



# Sex

Humanities in Public Festival 15/16

**Spring Season**

**January - March 2016**



Manchester  
Metropolitan  
University

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# Welcome

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'Humanities in Public' Festival returns for its third annual run!

If you're new to HiP, then we greatly look forward to meeting you. If you're one of our 7,000+ regulars, then welcome back.

'Humanities in Public' is the research showcase of the Faculty of Humanities, Languages and Social Science at Manchester Metropolitan University. Our aim is to introduce you to the research we do via a programme of topical events and activities that make you want to come join us and participate. The programme is open to absolutely everyone.

In response to your feedback from last year, we've decided to change things round a bit. The events are now no longer confined to Monday evenings. We've decided to stick to our thematic strands, but instead of five there are now just three, each stretching across one of the University's teaching terms. Each strand will have its own brochure, and the whole programme is complemented by a series of three inaugural professorial lectures, plus Gothic Manchester Week and, due to popular demand, the return of Encountering Corpses II.

This year's themes signal a return back to basics. We asked ourselves: what are the aspects of human society that seem unavoidable but which challenge us to think more deeply and ask more probing questions? We decided that three central aspects of humanity that need this focus right now are WAR, SEX and WORLD.

Our second grand challenge is SEX.

Sex – be it our gender, sexual orientation, biological make-up, our attraction for somebody else, the act of intercourse or procreation – matters to all of us. Sex is a tremendous source of joy, love, connection, identity and pride, but it can also provoke great shame, stigma, fear, worry and vilification. The intention of this HiP strand on SEX is to examine just a few of the pressing questions that sex confronts us with, such as: How is our era of increased sexualisation affecting and changing our relationship to our own bodies and to each other? What does parenthood signify? Can our ideas about disease and sexuality inform each other?

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Our events will match a discussion of questions like these with numerous fun activities and popular, accessible events that take a lighter look at sex, gender and sexuality, particularly as examined in performance and representation on stage and screen. We hope that you will be able to join us and allow yourselves to be inspired, thrilled, enthused, educated and – ultimately – satisfied by what we have to offer.

### **Helen Darby**

Humanities in Public Festival  
Co-ordinator

### **Professor Berthold Schoene**

Associate Dean for Research, Faculty of Humanities, Languages and Social Science

Keep up to date on all Hip events, including our forthcoming season on WORLD via our Twitter and website:

Twitter **@mmu\_hssr**

Website **mmu.ac.uk/hip**

#### 4 Season Introduction

It is within human culture and interaction – the stuff of the Humanities – that our ideas about sexual roles, acts and identities are forged and policed. This is also where those ideas are rejected, resisted and subverted. We live in an era when dominant ideas about straightness are under review. So much of our language for talking about the pleasures and politics of sex has developed among lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer and trans communities, and so our programme also looks at what the increased visibility of these groups can teach us all.

For over a century, the movies have channelled our desires and taught us how to be men, women and children, to the extent that much commercial cinema has been an engine designed to produce heterosexual couples. Yet throughout this powerful world of image narrative and sound, other positions have found a place. Documentarists have pointed their cameras at what were invisible, silent subjects, letting them tell their own stories, and placing them centre-screen, while queer film festivals

have provided physical spaces for new social groupings to emerge. Hence there is a distinctly cinematic flavour to our Sex Programme, and we hope you will find our exploration provocative, inclusive and entertaining.

#### Dr Andrew Moor

Reader in Cinema History, Humanities Research Centre

*Andrew Moor is Reader in Cinema History at MMU, where he chiefly researches all aspects of LGBTQ cinema history (and LGBTQ Studies more widely), and British cinema history. His chief area of interest was originally the work of Powell and Pressburger and emerging from this he has a wider interest in British, transnational and cross-cultural film, with a particular emphasis on the work of exiles. More recently, he has focused on gay (and queer) cinema. He has written various chapters and articles on gay/queer film culture and his forthcoming monograph on LGBTQ cinema will be published by I. B. Tauris (London, 2018).*

## SEX SYMBOL: Valentino!

Screening of *The Son of The Sheik* (1926) with talk and live piano accompaniment by **Neil Brand**

#### Thursday 28 January 2016

Drinks reception for launch of SEX season in ground floor bar at 5pm  
Screening and talk 6.20pm  
HOME, 2 Tony Wilson Place, Manchester M15 4FN  
Tickets available from HOME website: [homemcr.org](http://homemcr.org)

In 1921, Valentino scored a huge success in *The Sheik* - the exotic yarn that crystallised his status as cinema's Great Lover. Blatantly peddling orientalist fantasies, that image was so central to his popularity that this sequel was made 5 years later. Here, Valentino appears as both the father and his son, the passionate desert leader who falls in love with Yasmin, a dancing girl.

