

## National Poetry Day announces 36-book trade promotion as the Nation gets ready for mass celebration of poetry



**News for release: 6 August 2018:** National Poetry Day, the UK's greatest celebration of poetry, will see verse spilling into every aspect of our lives this October, as hundreds of thousands of people, schools, libraries, pubs, bus companies, museums and railway stations prepare to share, read, write and celebrate poetry. There will be hundreds of events across the UK and Ireland on **Thursday 4 October, 2018** with the nation invited to **share a poem** on social media.

Today National Poetry Day, Britain's national campaign for poetry, announces its dedicated book trade promotion for a second year running, highlighting 36 inspiring poetry books in three wide-ranging categories: new collections, poetry for book groups and children's poetry. The campaign's aim – to enable all to enjoy, discover and share poetry – is supported by 24 publishers, from Penguin Random House, Bloomsbury and Macmillan to independents like Carcanet and Bloodaxe Books.

The new poetry picks include *Venus as a Bear* (Carcanet), the latest from 2016 Forward Prize winner, **Vahni Capildeo**, alongside a much-anticipated new collection from Poet Laureate **Carol Ann Duffy** (*Sincerity*, Picador) and a new work by insta-poet, producer and mental health campaigner **Charly Cox** (*She Must Be Mad*, HQ).

National Poetry Day's poetry recommendations for book groups features a host of big names tackling big themes including former Poet Laureate **Andrew Motion's** *Essex Clay* (Faber), **Lemn Sissay's** *Gold from the Stone* (Canongate), Queen's Gold Medal recipient **Imtiaz Dharker's** collection *Luck is the Hook* (Bloodaxe Books), plus **Ben Okri's** anthology *Rise Like Lions: Poetry for the Many* (Hodder), a collection celebrating poetry's power to give voice to the silenced and unheard.



Poetry for children highlights include National Poetry Day Ambassador **Rachel Rooney's** forthcoming collection, *A Kid in My Class* (Otter-Barry Books) illustrated by **Chris Riddell**, much-loved poet and BBC Radio 4 presenter **Roger McGough's** *Happy Poems* (Macmillan's Children's Books) and a new anthology for National Poetry Day, *Poetry for a Change* (Otter-Barry Books) featuring contributions by National Poetry Day Ambassadors, including poets **Joseph Coelho**, **Brian Moses** and **Michaela Morgan**, who have chosen and written poems for young audiences, around the theme of 'change'.

Display packs featuring designs by National Poetry Day 2018 artist **Chie Hosaka** and including sets of collectable bookmarks featuring the 36 recommended poetry books are now available to bookshops and libraries around the UK, via the Booksellers Association and wholesalers Gardners and Bertrams who are supporting the campaign. With the help of the UK's leading supplier of books for schools and libraries, Browns Books for Students, hundreds of promotional packs are being distributed to schools and colleges across the UK, with thousands more

downloading materials and resources from the National Poetry Day website.

In a new partnership with national charity The Reading Agency the 12 poetry book recommendations for reading groups are being promoted to over 3000 reading groups via the charity's 'Reading Groups for Everyone' network to help encourage even more people to read and discover poetry. Libraries across the country will be promoting National Poetry Day throughout September and October, inspiring their visitors to borrow poetry collections and find out what the library has to offer.

**Andrea Reece, National Poetry Day Manager** says: *"Everything we see and everything we hear from our partners demonstrates an ever-growing appetite for poetry, and no wonder. Our recommendations highlight the incredible range of poetry available, and whatever your tastes, there will be a book in this selection to inspire, surprise or move you. We hope that these lists will tempt even those who think they don't like poetry into their bookshop or library to try poetry for a change. We are immensely grateful to the publishers for their backing and delighted to be getting so much support from the book trade."*

**Nikki Daigneault of Gardners** says: *"Gardners are privileged to be working with the Forward Arts Foundation in supporting this year's National Poetry Day on 4th October. The book trade has always had a passion for poetry and this year offer appears to be culturally stronger and more diverse than ever."*

