



Conference Report

Archival Afterlives: Postwar Poetry in English

John Rylands Research Institute Conference 2017,

University of Manchester

27th – 29th June 2017

Funded by North West Consortium DTP and Arts Methods

‘Archival Afterlives: Post-war Poetry in English’ was a stimulating three day conference held at the John Rylands Library in Manchester. It brought together poets, PhD Students, academic researchers, publishers, and members of the public to question, discuss and interrogate the uses of literary archives. The generous funding Artsmethods was used to fund the printing of essential materials for the conference. The following report will outline some of the key outputs from the conference in order to indicate the extent of its impact.

Key Points of Discussion

The twelve panels contained papers focused on a wide range of literary topics and methodologies. Key points of intersection appeared throughout the conference, however, which led to stimulating and productive discussions at the end of each panel. Key points of discussion are outlined below:

- The Ethics of Archival Research
- Where do archives belong? Do archives have a ‘natural’ home?
- Problems with the marketization of literary archives
- The changing role of literary archives in the digital age
 - o In the field of poetry publishing – enormous and unmanageable volume of email correspondence.
 - o What to keep and what to destroy
 - o How to predict future research interests
- Challenges faced by researchers using archival material
 - o The relationship between archival material and historical context
- Ways in which the process of self-archiving influences the creative work being produced



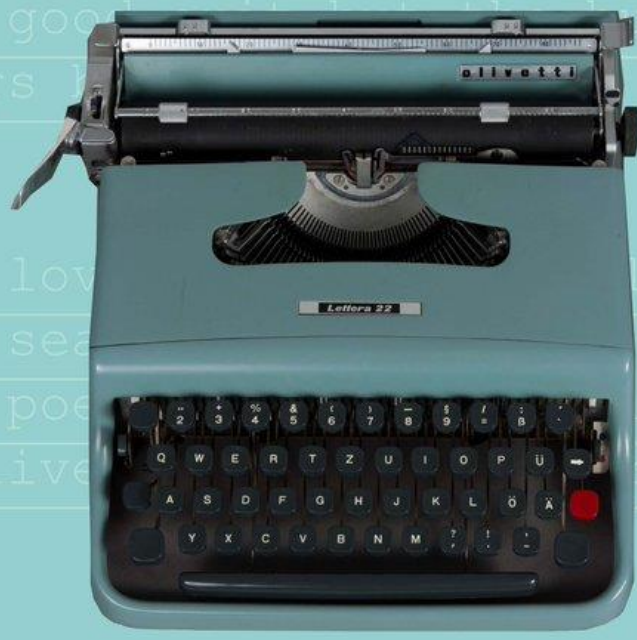
No death but the certificate.
 Not the marriage but the ring.
 Not the children but the photograph.
 Not the body but the lock of hair.
 Not the meal but the menu.
 Not birdsong but the feather.
 Not home but the lost key.

ARCHIVAL AFTERLIVES

Postwar Poetry in English
 The 2017 John Rylands Research Institute Conference

27-29 June, University of Manchester

Featuring Lucy Collins (UCD), Stephen Ennis (University of Texas, Austin),
 Rachel Foss (British Library), Peter Jay (Anvil Press),
 Robyn Marsack (Royal Literary Fund/University of Glasgow),
 Deryn Rees-Jones (Pavilion Press/University of Liverpool),
 Michael Schmidt (Carcanet Press), David Sutton (University of Reading),
With Poetry Readings by Tara Bergin, Elaine Feinstein, and Lorna Goodison



Design: laphealey.tumblr.com

Public Engagement

Several events within the conference schedule were open to the public in order to engage wider audiences with the ideas and discussions taking place. These events are detailed below.

Lorna Goodison Poetry Reading, International Anthony Burgess Foundation, Tuesday 27th June

The Conference Steering Committee worked alongside Carcanet Press to host Jamaican Poet Laureate Lorna Goodison's poetry reading at the International Anthony Burgess Foundation. In addition to many of the conference delegates and organisers, the event was also attended by members of the public. The event tied in with questions that were raised in the Conference's opening Plenary lecture, 'Global Diaspora of Modern Literary Archives', about how questions of place and nationhood impact and influence literature.



A promotional poster for Lorna Goodison's poetry reading. On the left is a portrait of Lorna Goodison in a blue top. The background is a gradient of yellow and green. Text on the right includes: "Lorna Goodison", "Poet Laureate of Jamaica", "LIVE IN MANCHESTER", "Tues 27 June 6pm - 8pm", "TICKETS £8 ON SALE NOW", "Limited availability via", "anthonyburgess.org", "carcanet.co.uk". At the bottom, a quote reads: "'One of the greatest!'" Kwame Dawes, Caribbean Writer. Logos for the International Anthony Burgess Foundation and CARCANET are in the bottom right corner.

Poetry Publishing Roundtable, John Rylands Library, Wednesday 28th June

The ‘Poetry Publishing Roundtable’ brought together four leading experts from the publishing industry: Peter Jay from Anvil Press, Michael Schmidt from Carcanet Press, Deryn Rees-Jones from Pavilion Poetry and Robyn Marsack from the Royal Literary Fund. These publishers shared their experiences and discussed the challenges and rewards of poetry publishing in the U.K. The event attracted poets, publishers, students considering careers in publishing, and many of the conference delegates. It offered a unique insight from the trade perspective which contrasted and complemented the academic focus of many of the conference’s panels.

The poster features a dark red background with a repeating pattern of faint, light-colored text: "Not the [blank] but the [blank]". At the top left is the University of Manchester logo (1824). At the top center is the North West Consortium Doctoral Training Partnership logo. At the top right is the "am @m" logo. The main title "POETRY PUBLISHING ROUNDTABLE" is in large white letters. Below it, the text reads: "The 2017 John Rylands Research Institute Conference", "28 June, John Rylands Library, 6-7:30 pm", and "Free event - Open to all". A central image shows a vintage teal typewriter. At the bottom, it says "Design: laphealey.tumblr.com".



Conference Dinner and Poetry Reading, Irish World Heritage Centre, Thursday 29th June

The conference closed with a reception, poetry reading and dinner at the Irish World Heritage Centre. Readings were given by poets Elaine Feinstein and Tara Bergin.

