



[Keats-Shelley 200 Final Report and Evaluation 2020- 2022](#)

[Background & Context](#)

The Keats-Shelley Memorial Association made plans to stage several events in the UK and Italy to commemorate the anniversary of the deaths of the English poets John Keats and Percy Bysshe Shelley respectively, between 2020 and 2022. To make this programme worthwhile and inclusive, partnerships were formed with a number of organisations including museums as well as arts, academic and cultural institutions. In addition to partner organisations, several high-profile individuals were invited to lend their support as 'ambassadors' in order to enhance the programme's profile and extend its reach.

Despite much forward planning, the schedule was seriously affected by the Covid pandemic which took hold in the UK and Europe shortly after the launch of K-S 200 in early 2020. Despite the devastating effects of Covid however, much of the programme went ahead although it was continually adapted and inevitably a few events were cancelled, and others moved or postponed to a later time. On a positive note, a programme of virtual exhibitions, immersive and virtual tours, and interactive events formed an enduring and vital element of the programme.

[Overview of Events](#)

A freelance PR professional was engaged on a one-off basis to galvanise interest in the activities by using press and media opportunities wherever possible. Two KSMA Trustees undertook the role of project managing, working closely with the Curator of the Keats-Shelley House in Rome and his team and fellow Trustees, to organise the schedule which broadly fell into the following categories.

1. Members/Friends events
2. Fundraising events
3. Public, ticketed events and publications
4. Marketing/outsourced events
5. Digital and interactive events

[Key Aims of the Bicentenary Programme](#)

Significant anniversaries offer an excellent vehicle for staging special initiatives, which in this case, paid tribute to pivotal moments in the lives of the romantic poets and their circle.

- To stage a series of events with the intention of providing an insight into the lives and work of the Poets and to inspire lifelong learning, creativity and a love of literature

and romantic poetry, making this an opportunity to forge enduring partnerships and encourage Friends and supporters to join KSMA.

- Take the opportunity to attract new fans of the romantic poets and encourage involvement from young people as well as disadvantaged and disabled members of the community, in ways which are sustainable and inclusive and encourage further supporters and Friends of KSMA.
- Provide a focus and theme for the annual Keats-Shelley Literary Prizes, with particular emphasis on the Young Romantics competition, as well as the journal of the Association, *the Keats-Shelley Review*. The Autumn 2022 edition of *the Review*, was dedicated to Keats-Shelley 200, and particularly the Gulf of the Poets Festival www.keats-shelley.co.uk/Keats-Shelley-Review.
- Enhance the profile of the Keats-Shelley Memorial Association, through re-establishing a presence at annual UK literature festivals, and particularly the Cheltenham Literature Festival, held annually in October. Through notices on social media platforms, local and national press and media, aim to raise the profile of the Charity, as well as the museum and its library in Rome.

The effects of the Covid pandemic on the K-S 200 programme

Shortly after the launch of the bicentenary programme, it became clear that adjustments would be necessary, and that contingencies were needed as the pandemic was having a devastating impact in Britain, Italy and across the globe.

Events that were cancelled include a Fundraising Gala at the Palazzo Doria Pamphilij in Rome; the evening would have included a dramatic production of *Life is But a Day*, first performed at the Palazzo in 1995 to mark the anniversary of Keats's birth. Ticket sales for the Gala should have made a significant contribution to the overall bicentenary budget.

A conference at King's College London, spanning the life and works of Keats and Shelley and his circle, had been planned for September 2021. Talks on Dante were also incorporated into the conference programme, in acknowledgement of his 500th anniversary and his influence on the romantics. The conference was postponed for a year but then cancelled, due to the difficulties of planning ahead and attracting support at that difficult time.

An exhibition about the life of Keats, *Adonais*, was scheduled to take place at the Keats-Shelley House in the Spring of 2021, unfortunately this proved to be impractical and Covid restrictions in place in Italy was preventing live visits to the House.

We aimed to raise external funding to support the bicentenary plans, but unfortunately grant-giving organisations and trusts and foundations were unresponsive to appeals, or they required complex predictions about the effects of the pandemic, which proved too challenging for our small team to provide.

The K-S 200 Programme

2019

October

Cheltenham Literature Festival

On Friday 10th October 2019, KSMA lent support to an event based on Adam Nicolson's recently published book *The Making of Poetry – when Coleridge met the Wordsworths: William Collins*. 'This investigation into the birth of the Romantic movement is the perfect marriage of poetry and place'.

The author took the stage in conversation with James Marriott, The Times literary critic, where they discussed the period from June 1797 until the Autumn of 1798 when poets William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge resided in the Quantock Hills. There they produced some of their most poignant and remarkable works, including *Kubla Khan*, *the Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, *Tintern Abbey* and *Lyrical Ballads*. *The Making of Poetry* had received much acclaim and excellent reviews at the time.

Outcomes

The Making of Poetry talk at Cheltenham received comprehensive coverage in the Festival programme and at the Festival itself; references to the Keats-Shelley Memorial Association were prominent in the Cheltenham publicity. The event also featured in several reviews and listings. A primary aim of K-S 200 was to maintain a presence at UK literature festivals, and Cheltenham is one of the largest of these. Due to the popularity of this event, KSMA again supported the Festival in October 2021, setting the scene for future participation.

The event reached full capacity on the day, with an audience of around 250 people.

<https://d.docs.live.net/4fd6d4480b834b5a/Documents/ksma%20bicentenaries/Cheltenham%20Literature%20Festival.pdf>

2020

January

Publication of *Odes for John Keats*

January 2020 saw the publication of *Odes for John Keats*; a slim anthology comprising of 15 tributes to Keats from contemporary Italian and British poets. The anthology was designed to celebrate the enduring nature of Keats's work and its relevance to the present day.

