

# Tributes to Dr Catherine Silverstone





***Dr. Catherine Silverstone, Head of the School of English and Drama and a longstanding colleague in the Department of Drama at Queen Mary University of London, tragically passed away on Sunday 4th October 2020 at King's College Hospital.***

Catherine was an esteemed scholar of contemporary queer and decolonial approaches to Shakespeare; she also published on LGBT culture more broadly, including in relation to club performance, performances of queer affirmation, “queer afterlives”, and the films of Derek Jarman.

Those of us who had the pleasure to work with Catherine will have known her to be a wonderfully intelligent and intuitive thinker, a brilliant doctoral supervisor, and a generous, warm, and committed teacher.

Catherine was a Reader in the Department of Drama at Queen Mary; she previously taught at Anglia Ruskin University. She was well loved -- and highly valued -- by colleagues and students at both universities.

We have created this space to record condolences and to share memories of Catherine to create a lasting tribute to our wonderful friend, colleague, scholar and teacher.

Our thoughts are with her partner Julia, her family in New Zealand and her friends.

We all loved and will miss Catherine more than we can ever say.

Catherine was a wonderful colleague, an amazing and dedicated teacher, and for far too short a time our Head of School. Catherine could be both visionary and highly pragmatic, an unusual but wonderful combination. She was always generous to others and a very good listener. As she led the School through the beginnings of the Coronavirus lockdown she showed determination, clarity of thought, and the soundest of ethical judgement. In very difficult times it felt safe to be in her hands. She had the warmest smile and left everybody she worked with feeling better for knowing her. My deepest condolences go to Julia, to Catherine's family, and to her many friends. We will all miss Catherine terribly.

**Morag Shiach**

I have the pleasure to hold lovely memories from working with Catherine at different occasions, especially when she got to travel to Brazil for work while PPP was managing the project Shakespeare Forum back in 2016. I'll keep her shiny smile, brilliant mind and kind approach to life in my mind, she was truly a lovely soul and wonderful professional. Much love to her partner Julia, whom we got to know and work in other projects too. My heart is with you.

**Renata Peppi**

Catherine was a fantastic teacher, colleague and researcher. She was incredibly supportive of me and my development, as she was of many others, and she will be very much missed and remembered.

**Lewis Church**

Catherine was an absolutely wonderful soul. She was one of those rare people who seemed gentle and approachable yet had a quiet confidence about herself that made you always interested in what she had to say. I fondly remember my days spent attending Catherine's lectures and I'm absolutely devastated that she is no longer with us. The world has lost one of the good ones. Rest well Catherine, you will always be remembered and forever be missed.

**Barnaby Twyman Baker**

I met Catherine a few times during the industrial action at the university this year going into the COVID crisis. In the brief time I was fortunate to know her she was incredibly patient, generous, and kind, despite becoming Head of School at the hardest moment in decades with twin crises. She seemed to have a grip on everything in terms of staff and student interests and well-being, whilst also managing to be warm and upbeat. She will be missed by the School, the university, and all colleagues who worked with her and met her, and no doubt to the wider community. An incredible person.

**Julian Hough**

It's difficult to express the dreadful shock and grief that I know so many of us feel about Catherine's death. I knew Catherine as a wonderful colleague, who embodied everything that is collegial in her help and support for others. She was such a kind and intelligent presence in any meeting or any interaction I had with her. She was stalwart in her support for all the values that matter in education and research, but was always able to put her point of view with gentleness and humour. She is a terrible loss to us all, and my heart goes out to all her friends and colleagues in SED and HSS and most of all to her partner and family - their pain is something that no one should have to bear.

**Kim Hutchings**

Always remembered with love and gratitude. You helped me so much dear friend. Ax

**Ali Campbell**

Thank you so much for your unwavering light and support for us all. You were my entrance interviewer for the University and my dissertation advisor - a real full circle - you inspired me to try and be the smartest and kindest person in the room, as you were. Thank you for everything.

**Carolina Mills**

I will always remember Catherine as one of those colleagues who made Queen Mary a real university for me - greatly appreciated, much respected.

**Dave Horne**

Catherine was one of the most unique humans I have ever had the pleasure to know. I was constantly awed by her always having time for us PhD students even when the temporal pressure was on, her attention to detail, her capacity for care and kindness, her ability to see through the rubbish to the core of what really matters, her once replying to an email I was scared to send within literally a minute with characteristic care and attention. She was quite simply unlike anyone else, a force of nature, a force of humanity, a pedagogical powerhouse.

Catherine was such a constant in life, it is so hard to absorb the fact that she is no longer with us, although when you are a beacon of generosity and hope that shines as brightly as Catherine, that light never truly goes out.

Massive love and solidarity to Julia, Anne, Brian, and all Catherine's family and friends whose lives she enhanced so much. Rest in the soundest of peaces, Catherine.

**Philip Watkinson**

Catherine was such a wonderful colleague and friend. Brilliant, inspiring, compassionate, rigorous, strong and also gentle, she filled everyone who met her with admiration. If you needed a partner to conspire with, she was the first person you'd want on side. Her care for us, staff and students, made every day a little better. And I just loved to see her smiling face in the corridor. We will miss her so much.

**Andrea Brady**

Dear colleagues and students in the School of English and Drama, Catherine was a kind and generous person, an outstanding scholar and a remarkable teacher. She was such a strong supporter of everyone in SED, and tenaciously and firmly defended the interests of colleagues and students. She loved the School, and the care and attention she devoted to you all was apparent to everyone. I will miss her warm and sensible presence, her calm good sense and the good humour that she always exhibited. I will remember her generosity of spirit.

**Christina Perry**  
**(Dean for Education - HSS)**

I have no words to express the shock and upset that I felt when I heard of Catherine's passing... I was fortunate enough to be taught by her when I attended QMUL in 2008, through until 2011. Since then, we remained in contact over email. Catherine supported me when I lost my place at the Institute of Education for teachers training, where she kindly wrote a letter in support of my appeal. 5 years later, I am a Teacher of English and drama, and a Deputy Head of Sixth Form at my current school. This would not have been possible without Catherine's support. She was incredibly intelligent, perceptive, kind-hearted, and warm - always going above and beyond to support her students, long after they left QMUL. She was such a special person, and really helped me to become the teacher that I am today.

