

18:08:21 Worried about that, feel free to change your names or otherwise.

18:08:28 >>: Recording in progress.

18:09:00 HEATHER: Briefly, I am Heather and together with Sian and Luca of the Morgan Trust, with Kyra of Acts of translation and Sheryll from live captioning UK and the wonderful poets you can see, finned in front of me, Alycia, Colin and Iona Lee, it is wonderful to welcome you to the heart of this zoom room for this panel discussion and question and answer

18:09:28 Ent on applying for the Edwin Morgan Poetry Award, 2022. To ask, I guess Morgan called this serious, what we might not call serious but more important questions of refining, "in foundation the lovely oil of poetry". Pardon the metaphorical shift so early on,

18:09:45 In is not a sponsorship issue, but pragmatically for a moment at least, as usual with these events this is the beginning before the beginning. I have got a few house keeping things to run through before we get to the good stuff.

18:10:05 Firstly, as you will all know, this event is being recorded. Edited version of the event will be available via the Morgan Trust over the next few days.

18:10:07 It is also being live tweeted.

18:10:30 Secondly, to let you all know that the event is being live captioned with a warm thanks again to Sheryll and BSL interpreted, warm thanks to Kyra and Acts of Translation, you will see in the blue screen.

18:10:41 I will pause just in case you want to change screen settings at all to ensure access.

18:11:01 Thirdly the usual housekeeping, please do ensure for the duration of the event that you have your mics and cameras turned off. Welcome, we will have a panel discussion which I am excited for and then have time to turn to questions and as the event is rolling,

18:11:19 Please feel free to pop questions into the chat and either gesture to them as the panel discussions on-going or add them to a Q&A part of the event as the event sort of comes to its conclusion.

18:11:50 We will also have a short comfort break at 6:25 for 5 minutes and then resume the event after that. Before we turn to the promised panel discussion, I would like to say thanks to the Edwin Morgan Trust and the centre for poetic innovation at the universities which made it possible.

18:12:05 Many of you will be familiar with the information available about the awards on the Morgan Trust website but in case we are popping a refresher link into the chat bar kind of in the next few minutes so you can keep it bookmarked.

18:12:36 I keep saying it is important to thank people and it is sort of a sense I have such an event wouldn't about possible without the people that I have already thanked but such an event wouldn't about possible without the panel in front of you. I am happy to be here with these two brilliant poets whose work you should about very familiar and if not,

18:13:07 Do check them out before you apply for the Morgan Award, 2022. But, I am really happy to be here with Alycia, who I am just going to wilfully steal her bio, it is found poetry, a Canadian poet based in Scotland, also of hinge and faces that fed the wind and the collaborative lyric essay second memory.

18:13:32 Also co-founder of what is now called the Scottish bipod writers network, organisers of led free critics programme and much more. In 2020 she was awarded the Edwin Morgan Poetry Award and reading for this year's award wonderful to have you here.

18:13:59 To introduce and embarrass Colin, Colin, poet and lecturer, at Edinburgh, Glasgow Dundee triangle whose books volumes include 2 glove box, click and collect, swamp kiss you name it. Also the editor of the Edwin Morgan centenary collection. You can see a theme here perhaps?

18:14:05 And co-editor with Sam small, it all becomes art.

18:14:32 And many more. So Hi Alycia, Hi Colin. I thought we might start with a bit of a bricolage a bit of a challenge, on the event page the first and last questions that this poses, the idea of a portfolio, how do I select which poems should be in the collection?

18:14:38 How do I make sure that my selected poems speak to each other?

18:15:12 It is a difficult thing I think we all know sitting in a sea of drafts and pages and drafts and pages trying to work out how to whittle things down, to we will, in this case, it is 10 poems a maximum of 12 pages or if spoken aloud or recorded, 10, 12 ratio.

