

Press Release



10th October 2018

NATIONAL POETRY DAY AT 25: MICHAEL O'MARA BOOKS AND FORWARD ARTS FOUNDATION ANNOUNCE POETRY CALL-OUT FOR 25TH ANNIVERSARY COLLECTION

In a new partnership, Michael O'Mara Books and The Forward Arts Foundation are to publish a collection of poetry to celebrate National Poetry Day's 25th anniversary in October 2019.

Curated and introduced by poetry lover and BBC presenter **Cerys Matthews**, *Tell Me the Truth About Life* will be an indispensable anthology celebrating poetry's power to capture the truths that really matter to people.

The public are today invited to nominate a wide range of poetry to be considered by Cerys for the anthology: the search is on for poems old and new that touch on 'a truth that matters to me'. Closing date for submission of nominated poems, which should be already in the public domain, is Friday 23rd November. Nominations should be sent to: truth@nationalpoetryday.co.uk, and they can also be submitted via Twitter using the hashtag #TellMeTheTruthAboutLife.

The book's themed chapters will include: 'True Love', 'Hidden Truths', 'Misdirection and Lies', 'True Stories' and 'Everyday Truisms'.

The anthology will also include poems selected and introduced by a number of high-profile names. These poems will be discussed in an accompanying podcast to be launched for National Poetry Day 2019.

A percentage of royalties from the sale of *Tell Me the Truth About Life* will be donated to the Forward Arts Foundation, the charity behind National Poetry Day.

Nicola Crossley, Senior Commissioning Editor at Michael O'Mara Books said: "We are thrilled to be collaborating with the team at the Forward Arts Foundation and Cerys Matthews to produce an unforgettable anniversary edition for National Poetry Day. Our beautiful book will be broad in its appeal but focused in its aim: to highlight the power of poetry, and its ability to change our understanding of truth."

Cerys Matthews said: "I think of poetry as words that lodge in the mind, lying there for ages until needed, when suddenly they come to you and – ping! – connect you with another way of understanding truth, a way that conjures images and rhythm, metaphors

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and music. We want people to share with us poems that evoke important personal or universal truths: words that really matter. Bring them on so we can share them in our turn!”

Susannah Herbert, Executive Director at the Forward Arts Foundation, said: “We each have a poem that is special to us, a kind of talisman or touchstone to turn to when ordinary words fail. This is a chance to share those lines, using National Poetry Day’s 25th anniversary to explore different ways of approaching the truths that really matter.”

The book will be published on 12th September 2019 in hardback, priced £12.99. The 25th National Poetry Day 2019 – which takes “truth” as its theme – will take place on 3rd October 2019.

Notes to Editors:

- Michael O’Mara Books is a leading independent publishing house known for their innovative and diverse non-fiction list, comprising best-selling biography, autobiography and lifestyle in addition to popular science and history.
- The Forward Arts Foundation is a registered charity in England and Wales (charity number 1037939), promoting public knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of poetry in the UK and Ireland. It is committed to widening poetry’s audience, honouring achievement and supporting talent: programmes include National Poetry Day, the Forward Prizes for Poetry and the Forward Book of Poetry. For more information, visit: <http://www.forwardartsfoundation.org/>
- National Poetry Day is an annual mass celebration that inspires people throughout the UK to enjoy, discover and share poems. In 2017, it enabled activities and participation in more than 16,500 schools including many in the most deprived parts of the UK: in 2018, care homes throughout the UK used National Poetry Day resources to lay on special events for residents to enjoy poetry-reading with friends and family. In 2019, the priority is enabling people to find the words they need to share the truths that matter to them
- National Poetry Day is about literacy in the deepest sense: the kind which finds meaning in story and song, rhythm and memory, and which values shared understanding of what it is to be human. It was founded in 1994 by the Forward Arts Foundation, and enjoys the support of the BBC, Arts Council England, the Royal Mail and leading literary and cultural organisations, alongside booksellers, publishers, libraries and schools. For more information, visit nationalpoetryday.co.uk