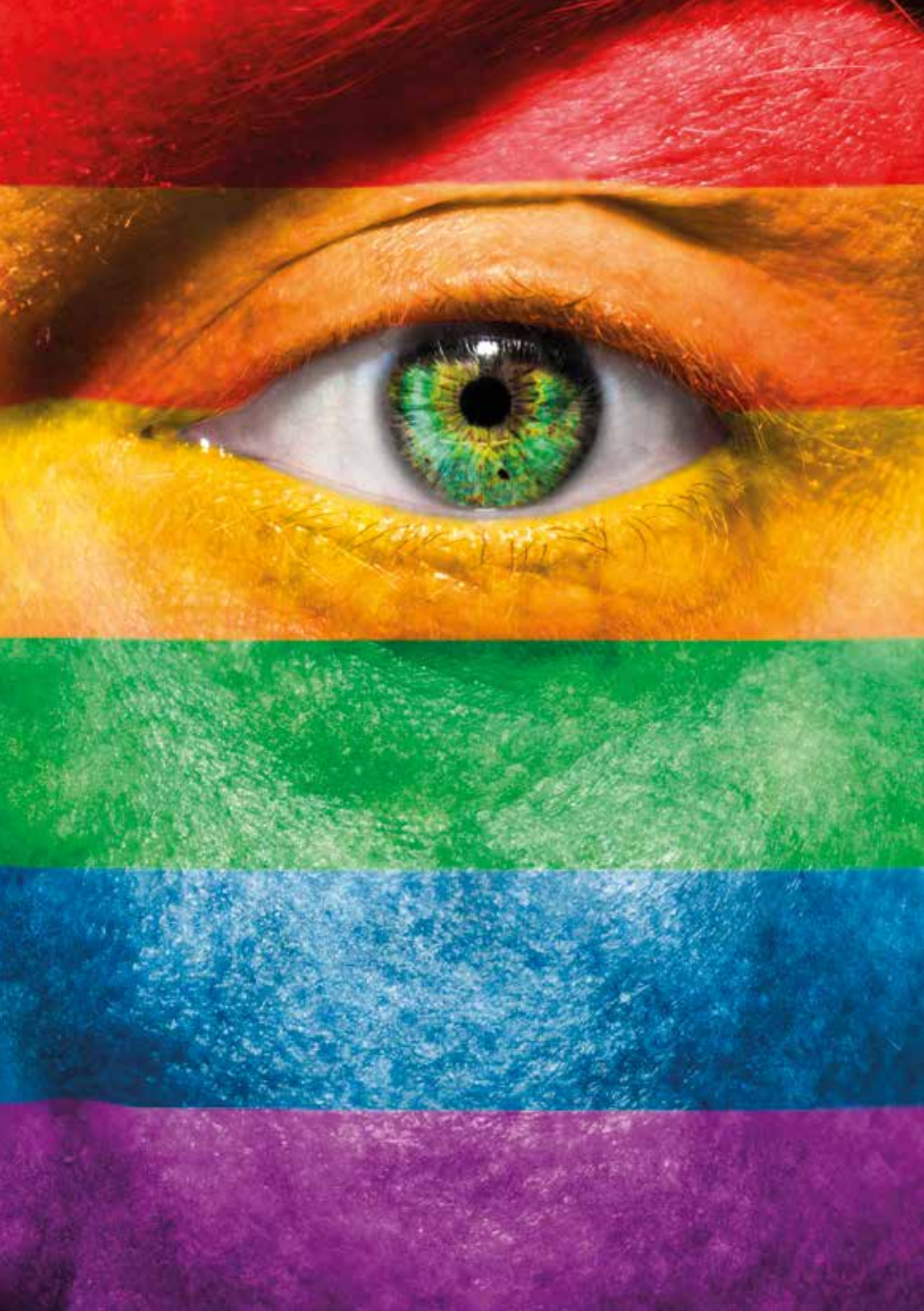
For this special screening, we are delighted that the celebrated composer Neil Brand will provide live piano accompaniment. Neil will be joined by Dr Andrew Moor (Manchester Metropolitan University) to give an introductory talk on the theme of 'Sex and Film Music'.