You will be missed, Catherine... This really is such a loss. x

**Ashleigh Yulle**

Dr Catherine Silverstone was such a positive light throughout my final year at QM. Her passion and energy was always encouraging and she was so clearly dedicated to helping every student that she could, in every way that she could. I always remember feeling grateful & reassured that Catherine was there to support me and point me in the right direction. It is so saddening to hear that Catherine has passed, my thoughts are with her family and friends during this difficult time.

**Charlotte Ruane**

I am so shocked and sorry to hear of Catherine's passing and I want to send my love and thoughts to her family, friends and colleagues. I cannot say I knew Catherine well personally, but our paths crossed often at QM and I really appreciated her warmth, good sense, humour, and collegiality. She was so obviously a lovely, giving, honest and funny person, and I wish I had had the chance to know her better.

**Madeleine Davis**

**My memories of Catherine are filled with big, warm aloha. She will be sorely missed.**

**Stacy Makishi**

I'm shocked and devastated by the news of Catherine's death.

As my personal tutor twice throughout my degree Catherine's wisdom and advice had a profound affect upon how I accessed the world of performance.

I greatly doubt that I would be the theatre maker and on the path I am now without Catherine's insightful, generous and me sincere guidance.

My prayers are with Catherine's partner and family as they process I loss that even I at this distance struggle to understand.

**Barnaby Simmons**

I just read that the fronds of the New Zealand silver fern stood for strength, stubborn resistance and enduring power. All qualities that you would want in a colleague and leader, and all qualities that everyone in the department felt from you.

**Tom Wilson**

I am deeply saddened to learn of Catherine's passing. I met her for the first time only in Summer 2019, as we both prepared to assume the roles of Heads of our respective Schools. We became friends, helping each other along as we stepped into our new roles. She introduced me to a great coffee shop in Mile End and we often met up there.

All of us have lost a dear friend and a much loved and admired colleague. She left too soon, but there is so much to celebrate in her life and work. I shall remember her by her lovely sense of humour, her warmth and her kindness. My sincere condolences go to her partner and family. I wish them strength to bear this loss.

**Parvati Nair**

Dr. Catherine Silverstone taught me on the undergraduate model Performance, Sexuality, Identity, a module that opened my eyes and has shaped the course of the work that I now do in my performance career.

The work that she showed us and the discussions she led and allowed us to have were so important and enlightening and I am very grateful that she curated the module.

She was also my advisor for my MA dissertation and I remember her being patient, attentive and incredibly supportive. I am sending love to her family and loved ones and keeping them and her in my thoughts.

**Izzi Richardson**

Catherine showed incredible leadership, sensitivity and bravery when Head of the School of English and Drama at Queen Mary during an extremely - almost unimaginably - difficult and challenging time.

Condolences to her family and friends and to all those who worked closely with her and who will miss her on so many levels.

**Howard Finn**

Catherine was one of my favourite teachers in undergrad - always open minded and kind, and full of inspiring insights and helpful recommendations. She really knew how to make academia fun, and how to turn fun into constructive conversations. I am shocked and devastated by the news of her death, and my heart goes out to those who were close to her - she was an amazing teacher and a wonderful person.

**Soz Redland**

Although I didn't have Catherine for a lesson. I have spoken to her on many occasions about life both academically and personally. Catherine was one of the most genuinely lovely people I have met, always willing to help and a great listener! My thoughts are with the rest of the drama department and my colleagues at this very very sad time.

Words can't describe how we are all feeling.

**Joshua Lowes**

I joined the English department the same year Catherine was nominated Head of the School of English and Drama. Her warmth welcome astonished me, and I knew that my research journey would flourish thanks to her presence, her kindness and creativity. I can imagine how inspiring she was to the students she was supervising and to all the colleagues who worked closely with her.

The department has lost a prominent and influential scholar. Her significantly rich body of work will shape and impart life into the next generations of scholars to come.

My thoughts and prayers are going to her family in the UK and New Zealand, and her friends.

**Cathie Jayakumar**

Catherine was, as for so many of us, the first person I met on my journey into QMUL.

From the moment we first spoke at my interview, I was struck by her warmth and sincere passion for each student she engaged with.

This was true throughout my whole undergrad at QM and there was never a day when Catherine would not make the time to ensure your voice was heard. She was a fantastic teacher and a source of inspiration to so many.

**Matti Ryan**

I am deeply saddened to learn of the death of Dr. Catherine Silverstone and send heartfelt condolences to her partner and family, friends and colleagues. I met Catherine some years ago, on the Shakespeare circuit and at Anglia Ruskin, appearing in the collection she edited with Sarah Annes Brown, *Tragedy in Transition*. When, in 2018, I co-hosted (with Erica Whyman of the RSC) a conference called 'Radical Mischief: Inviting Experiment in Thought, Theatre and Politics' in Stratford, I knew I wanted to get Catherine involved. We needed academics who could facilitate conversations between people from Universities and the arts, and I was delighted when Catherine agreed to run the session about theatre, thought and gender, in conjunction with the Director Kimberly Sykes. Catherine was brilliant at the conference: intelligent, focussed, encouraging, passionate and (where necessary) sceptical.

I was also just very pleased to see her again, enjoying her easy kindness, good humour, modesty and commitment, and that ready, sympathetic laugh and smile.

She was real and good; I'm so sorry she's gone.

**Kim Solga**

My deepest condolences to Catherine's family, colleagues and students. I will remember her fondly as inherently gentle, thoughtful, and reflexive. Her laughter and kindness always put those around her at ease. Sending all those who knew her much love and lightness.

**Sadhvi Dar**

Catherine was my dissertation supervisor for my BA two years ago. I had never really spoken to her before that, and wasn't sure what to expect - but on entering her office for the first time, I was met with a calm, warm and intelligent person who became a lifeline for me in my final year. I used to go to her office and speak to her for far too long; we would spar our ideas, scribble notes, and really get into it. She would read all my rambling emails and reply every time with wisdom and calmness. She was such a generous teacher. My god, she was a giver. She wrote a post-it note for me on a particularly overwhelming day, which I stuck up on my wall through the whole of my last year at university. I used to read it every day, and it would make me feel calm. Catherine was the kind of person who, even on the most frazzled, stressed and overwhelmed of days, would make you feel refreshed and focused by the time you left her office.

