

Call for papers: *Under the Volcano*, 70 Years On

International conference, Liverpool John Moores University and Bluecoat, Liverpool, UK,
Friday 28 and Saturday 29 July 2017

Confirmed speakers

Sherrill Grace OC (Professor Emerita, University of British Columbia); Michael Schmidt OBE FRSL; Paul Tiessen (Professor Emeritus, Wilfrid Laurier University); Vik Doyen (KU Leuven); Miguel Mota (University of British Columbia); Chris Ackerley (Professor Emeritus, University of Otago); David Large (University of Otago); Patrick A. McCarthy (University of Miami)

Outline

2017 marks the seventieth anniversary of the publication of Malcolm Lowry's great modernist novel *Under the Volcano*, and the sixtieth anniversary of Lowry's death. This two-day international conference will explore the legacy of Lowry's work, his literary status today and his ongoing role as source of inspiration to creative writers and artists across various disciplines. The conference appropriately takes place in Liverpool, across the Mersey from Lowry's birthplace on the Wirral. Since 2009, Bluecoat (Liverpool's contemporary arts centre) has worked with the Firminists, an informal collective of Lowry enthusiasts and academics, to stage an annual 'Lowry Lounge' to celebrate the writer in the place of his birth. This programme has included guided walks, film screenings, talks and discussions, archival displays, music and other creative responses to Lowry, and book launches of the University of Ottawa Press critical editions of *Swinging the Maelstrom* (2013), *In Ballast to the White Sea* (2014) and *The 1940 Under the Volcano* (2015). The 2017 Lowry Lounge will take place on Saturday 29 July at Bluecoat and conference delegates will have the opportunity to participate in the programme.

We welcome proposals for 20-minute papers or ideas for panels. Topics might include, but need not be limited to:

- *Under the Volcano* as canonical, cult, or (late-)modernist novel
- Reappraising Lowry as a literary figure today: where does Lowry sit in the canons or contexts of English/British and/or Canadian and/or North American literature?
- The concept of the masterpiece in relation to a writer's oeuvre as a whole: is *Under the Volcano* Lowry's only wholly successful work?
- Lowry and politics, especially in relation to the recently published *In Ballast to the White Sea*
- Editing Lowry and the new critical editions of his texts; genetic criticism
- Place and psychogeographical approaches to Lowry
- Lowry and temporality – the fluidity of time and memory in Lowry's writing
- Lowry and intertextuality

- Lowry and cinema, music, or other art forms
- Lowry as source or inspiration for contemporary creative work
- Lowry and gender

Alongside academic papers we would also welcome presentations of creative work inspired by or connected to Lowry, including film, visual art or work in other media. There will be opportunities to screen or display such work as part of the event.

Please submit 300-word proposals along with a short (200 words max) biographical note to Helen Tookey h.i.tookey@ljmu.ac.uk by **30 November 2016**.

Organising committee

Helen Tookey (Liverpool John Moores University)

Bryan Biggs (Artistic Director, Bluecoat)

Robert Sheppard (Edge Hill University)

Ailsa Cox (Edge Hill University)

Mark Goodall (University of Bradford)

Colin Dilnot (Merseyside-based artist and researcher)

Location

Liverpool is on the North-West coast of England and has airport connections via Liverpool John Lennon Airport (20 min. from city centre) or Manchester Airport (30 miles), as well as excellent road and rail links (2 hours 15 min from London by train). A former European Capital of Culture (in 2008), the city has a superb cultural offer of galleries, museums, theatres and other attractions, excellent restaurants, affordable hotels and a vibrant nightlife. It is also within easy reach of coastal walks, the Wirral peninsula and North Wales.