Convened by Dr Andrew Moor (MMU)

#### Plus:

Please join us for pre-screening drinks in the ground floor bar of HOME, where we will be launching the new Humanities in Public strand on SEX from 5pm – 6pm.





## Queer Film Festivals as Activism: An international symposium

**Friday 5 February and Saturday 6 February**

Featuring performance by **Bird la Bird**

No 70 Oxford St, Manchester M1 5NH

Symposium fee: **£20.00/£10.00** (includes film screening and Bird la Bird performance)

Bird la Bird performance: **Free**

Film screening: **Free**

Since the 1977 queer film festivals have proliferated across the globe and provided an opportunity for the enjoyment and popularisation of films on queer and LGBT themes that may be otherwise difficult to access in mainstream cinema. They are important events for the production of queer community. Furthermore, queer film festivals provide an alternative to a purely commercial scene providing opportunities to come together for the enjoyment of film culture and discussion. What is the role played by such festivals in nurturing visions of what a queer world could be? How important are these film festivals in articulating agendas around LGBTQ politics in different geographical and political circumstances? As new queer film festivals continue to proliferate, what needs, desires and agendas do they address? What motivates those who organise them? What roles do they play in the lives of those who attend them.

These questions and others will be addressed by this two-day international symposium at MMU. The event will bring together festival directors, programmers and academic researchers to discuss the practical, organisational, theoretical, political and cultural issues associated with queer film festivals. The symposium keynote will be

presented by Dr Skadi Loist from the University of Rostock.

Convened by Dr Jon Binnie in the School of Science and Environment and Dr Christian Klesse in the Department of Sociology. Since 2008, they have jointly researched the geographies of transnational geographies of LGBT and queer activism in Central and Eastern Europe. Their current research is concerned with queer film festivals as a form of cultural activism in different European cities.

Supported by the School of Research, Enterprise and Innovation, MMU

### **Events schedule:**

#### **Friday 5 February**

3.00 - 5.30pm  
Symposium introductions and session 1

#### **Evening event:**

5.30pm – 7.00pm  
*Screening of Acting Out: 25 years of Queer Film and Community in Hamburg* (Dir. Christina Magdalinou, Silvia Torneden, Ana Grillo, Germany, 2015)

#### **Saturday 6 February**

10.00am – 6pm  
International Symposium

## Bird la Bird

**Saturday 6 February**

7.30pm – 9.00pm

Performance by internationally renowned performance artist Bird la Bird.

No 70 Oxford St, Manchester M1 5NH

**Free** - See HiP website for tickets

8 We are intensely excited and honoured to offer this special, one off performance from Bird la Bird. Bird la Bird is "A shell-breaking performance artist who puts the camp back in communism and the fun back in feminism".

Under the streets of Manchester, a new plot against femme-invisibility is hatching! Be there to see it take flight, or miss out!

Photograph by Holly Revell



## Sex, Sexuality and Cancer

**Monday 8 February 2016**

6.00pm – 8.00pm

No 70 Oxford Street

Manchester, M1 5NH

**Free** - See HiP website for tickets

Join us for a frank, full-frontal look at issues around sex, sexuality and cancer! Exploring ways in which theatre and art can open up feelings and discussions about the C word, this event will feature a panel of academics and artists who have all dealt with cancer: in their research, their work and in their lives.

Panel members:

- Dr Natalie Hammond (MMU)
- Dr Brian Lobel (funwithcancerpatients.com)
- Dr Jac Saorsa (drawingcancer.wordpress.com)
- Dr Jackie Stacey (University of Manchester, author of *Teratologies: A Cultural Study of Cancer*)

This event will also feature a display of images from the Phoenix Project *Surviving Cancer*.

The Phoenix Project *Surviving Cancer* began by looking at issues surrounding cancer, sexuality and relationships.

9 The project team interviewed cancer survivors, asking them about their experiences. Excerpts from these interviews were then given to artists recruited from the graphic medicine community. We showed the resulting images back to the participants and assessed how they addressed their concerns. These powerful, provocative and moving images have helped survivors come to terms with how cancer has affected their relationships and sex lives.



## My Name is Gerry Potter

Documentary screening, poetry performance and Q&A

**Friday 12 February 2016**

6.00pm – 9.00pm

No 70 Oxford Street, Manchester M1 5NH

**Free** - See HiP website for tickets



*My Name is Gerry Potter* is a new documentary portrait of legendary Liverpool-born poet, performer, playwright and author Gerry Potter.