One of the things that was amazing about Catherine is that she was universally liked. I never heard a bad word said by anyone about Catherine. We were all just in awe of her, and that is because she gave every student she met a chance to love university, even when they didn't think they could. Even if they didn't ever really love it, she supported them no matter what. She wasn't egotistical, she was just present. She was just there with you. She was just Catherine. I am shocked and devastated by the idea of her not being there any more. She will be missed badly by all the students, all the alumni, and I'm sure by her colleagues so fervently too. I wish her family well, and my thoughts are with them at this awful time. Her light, generous spirit will remain within me, and within so many people she touched, forever.

**Madeleine Goode**

I knew Catherine as a brilliant Shakespeare scholar and an insightful member of Shakespeare Bulletin's editorial board. What a loss for our field. Condolences to all who loved her.

**Kathryn Prince**

I met Catherine working in the tech dept at QMUL. She was always lovely. Smiled and asked questions even if we didn't know each other that well. What a sad loss. Thoughts to her partner, family, friends and colleagues.

**Jo Palmer**

She was an amazing teacher, a great person in general, with a lively and fun personality. I was terribly disheartened that the teacher who welcomed us all at the start of last year, the teacher who was so excited to see us and present us with the curricula, is not between us anymore... It's hard to even express in words how tremendously sad this news is. My thoughts go to her family, her partner and her friends. May she rest in peace and power. She truly was an angel.

**Anca-Teodora Stoian**

I was lucky enough to be taught by Catherine in my first year at university. I will never forget her calming attitude and wonderfully wise way of communicating with some very nervous young people just starting out their academic adventures. I'm sending much love to her family and to the department of English and Drama.

**Grace Cameron**

I only had the opportunity to speak with Dr. Silverstone once, on the picket line this past February. Even from that brief interaction, I could feel the warmth and care she extended to each of her students and colleagues. My thoughts are with all who worked closely with her.

**Erin McMahon**

I loved Catherine's classes. I called her Dr Cath which she hated and asked me not to do but always tolerated and always smiled. She was smart and kind and even after I graduated, she kept being supportive by coming to see shows I made when she really didn't have to. So many of my friends from QMUL have spoken today about how sad they are and how much they loved her, which shows the impact she had as a person and a thinker and a teacher. I'm so sorry to her partner, friends and family for their loss, and send love.

**Rebecca**

I am so sorry to hear this shocking news. Catherine was a fantastic scholar and lecturer and supported me greatly when I was an emerging researcher fresh out of my phd and teaching at QM. She taught me a lot. My thoughts are with her partner, family and friends.

**Sarah Sigal**

I am truly saddened by this tragic news. It was such a pleasure and a privileged to be taught by Catherine, who had such beautiful mind and outlook. It was an real treat to reconnect with her again recently for a long overdue catch-up over lunch - I was once again struck by her and her extraordinary mind and kindness, and was delighted to know her. She will be missed terribly.

**Katie Moriarty-Hopper**

Catherine was a valued member of the Faculty EDI committee and a real pleasure to work with. I am shocked and deeply saddened by her loss and wanted to convey my heartfelt condolences to all who knew and loved her.

**Rainbow Murray**

Catherine taught me in the Performing Shakespeare module when I was in my second year in 2015. We had so much fun and made a performance that to this day I am so proud of, thanks to her. She was such a kind, funny and supportive teacher and I feel lucky to have been able to work with her. She put up with our moaning at the 9am starts and let us dance to Shakira and play ridiculous games to warm up, and never let us get overwhelmed when our final performance was looming.

**Hannah Gladstone**

I had the privilege of being taught by Catherine when embarking upon my dissertation earlier this year. Somehow, in the middle of a pandemic and third year being over trauma, Catherine was still a champion of laughter, academic rigour and, of course, QMPlus. In my three-year capacity as course rep, I worked closely with Catherine, as she picked my brain on how she could make the SED better for students. She always had our needs and wants at the forefront of her mind. We often met stupidly early or late to discuss the course together and liaise between the final years and the department.

She was never afraid to move first to protect her staff and students, making the decision to close the SED before the university did in the wake of coronavirus. But this wasn't goodbye, simply hello to an exciting new teaching environment. Catherine was the kind of tutor that stays with you long after graduation, and I count myself lucky that I got to know her so well. In my last email from Catherine, we discuss my results (a grade that I could not have achieved without her) and bright hopes for the future. She agreed that we should keep in touch, and I wish we'd had more time to do so. She was there for every catastrophe I was met with, and every achievement I made, on my three year rollercoaster. I wouldn't have had it any other way.

Dr Catherine Silverstone will stay in my thoughts for a long time to come, and I hope to inspire the excitement for life and learning in others as she did in me.

Cheers to you, Catherine. We're all better off because you were here.

**Gwyn Lawrence**

Catherine and I did our PhDs at the same time at the University of Sussex in the late 90s and early 00s, and stayed in touch for sometime after we left. I remember her as immensely gentle, warm and empathetic, as well as incredibly bright, sparky and hilariously, mischievously funny. I am deeply shocked to hear of her death and send my very deepest condolences to her friends and family.

**Bryony Randall**

Dr. Catherine Silverstone shaped so much of my learning at Queen Mary. She had such care and attention for her students. I was so inspired by her intellectual standpoints. Her Shakespeare module was one of my most memorable classes, inspiring me to take an original stance upon an “un-original” idea. Thank you Catherine for everything you have given us.

**Olivia Wylie**

This is devastating news. Catherine was one of my PhD examiners—she was kind, thoughtful, incisive, generous with her time and her comments; she made the viva feel empowering. What a terrible loss to QMUL and to the scholarly community.

**Sally Barnden**

My deepest condolences to Catherine's loved ones. I didn't have a lot of contact time with her but Catherine made an impact on me every time that I heard her speak. I admired her vibrant energy, her sense of humour and her good nature. May we live with the same brightness in her memory.

**Clarice Montero**

- [ ] Catherine silverstone was one of the only teachers I have ever met who made me feel completely comfortable. Her proactive mindset and caring nature made her the perfect listener who always left you feeling elated. Catherine helped me identify my dyslexia and supported me through my journey. I feel truly blessed to have had her as my personal tutor for three years. Her door was always open, but as one door closes another must open. I'll never forget you Catherine xxx

**James Jackson**

Love from an Antipodean brother xo

**Rob Conkie**

I'm absolutely heartbroken to hear this news - please pass on my love and best wishes to her family and to Julia. I had the great privilege of teaching alongside Catherine as a PhD student - she helped shape my attitude to teaching, she used to take all the TAs for lunch after every session. She listened to our worries and fears, and helped us learn how to be better teachers. She never rushed or hurried us, and just genuinely cared about our wellbeing and how we could learn to support the students. She was generous with her time, and incredibly passionate about her work. She was a vital part of Queen Mary for so long, and has shaped so many people - including me. I remain incredibly grateful to her.

