



Press Release 19/02/2025

HFEH Mind and Munchie Lunchie Productions launch #PoetryInTheCity, a 3-part Poetry Slam and Grand Final

- #PoetryInTheCity is a three-part Poetry Slam and Grand Final open to anyone to join or compete, being held in Shepherd's Bush from 3rd to 21st March.
- An incredible line up of award-winning Professional Poets, Fellows, Artists and Judges featuring; Ruth O'Callaghan, Charnjit Gill, Sami Rhymes, Shachar (Shar) Shamai, and Arun Jeetoo.
- Opening 3 rounds will be held at Next Door Records on Uxbridge Rd with the Grand Final taking place at Unit 156 in Shepherd's Bush Market.
- #PoetryintheCity features professional and amateur poets exploring the writings of famous Arab poet Al Mutanabbi. Attendees compete to finish open ended verses from Al Mutanabbi writings and perform them on stage.
- The Grand Final will feature a performance from Europe's first Middle Eastern, North African, and West Asian (SWANA) improv comedy show The Bazaar.
- Together we will drive awareness of marginalised communities and mental health support available to all.

On Feb 19th 2025, HFEH Mind and Munchie Lunchie Productions launch #PoetryInTheCity, aspirational 3-part Poetry Slam and Grand Final in aid of short film 'Ashes of a Dying Ember'. The Slam also forms part of HFEH Mind's Thirty for 30K Campaign aimed at driving thirty Thousand conversations around mental health in west London.

The Slams have been designed to be both engaging and thought provoking by highlighting the everyday struggles refugees and asylum seekers face while losing their identity, awaiting asylum application outcomes and trying to integrate into a new and alien society.

With a fantastic panel of judges and professional poets, artists and fellows lined up to perform, recite and judge throughout the evenings, the slams are sure to be a hit. The Slams are centered around the verses and scriptures of Syria's very own Shakespeare; Poet and Philosopher Al Mutanabbi. Through careful curation of stanzas from his works, poetry fans will be encouraged to perform in English in an open mic setting on the night along with readings from professional poets, with a special guest appearance from stand-up comedy performance group The Bazaar for the Grand Final.

To be a Slam contestant, contenders must simply purchase a ticket via the Eventbrite page and then register their interest to compete on HFEH Mind's website. Contestants can also register to compete on the night and all are welcome to attend and enjoy the evening.



“In a time where division and misinformation is prevalent. A project like Poetry in the City stands as a beacon of hope, guiding future generations towards healthy and positive discussions to better understand our fellow man and create avenues for constructive conversations and practical discourse that helps unite rather than divide.” - **Karim Hadaya**
CEO Munchie Lunchie Productions

The 3 opening rounds will consist of multiple open mic slots, an introduction to mental health awareness, a brief overview of the history of refugees, and recitals by renowned professional poets.

The Grand Final will follow a similar format to the opening rounds with the winners of the opening rounds being invited back for a chance at earning the bragging rights.

If you are an aspiring poet, writer or looking for an alternative evening of performances then simply head on down and join in the Slams. You can register your interest to perform in advance for the open mic slots or sign up on the night! Tickets are £10 in advance £12 on the door.

There is a star-studded line up of judges and performers joining the Slams. Ruth is a Hawthornden Fellow, an international competition adjudicator, interviewer, reviewer, editor, workshop leader – both in the U.K and abroad – and mentor, has compered and read at poetry festivals in the U.K. and abroad. She has been translated into six languages and invited to read extensively in Asia, Europe and the USA.

“The importance of this campaign is of inestimable value to the nation’s mental health. Poetry enables us to express those emotions generated by our life experience.” - **Ruth O'Callaghan**

Charnjit Gill has an MA in Creative Writing and a BA in English Literature & Creative Writing, her work has been published in 12 poetry journals. She was one of winners of the Art Fund Prize 2023 where her poem ‘Triggered’ was displayed on billboards throughout the UK. Last year her debut play ‘Good Mourning’ was showcased with a 4 star review. She has performed at venues such as Somerset House, Rich Mix, the Desi Blitz festival in Birmingham and Leicester Museum. Charnjit has published 3 poetry collections with Atmosphere Press- Impression, For the Moment and most recently Pray Tell.

