**Interview with Katherine Moss transcript**

**Laura Kenwright** 00:02

I'm absolutely thrilled to be joined by Katherine Moss, who won this year. This year's disabled poets prize for the best unpublished pamphlet with her pamphlet the still point. It will be published later this year by virtue of poetry pressed. Catherine finished her MA in creative writing at the Manchester writing school in October 2022. Her most recent work explores truth and mythology in a family heritage with a particular interest in the Irish diaspora of the 20th century. Catherine's work also reflects upon her own attempts to find a better life abroad as a disabled young woman and mother. New to the poetry world. Her poem st Francis's Sati was published in the journal consilience in October 2022. In 2020, her script monologue Linda's shield was performed online by the Garrick Theatre, a story that reflected the devastating impact of high COVID-19 mortality rates for the elderly and disabled people in the UK. She recently worked as a volunteer editor on a children's book of short stories by young people from the care system in the UK. The book, 'Tales of the Bold The Brave and the Beautiful' was published in June 2022. In May 2022, she was awarded a writing bursary from Manchester Metropolitan University International Department to produce poetry based on the life experience of British residents and UK residents of Chinese descent for an arts exhibition at the University in September 2022. Welcome, Katherine. It would be absolutely wonderful if you could share with us one of the poems from your award winning pamphlet, would that be okay?

**Katherine Moss** 01:47

Yes, hello, Laura. Yes. Um, so I'm going to read for you the first poem in my submission of the pamphlet to the Disabled Poets competition. I, I think, I think this is probably a poem that I worked the hardest on. I like to write, I used to like to write very long form poems. And so this one was, I feel it was very, it feels like I crafted this poem. But yeah, I'm really, I think. Yeah, I think I still managed to retain the imagery that I wanted to portray. So this is this poem is called 'Etna' after the famous volcano in Sicily. I went to Sicily probably about 10 years ago, with a friend. And everywhere I went, I just thought my daughter would love this. And I took my daughter there last year. And we didn't get to see Etna because it was so hot. They cancelled all the tours. And also, Etna was being a little bit temperamental. She was she was erupting just a little bit. And so we had to see her I managed to go up 10 years ago, I woke up and see, I went quite high to see Etna. But last year, we just had to see the coach back to the airport and she was she wasn't happy. You could see the plumes of smoke, the black smoke, you could tell that she was angry about something. And for some reason we call the we refer to volcanoes as the feminine, which I found out so Etna is a she. Etna offends the blue canopy, her rupture unresolving obscurer of man's ascent, hidden by light, leeching plumage, the dull shade of a badly laundered communion dress. Amid the uniformed purity of a child's processional, girls step in line behind their fathers and uncles. Above veil children men hoist and marble virgin. Stumbling as her bulk breaks their shore stride, broad backs perspiring from lack of practice. Secrets, whispered by daughters, inside soft, steepled hands.

**Laura Kenwright** 04:25

Beautiful. Thank you for sharing that with us. Okay. So I'd love to ask you some questions about your work if that's okay. Yeah. So my first questions is, when did you start writing poetry and what drew you to it?

