



International Literary Translation and Creative Writing Summer School

19–24 July 2020

Online

This year's summer school, run by the British Centre for Literary Translation in partnership with The National Centre for Writing, featured language-specific workshops in Danish, Dutch, French, and Norwegian in addition to multilingual workshops for prose and theatre. We also ran a workshop strand designed to train mid-career/experienced literary translators to run their own workshops in their home countries. The event took place online this year via Zoom and YouTube and we therefore adjusted the programme slightly to fit the new format. We spent a lot of time on the lead up to the summer school with our workshop leaders, ensuring they were comfortable using Zoom and working in such a different way. We are incredibly proud of how the event went and I hope you will get a sense of how successful it was in the feedback later in the report.

We received 200 applications for the Summer School this year and offered places to 65 of the applicants. Translators took part from across the UK, Ireland, France, Germany, Denmark, Norway, Belgium, the Netherlands, the USA, Canada, Singapore, Indonesia, Brazil, Mexico, South Korea, and India.

The Summer School authors gave a reading from their work in the original language during the opening session on the first morning of the summer school, then for the rest of the week the groups worked closely with the authors and workshop leaders on a consensus translation which they presented to the other groups on the final afternoon.

As well as engaging with literary translation workshops, all participants took part in two creative writing sessions, led by the authors, Sarah Bower and Nick Bradley. The Summer School also consisted of a variety of plenary sessions, short talks, lectures and social events. The plenary sessions, including the authors panel, were also open to the public. Much of this content is now available on our YouTube channel and the links are below:

The Collaboration Game

What goes into actively 'publishing' translated fiction? Can the collaboration between translators and publishers – on which the publishing of international literature depends and which has transformed in the last ten to fifteen years – be developed further, especially in the post-Covid world?

Renowned editor Bill Swainson chaired this publishers panel with Katharina Bielenberg (MacLehose Press), Anne Meadows (Granta Books) and Samuel McDowell (Charco Press)

<https://youtu.be/aHCmWtb8jyU>

Summer School Authors' Panel: Four European Fiction Writers Discuss Their Writing and Translation Experience

Chaired by writer and translator Kyoko Yoshida, this all-female panel of Sanneke van Hassel, Christina Hesselholdt, Pascale Kramer, and Mona Høvring looked at their literary influences, writing processes and experience of being translated.

<https://youtu.be/bc8uAp6int4>

Translation in Theatre

Theatre translator William Gregory spoke to Sam Pritchard (Associate Director – International, Royal Court), Anthony Simpson-Pike (Associate Director, The Gate Theatre) and Trine Garrett (Creative Director, Foreign Affairs Theatre Company).

In a rare opportunity to talk with three directors whose work – and the work of the theatre companies they represent – regularly includes plays in translation, William Gregory explored the role of the translator in the theatre-making process, from choosing a play to begin with, all the way to putting it before an audience.

<https://youtu.be/kFKD3s6rY0o>

Getting started in literary translation, Jen Calleja

<https://youtu.be/mY5RvWnrL8c>

The Writing of Translations and Memory: Bridging Communities Affected by Past Conflict, Cecilia Rossi and Lucila Cordone

<https://youtu.be/LGONnzUtY7Y>

What makes a good translation? Katy Derbyshire

<https://youtu.be/R2EaeAy3wAs>

Support for literary translators, Will Forrester (English PEN), Jozef van der Voort (Emerging Translators Network), Catherine Fuller (Translators Association) and Sarah Bower (Emerging Translator Mentorships)

<https://youtu.be/IgCYQOlaFfQ>

Translating outside the lines, Jeremy Tiang

<https://youtu.be/jnFVfngxzpo>

Networks and communities in literary translation, Rosalind Harvey

<https://youtu.be/sUJ3wNW-LY0>

High Fidelity: Always True To You, Darling, In My Fashion, George Szirtes

<https://youtu.be/LEHIFfSfqCw>

BCLT Summer School Evening Lecture

Translation as Storytelling, Susan Bernofsky

Translating is always a sort of storytelling, a way of giving an account of a reading of a work. In retranslating classic literary works, the translator's story becomes a key factor in the interpretation of the work. In this talk, Susan discussed her approach to the translation of several works from the German canon, including Thomas Mann's novel *The Magic Mountain*.

<https://youtu.be/BnPNXtdMKkQ>

66% of participants at the summer school completed the post-event survey. 100% of those that completed the survey stated that they would recommend the summer school to other literary translators. Here is some feedback from those that took part:

“It has given me clear guidance on the steps I need to take to make a start in literary translation, as well as very valuable guided practice in the translation process itself...I can't think of any possible improvements - I felt that you had all thought through every detail of the week and planned it very carefully.”

Sally Axon, 2020 French-English Workshop

“Language-specific tips will be useful in self-editing my work in the future. I've learned more about the Dutch translation 'scene' - and how it differs from the Flemish networks. The plenary talks also broadened my perspectives and approach to literary translation. Overall, I feel a new energy and motivation to continue working on my career as a literary translator...Great job guys! You pulled off a fantastic week under very strange circumstances. Not only was it as inspirational as an onsite summer school, but it also offered a certain kind of 'respite' from the current crazy times! A space to let us explore our creativity, share ideas and encourage each other to move onwards and upwards with our dreams and passions.”

Johanna McCalmont, 2020 Dutch-English Workshop

“I am thrilled with the online experience and how professionally it was handled. Very impressed how you managed to also bring a social aspect to the course...BCLT Summer School was a fantastic experience. Professional. Inspirational. Fun. Exhausting. Enlightening.”

Eve Anderson, 2020 French-English Workshop

“Given me more confidence in my abilities. Has shown me different ways of approaching translation. Not to mention all the places to look for help, support and opportunities.”

Simon Clark, 2020 Norwegian-English Workshop