Professor Duncan Wu's introduction gives an overview of the development of the Ode and discusses how John Keats's *Odes* of 1819 changed the form forever. This significant milestone is celebrated in verse by Pascal Petite, Liz Lochhead, Annelisa Alleva, Poet Laureate, Simon Armitage, and other inspirational contemporary poets.

Outcomes

The anthology is a unique and fitting tribute to John Keats, which appeared shortly before the 200th anniversary of his death. The private publication aimed to reach an international audience, while forging links between Italian and British poets.

Odes for John Keats is a dedicated publication by the Keats-Shelley House on sale in the museum bookshop and through the on-line shop.

February

[Reception at the Italian Embassy, London](#)

In February 2020 the launch of K-S 200 was hosted by His Excellency, Ambassador Raffaele Trombetta at the Italian Embassy in London. This occasion provided an opportunity to introduce and welcome supporters, Trustees, Keats-Shelley 200 Ambassadors, partners and representatives from the world of Literature, museums, the Arts and education, as well as press and media.

Interviews with some of those present were filmed as part of the commemorative K-S 200 archive. KSMA is indebted to the Ambassador and Embassy staff for providing a sumptuous setting to initiate the Bicentenary programme.

[Outcomes](#)

The reception provided a perfect focus for the forthcoming programme scheduled to take place across venues in both Italy and the United Kingdom.

The filmed archive of Keats-Shelley 200 introduces the partners and 'ambassadors' who would be participating in the 2-year programme; the film has created a legacy for present users and future generations to enjoy.

[Immortal Dinner Competition](#)

An on-line competition inspired by the famous 'Immortal Dinner' which took place on December 28th, 1817, at the London home of artist Benjamin Robert Haydon. Among the illustrious guests at the table were essayists William Hazlitt and Charles Lamb and the poets John Keats and William Wordsworth. Later diaries and letters describe the evening as one of 'excitement and tension' with the conversation ranging between literature and politics, science and exploration and it also touched upon contemporary issues, including the removal of the marble frieze from the Parthenon in Athens attributed to Lord Elgin.

During the period of lockdown in 2020 this proved to be a low cost and accessible activity available through the KSMA website and social media platforms. A colourful poster was designed depicting John Keats and another guest seated at the dinner table but with an empty chair between them, and it posed the question 'Do you think there is a guest missing whom John Keats would have enjoyed meeting'. Votes for the anonymous guest were counted and the names of the most popular choices were announced in December 2020. Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Oscar Wilde tied for first place and in joint second the nominations were for Rabbin Burns, Mary Shelley, Bob Dylan, William Shakespeare, Kamela Harris, Mary Wollstonecraft and Stephen Fry. In third place were Josiah Wedgwood, W H Auden, Leigh Hunt, John Milton, Dante Alighieri, Aristophanes and Bob Geldof.

<https://d.docs.live.net/4fd6d4480b834b5a/Documents/ksma%20bicentenaries/Immortal%20Dinner.jpg>

[Outcomes](#)

A low-budget competition designed to maintain the momentum of the bicentenaries during the Covid pandemic when it was proving difficult to offer public facing activities. The websites

of the Keats-Shelley House and the Keats-Shelley Memorial Association and social media pages provided a fitting vehicle for this activity.

An opportunity to engage a range of audiences from all backgrounds, and age groups, no prizes were offered but it was a fun diversion.

October

[‘Gusto’ Exhibition at the Keats-Shelley House](#)

The exhibition featured paintings by artist Nancy Cadogan and ran from 31st October to 28th February 2021. As this coincided with a period of lockdown in Italy the exhibition was only available in digital format.

2021

February

[Immersive Video Tour of the Keats-Shelley House, Rome 23rd February](#)

The immersive tour was launched on a day of sequential events to mark the 200th anniversary of John Keats’s death at 26 Piazza di Spagna, Rome. The film was narrated by K-S 200 Ambassador, Sir Bob Geldof, with the aim of maintaining interest and encouraging virtual visitors particularly during the early phase of the Covid pandemic.

Available on [youtube.com/the Keats Shelley House](https://youtube.com/theKeatsShelleyHouse)

[Outcomes](#)

The tour has achieved a significant following on the Keats-Shelley House and KSMA websites and social media platforms. It was also used by the Italian and International schools who were unable to make their regular visits to the museum at that time.

It was a privilege to engage with K-S 200 ambassador, Sir Bob Geldof on this project.

THE BICENTENARY OF PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY'S DEATH IN ITALY AN UPDATE

Thank you for registering for our online event to mark the 200th anniversary of Shelley's death on 8th July 2022.. The event will take place on YouTube at 1 p.m. EDT/ 6 p.m. BST/ 7 p.m. CEST. We will send you the event link in due course and recommend that you [subscribe](#) for free to the Keats-Shelley House's YouTube channel in the meantime.

The event will take place in a specially created virtual Keats-Shelley House and will be presented by Professor Neil Fraistat and Dr Anna Mercer of the Keats-Shelley Association of America, and Dr Giuseppe Albano, Curator of the Keats-Shelley House.

Part 1 – Premiere of The Last Days of Shelley, a video story with immersive sound featuring the voice of actor and Keats-Shelley200 Ambassador Julian Sands and produced by 313 film production and directed by Giulio Boato. This short film, released in December 2021, follows Shelley in Rome, and is best experienced with headphones.