The documentary takes the audience on a journey through Gerry's work, his favourite landmarks, childhood memories, the Liverpool gay scene and Manchester's Canal Street. At times controversial - Gerry's work is brave and nothing is sacred – this probing documentary sees many old friends and collaborators share their memories of Gerry and his work.

Featuring Q&A panel with Gerry Potter and the director, Alex Negueruela. Chaired and convened by Dr Andrew Moor (MMU).

We are honoured and delighted that Gerry will be performing a selection of his poetry (as featured in the film) as part of this event.

## Polyamory – Consensual Non-Monogamy – Relationship Anarchy

A workshop and information fair on relationship diversity

**Sunday 21 February 2016**

10am – 6pm

No 70 Oxford Street, Manchester M1 5NH

**£5** - See HiP website for tickets

Many people feel drawn towards building intimate relationships that include mutual arrangements on emotional and/or sexual non-exclusivity. This event will explore questions regarding consensually non-monogamous ways of life, from academic, cultural and political perspectives. Consensual non-monogamy can be based on many different styles of intimacy, including (among others): open relationships (built around a primary couple), negotiated loving multi-partner relationships (often called polyamory) or approaches that refuse to make any distinction between sexual, romantic or platonic relationships (referred to by some as 'relationship anarchy').

This event will bring together leading researchers, activists and community organizers to stage a discussion around relationship diversity, exclusion, visibility, relationship ethics and the practical challenges of living in non-monogamous or polyamorous relationships and families. The day will consist of a series of brief talks and discussions, an information fair with stalls and a 'human library' of people who are ready to answer your questions about what 'poly' means to them personally.

Speakers and Panel members include:

- Dr Meg John Barker (Writer and activist; Senior Lecturer in Psychology at the Open University; Psychotherapist and Co-Founder of Poly Counselling UK).
- Dr Robin Bauer (Acting Professor of Social Work, The Baden-Wuerttemberg Cooperative State University Stuttgart (DHBW Stuttgart, Germany), Brussels/Belgium).
- Grant Denkinson (Counsellor/ Psychotherapist, co-founder of Poly Counselling UK, Academic and Polyamory Community Organiser, Leicester, UK).
- Gesa Mayer (Associate Researcher, Hamburg University of Applied Social Sciences, Germany).

Convened by Dr Christian Klesse (MMU).

Christian Klesse teaches Sociology at Manchester Metropolitan University. His main areas of interest include sexualities and intimacies, gender and sexual politics, transnational LGBTQ activism and the cultural activism around Queer Film Festivals.



## Myra Breckinridge: Sure hard to handle?

Featuring **Kate O'Donnell** and **Cheddar Gorgeous**

**Friday 26 February 2016**

6.00pm – 10.00pm

No 70 Oxford St, Manchester M1 5NH

**Free** - See *HiP* website for tickets

**Over 18s only**

**12** "A tasteless abomination!", "The worst film ever made!" with this sort of critical castigation, perhaps it was inevitable that 'cult status' awaited Michael Same's adaptation of Gore Vidal's scabrous satire, *Myra Breckinridge* (1970). It was rapturously received at its last sold-out screening at the National Film Theatre a few years ago, though it is very rarely screened now.

Raquel Welch stars as Myra, a transsexual heroine graphically battling Hollywood's obsessive construction of All-American maleness. Featuring giants of the studio period (Mae West and John Huston), a brief appearance from a pre-moustachioed Tom Selleck, and revelling in its seemingly wanton degeneracy, what does this film say to us now about sexual roles, about the magic of cinema, about its ability to shock?



Featuring a discussion panel with superstars Kate O'Donnell and Cheddar Gorgeous!

This event will be immediately followed by the February edition of Manchester's infamous and fabulous clubnight Cha Cha Boudoir!! Stay tuned for further announcements...

Chaired and convened by Dr Andrew Moor (MMU)



## Queer Story Showcase 'Let's talk about sex'

**Thursday 3 March**

6.00pm – 10.00pm

No 70 Oxford Street, Manchester M1 5NH

**Free** - See *HiP* website for tickets

This screening event, in collaboration with Queer Media, includes *Chemsex* (2015), described as powerful and unflinching exploration of a potential health emergency in London's gay community. *Chemsex* is a new feature-length documentary from *Vice* magazine, which features privileged access to the world of 'chemsex' and 'slamming' parties - where intravenous drug use and unprotected sex may be fuelling a rise in HIV infections and drug addiction in the capital.

