

George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling  
Symposium 2017

Storytelling and Place

# Delegate Pack



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# Welcome

The George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling is delighted to welcome you to our eleventh annual symposium, which includes two days of provocations and presentations on the theme of storytelling and place. The programme this year includes a splendidly diverse range of speakers who are examining notions of both story and place from a varied range of perspectives including the digital, the literary, the performed, the folkloric and others. We aim to inspire, encourage and showcase exciting projects across a wide spectrum of storytelling practice and are thrilled to bring such an exciting range of speakers to the Centre. Storytelling can help us understand our identity and relationship to the places we inhabit, be these geographic or psychological. In our current times the stories we tell about ourselves and our places can serve to guide us and inform our relationship to the world and each other; this is perhaps all the more urgent as national identity is being negotiated and renegotiated, as Europe is reshaped in the wake of the 'Brexit' vote, and as Twitter is rebirthed as an instrument of government. In an era which has been described as 'post-truth', and where news stories draw their cultural capital as much from their 'clickworthiness' as their veracity, the stories we tell about ourselves and our place within the world have become one of the most-urgent issues of our time.

We hope you'll find everything you need in this pack including:

- [An itinerary](#)
- [Abstracts and speaker biographies](#)
- [Directions to Atrium](#)
- [Where to stay](#)

If you need any more information or there is anything else we can help with please do get in touch. You can call us on 01443 668547 or email [storytelling@southwales.ac.uk](mailto:storytelling@southwales.ac.uk).

The George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling (GEECS) is the only UK academic research centre devoted to the study of storytelling and its applications. We believe storytelling creates better understanding between individuals and communities across society. Our expertise includes digital storytelling, applied and community arts, folkloric studies, performance, oral history and storytelling in health and social care. Students, academics and anyone who wants to include storytelling as part of their professional practice will find a wealth of resources at the centre. <http://storytelling.research.southwales.ac.uk>.

# George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling Symposium 2017: Storytelling and Place

## Itinerary

All events take place at the Atrium, Faculty of Creative Industries, Adam Street, Cardiff, CF24 2XF

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Friday 21st April 2017, 9.00am – 10.00pm

**ALL EVENTS TAKE PLACE IN THE THEATRE UNLESS  
OTHERWISE MARKED**

8.45am	Registration, tea and coffee (Atrium foyer)
9am	Welcome – Prof Hamish Fyfe
9.10am	Keynote: Dr Jamie Tehrani 'Once upon a time – but when? Searching for the origins of Indo-European folktales' Chair: Prof Hamish Fyfe
10.15am	Welsh perspectives panel: Catherine Fisher, Cath Little, Prof Kevin Mills Chair: Dr Alice Entwistle
11.15am	Tea/coffee (Atrium foyer)
11.30am	Prof Gareth Williams 'Ask the Fellows Who Cut the Coal: George Ewart Evans of Abercynon (1909-1988)' Chair: Dr Pat Ryan
11.45am	International perspectives panel: NAR-SPI 'Social spaces across Europe: stories of socio-professional inclusion in NAR-SPI Project' Chair: Prof Mike Wilson
12.45pm	Lunch (Atrium foyer)

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1.45pm	Parallel session Chair: Dr Steve Killick	1.50 Sara Rees 'A Walk Through A City In Ruins: Psycho-geography and the Essay Film' 2.15 Dr Elizabeth Lloyd-Parkes, Nadine Khair and Prof Jonathan Deacon 'The Name and a Dress: a co-constructed narrative of the importance of place of origin in consumer perception' 2.35 Sarah Haynes 'An approach to authoring / designing an online storytelling project, The Memory Store, set in Liverpool in 2115' 2.55 Dr Abigail Gardner 'MY STORY: Storytelling in and across 'place''	Parallel session 'Walkshop': Dr Hilary Ramsden
3.30pm	Parallel session Chair: Dr Roiyah Saltus	3.35 Sharon Magill 'Voices from the Rhondda' 3.55 Sarah Tanburn 'By There they will Scatter my Ashes' 4.15 Matt White 'Speculative Fictions: the spin of a coin' 4.35 Dr Robert James Smith 'The World's Oldest Culture Telling Stories in New Media'	
5.10pm	Tea/coffee (Atrium foyer)		
5.25pm	Prof Kevin Mills 'Plot and Tell', Chair: Dr Emily Underwood-Lee		
6.35pm	Break		
8.00pm	Beyond the Border Storytelling Social (Mingle)		
10.00pm	Close		

Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 10.00am – 5.30pm

**ALL EVENTS TAKE PLACE IN THE ZEN ROOM UNLESS  
OTHERWISE MARKED**

9.45am	Registration, tea and coffee (Atrium foyer)
10am	Welcome – Prof Hamish Fyfe
10.15am	Peter Stevenson Croesi'r Terfynau / Crossing the Boundary' Chair: Dr Pat Ryan
11.15am	Tea/coffee
11.30am	Provocation 1: Susan Richardson 'Writing in Cold Blood: Thirty Ways of Looking at the Sea' Chair: Dr Alice Entwistle
12.30pm	Provocation 2: Dr Aparna Sharma and Dr Lisa Lewis presented by Dr Helen Davies 'Sacred Places in the Welsh and Khasi Cultural Dialogues' Chair: Prof Hamish Fyfe
1.30pm	Lunch (Atrium foyer)
2.30pm	Provocation 3: Catrin James and Dr Emily Underwood-Lee The Modern Story of Orchards and Cider Making in Wales Chair: Prof Mike Wilson
3.30pm	Tea/coffee
3.45pm	Provocation 4: Prof Sioned Davies 'Keeping The Stories Alive - The Mabinogion Landscape' Chair: Dr Pat Ryan
4.45pm	Plenary: respondents Denis Lennon, Dr Jodie Allinson Chair: Prof Hamish Fyfe
5.30pm	Close

# Speaker Biographies and Abstracts

**Dr Jamie Tehrani (Durham University)**

## **‘Once upon a time – but when? Searching for the origins of Indo-European folktales’**

Researchers since the Brothers Grimm have speculated about the origins of folktales shared by different cultures around the world. However, as primarily oral art forms, there is precious little literary evidence to locate the source and spread of these stories. I will describe a novel approach to this problem that draws on methods from evolutionary biology, showing how they can be used to trace lineages of narrative inheritance and reconstruct ancient tale corpora in Indo-European tale traditions.

Dr Tehrani’s research focuses on how culture evolves as it gets transmitted from person to person and from generation to generation. He is interested in understanding what makes some things catch on, others die out, and how these processes shape patterns of cultural diversity within and across populations. His current work focuses mainly on the transmission of popular narratives, such as traditional folktales, urban legends and modern day conspiracy theories.

## **Welsh Perspectives panel**

**Presenters: Catherine Fisher, Cath Little, Kevin Mills**

### **Catherine Fisher**

Catherine Fisher was born and brought up in Newport, Gwent. Her volumes of poetry include *Immrama*, *Altered States*, and *The Unexplored Ocean*; her work has appeared in *Poetry Wales*, *Poetry Review* and many other periodicals. She is a past winner of the Cardiff International Poetry competition. Her fiction for children includes *The Oracle Trilogy* (which was shortlisted for the Whitbread Awards), *The Snow- Walker Trilogy*, *Corbenic*, *Darkhenge* and the *Relic Master Quartet*. Her novel *Incarceron* was *Times Children's Book of the Year*, a *New York Times* bestseller and has been translated into over 20 languages. Catherine provided the introduction to the Library of Wales reprint of Arthur Machen's *The Hill of Dreams*. Recently she has published the first three volumes of the *Chronoptika Quartet* and is working on the fourth, *The Speed of Darkness*. Catherine is a Fellow of the Welsh Academi and was the inaugural Young Peoples Laureate for Wales.

### **Cath Little**

Cath Little is a storyteller and singer drawing inspiration from her Irish and English heritage and from her Welsh home land. She tells tales and sings songs for the Turning Year in celebration of our Earth and its seasons. Cath has a rich sense of the magic of stories and of their ability to connect us to one another, leading us gently to a clearer sense of ourselves and our place in the world. Cath has performed at Beyond the Border International Storytelling Festival, Glastonbury Festival, Festival at the Edge and The BBC Proms Folk Day. She regularly tells stories at The National Museum for Wales.

### **Prof Kevin Mills (University of South Wales)**

Kevin Mills is Professor of English Literature at University of South Wales. He is author of a number of monographs, including *Approaching Apocalypse: Unveiling Revelation in Victorian Writing* (Bucknell UP, 2007) and *The Prodigal Sign: A Parable of Criticism* (Sussex Academic Press, 2009). He has published essays and articles on a wide range of literary and theoretical subjects, most recently a co-authored creative-critical response to the work of Ciaran Carson (*Textual Practice*, 2016) with Dr Alice Entwistle. Three volumes of his poetry have appeared from Cinnamon Press, the latest of which is *Stations of the Boar* (2016).

### **Prof Gareth Williams (University of South Wales) 'Ask the Fellows Who Cut the Coal: George Ewart Evans of Abercynon (1909-1988)'**

George Ewart Evans' reputation rests on his fame as a pioneer of oral history and unrivalled chronicler of the English countryside. He settled in Suffolk in the late 1940s and became a unique interpreter of East Anglian rural life, its customs, work practices, dialect usages and agrarian culture. Gareth Williams will introduce his book, written to accompany the unveiling of a plaque to George Ewart Evans in his birthplace, the mining village of Abercynon three miles north of Pontypridd, which argues that the kind of remarkable writer and historian George Ewart Evans became owed everything to his background and upbringing in an industrial coal community in south Wales.

