

Guest speakers' biography

Sunjeev Sahota is a young British writer whose debut novel **Ours are the Streets**, published in 2011, received great reviews in publications like **The Times**, **The Guardian**, **The Independent** and **The Sunday Times**. Sunjeev was selected by UK literary and magazine publishing giant **Granta** as one of the Best Young British Novelists in their fourth collection and he is currently working on his second novel, 'The Year of the Runaways'.

Dr Katy Shaw is a leading authority on the literature of the 1984-85 UK miners' strike and 21st century writings. Her research interests include contemporary literature, especially working class literature, cultural representations of post-industrial regeneration and the languages of comedy. She is editor of *C21 Literature: Journal of 21st-Century Writings*, director of [C21: Centre for research in 21st century writings](#) at the University of Brighton and a key contributor to the journal [Alluvium](#) [21st century writing | 21st century approaches](#).

Katy grew up in Newcastle Upon Tyne and County Durham. Her family and environment bore the scars of the miners' strike, the decline of the industrial North and the after-effects of the Thatcher era. Living in the shadow of defunct pithead winding gear and silent landscapes provided the inspiration to re-examine the history of this area and look again at the literature which emerged from it.

Much of her early research focused on the Gothic influence in post-industrial images of decline and representations of loss and absence. This theme sustained her undergraduate dissertation in literature at Cambridge University and was later developed in her MA by research at Lancaster University. Following on from this work, she has written a monograph about contemporary British novelist David Peace and is currently working on monographs concerning women in comedy, twenty-first century genre fiction and the global credit crunch and approaches to Hauntology in contemporary culture.

Dr Katy Shaw is Subject Leader for English Literature, Senior Lecturer in Contemporary Literature and Director of Centre 21 at the University of Brighton. She has previously worked at the University of Greenwich and was 40th Anniversary Teaching Fellow at Lancaster University. Prior to this she worked in a variety of secondary and FE institutions teaching English Literature and gaining a PGCE. She brings an inter-disciplinary, theoretical expertise in the specific field of the intersection between creative and critical practice to Centre 21: Centre for 21st Century Writings as well as contributing to developments in the fields of poetry, language, identity and the development of the Research Centre in Memory, Narrative and Histories.