Featuring Q&A with academics Dr Phil Hutchinson (MMU, Philosophy) and Dr Rob Ralphs (MMU, Sociology).

**Plus:** Short films including *Hole*; *Daniel*; *Wham, Bam, mr Pam*; *The Kiss*.



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## Sex and Stigma

Friday 4 March 2016

12.00 – 4.00pm

No 70 Oxford St, Manchester M1 5NH

**Free** - See HiP website for tickets

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Even in the highly sexualised environment of the 21st Century secular western world, sex, sexuality and sexual behaviour are still often stigmatised as 'dirty' and 'unsafe' - particularly if performed with more frequency, more partners, or in more specialised ways than those considered 'normal'. HIV-stigma is just one of the judgements being driven by society's prejudicial attitudes to sex (how much we should have; sex as dirty) sexuality (certain sexualities are normal others perverse) and sexual behaviour (The use of the term 'risky' sex, for example, and the connotations that stem from that).

In this free public event, a panel of HIV clinicians, public health workers and academics - led by Dr Phil Hutchinson (MMU Philosophy, researcher on shame and medical humanities) and Dr Rob Ralphs (MMU Sociology, researcher in substance use and abuse) - will address various issues surrounding sex, shame and stigma.



The panel will consider how public health concerns such as HIV and STI transmission intersect with more deeply ingrained moral and emotional biases about other people's

sexual practices. This event will discuss the phenomenon currently labelled as 'chemsex' and the coverage of this phenomenon in the media, as a case study of contemporary stigmatising. The panel will examine how much of the discussion about chemsex begins from an unacknowledged, sometimes subconscious, piety about sex per se (and 'transgressive' gay sex in particular) and ask if there is a potentially stigmatising effect from this moral panic, on the wider LGBT community.

## Hot Sex Time Machine: 30 years of sex on screen

Saturday 5 March

10.00am – 7.00pm

No 70 Oxford Street, Manchester M1 5NH

**Free** - See HiP website for tickets and running order (each film will be ticketed separately)

**Over 18s only**

The 'Hot Sex Time Machine' invites you to time jump 30 years into the past and visit the erotic world of 1980s intimacy. We will be screening three incredible films, all of which deal with different aspects of forbidden sexuality: gay, lesbian and BDSM:

- *My Beautiful Laundrette* (1985)
- *Desert Hearts* (1985)
- *Nine and a Half Weeks* (1985)

The Hot Sex Time Machine will consider changing attitudes to sex, love and desire over 30 years from 1985 to the present day. Issues addressed will include: LGBTQ 'then and now', the screen kiss through time, safer sex/HIV and attitudes to BDSM from Basinger to Christian Grey...



The films will be introduced and discussed by three amazing academics and film experts:

- Dr Andrew Moor (MMU)
- Dr Monica Pearl (University of Manchester)
- Professor Linda Ruth Williams (Southampton)

**Plus!** Free safe sex packs, popcorn, popping candy and 80s tunes in the breaks.

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## Vanilla Shakes?

Exploring sexual coupledness and the everyday

Wednesday 9 March 2016

6.00pm - 8.00pm

No 70 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 5NH

**Free** - See HiP website for tickets

The liberalisation of both sexual regulation and attitudes since the 1960s - alongside the popular cultural ubiquity of sexual references and images - has given rise to the assumption that western cultures are sexually liberated. Within this context, sociological debate around intimate relationships has focused on changes in sexual practices. A key assertion is that heterosexuality is losing its associations with wider gender inequalities and as such is no longer privileged as the norm. While there is some evidence suggesting that sexual identity categories may be loosening, in everyday life heterosexuality appears to maintain its status as the normative form of sexuality, and long-term couple relationships remain the dominant form.

This event foregrounds the everyday life of the sexual couple to explore what constitutes 'everyday, mundane, conventional sexual lives' at the beginning of the twenty-first century.



Convened by Dr Jenny Van Hoof (MMU Department of Sociology) in conversation with Dr Jacqui Gabb (OU).

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Dr Jenny van Hooff is Senior Lecturer in Sociology at Manchester Metropolitan University. Her work focuses on couples, sexual practices, love, commitment, monogamy/non-monogamy and emotional and domestic labour. She is currently researching the role of dating apps in the ways that individuals conduct their personal relationships through digitally mediated interactions.

Dr Jacqui Gabb is the author (with J Fink) of *Couple Relationships in the 21st Century*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan (2015) and Associate Dean in the Faculty of Social Sciences at The Open University.