Part 2 – The Triumph of Life: A global reading of Shelley’s last, unfinished poem in fourteen languages read by readers from different locations around the world. The reading will be led by two-time Academy Award winning film director and Keats-Shelley200 Ambassador, Dame Jane Campion.

Part 3 – A Round Table legacy he shares with John Keats.

The panellists comprise Dr Serena Baiesi, Professor Nora Crook, Dr Mathelinda Nagubodi, Professor Andrew Stauffer, and Professor Fernando Valverde. The discussion will be moderated by Professor Neil Fraistat, Dr Anna Mercer, and Dr Giuseppe Albano.

discussion on the theme of Shelley's last days bringing together scholars of the poet's life and work. The discussion will cover Shelley's life, work, thought, his relationships with Byron and Leigh Hunt, and the intertwining

Audience members will be invited to submit questions to the panel in advance of the event.

Running time circa 90 minutes

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[John Keats's Final Voyage Mapped on Google Earth](#)

23rd February 2021 marked the 200th anniversary of Keats's untimely death in Rome and several virtual events took place internationally in commemoration. On 17th September 1820, John Keats and his friend Joseph Severn had set sail from Tower Wharf in London on the 'Maria Crowther', beginning a six-week voyage to Rome. The poet was 24 years old.

Keats travelled to Italy in a desperate attempt to restore his health, as over the previous two years he had been slowly wasting away from consumption. 'A winter in England would, I have not a doubt, kill me,' he wrote to his friend Charles Brown in August 1820. 'So, I have resolved to go to Italy, either by sea or land. Not that I have any great hopes of that, for, I think, there is a core of disease in me not easy to pull out.'

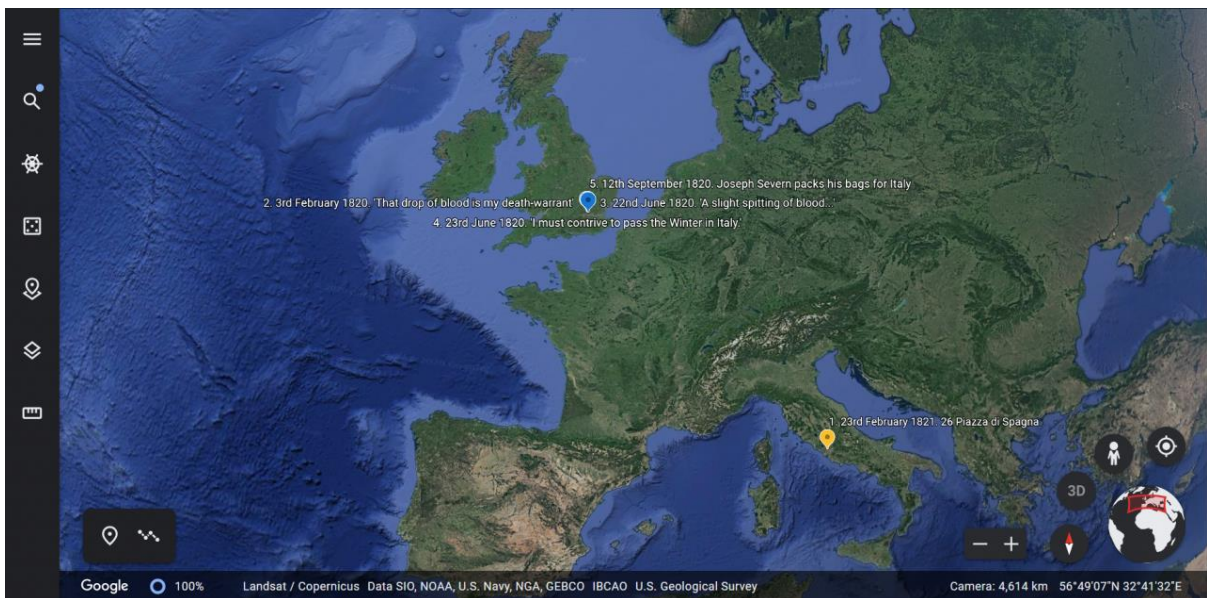
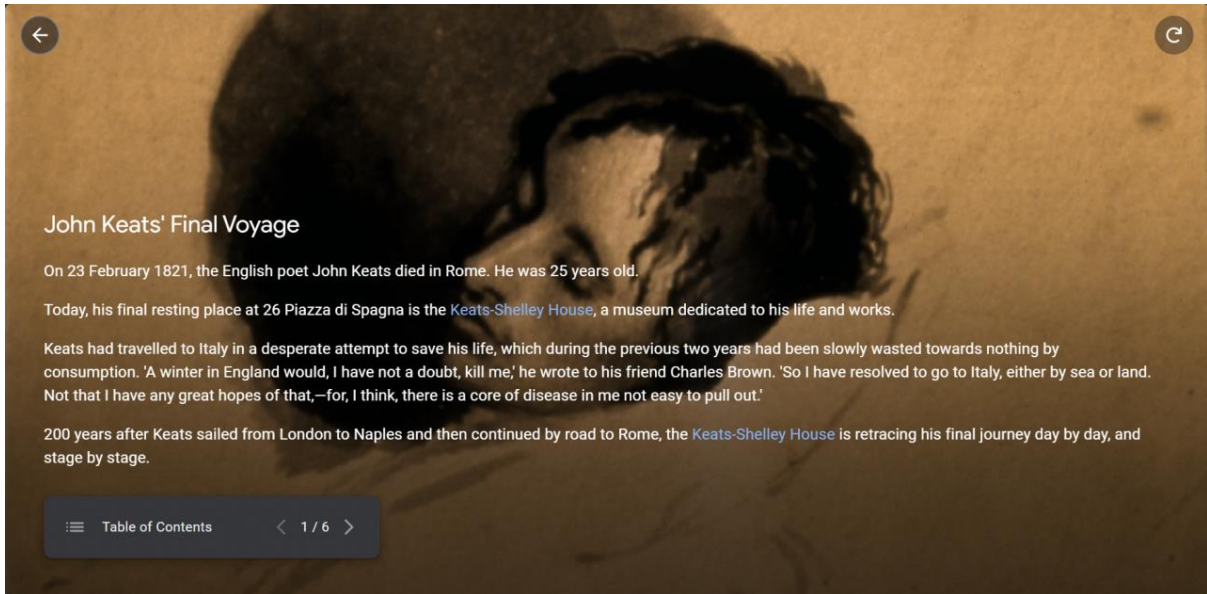
To mark the 200th anniversary of this heart-rending final voyage, the Keats-Shelley House retraced Keats's footsteps and the moment of his final passing; day by day, and stage by stage using the eminently 21st century storytelling possibilities of Google Earth, which enabled the use of maps, narrative, animation, images, videos and links to recreate a journey through time and space.

