

## Ledbury Poetry Critics – Call for Applications

Deadline: 15th March 2021

### **A national programme to encourage diversity in poetry reviewing culture aimed at emerging critical voices**

In 2017, and in collaboration with Ledbury Poetry Festival, Ledbury Poetry Critics launched, offering a year-long intensive mentorship scheme for 8 emerging poetry reviewers of colour: Dzifa Benson, Srishti Krishnamoorthy-Cavell, Mary Jean Chan, Jade Cuttle, Sarala Estruch, Maryam Hessavi, Nasser Hussain and Jennifer Lee-Tsai. In 2019, we selected four more critics: Victoria Adukwei Bulley, Joanna Lee, Sarah-Jean Zubair, and Stephanie Sy-Quia. These critics have since published reviews in The Guardian, The Telegraph, The New Statesman, the Times Literary Supplement, Poetry Review, Poetry Wales, Poetry London and many other magazines and journals.

In 2021, with generous funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council, Ledbury Poetry Critics intends to extend our programme and offer an intensive, individualised mentorship opportunity to new critics based in the UK. In our efforts to nourish a strong community of critics, this strand will exist alongside workshops and seminars, supported by our partner organisations, that will be accessible to the wider public. The mentorship programme will culminate in a Critics Residency as part of Ledbury Poetry Festival. Mentorship has been foundational for LPC since the initiative was founded by Sandeep Parmar (Liverpool) and Sarah Howe (King's College London) in 2017, and has since been joined by Vidyan Ravinthiran (Harvard), Catherine Gander (Maynooth), Janine Bradbury (York St John), and Alycia Pirmohamed (Liverpool).

### **The programme and application:**

Over the course of the Ledbury Poetry Critics scheme, you will be assigned a poetry critic mentor with experience reviewing for national journals, magazines (print and online) and broadsheet newspapers. This year, the LPC team is delighted to be joined by mentors Sandeep Parmar, Sarah Howe, Vidyan Ravinthiran, Jane Yeh, Will Harris, Jay G Ying, Vahni Capildeo, Kit Fan, Nisha Ramayya, Jeremy Noel-Tod, Dzifa Benson, Jade Cuttle, Dave Coates, Khairani Barokka, Leo Boix and Seán Hewitt.

You may already be an emerging critic with a few published reviews, have some or no critical or academic background, or you might be strongly committed to becoming a poetry critic in the very near future and keen to explore issues of diversity in British poetry.

### **The scheme involves:**

- At least five one-to-one mentorship meetings (to be conducted virtually) with one of our mentors
- Critical feedback on the writing of poetry criticism and on a poetry review between April 2021 and December 2021. These reviews will be pitched to the editors of the Times Literary Supplement and Poetry School
- The opportunity to build a community with other critics of colour through informal virtual meet-ups and the scheme's "buddy system"
- Future advancement opportunities, such as undertaking one of LPC's 10 Editor-in-Residence positions across our partner publications or becoming an LPC mentor
- An online resource library where critics can share information

To apply, please include

- A covering letter of up to 500 words expressing your interest and any experience in poetry reviewing. In this letter, please outline why you feel you would benefit from participating in Ledbury Poetry Critics
- A brief sample review of a recent poetry collection, pamphlet or live poetry performance (by any contemporary poet) of up to 800 words. This review may be published or unpublished.

For applicants with additional accessibility requirements, or whose participation would be hampered without financial aid, the Ledbury Critics programme is pleased to offer additional funding in the event of their successful application. Please outline any accessibility needs in your covering letter.

Send your applications and/or any preliminary enquiries to Professor Sandeep Parmar via email [Sandeep.Parmar@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:Sandeep.Parmar@liverpool.ac.uk). Due to remote working conditions, we cannot consider applications sent by hardcopy at this time.

Please note that this scheme is unfortunately only open to poets/critics resident in the UK. Travel and accommodation as well as costs associated with mentorship and residency/events are entirely covered.