**Sarah Whitfield**

Catherine, thank you.

Thanks for believing and encouraging me. Thank you for seeing potential in me. Thank you for giving me the strength to grieve. Thanks for being an exemplar teacher, an influential force and a caring supervisor.

It was such an honour to be taught by you. You will be missed.

**Yiota Demetriou**

Catherine's scholarship was distinguished by its intellectual brilliance, integrity, and range. I first met her at one of the early BSA conferences. I liked her straight away - she was warm, funny, and clever. I think she was quite a shy person but that never stopped her and she was always excellent company.

I am so sorry to hear of Catherine's untimely death. My sincere condolences to her colleagues, friends, and family. She will be missed greatly.

**Adrian Streete**

I only had the pleasure of knowing Catherine briefly, but I was struck by how gently-spoken, sharp-witted and kind she was. She was clearly much loved and will be sorely missed.

**Ellen Wiles**

I will always be grateful to Catherine for her help. My condolences to all who had the privilege to know her better than I did.

**Vanessa Lim**

Such a loss for the Theatre and Performance Studies community. I took Catherine's module on Performativity, Sexuality and Identity at QM. Everything changed for me. It was such a gift for my small-town-mind.

Dr Catherine Silverstone was an esteemed scholar of contemporary queer and decolonial approaches to Shakespeare; she also published on LGBT culture more broadly, including in relation to club performance.

I still remember our supervisions. Never did you, even once, downplay my overexcitement about first-time realisations in discovering the gems of philosophy, the depths of deconstructionism, and feminist studies.

Over the years, when I've been tired and upset, having 2nd thoughts about academia, it's that excitement and transformation that I remember, that you gave to me - which, in turn, I try to give to my students.

Catherine, thank you.

Thanks for believing and encouraging me. Thank you for seeing potential in me. Thank you for giving me the strength to grieve when I didn't understand. Thanks for being an exemplar teacher, an influential force, a caring and generous supervisor.

You will be missed.

**Yiota Demetriou**

I am so sorry to hear of Catherine's passing, my heart goes out to Julia and her family and friends. I am so sorry for your loss. Catherine taught me when she had just started at QM, and we re-met through Julia recently. I always enjoyed her passion for theatre and questioning nature. I feel very sad. An observation Catherine made to me in March came back into my mind yesterday with no prompt, and now I read of her passing. These are connected and whilst sad, I thank her for her teaching and her life.

**Tim Hopkins**

Catherine Silverstone was one of the best teachers I ever had. Warm, patient and painfully funny, I'll always remember a shared love for trashy God-awful (briliant) Shakespeare adaptations and nerding out over running stats. Such a sad loss. Xx

**Joe Mcloughlin**

Catherine Silverstone was one of the kindest mentors and professors I encountered in all my years of education at Queen Mary. She was an incredible mind and on a more personal note always had time for a chat, always leant an ear. Her help during my final year of University was an immense help and she always offered beautiful insight towards queer existence, which has stayed with me until now. I'm wishing all the best to everyone mourning her passing, my heart goes out to you.

**Rebecca S**

I'm so very sorry to hear the sad news of Catherine's passing -- she was a lovely woman and she will be missed by all of us.

**Susan Bennett**

I didn't work with her directly that much. I can remember her immense kindness. As if she knew me as her own student. It was a privilege to be able to read her work and be taught by her, even indirectly. Thank you for your kindness.

**Charli Hurford**

I was sad to hear about Catherine's passing, she was my personal advisor for my 3 years at uni and from day one she was as helpful as one can be to a student, passionate and supportive about the arts as one can be and it was what an arts student like me needed. I am completely sure that many students owe her so much and I want to be one of those to say thank you.

**Felipe Mesa Koch**

This news is so difficult to take in. Catherine was such a lovely, warm, and calm presence. She was also very sharp-witted and astute. My deepest condolences to Julia, to her New Zealand family, and to her QMUL family. Everyone who knew her will deeply miss her.

**Joanne Tompkins**

I only met Catherine very fleetingly - a warm smile across a table - but wanted to send sincere condolences to all her broken-hearted colleagues and students. Thinking of you all.

**Cathy Turner**

**Saddened by this tragic news. Deepest  
condolences to Catherine's partner, friends and  
colleagues.**

**Ash Devasundaram**

Catherine was such a kind and warm person, and a generous and brilliant teacher. I knew her as a constant champion for PhD students, always supporting and lifting us up, and we benefited in so many ways from her knowledge and insight. This is a terrible loss. Thank you Catherine for everything.

**Eleanor Roberts**

Catherine's wonderful combination of wit, incisiveness, gentleness, and care for others set such an example: every meeting with her was a pleasure. She'll be so much missed.

**Julia Boffey**

I remember you fondly as a person with a big heart and a warm smile. Loved by all of us in the School Admin Team for being able to get stuff done so brilliantly no matter how arduous the university administration was and for being a truly lovely colleague. We worked together taking care of postgraduate research students when you were Director of Graduate Studies. It wasn't just an admin role to you, the students and their needs were everything and you were truly great at supporting and guiding them. You made time for everyone that needed you. I am incredibly shocked and deeply saddened that you are gone. Sleep well Catherine xx

**Daphne Rayment**

I am so saddened and shocked to hear of Catherine's passing. I had the privilege of being taught by her in my first ever class in my first year and 3 classes in my final year including overseeing my dissertation hand-in. Her teaching and mentorship was hugely formative for me and I will always remember her. I hope she knew how much of a positive and powerful impact she had. My deepest condolences to her loved ones and I am thinking of them in this sad time.

Catherine was kind, generous, supportive and funny. She was also fiercely committed to justice and equality, and she pursued that commitment in her work. Working alongside her when she was Director of Graduate Studies and later Head of School kept me on my toes because she was attentive to every detail of every document. What might have been infuriating in others was never so with Catherine because she carried her kindness and generosity into all aspects of her work and realised that political commitment alone isn't enough, that change requires hard work and the details have to be right.

Catherine was universally liked, by which I don't mean that I've never heard a bad word said against her but rather than I've never heard her talked about with anything other than warmth and admiration. This extends well beyond Queen Mary, and more than once, during inter-panel conference chit chat, one of the first things someone has said to me is, 'Oh, you're at QM. Catherine Silverstone's there, isn't she? She's fantastic.' I'm heartened that her influence will continue in the lives of the many students and scholars she has inspired, as well as in the memories of her friends and loved ones.