[Outcomes](#)

This was a well-conceived initiative which took place during the pandemic when actual events became impossible to deliver.

The following of the last journey of the poet on social media platforms and the KSMA and Keats-Shelley House websites was significant.

It is anticipated that an equally moving and effective initiative on Google Earth will be incorporated into the programme marking the 200th anniversary of Byron's travels and his death at Missolonghi, Greece in 1824.



[Writ in Water: BBC Radio 4](#)

KSMA Trustee, and author of a several plays for BBC Radio, Angus Graham-Campbell, was commissioned by BBC Radio 4 to write a companion piece for *Rebel Angel*, a play based on Keats’s medical training. *Writ in Water* was broadcast on the 200th anniversary of the poet’s death on 23rd February 2021. It remained available on BBC Sounds and received coverage in media listings.

The poignant 45-minute radio drama retraced the final journey of the English poet John Keats, recounting his departure from London and his fiancé Fanny Brawne, and the lengthy and tortuous crossing to Naples on the ‘Maria Crowther,’ which was followed by a period of quarantine after the ship docked. Then, the onward journey to Rome accompanied by his friend, the artist Joseph Severn. The sadness and pathos of Keats’s final months was movingly conveyed through this production for radio.

[Outcomes](#)

A far reaching dramatic high point to mark a poignant anniversary which re-visited an earlier connection with BBC Radio.

This generated an interest in Keats and the romantic poets from alternative audiences and regular listeners.

[Poems and Flowers for Keats; on the 200th anniversary of his passing](#)

John Keats was laid to rest in the non-Catholic cemetery in Rome on 23rd February 1821, and this tranquil spot provided the setting for a special ceremony on the 200th anniversary of his death.

Flowers were placed on Keats's grave while the Curator of the Keats-Shelley House read from his poems to commemorate the occasion which was live streamed on social media.

[Outcomes](#)

This was originally planned as a high-profile occasion, but just a handful of people were able to be present at the Cemetery due to lockdown restrictions. However, the event was recorded for the K-S 200 archive film, while social media platforms offered an opportunity for wider participation.

[Live Stream reading of *Bright Star*](#)

At 6 pm on that day there was a reading of *Bright Star*, John Keats final poem dedicated to Fanny Brawne. The reading took place in the room at the Keats-Shelley House where the poet passed away aged 25. The event was produced and given social media coverage by the Institute of Digital Archaeology.

[Outcomes](#)

The Institute of Digital Archaeology gave support to the Keats-Shelley House to create a celebratory event and provide a different, but equally poignant tribute to Keats. This marked a new partnership which would prove very positive in the future.

The use of film and social media platforms during a time of restrictions for public events.

June

[Keats by Candlelight at the Sir John Soane's Museum, London](#)

After a period of lockdown, Keats by Candlelight marked a welcome diversion and poignant celebration of romantic poetry. The dramatic tour of Soane's wonderful idiosyncratic house was choreographed by playwright and Trustee, Angus Graham-Campbell and delivered by actors Fred Fergus, Harry Lloyd-Yorke, Tom Palmer and Polly Edsell. The evening proved somewhat challenging, as members of the audience were escorted through the candlelit recesses of the building where they encountered the actors dressed in costume of the Regency period. Readings of some of Keats's best loved works included *The Eve of St Agnes* in the Monks' Parlour and *Endymion* in the Colonnade, while in the Drawing Room there was a conversation between John Keats, his sister-in-law and Fanny Brawne. Each tour began with refreshments in the Drawing Room of the House.

Sir John Soane's Museum had hosted a similar dramatic evening with KSMA fifteen years earlier.

Outcomes

Keats by Candlelight took its inspiration from a similar collaborative event at the Sir John Soane Museum several years earlier, and the bicentenary was an opportune moment to revive this special partnership.

An event which engaged with the audience in a romantic setting; the two consecutive dramatic tours accommodated around 60 people. Not only was everything filmed as part of the bicentenary archive, but the actors gave interviews to camera, in advance of the performances.

The event attracted generous financial support and sponsorship, fulfilling a further aim of K-S 200, and set the scene for further connections between the two personality houses of the romantic period.

