

# Becky Cullen

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PhD in Creative Writing

'Mastering Time: Time and Temporality in Contemporary Poetry'



## Thesis Description:

My doctoral thesis explores the ways in which poetry breaks chronological time. In *On Poetry* (2011) Glyn Maxwell states 'You master form you master time,' but a poem moves between temporalities of past, present and future, so that time is always in dynamic movement, resisting mastery. The thesis is organised around discussion of the repetition of time, the way that poetry stratifies time, and poetry and the disturbance of time.

The thesis is practice-led and combines creative practice, contextualisation within contemporary poetry and critical extension. I will carry out a programme of creative research to inform a collection of my own poems, drawing on a series of visits and residences. At the same time, the poetry of Michael Ondaatje and Sujata Bhatt provides a literary framework to explore the research questions, extended by critical thinking about text and time. For instance, my creative research with Nottingham City Museums and Galleries as AHRC Midlands3Cities Poet-in-Residence at Newstead Abbey provides the opportunity to make connections between repetition of steps, window shapes and panels in the Newstead site, repetition in both Ondaatje and Bhatt's work, and theories of repetition and return (Peter Brooks, 1984) and iterability (Derrida, 1971).

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## Supervisory Team:

- Dr Sarah Jackson, Nottingham Trent University
- Dr Rory Waterman, Nottingham Trent University
- Professor Tim Youngs, Nottingham Trent University

## Scholarly / Public Engagement Activities:

- AHRC Midlands3Cities Poet-in-Residence at Newstead Abbey, January - June 2016, funded by Student Development Fund

(SDF).

- Represented NTU and M3C students at national AHRC student consultation on next round of funding, November 2015, travel funded by AHRC.
- Attended Masterclass with Louise Emerson, Director of Cheltenham Festival, University of Nottingham, November 2015.
- Participated in 'Inspiration from the Archives' writing workshop at the University of Leicester, October 2015.
- Supported bid/participated in 'BOOOM! Making Research Memorable' event at BCU, funded by M3C Cohort Development Fund, developing research dissemination and performance skills, July 2015.
- Wrote, recorded and produced a podcast through AHRC/Birkbeck College Critical Waves AHRC-funded development programme, broadcast on Resonance 104.4FM, archived at <https://soundcloud.com/criticalwavesradio/becky-cullen>, June 2015, funded by SDF.
- Presented paper titled 'Poetry, Time and Temporality' at International Great Writing conference, June 2015, funded by SDF.
- Poet-in-Residence for National Tour of 'Inside Out of Mind', 2015.
- Emcee for 'Totally Wired' Early Evening Poetry series at Wired Cafe, Nottingham, 2014 to present.
- M3C NTU SAF representative, October 2014 to present. Hosting and chairing meetings, writing updates for the cohort, arranging elections for new members, writing Terms of Reference, meeting with Site Directors and taking part in planning and delivering sessions during the M3C residential for Cohort 2. Additionally, co-leader of bid for 'Talking Heads' Midlands3Cities Interviewing and Broadcasting Development Programme, Spring/Summer 2016.
- Creative Writer at National Videogame Archive Game City 9 'Turn to Text' programme, run in conjunction with Nottingham City Libraries, 2014.
- Poet-in-Residence at Lakeside Theatre, Nottingham, for the production of 'inside Out of Mind', 2013.
- Poet-in-Residence at Surface Gallery, 2013.
- Community poem project, 2013.

## Publications:

2014

- Three Poems, 'What I See in the Mirror', 'Majid Sits in a Tree and Sings' and 'How to Hang Washing' in *PN Review*
- Three Poems, 'Waiting for the Last Laugh', 'The Courthouse, Shillelagh' and 'Crossing to Marazion' in *New Walk*

2012-13

Poems published in:

- Ink,Sweat and Tears <http://www.inksweatandtears.co.uk/pages/?s=becky+cullen>
- The North
- The Interpreter's House
- Moths at the Bus Stop (anthology)
- Species (anthology)
- As/Sent
- Be:

**Other Research Interests:**

- Voices from history
- Memory, memorisation and performance of poetry
- The under-representation of women within literature from Nottingham