Sami Rhymes is an Award-Winning Spoken Word Artist, Poet and Author from London, UK. She also works in Project Management and as a Freelance Creative. Sami had her first poem published at the age of 9 in a young writers anthology. Sami released her debut collection 20 Something in 2020 and has contributed poems to other publications including It Will Be: The Black Experience and the Words By anthology.

Shachar (Shar) Shamai is a London-based librettist, lyricist, poet, composer, director, and vocal coach. He holds an MA in Classical Singing from the Jerusalem Academy of Music and



Dance and an MA in Musical Theatre from Guildford School of Acting (GSA). Shar has over 15 years of teaching experience across various international and UK-based institutions, including Urdang Academy, London Studio Centre (LSC), International College of Musical Theatre (ICMT), and Performance Preparation Academy (PPA).

Arun Jeetoo is a multidisciplinary artist, performer and English teacher with Mauritian heritage currently based in London, UK. His work features in The London Reader, The Black Spring Group Press's The Best New British and Irish Poets 2019-2021, fourteen poems, Magma 89 and The Commonwealth Foundation, as well as other established literary and contemporary poetry magazines and anthologies.

The Bazaar is Europe's first Middle Eastern, North African, and West Asian (SWANA) improv comedy show. Blending audience suggestions, the epic myths of; 'The Arabian Night's', 'The Shahnama', and especially for Poetry in the City, the poetry of Al Muntanabbi' the multi-award-winning cast of comedians create hilarious scenes—blending experiences of migration whilst celebrating the warmth, humour and quirks of the diaspora.

"With #PoetryInTheCity we provide a unique space to express deep emotions, struggles, and hopes in the face of trauma, displacement, and loss. I think poetry can serve as a healing tool, offering both a voice and a sense of agency as it so does for the main character in our short Ashes of a dying ember where it helps Hadi transform silence into words, pain into art, and gives him the power to reclaim his narrative." - **Yasmin Henn - Writer - Ashes of a Dying Ember**

An inclusive event designed to inspire, transcend barriers and break down divides through the power of words.

Please find Boiler Plates, supporting links and downloads for imagery below

End

Approved Imagery

- [Download Now](#)

Buy Tickets:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/poetryinthecity-4057753>

Sign up to Compete

<https://www.hfehmind.org.uk/support-us/poetry-in-the-city/>

Go Fund Me – Support short film 'Ashes of a Dying Ember'

- [Donation link](#)



About HFEH Mind

Hammersmith, Fulham, Ealing and Hounslow Mind is a Local Mind Association operating across the Tri-borough. Mind operates a federated structure of Local Mind Associations, which are independent charities with their own funding and services. We share the same values as Mind, and we are regularly reviewed to make sure our charity is maintaining local Mind quality standards, so that we are providing local and effective services which meet the needs of our local community. Everyone deserves the help and respect they need to recover. We listen, support recovery, fight stigma, and work with partners to take action on mental health. We provide services for adults, children and young people, and training and consultancy for employers.

Find out more about HFEH Mind [here](#)

Main HFEH Mind Social Media: [FB](#), [Insta](#), [X](#), [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#), [TikTok](#)

About Munchie Lunchie Productions

Munchie Lunchie Productions is a young production company run by the next generation of filmmakers in the UK. Their mission is to create equitable and diverse stories that truly represent the mixed tapestry of cultures in the UK and around the world. Their future projects catalog consists of 37 films, TV shows and plays of different genres and themes. The drama short film *Ashes of a Dying Ember*, will usher in their first motion picture to be submitted for national and international festivals.

Find out more about Munchie Lunchie Production [here](#)

Main Social Media profiles: [Insta](#), [YouTube](#)

Crowdfunder link: <https://gofund.me/74490701> - *Ashes of a dying ember*

Promo video: <https://youtu.be/eQ6ACaLZogo?si=2LncRIGkEUaDI1oc> - *Ashes of a dying ember*

