

HIMALAYAN LITERATURE FESTIVAL & WRITERS' WORKSHOP 2026

May 29 – June 5, 2026 | Malla Hotel, Kathmandu, Nepal

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HLF-WWK 2026 WORKSHOPS — May 29–June 3

May 29 (Friday) Orientation Day	May 30 (Saturday) Workshop Day 1	May 31 (Sunday) Workshop Day 2
<p>2:00 PM</p> <p>Orientation & Welcome Meet</p> <p><i>Opening gathering welcoming all participants to the Himalayan Literature Festival and Writers' Workshop with introductions and an overview of the week ahead.</i></p> <p>♀ Malla Plaza</p>	<p>9:00 AM – 11:00 AM</p> <p>Tina Chang: Tender Archive — Poetry as a Pathway to Healing</p> <p><i>Brooklyn Poet Laureate and author of <i>Hybrida</i> guides participants in using confessional and lyric poetry to excavate personal and collective trauma toward healing.</i></p> <p>♀ Malla Plaza</p>	<p>9:00 AM – 11:00 AM</p> <p>Tony Barnstone: Magical Realism & Flash Fiction</p> <p><i>Poet and translator Tony Barnstone leads an intensive on the art of flash fiction and magical realism, drawing on global literary traditions to spark unconventional narratives.</i></p> <p>♀ Malla Hotel</p>
<p>6:PM</p> <p>Dinner at Aakshara School</p>	<p>11:00 AM – 1:00 PM</p> <p>Peter Salisbury: Nurturing Place in Screenwriting</p> <p><i>Award-winning Irish screenwriter explores how setting, character, and story intersect to give screenplays a vivid sense of place.</i></p> <p>♀ Malla Hotel</p>	<p>11:00 AM – 1:00 PM</p> <p>Ravi Shankar: Dramatizing the Daily — Mastering Unruly Forms</p> <p><i>Pushcart Prize-winning memoirist and poet Ravi Shankar guides writers in shaping personal experience into compelling literary memoir, embracing hybrid and experimental forms.</i></p> <p>♀ Malla Hotel</p>
<p>Thamel Walk</p>	<p>Visit to Kathmandu Durbar Square</p>	<p>Visit to Patan Durbar Square</p>

HLF-WWK 2026 WORKSHOPS — May 29–June 3

June 1 (Monday) Workshop Day 3	June 2 (Tuesday) Master Class Day	June 3 (Wednesday) Master Class Day
<p>9:00 AM – 11:00 AM Martin Doyle: Writing Material — Ethical and Effective Memoir Writing <i>Books Editor at The Irish Times and author of Dirty Linen leads a workshop on the ethical challenges of memoir—how to write honestly about real people while crafting a compelling narrative.</i> ♀ Malla Hotel</p> <p>11:00 AM – 1:00 AM Mary Newell: Enhancing Whole Body Resonance for Impactful Writing <i>HLF-WWK presents a special virtual workshop with Dr. Mary Newell exploring sound, resonance, breath, and creative writing through guided exercises, discussion, and reflective practice.</i></p> <p>Virtual ♀ ♀ Malla Hotel</p> <p>Visit to Boudha stupa Dinner Hosted by Kathmandu International School</p>	<p>Breakfast Visit to Nagarkot</p> <p>1:00 PM – 2:00 PM Lunch Hosted by HWH & HLFWWK</p> <p>2:00 PM – 4:00 PM Tracy K. Smith: Poetry and Consciousness — Master Class <i>Pulitzer Prize winner and 22nd U.S. Poet Laureate Tracy K. Smith leads a master class exploring how poetry can expand awareness, deepen empathy, and illuminate lived experience.</i> ♀ Mountain Vista Retreat, Nagarkot</p>	<p>9:00 AM – 11:00 AM Paul Muldoon: Sudden Zen — Master Class <i>Princeton professor and Pulitzer Prize-winning Irish poet Paul Muldoon leads an experimental master class on the haiku spirit in contemporary poetry—brevity, surprise, and enlightenment.</i> ♀ Malla Hotel</p> <p>11:00 AM – 1:00 AM Yuyutsu Sharma: Ecstasy, Healing and Creative Writing in the New World Order <i>In this interactive workshop, Yuyutsu Sharma explores the healing and transformative power of creative writing in the context of Himalayan shamanic traditions, encouraging participants to deepen imagination, voice, and human connection through one of the world’s oldest spiritual disciplines.</i></p> <p>♀ Malla Hotel</p> <p>Visit to Budhaneelkantha and Wildlife 6:30 pm Dinner Hosted by MIT& Kathmandu Model College</p>

HIMALAYAN LITERATURE FESTIVAL — June 4–5

June 4 (Thursday) Festival Day 1

9:30 AM – 10:30 PM

Indigenous Music Group Performance

📍 Malla Lobby

9:30 AM – 10:15 PM

Sacred Chants by Swami Shantam

📍 Malla Plaza

10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Inauguration Ceremony

The festival opens with an official ceremony featuring the British Ambassador Rob Fenn, Paul Muldoon, Tracy K. Smith, Tony Barnstone, and Yuyutsu Sharma celebrating the convergence of global and Himalayan literary voices.

