

Unfold – Experimental Poetries Then and Now Summer School of Experimental Poetry, Bucharest 6 - 10 July 2026

I. Introduction

kultura natura pARTicip ([KNP](#)) in partnership with the National Museum of Contemporary Arts Bucharest ([MNAC](#)), Museum of Applied Arts [MAK](#) Vienna and Faculty of Media and Communication – Singidunum University Belgrade ([FMK](#)), is pleased to announce the summer school of experimental poetry, *Unfold: Experimental Poetries Then and Now*. The event is organized as part of the project *Anthologies of Cooperation: Encounters in/through Artists' Book and Experimental Poetry* (AbeX), co-financed by the European Union through the Creative Europe Programme. The summer school will take place at the premises of the National Museum of Contemporary Arts in Bucharest, from Monday, 6 July 2026 to Friday, 10 July 2026, and requires the physical presence of all participants.

The summer school will be facilitated by Dr Robert Stacey and Senka Gavranov.

Robert Stacey is an Associate Professor in the Department of English at the University of Ottawa in Ontario, Canada. His area of specialization is modern and contemporary poetry and poetics, with an emphasis on Canadian literature. A major focus in his teaching and research is experimental poetics, especially concrete poetry, sound poetry, and proceduralism. He is the former creative director of Rhombus 19, a poetry-in-performance ensemble in Ottawa that specialized in collaborative experimental sound work.

Senka Gavranov is a cultural worker who bridges arts-based research, advocacy for improved working conditions in the cultural sector, feminism, and European transnational cooperation. As a PhD candidate, she researches experimental literary production. As an art-mediator, she facilitates participatory workshops that demystify poetry, literature, and experimental art for general audiences. These collaborative get-togethers make complex academic concepts and experimental art accessible and relevant to everyday life.

The working language of the summer school is English. Travel, accommodation and meals for the participants will be covered by the organizers.

Summer school participants will be initiated into the global heritage of experimental poetries, including visual concrete poetry, sound poetry, language poetry, proceduralism, and other forms of non-traditional poetic expression. A combination of presentations, workshops, discussion and collaborative exercises will equip students with concepts and models that will allow them to produce their own works in conversation with the rich history of avant-garde and radical modes of poetic expression. Working with experts and peers, summer school participants will acquire the theoretical knowledge, practical know-how and personal confidence to experiment with language as text and sound and image across diverse media. In addition to methods such as “cut-up” and collage, chance-based composition, erasure and appropriation, participants will also attend to the performative side of contemporary poetic practice by doing voice and sound exercises and performing works in a group setting.

Since experimental poetry often focuses on the non-semantic or extra-semantic aspects of language by refusing to limit writing to instrumentalist notions of “communication,” the international and multilingual character of the school will provide an especially fruitful setting for exploring the possibilities of connection and collaboration via poetry as a material object and sonic experience unhindered by linguistic and cultural differences.

II. Summer School Program

Monday 6 July 2026	Meet & Greet + General introduction
	Sound (concrete) poetry
Tuesday 7 July 2026	Visual / Shape (concrete) poetry
	including kinetic, digital and multimedia, intermedia and new media
Wednesday 8 July 2026	Treated text
	appropriation
Thursday 9 July 2026	Procedural poetry
	aleatory, constraint, experimental translation, asemic translation
Friday 10 July 2026	Language poetry
	parataxis, hypotaxis, de/re-semantization, disjunctive poetics, including avant-garde tradition
	Wrap-up and goodbyes

The program will include lectures, interactive talks, individual work, and peer exchanges mediated by Dr Robert Stacey and Senka Gavranov. The participants will receive handouts, materials, and tools in support of their activity during the event.

At the end of the event, the participants shall be able to generate experimental poetic forms, which will be collected and published in the form of a chapbook and distributed through the network of the partners in the AbeX project.

III. Conditions for participation

We are looking for applications submitted by students and emerging poets living, studying, and/or working in Romania, Austria, and Serbia.

The applicants should be:

- between 19 – 26 years of age on the date when the summer school starts (6 July 2026);
- fluent in English and comfortable using the English language;
- undergraduate students or graduates in the fields of literary studies, linguistics, languages, and also the social sciences and humanities;
- students/emerging poets with an interest in experimental literary works, an open mind, and a willingness to experiment, perform, and collaborate;
- willing to produce poetic work that will be published in a chap-book (by the end of September 2026).

IV. Selection process

The application process is based on a two-step procedure: submission of applications and an online interview of pre-selected candidates.

Firstly, interested candidates are asked to submit PDF files as specified in **Section VI**.

Applications that do not satisfy the formal requirements will be rejected (e.g. age, place of residence – work and/or study location, fluency in English, or failure to follow the specifications in Section VI).

A committee will assess the submitted documents and select candidates who will be invited to the second phase of selection, consisting of an online interview. Indicatively, the second phase will take place in March 2026, and the results are planned to be announced in April 2026.

Preference will be given to candidates who most clearly demonstrate an aptitude for and interest in challenging their own literary preconceptions and writing habits. The organizers and AbeX partners uphold the values of diversity, gender equality, inclusion, and sustainability.

V. Tentative Timeline

Publishing the Call: 14 November 2025

Application deadline: 16 January 2026, end of day CET

Selection process: February – April 2026

Online interview: March 2026

Announcing results: April 2026

Online meet-up: end of June 2026 (Zoom)

Start date of the *Unfold* summer school: Monday, 6 July 2026

End date of the *Unfold* summer school: Friday, 10 July 2026

Work on the experimental form for the chapbook: 11 July – 14 August 2026

Submission of the experimental form for the chapbook: 14 August 2026

Publishing the chapbook: mid-September 2026

VI. How to Apply

To apply, you should submit the requested documents attached to the email titled “*Application for Unfold Summer School of Experimental Poetry 2026*” to summerschool2026@mnac.ro by **16 January 2026, end of day CET**. The total attachment size should not exceed **20 MB**.

You will receive a notification email confirming that the application and its attachment have been received. Please check your spam folder. The notification email does **not** constitute acceptance.

For submissions, please send PDF files (maximum 20 MB in total) with the following:

1. Short CV (≤ 1 page): name, date of birth, education, work experience, work/study place (residence). In this document, indicate whether you used AI for any aspect of your application. If so, briefly describe which aspects and how.
2. Brief essay (≤ 500 words) describing your interests and motivations for participating in this summer school, describing why you are interested in:
 - a) poetry
 - b) experimental writing
 - c) participating in this summer school
3. A sample of published or unpublished work (≤ 5 pages).
4. Ekphrastic translation of the image (≤ 2 pages). Please find online Barrett Newman’s “Voice of Fire” (1967). Based on it and your research on ekphrastic translation, produce a piece of experimental writing and attach it as a pdf file.
Ekphrasis is a literary response that translates a visual artwork into words. For this assignment, produce an experimental text (up to 2 pages) that interprets the selected image. You are free to adopt any experimental technique, but please include a brief note (max 100 words) explaining the research or references you consulted to inform your approach.

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