Dr Gabb will be discussing her study, *Enduring Love?*, which is exploring what it means and feels like to be a couple in contemporary Britain. Shifting the emphasis away from media hyperbole and unsubstantiated claims about what everyone is doing, and policy-professional practice emphasis on the 'stressors' which may contribute to relationship breakdown, *Enduring Love?* focusses on the things that help people sustain their 'enduring' relationships.

## Being Childfree with Kate Fox

**Friday 11th March**

6.00pm – 9.00pm

No 70 Oxford St, Manchester M1 5NH

**Free** - See *HiP website for tickets*

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Kate Fox has always known she didn't want children. (Though she wouldn't have minded giving birth to spaniels). She began developing a stand up show to explore

the topic in 2013 and was surprised at the positive response of both parents and non-parents, and at how common choosing to be child-free now is. The show *Good Breeding* was performed at the Leicester and Glasgow Comedy Festivals and the Edinburgh Fringe and became a Radio 4 comedy show which aired in June, 2015. She realised how many people are still stigmatised for choosing not to be parents (especially women). There are now 'child-free' and 'otherhood' movements. Kate's choice of comedy as a medium to explore the issues reflects her belief that the complex set of personal, social and economic issues that are involved in having, or not, having children needs to be talked about more openly and freely.

Kate Fox did a PG Diploma in Radio Journalism at Leeds Trinity in 1997 & worked as a newsreader and reporter for stations including Galaxy North East and Manchester and Metro Radio. She dabbled in stand up for years but things took off when she added

poems and she became a full-time performance poet in 2006, winning slams and competitions and becoming a regular on Radio 4's *Saturday Live* from 2007-2014. She recently wrote and performed two comedy shows for Radio 4 including one episode about how she didn't want children and one about how she didn't want a big white wedding. She now holds a full time PhD studentship at the University of Leeds where she is researching performance and Northernness.



Convened by Dr Ginette Carpenter (MMU)

Ginette Carpenter is a senior lecturer in the Department of English. Her research interests are in feminist

theory, women's writing and theories of reading. Her publications include work on Jeanette Winterson and the figure of the mother in contemporary gothic film and she is currently co-editing a volume on the work of Hilary Mantel. Her interest in the concept of the 'childfree' originates from a combination of her own childfree status with an increasing anxiety about the reactionary polarisation and compartmentalisation of women's identities that can attach to the use of the term.

## At a glance

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| Date           | Event                                       | Location |
|----------------|---|----------|
| 28 January     | Rudolph Valentino screening                 | HOME     |
| 5 & 6 February | Queer Film Festival Symposium               | No 70    |
| 8 February     | Sex, Sexuality and Cancer Panel discussion  | No 70    |
| 12 February    | <i>My Name is Gerry Potter</i> Documentary  | No 70    |
| 21 February    | Polyamory Day                               | No 70    |
| 26 February    | <i>Myra Breckinridge</i> screening          | No 70    |
| 3 March        | Chemsex Documentary                         | No 70    |
| 4 March        | Sex and Stigma panel discussion             | No 70    |
| 5 March        | Hot Sex Time Machine - 80s film triple bill | No 70    |
| 9 March        | Vanilla Shakes? Panel discussion            | No 70    |
| 11 March       | Being Childfree with Kate Fox               | No 70    |

# Save the date

**20** The third and final strand of the 15/16 season will be entitled 'WORLD'.

## **WORLD:**

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| 19 March   | Encountering Corpses II   |
| 20th April | The Great British Breadwinner:<br>Shared Parental Leave 1 year on |
| 27 April   | Global Austerity  |
| 30 April   | Faith in the World  |
| 7 May      | Beyond Babel Film Festival  |
| 13 May     | The Global Girl   |
| 19 May     | Dolly Birds and Swinging Cities                                   |
| 28 May     | Animal Rights and Education                                       |
| 11 June    | Digitised Re-enchantment: Nature, Writing & Technology            |
| 25 June    | Ruskin and Sustainability   |

Plus:

Join us on the 15th June for our launch of the 16/17 season on 'Greater Manchester Devolution and Northern Identity: D/Evolving Manchester'.

All venues and further details will be confirmed nearer the time. Please see the HiP website and Twitter @mmu\_hsr for updates.

**Humanities in Public are grateful for the support of the following partners and sponsors:** **21**



**[mmu.ac.uk/hip](http://mmu.ac.uk/hip)**

 **[@mmu\\_hssr](https://twitter.com/mmu_hssr)**

**#HIPSEX**

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