18:15:36 English, variants, English, Scotts and Gaelic are various language options, it is a concrete process, a visual process, a vocal process and a deeply emotional process I think. We have got a couple of telegrams about this one from the amazing Maria Fusco,

18:16:05 Who is one of the Morgan Awards nomination committee and I am not going to try and share my screen at this point but hopefully in the editing process, a slide will miraculously appear but, Maria has sort of written to say that ordering expanded forms of poetry such as the concrete or visual is a spatial and temporal process,

18:16:29 So she, her advice, so you all hear it tonight is to print it out, the work out, lay it on the floor – I know I use a wall and blue tack, which is not good for the point. Spend some time walking it, reading it out loud as you do. We have another longer telegram from the amazing Nadine,

18:16:49 A part of which also says: Ask yourself to get to the heart of your collection, like, to get to the heart of your collection, of what you want to say with it. Look at the poems, they are placing, they are titles and they are ordering to help you translate that to your readers.

18:17:11 She also says, on a practical note, print all your poems out and really look at them. In person, so it is a face-to-face interaction with the poems, group them by themes, learn about yourself and your work by reading the pages and placing them on your bedroom,

18:17:35 Kitchen, living room floor. It is a wonderful way to play and see the different ways you can structure the collection and just how big and impact placement can have. We have the two readers giving advice and wishing good luck. I think there is a thread through this.

18:18:03 This might be similar irrespective of the type of the poetry that each of us right, we are three different poets speaking tonight, concrete, innovative performance, link poetry, collaborative work. I read my stuff aloud when I am – to work out how it feels on the tongue and the logic of that.

18:18:23 Is there something you think about as well when you are pulling together a collection? Is this something you would give as prime advice to people, thinking of applying for this year's Morgan Awards?

18:18:44 ALCIA: I will start, jump in Colin if you have anything to add. Responding to what Maria and Nadine said, I agree that I think the whole idea of printing it out or blue tacking it is the process of thinking about the portfolio ho list I cannily, everybody is probably,

18:19:07 Holistically, everybody is probably, they have their own process, my process as a poet, I tend to write a poem as a singular peace and that piece exists on its own for a long time. It is interesting because I am putting together, I have just put together my first collection manuscript,

18:19:29 thinking about the echos, no longer is a piece created as a singular, like a singular poem, no longer can it exist that way, that it was processed to be. So I have to start thinking about how does this poem echo with what is next to it and something that comes a few pages later and how does it echo with the last poem in the collection.

18:19:40 Some words have to change from the poem because some of the threads are not apparent enough. Some of the repetitions don't feel deliberate enough.

18:20:08 Some of the echos, so I could capitalise on some of the echos a bit more. The idea of changing – in my particular process and you might be different, might be thinking in terms of projects and several things together. In my process, I have to think of a poem as it exists in an on-line journal and thinking about how is the narrative working with the

18:20:33 Poem next to it? How is that thread continuing throughout the portfolio? I think printing it out. Looking at them working on Word and in a child format, can help thinking about what structures visually you have next to each other. I notice that a lot of my poems use couplets,

18:20:46 Do I have one and then a block? How am I playing visually with the structure and the echos there? Yes, I will pause there for a minute.

18:21:11 COLIN: I couldn't agree more with what was said, the importance of paying attention to the individual work in relation to the sense of different kind of roots around or through or between poems. I love Alycia term "echos" I think there are other ways of thinking about that.

18:21:35 Thinking of attraction, how poems magnetically attract each other, that can be something in the language, I loved Heather's opening heart and heart. There are moments where there are raises or words that kind of seem to form a tension or attraction, sometimes resistance also like it can be that they are polarising rather than attracting poems together

18:21:41 And that can be a really kind of interesting dynamic of a collection to explore.