📍 Malla Plaza

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

Jean Hanff Korelitz in Conversation with Yuyutsu Sharma

*Bestselling author of *The Plot and You Should Have Known* discusses the craft of literary suspense and the novelist's moral imagination in conversation with Himalayan poet Yuyutsu Sharma.*

📍

Malla Plaza

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12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

Tarot Reading and Poetry

Tony Barnstone

A discussion of the uses of creativity, divination, and the tarot as modes of self-invention and healing. A session on the intersections of creativity, neuroscience, and spirituality. How can the tarot and divination techniques from the world spiritual traditions strike sparks of inspiration and help you on the path to creative self-invention.

📍 Garden Cafe

12:00 AM – 1:00 AM

Trauma, Healing and Creativity: *Anne Casey Kavita Jindal Krestina Prater Florian Dietmaier Jane Barrett Elaine Joy Degala, Rajni Shankar Brown*

June 5 (Friday) Festival Day 2

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Healing Hymns in the Light of Guru by Swami Shantam

An immersive healing session featuring sacred hymns and meditative chants, guiding participants toward inner stillness and the sacred dimensions of creativity.

📍 Malla Plaza

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Swami Anand Vinod: Singing Bowls and Stress Management

An immersive sound-healing experience using Himalayan singing bowls and shamanic ritual to attune participants to the meditative and sacred dimensions of creative practice.

📍 Orient Hall

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Mixed Messages: Readings East and West

Kathleen Willard, Florian Dietmaier, Poonam Surie, Tanka Upreti, Daniela Chacón, Sanjula Sharma, and Amar Aakash present a vibrant cross-cultural reading that brings together voices, stories, and poetic reflections from diverse literary traditions of the East and West.

📍 Garden Café

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Tracy K. Smith: Keynote Address

The Pulitzer Prize-winning poet and former U.S. Poet Laureate delivers the festival's keynote, reflecting on poetry's role in healing, consciousness, and our shared humanity.

📍 Malla Plaza

11:00 AM – 12:00 AM

Panel: Guru Prasad Mainali

Scholars Gyanu Adhikari, Narayan Dhakal, Hari Adhikari, Deepak Sapkota and Amar Aakash examine the literary legacy and enduring influence of pioneering Nepali short-story writer Guru Prasad Mainali on modern Nepali literature. The session explores Mainali's realism, social insight, and his lasting contribution to the evolution of Nepali fiction.

📍 Oriental Hall

12:00 AM – 01:00 AM

Meditation, Imagination, and Performance

Poonam Surie, Sanjula Sharma, Gabriele Tautscher Linda Ohlson Graham, Lara Gularte Mary Newell Penny Kline Swaati Chadra Shivki, Ravi Shankar, and Jessie Hare explore the interplay of contemplative practice, creative imagination, and live performance.

📍 Orient Hall

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

EL LABERINTO DE OCTAVIO PAZ

Directed by José María Martínez
Spain, 2016 | Documentary

A compelling documentary exploring the life, ideas, and literary legacy of Octavio Paz, one of the most influential intellectuals of the twentieth century. Through archival material, interviews, and reflections on poetry and politics, the film offers an intimate portrait of the Nobel Prize-winning writer and his enduring global influence.

📍 Belvedere hall

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Mapping & Memoir Writing:

Martin Doyle in *Conversation with Yuyutsu Sharma*:

Martin Doyle explores how writers can use landscape, geography, and memory to structure memoir, drawing on his experience as Ireland's foremost literary journalist.

📍 Oriental Room

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Paul Muldoon In Conversation with Anne Casey

Acclaimed poet and Pulitzer Prize winner Paul Muldoon joins poet and journalist Anne Casey for an engaging conversation on poetry, memory, creativity, and the evolving role of literature in today's world. The session will explore Muldoon's literary journey, influences, and reflections on contemporary writing.

📍 Malla Plaza

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Writer as Warrior: Writing as Empathy, Resistance, and Healing

Tina Chang, Stephanie Green, Rajni Shankar Brown, Manjula Narayan, Gabriele Tautscher, Shilpa Dixit Thapaliyal and Kavita Jindal discuss how writing becomes an act of resistance and self-recovery, particularly for writers navigating marginalized identities.