Gareth Williams is Emeritus Professor of History at the University of South Wales where he was head of the Centre for Modern and Contemporary Wales. A graduate of Balliol College, Oxford, the London School of Economics, and the University of Chicago, he is one of Wales' foremost social historians and has written and broadcast widely on the popular culture of south Wales. His books include *George Ewart Evans* (1991), *Valleys of Song: music and Welsh society 1840-1914* (1999), and *Do You Hear the People Sing? The Male Voice Choirs of Wales* (2015).

## **International perspectives panel: NAR-SPI 'Social spaces across Europe: stories of socio-professional inclusion in NAR-SPI Project'**

**Presenters: Prof Mike Wilson (Loughborough University, UK), David Bodart (Perspectives, Belgium), Jean-Marc Lafitte (Transfer, France), Dr Antonia Liguori (Loughborough University, UK), Dr Katarzyna Paszyn (Wyzsza Szkola Biznesu i Nauk o Zdrowiu, Poland), Athanasios Verdis and Spyros Kokkotas (Research Paths, Greece).**

*'NAR-SPI Narrative educational resources for socio professional inclusion'* is a European project, funded under the Erasmus+ Programme KA2, that aims at creating Open Educational Resources for socio-professional inclusion. The novelty of the approach proposed by the 8 institutions involved in this strategic partnership consists in combining experiential knowledge (elicited by multiple narratives approaches) with scientific knowledge (embedded in the expertise within the partnership), to maximise the effectiveness of the learning process.

As we are exploring social spaces across Europe, the 'systemic theory', approached from a social psychologist's angle, offers a theoretical background to frame and gather stories of socio-professional inclusion in different contexts (both cultural and geographical). Storytelling, as a process, helps the individual to understand her/his 'role' within a specific system; stories, as learning objects, depict more precisely the interactions between different actors of the same system, focusing on the relationship between the individual and his social space. Using storytelling in formal and non-formal learning enables learners to connect experiential and scientific knowledge and to clarify the link between theory and practice.

This panel discussion will be triggered by a 'story-based' session that will focus on three main aspects: a specific 'philosophy of inclusion' that is behind the project; the use of multiple narratives approaches to create Open Educational Resources for socio-professional inclusion; work environment as social space from a HR management perspective.

### **Parallel Session 1**

**Sara Rees**

**'A Walk Through A City In Ruins: Psycho-geography and the Essay Film'**

In this presentation, I will show my recent essay film, *Fragments For A City In Ruins*, and use the film and my subsequent reflections upon it, to offer some thoughts about psycho-geography and essay film in relation to storytelling and place. *Fragments For A City In Ruins* is an essay film in which an unseen narrator wanders through the city of Athens. The viewer is invited to suspend disbelief

and to entertain the premise that this visitor has come from a future in which time has collapsed. What begins as a reflection on architecture and the aesthetics of ruins slips into a meditation upon history and time. As the film unfolds, its initial documentary-style tone gives way to a more dream-like quality, in which different aspects of time are evoked. The narration draws upon the writings of Walter Benjamin, particularly his *Theses on The Philosophy of History*. Following Benjamin's ideas about inter-textuality, citation and the fragment, writings by Robert Smithson, Italo Calvino and W.G. Sebald are also drawn upon and woven together. While the explicit narrative is concerned with ruins, memory, history and time, the film alludes to the traumas of the financial crisis and the refugee crisis, and seeks to offer a space for reflection on how we relate to such events. Taking this essay film as a point of departure, and drawing upon the work of artists such as Chris Marker and Patrick Keiller, I would like to discuss the creative strategies of psycho-geography and essay film in relation to storytelling and place, and what the peripatetic nature of both might offer us in terms of strategies for political engagement and critical reflection.

Sara Rees is a Welsh artist from the Gower Peninsula, currently based in Cardiff. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree (First Class) in Visual Performance from Dartington College of Arts and a Masters in Fine Art degree (Distinction) from Cardiff School of Art & Design. Her work is exhibited internationally and she has been the recipient of a number of awards and prizes, including Creative Wales and Leverhulme Trust awards.

**Dr Elizabeth Lloyd-Parkes, Nadine Khair and Prof Jonathan Deacon  
(University of South Wales)**

**'The Name and a Dress: a co-constructed narrative of the importance of place of origin in consumer perception'**

This autoethnographic paper combines ethnography, biography and the analysis of self in a paper which uses story-telling in a collaborative, co-constructed narrative. The stories focus on the personal experience of two researchers in the purchase of clothing of Jordanian origin, and the importance that place of origin has in our consumer behaviour decisions. The paper also uses community autoethnography, whereby the individual stories are commented upon by a third researcher to bring an objective view on the similarities and differences between the two stories. The findings relate to the socio-cultural implications of the importance of brand personality to self-concept and also incorporate the significance of place of origin. Included in the findings from this exercise is the observation that brands from one's own country are not perceived in the same, exotic light as items from other places of origin. Additionally, there is rich data within this piece of research which may provide insight into the female clothes-shopping experience. The most

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interesting occurrence is that in the world of marketing and business management research, this type of approach is rarely used; however, it can elicit very rich data and important consumer insights in line with the recent developments in UX (user experience) ethnographic research.

