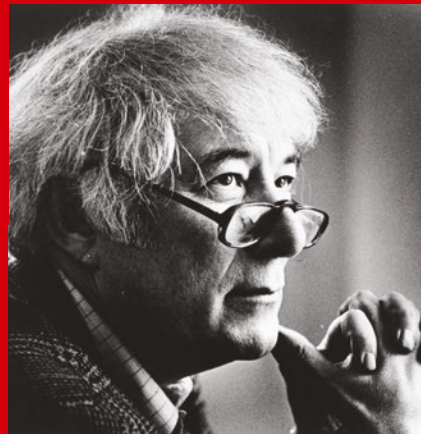




QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST



THE SEAMUS HEANEY CENTRE AT QUEEN'S

'This centre holds and spreads.'

AN ACT OF FAITH IN THE IMAGINATIVE AND THE INTELLECTUAL

At its opening in 2003, Heaney described the Centre as 'an act of faith in the imaginative and the intellectual that has brought repute and respect to the university'. Since then, the Centre has been home to some of the world's foremost poets, writers and critics.

Representing the place where Heaney studied and developed as a writer and poet, the Centre works in close collaboration with the Heaney family and is a distinctive and important element of the wider Heaney community, including the Estate of Seamus Heaney, the Heaney HomePlace and the National Library of Ireland.

Anchored by its academic and literary distinction, and building on the activities created by Seamus Heaney and other writers in the 1960s, the Centre has constantly evolved.

Recognising the significance of Heaney and his stature as a global literary force, we are about to embark on a new and exciting era that will build on this success. Our vision is to:

- Celebrate and symbolise the legacy of Seamus Heaney on the world stage;
- Attract, nurture and inspire future generations of writers from around the globe;
- Produce world-class writing and research.





GROWTH AND EXPANSION

The Seamus Heaney Centre is now firmly established as an internationally recognised centre of excellence in creative writing and poetry rooted in community, Ireland and beyond. It is thriving and there are ambitious plans to build on this success.

Student numbers are growing and projected to almost double in the next five years. Writing groups, workshops and events are often oversubscribed, with many local and international partners in the higher education, cultural and community sectors aspiring to work with the Centre.

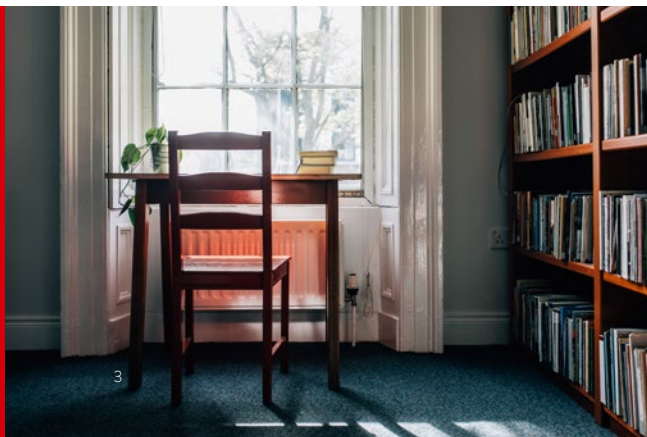
The Centre welcomes more visitors every year and literary tourism is a growing sector. It is also a key driver in Belfast's thriving cultural scene and is set to play a significant role in providing expertise, talent and skills for Northern Ireland's rapidly expanding creative sector spanning film, television, performing arts, music and gaming.



The Centre has adopted as its motto the words from section IV of Heaney's 'Kinship', 'This centre holds and spreads'.

True to its ethos of innovation and imagination, the Centre is now on the verge of an exciting chapter that will expand its reach and influence. This will include:

- The creation of the Seamus Heaney International Visiting Chair of Creative Writing;
- A move to a new home in a landmark venue at the heart of the university where Heaney studied and became the writer;
- An outreach programme, which will give rise to new voices through engagement with our local community.





THE SEAMUS HEANEY INTERNATIONAL VISITING CHAIR OF CREATIVE WRITING

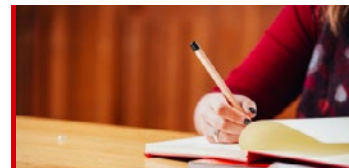
This role will be an invitation to a distinguished writer of global repute to further enhance the Centre's illustrious team of world-class writers, poets and critics. The first appointment will be made in 2023/24 and each appointment will be for a two-year period, with residency in Belfast for one semester per year.

The Visiting Chair will bring expertise, creativity and new perspectives to the Centre's expanding degree programmes, events, outreach activities and collaborations.

They will work with writers at all stages, developing their craft, inspiring excellence and ambition. They will host masterclasses, mentoring sessions, workshops and lectures for students. They will bring their expertise to writing groups, summer schools and outreach programmes and contribute to the Centre's events and performances, engaging fully with the literary life of Belfast and beyond.



This will include working with the Heaney 'family' of institutions across Ireland, contributing to their work whilst enhancing the Heaney legacy on a global stage.



The Visiting Chair will help to grow global partnerships and opportunities, raising the international profile of the Centre, Queen's and Ireland's writers, past, present and future. This will play an important role, not only in attracting the best writers from around the world, but also in helping to connect local writers globally.



A NEW HOME

The new Centre will be housed in a beautiful Victorian listed building conveniently close to Belfast City Centre and on the edge of the main university campus. We will create a place where esteemed and emerging writers, critics, students and people of all ages and backgrounds, can come together to learn and explore, develop their creativity and talent, and produce great writing in all its forms.