18:22:03 I have a kind of, like, like the best example I can think of was working with a student on their dissertation, written a series of really beautiful poems across semester and their plan was to kind of present these poems in the chronological order which n

which they were written,

18:22:30 it was a time based thing, semester of work. They kind of tracked a journey they had been on in terms of mental health. It worked but in one of the last meetings, I encouraged them to print them out and looking at them and think in terms of these kinds of ideas the echos attractions and things they hadn't expected to find in the poems that maybe link

18:22:54 Linked to them and connected them and things like that. They ended up finding an amazing idea of connectivity within the poems, some of the poems had been written in somewhere where lots of wi-fi and some no wi-fi. Ended up having the idea of connectivity to structure the collection,

18:23:15 1 bar was going to 1 bar, going to a collection that was 5 bars and thinking of it metaphorically in terms of what the poems were and the language in the poems and elevated and make the collection say a lot more than it would have in the chronological sequence.

18:23:37 HEATHER: There is something there about editing the poems in their singular units but how a poem changes and shifts as you allow it to articulate itself alongside its other poems and placing them out and walking them, I love the idea of walking the poetry,

18:24:01 Can really bring those lines out in different ways. So, yes, I wondered if either of you had further thoughts about that? We are edging towards the moment where there is a short 5-minute break in this panel, but just a few comments before we break for 5 minutes?

18:24:21 COLIN: Just one tiny thought, if you were doing - I do think it is important the printing out and walking around is lovely but not always necessary possible for someone, or desirable for everyone's aesthetic and it is possible to think about in a similar way,

18:24:42 The slippage between windows or screens on-line, whether you open them up as different files and then skip between them in a way, that might produce results but it is a slightly different way of thinking about it.

18:25:03 ALYCIA: I can add a thought responding to something that Colin said, about the temporal movement of the poems and placing them in order. One thing that I found really interesting is, in my manuscript a poem that was written in 2016 that I thought I didn't have any relationship to anymore.

18:25:27 Had new resonance when I put it next to newer poems. I think there is something interesting about you might connected to new work, it feels like this now, going back and the things that you have created in the past can make you look - even if you don't put all of them in or one of them.

18:25:34 It can make things stand out that you would never connect. That is based on the time of writing really.

18:25:55 HEATHER: Time of writing and time of editing, since we thinking about time. We will now take a 5-minute break and resume at 30 minutes past the hour. So thank you all and we will see you again very, very soon.

18:25:59 (Comfort break).

18:30:20 .

18:31:04 HEATHER: Welcome back, this is really exciting. I didn't

think I have ever had a break like this in an event of this sort and what it has allowed is for me to work out and consolidate my thinking around the conversations we have had and what I found amazing is that this idea of the moving and the rhythm of the poems really came out for me just in those

18:31:04 5 minutes.

18:31:29 I wondered then, because, you both know and many of us here will know that the awards this year are asking for a fewer poems than the original really demanding quantity of poems that were asked for, just to rest tear rate, it is 10 poems up to 12 pages or 12 minutes,

18:31:54 They are asking for digital sub submissions for page poetry, sound or video poems. So poem films in effect. I wondered Colin or Alycia, if you had any thoughts about that, Morgan worked across so many media in his work, family with the page poems that he was a visual poet,

18:32:24 A concrete poet, read the work and I wondered if you had any thoughts about the idea of presenting a selection of work in an alternate format. I feel awkward calling it alternate format. Those are two ways we think about poetry, but it is something, a Poetry Award doesn't seem to necessarily kind of speak to,

18:32:28 So much until now perhaps?

18:32:56 COLIN: I will go on there and then pass over to Alycia. I think it is really, really excite. I think a lot of the same principles maybe apply in terms of somehow creating that sort of outside perspective and being able to sort of look at the work from outside and think about how you might kind of structure and order and present and how the work speaks in

18:33:25 The way you want it to speak? Whether it is you know, whether it is a performance or a video work and maybe also think about possibly because we have been on a pause, think about questions of pause, questions of yes, where, where the kind of viewer or listener gains kind of perspective on and access to the sound file or the video.

18:33:56 I, there is a performance poet who isn't very well-known at all, called Jason Gave whose work I am interested in, he died of AIDS, but his work, he passed away at 33 I think. He, but he produced all these amazing performances and printed books of his performances as we will.