📍 Garden Cafe

3:00 PM – 4: PM

Irish Film Screening: Clouded Reveries

Introduction by **Martin Doyle**

📍 Oriental Hall

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

Nepalese Poetry

*Dwarika Shrestha Shailendra Sakar Hari Adhikari Narayan Dhakal Usha Sherchan Dubasu Chetri
Krishu Chetri Dhruva Madhikarmi, Tanka Upreti, Sneha Sayami, Maniraj Singh*
A showcase of contemporary Nepali poets

📍 Garden Café Hall

12:00 AM – 1:00 PM

AI and Creative Writing

Manjula Narayan Tony Barnstone Meißnitzer Heidemariam Jane Barrett Runa Bandyopadhyay
A thought-provoking discussion on how artificial intelligence is reshaping storytelling, poetry, publishing, and the future of creative expression.

📍 Malla Plaza

01:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Nepali Book Launch

Launch of a new Nepali-language title celebrating indigenous literary voices and the richness of Nepal's vernacular literary tradition.

Khagendra Khushi Shailendra Adhikari BN Joshi Shyam Rimal Bharat Thapa Pratichit

📍 Malla Plaza

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Keynote Address: Tony Barnstone: Androids, Robots and Cyborgs: Creativity in the Time of AI

Award-winning poet and anthologist Tony Barnstone delivers a keynote that puts the question of AI and creative writing into the context of philosophy and neuroscience of consciousness.

📍 Oriental Hall

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

PORTUGUESE FILM

Erros Meus, Má Fortuna, Amor Ardente

Inspired by the celebrated sonnet of Luís Vaz de Camões, Portugal's and the Portuguese language's greatest poet, the film draws on themes of fate, error, and passionate love that define the poet's enduring legacy.

📍 Belvedere Hall

A special screening of the Irish film *Clouded Reveries*, offering audiences a reflective cinematic journey through memory, imagination, and the emotional landscapes of contemporary Irish storytelling.

📍 Belvedere Hall

3:00 PM – 4:30 PM

Book Launches

New collections by Ravi Shankar Stephanie Green, Kathleen Willard, Krestina Prater, Inderjeet Mani and Edith Hakimian are launched with readings and author remarks.

📍 Malla Plaza

3:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Poetry in the Court: Jane Barrett

This workshop explores the rich intersection of poetry and legal discourse, examining how language, metaphor, and narrative shape both literature and the pursuit of justice. Through readings, discussion, and creative exercises, participants will reflect on themes of testimony, power, and human experience within the courtroom and beyond.

📍 Oriental Hall

3:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Shared Voices: Hindi and Nepali Literary Traditions

Nisha Sharma Pokhrel Usha Thakur Divakar Upadhyay Shweta Deepti

A conversation on the literary and cultural connections between Hindi and Nepali writing, exploring shared histories, translation, poetry, storytelling, and contemporary literary exchange across the Himalayan region.

📍 Garden Cafe

4:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Young and Emerging Poets: Prodigy Group

A platform for new voices from Nepal and beyond, showcasing poetry that reflects fresh perspectives on the Himalayan experience and global belonging.

Atharva Bikram Shah Darshak Acharya Shranup Tandukar Arjun Adhikari Prakriti Chauhan Aliya Khan Shreeya Dhakal Sonisha Bajracharya

📍 Garden Cafe

4:00 PM – 5:00 PM

HLF-WWK Faculty Reading

Paul Muldoon, Tracy K Smith, Tina Chang Yuyutsu Sharma Tony Barnstone

An extraordinary evening of poetry and literary expression featuring internationally acclaimed writers Paul Muldoon, Tracy K. Smith, Tina Chang, Yuyutsu Sharma and, Tony Barnstone The faculty members will share

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Nepali Poetry Reading

Readings by young Nepali poets

Avaya Shrestha Pramod Snehi Radhika Kalpit Umesh Akinchan Radha Karki Rami Priya Deepak Sapkota Mani Lohni Thaku Belbase Shreejana Bhandari Jyoti Kiran Moharaj Sharma

📍 Oriental Hall

2:00 AM – 3:00 PM

SPANISH FILM:

📍 Belvedere hall

2:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Visiting Poets Reading

An international poetry reading featuring Mary Newell, Ketan Jain, Runa Bandyopadhyay, Kavita Jindal, Elaine Joy Degala, Shilpa Dixit Thapaliyal, Sanjula Sharma, Linda Ohlson Graham Ravi Shankar Swaati Chadra, Shivki and Edith Hakimia

📍 Malla Plaza

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Young Poets Meet -- Prodigy Group

Emerging Nepali and international youth poets gather for mentorship, dialogue, and an informal reading with festival faculty.

