

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-09066-8 - The Cambridge Companion to British Poetry, 1945–2010

Edited by Edward Larrissy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO
BRITISH POETRY, 1945–2010

The Cambridge Companion to British Poetry, 1945–2010 brings together sixteen essays that explore the full diversity of British poetry since the Second World War, a period of significant achievement in which varied styles and approaches have flourished. As a comprehensive critical, literary-historical and scholarly guide, this *Companion* offers not only new readings of a wide range of poets but a detailed account of the contexts in which their verse was written and received. Focusing on famous and neglected names alike, from Dylan Thomas to John Agard, leading scholars provide readers with insight into the ongoing importance and profundity of post-war poetry.

Edward Larrissy is Emeritus Professor of Poetry in the Queen's University of Belfast. His published works include *Reading Twentieth-Century Poetry: The Language of Gender and Objects*, *Yeats the Poet: The Measures of Difference*, *Blake and Modern Literature* and *The Blind and Blindness in Literature of the Romantic Period*.

A complete list of books in the series is at the back of this book.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-09066-8 - The Cambridge Companion to British Poetry, 1945–2010

Edited by Edward Larrissy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-09066-8 - The Cambridge Companion to British Poetry, 1945–2010

Edited by Edward Larrissy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

THE CAMBRIDGE
COMPANION TO
BRITISH POETRY, 1945–2010

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-09066-8 - The Cambridge Companion to British Poetry, 1945–2010

Edited by Edward Larrissy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-09066-8 - The Cambridge Companion to British Poetry, 1945–2010

Edited by Edward Larrissy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

THE CAMBRIDGE
COMPANION TO
BRITISH POETRY,
1945–2010

Edited by
EDWARD LARRISSY
Queen's University Belfast



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-09066-8 - The Cambridge Companion to British Poetry, 1945–2010

Edited by Edward Larrissy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

32 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013-2473, USA

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107462847

© Cambridge University Press 2016

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2016

Printed in the United States of America by Sheridan Books, Inc.

A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

The Cambridge Companion to British Poetry, 1945–2010 / edited by
Edward Larrissy.

pages cm. – (Cambridge companions to literature)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-107-09066-8 (hardback) – ISBN 978-1-107-46284-7 (pbk.)

1. English poetry – 20th century – History and criticism. 2. English poetry –
21st century – History and criticism. I. Larrissy, Edward, editor.

PR601.C36 2015

821'.91409–dc23 2015025685

ISBN 978-1-107-09066-8 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-107-46284-7 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party Internet Web sites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such Web sites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

CONTENTS

	<i>Notes on Contributors</i>	<i>page ix</i>
	Introduction EDWARD LARRISSY	I
1	Poets of the Forties and Early Fifties: The Last Romantics? C. D. BLANTON	10
2	The Movement: Poetry and the Reading Public PATRICK DEANE	25
3	Survivors from before the War: Late Modernists and Poets of the 1930s JOHN MATTHIAS	39
4	Beyond All This Fiddle: Hughes, Hill, Tomlinson and Fisher ERIC FALCI	54
5	Poetry and Performance: The Mersey Poets, the International Poetry Incarnation and Performance Poetry CORNELIA GRÄBNER	68
6	High Late-Modernists or Postmodernists? Vanguard and Linguistically Innovative British Poetries since 1960 SIMON PERRIL	82
7	Stretching the Lyric: The Anthology Wars, Martianism and After NATALIE POLLARD	99
8	Poetry and Class SANDIE BYRNE	116
		vii

CONTENTS

9	‘In a between world’: Northern Irish Poetry FRAN BREARTON	130
10	Scottish Poetry, 1945–2010 ALAN RIACH	148
11	Welsh Poetry since 1945 KATIE GRAMICH	163
12	Black British Poetry SARAH LAWSON WELSH	178
13	Poetry, Feminism, Gender and Women’s Experience JAN MONTEFIORE	197
14	Ecopoetics and Poetry FIONA BECKET	214
15	Poetry and the City PETER BARRY	228
16	Poetry’s Outward Forms: Groups, Workshops, Readings, Publishers JON GLOVER	240
	<i>Further Reading</i>	259
	<i>Index</i>	273

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-09066-8 - The Cambridge Companion to British Poetry, 1945–2010

Edited by Edward Larrissy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

PETER BARRY is Professor of English at Aberystwyth University. His books on poetry include *New British Poetries* (co-edited with Robert Hampson, 1995), *Contemporary British Poetry and the City* (2000), *Poetry Wars* (2006), *Literature in Contexts* (2007), and *Reading Poetry* (2013). He is also the author of *Beginning Theory* (1995, 3rd edn, 2009, with translated editions in Korean, Hebrew, Ukrainian, Greek, Japanese, and Chinese); and *English in Practice* (2000 and 2nd edn., 2013). He co-edited *English* (the journal of the English Association) for twenty years, and headed the 2012–2015 Leverhulme-funded ‘Devolved Voices’ project on English-language poetry in Wales since 1997.