**Sarah Haynes**

**‘An approach to authoring / designing an online storytelling project, The Memory Store, set in Liverpool in 2115’**

In The Memory Store, readers access the memories of Jules Stewart, a pattern surveillance officer, investigating a disappearance in Liverpool in 2115. Seeking a pattern in the myriad threads of the network, where information is calibrated with and verified by the crowd. The Memory Store invites readers to contribute their own fictional memories set in this future city to sit alongside those of Jules Stewart providing a richer narrative world, a shared imagining of Liverpool in a hundred years time. The contributed text will influence the story as it unfolds in stages over the next nine months as Jules pieces together, through the contributed memories, a plot that explains the disappearance of Estelle Fischer. But, in this online maelstrom of memories, whose version of events and places should be believed? The project asks; what might participation with digital storytelling offer the reader? What challenges does participation present to the author? Can collaboration produce a satisfying narrative experience? What strategies might be applied to design and manage this participatory narrative experience? Themes of the work include: story and place, projecting a future Liverpool, participation, collective intelligence, memory online, associative links between memories online and meaning making.

**Dr Abigail Gardner**

**‘MY STORY: Storytelling in and across ‘place’**

MyStory (MYSTY) is a pan-European, Erasmus+ funded Digital Storytelling project focused on migration and minority experiences. It has 8 partners (HE, secondary schools and NGOs) across 4 countries (Austria, Italy, Hungary and the UK) and involves the collection, editing and uploading of digital stories to a Digital Storytelling Toolbox website. These stories focus on ‘food’, ‘family’ and ‘festival’ and act as a platform for diversity awareness and digital upskilling. The MYSTY Project is driven by the principle that innovative teaching resources form part of broader pedagogic strategies that can actively help tackle issues of diversity common across the EU. As issues related to migration present a transnational challenge, Mysty provides a transnational cross-sectional educational tool to enhance intercultural competency. MYSTY aims to provide validity to experience irrespective of cultural background, using storytelling as a positive mechanism to counter negative stereotype (Salazar, 2010). We work from an awareness that “The current context of rapid migration into Europe associated with the international tensions, have revealed growing distances

between different cultures and communities, including in educational setting, and involving intolerant attitudes and behaviours' ([www.mysty.eu](http://www.mysty.eu)). This paper highlights the project, its challenges and its expectations. It mobilises theoretical contributions from popular music interventions on folk music as a foundation because they offer an understanding of the tensions around 'place'. Folk music is at once rooted, or 'grounded' (in specific cultures and histories and particularly in the land) and 'de-territorialized' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1972) since it travels not only across differing spaces but across time (Bohlan, 1988; Connell and Gibson, 2003; Negus, 2012). These readings of the dynamic interplay between roots and routes in European folk music offer a map from where we can trace out migration stories that, whilst focused on the micro; intimate, the familial and the traditional, are interwoven with the macro; movements across time and place, of travelling.

## Parallel Session 2

Sharon Magill

### 'Voices from the Rhondda'

In the book *A Fortunate Man* John Berger wrote, "Landscape can be deceptive. Sometimes a landscape seems to be less a setting for the life of its inhabitants than a curtain behind which their struggles, achievements and accidents take place. For those who, with the inhabitants, are behind the curtains, landmarks are no longer geographic but also biographical and personal" (1976). As a newcomer to the Rhondda valley, my outsider view to the mountains and long terraced streets was one closer to a tourist, informed by the media, art and history books. But I knew that beyond the curtain of these mediated sources were views, experiences and stories with just as much importance than the academic or journalist could offer. During 2016, while studying an MA in Arts Practice (Fine Art) at the University of South Wales, I embarked on two projects to discover the personal stories of the Rhondda. Using my experience of digital storytelling, Ystrad Stories used the paintings of Ystrad Rhondda artist Ernest Zobole as prompts to explore personal stories through art. Using a different creative research method Rhondda Voices invited people to stop, sit on a bench, take in the view and talk about their Rhondda with the recorded conversations becoming part of an art installation. The stories and conversations from both projects reveal an incredible range of personal experience, shared histories, coincidences and contradictions and are embedded within the place, the landscape, its history and community.