18:34:15 He included as part of the work the audience reactions. So he would actually, I mean he did make printed publications of his performances but included within that the kind of heckles and kind of audience reactions as a kind of part of the text of his poems.

18:34:42 Whether you are doing a sound file or whether you are doing something like that, I think it is just really interesting in terms of emphasis and where the poem is, whether the poem is in the event of the performance or just kind of thinking about the porousness and the opportunities of that kind of not quite knowing where the poem is.

18:35:11 ALYCIA: I would totally agree, I think it is really exciting. I think what it, having an award like this opening up to all these different forms or interdisciplinary forms or collaborative, like different kinds of like genre's coming together, it is really exciting because it means there is going to be more of

everything that's really important when

18:35:32 we think about the process of gate keeping in the industry the way poetry has been, taught or portrayed or the kind of, kind of way that we have encountered it, we of course, like for me, when I think about, living in the western world and encounter an educational environment,

18:35:51 There is a canon I supposed to about reading and supposed to know, but I think that when we open up the doors and invite more people to write in the way that suits their writing and their ideas, that is really exciting and that's what we need more of and it is just a way to invite,

18:36:15 Invite more people into this process. So that's my thought on opening the awards up. I think it is great and amazing. I also think that now because a lot, this award, I have seen it happening in a lot more publications or performances in general, I think we are seeing that artists are actually working in different modes anyway,

18:36:41 A lot of artist, like you mentioned Edwin Morgan and one of my favourite poets, working within a bodily space, it isn't just on the page for that poet. It also works almost as a metaphor, they become metaphors of each other and different themes or the things we are trying to express and it creates a richness.

18:37:01 So I think you are right Heather when you say, we are always encountering poetry through all these different ways and senses. I think a lot of these artists are playing within those things, even though the questions being read, are under more, what we are used to seeing,

18:37:11 Generally, but yes, our experience is of poetry are all of these things which is really great.

18:37:38 HEATHER: One of the things turning towards the, our kind of comrades in the zoom room is this, this is reminding me of something Colin that you said really earlier on, before we had a break, which was allowing the medium in which you write or the multiple media you write the spaces and time,

18:37:43 when you are writing to help infiltrate and form and reform the work.

18:37:52 This formative, a formative, informative process of letting the work mold your holding of it.

18:38:13 That is a really wonderful way of thinking across media as Alycia was speaking about, that interweaving but to allow the work to ask questions back of you is also one of those beautiful ways in which editing can take place, it involves giving something up.

18:38:38 Not to about scared to give something up to the poetry. If we were talking to people that are putting together poems, sitting amongst the sea of drafts, whether it is digital or awed tear sea or page based sea of drafts. Some advice about how to navigate that sea with maximum confidence.

18:38:55 Any thoughts there? Bringing together thinking about, thinking about maybe form and formatting.

18:39:26 COLIN: That's a really interesting question, I am not sure, I think that navigational metaphor is one, I am not sure it needs to be fully confident navigation on the part of the writer. I think having that kind of openness and that room for kind of error and kind of erroring and being kind of carried away by currents might be

really,

18:39:50 I feel like that does also translate to the reader when they encounter a text in pleasurable ways and can really open up the possibility of different different routes of them through a collection. Even though we put such care and attention and effort into ordering poems that doesn't necessarily mean that that's exactly how poems get read.

18:40:21 You know often readers of poetry will read through the kind of order they are presented in and then read back to poems that particularly attracted them or for whatever reason and so, I think poetry as a form does often resist a kind of, a one navigational route and has these possibilities of kind of currents and also kind of interruption and - I really

18:40:44 Love collections where there are a sequence of poems where there are moments that feel like outliers, they feel like, I can't remember if this was during or before the zoom. There was a question of a window popping up. I love the idea of a poetry collection where you get a pop-up.

18:41:04 Something unexpected. So I think yes, that kind of, it is important to leave room I think for that sort of openness and not knowing for that kind of sense of a readerly discovery in the text.

18:41:11 ALYCIA: That is a such great way to put it. A pop-up in the poetry book. I really like that.

