

Emma Purshouse is a lively and original performance poet, workshop facilitator and free-lance writer.

Education

1990 – 1994	Wolverhampton University B.A. Hons English and History
1996 – 1997	Cannock Chase Technical College City and Guilds 7306 Level 3 (Further and Adult Education Teacher's Certificate)
2000 – 2003	Manchester Metropolitan University MA in Creative Writing (Novel Route)

Performance Poetry

Venues and support include:

- The Gateway in Shrewsbury (supporting poet and novelist Sophie Hannah)
- Warwick Arts Festival 2005
- Warwick Words 2006, 2009
- Birmingham's Six of the Best
- Swindon Festival of Literature 2006;
- Ledbury Poetry Festival 2007, 2009, 2010
- Cheltenham Festival 2006, 2008, 2009
- Guest poet on Apples and Snakes' 'Things That Cannot Be Said' tour
- Featured poet for Apples and Snakes at Whitechapel Gallery, London
- Radio 4 Slam (regional heats 2009)
- Sol Fest 2009
- Audlem Festival 2009 – 2015
- Featured artist for Apples and Snakes - Hit the Ode 2011
- Featured artist Bang Said the Gun, Manchester 2012;
- Much Wenlock Poetry Festival 2013, 2014 (support for John Hegley), 2015 (support for Holly McNish)
- Cheltenham Poetry Festival 2013.
- Manchester Metropolitan University Children's Literature Festival 2016 (support for Carol Ann Duffy)

Workshop Leader.

Sample of groups worked with include:-

- Wednesfield Writers with Talent and Reans Writers (children's writing groups run by Wolverhampton Libraries)
- Bilston Writers' Group
- Women Who Write
- Family Dyslexia Group
- ImageText Image cross-generational workshops
- Birmingham Literature Festival's Write On Project (various schools Yr 1 upwards)
- Children's poetry workshops for the Dudley Rock and Fossil Festival
- Group leader for Writing West Midlands' Spark Young Writers group based in Stoke on Trent

Stand up Comedy

Venues include Wolverhampton Varsity, Stourbridge Town Hall, Bridgnorth's Cinnamon Café, Manchester's Comedy Balloon, The Holly Bush in Cradley Heath.

Residencies

Poet in Residence for Wolverhampton Libraries – working with children's writers groups.

The New Vic Theatre in Stoke on Trent (2007) – A week long residency producing poetry for their 21st Birthday celebrations.

Poet in Residence for the International Festival of Glass, Stourbridge 2015

Publications

Short stories and poetry published in various national and international small press magazines and anthologies, including Raw Edge, Fire, Labour of Love, Bugged, Caterpillar, Much Wenlock Poetry Festival Anthology.

Poetry On Loan postcard poem – Divorcing Superman.

Poetry On Loan postcard poem – Feeling Low?

Poetry On Loan postcard poem – Glut Reaction.

Poetry On Loan postcard poem – Go Or They Might Stop Asking.

Fair or Fowl - children's poetry CD (published by Rowan Berry Press)

Upsetting The Applecart – performance poetry CD (published by Offa's Press)

The Nailmakers' Daughters – with Iris Rhodes and Marion Cockin (published by Offa's Press 2015).

I Once Knew a Poem Who Wore a Hat – children's poetry collection (published by Fair Acre Press 2016)

Part of the Multistory team responsible for producing 'Black Country Women at Work', 'Black Country Man' and 'Black Country Roots'.

Competition Placings

- Winner of the Wolverhampton City Arts Festival Poetry Competition 2002.
- Two poems short listed for the Belmont Children's Poetry Competition 2005.
- Highly commended for the Belmont Children's Poetry Competition 2007.
- Winner of the Fourth Annual Solihull Slam
- Joint winner of the Warwick Words Slam 2006
- 2nd Place in the UK All Stars at the Cheltenham Festival of Literature 2006
- Winner of The Big Bilston Love Slam 2009
- Winner of Waterstones/Central Libraries 'Write the Future' competition
- 2nd Place in The Ledbury Poetry Festival Slam 2009
- 2nd Place in the UK All Stars Poetry Slam at Cheltenham Festival 2009
- Winner of the Nailsworth Festival Poetry Slam 2010
- Winner of the Much Wenlock Poetry Festival Slam 2011
- Shortlisted for the Mslexia Novel Writing Prize 2012.
- Shortlisted for the Bare Fiction Flash Fiction Prize 2014
- Shortlisted for the Brighton Prize for Flash Fiction 2016.
- Winner of the Rubery Book Award (Poetry Section) 2016.

Editing

'Women's Work' – Women Who Write

'The Poetry of Staffordshire' (with Simon Fletcher - published by Offa's Press 2015)

Mentoring and Lecturing

Poetry mentoring for Poetry on Loan.

Poetry mentoring for Offa's Press.

Visiting poet for Ledbury Poetry Festival Schools' Programme 2010 and 2013

Visiting lecturer for Wolverhampton University academic year 2012-2013

Mentor for the Young Poet Laureate of Shropshire 2015/16

Mentor for the Young Poet Laureate of Warwickshire 2016/17

Other

- Former member of ImageText Image, a group of writers and artists who collaborated to produce images influenced by poetry and poetry influenced by images.

Exhibitions took place at Wolverhampton's Eagle Works, Harbourne Gallery, The Gateway in Shrewsbury, Wolverhampton's Light House, and the Dudley Rock and Fossil Festival 2009.

- Writer and performer of the one-woman poetry play 'The Professor Vyle Show'. The show was performed at festivals, colleges, and schools. The writing and development of this piece received ACE funding.
- 'A circle drawn at random' - collaboration with photographer David Rann (shown at the Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton, The Mayor's Parlour Wolverhampton).
- Writer of site specific theatre piece 'Wrosne'. The Wrosne project took place over a period of twelve months in Dudley (2007 – 2008). The Leaps & Bounds team used a unique programme of personal intervention and development, one-to-one pastoral support, and professional quality arts activity to help 60 young people turn around their own lives and that of their local community which culminated in a week of sell out performances, deep underground in spaces that the audiences accessed by boat!
- Writer of 'Are you sitting comfortably?' new poetry commissioned by the Arena Theatre Wolverhampton – performed December 2009.
- Text pieces for Brian Griffin Photography exhibition – Black Country (Paris, November 2010; Walsall, Spring 2011).
- Co-founder of Brewers' Troupe – Theatre company specialising in taking performance poetry shows into public houses and community venues.
- Poetry Competition Judge
- Writer of 'Who does she think she is?' – performed Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton – October 2011.
- Co-writer and performer for E-X-P-A-N-D-I-N-G the universe, a collaborative project between two poets a musician and an astro physicist which was performed at Much Wenlock Poetry Festival, Stratford Literature Festival, Birmingham Literature Festival and Birmingham University Science Festival.

- Ten Letters (2016) – cross-generational performance piece directed by Hannah Silva.

Organiser/Promoter for:-

- Live at the Imperial – cabaret night which included top comedians, novelty acts and the country's best performance poets.
- The Big Bilston Love Slam – annual poetry slams hosted by Marcus Moore and Sara-Jane Arbury.
- Bilston Voices – spoken word night for local writers.
- Poetry strand of the Audlem Music and Arts Festival.

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