Sharon is an artist with an interest in working in and with communities to encourage engagement with art and storytelling. Sharon also teaches Digital Storytelling and media production skills at Cardiff School of Journalism, Cardiff University. The Ystrad Stories project will be on display at Pontypridd

Library from 27th March to 24th April. See the Facebook page for more details - [www.facebook.com/artisttrails/](http://www.facebook.com/artisttrails/)

### **Sarah Tanburn**

#### **'By There they will Scatter my Ashes'**

A place – a square or a block or a city – is a *where* and a *what*, a *when* and *who*. And of course *why*? Schools, hospitals, stations and town quarters all have narrative drive; people who make them, live and work in them, have tales which reach backwards and forwards in time. Paying attention to place makes for better storytelling. Paying attention to stories makes better places. I will talk about how storytelling, digital, paper-based or in person, shapes the complex juggling act of making places in our cities and towns. From Canvey Island or Christchurch, people discuss the past and the future and reach for places where they can be happy. In the marshalling of money and planning, juggling architects and stakeholders, in the cacophony of traffic, too often the story and the place separate. To residents and workers, usually outside the decade-long decisions, the changes in their place seem at best an accident and at worst a deliberate onslaught on familiarity. The stories of the past are clawed apart by the bulldozer's claws and reburied in the new foundations. Meanwhile, investors and risk-takers, civic leaders and transport planners are excited by events' trajectory, telling tales of driverless cars, the internet of things, the way the future will manifest itself here and now.

*Reflect on the dark street at the back of the building, the alley running between the grey bricks, the corner of an ancient field marked by black and white arrows and the flowers of a recent tragedy. Here's where we played as children, here's where he grabbed me. By there, they will scatter my ashes.*

When we make places we make histories, and her stories too. We need to pay attention, to make places which matter and will last, as we call the future into being.

Sarah Tanburn is a writer and consultant. She has worked with communities, planners, architects and artists for thirty years from the UK to New Zealand. In 2017 she is engaged in London, Peterborough and the British coastline. Her practice includes working with local communities and government agencies to unearth and create the stories which will make places work better for people and she believes passionately in the importance of storytelling to improve both the present and the future.

### **Matt White**

#### **'Speculative Fictions: the spin of a coin'**

The connection that we have to specific places is politically, culturally, historically and emotionally complicated. The narratives that form the

dissemination of our ideas about the places that we are connected to come in many forms, from the handed down family anecdote to the perpetuating stories that pervade local pubs and clubs. More widely, the ways in which the creative world chooses to present these narratives, as well as the impact that they can have, offer the potential for a wide reaching debate about the nature of communities and the ways that they can be improved. From the facilitation of many digital storytelling projects to more personal quests to specific international places, my wider research involves developing and incorporating narratives that both utilise and question the construction of identity as well as the connection to place. Through the use of pertinent examples from previous research outcomes, I will set a contextual ground for the presentation of new work from an ongoing *Arts & Minds Consortium* artist residency in Newtown, Ebbw Vale, whose general remit is to assess the impact of contemporary art practice on community regeneration. Over the last twelve months of this residency I have incorporated a number of creative research methodologies to interface with tenants and residents from Newtown as well as staff from the social landlord charged with their care. These have included interviews, digital stories and vintage makeovers. These methods have been used to build trust, create connections, boost confidence and attempt to change individual perceptions about their own contribution to the regeneration process. This approach has also provided material for a film, currently in development, that blends fantasy with reality to talk about how key decisions can drastically alter the course of the future.

## Walkshop

**Dr Hilary Ramsden (University of South Wales)**

**'Playing in the everyday walk: a few experiments'**

Generally, when in public space we are expected and encouraged to behave, act, see, hear in quite normative and arguably, constrained ways. It doesn't have to be like that. ...this workshop explores how walking can be a means to change our perceptions of the environment and our relationship to it and others within it. We'll spend the workshop time walking - and the focus of this walking will be play, improvisation and experimentation. This means we will look at a variety of ways and interventions that we can use to encourage us to sense our environment differently from how we are frequently expected to. The walk will become a ludic space and we walkers will become artists and players in the space of the walk. Maybe our experiments and improvisings will give rise to the creation of new forms of understandings or to the realization that we already possess these new forms. Maybe we will have fun in public space!

Hilary Ramsden is Award Leader on the BA (Hons) Performing Arts at the University of South Wales. Her main preoccupation as artist, researcher and

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educator is exploring how play and experimentation through the arts can lead to positive changes, big and small, in our everyday lives. She is particularly interested in clowning and live performance, as well as creating work that combines other disciplines such as film, puppetry, visual art and walking.

## **Prof Kevin Mills (University of South Wales)**

### **'Plot and Tell' / Welsh Perspectives Panel**

'Plot and Tell' will explore aspects of the relationship between these two richly polyvalent terms. Crucially, both carry connotations of narration, location and secrecy. Drawing on the work of thinkers such as Doreen Massey, Michel de Certeau and Paul Ricoeur, as well as George Ewart Evans, 'Plot and Tell' will attempt to depict storytelling as a mobile economy of overt and covert exchanges between teller, tale, and territory. Its aim will be to show that place and story are necessarily co-implicated and co-dependent.