18:41:37 Some of the words, like rupture is really important. I think that in poetry you always want this, there is an expectation you want the surprise to be there too, you want to be surprised moved by the work. A lot of that comes to the process of creating pattern and then subverting pattern.

18:41:56 That can be so effective when it is intentionally done, you are deliberate deliberate deliberately establishing something in the work, subvert it. Creates attention to the rupturing then and creates a sense of surprise and the constant tension there,

18:42:05 The constant question is, how do you make it a surprise but also something that you deliberately done?

18:42:30 So that it is a pop-up our outlier with you doesn't pull us away, brings us further in. That's something, as long as you are thinking about it. It will come through the work. Not afraid to about an outlier but embracing the fact that you are creating a pattern and pulling it away from us.

18:42:58 Yes, I think that is quite interesting and it also creates a maybe that movement when you are reading several poems by one author, whether they are in the way they are presented in the collection or several different poems, always can be that moment of breaking pattern which is an exciting thing.

18:43:16 HEATHER: That is super exciting. This is wonderful because it is providing this event is providing its own kind of format structure in all sorts of exciting ways, to break pattern, I am going to, we are going to move to some of the questions being asked,

18:43:26 I will pass the mic and a spotlight over to Iona who I think is going to take over in terms of, in terms of questions.

18:43:53 IONA: I believe I am in the poet of applying for the award. Working in the poet that works across the genres and forms offered who writes for the page, who writes for performance and who writes for sound. My question is, while the opening up of the form

available,

18:44:19 The forms available potentially it is freeing, it is also potentially restricting for people who, who write across different disciplines, how would you suggest that a cross genre poet, a poet that enjoys working in 3 forms, decides which one is the best one to choose for the application,

18:44:32 Which one would best represent their work?

18:44:57 HEATHER: This chimes with Be's question in the chat, what you can submit from audio and video, whether it is possible to put a transcript with an audio file which is not the case in the awards, the media are siloed because, because there is a sense in there there was,

18:45:24 Really they want to support people that are working dr or presenting the portfolio intensely in a given medium. I hope that helps answer your question, but also to kind of, it does articulate a little bit with Ionas, I would like to gift this to Colin and Alycia.

18:45:45 COLIN: I probably don't have a particularly useful answer for you in how you would go about selecting that. That would be, for people who work across different media but also people who just have different poems to select from and different kind of strands to their work,

18:46:12 I think will both about faced with that same challenge of choosing which, choosing which work to submit and it is a really hard thing, you never, you know like, people say things like, just choose your best work, I have no idea what my best work is? I often until I kind of read poems to audiences or publish them,

18:46:28 I have no idea which poems will resonate with people and often the poems that people say resonate with them I am not entirely sure whether - they are the poems they remember, but doesn't necessarily mean they are the ones that people actually have got the most from?

18:46:58 So it is a really difficult question and, I think a certain point you probably just have to go with your gut instinct of the work that really excites you and prizes are wonderful and a great thing to support work and nurture talent. They are not everything though and what is everything really is you being excited by your own work and kind of confident

18:47:24 In your own work and having a sense of what you want to achieve with your writing. I feel pretty confident to say, all my favourite writers have never won prizes, so Alycia is one of my favourite writers that has won a prize. But so many who haven't won prizes who are amazing writers.

18:47:37 The fundamental thing is you being confident in your work and submitting your work in what excites you the most.

18:48:09 ALYCIA: One of the really amazing changes this year, I mean it was always but I think, it is about development and developing your craft and that's such a big aspect of it. Go with your gut instinct and what excites you, what is it that you want to take forward with all the resources that the award might provide.

18:48:22 It is all about the potential of what you have and growing. That's one of the exciting things that the award is emphasising this year.