**Katherine Moss** 04:46

So I started, I think writing poetry is as a child. When I went to school 100 years ago, there wasn't a national curriculum. So teachers kind of just taught you, whatever. Which meant they didn't teach us grammar, unfortunately, which is still a weakness of my. But we did get the opportunity to do lots of creative work in, in, I suppose what you would call that time reserved for English Language and English literature. And so I remember writing an acrostic poem, you know, where you put the words that say a word like Christmas, down the page, and then each line starts with the letter of that word. So C would be the first line page would be the second. And I remember the teacher really liked it. And she made me read it in front of the class to very bored bunch of 10 year olds. And I don't know if it was the same day or a different point when I was in her class. But she said that she, that I'm a writer, and that one day, she expects to read my book. And I was like, really embarrassed by that. But also, I just, it was just a lovely thing for her to say. Quite a pressure as well. I suppose I always held that a little bit in the back of my mind. And so yeah, she was a wonderful teacher. I just quite strict. So for her to say something like that was quite a big deal. But, but yeah, I didn't publish any books. Yes, I Yeah, yeah. I've left it so long. So yeah, so I, when I think of when did I start writing that memory comes to mind. I also like many teenagers, I wrote really deeply earnest, passionate poetry when I was in sixth form. And, you know, I thought it was wonderful that when you look back on work like that, you're very embarrassed. Why was I drawn to poetry? I really liked writing stories, we were usually asked every week through primary school to write a story. And you're given no guidance as you would be now you'd be given a sentence starter or a topic now in primary skill, we will just like read story in his head. And I really loved doing that. And I found it very easy homework. So what drew me to poetry? I don't, I suppose it's all by accident, and by just teachers requiring us to write and I did, and I liked it. And obviously, within our class, you would have people that would love to do that. And then you'd have people who it's the worst thing possible, why can we do some maths? Can we just see that I really enjoyed it. That's probably more a writer, as a child than a, than a reader of poetry. Although, when I tell people now when they say to me, oh, poetry, it's too difficult, or I don't read poetry. I do remind them that as a baby, as a child, you know, they would have been exposed to nursery rhymes and poems that they may not recognise as poets, that it's part of our it's very much part of our formative years, there's very early years, but we don't recognise it as such. So I suppose like everyone I've grown up with, with poetry from before, probably from before I could speak before I could communicate. Plastic,

**Laura Kenwright** 08:28

can you tell us a little bit about the development of your poetry? When did you first feel you were a poet?

**Katherine Moss** 08:38

 Um, that comes and goes, Yeah, so I think there was some times during the Creative Writing masters that I just finished, that you feel like, Oh, I'm, I'm in a room with poets. And I, they're my peers. So I'm a poet as well. But then you could be in a class with quite prominent published poet, and you just sit there thinking there's no chance I can, you know, be at that that level of just wonderful writing. So I don't think I still don't confidently tell people I'm a poet. I think there are only certain contexts in which you could say that. So I imagined like a lot of even quite prominent poets, I have a job and poetry is my, my side hustle I suppose - something I do. So I have to come back to you on that and Laura, and tell you when I feel that I'm a poet.

**Laura Kenwright** 09:49

I'm really looking forward to getting that email! Can you tell us a little bit about the creation of your award winning pamphlet The Still Point?

