

National Centre for Writing and Tilted Axis Press partner to diversify literary translation in UK

NEWS RELEASE

The National Centre for Writing (NCW) today announced the launch of the new Tilted Axis Mentorship for a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic literary translator based in the UK. The two organisations have come together to promote increased diversity among literary translators to encourage a greater variety of translated work.

The Tilted Axis Mentorship is part of the 2018 Emerging Literary Translators Mentorship Programme, run by the National Centre for Writing and covering eight languages, from Indonesian to Lithuanian. Through its Young Translators Prize, Harvill Secker is supporting a mentorship for a translator working from Bengali to English.

Chris Gribble, Chief Executive of NCW says:

“We’ve rarely needed more diversity and global reach in our literature than we do today and that is why we are putting literary translation at the heart of our programming at NCW. Much of the same thinking that strangles diversity in UK publishing is hindering the growth of literature in translation too. Readers are not scared of unfamiliar names or settings, some in the business just fear that they are. Similarly, helping the translation industry to be more inclusive and accessible also benefits the publishing industry and UK readers as well as the individual translators chosen for the mentorship. The mentees on this scheme will get support from some of the most established translators in the industry, all committed to opening up this vital profession to new voices.”

Under the scheme early stage literary translators receive six months of mentoring with an experienced translator, insights into the industry, a cash bursary and access to the Literary Translation Centre at London Book Fair 2019. Mentors on the scheme include Daniel Hahn, Deborah Smith and Antonia Lloyd-Jones.

In addition NCW and the British Centre for Literary Translation (BCLT) - both based in Norwich, England's first UNESCO City of Literature - have just announced a three-year programme of activity with the Literature Translation Institute of Korea (LTI Korea). This will include a Korean mentorship, professional development workshops and translator in residence opportunities in NCW's cottage - part of the new campus at Dragon Hall.

NCW has hosted a number of Korean writers in Norwich, with support from the Arts Council of Korea. In 2015 Han Kang was writer in residence before going on to win the Man Booker International prize for fiction for *The Vegetarian* the following year.

Deborah Smith, Han Kang's English translator and the founder of Tilted Axis Press says:

"Tilted Axis has always been committed to opening up access in publishing, and already publishes many BME translators. We're proud to put our money where our mouth is, alongside the generous contribution from NCW, and fund a mentorship that will benefit us all. I wouldn't be where I am today without the support I've received from NCW. No other literary organisation has the same global reach, especially across Asia or is as generous in sharing its connections."

Kate Griffin, Associate Programme Director of NCW says:

"In recent years Korea has become an important player in the international literary sphere. We are delighted to be collaborating with LTI Korea to train talented literary translators and help bring more of this exciting literature from Korea to English-language audiences."

Professor Duncan Large of BCLT says:

“It has been a great pleasure working with LTI Korea in recent years, and they have been one of our most important partners. We look forward very much to extending our collaboration in this way and continuing to support the reception of Korean literature.”

The National Centre for Writing opened in June 2018 and is backed by patrons including Margaret Atwood, JM Coetzee, Kei Miller, Sarah Perry, Elif Shafak and Ali Smith. It is a physical and digital space to promote great literature, inspire communities through the power of writing, reading and literary translation, nurture literary talent and host world-class events.

Notes to Editors:

1. For comment and interviews contact Alice Kent, Communications Director at alice@nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk / 01603 877177
2. **The Patrons of the National Centre for Writing are -**
Margaret Atwood
John Boyne
JM Coetzee
Anthony Horowitz OBE
Jon McGregor
Kei Miller
Sarah Perry
Elif Shafak
Ali Smith CBE
Rose Tremain CBE
3. **About National Centre for Writing (NCW)**
NCW is a literature development organisation based in Norwich England’s first UNESCO City of Literature. The National Centre for Writing at Dragon Hall promotes great literature, inspires communities through the power of writing, reading and literary translation, nurtures literary talent and hosts world-class events. www.nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk
4. The National Centre for Writing is supported by Arts Council England, Norwich City Council, Norfolk County Council and the University of East Anglia.
5. Applications for the National Centre for Writing Emerging Translator Mentorship Programme 2018-19 are now open. The languages are below and for full info see: www.nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk
 - Bengali – Mentored by Arunava Sinha - Harvill Secker Young Translators Prize supported by Reimagine India.
 - Indonesian – Mentored by Pamela Allen
 - Korean – Mentored by Deborah Smith - supported by LTI Korea
 - Lithuanian – Mentored by Daniel Hahn - supported by the Lithuanian Cultural Institute
 - Norwegian – Mentored by Don Bartlet - supported by the Royal Norwegian Embassy
 - Polish – Mentored by Antonia Lloyd-Jones - supported by the Polish Cultural Institute
 - Swedish – Mentored by Sarah Death - supported by the Anglo-Swedish Literary Foundation

- Titled Axis Mentorship** - Mentored by Jeremy Tiang - supported by Tilted Axis Press This mentorship has been designed to support a UK based translator from a Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic background who is translating from a language which is not represented in the above list.

6. **About the British Centre for Literary Translation**

The British Centre for Literary Translation was founded in 1989 by the late W.G. Sebald. 'Max' was Professor of European Literature at the University of East Anglia, Norwich, and a German writer who opted to live in the UK and continue writing in German. Almost 30 years later, BCLT is a research centre within the School of Literature, Drama and Creative Writing at UEA. We support an MA in Literary Translation, an increasing variety of undergraduate modules in the subject, and an extensive programme of PhD research. We also work in close partnership with the National Centre for Writing and a wide range of other national and international organisations to deliver a rich and varied programme of activities aimed at and raising the profile of literary translation as a profession. These include the Sebald Lecture in literary translation and the International Literary Translation and Creative Writing Summer School, held annually at UEA in July. Sign up for our e-newsletter at www.bclt.org.uk

7. **About LTI Korea**

LTI Korea sprung from what was the Korean Literature Translation Fund (est. 1996) in 2001 as a result of the South Korean government's push to share Korean literature and culture with the world. LTI Korea's efforts over the nearly two decades since its establishment have resulted in a remarkable increase in the number of Korean books being published and read overseas. Today, Korean books are attracting the interest and love of readers all around the globe.

8. **About Tilted Axis**

Tilted Axis Press is a nonprofit press founded in 2015 by translator Deborah Smith Based in Sheffield and part of the Northern Fiction Alliance, Tilted Axis exists to promote decolonisation through and of translation. TAP publishes the most exciting contemporary fiction and poetry from languages including Uzbek, Thai, Bengali, Tamil - frequently the UK's only contemporary translations from these languages, in a given year, decade, or at all - Japanese, Korean, and Turkish. Several TAP titles were their translator's first book-length publication.