

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE USE

20th ALDEBURGH POETRY FESTIVAL • 7–9 NOVEMBER 2008

This prestigious event is renowned for mixing the world-class and well-established with neglected and rising-talent poets in programmes of rare ingenuity and international scope. It all takes place in the beautiful Suffolk seaside town of Aldeburgh, and this year will see 22 poets taking part in 44 events (13 of them entirely free) during the ultimate annual celebration of contemporary poetry.

Why is Aldeburgh Poetry Festival the UK's leading annual poetry event?

- Because it's the complete poetry weekend – **22 poets, 44 events** (13 entirely free), in a **60-hour poetry-athlon**;
- Because every year it attracts the UK's largest and most discerning poetry audiences;
- Because of Aldeburgh, Suffolk's beautifully compact seaside town with its big cultural reputation.

Who's Coming in 2008?

Director Naomi Jaffa recommends essential Festival discoveries, all reading at Aldeburgh for the first time:

- **Clive James** – wit, intellect and entertainment guaranteed from the broadcasting luminary who has also been a devoted and accomplished poet since the 1960s. He launches his new collection *Angels Over Elsinore* on Saturday 8 November at 4pm.
- **Antjie Krog** – winner of every major literary prize her native South Africa can offer and famed for her taboo-breaking poems and on-stage intensity. An outspoken political and social commentator (with lots to say about gender issues), her 'conversation' with **Clive James** about *Poetry in the Culture* could be fiery...
- **Yi Sha** – one of China's most controversial young poets whose work has been condemned by the literary mainstream for not following his culture's poetic tradition. Yi Sha makes his UK debut at Aldeburgh, launching *Starve the Poets!* his first English publication outside China. He will co-read with his Australian translator Simon Patton.

more...



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- **David Kirby** and **Barbara Hamby** from Florida – husband and wife poets and brilliant live performers, offering exhilarating, insightful and often very funny accounts of life in both Europe and America.

Aldeburgh welcomes back its favourite Radio Four stand-up poet **Matt Harvey** with his new **Wondermentalist Cabaret** which will include 'The Adventures of Empath Man' (Matt's own superhero for our times), plenty of jazz knitting and scat origami from musician **Jerri Hart**, and party-pieces from Festival poets as they've never been seen before.

The weekend will also see the announcement of the winner of this year's **Jerwood Aldeburgh First Collection Prize** – £3,000 plus an invitation to read at next year's Festival – and a reading by last year's winner, **Tiffany Atkinson**.

Full programme details are available at www.thepoetrytrust.org

To book tickets, telephone the **Box Office 01728 687110** or online at www.aldeburgh.co.uk and follow link to Aldeburgh Poetry Festival.

For more information, for photographs, or to be put in touch with any of the poets, contact Judy Braggins on 01986 835950 or info@thepoetrytrust.org

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See over for Editors Notes





EDITORS NOTES

Aldeburgh Poetry Festival

The Aldeburgh Poetry Festival was set up in 1989 by poet, editor and teacher, Michael Laskey, and Naomi Jaffa has been Director since 1999. It has taken place annually for twenty years, drawing poets and audiences from across the UK and around the world. Today it is managed by The Poetry Trust – one of the UK's flagship poetry organisations – which in addition to the Festival, delivers a year-round programme of live events, creative education opportunities, courses, prizes, publications and from November 2008, a new digital platform The Poetry Channel. www.thepoetrytrust.org

Clive James was born in Australia in 1939 and has lived in England since 1962. A seminal TV broadcaster, he is the author of over twenty books, including novels, travel writing, essays, memoir, criticism and poetry. In 2003 he published a collected poems, *The Book of My Enemy*, and is launching *Angels Over Elsinore* at Aldeburgh.

www.clivejames.com

Yi Sha was born in 1966 in Chengdu, China and grew up in the Maoist era. He studied at Beijing Normal University and now works as an assistant university professor. A highly controversial poet in China, he has also published fiction and essays. *Starve the Poets* (2008), to be launched at Aldeburgh, is his first English publication outside China.

Antjie Krog was born on a farm in the Orange Free State, South Africa in 1952. Writing in Afrikaans as well as English, she has won every major South African literary prize. She has published eleven collections of poems, translations and non-fiction, most notably *Country of My Skull*, an account of the hearings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Barbara Hamby was born in New Orleans and raised in Honolulu. She teaches at Florida State University in Tallahassee, where she lives with her husband, the poet David Kirby. Her third collection, *Babel*, won the Donald Hall Prize in 2004, her fourth, *All-Night Lingo Tango*, will be published in Spring 2009.

<http://barbarahamby.com>

David Kirby was born in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Married to poet Barbara Hamby, he has taught all over America and in Europe and is now a Professor of English at Florida State University. He has published more than twenty books, most recently *The House on Boulevard St.: New and Selected Poems* (2007).

www.davidkirby.com

Matt Harvey was born in Cheshire in 1962 and now lives in Totnes. A Radio 4 regular, he can currently be heard on Saturday Live and also has a Desktop Poetry slot in the Saturday *Guardian's* 'Work' section. His collection *The Hole in the Sum of My Parts* (2005) is now in its third reprint.

www.mattharvey.co.uk

Full programme details available at www.thepoetrytrust.org

