

**Press release**

**For immediate release: Monday 1 April 2019**

## **Take a writing adventure with us! Julia Darling Travel Fellowship 2019 opens for entries**

New Writing North and the Julia Darling Trust are on the look-out for the next winner of the Julia Darling Travel Fellowship.

Worth £2000, the fellowship will award one published writer from the North of England a period of travel for writing, research and inspiration.

The Julia Darling Travel Fellowship is now open for entries until Wednesday 1 May.

The prize celebrates the memory of writer Julia Darling, whose wide-ranging work included the novels *Crocodile Soup* (1998, 2015) and *The Taxi Driver's Daughter* (2003); poetry collections *Sudden Collapses in Public Places* (2003) and *Apology for Absence* (2004); and plays for stage and radio, *Eating the Elephant* (1996), *Personal Belongings* (2002) and *Appointments* (2005).

Founded by Julia's friends and family in 2015, the fellowship is managed by New Writing North. It is inspired by Julia's love of travel and by the appreciation that she had of writing away from home, while reflecting her passion for encouraging other writers.

Each year, the fellowship is awarded by a panel made up of Julia Darling's writer friends and family. This year's judges are the poets Colette Bryce and Linda France along with Florrie Darling, Julia's daughter, and Josie Darling, Julia's sister.

So far the award has supported four writers to undertake creative journeys to write and research new work. In 2015, Chloe Daykin travelled to Norway to research her latest children's novel, *The Boy Who Hit Play*. In 2016, Michelle Green travelled to Hayling Island to work on a project, *Hayling Island: Stories at Sea Level*, which encompassed short stories, spoken word and digital mapping. In 2017, Emma McGordon won the fellowship to research queer culture in San Francisco. In 2018, Caroline Hawkrige returned to Zimbabwe for the first time since she emigrated in 1966, aged nine.

The Julia Darling Travel Fellowship is open to novelists, poets and playwrights. Entrants must be over the age of 18, live and work in the North of England and have at least one professionally produced or published work to their name.

### **Judges' comments:**

**Colette Bryce said:** "I'm delighted to be co-judging the Julia Darling Travel

Fellowship in 2019. Julia Darling knew very well how travel can replenish an artist's image bank, and this prize offers that gift to a writer each year as part of her positive legacy. I look forward very much to reading this year's proposals."

**Josie Darling said:** "I am very honoured to be a judge in this competition in my wonderful sister's name, and she would be so pleased."

**Florrie Darling said:** "Now that I am writing up my PhD alongside work and caring for three young children I understand, more than I ever did before, how vital it is to have time and space to write. It is an absolute privilege to be able to be able to remember and celebrate my wonderful mum by supporting other writers to have that space and to find inspiration away from their everyday surroundings."

**Linda France said:** "I'm very much looking forward to judging this year's Julia Darling Travel Fellowship, hoping to read some exciting proposals in the spirit of Julia's own work and practice – vibrant, surprising and relevant to how we're living now."

**For all media enquires, including high res images and interview requests, please contact Laura Fraine, Senior Marketing & Communications Manager at New Writing North [laurafraine@newwritingnorth.com](mailto:laurafraine@newwritingnorth.com) 0191 204 8850.**

## **Notes to Editors**

### **New Writing North**

New Writing North is the development agency for creative writing and reading in the North of England and is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation. It works in partnership with regional and national partners to produce a range of literary and performance activities including flagship projects such as The Northern Writers' Awards, the Gordon Burn Prize and Durham Book Festival. As a producer of new work, New Writing North commissions a wide range of writing from topical essays and publications to award-winning dance theatre productions, short films, live literature and broadcast projects.

New Writing North specialises in developing and investing in writers of all ages and acts as a dynamic broker between writers, producers, publishers and broadcasters across the creative industries. Current partners include BBC Radio 3, Channel 4 Drama, Faber & Faber, Northumbria University and Durham University.

### **Julia Darling Travel Fellowship**

The fellowship can be used to fund travel and accommodation in the UK and internationally. The fellowship will also support group applications by writers who would like to undertake joint residential retreats (something that Julia valued).

The fellowship is open to novelists, poets and playwrights over the age of 18, who

live and work in the north of England who have at least one professionally produced or published work to their name. The fellowship is for activity that takes place between July 2019 and June 2020.

To apply writers must write a brief description (up to 500 words) of how they would like to use the resource to advance their creative work, a short biography (up to 300 words) and state why now would be a good time for them to receive support (up to 300 words). To apply visit [www.newwritingnorth.com](http://www.newwritingnorth.com). Entry is by online submission only.

The Julia Darling Travel Fellowship opens for applications on: Monday 1 April 2019 and the deadline for submissions is Wednesday 1 May 2019.

### **Judges' Biographies**

**Colette Bryce** is an Irish poet who lives in Newcastle upon Tyne. Her latest collection, *The Whole & Rain-domed Universe* (2014), which draws on her experience of growing up in Derry during the Troubles, received a Ewart-Biggs Award in memory of Seamus Heaney. *Selected Poems* (2017) won the Pigott Prize for Poetry 2018. A new collection will be published by Picador in 2020.

**Josie Darling** is Julia Darling's younger sister. She is a clinical nurse specialist in palliative care, and an acupuncturist. She has four children (mostly grown up) and lives in Brighton. She has always loved reading and creative writing and improv. She has written some plays and short stories which she has been successful with. She has written a novel she is not happy with and meets once a week in Waterstones Bookshop to write with friends in their Nibbles and Scribbles group. She is in an improv group called the Short and Girlies, and another one called The Mirthworms.

**Florrie Darling**, Julia's youngest daughter, will be joining the judging panel for the third time this year. Florrie had many inspirational journeys with Julia, from riding horses across Welsh mountains to three months in Bali and Australia while Julia was writing her novel *Crocodile Soup*. Growing up with a writer as a mother, she also understands the need for creative space, whether that is in a cupboard under the stairs or in a remote cottage by the sea. Florrie now works at Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art co-producing creative social action projects with teenagers and is completing a PhD on the social value of participatory art for young people at Newcastle University.

**Linda France** lives in Northumberland. She has published eight poetry collections, including *The Toast of the Kit-Cat Club* (Bloodaxe 2005) and *Reading the Flowers* (Arc 2016). She edited *Sixty Women Poets* (Bloodaxe 1993) and won the 2013 National Poetry Competition.