**Katherine Moss** 09:57

So in September 2020, I started a Master's at Manchester Metropolitan University, they call their creative writing department, the Manchester Writing School. So I started that course, kind of blindly, kind of lurched at that I decided I want to do this, I'm gonna give it a try. And I think that kind of, there was quite a strange atmosphere wasn't around 2020 of people. I think through our fears, and through the silence, we reflected so much on ourselves. And I think at one point, I reflected the world's in chaos, the world's in crisis, you know, why not? Why are you stopping yourself from doing something you've always wanted to do, just give it a go take a risk. I don't like taking risks. So. So yeah, I applied, I somehow got on the course, I had to very quickly develop a portfolio because I didn't realise when you apply for a master's in creative writing, you don't just fill in application form, they want quite a bit of written work from you. So I had to, I had to get that done. And I was very, very lucky, I had the space to do that. Quite a few responsibilities had been taken away from me during COVID, which meant that COVID gave me an easier life than my pre-COVID life. Both my parents, you know, they're not very well, so I was carer with other family members to my parents and, and that, that was taken away, which are very hard to deal with, initially. But then I suppose we adapt, don't we? And I learned to fill the space with things for me, which felt very strange. I remember watching a YouTube that my daughter got me into YouTube during lockdown. And I remember watching a YouTube video, this young woman was talking about how she's going to spend her Sunday writing her journal, and having a bath. And I was outraged. So, gosh, you're so privileged to realise that that's normal. That's what you know, you shouldn't be rushing about everywhere, being, you know, running yourself into the ground. That is normal. That's called self care. So I suppose I started to dip my toes into self care. And for me part of self care is not journaling, it's writing poetry or stories, which I suppose is my journaling, I suppose, in a way. So can you tell me about the creation? So getting to the question! So the pamphlet emerged from my dissertation. So as part of the masters at the end of the Masters, you submit a dissertation, and at my university that is about 1000, or 1500 Word document that talks about how did you develop your poetry, and then you must submit a collection of poems, a small collection of poems. And so over those two, the two years that I did Master's part time, essentially, that pamphlet emerged from those two years. Because everything I wrote before my masters, I'm very critical of now. But the great thing about doing a course was, you know, I was with other creative people, I was with people who would give me feedback. And I need that. I can sometimes in the isolation, your house in COVID, in your front room, in front of a laptop, I can write something. And I think it's amazing. I think part of that is just because I've written something, I've managed to finish something, we get that great feeling. And it's quite hard to share your work with people and let them judge it. But for me, there have been many occasions where if that judgement is given kindly and given with care, and you know, if that if I know that person, I respect their writing, even if they're a student or a published poet, then it's much easier to accept what people say and sometimes you don't see you don't see the the lack of clarity in your work, you don't see the errors in your work. You need fresh eyes to see that for you. So that was very important for me that other people were looking at my work and helping me to improve. Fantastic. Which of the poems in your pamphlet, most important to you? That's like naming your favourite child. Good job I only have one! I don't think I have a favourite, because they each have, they not only have the story that's contained within the poem, they usually are linked to a memory. So Etna, for example, that I read to you, that's a memory from my first trip to Sicily, during a religious festival. And there were two religious festivals in that one week, I was in Sicily for the first time. And it was a very, it was, unlike the religious processions I'm used to in this country. So I grew up as a Catholic. They're very formal. They're very staid, very English, I suppose. But in Italy, they're more like a kind of Carnival. So it's a mixture of a of a carnival with a religious festival, which I found, seemed to merge Catholicism with paganism in my eyes, in many ways, and because there's this true sense of celebration that we understand, you know, eating, drinking, dancing, but then within that is this very serious and very intense procession, where you have men from the village, carrying this enormous, enormous statue, the Virgin Mary, and other saints, and you can see the sweat on these men's brows, and you can see, you know, the weight bearing down on them. And you can see, it's almost an impossible task. I suppose it's like Sisyphus trying to roll Big Stone up the hill. And that's what the, you know, I felt that that poem came from, you know, some of the strange sights and sounds and smells that I experienced. So each poem does have a little, it's precious in, in its own way. But I think, one poem that had such a strange effect on me, I wrote a poem about my, my mother's brother in law, who passed away when I was working in Italy, in 2000. And he was a wonderful man, I didn't see enough of him because he lived in Northern Ireland. And he was just just a joy every time he came over to visit, and a very pivotal member of his community. So my, my mother's family are from Northern Ireland, they're Irish Catholics. And part of the reason that she's in, you know, in the mainland living in England is because of the Troubles because not just because of the Troubles of Northern Ireland, which is a conflict that seemed to be at its height in the 1960s 70s and 80s, in Northern Ireland, but also because as a, as an Irish Catholic, she was excluded from certain jobs and careers that she couldn't access, she will, she wouldn't have been allowed to buy her own home. It wouldn't have been, there was no system of one man or woman one vote. Very, obviously very corrupt, very difficult environment to live in. And so it, I suppose it was very attractive to many generations of Northern Irish Catholics to come over to the mainland, where there were prejudices. I mean, my mother did experience what I thought was only in history books, but there's a poster, quite famous, an image of a poster that says, Do you would have this in what they call digs, so lodgings anywhere where perhaps a single person when they came over from another country, perhaps or another city, would go and live like a boarding house, and there would be notices that would say, No blacks, no dogs, no Irish, and the Irish roll was at the bottom. This list is horrendous, but I suppose I always thought that was a one off. But no, so she experienced, you know, a lot of a lot of prejudice and discrimination. So So going back to my favourite poem, I've always been fascinated by I suppose, the experience of the Irish side and my family and that prejudice that they experienced. And as part of that, I was I was surprised to hear that my my cousin, so the son of my uncle, you know that he experienced this on quite as a very young man as a teenager he experienced some some really awful discrimination from people in authority. You know, the police and the British Army and and it's very conflicting for someone who's been born here to hear that, to hear about your- that's my army, British Army is my army you know, the Ulster Defence Force. You know, that's something I should be, I suppose I should see as on my side, that it's really difficult to hear the I suppose the the abuses that were committed under the name of the English, which I am half English. So I wrote a poem based on something my cousin told me about one of his experiences. And there are two poems. It's a poem about the Son, and the poem about the Father. And what's happening is in one poet there, the poem that come together, that meant to be read together, one after the other. So the sun is experiencing, being I'm not gonna say arrested, you've just lifted from the streets for no reason whatsoever, and bundled into the back of the car. And the men inside have, you know, they have guns, but they are, they are part of the recognised police force, you obey these men. And then he was taken away with his friends. It's, I think he was 17 at the time, I should, I won't go into detail what happened, which is incredibly frightening. And I didn't think these things went on, I don't know why. And so I wrote a companion poem, a father, about his father, my uncle, waiting for him at home. And when I wrote that poem, it was really strange, it was as if I'd, I've been meant to write it as if it was the poem, I had learned to write, for, it was such a stretch and never experienced that before. When I finished it, I just realised I had to do that I had to write that. And it came very easily. It's a very convoluted explanation, I do apologise