PETER BARRY is Professor of English at Aberystwyth University. His books on poetry include *New British Poetries* (co-edited with Robert Hampson, 1995), *Contemporary British Poetry and the City* (2000), *Poetry Wars* (2006), *Literature in Contexts* (2007), and *Reading Poetry* (2013). He is also the author of *Beginning Theory* (1995, 3rd edn, 2009, with translated editions in Korean, Hebrew, Ukrainian, Greek, Japanese, and Chinese); and *English in Practice* (2000 and 2nd edn., 2013). He co-edited *English* (the journal of the English Association) for twenty years, and headed the 2012–2015 Leverhulme-funded ‘Devolved Voices’ project on English-language poetry in Wales since 1997.

FIONA BECKET lectures in modern and contemporary English literature at the University of Leeds. She is the author of *D. H. Lawrence: The Thinker as Poet* (1997) and *The Complete Critical Guide to D. H. Lawrence* (2002). She has co-edited several volumes including *Culture, Creativity and Environment: New Environmentalist Criticism* with Terry Gifford (2007) and has written articles on modernism and language, the contemporary novel and poetry. She is currently working on a study of post-war experimental poetry and technology in the pre-computer decades, and curating an exhibition of visual poetry. Her principal interests lie in the area of post-war poetics and include eco-poesis.

C. D. BLANTON is associate professor of English at the University of California, Berkeley. He is the author of *Epic Negation: The Dialectical Poetics of Late*

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-09066-8 - The Cambridge Companion to British Poetry, 1945–2010

Edited by Edward Larrissy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTRIBUTORS

Modernism (2015). He is also the co-editor, with Nigel Alderman, of *A Concise Companion to Postwar British and Irish Poetry* (2009).

FRAN BREARTON is Professor of Modern Poetry at Queen's University Belfast and Director of the Seamus Heaney Centre for Poetry. Her books include *The Great War in Irish Poetry* (2000), *Reading Michael Longley* (2006) and, as co-editor, *Incorrigibly Plural: Louis MacNeice and His Legacy* (2012) and *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Irish Poetry* (2012). She recently edited Robert Graves's war memoir, *Good-bye to All That* for Penguin Classics (2014).

SANDIE BYRNE is University Lecturer in English at the University of Oxford, and Fellow in English of Kellogg College Oxford. She is the author of a number of books and articles on nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature including *Tony Harrison: Loiner* (1997), *H, v. & O: The Poetry of Tony Harrison* (1998), and *The Poetry of Ted Hughes* (2014).

PATRICK DEANE is Professor of English and Cultural Studies at McMaster University, Canada, where he is also President and Vice-Chancellor. His publications include *At Home in Time: Forms of Neo-Augustinism in Modern English Poetry* (1994) and *History in Our Hands: A Critical Anthology of Writings on Literature, Culture and Politics from the 1930s* (1998).

ERIC FALCI is Associate Professor of English at the University of California, Berkeley. He is the author of *Continuity and Change in Irish Poetry, 1966–2010* (2012) and *The Cambridge Introduction to British Poetry, 1945–2010* (2015). He has also published a number of essays on modern British and Irish poetry.

JON GLOVER studied at the University of Leeds from 1962 to 1969. There he met Jon Silkin, Geoffrey Hill, Ken Smith, Peter Redgrove, David Wright, Tony Harrison and Jeffrey Wainwright amongst others. In 1964 he started to help edit *Stand* of which he is now Managing Editor with John Whale and his wife Elaine. His most recent book of poems is *Glass Is Elastic* (2013). He edited with Kathryn Jenner, *The Complete Poems of Jon Silkin* (2015). He is Professor Emeritus at the University of Bolton and Honorary Fellow of the School of English, University of Leeds.

CORNELIA GRÄBNER lectures in Hispanic Studies and Comparative Literature at Lancaster University. She holds an M.A. in Comparative Literature from the University of Bonn, Germany, and an PhD in Cultural Analysis from the University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands. She has published extensively on performance poetry, on contemporary resistance literature (especially poetry) in Europe and in the Americas, and on the relationship between committed writing, social movements and projects of social and political transformation in the twenty-first century. She is co-editor of an edited collection on performance poetry, and of special issues on the poetics of resistance and poetry in public spaces.