Rose Dangol Ritambhara Dhungana Sibias Giri Shardoool Nepal Samridhhi Basyal Anuska Devkota DIYA SUBEDI Birat Bijay Ojha

Gaden Café

3:00 AM – 5:00 PM

POLISH FILM

In Desert and Wilderness

Based on the classic 1911 novel by Nobel Laureate Henryk Sienkiewicz, this sweeping adventure unfolds against the backdrop of Mahdi's rebellion in Sudan.

📍 Belvedere hall

3:00 PM – 4:00

Nepali Fiction: Illusion and Reality

Hari Adhikari Raj Kumar Baniya Amar Aakash Shakuntala Joshi

selected readings from their works, offering audiences a rich and diverse poetic experience across cultures and traditions.

📍 The Malla Plaza

4:00 PM -4:45

HLF Poetry Film Festival Panel

Peter Salisbury, Carola Mair, Maria Gil Burman and Murtaza Ali Khan discuss the intersection of film and poetry in the festival's curated short-film program.

📍 [Belvedere Hall](#)

4:45 PM -6:00

POLISH FILM: The Doll (Lalka)

An adaptation of the celebrated novel *The Doll* by Boleslaw Prus, widely regarded as one of the greatest works in Polish literature.

[Belvedere Hall](#)

5:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Nepalese Poets in English

A showcase of contemporary Nepali poets writing in English, celebrating the intersection of Himalayan identity and the global anglophone literary tradition-

Bhuwan Thapaliya Anand Vijay Gurung Shreejana Bhandari Ujjwala Maharjan Saudamini Chalise Sushant Thapa Amar Aakash Kripa Khanal Raman Ghale Tajendra Sherchan Rajni Mila Ranjan Kumar Sharma

[Malla Plaza](#)

6:00 PM -8: 00

AUSTRIAN FILM: Wide Awake

Directed by Carola Mair

[Belvedere Hall](#)

[Oriental Hall](#)

3:00 PM – 4:30 PM

Nepal Bhasha Poetry Reading

Pushparaj Rajkanikar Pratisara Saymi Dhruva Madhikarmi Sudheer Khwabi Nabin Prakash Shrestha Binita Bajracharya Rahena Nakarmi Manandhar Manju Singh Shrestha Hisilina Shakya Kabindralal Pradhan Raj Akshebhya

📍 [Oriental Hall](#)

3:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Book Launches

Shilpa Dixit Thapaliyal, Drinken Boat Swaati Chadra Shivki, Lara Gularte

📍 [Malla Plaza](#)

4:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Nepali Women Poetry Reading

A dedicated reading showcasing contemporary poetry by Nepali women, honoring their contributions to the evolving landscape of Nepali literature.

Usha Sherchan Laxmi Mali Laxmi Rumba Shreejana Bhandari Rami Priya Shakuntala Joshi Rajni Mila Radhika Kalpit Jyoti Jungle

📍 [Malla Plaza](#)

4:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Poetry in Nepal Terai Languages

Shweta Deepti (Mailthali) Kanchana Jha (Mailthali Pratima Chaudhary (Bhojpuri) Rupam Pathak (Hindi) Chakchaki Rajbanshi (Tharu) Anand Gupta (Bhojpuri) Imtiaz Wafa (Urdu) Sangeeta Thakur (Hindi) Aanshu Kumari Jha (Hindi) Vijata Chaudhary (Mailthali) Sneha Jha (Mailthali) Hansavati Kurmi (Awadhi) Amrendra Yadav (Maithili) and Arkana Khatun (Bhojpuri)

Indigenous writers and scholars from Nepal's Terai region share stories, songs, and literary perspectives rooted in the lowland communities of the Himalayan foothills.

📍 [Garden Cafe](#)

6:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Bharat Natyam: Classical Dance Performance

A captivating classical dance performance showcasing the grace, rhythm, and spiritual storytelling traditions of the oldest and most revered dance forms.

📍 [Malla Plaza](#)

An evocative Austrian film that explores themes of awareness, identity, and human connection through a visually engaging narrative. Directed by Carola Mair, *Wide Awake* offers audiences a thoughtful cinematic experience that reflects contemporary European storytelling and artistic expression.

Belvedere hall

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Visiting Poets Reading

Anne Casey, Lara Gularte, Shilpa Dixit Thapaliyal, Poonam Surie, Penny Kline, Rajni Shankar Brown, Daniela Chacón, Kathleen Willard, Florian Dietmaier, and Krestina Prater read from their work in an international literary showcase.

📍 Malla Plaza

Dinner at Gate College 7:30 pm