**Laura Kenwright** 20:54

I wonder, so that those poems that they called a father and a son?

**Katherine Moss** 21:18

Yeah, A Father and A Son. And if you can, I suppose is, you can read them in any order. So I should explain that A Son, because this is audio. So no one can see, but a son is written as a redacted poem. So there are sections of the some of the words are blanked out. And originally, when I wrote this for my, my dissertation, I, I got very, I got very high school, and I decided, oh, I want to, I want to put this on a, I want to frame it within a, like it's a document like it's an unsealed document, from her majesty's archives. And it's only just been now released, that it's still been redacted. It's been released, because a certain amount of time has passed. And I had the Queen's seal at the top, I had some information at the bottom to explain, you know, that this document can only be read, you know, in a certain day, and we'll be held, you know, in archive, locked archive, and then, and then the Queen passed away. And I was due to submit my dissertation. And I suddenly realised that when they talk to a summer course, about the responsibility of the poet, I thought, Oh, I can't submit this. Because this is now feels offensive. Because there was quite, I'm not, I'm not a royalist or monarchist that I think that there was a sense that you, you needed to be at that time. And I wanted to be I felt very sad. It was a real end of an era. And it did feel very sad. Because I suppose she was part of an old guard of the royal family who I developed, quite respectful, especially during COVID. I think she, thank God we had her, because I didn't feel our government represented us well, and lead us well. And I think she was someone we could look to and think, Okay, our country is okay. We don't look too bad to the rest of the world. She's not she wasn't controversial. And it seemed everything else about our country in the last seven years has been very controversial. Very difficult. So, I just felt it was very hard because I, I I was making a point about freedom of expression by redacting that poem in and so I just thought, huh, if you're gonna censor yourself, so it's very circular argument I had with myself. But in the end, I thought I, you know, out of respect, I better reframe that poem. And yeah, so it. So yes, it was it became quite a political act. So right, it went from just writing about family history to becoming quite a political act. And yeah, maybe to this day, I feel a little bit like a coward that I didn't go ahead and submit it. But I thought hang on. It, it's quite unprecedented to have a monarch die. Very unprecedented. So I felt I needed to make an unprecedented decision. For me, I suppose I'll always lean towards being respectful. Even if I don't know. That's just my natural default, I hope.

**Laura Kenwright** 25:58

Thank you. Can you tell us a little bit about which poets you admire the most, and what do you value particularly in their work?

