

# NEW WRITING NORTH

## Collective poem invites contributions for a brighter day

*Imagine that we have the chance to begin again. What kind of world would you want to wake up in?*

**DAWN CHORUS**, a new collective sound poem by poet Linda France and sound artist Christo Wallers, is inviting spoken word contributions from the public.

Introduced as 'A Collective Sound Poem for the Beginning of the World', the poem takes its inspiration from birdsong at dawn, a symbol that the long night is over and a new day has arrived.

Dawn Chorus is being created as part of Linda France's Writing the Climate residency at New Writing North and Newcastle University, with funding from Arts Council England's National Lottery Fund. The audio poem will premiere at Durham Book Festival, a Durham County Council festival produced by New Writing North, in October 2021.

The collaborative audio project follows on from [Murmuration](#), which was created by Linda France, artist Kate Sweeney and almost 500 participants in 2020. It has been shared internationally and viewed more than 12,000 times.

People are now invited to write and record a few lines based on simple starting prompts, which will be considered for inclusion in Dawn Chorus. Lines can be received in any audio format until 2 August 2021. The project is open to people from anywhere in the world to send contributions in English or their native language.

**Linda France writes:** *"Ornithologists believe that birds singing at dawn in springtime are staking a claim to their territory before they choose a mate. They might simply be glad to have survived the long dark night. The light is a signal to begin again so they can just be birds in the world."*

*Imagine we have the chance to begin again, to start over – like the birds waking up to a new dawn, singing their hearts out. What sort of world do you want to wake up in? How would you greet it? What would your first words be? How would you sing yourself and the world awake?*

*What words might best express your wonder at a chance of life and your dedication to the unfolding day? You're not singing 'about' the future – you're already there – here – making it happen – in the present tense."*

### How to take part

For this new collaborative audio project, you are invited to write, speak and record a few lines or a short verse and send it in to be considered for inclusion in our dawn

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chorus for the beginning of the world.

Choose one of these prompts to start your lines with: 'Today...', 'I am...', 'We are...' or 'Here...'.

Linda France and Christo Wallers will create a polyphonic soundscape from the submissions, incorporating music and birdsong. They are listening out for oral poetry, spoken word, sounds uttered with the ear in mind. The finished piece will incorporate as many contributions as possible in a morning chorus for a planet waking up to better times.

**WRITING THE CLIMATE** is led by Linda France as part of her climate writing residency at New Writing North and Newcastle University. The residency began in 2020 after both organisations declared a Climate Emergency in 2019. New funding from Arts Council England now allows Linda to build on the success of the original programme with a varied programme of activity that encourages engagement at all levels.

As well as Dawn Chorus, the public part of the project includes:

- A monthly **Writing Hour**: an online experiment in shared writing time, where people can come together simply to write
- A **Climate Reading Group**: where participants discuss a contemporary work with an environmental theme
- **How to Start Writing the Climate**: a series of workshops for both established and emerging writers who are interested in turning their attention to the climate crisis
- A podcast series, **In Our Element**: featuring special guests, poems and reflection, to be broadcast weekly in the lead up to COP26

Alongside this, Linda is also conducting her own research, including being an observer at the North of Tyne Citizen's Assembly on Climate Change, and writing poetry for a new collection to be published by New Writing North in 2022.

**Find out more and contribute your lines by 2 August 2021 at  
[NewWritingNorth.com/Dawn-Chorus](http://NewWritingNorth.com/Dawn-Chorus)**