Shelley at Eton

On 11th June 2022, Eton College opened its doors to Friends and supporters of the Keats-Shelley Memorial Association for a day-long tribute to one of its most famous pupils. The varied programme started with an illuminating talk by KSMA Trustee and former Head of English, Angus Graham-Campbell, who regaled the assembled audience with stories of Shelley's Etonian Days. A group of pupils then read Shelley's speech written in 1810, In *Catilinam IV* and a selection of his poems including *Ode to the West Wind*, and *Adonais* - a lament on the death of John Keats.

Before a buffet lunch, kindly provided by the Provost, the participants enjoyed a guided tour of the 'Romantics' exhibition in the College Library, and Museum of Eton Life. The day concluded with tours of the College and grounds which have changed little since Shelley's time.

Outcomes

There has traditionally been a close link between KSMA and Eton College, and the day there was a fitting addition to the bicentenary programme.

The visit to Eton gave the participants a unique and illuminating insight into the early life of Percy Bysshe Shelley.

Blue Apple Theatre Production of *Frankenstein* 8th & 9th July 2021

Blue Apple – 'Changing lives through performing arts'

Blue Apple's *Frankenstein* was a long-awaited treat as the earlier schedule had been disrupted by the pandemic. However, it finally happened at the elegant, historic, Theatre Royal, Winchester in the summer of 2021. Although the audience was subject to social distancing, the production featured a full cast on stage with additional filmed sequences. The production was a triumph; despite the complexities of rehearsing during the pandemic, the audience was given a professional and full-on performance.

Frankenstein was first published in 1817 and is probably the most enduring novel of the nineteenth century; it is studied universally and is the subject of fascination by film makers, so how refreshing to be part of an innovative interpretation without a neck bolt in sight. Although the costumes were suggestive of the early 19th century, this innovative and thought-provoking adaptation posed some stark questions relevant to our times. Issues of alienation and prejudice defined the performance and the off-site interviews. The acclaimed Blue Apple actor, Tommy Jessop, provided a recorded voice-over for the Creature, a life-sized puppet which was something between a Wicker Man and a monster. A puppet theatre silhouetted against the darkness formed another effective element of the show, while the set and stage lighting created a bleak backdrop to Mary Shelley's Gothic tale. The production conveyed a message relevant to our times, that if you interfere with the natural world, nature will come back to haunt you.



Outcomes

The production of *Frankenstein* marked an exciting new departure for the Keats-Shelley Memorial Association fulfilling an important aim of the bicentenary initiative, to work with disadvantaged and disabled groups. This was also a partnership with Winchester University.

The Winchester production and the later tour to Rome, attracted local sponsorship and Arts Council funding.

The event was comprehensively covered in the local press and media and received excellent reviews, while Blue Apple have a far-reaching publicity machine. *Frankenstein* was also live streamed on YouTube and has remained available to view.

Educational Project with Apples & Snakes- a digital literature project on Romantic Poetry

A collaborative project between KSMA and Apples & Snakes; a company described as 'Spoken Word Trailblazers with Artists at our Heart'.

A number of secondary schools have been sourced through Birmingham Hippodrome and First Story to work with poets, regarded as social media influencers. What began as a search for Wi-Fi- the Poets were assigned to a rural retreat 'Content Cottage' to compose poetry and reflect upon the work of Keats and Shelley and to then transform the outcomes of this period

of isolation and deep reflection into educational resources and touring workshops. The workshops are concentrated in schools across parts of London and the East Midlands. Through the mechanism of film and social media, this initiative aims to give the poetry of the romantics a contemporary and innovative direction. Various resource materials have been created as part of the project, specifically aimed at GCSE and A-Level students.

The participating poets/artists are Christy Ku, Sophie Sparham, Adrian B. Earle.

Content for schools comprises a 45 minute live or digital performance of Y9-13, 2 x 1 hour long workshops based on groups of 35 students, with accompanying lesson plans.

Like so much of the K-S 200 programme, the workshops have been subject to delay and re-programming as a result of school closures throughout the pandemic, but also subsequent strikes by teachers. Due to re-scheduling the project will continue to run throughout 2023.

Outcomes

Final outcomes of the Apples & Snakes project are awaited.

July

South Downs Poetry Festival: Poetry and Music with Dame Penelope Keith at Chichester Cathedral

A collaboration between the South Downs Poetry Festival and KSMA in the glorious setting of Chichester Cathedral in July 2021.

Dame Penelope Keith read from Keats's immortal Odes to mark the bicentenary year of the death of John Keats in this celebration of poetry and music, held in the atmospheric setting of the Cathedral. A selection of poetry was also read by the South Downs poets and music for the piano was performed by visiting Russian maestro Victor Ryabchikov.

<http://www.sdpf.org.uk/programme/>

Outcomes

A rewarding collaboration with the South Downs Poetry Festival representing the first of other partnership events; the following year saw a tribute to Shelley and the anniversary of Byron's death in 2024 will be another commemorative occasion at Chichester Cathedral.

A fitting celebration of the poetry of John Keats on the bicentenary of his death. The event went ahead despite social distancing measures in place at the time, which effectively reduced the number of seats available by 40%.

Winchester Water Meadows Walk, Sunday 11th July 2021

To Autumn is one of John Keats most familiar odes and is forever associated with Winchester's historic water meadows and the Hospital of St Cross. Keats was staying in the city during September 1818, his 'living year' and took his inspiration for the ode from the

beauty of the countryside in the warm autumn sunshine; he told a friend 'The Air is worth sixpence a pint'.