Doubling in size, it will be designed as a creative and inspiring space for teaching, writing, workshops, masterclasses and performances for growing numbers of students, aspiring writers and visitors.

Social spaces for interaction will be coupled with nooks and booths for thinking, reading, writing and creating. In this inspiring and supportive environment, individuals will find their voices as writers, just as Heaney did, at Queen's.

Notably, the new venue will make it possible, for the first time, to exhibit the extensive, untapped Heaney archive held by Queen's which includes a digital archive of all his television and radio appearances and other valuable items such as rare first edition pamphlets.

This will firmly establish a beacon for Heaney's legacy at Queen's, creating a symbolic landmark, drawing as many people as possible into a world of creativity, literature and learning.



Artist's sketch of the new building

External Piazza

NEW VOICES

The new venue will enable the Centre to create and deliver a rich programme of outreach and engagement, supported by dedicated staff. This will provide inclusive access and reach new, non-traditional audiences in collaboration with education and community partners, drawing as many people as possible into a world of creativity, literature and learning.

This will transform the Centre's reach and impact and maximise the powerful draw of Heaney as a catalyst for engagement and creativity.

The strategic location offers the opportunity to reach new communities across the city, with some of Northern Ireland's most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in close proximity.

Now more than ever, the value of creative writing for personal and professional development, and the positive role it can play in wellbeing is increasingly recognised. As we emerge from the pandemic, there will be a greater need for creative outlets, community spaces, and opportunities to express and share experiences.

The creative and cultural sector in Northern Ireland has played a significant role in the recovery and ongoing

transformation of Belfast, following many years of conflict. Culture, heritage and the arts are important in generating a sense of social cohesion and are key drivers of the city's economic growth.

The impact of COVID 19 on these sectors in Belfast and across Northern Ireland will be significant, and future investment and interventions will be critical.





New and innovative courses, summer schools and creative writing weeks will be developed for a growing and increasingly diverse student body. An enhanced network of writing groups, workshops and masterclasses will attract, inspire and support writers at all stages of their creative journey.

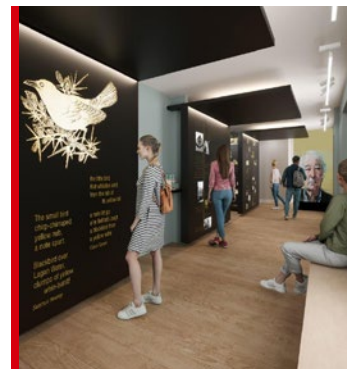
Expansion of public events, performances, showcases, exhibitions and collaborations with local venues, theatres and festivals will draw existing and new audiences. Workshops and seminars will also enhance industry collaborations and maximise the Centre's role in ensuring the sector is able to recover from the effects of the pandemic, and to thrive.



Ground Floor

1st Floor

Scriptorium



Exhibition Space



AN INVITATION TO JOIN US

With the enthusiastic support and endorsement of the Heaney family and investment from the University, the Queen's University of Belfast Foundation is embarking on a campaign to raise USD 5.5m*/CAD 6.7m*/GBP 3.9m from philanthropic sources to support the vision and unlock the next stage of the Centre's exciting journey.

Opportunities to support the Visiting Chair, the new building and the outreach programmes will be available. We would be delighted to hear from you should you wish to talk to us about how you can support the project financially, raise the profile of the project amongst your networks or connect us with others who may be interested.

For further information, please contact:

Helen Carrick, Head of Major Gifts
Queen's University Belfast

h.carrick@qub.ac.uk or **+44 (0)7580 970 600**

based on FX rates, June 2021



"The new Seamus Heaney Centre will more than ever be a link between the past and the future, between the city and the university, between writing here and elsewhere.

A centre with Heaney at its heart – a stellar poet who excelled in other genres and forms and who never stopped enquiring – a centre where writing lives."

Professor Glenn Patterson,
Director, Seamus Heaney Centre

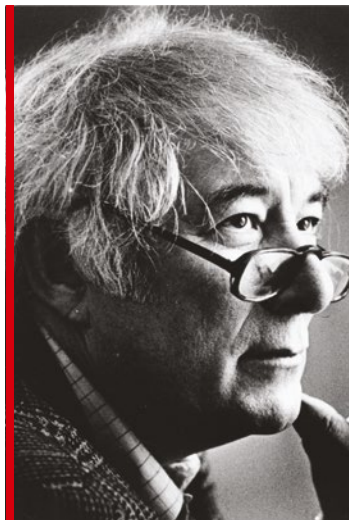


A LITERARY GREAT

Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney (1939–2013) was one of the greatest poets of the twentieth century. A global literary figure and the university's most internationally renowned graduate, his work embraced playwriting, prose, translation and song, as well as poetry, criticism and practice.

He began writing while studying English Language and Literature at Queen's and was a founding member of the 'Belfast Group', set up in 1963 by Cambridge poet and critic Philip Hobsbaum. Among the other writers and critics who attended the Group, and later came to prominence, were Edna Longley, Michael Longley, Derek Mahon, Bernard MacLaverty, Stewart Parker and current Ireland Chair of Poetry, Frank Ormsby.

The Group played a tremendously important role in encouraging new writers and this ethos prevails in the Seamus Heaney Centre today. It is a focal point for creativity, providing writers with the opportunity to come together to discuss and critique their work.



“I didn’t have any sense of election or purpose or ambition. My pseudonym at Queen’s, in the magazines where I published, was Incertus — Latin for uncertain — I was just kicking the ball around the penalty area, not trying to shoot at the goal. Then in 1962 the current began to flow...”

Seamus Heaney, studying English Language and Literature at Queen's



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