**Jon Stone of Sidekick Books** says: *"We're participating in this National Poetry Day promotion because we believe in pushing contemporary poetry out of its niche, and onto the unsuspecting world - where it can wreak magical havoc, steal into houses and rewire reality, fragment by fragment. National Poetry Day is a rallying point for energetic small presses, a hill where we can gather and pool our subtle sorceries - our once-a-year witching hour."*

**Gaby Morgan, Editorial Director at Macmillan's Children's Books** says: *"In our 25th year of publishing poetry for children, Macmillan Children's Books are delighted to be supporting National Poetry Day as they develop exciting and innovative ways of getting poetry into the hands of the widest audience possible. From National Poetry Ambassadors and the gorgeous Poetry For a Change anthology to this brilliant campaign featuring a really wide range of books they are delivering a joyous chorus of poetry to the nation. National Poetry Day have poetry for everyone whether you are singing rhymes to your baby, sharing topical poems on social media, reading mindfully or spreading the spoken word. They work tirelessly to bring people into the poetry conversation and have embraced and enhanced the current vibrant poetry landscape."*

**Nessa Urquhart, Waterstones Poetry Buyer**, says: *"Happy National Poetry Day 2018! Celebrations are in order for a landmark year in poetry. We've Robin Robertson on the Booker Longlist, the late, great Helen Dunmore reigning as Costa's Overall Winner and a host of genre-busting titles adorning our shelves. Hot on the heels of some blazing Spring/Summer publishing, the Autumn schedule is already packed with blockbuster releases, debut gems and, of course, National Poetry Day continuing to grow and engage with more people than ever before. We're delighted to work with them and play our part in the celebrations."*

**Karen McPherson of The Reading Agency** says: *"We are delighted to be working with National Poetry Day again this year to share the joy of poetry in communities, and we have been pleased to put the spotlight on poetry reading groups, sharing what poetry has meant to them. This year, the theme of Change has really spoken to our readers, and in the lead up to 4 October we look forward to seeing the impact that poetry is making on local communities."*

For the third year running National Poetry Day has partnered with BBC Local Radio. Taking their cue from National Poetry Day's 2018 theme – Change – BBC Local Radio stations across England are calling on listeners for stories of the changes that mean the most to them. The most inspiring of these stories will then become the creative spark for 12 new poems by local poets, to be broadcast on the BBC on National Poetry Day. The 12 local poets, including Young Poet Laureate for London, **Momtaza Mehri**, award-winning Yorkshire poet, **Kate Fox** and the East Midland's **Andrew "Mulletproof" Graves**, are tasked with making the most of poetry's power to change how we see our world; while writer, film and TV producer (Philomena, Alan Partridge, Gavin and Stacey) turned poet **Henry Normal** shared his own story of personal change to launch the initiative last month.

The explosion of poetry on National Poetry Day will see poems in leisure centre changing rooms in Scotland, poets and children reciting verse on buses in Wales, even a poet in a tin mine in Cornwall, London travellers will be treated to pop-up poetry across London Underground, at Battersea Arts Centre star poets including **Roger Robinson, Joelle Taylor** and **Chiedu Oraka** are lining up for an immersive poetry journey, presented as part of Apples and Snakes 35th anniversary celebrations, while Poetry Live returns to London's Southbank Centre with a free evening of poetry by exciting young poets **Anthony Anaxagorou, Mary Jean Chan, Caroline Bird** and **Zaffar Kunial**; and Foyles Bookshop hosts a Poetry Inquisition with hosts **Will Harris** and **Richard Osmond** and poets **Craig Raine, Sandeep Parmar** and **Richard Scott**.



**National  
Poetry  
Day**

National Poetry Day (4th October 2018) is a mass celebration of poetry that annually engages people across the country with millions joining in on the day by reading, writing, performing and listening to poetry. It enjoys very high participation rates, especially online and in schools and libraries: supporters include the Royal Mail, the BBC, and HRH the Prince of Wales. It is co-ordinated by Forward Arts Foundation, a charity which brings together leading poetry, literacy and literary organisations around a common purpose: promoting the enjoyment, discovery and sharing of poetry.

For further information, visit <http://nationalpoetryday.co.uk>