18:48:53 HEATHER: I totally agree, the other thing about this sort

of submission if you submit something that in effect, coming away with something that is your work and you are simply giving out into the world and also to the awards, that's the way that you can kind of gain a sense of poetic sense of how something is – I suppose sticking,

18:49:16 If it becomes sticky! So for those of you who are, going between audio, if you are both a page poet and performance poet, try playing around with both and then see what the sort of particular con juncture you are in at that moment for submission, see which one,

18:49:33 Go with gut feeling, see which one works then what you give will be a gift and then there won't about that sort of anxiety kind of award facing anxiety and it will about rather about development like Alycia was saying.

18:49:40 That's one of the other amazing things about what the award is fostering this year.

18:50:02 I am just, I have my eye on the clock, thinking on a slightly more granular level, this is also about that feeling, a couple of questions about presentation of poetry. This is the page poets I suppose but equally, could apply for the other media.

18:50:27 How much latitude about font? I suppose if we translated this into video, how much would one want of image, sound and text? I suppose my answer is, look at how many different media Morgan worked towards and across and the concrete stuff and realise that that is the remit.

18:50:31 So you have absolute control of your page as a poet.

18:50:51 Wonder Colin, Alycia, any tips on editing? Like interaction with the space? So the 12 minutes or the 12 pages?

18:50:57 ALYCIA: I can't tell if you are unmuting Colin, I should just go. Okay.

18:51:23 Yes, I think that in terms of the actual, the pages itself, because, because it is electronic submission especially, I think there is a a lot of play and – in editing anthologies, it is interesting to get electronic submissions and portray them in the physical format.

18:51:47 Okay, you are putting a lot of people's work with forms again, some have to be landscapes and over 2 pages. But this year it is the last year or 2021 I submitted my manuscript, it was printed but this year, electronic, there is so much opportunity to play with space,

18:52:13 with on-line publications, video and audio formats, so much opportunity, freedom is, in this case, the lay out of the page is an exciting place to play with. Then, in terms of presentation, of a portfolio I feel like, in terms of cover pages or, whatever else,

18:52:32 In terms of fonts, I think if it is important to you that's what you should present. But, I don't think we would I mean this is a discussion we would have as a panel of course but I don't think we would look at it differently if you didn't include a cover page and someone else did.

18:52:41 It is all about the poem and how the poem is playing with space, I did see details about logistical stuff in the chat too.

18:53:12 COLIN: I am prompted by the logistical question, I looked up. The description on the website is really wonderful actually, so it says: The Edwin Morgan Poetry Award places no definition or

restrictions on the form, that is important to you as poets, to consider all the different affordances and opportunities of the, 18:53:38 Of the form you are working in. You know, I always encourage people to consider, so that is portfolio or a manuscript of ten poems and just think of what that you know, with, or there is also the 12 pages isn't there, just think about what the opportunities of that are and how you can really welcome the kind of reader in or provide them a kind of you

18:54:00 Know, exit point or you know, whether there is different levels on which you can kind of interact with the reader within that, that space that you are being allowed for your PDF. Or indeed if it is video or sign work. So really just using those conventions, 18:54:21 so not feeling that they are conventions that you have to adhere to, but thinking about how to create use conventions or use the kind of affordances of the form to really create the sort of environment you want for your work and you can really do so much in terms of how it gets read.

18:54:49 I am very interested in like, what people call like para text, all the furniture of a book or publication or manuscript, whether you have forewords afterwards. That is not part of the submission, but no reason not to have poem as introduction. Or notes,

18:55:00 They are part of the space of the PDF might allow.

18:55:10 HEATHER: I see you are nodding, I love that idea of para text as furniture, something is going on there for me. Yes.

18:55:34 So, we are coming to a close and I think we have managed to address in ways direct and oblique of the questions in the chat, so, for now, I would like to really thank Iona and you can see that the - I am probably pointing to the wrong side of the screen,

18:55:41 All the relevant links to the awards pages have come up in the chat.

18:56:12 There is a quick question from Bee that I will address, identifying elements as in name if, identifying elements, name rather than face and body I think. But equally that applies to, to any form - don't edit yourself out of your work - just don't put your name at the top of your submission,

18:56:15 That is what identifying elements mean.