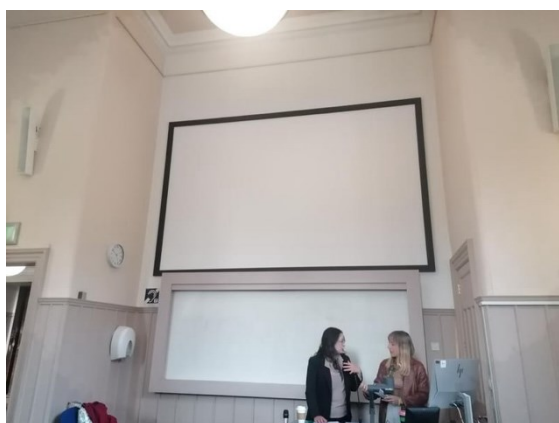


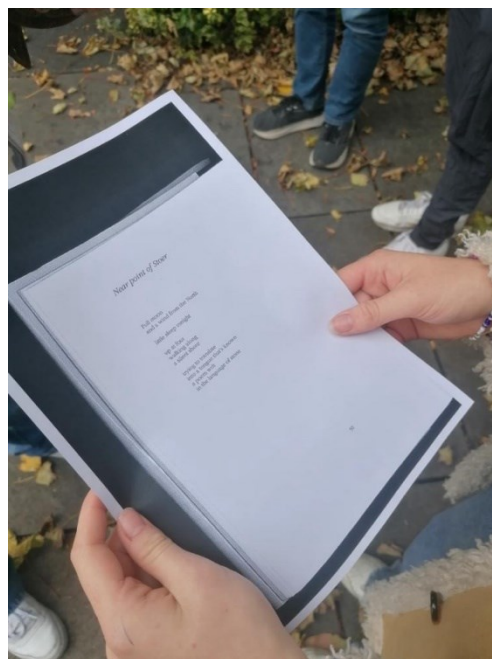
## Walking Poems: A Workshop of Three Landscapes

On the afternoon of Friday, October 4th, students and staff gathered for a unique "walkshop"—a blend of walking and a workshop—designed to explore poetry through the lens of Scottish coastal landscapes. This event, organized as part of the Festival of Modern Languages, was led by Dr. Liliana Chávez Díaz, Lecturer in Latin American Studies, and Viktoriia Grivina, a PhD candidate in the School of Social Anthropology and Modern Languages. Participants were encouraged to explore alternative methods of interacting with poetry in outdoor spaces, allowing their creative insights to be shaped by the environment and movement of the body. The walkshop fostered a deeper connection between words and place, inviting new perspectives on how poetry can be experienced and expressed beyond the traditional classroom.

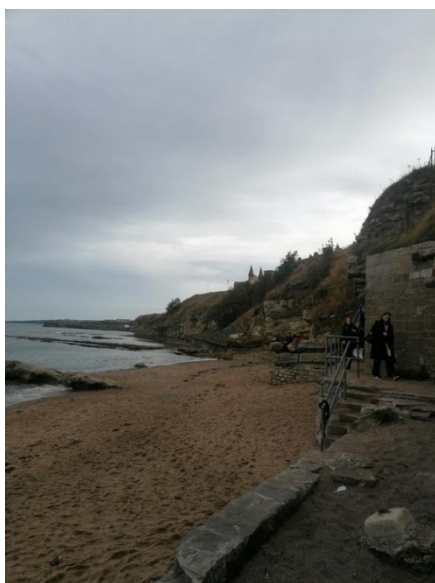


The workshop began with students and staff gathering in a lecture hall located within the historic St Salvador's Quad, starting with a moment of mindfulness. Participants were encouraged to pay attention to their bodies within the space and enter the 'strange, different world poetry creates for us,' as Viktoriia stated.

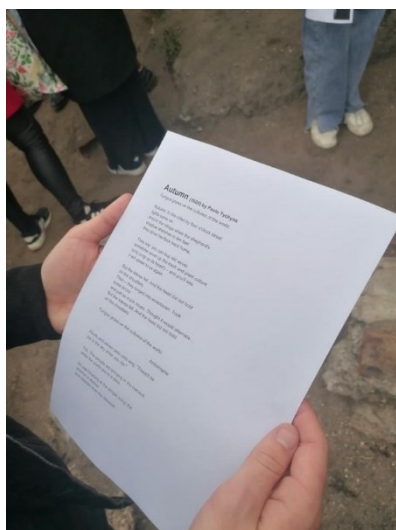
The group then proceeded towards Wardlaw Museum, where they were paired up and provided with handouts introducing the first poem, *Coastline*. The quiet setting allowed for reflection and after an insightful discussion participants were led to Castle Sands. Here, another Scottish poem, *Near Point of Stoer*, was shared. There was a clear connection between the poems and the local coastal scenery.



As participants stood by the shore, the words of the poem blended with the natural landscape, resembling the motions of the waves and offering an example of how poetry can both reflect and be enriched by the environment in which it is read.



Departing from the beach, pairs were swapped, and participants explored English translations of Ukrainian poets. The first poem was Zhadan's *Autumn*. The opening line, "In the cities by four o'clock streetlights come on," perfectly matched the atmosphere. The autumn setting, often linked to themes of decline and aging, mirrored the poem's broader exploration of cultural decay. One student noted that reading the verses in the wind, with the sea as a backdrop, enhanced the metaphor for the seasonal and emotional shifts Zhadan contemplates.



Continuing along The Scores, the group read *Years (Middle)*, reflecting on time and identity. The line "There are always two roads from this deepest hollow" resonated with many, especially those nearing the end of their university years, as they contemplated the choices and uncertainties ahead.



As the group approached the pier, they turned to Antonio Machado's *Traveler, Your Footprints* and reflected on the line, "Traveler, there is no road; you make your own path as you walk." Coincidentally, the path to the pier was blocked, and so the group took another route—an unexpected but fitting symbol that in life the path you must take is not always clear. When confronted with obstacles, we must adapt and forge new directions. The surroundings further consolidated the poem's message: life's journey is not predetermined.



The “walkshop” concluded back in the classroom, where participants shared their experiences of embodiment and how the outdoor landscape interacted with the afternoon’s poetry. Although all poems were presented in English, poems were also introduced from Dr. Chávez Díaz’s and Viktoriia Grivina’s mother tongues, Spanish and Ukrainian, respectively. This comparison prompted connections between the coastal landscape of Scotland, the Ukrainian dappled forests and Central American vibrant tropics. It highlighted how both language and landscape shape our understanding of poetry, allowing us to connect more deeply with it.

Arriving at the graveyard and Cathedral, the group read the poetry of Gioconda Belli, a renowned Nicaraguan poet known for her passionate, feminist, and politically engaged works. The poem *¿Qué sos, Nicaragua?* reflects on the identity, soul, and essence of Nicaragua. Belli intertwines her feelings of pride, frustration, and love for her homeland.