(for Prof Kevin Mills' biography see above Welsh Perspectives panel)

## **Peter Stephenson**

### **'Croesi'r Terfynau / Crossing the Boundary'**

Croesi'r Terfynau / Crossing the Boundary, is named after a story by Ifan Gruffydd, bardd gwlad and farmhand from Llangristiolus, who told how his mother forbade him to cross the invisible boundary beyond the church, for on the other side lived the fairies, who were known to steal away young boys like Ifan and keep them for a year and a day. Ifan, of course, is both scared and intrigued by those on the other side. These themes of visible and invisible walls in the landscape, and encounters with the Otherworld who inconveniently try to cross those boundaries, are rife throughout Welsh folk tales, from the many stories of the Lady of the Lake to arguments over who owns the land. This paper tells the story of what happened when these tales were told in America late last year, where the subject of wall-building was on everyone's lips. Follow the Welsh diaspora from New York to Appalachia, meet Fanny the Cardiff Barmaid, the American Post Tortoise, the Lady-boys of the Mynydd, Siani Pob Man of Cei Bach, and the Lincolnshire gentleman who wanted to build a castle on a Welsh mountain.

Peter is a book illustrator, storyteller, writer, folklorist, film maker, folk artist, crankie-maker, artist-book maker, curator of Aberystwyth Storytelling Festival, organiser of Story Nights at Medina, inspired by the art of visual storytelling. He is the author and illustrator of Welsh Folk Tales and Ceredigion Folk Tales in the ongoing History Press series. He lives in Llanbadarn Fawr where he wanders the old Welsh tramping roads, listening to anyone happy to tell him a tale and share a cake.

## **Provocation 1**

**Susan Richardson**

### **'Writing in Cold Blood: Thirty Ways of Looking at the Sea'**

This presentation/performance will draw on my current role as poet-in-residence with the Marine Conservation Society, and my experience of writing poems, and devising/facilitating workshops, for its Thirty Threatened Species project. Of the thirty vulnerable, endangered and critically endangered species on whom I've been focusing, two-thirds are fish and reptiles, and my presentation will examine the challenges that have arisen in the course of writing about these cold-blooded creatures who mostly live deep underwater, out of sight. How has the fish-and-reptile-themed writing process compared with creating poetry about marine mammals who periodically appear at the sea's surface, and pelagic seabirds who fly above it, and what has been the impact on the poems' form and language? The session will include performances of several of my commissioned Thirty Threatened Species poems, due to be published as a collection in 2018, as well as ocean-related work from my previous three collections, both to illustrate its evolution and to generate discussion about poetry's role in helping to raise awareness of endangered marine creatures and their ravaged habitats.

Susan Richardson is a poet, performer and educator, whose third collection, 'Skindancing', themed around human-animal metamorphosis and both our intimacy with, and alienation from, the wild and our animal selves, was published by Cinnamon Press in 2015. She is currently poet-in-residence with both the Marine Conservation Society and the global animal welfare initiative, World Animal Day. Susan has performed her work throughout the UK, for organisations such as WWF and Friends of the Earth, on BBC 2, Radio 4 and at Universities both nationally and internationally. She is poetry editor of Zoomorphic magazine and her fourth collection of poetry, themed around endangered marine species, will be published in 2018.

## **Provocation 2**

**Dr Aparna Sharma and Dr Lisa Lewis presented by Dr Helen Davies**

### **'Sacred Places in the Welsh and Khasi Cultural Dialogues'**

This paper will explore approaches to investigating history through art-making around the 'sacred'. It will focus on the creative practice research project 'Welsh and Khasi Cultural Dialogues', which examines the shared cultural history of the Welsh and the Khasi people of northeast India. The scope of this project involves examination of Welsh Missionary activity in the Khasi hills (from 1841), the drive for an indigenous revivalism through organizations such as Ka Seng Khasi (Khasi cultural society) that is geared to assertion of indigenous religion and culture as a counterpoint to colonialism, and the

persistence of both, albeit with shifting intensities, within the contemporary cultural landscape. As artists we are interested to investigate the dialogue between different modes of religious practice and their particular configurations of the sacred. The Khasi religion, Ka Niam Khasi, is separate from the Hindu religion practiced throughout India. Western (Christian) analyses of Khasi religion have defined it as animistic, while indigenous theologians have proclaimed it to be monotheistic, with reference to a single deity in the masculine, feminine and in the plural (Jyrva 2011; Khongkiam, 2012). The term Khasi is a compound of two, 'kha' (descended from) and 'si' (an ancient mother) (Bareh, 1997), and Khasi society is matrilineal. Both feminine and masculine aspects are present in Khasi burial rituals and customs, which involve monoliths and memorial stones, and these stones - many of them situated in sacred groves, characterize the topography of the Khasi Hills. Khasi sacred places are understood and revered in relation to the stories, both mythological and familial, that underpin the sense of sacred place. In this paper we share how our research seeks to engage and trouble the boundaries between the colonial and indigenous sacred places.