This is devastating news but I feel fortunate to have known Catherine.

**Huw Marsh**

It was such a pleasure to get to know you on the QMUL Heads Leadership Programme and I learned so much from you! Will miss you very much.

**Paul Coulthard**

So sad to hear the news of Catherine's death. I was on her interview panel when she was appointed as a lecturer at Queen Mary. Our paths barely crossed afterwards; ships passing in the corridors of the Arts building; a quick 'hello' and 'how are things in your School?'. She appeared both calm and full of energy at the same time, and had the most wonderful smile. No matter how often it happens, and as one gets older it happens much more frequently than one would like, it is always like a horse's kick in the stomach when a colleague or friend dies so suddenly and prematurely.

**Raymond Kuhn**

Thoughts are with Catherine's family, friends and the many lives she has touched. A sad day on her death, but a life we should always celebrate.

**Tanzil Chowdhury**

Catherine was a funny, amazing human being and a great and varied scholar. I am so sorry to hear of her passing and my sincere condolences to Julia and her family in New Zealand. She will be deeply missed.

**Holly Maples**

I am so sorry to hear of Catherine's passing. She was an outstanding scholar and such a thoughtful warm and generous person. My thoughts go out to her family and friends. We will miss her very much.

**Sarah Gorman**

I was so sorry to hear of Catherine's passing. I knew her mainly through the process of selecting a new Head of School for English and Drama, and the outpouring of confidence in her, deep respect, and affection from her colleagues was striking. I met with her a few times to talk about what it was like being a Head of School, and in those meetings saw for myself what a compassionate, warm, funny and brilliant person she was. I send my deepest condolences to all of her colleagues, friends and family.

**David Adger**

I only had the pleasure of meeting Catherine once, lucky happenstance meant that I spent a sunny July day in 2019 in Bushy Park talking excitedly about the crossovers in our research interests and our passion for queer performance. Just one meeting was enough to know that I had met a brilliant thinker and incredible, generous and warm person with the ability to turn a casual conversation into a deeply engaging philosophical discussion that has informed my thinking as a queer performance academic ever since. The news of her passing after a sudden illness is such a deep tragedy and shock to the many of us who admired her both personally and professionally, and my deepest condolences are with her partner Julia and her family and friends at this incredibly difficult time. May she be remembered and celebrated as the trailblazer and incredible woman she was and her legacy and passion live on. The world has lost a blazing light, may she find peace among the stars.

**Rebecca Tadman**

I had the pleasure of being taught by Catherine during my time at QMUL, and throughout she was the most shining beacon of enthusiasm and encouragement. She was always so kind, and thoughtful, in every conversation we had. You'll be missed so much, Catherine. Thank you endlessly for everything you helped me through and taught me in our time together.

**Rhys Farrington**

Catherine was lovely to work with. Although our paths did not cross often at Queen Mary, when they did, it was evident that she was caring, intelligent and willing to go above and beyond for her School, students and staff. My deepest condolences to colleagues, Julia, and Catherine's friends and family. I am so sorry for your loss.

**Rachel Davies**

I miss Catherine. Our thing was that we were the School's New Zealanders, so we shared a love of coffee, black clothes, and strong words softly spoken. Catherine was such a wonderful colleague to work with: always ready with a smile and an encouraging word, enthusiastic for the most mundane tasks and ready to do more than her share. We also share a talent for producing regulations and guidelines, perhaps another hallmark of our distant homeland, and egged each other on. It was a wonderful gift to work with Catherine, to talk to her about her work, and to share plans for the weekend and the hols. Catherine also had enormous reserves of humanity and good sense, so that everyone under her wing and cover felt treasured and safe. I will miss Catherine.

**Markman Ellis**

Catherine was a beautiful spirit, that rare combination of calm, intelligent grace, and witty, playful purpose. She was a treasured and inspiring colleague. In particular, working with Catherine as HoS over the past 9 months was a joy, despite and often - given her conscientious, patient, and determined response - because of the challenges facing the School which she navigated with such poise. I am heartbroken that we were not able all to meet in person to thank and congratulate her for guiding us through this difficult time. It is truly devastating that we have lost such a beloved and esteemed leader, colleague and friend. My heart goes out to her loved ones: their loss is immeasurable. We will all miss her dreadfully, more than we can ever adequately express.

Catherine, thank you for everything you were, and everything you did for the School.

**Katie Fleming**

Catherine made intellectual brilliance, civic engagement and personal kindness all feel like different parts of the same project, of making a better world. She was my PhD supervisor (2014-18) on a project she initiated, researching the community projects of the queer performance collective Duckie. In the end I framed these as 'homemade mutant hope machines' and have shared related ideas within and widely beyond the academy – a process Catherine enthusiastically and smartly supported. It is simply true that this research would not exist without her and her extraordinary array of talents: powerful and multifaceted intellectual agility; diligent attention to detail and consistency from the macro to the micro; an extraordinary level of care and patience at the human level. Indeed to me Catherine was a model of how to place care at the vital centre of one's work, as both subject matter and mode of practice, to match love with rigour, to share joy and work to enable its profusion. I'm sad only to have known her as a friend for a year or two after the PhD. She was such fun and I had so much more to learn from her. Catherine's effect on my life was truly transformational. We all know many, many others feel the same. She will be incalculably missed.

**Ben Walters**

I only knew Catherine for a short amount of time, but it has been my absolute privilege to have had the opportunity to meet her upon starting work at QM. In all our interactions she was warm, and kind, and generous. I don't think I ever saw her without a smile on her face. During the many stresses of the last year--through strike action, and lockdown, and academic precarity--I have found Catherine to be an exceptionally caring person, and I felt just a little safer, and a bit more secure because she was our Head of School. I am sorry that I will not have the chance to get to know her better.

I would like to share my deepest sympathies to everyone who knew her more than I, to her family, her friends, and all who have worked with her over the years. There is never a right thing to say, that will take away the grief, but I hope whoever reads this knows how much she touched the lives of even those who knew her only briefly.

**Rachel Gregory Fox**

I was so saddened to hear about the passing of Catherine Silverstone. She was an incredible member of the department with a wonderful sense of humour. Catherine brought all of her seminars to life with her enthusiasm and knowledge. She supervised my MA Dissertation and without her I wouldn't have been able to achieve the grades that I did. She will be truly missed.