KATIE GRAMICH is a Professor of English Literature at Cardiff University, specialising in the literatures of Wales, women's writing, modern poetry, comparative

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-09066-8 - The Cambridge Companion to British Poetry, 1945–2010

Edited by Edward Larrissy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTRIBUTORS

literature, translation, and travel writing. She is a Fellow of the Learned Society of Wales and a judge for the annual Stephen Spender Poetry in Translation prize. Publications include: *Twentieth Century Women's Writing in Wales: Land, Gender, Belonging* (2007); *Mapping the Territory: Critical Approaches to Welsh Fiction in English* (ed.) (2010); *Feet in Chains*, annotated translation of Kate Roberts' *Traed Mewn Cyffion* (2012); and, co-edited with Kirsti Bohata, *Rediscovering Margiad Evans* (2012).

EDWARD LARRISSY is Emeritus Professor of Poetry at Queen's University, Belfast, where he chaired the Advisory Board of the Seamus Heaney Centre for Poetry. He has also taught at the University of Leeds, where he directed a major project on 'Leeds Poetry: 1950–1980.' His books include *Reading Twentieth Century Poetry: The Language of Gender and Objects*, *Yeats the Poet: The Measures of Difference*, *Blake and Modern Literature*, and *The Blind and Blindness in Literature of the Romantic Period*. He has reviewed poetry for the *TLS*, *Poetry Review*, *Stand* and *Poetry London*. He is a Member of the Royal Irish Academy.

SARAH LAWSON WELSH is Associate Professor and Reader in English and Postcolonial Literatures at York St John University, York, UK. Her publications include *Grace Nichols* (2007), *Rerouting the Postcolonial: New Directions for a New Millennium* (2011) and *The Routledge Reader in Caribbean Literature* (1996). She is also an editor of the international *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*. Her most recent research focuses on food histories, food cultures and food writing in and from the Caribbean. She is currently writing a monograph entitled *Food, Text and Culture in the Anglophone Caribbean* (2018).

JOHN MATTHIAS is Professor Emeritus at the University of Notre Dame and a Life Member of Clare Hall, Cambridge. He is Editor at Large of *Notre Dame Review*. He has published some thirty books of poetry, criticism, fiction, and scholarship. Shearsman publishes his *Collected Longer* and *Collected Shorter Poems* in three volumes, together with *Trigons*, a book-length poem, and *Different Kinds of Music*, a novel.

JAN MONTEFIORE was born in Cambridge and educated at Oxford University. She is Professor Emerita of the University of Kent, where she worked in the School of English and American Literature from 1978 to 2015. She taught on Kent's pioneering MA in Women's Studies from 1980 to 1992, and in 2007 co-founded the Centre for Gender, Sexuality and Writing with Dr Nicky Hallett. Her books include *Feminism and Poetry* (1987, 1994, 2004), *Men and Women Writers of the 1930s* (1996), *Rudyard Kipling* (2007) and most recently the edited collection *In Time's Eye: Essays on Rudyard Kipling* (2013).

SIMON PERRIL'S poetry publications include *Beneath: a Nekyiad* (2015), *Archilochus on the Moon* (2013), *Newton's Splinter* (2012), *Nitrate* (2010), *A Clutch of Odes* (2009), *Hearing is Itself Suddenly a Kind of Singing* (2004). As a critic he has written widely on contemporary poetry, editing the books *The Salt Companion*

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-09066-8 - The Cambridge Companion to British Poetry, 1945–2010

Edited by Edward Larrissy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTRIBUTORS

to John James, and *Tending the Vortex: The Works of Brian Catling*. He is Reader in Contemporary Poetic Practice at De Montfort University, Leicester.

NATALIE POLLARD is Lecturer in Modernist and Contemporary Literature at the University of Exeter. Her research interests include twentieth- and twenty-first century British poetry and Anglophone fiction, reception theory and philosophy of language. Natalie is the author of *Speaking to You: Poetry and Public Address* (2012), and editor of *Don Paterson: Collected Critical Essays* (2014). She has also recently published on areas including scholarship and stupidity, commerce and literature, the avant-garde and the mainstream, and on the ethics of bickering and rudeness in the South African novelist and scholar J.M. Coetzee.

ALAN RIACH, Professor of Scottish Literature at Glasgow University, is the author of *Hugh MacDiarmid's Epic Poetry* (1991), *Representing Scotland in Literature, Popular Culture and Iconography* and co-author with Alexander Moffat of *Arts of Resistance: Poets, Portraits and Landscapes of Modern Scotland* (2009), described by the *Times Literary Supplement* as 'a landmark book' and *Arts of Independence: The Cultural Argument and Why It Matters Most* (2014), general editor of Hugh MacDiarmid's collected works and co-editor of *The Edinburgh Companion to Twentieth-Century Scottish Literature* (2009) and *Scotlands: Poets and the Nation* (2004). His most recent book of poems is *Homecoming* (2009).