The 'Welsh and Khasi Cultural Dialogues: An Interdisciplinary Arts and Performance Project' team are: Dr Lisa Lewis, Reader in Theatre and Performance and Co-Director Centre for Media and Culture in Small Nations, University of South Wales; Dr Aparna Sharma, Associate Professor, Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance, University of California Los Angeles; Dr Helen Davies, Senior Research Assistant, University of South Wales; Professor Desmond Kharmawphlang, folklorist and poet, North Eastern Hill University, India; and Gareth Bonello, PhD researcher, USW.

### **Provocation 3**

**Catrin James/Dr Emily Underwood-Lee**

#### **'The Modern Story of Orchards and Cider Making in Wales'**

This presentation will explore how stories of apples, cider making and orchards in Wales can give a sense of the intangible heritage which shapes our relationship to the places we inhabit and put down roots. It will draw on stories collected as part of the 'The Heritage of Orchards & Cider Making in Wales' project, a two year programme of work funded by the Heritage Lottery fund and carried out by the Welsh Perry and Cider Society in partnership with the George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling.

Catrin is the Project Associate for 'The Heritage of Orchards & Cider Making in Wales' project partnered with the George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling and The Welsh Perry & Cider Society. Catrin is an Archivist who previously worked on the 'Transforming Tate Britain: Access & Archives' project which took the largest archive of British art in the world and made it

accessible to national and international online audiences, through an ambitious programme of digitisation, learning and participation.

Emily Underwood-Lee is Research Fellow at the George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling. Her research focuses on performance, autobiographical stories and the body in a variety of contexts including feminist performance art, narratives of illness, performance and the maternal, and performance and disability. Emily is Lead Investigator on the Heritage of Orchards and Cider Making in Wales project for the University of South Wales.

## **Provocation4**

**Prof Sioned Davies**

### **'Keeping The Stories Alive - The Mabinogion Landscape'**

This illustrated talk will focus mainly on the medieval Welsh stories known as the Four Branches of the Mabinogi. After a brief introduction contextualising the tales, it will be shown how the landscape of Wales is an integral part of their fabric. Both real and otherworld locations will be analysed. It will be argued that the tales' onomastic elements are used as powerful mnemonic devices which are an important part of the art of the medieval story-teller. Moreover, the place-names in the tales have constituted a powerful guarantee for the perpetuation of tradition – they are a constant reminder of the significance of a place and the tales connected with it. As such, the Mabinogion landscape is a means by which the stories are kept alive today.

Sioned Davies is Chair of Welsh and Head of the School of Welsh at Cardiff University. Her recent publication *The Mabinogion* (2008), and *Canbyll Marchogyon: cyd-destunoli Peredur* (2000).

## **Session Chairs**

### **Prof Hamish Fyfe**

Hamish Fyfe is Professor of the Arts and Society at the University of south Wales. He is Director of the George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling. He has worked as a teacher, actor, and researcher in a variety of contexts and worked for twenty years in Belfast, Northern Ireland before taking up his post at the University of South Wales in 2004. Hamish has a long track record in collaborative, applied research and knowledge exchange activities.

### **Dr Alice Entwistle**

Alice Entwistle is Director of the humanities Research Institute at the University of South Wales. Her research interests lie in the field of Anglo-American poetry, especially 20th century (mainly postwar) poetics, and women's writing. She is particularly interested in the construction of voice and identity, and in the relationship between poetry and place, as represented in the work of the later twentieth century woman poet, especially in Wales, but also in Scotland and Ireland. She is also interested in letters and letter-writing, and in the nature of literary influence.

### **Dr Pat Ryan**

Pat Ryan is Research Fellow at the George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling. He works as a storyteller, doing performances, workshops, training others in the uses of storytelling (teachers, classroom assistants, library staff, parents and grandparents, footballers, coaches, etc). His areas of expertise include Storytelling; Folklore; Children's Literature; Literacy; Cognitive Studies in relation to Oral Narrative, Storytelling and Story Listening.

### **Prof Mike Wilson**

Mike Wilson joined Loughborough University in September 2014 as Professor of Drama, having previously been Dean of Research and the Graduate School and Professor of Drama at Falmouth University. Before that he was Head of Research at the Cardiff School of Creative and Cultural Industries, University of Glamorgan, where he also ran two research centres. He gained his PhD from the University of Exeter in 1997 for a study of the performance of oral narrative traditions amongst teenagers in Britain and Ireland. He is a member of the Programme Advisory Boards for the RCUK's programme on the Digital Economy (led by EPSRC) and the AHRC's programmes on Digital Transformations and Connected Communities. He is also a member of the AHRC Strategic Reviewers Group and Chair the British Council's Arts and Humanities Panel for the Researcher Links and Institutional Links Programme (Newton Fund).