Following in Keats's footsteps with a group of Friends and supporters was a rewarding element of the Keats-Shelley 200 programme, however the timing of the event was disrupted by the Covid pandemic, and instead of taking place in the Autumn of 2020, it was rescheduled to the following summer. Despite the change in timing, on 11th July 2021 we were welcomed to Winchester College and treated to an exhibition of their collection of romantic memorabilia; the group was also invited to visit the College Museum. Meanwhile in the late Medieval courtyard, three members of the Blue Apple Theatre's cast of *Frankenstein* recreated elements of the play for the benefit of the assembled group.

The walk started with a short diversion to look at the house on College Street, where Jane Austen once stayed. From there we were escorted through the College grounds to the water meadows; we paused to look at the medieval chapel and some famous graffiti including one by former pupil Anthony Trollope. The *To Autumn* walk was conducted in collaboration with the South Downs Poetry Festival and two of their resident poets, Stephanie Norgate and James Simpson accompanied the group, occasionally pausing to read Keats's poetry and a selection of their own work. A poignant moment was a group chorus of '*To Autumn*' beautifully choreographed by Stephanie and James. James Simpson is a knowledgeable naturalist and he spoke to us about the birds and wildlife that inhabit the water meadows.

Finally, arriving at St Cross Hospital and the Norman Church where Keats is said to have completed his poem, we were given a short introduction by one of the Hospital Brethren, and then permitted to wander around the garden and grounds which made a fitting finale to the day. Keats's own recollection of the Hospital was 'a very interesting old place, both for its Gothic tower and alms-square, and for the appropriation of its rich rents to a relation of the Bishop of Winchester'. A reference alluded to in Trollope's later novel, *The Warden*.

Outcomes

A memorable occasion for KSMA Friends, volunteers and supporters plus members of the public.

An illustrated article appeared in the Hampshire Chronicle and an interview on Radio Solent took place prior to the event.

The event was public facing and can be repeated in future years; it offers further opportunity to collaborate with Winchester College, Blue Apple Theatre Group and The South Downs Poetry Festival.

The day was filmed for the K-S 200 archive.

October

Cheltenham Literature Festival – The Beautiful and Damned; Lives of Keats and F. Scott Fitzgerald

Following a two- year break, KSMA was pleased to support an event at Cheltenham Literature Festival. The Beautiful and Damned was inspired by Professor Jonathan Bate's recently

published biography, *Bright Star Green Light*, which explores the interwoven tragic lives of John Keats and F. Scott Fitzgerald. The event adopted a Jazz Age theme, and the audience was treated by a jazz trio to music and songs of the era. Lucasta Miller, Sara Churchwell and Jonathan Bate then entertained the audience through letters and poems recalling loss, pleasure and pain through familiar and enduring lines from both tragically short lives. The Beautiful and Damned marked a Festival event with a difference, and fittingly concluded with a glass of fizz.

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Outcomes

A further opportunity for the Keats-Shelley Memorial Association to participate in one of Britain's foremost literary festivals and to benefit from inclusion in the Festival programme and the accompanying publicity. It also appeared in other listings.

The event attracted a full house, and the speakers kindly acknowledged the support of KSMA

<https://d.docs.live.net/4fd6d4480b834b5a/Documents/ksma%20bicentenaries/Cheltenham%20Literature%20Festival.pdf>

2022

January

A Grecian Urn for the 21st century – The Unveiling

One of Keats's best loved poems, *Ode on a Grecian Urn* provided the inspiration for a ceramic sculpture by Dan Baldwin, and the decoration of this sizeable piece pays tribute to the poet. The work was commissioned by Director of the Institute of Digital Archaeology, Oxford, Roger Michel, to mark the bicentenary of Keats's death and is eventually to be sold at auction to raise funds for KSMA and the Keats-Shelley House. An event to mark the unveiling of the sculpture was held at Keats-House Hampstead in January 2022, with another occasion later in the year at the Freud Museum in London. Poet Laureate, Simon Armitage, was among several eminent guests whose readings made this occasion memorable.

John Keats took his inspiration from The Sosibios Vase, or krater, which dates to around 50 BC and bears the signature of Sosibios of Athens, a Greek sculptor living in Rome during the latter years of the Republic. It is made of marble and decorated in a sculptural medium, unlike the red or black painted figure ware more typical of the Attic and Hellenistic periods. It has an illustrious history as at one time it was owned by Louis XIV and there are several copies in existence. Keats never visited Paris, but he was shown a sketch of the vase dating from around 1816 and his own sketch of 1819 is inspired by that. The original sketch of the Sosibios Vase by John Keats is one of the most treasured items in the collection of the Keats-Shelley House in Rome, and has been there since it was bequeathed to the museum in 1911.

Outcomes

Dan Baldwin's sculpture transforms the poetry and sketch by John Keats into an interesting three-dimensional art form, and the presentation hosted at Keats House was a fitting event to mark its unveiling.

Restrictions during the pandemic had prevented the Keats-Shelley House and Keats House on exhibitions and other things, so this event provided a welcome opportunity to join them. The Keats-Shelley Museum will benefit from the proceeds of the sale of the Vase.

May

John Keats's Final Journey

The anniversary of the arrival in Naples of John Keats and his companion, artist Joseph Severn in the Autumn of 1820, was marked by a reception at the Hotel Excelsior, overlooking the Bay with its stunning view of Mount Vesuvius. A musical programme with a romantic Neapolitan theme was presented by Duo Savigni and mezzo soprano Anna Tonna. Professor Nicholas Roe, Keats's biographer, gave a talk on 'The Footsteps of John Keats in Naples' he also led the guests on a walking tour which took in the Hotel Villa di Londra where Keats and Severn took lodgings before traveling on to Rome.