**Liam Mortell**

Catherine Silverstone was deeply admired and loved colleague at Queen Mary. Catherine was a lifelong UCU member, and lots of our last memories of being in person together were when Catherine came to the picket line in March, as she had in every dispute, and stood steadfast, with us and one of us.

Showing great judgement and foresight, and demonstrating her care and compassion, Catherine told her colleagues in the School of English and drama that she would cancel all in person work, long before the university moved to do the same.

Our sympathies go to her partner and family, to her colleagues in the School of English and Drama, and the many others at Queen Mary who have been touched by her passion and professionalism.

We will all miss her terribly.

**Members of the  
Queen Mary branch of  
University and College Union**

I worked with Catherine a few times and she was a thoroughly lovely lady. My heart goes out to her partner, family, friends and colleagues. I hope that they can find some comfort in knowing how loved she was. Paul x

**Paul Jordan**

Catherine was head of the MA at QM when I undertook the course in 2008. She was so incredibly supportive and understanding of the pressures of academia - I greatly appreciated her guidance and am so sorry to hear of her passing.

**Claire Read**

As the Faculty Liaison Librarian with responsibility for SED at QMUL, I was lucky enough to work with Catherine in a number of her roles - Academic Staff Library Rep, Director of Taught Programmes, Convener of DRA329 module, Head of School. She was a kind, thoughtful colleague who was really engaged in and enthusiastic about library matters.

One example, springs to mind - I give library training sessions as part of my role. I like to do a close reading of a module's QMPlus page before I give a session to that module. One year I mentioned in passing in my DRA329 lecture that there was a slight difference in terminology between that used on the DRA329 QMPlus pages and that used in my presentation. Neither was wrong, just different and I wanted to avoid any confusion. Next year I came to read the DRA329 QMPlus pages and I found that Catherine had edited them so that her terminology matched mine. That she would take the time to do that, change her material to bring it in line with mine, when I do only one session among many on DRA329, and in order to make my job easier ... well, I was very touched. And it speaks volumes about Catherine as a colleague.

I am very saddened by her passing and I and Library Services colleagues will miss her.

**Rich Evans**

Everyone at LADA is reeling from the news of Catherine's untimely and heartbreaking passing. In all kinds of ways her influence can be felt on us and on so, so many of the artists and thinkers we work with. Catherine was such a generous presence - she encouraged folks to think, to write, to make and to be, and she always seemed to be there to see what they had made and who they had become. Catherine personified everything that is so wonderful about the Drama Dept at Queen Mary - a Shakespeare scholar who also considered Duckie to be a subject of serious study. For that alone I am eternally grateful. But she brought so much more to the world of Live Art and her loss is deeply painful. When I announced that I was stepping aside from LADA this summer, Catherine sent me the most beautiful note. It was something I treasured at the time, and will now treasure even more. Thank you, Catherine, you will be missed.

**Lois Keidan  
Live Art Development Agency  
(LADA)**

Catherine was a wonderful colleague and I am shocked to hear of her untimely death. I had the great pleasure of editing her article on the Maori 'Troilus and Cressida' that came to the Globe to Globe Festival in 2012. My condolences to her partner, family, friends and students. She will be much missed!

**Christie Carson**

It is impossible to convey the huge amount of integrity, warmth and generosity Catherine exuded. Although I had only known her a few years, her openness, willingness to talk, combined with a loyalty and a steely determination to get done what she needed with diplomacy and discretion were wonderful qualities. I will be forever grateful just as the pandemic broke for the way she managed to still commit precious time to helping us at Wasafiri; persuading the powers that be that, despite the dire financial situation and the post freeze, it was critical for us as a small arts charity to replace a member of staff who had left. Her caring commitment to all of us was always evident; it was a part of who she was and she breathed positive energy and grace into everything she did. I can only say thank you Catherine for all that you gave. You leave a big hole in our lives.

**Susheila Nasta**

I got to know Catherine when we were doing parallel admin jobs in the School, not long before I retired. She was so obviously talented, and an absolute joy to work with. She had a gift for making the inevitable drudgery that comes with academic life feel tolerable, and even amusing. She was witty, self deprecating, dedicated, and generous to a fault to her colleagues and students alike. I shall never forget her kindness. How she will be missed.

**Chris Reid**

A word from a lesser-known group who have reason to mourn Catherine's passing - the parents of the many students she taught, supervised, mentored and inspired. She cared deeply for each of those students and left every one of them with an exemplary role model to follow. Their future successes will be a rich and vibrant memorial. As Parents, our thanks are bottomless.

**Ann & David Fallow**

A great teacher, and ally in the development of teaching and supporting young colleagues in their early academic careers. I value my experience of working with her, good memories.

**David Andrew**

Please accept my condolences. I met Catherine in several occasions at work and all that I have to say, she was an inspiration to us. Her passion for education was remarkable. Rest in peace my dear! ??

**Ishani**

Catherine came to watch me teach during my three-year fellowship at QMUL, it was the PBrB project at Hackney Showroom. She was gentle and supportive and I was so happy she was there. She then took me to a Vietnamese restaurant in King's Cross and we talked about my session, amongst other things. I learnt that I should not only ask: is this clear? But I should make space for students to ask questions. Then she said, we should do this more often, talk about pedagogy over food. I loved her gentleness and kind spirit. I will miss her.

**Eirini**

I didn't know Catherine extremely well, but she was one of the first people to introduce herself to me when I arrived at Queen Mary. She came across as an incredibly warm and open person and this impression of her has only increased. She was an amazing head of school that always went to battle on behalf of the staff. A truly human person, which is not always easy to find in the higher ranks of academia. It is a terrible loss for all. Sending deepest condolences to her family, friends and all of SED. She will be greatly missed.

**Lucinda Newns**

Catherine was so generous to us when we launched our book *Queer Dramaturgies*. She was insightful and meticulous in her reading of the work and generous and perceptive when chairing a discussion with us. Such a loss.

**Stephen Farrier &  
Alyson Campbell**

Catherine was a kind and thoughtful colleague who had that rare quality of being able to listen actively and quietly in the moment. She had a huge commitment to QM - its students and staff -- and it showed in her careful and inspired teaching, the rigour of her publications, and her commitment to civic work across a range of roles. She was quite simply a doer with a huge sense of pride in what she did and a responsibility to those she worked with. She will be much missed.