### **Dr Steve Killick**

Steve is Visiting Fellow at the George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling. Steve Killick works as Clinical Psychologist and as a Storyteller. He has a background in the NHS and in education and now works in independent practice. He is particularly interested in the uses of storytelling in education and psychological therapies. He has worked with Taffy Thomas, The First UK Storytelling Laureate, to develop ideas about how stories and storytelling can develop emotional literacy in schools and they are currently involved in a new project, 'Home Truths' looking at the value of family storytelling. He has also been involved with the Fostering Network in several projects using storytelling. This work has included the 'Men Who Care' project and 'Dylan's Story' which were involved in helping give voice to the experiences of male foster carers and birth children of foster carers respectively. He also has been involved in training foster carers in traditional storytelling skills as a way of helping foster carers develop attachment relationships and emotional literacy and resilience in foster children. He also has organised, with Alette Willis of the University of Edinburgh, and in association with GEECS, 'The Well at the World's End' – a series of symposia about 'storytelling, health and well-being' which aims to promote discussion between researchers and practitioners in this area.

### **Dr Roiyah Saltus**

Roiyah Saltus is a Sociologist and her research incorporates critical race theory, feminism, community development theory, and critical perspectives in health, social policy and practice. Her abiding research interest is rooted in intersectionality, in particular, the interplay and impact of, gender, age and social class as experienced by racialised and minority ethnic population groups. More recently, she has begun to examine the ethics of researching 'race', and ethnicity, and to explore intersectionality as linked to poverty, social exclusion and location in Wales. Roiyah Saltus is Principal Research Fellow in the Faculty of Life Sciences and Education at the University of South Wales.

### **Dr Emily Underwood-Lee**

(see Dr Emily Underwood-Lee's biography see above 'Modern Story of Orchards and Cider Making in Wales' presentation)

## **Plenary respondents:**

### **Denis Lennon**

Denis Lennon is a PhD candidate at the University of South Wales. His thesis is titled 'Breathing through the text: Investigating the Role of Breathing Work in Twentieth and Twenty-first Century Approaches to Speaking and Acting Shakespeare's Text'. Denis organised the George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling's 2016 annual symposium 'Storytelling and Justice' and coordinated

the Centre's nominations for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award in 2016 and 2017.

### **Dr Jodie Allinson**

Jodie Allinson is a lecturer in Drama in the Faculty of Creative Industries, University of South Wales, where she teaches both practical and theoretical classes in twentieth and twenty-first century performance at undergraduate and masters level. In 2011 Jodie completed a PhD entitled *Approaches to Multimedia Theatre: Theory, Practice, Pedagogy*, in which she wrote about the creative and training processes of practitioners working across the disciplines of theatre, dance and video, as well as the pedagogy of interdisciplinary performance practice. Since completing her PhD her research themes have been interdisciplinary working practices, the nature and process of artistic collaboration, multimedia theatre practice, theatre and ecology, and performance and landscape. Underpinning all of these areas is a broader investigation into the interconnected relationship between language, cognition, body and space, as evident in the learning processes and development of performers and artists.

### **Beyond the Border**

Beyond the Border is a charity which exists to create, encourage and promote traditional storytelling for contemporary audiences. Their vision is to 'bring the world to Wales, and take Wales to the world'. Their biennial international festival of storytelling is the cornerstone of their work, and in addition they run events and projects year-round to build audiences for storytelling and to communicate its power to entertain, transform and inform people's lives.

# How to find us

All events take place at the Atrium, Cardiff School of Creative and Cultural Industries, Adam Street, Cardiff, CF24 2XF.

## **By train**

Our Atrium building is right at the heart of the city. Atrium is a short walk from Cardiff Queen Street station or Cardiff Central station.

## **By coach**

Cardiff is served by regular coaches from London, West Wales, the North, Midlands and South West England. There is also a direct service from Heathrow, Gatwick and Bristol Airports. The coach station is a short walk from Atrium.

## **By air**

Cardiff International Airport is 11 miles from the city centre and is serviced by regular bus and rail links. London's Heathrow airport is about two-and-a-half hour drive away and there is also an airport at Bristol.

## **By car**

Travelling by car, it can be reached from junctions 29, 32 or 33 of the M4. There is a large car park opposite the Atrium Building on Adam Street. The **postcode is CF24 2FN**.

# Where to stay

You can search and book accommodation online at <http://www.visitcardiff.com/accommodation>. The Atrium is located in central Cardiff and is within walking distance of most city centre hotels.

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