Outcomes

Unfortunately 'The Final Farewell' planned to take place at Tower Bridge Wharf in London, to mark the departure of the 'Maria Crowther', was cancelled due to Covid restrictions, so the event in Naples to commemorate her arrival was particularly poignant.

An opportunity to work with Italian Friends and colleagues on a bicentenary event.

A grant from the Commune of Rome assisted with expenses for the event

[https://d.docs.live.net/4fd6d4480b834b5a/Documents/ksma%20bicentenaries/An%20Invitation%20from%20the%20Keats-Shelley%20Memorial%20Association%20\(2\)%20-%20Copy.pdf](https://d.docs.live.net/4fd6d4480b834b5a/Documents/ksma%20bicentenaries/An%20Invitation%20from%20the%20Keats-Shelley%20Memorial%20Association%20(2)%20-%20Copy.pdf)

June

The Gulf of the Poets Festival, Lerici

The Gulf of the Poets Festival took place over three days at Lerici on the beautiful Ligurian coast of Italy. The 2022 Festival to some extent, replicated a similar event held in 1992 to commemorate the birth of Shelley, and it was a particular pleasure to welcome back Simon Armitage who had joined us 30 years earlier. In 2022 we marked the anniversary of Shelley's untimely death somewhere near the bay, when his small sailing vessel 'The Ariel', capsized in a storm on the return from a visit to Lord Byron in Pisa. The tragic story unfolded in July 1822, when Mary Shelley and her companion Jane Williams waited in vain for the return of their husbands, but sadly the bodies were washed up on the shore at Viareggio a few days later. Shelley's last home the Casa Magni, still stands overlooking the Bay at San Terenzo and the park beside it provided the setting for some of the readings. The Gulf of the Poets Festival proved a memorable experience with poets and speakers from the UK and Italy; among them Poet Laureate, Simon Armitage, Scarlett Sabet, Annalisa Alleval and Paolo Febbraro. Shelley scholars Anna Mercer and Carla Sanguinetti gave talks and readings from

Mary Shelley's letters. The extraordinarily rich bilingual programme of music, contemporary and romantic poetry and tours by land and sea, concluded with a presentation of the local Pea Prize to Simon Armitage and a showing of the specially commissioned film *Shelley in Rome*.

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Outcomes

Key partnerships with the Comune of Viareggio, the British Council, the British Embassy, the Italian Embassy and the local community, were an important element of this initiative.

It was an honour to be included in the programme for the Pea Prize, a long-standing local tradition honouring outstanding international poets.

A collaborative opportunity for British and Italian poets, academics and lovers of literature, delegates participated from Britain, Italy and elsewhere.

A nostalgic trip for several people who were present in 1992 at the first Gulf of the Poets Festival.

Much of the Festival was filmed for the K-S 200 archive.

The Last Days of Shelley

Shortly after the conclusion of the Lerici Festival, the Piazza di Spagna in Rome became the setting for a large screen showing of the film *The Last Days of Shelley*, directed by Giulio Boato and with a voice over by Keats-Shelley Ambassador, the late Julian Sands. An audience of several hundred people gathered outside the Keats-Shelley House to enjoy this event on a warm summer evening.

Shelley in Rome, a video story directed by Giulio Boato, exploring the poet's relationship with the Eternal City with evocative visuals and 3-dimensional audio.

Outcomes

A well-attended public facing event conducted by the Keats-Shelley House

The film leaves an enduring legacy on YouTube, social media platforms and the KSMA and K-S House websites.

South Downs Poetry Festival: Poetry & Music with Roger McGough in Chichester Cathedral

In July 2021, KSMA was in partnership with the South Downs Poetry Festival in a celebration of the poetry of John Keats in Chichester Cathedral and the following summer we collaborated in a tribute to P. B. Shelley.

The musical element of the event was provided by Elena Toponogova – who played works for the piano by Chopin. South Downs poets, Barry Smith (Director of the Festival) and Chris Hardy read pieces from their own collections and from Shelley. Roger McGough then added his contribution to the evening. Particularly memorable was Roger's reading of

Shelley's enduring and thought-provoking *Masque of Anarchy*.

Outcomes

The evening was a great success with the Cathedral filled to capacity, unlike the previous year when numbers were limited by social distancing.

An opportunity for KSMA to reinforce the partnership with South Downs, whose aim is to encourage diversity through poetry and Art.

A way of connecting with leading poets and media celebrities.

July

The Triumph of Life

In the summer of 2022 the Keats-Shelley House worked closely with the Keats-Shelley Association of America on the production of a spectacular global reading of Shelley's last unfinished poem *The Triumph of Life*. The reading spanned 14 different locations across the globe with a live broadcast open to a large international audience.

With translations provided, the readings were conducted by Academy Award winning film director and Keats-Shelley 200 Ambassador, Dame Jane Campion whose film *Bright Star* was based on the life and love of John Keats. This was a unique way of bringing Shelley's work to life two centuries after his death.

Following the readings, there followed a round table discussion about Shelley's eventful life and work and the tragedy of his death. This was interwoven with thoughts on his dedication to Keats through the poem *Adonais* as well as his relationship with Lord Byron. A digital conference suite was created for the event, which incorporated architectural features from the Keats-Shelley House. An interview with Dame Jane Campion on Channel 4 TV and BBC Arts added another dimension to the publicity for this extraordinary occasion.

THE BICENTENARY OF PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY'S DEATH IN ITALY AN UPDATE

Thank you for registering for our online event to mark the 200th anniversary of Shelley's death on 8th July 2022. The event will take place on YouTube at 1 p.m. EDT/ 6 p.m. BST/ 7 p.m. CEST. We will send you the event link in due course and recommend that you [subscribe](#) for free to the Keats-Shelley House's YouTube channel in the meantime.