**Katherine Moss** 26:08

So I was so lucky. Recently, I was supposed to meet... Well, the, as part of the prize, Verve Publishing are going to publish my pamphlet, which is amazing. It's fantastic. And I was in contact with Stuart, who runs Stuart Bartholomew, who runs Verve Press. And he wanted to arrange a time and a date when we could meet. And I was thinking of a couple of dates. And then I found out that Ilya Kaminsky, the poet, was going to be reading at the University of Liverpool. And I just thought, I'm going to that I'm not meeting Stuart. So on a day off work, when I could have met with Stuart, I ditched him. Ilya Kaminsky, so Ilya Kaminsky...

**Laura Kenwright** 27:01

It is Ilya Kaminsky though.

**Katherine Moss** 27:04

Exactly. And I I was introduced to his work near the end of my master's when we did contemporary poetry. We did contemporary poetry right at the end. And that's where I found my home, I think, with the contemporary poets. And, and I love Deaf Republic that I want. I just think it's a it's a beautiful piece of work. And I really love how he's merged to me, he's merged poetry with theatre, and history. And I just think it's stunning what he's achieved. So I do recommend that. So, so yeah, I just recommend everybody read Ilya Kaminsky is deaf Republic. It's, it's, it's an astounding piece of work. And everyone always says you should really hear Ilya Kaminsky read and they're right. It was mesmerising. I've never been, I've never been to a poetry reading where I've just felt so enthralled by the words and by the sounds, and by the urgency and passion of of the reader. So Ilya Kaminsky, He's based in New York now, but he's originally from Ukraine. And he, he became deaf at a very young age. I think he was back in May have been Soviet era Ukraine when the he was diagnosed with his deafness, and I think, I think I read somewhere that. I don't know if it's possible that maybe if it had been diagnosed in a different country, with more resources and more, you know, medical access to more medical advancements in it, perhaps something could have been done. I don't know. But, but his work is. It's very much although it stands alone in its work. It is. It is about Deaf culture, and it is about silence. And I find I find that silence comes up so much. I think in poets that I like, people being silenced people living in silence, the marginalisation of silence, the power of silence and the abuses that can can transpire through silence. So I just was very drawn as well to his meditation upon silence. We were also introduced to Claudia Rankine. She's an American poet. I love the American contemporary poets. I feel that their contemporary movement in America is seems to be richer and more expansive than here in the United Kingdom. Her work very challenging. So we did Citizen we did her her collection Citizen. And it is very challenging. She writes, she doesn't just write poetry, she will write, she will write, she will. In her book, there are transcripts that you can then link and go and watch films. There are stories of accounts of experiences of other people that she presents them. As if she is that, you know, she's experienced them, and she's not just the narrator, she becomes that individual. And what she's trying to do with, with poetry is I think she's trying to push push the boundaries of poetry, and to look at how we can bring other forms into the world of poetry. It's very, I think, I didn't realise but it's quite controversial to some critics what she's she's doing. And I think there's not 100% acceptance, that her work is defined as poetry, but I believe it is. And I think it's very exciting, what she's trying to do in the, with poetry and how she's, she's pushing those boundaries, in a very different way to help Ilya Kaminsky in a very different way. And I think as well, what she reveals to us about the experience of black Americans living in America and experiencing racism, you think, you know, as a white person that you've dealt, and so it's important that, I think is that as a white person, you you read her work. She's a very presumptuous thing to say, but I just think I was very shocked by some of the things I read in her work. And it made me deeply uncomfortable, as well. And I think there's space in our world to feel deeply uncomfortable sometimes. And if, if that changes people's behaviour, then that's incredibly valuable.

**Laura Kenwright** 32:22

So you love a boundary pusher?

**Katherine Moss** 32:25

Yeah, that I'm too scared to a queen's crest on a poem. Yeah. Yeah, I think I admire their... Do we, Do we admire people who are the opposite of us? Sometimes, I think, yeah. Or who we aspire to be? Perhaps.

**Laura Kenwright** 32:42

Potentially! Can you tell us what's next for you and your poetry?

