

# Engaging Online Audiences with Poetry

Presented by Spoken Word Artist Liv Torc

Supported by Forward Arts Foundation, National Poetry Day and Arts Council England



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**ARTS COUNCIL  
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haiflu



# What I am going to talk about?

- ❖ The power of poetry to change lives, especially now
- ❖ How I use digital to engage audiences
- ❖ What you can do, including how to:
  1. identify and engage your online audiences
  2. run online workshops and poetry events
  3. work with artists to help you deliver successful campaigns
- ❖ Project Haiflu
- ❖ National Poetry Day
- ❖ How your library can get involved with Project Haiflu and National Poetry Day
- ❖ Questions at the end

# The power of poetry to change lives

This webinar has been brought about because the Forward Arts Foundation - which organises National Poetry Day each October - believes that in times of great change and challenge we need the arts and poetry more than ever.

## Poetry changes lives:

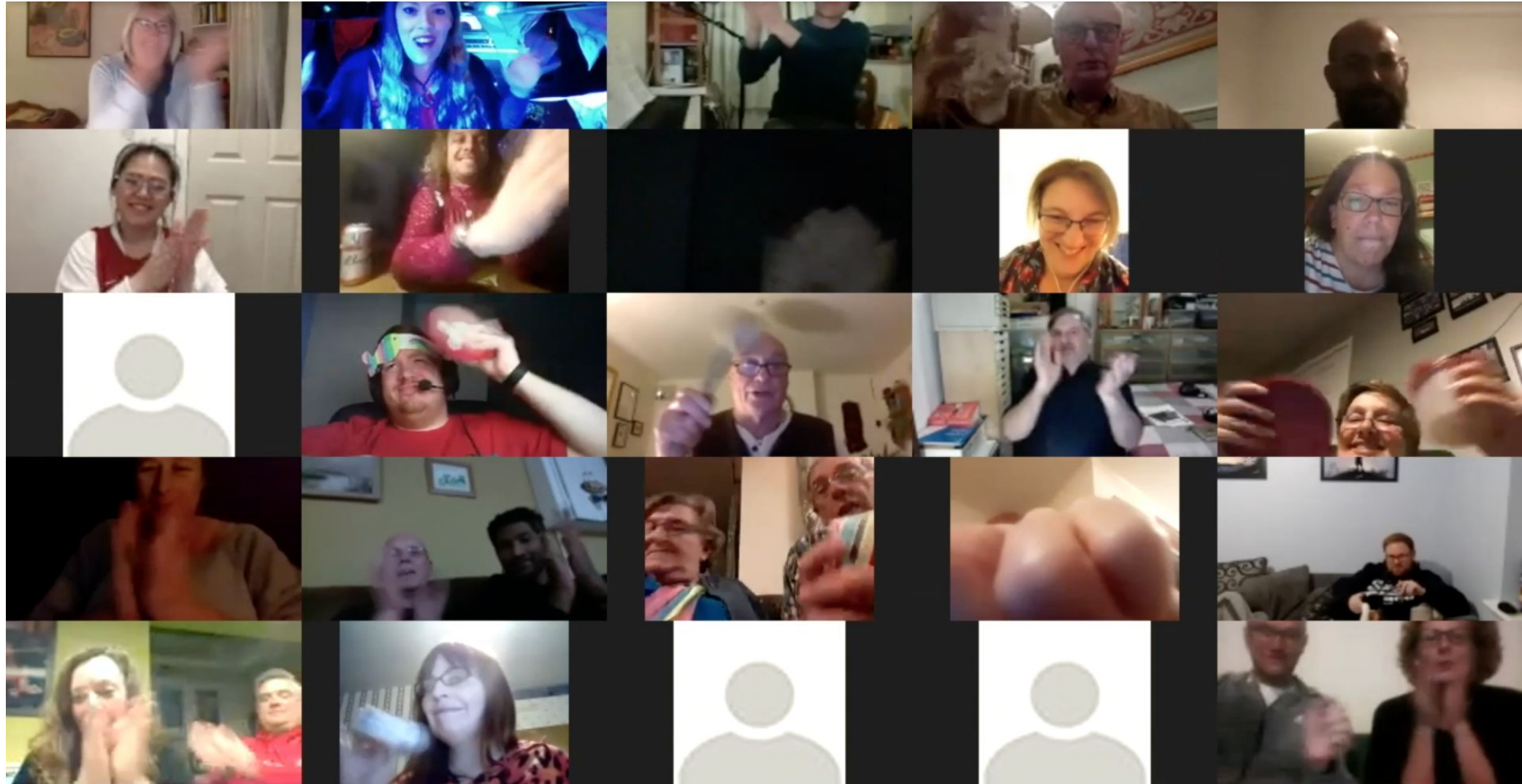
- ❖ by giving confidence
- ❖ by encouraging communication
- ❖ by fostering creativity
- ❖ by building communities

Since March, the number of Instagram posts tagged #poetry has increased by 6 million to 46 million.