**Maria Delgado**

I am truly sorry to hear this bad news. I thought Catherine was great: clever, impish and totally committed. When I was external examiner at QMU, I was always amazed with her work and enthusiasm. I'll miss her and her spirit.

Carl

**carl lavery**

May there be comfort in knowing that someone so special with such a beautiful soul will never be forgotten. With loving memories of Catherine Silverstone (also my Birthday Sister) RIP.

**Patricia Hamilton**

Condolences to Catherine's family and colleagues. Although I didn't know Catherine, as a student on the Masters in Theatre and Performance programme I greatly appreciate the inclusive culture and supportive nature of the SED. As a fellow NZer I feel the loss of a brave and intelligent fellow country woman. The sadness regarding her demise will ripple out far beyond QMUL, her inspirational work will live on.

**Viv Harris**

The Department of Theatre and Performance at Goldsmiths University of London should like to express our heartfelt condolences to our fellow colleagues in the QM School of English and Drama. Individual members of our department are sending their own fond reminiscences and tributes. This message is on behalf of the entirety of TaP. A number of you are former members of our department, and many members of our staff have been students or teachers at QM. As a “sister” department, we offer our support, send our love, and share in your grief.

**Goldsmiths Department of  
Theatre and Performance**

It's difficult to put into words just how hard it is to imagine a world in which Catherine is not there, ready to be tapped on the shoulder to go and have a meal together or see a play when I'm in London. I met her at the first conference I organised, and she struck me right away as someone who had so many interesting and important things to say. Including her in the line-up for my first edited collection was a no-brainer, as not only was her contribution going to be brilliant, but I was going to get to know this fascinating, lovely person better in the process, too. It's been an utter privilege and joy to work with Catherine since: she's been a continual source of inspiration, a wonderful advocate for the causes she embraced, a supportive editor of my work and, whenever I asked her to help me out with a peer review, an insightful and generous reader. Her laugh was contagious, and her company always made me wish we could spend more time together. And now she's gone, and I realise how lucky I was to have known her. Thank you, Catherine. I hope you're in a good place now. My heart goes out to Julia, to Catherine's parents, to all the friends and colleagues she leaves behind.

**Pascale Aebischer**

I remember being in my first term of first year, and we were told to interview a scholar and do a presentation on them. I was so nervous, not just about the interview but about the course on a whole. I was very concerned that I wasn't going to enjoy the course, or that I would do badly. Catherine was our subject, and meeting her made me feel so at home at Queen Mary. She was kind and funny, and she had a way of making those around her feel confident. She will be sorely missed, and I feel sorry for all those students who will not have the privilege of working with her.

**Stephanie Overington**

I have fond memories of Catherine's generosity as a teacher at Queen Mary. I was a PhD student in the department when she first joined QM and had the wonderful experience of having her as an external reader for my "PhD Upgrade" during my second year. Her comments on my draft were generous and tough at the same time. I remember her phrase at the end of it: "Only take my comments into consideration if they are useful. If they are not useful, just ignore them". I thought that was such a simple yet brilliant, empowering thing to say to an early-career scholar. It signalled openness, honesty, and treating students as equals. I will always remember her example, and now try and practice her generosity with my own PhD students. Thank you Catherine, you will be missed.

**Margherita Laera**

Catherine was extremely well loved amongst SED students. Her knowledge of Shakespeare and contemporary culture affirmed my love for the arts. Without her passion and commitment to her students, I may not have made it through the degree. She will be greatly missed.

**Kerry Hunt**

I had the pleasure of working with Catherine as drama course rep in my first and second year studying at Queen Mary University, before taking one of her modules in third year, during which she also acted as my academic advisor. I spent a lot of time in her office during my final year, and she was an incredibly generous support to me, both in my academic and personal life. She had an incredible passion for her work and students. I'd often get email responses in the early hours of the morning or very late, and our 10 minute check ins often turned into hour long chit chats. My university experience was deeply impacted by Catherine's presence, care and commitment, and I will fondly remember her wonderful sense of humour and passion for queer academia.

**Joseph Winer**

Dearest Catherine, where to begin to register the tragedy of losing you so suddenly and cruelly? Like so many others I have been in shock; in tears; even angrily uncomprehending that you're no longer with us. Writing a letter felt the right thing to do. I remember so vividly when I last saw you, late last year, as you'd just taken on the onerous job of Head of School, but as ever with a huge smile and wry expression. As with everything else, you took on the job with absolute commitment and gracefulness. It typified how you approached work and life, from what I knew of you. My happiest memory was of spending time with you and Julia in Brazil working for People's Palace Projects. It was there I got to know the very funny, mischievous, and slightly subversive Catherine, working hard during the day and also playing pretty hard in the evening, with both of you invariably laughing and keen to recount your latest escapades! You were and remain one of the kindest people I know: students adored you, colleagues admired you while making an easy friend of you. The outpouring of grief at your passing has been extraordinary; or perhaps not, because you would always have inspired it, because of the love people felt for you. I will miss you; we will all miss you, beyond plight and time.

**Jerry Brotton**

I had got to know Catherine mostly through our interaction at the Fac Exec meetings. She was such a friendly, intelligent and dignified presence, one of my favourite people there. A huge loss to our QMUL community.

**Sujoy Mukerji**

I had a couple of meetings with Catherine when she took over as the Head of English and Drama . She was warm, friendly and professional which is a rare quality. Deepest condolences to her family.

**Sharon Bond**

I met Catherine at the heads of school training last year. I knew a few people from the HSS faculty, but not many as I am in SMD. Catherine was so committed and passionate about the work she had done so far in her own school and her plans and ambitions as incoming head of department that I found her very inspirational. She was also incredibly warm and funny, and a bit naughty. I liked that when there was an early break she joined the breakaway minority down the pub. I had been looking forward to seeing her around in the future. So sad to hear this news. She was very special.

**Tim Warner**

I'm so sad, I've lost a pal. From across disciplines we met and something sparked. We were colleagues not close friends but enjoyed the warmth of companionship and academic comradery. A safe space was created between us. To Catherine's loved ones I'm truly sorry for your loss...

**Sandra Nicholson**

I only met Catherine a few times over our years at QMUL - at induction events when we both started in 2007, occasionally in the intervening years, and most recently on the picket line. Yet those those slight, brief, spaced out meetings were enough to show what an incredibly special human being she was: intelligence, sensitivity, kindness and humility shone from her. That experience of Catherine gives me no doubt that I am one of many near strangers on whom she made a lasting and powerful impression. I send deepest condolences to her family, loved ones, friends, colleagues and students.