The event will take place in a specially created virtual Keats-Shelley House and will be presented by Professor Neil Fraistat and Dr Anna Mercer of the Keats-Shelley Association of America, and Dr Giuseppe Albano, Curator of the Keats-Shelley House.

Part 1 – Premiere of *The Last Days of Shelley*, a video story with immersive sound featuring the voice of actor and Keats-Shelley200 Ambassador Julian Sands and produced by 313 film production and directed by Giulio Boato. This short film, released in December 2021, follows Shelley in Rome, and is best experienced with headphones.

Part 2 – The Triumph of Life: A global reading of Shelley’s last, unfinished poem in fourteen languages read by readers from different locations around the world. The reading will be led by two-time Academy Award winning film director and Keats-Shelley200 Ambassador Dame Jane Campion.

Part 3 – A Round Table discussion on the theme of Shelley’s last days bringing together scholars of the poet’s life and work. The discussion will cover Shelley’s life, work, thought, his relationships with Byron and Leigh Hunt, and the intertwining legacy he shares with John Keats.

The panellists comprise Dr Serena Baiesi, Professor Nora Crook, Dr Mathelinda Nagubodi, Professor Andrew Stauffer, and Professor Fernando Valverde. The discussion will be moderated by Professor Neil Fraistat, Dr Anna Mercer, and Dr Giuseppe Albano.

Audience members will be invited to submit questions to the panel in advance of the event.

Outcomes

The Triumph of Life event was a remarkable achievement which achieved an international following and brought together poets, writers and academics from 15 countries.

Dame Jane Campion gave interviews on national television which further publicised this event.

Recital at Old St Pancras Church, London

Old St Pancras Church provided the setting for an evening of music, readings and poetry in July 2022. Harpist Harriet Adie, and the Sacco String Trio played pieces from the romantic era interspersed with poetry narrated by Reeta Chakrabarti, BBC Journalist and K-S 200 Ambassador. Professor Paul Hamilton treated the audience to an illuminating talk about the historic churchyard and its connection to Mary Shelley, Percy Bysshe and the mother of Mary Shelley, the writer and feminist, Mary Wollstonecraft. The guests later gathered for refreshments and were offered the opportunity to visit the graves of Sir John Soane, and Mary Wollstonecraft, and the Thomas Hardy tree.

Outcomes

The Church of Old St Pancras has an enduring connection to Percy Bysshe Shelley, his second wife Mary and their families; it was on the tomb of Mary Wollstonecraft that Shelley proposed in marriage, so a fitting venue for a bicentenary event.

Father Elston and the church community made everyone welcome and suggested an event such as this could be repeated in the future.

An interesting public facing occasion which was well supported by a full capacity audience. The event was originally planned to take place in June 2021, but social distancing restrictions would have made it costly and impractical.

An event partly run by volunteers- this was an opportunity to involve new audiences, enthuse volunteers and reinforce partnerships.

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October

Blue Apple Theatre Company; *Frankenstein* Tour to Rome

The penultimate bicentenary event was the tour to Rome by the Blue Apple Theatre Company. After much anticipation and planning, *Frankenstein* arrived in Italy.

St Stephen's International School kindly made their theatre available free of charge, for two performances on consecutive days of the Blue Apple adaptation of Mary Shelley's timeless Gothic story. The theatre was full for both performances and the audience consisted of students from St Stephen's and other schools, as well as members of the public who came from the UK and Italy. The Blue Apple cast and support workers also offered a day of workshops for St Stephen's students. During their stay the cast were given tours to the Colosseum and other parts of the city. They were also invited to the dramatic readings at the non-Catholic Cemetery in Rome.

Outcomes

KSMA was able to fulfil a compelling aim of the bicentenary programme by extending its outreach capability to work with disabled groups; it is anticipated that there may be occasions to work with Blue Apple Theatre Company in the future.

The tour to Rome demonstrated that it was finally possible to defeat the setbacks of the Covid pandemic and make a success of the bicentenary initiative.

The partnership with St Stephen's International School is a significant one for the Keats-Shelley House in Rome and something that might continue.

The members of the Blue Apple company who participated in the tour to Rome, had an enjoyable and rewarding experience, none of them had visited previously. The cast members all signed a copy of the programme as a thank you to the project managers.

Some excellent publicity was gained through the Blue Apple publicity machine, the International Schools network, and through press and media coverage in Italy. Bicentenary 'ambassadors' including Simon Armitage, Bob Geldof, Julian Sands and Reeta Chakrabarti left messages on the Blue Apple website, wishing everyone good luck.

Reception & dramatic readings at Rome's non-Catholic Cemetery, Rome

The historic cemetery at Testaccio in Rome is the final resting place of the English poets, John Keats and Percy Bysshe Shelley, along with Edward Trelawney and Shelley's son William. This tranquil corner of the city provided a wonderful setting for a tribute to the poets. On a warm October afternoon, local volunteers, The Blue Apple company and others gathered there for a tour and dramatic readings of letters and poetry by actor Fred Fergus and K-S 200 Ambassador Reeta Chakrabarti. The tour was repeated twice to allow the maximum number of people to enjoy this unique experience which concluded the bicentenary events programme.

Outcomes

An opportunity to work in partnership with the non-Catholic Cemetery which is largely volunteer run.

An opportunity for poignant reflection on the life and death of John Keats and Percy Bysshe Shelley, which took place in their final resting place.