# How I use digital to engage audiences

- ❖ Who am I – a poem
- ❖ Sharing poetry films online: 'How to Make a Difference' for the BBC (perform)
- ❖ Online workshops: Word/Play, Mother's Who Make
- ❖ Poetry events / Open Mics: Rainbow Fish Speakeasy, Blue Sky and Beyond Festival
- ❖ Project Haiflu: Documenting the social history of the Covid-19 pandemic, through crowd-sourced haiku, photographs and weekly films

# THE RAINBOW FISH SPEAKEASY ON ZOOM



# What makes audiences engage?

## Identify your audiences

- Rhyme time
- Book groups
- Twitter / Facebook / Instagram
- Mailing Lists
- Researchers and stakeholders
- Websites
- Education

Add some more to the comments...

# How to engage your audiences

- Make accessible, high quality content that is relevant to your target audiences
- Ensure the marketing/ audience engagement is part of the art not an afterthought
- Where possible facilitate other people to be creative and share their work
- Employ a local artist to run workshops and weave the participants work into a bigger digital art piece. It also helps if they have a good online audience/brand
- Participants become ambassadors and will help share content

# haiflu

Project Haiflu began with an idea and a creative challenge to my friends on social media to tell me how they were doing in the form of a haiku. I then asked them to send photos of their lives in lockdown. The response was overwhelming and incredibly powerful. So in March I made a film weaving together the best. I'm now on my 12 weekly film and it's time to give others the chance to run with the haiflu project.

Forward Arts Foundation believes that Project Haiflu hits all the right accessibility, quality and participatory markers for charities, schools and libraries to get involved. In fact we think the haiflu is the perfect poetic tool for Library audiences in the run-up to National Poetry Day on October 1.

So we're inviting YOU, librarians, to take up the challenge.



# What is a haiflu?

A haiku, or 3 line poem in 5,7,5 syllables written during a global pandemic, often presented with photograph taken the same week.

Let's watch two haiflu films

# What haiflu has achieved so far

- ❖ 11 out of a series of 12 weekly films have been made and shared
- ❖ Haiflu was Word of the Week in The Times and Sunday Times on 5 April
- ❖ Featured on the National BBC Poetry Podcast and BBC Local Radio on 29 May
- ❖ A spin off project for MIND in Somerset for Mental Health Awareness week
- ❖ Haiflu has been used as the basis for two multi-school competitions
- ❖ More than 25k people have seen at least one of the films
- ❖ 7,500+ contributions of haiflu and photographs posted on social media
- ❖ 550 total contributions from 300+ people included in the weekly films
- ❖ I have received over 50 case studies from participants citing how the project has positively affected their wellbeing during lockdown

# How to Write a haiflu

- 1) Pause. Look. Listen.
- 2) Consider what is really holding court in your mind.
- 3) Notice how you feel about it.
- 4) Using few words, capture the moment and your feelings.
- 5) Arrange them in haiku form: 3 lines, 5,7,5 syllables.
- 6) Count the syllables on your fingers if it helps. I do.
- 7) Don't rhyme.

Have a go at writing a haiflu  
and sharing in the chat

# What is National Poetry Day?



**National Poetry Day** is a mass annual celebration that encourages all to enjoy, discover and share poetry. In 2020 it will be on 1st October. The theme is Vision.

**National Poetry Day** is fun, it starts conversations, it encourages love of language - and best of all, it's open to absolutely everyone to join in, individually or in groups, by holding events, sticking poems in their windows or just sharing a poem online.

# How your library can use haiflu and NPD to engage digital audiences

## In the short term

- ❖ Identify your digital audiences and how to reach them
- ❖ Share the 'How to Haiflu' film with those audiences
- ❖ On social media ask audiences to use the #haiflu tag
- ❖ And to tag their nearest library
- ❖ In the week of 15 -19 June, libraries can post their favourite haiflu on the National Poetry Day Facebook page
- ❖ Look out for a special libraries haiflu film on 21 June
- ❖ Use the haiflu branding guidelines


# In the long term

Leading up to National Poetry Day on 1 October

- ❖ Hire a local poet to facilitate an online workshop or a series of workshops
- ❖ If you have any existing creative groups, run a special haiflu session for them
- ❖ Choose a haiflu theme that relates to your region
- ❖ Make your own haiflu art, such as a calendar, book, spoken word piece etc. Print postcards or posters. Display them. Share what you're doing by tagging #haiflu #NationalPoetryDay
- ❖ Make sure you use an artist or experienced creative who can weave all the haiflu together into something new. The weaver is the key
- ❖ Use the Haiflu branding guidelines



Questions

A wide-angle photograph of a beach. The foreground is filled with white, frothy waves washing onto the shore. The ocean extends to the horizon, showing a gradient of blue from light to dark. The sky is a clear, bright blue with a few wispy white clouds near the horizon. The overall scene is bright and sunny, suggesting a clear morning.

It's been a dark time  
but this morning, in blue skies  
a swift brings summer

Steve Pottinger

haiflu

Photo: Seif Alaya, Bournemouth Beach