**Katherine Moss** 32:49

I'm so so I haven't really thought much past our meeting today, Laura. Or so you're this is exciting to be interviewed for. For the website. It was really funny, my my, my boss. But it wasn't my boss. It was a colleague had sent an email, desperately needing staffing work for some children's exams. And yesterday, today on my day off, and I was like, Oh, how am I going to explain to my boss that I've got an interview today, I'm gonna have to explain what I mean by an interview. Although I she's gonna think, because I thought it was important for me that they know that I'm not coming in to help. But there's a good reason. And so I left a voicemail from my boss yesterday, so I'm really sorry. I 'm in York yesterday I can't, you know, come in. And tomorrow, I've got an interview. But it's it's not a job. It's the, you know, because I've won the Disabled Poets competition. And she sent back a lovely message to say that I thought she was gonna be like, Oh, that's a shame. We really needed you. She was so nice. That's so exciting. Like Good Luck. So I haven't really thought much past doing this with you, in terms of poetry and also working with with Stuart Bartholomew. He, he would like me to provide some more poems more than I've submitted to the competition, so I can't really think beyond that. And, and what I've been doing at the moment, particularly this weekend, is I finished a short story course that I did with comma press, led by the Leeds novelist, SJ Bradley, which was wonderful. I really recommend it. It's a 12 week course but you you meet every two weeks online for two hours, and she introduced the group to short story writers. Fabulous. And, and by the end of it, they like you to write us Short story. And then hopefully that will be published in one of their ebooks. And I started that course, knowing that I wanted to learn about short story writing. And halfway through it, I managed to push myself to write a 500 word piece. And she was like, I'm sorry, no, you need to write three. And I just thought, I can't do that. How would you do that? So, so this weekend I was, I was at that point, you know, we have to throw stuff away, because you've written far too much. And you're really upset because this character has to go and this, this event has to go. So So I've actually I've been learning a different craft recently. And I find that that is, I think it's what I need. I think for poetry. I need to live a bit of life, I need to live a bit more life so that I can write again, that makes sense. So at the moment, I'm dipping into fiction, I'm reading again, which is fantastic. For two years, I mainly read these kinds of books, quite poetry books, like a really big chunk novel on the go. Because everybody tells you, you're gonna be a writer, read, read, read. And I think because of my health condition, not been able to read. And I had, I had to sit in front of my tutor who's a very prominent poet. And I had to sit in front of her during a tutorial when she asked me who are you reading? I said, I can't read. I can't focus. You know, my mental health has not been amazing. Turns out I was also going through perimenopause, as well. I was doing my Masters didn't realise that till afterwards. And I couldn't read. I could read journal articles. I could read poems. But I couldn't read a novel. And I hadn't I hadn't read that point. Some point last year, I hadn't read a novel since March 2020. And the look on her face is like, Well, I think you need to start reading. So So I, for me, the next step in poetry is I'm reading and reading. And I'm absorbing.

**Laura Kenwright** 37:25

It's an important part of writing, isn't it? Just as important, maybe more so.

**Katherine Moss** 37:31

It is, because I think it's through reading others. I suppose that you obviously say, I used to tell my daughter when she was younger, expand your vocabulary. But also it allows you to, I think it stimulates creativity. And even if that stimulates you into writing a story, I think very often my opponents come from memories and stories. So So I think I'm going to have to inched my way back towards poetry. Because doing the dissertation, I didn't realise till I finished that. So in my master's, I didn't realise till I finish, but I was, I was exhausted. And people who've done the course before me said, yeah, you probably won't be able to write for a while. Which was a bit of a shock. So that's, that was the whole aim of the course. So yeah, so I'm gonna, yeah. Next steps is just focusing on the prize and the requirements for the prize and towards publishing, which is good. That's good enough. I think it's good enough.

**Laura Kenwright** 38:40

More than enough, it's fantastic. Can't wait, yeah, to see your pamphlet published. We're all really excited. So what advice wou ld you give to disabled poets just starting their poetry journeys?

