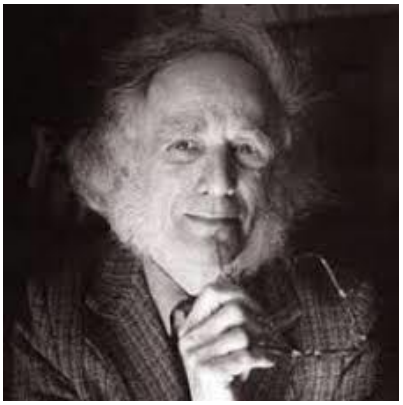
The Norman Nicholson Society



NEWS RELEASE

WHAT MAKES THE NORTH SO GREAT?

NORMAN NICHOLSON FESTIVAL WILL COME UP WITH SOME ANSWERS!

12/6/23

SHORT VERSION

Some of the north's top writers will assemble in Millom at the start of next month to answer the question: what makes the North of England – our home country – so great? Led by Karen Lloyd, editor of *North Country,* the 2022 anthology of outstanding writing about the North of England, the line-up includes top Cumbrian poets Kerry Darbishire and Kate Davis, along with Steve Wharton, Cumbria's outstanding singer and composer of folk songs, the creators of the award-winning short film *Shadow of the Mountain,* plus a range of creative activities including art workshops for children, 'deep reading' study sessions in Nicholson's own house, and a guided walk around Nicholson locations. Supported by Millom Town Council and Dobies Charitable Trust. Full details at www.normannicholson.org

LONGER VERSION

Some of the north's top writers will assemble in Millom at the start of next month to answer the question: what makes the North of England – our home country – so great. They will be joined by film makers, one of Cumbria's leading musicians, an artist, and an expert in local history to show off the terrific cultural quality on offer in 2023.

All will gather at the third two-day Norman Nicholson Festival, to take place in Millom on Saturday and Sunday, July 1st and 2nd, 2023.

Keynote speaker is Karen Lloyd, editor of the ground-breaking anthology of Northern writing *North Country,* published by Saraband in 2022 and shortlisted for the Wordsworth Prize for Literature at the upcoming Lakeland Book of the Year awards. Karen, Writer in Residence at Lancaster University's Future Places Centre, will speak on 'Native; Landscape, Literature and Belonging', in which she will discuss how these themes which underpin Norman Nicholson's work have developed to the present day and influenced so many contemporary writers. That's at 11am on Saturday July 1st at Millom Community Hub.

That evening, at the town's Beggar's Theatre, Karen will be joined by a number of contributors to *North Country* to read and discuss their work. They include Kerry Darbishire, Writer in Residence at Rydal Mount this summer and shortlisted for the Lakeland Book of the Year awards for her 2022 poetry collection *Jardiniere,* along with her fellow poets Kate Davis, Mark Carson and Caroline Gilfillan, and prose writers Geoff Cox and Jack Threlfall Hartley. Also appearing will be Steve Wharton, Cumbria's outstanding singer and composer of folk songs who freely acknowledges Nicholson as one of his key influences.

In between, the Beggar's Theatre will stage 'Short Films, Wide Horizons', an afternoon when the audience will have the chance to watch two remarkable short films and discuss them with their creators. *Shadow of the Mountain*, winner of the Osprey Short Film Award at Keswick Film Festival, was inspired by Nicholson's poem *The Shadow of Black Combe.* Director Simon Phelps and members of the cast will be there to talk about issues raised by the film. It will be followed by *The Girl Who Forgets How to Walk*, a short film which

reinterprets the work of the Cumbrian poet Kate Davis and her personal story of illness, disability, challenge, and triumph. Kate will be there in person to expand on the film and answer questions.

On Sunday July 2nd the Festival offers a range of activities: art workshops for children aged 7 to 11 with Workington artist Alan Roper; guided walk around Nicholson locations with local history specialist Jonathan Powell; 'deep reading' study groups in Nicholson's old house led by Dr Antoinette Fawcett; and a session with Cumbrian poet Mike Smith who will recall the day he made a series of audio recordings of Nicholson reading his own poetry, and revisit those recordings. Places for the art workshops and 'deep reading' must be booked in advance – see www.normannicholson.org for details. Nicholson's house, 14 St George's Terrace, Millom, will be open to the public on the afternoon of Friday June 30th, 2pm-4pm, ground floor only.

All events are free except the evening event at the Beggar's Theatre on Saturday July 1st which is £5 cash only, pay at the door.

Chair of the Norman Nicholson Society Charlie Lambert said: 'I'm delighted with the line-up for our 2023 festival and really looking forward to a weekend discussing and celebrating what is so special about the North. Nicholson's own work is included in Karen Lloyd's anthology and I'm sure he would approve of the way we're bringing different art forms together for an enjoyable and instructive weekend in his own home town. We are grateful to Millom Town Council and Dobies Charitable Trust for supporting the Festival'.

Full details of the festival are at https://www.normannicholson.org/festival-2023.html

Supported by Dobies Charitable Trust

Dobies Cumbria

Norman Nicholson (1914-1987) was a notable poet of the 20th century who was born and lived his whole life in the same house in Millom, Cumbria.