**Katherine Moss** 38:56

Think sometimes, I felt because of my health. My disability that I'm quite isolated. And I think if I think over the years, so I was first diagnosed with Crohn's disease when I was 19/20. And I know over the decades that I've lost friends, not because of you know, we've fallen out is because I didn't have the energy. I didn't put in that effort. Because I couldn't, it was it was enough just to kind of get from day to day. So so you can be quite isolated because you're disabled, but also I think it's really important. As a poet as a writer, you can be quite isolated. So the two disabled poet is just isolation on top of isolation. So I think for me, it's really important to kind of join a group or fortunately I live in an area where there are just no writing groups I would have to travel you You know, many miles before I could find a group I'd have to travel to more affluent areas really where they have things like writing groups, they don't have anything like it's all Scouts and Guides and rainbows here. You know nothing else. So, for me, things like to spread the word Salons - CRIPtic Salons And the course that I did with you guys in 20 would have been 2020. Were just invaluable. And they were it was hard because I I'm not a natural on on Zoom. And I find it, it's very awkward, you know, when they put you in a breakout room, you chat to people, it's really awkward and stilted. But the more you do it, I think the more you get used to it. And that, that for me, I think was really important that you need to connect with people, I had so many barriers to doing that, and I think many people do. The other barrier then is I'll often see, you know, wonderful kind of classes I could join are wonderful events. So money can be a barrier. So I was really fortunate with a short story course that I did, there was an option to pay half the price. I mean, you have to it's always a bit awkward, you have to email someone and say, Oh, I don't have a lot of money. And sometimes you just not in the mood to do that I don't want I don't want their first communication with me to be Oh, I don't have a lot of money. But I kind of pushed myself past that. And I'm glad I did. So yeah, try and join. If you can, in your local area, try and join a group. If that's not possible, see what's out there online. Let other people read your work and read other people's work as well. Because I think it is very hard to do to write and not. And it's awful as well, if you've written something really great, and no one ever gets to read it. That's really sad. So So yeah, join a group somehow, if you can get other people reading your work, and read other people's work.

**Laura Kenwright** 42:23

Really wonderful advice there. Thank you for sharing that. I've got one last question if that's okay, which is what would you say to anyone considering entering the disabled poets prize 2024?

**Katherine Moss** 42:38

I would say obviously do it. I, I had no no hope of winning. I've got I've got this thing called Submittable. Where I think if you've ever submitted to a competition, you'll be you'll know Submittable it's like a portal where you send your your work. And it's just full of rejections. So I think I live in hope. And so I just thought, you know what, you have this collection. You know, your tutors really liked it. I think feedbacks always a little bit vague. But I thought yeah, they liked this. Why not? Why not refine it, change it, and why not. And I think as well because I was familiar with cryptic and spread the word from the salad I attended. And the course that I done. And I knew how lovely they were, they were so nice to me when I had a lot of caring responsibilities again at that time, and they were so nice about letting me dip out to go and go to hospital and health help out. I just thought, you know what, you should do this. These are nice people. And even if they think your pamphlets not very good, because I thought they'll come back and say something really nice. So I think it was knowing that, that you guys are just just lovely people and being really on board with what you're trying to achieve in terms of giving disabled writers a platform that encouraged me to just overcome my lack of confidence. And just, you know, apply what's the worst that could happen? I don't when I'm used to that it's definitely go for it. And and again, going back to if you you know, join in groups. Do share your world with people before you submit because even if your friends and family and people you know are not you know, poets or writers themselves, they'll often give you good feedback. For example, they might say I don't really understand what you're trying to say there or do you know that your punctuation is a bit off? So definitely again, you know, share your work, get feedback wherever you can. And enter, just do it.

**Laura Kenwright** 45:13

I think we'll finish there today. Katherine, thank you so much for your time. We're all absolutely thrilled that you've won the prize and we cannot wait to read your pamphlet, hopefully later this year.

**Katherine Moss** 45:22

Thank you. Thank you so much, Laura. Thank you