**Lizzie Barmes**

I am heartbroken to hear the awful news of Catherine's death. She was a lovely, lovely person, so smart, attentive, gentle and clear-sighted. I loved her wise, illuminating comments, her smile, and her sneakers. I know I would have wished to run into her again if only in passing, as sometimes we did on the Mile End Road, and I feel so sad for the loss of that possibility. My truly heartfelt sympathies to everyone in the School of English and Drama; I know how terrible this must be for you.

**Sally Mitchell**

I taught Catherine from 1993, when she enrolled at the University of Waikato, Hamilton New Zealand, and I supervised Catherine's beautiful, adroit Master's thesis on John Ford (the Renaissance one!). Here at Waikato she was a tutor and gave lectures, showing early signs of her giftedness in that area of our professional lives. I learned ways of using an overhead projector I had never thought of. In all the years I knew her, Catherine was warm, generous, clever and thoughtful. Aroha Nui.  
Mark Houlahan.

**Mark Houlahan**

Sending the warmest of wishes to Catherine's partner, colleagues and students. The loss of such a bright light is immense to the department and to family and friends. A friend told me of the wonderful feeling of being 'got' by Catherine; her understanding of others research and journeys made such a difference. Rest in peace

**Sue Mayo**

**Goldsmiths Branch of UCU, the Executive Officers and Representatives send their heartfelt condolences to Julia, to all loved ones of Catherine - family, friends, colleagues and students. This is such terribly sad news. Catherine will be remembered for her principled and energetic support of UCU, in campaigns for fairness in our sector. We send love, solidarity and strength to all those who knew Catherine.**

**Goldsmiths Branch of UCU (Joint-President  
Pamela Karantonis)**

I didn't know Catherine in person but when I was applying for PhDs I considered her as a supervisor. Her positive energy and commitment to queer cultures will resonate with many of us for many more years. We can only find inspiration in her and continue her legacy on this planet. Love to her and to her extended family <3

**Giulia Casalini**

I feel so incredibly lucky to have known and been taught by Catherine. Her enthusiasm shon out of her and it was impossible not to feel excited about the subjects that she spoke about with such accessible knowledge, passion and insight. She was an incredible person, so kind, funny, interesting, compassionate, caring, supportive... the list is endless. Catherine undoubtedly had a huge impact on my life, in the way she shaped my thinking about what Drama could be, as well as my relation to queer performance and identity. I will miss my conversations with her immensely. I am proud and lucky to have known her and call her my friend.

**Ema Boswood**

I hardly knew Catherine, and wish I had known her better. She came to Anglia Ruskin University when I was about to retire. Yet even in that short space of time that we were colleagues she made an unforgettable impression on me. She was bright, warm, kind; clearly destined for a distinguished career. What a cruel blow that someone so gifted, and with so much to give, should be cut off so young, at the height of her powers. May I condole with her colleagues, students, and all who loved her.

**Nora Crook**

I've known Catherine since 2007 when she joined the Department of Drama and the School of English and Drama. She reminded me not so long ago that I took her over to her interview from ArtsOne. I can't remember that anymore and now I wish I did. Anyway it became clear soon after she started that Catherine was someone very, very special. I think she got given too much to do early on because she was very, very good at anything and everything she did. I always prided myself on being quite a good proof reader but Catherine had the most incredible eye for detail and all the masses of paperwork that went between us would pretty much always come back with some mistakes corrected that she'd picked up. And she was always generous in doing this work although I know it took its toll. So she was a joy to work with and for. Catherine was the queen of the raised eyebrow (there's a king of the raised eyebrow too, but he'll remain nameless for now) and during endless meetings (particularly I remember those discussing the QM Model), and at various difficult times just that acknowledgement that she knew exactly what you were thinking and that she understood was special. We stayed friends after I left my job in the School and continued to share our love of chips, and drinks out with Bev and others. I got to meet her gorgeous partner Julia and their beloved cat Effra. Catherine's sudden death so young has felt like repeated shocking blows and kicks to the heart, and stomach and head. Just now it feels like something we won't get over. My heart goes out to Julia and Effra, and Catherine's family and many friends and colleagues.

**Jenny Gault**

The only time I met Catherine was 14 years ago at my wedding. She was my very good friend's partner at the time. She was lovely, so warm, friendly and she wore an amazing 1920's style dress in which she looked drop dead gorgeous. I would like to extend my sincerest condolences to her partner and family - I cannot imagine their pain and loss. Deepest Sympathies

**Ashley Morgan**

I did not know Dr Silverstone personally, but I have always admired her work. Reading it gave me a sense of a compassionate, dedicated, deeply ethical person, committed to social justice and to making the world a better place. I regularly recommend it to my students, and I will continue to do so for the rest of my career. My heart goes out to everyone who loved her; what an enormous, tragic loss.

**Erin Sullivan**

I was a friend of Catherine. We got to know each other through mutual friends when we lived in Brighton and then later she shared my house in London. Here we further bonded over all things drama, nights out at Popstarz and '24' box sets.

Catherine loved her work at QMU, and the colleagues and students whom she both inspired, and drew inspiration from, on a daily basis.

As usual, as well as her teaching, Catherine was also studying herself when we lived together - as I was too. There'd be many times when we'd be in separate rooms, our heads in research, meeting occasionally by the kettle, to curse the process but wallow in the learning. In her generous way she helped get me through some hideous exams.

She's did bring her work home with her. One time literally, when the week she moved out she asked a favour.... And so the living room hosted a performance from one of her classes on the last night of their 'in homes' tour. In a not quite feline swinging space against a distracting backdrop of vintage Dandelion Clock wallpaper, the cast delivered an intimate, enthusiastic and enjoyable experience to a handful of our friends. Afterward we toasted their closing night. Their respect and love for Catherine was evident.

That summed up Catherine. Cheekily willing to do whatever she could for her students to give them opportunity and support their ideas.

My heart goes out to Julia and her family, friends, colleagues and students. There are thousands of young (and not so young) people whose lives have been enriched by Catherine's passion and zest for life.

Rest in peace Catherine

Mark Davison

**mark davison**

Catherine Silverstone interviewed me prior to being accepted onto the Drama course at Queen Mary. I loved our conversation so much that I knew it was the right place for me. Catherine was then my first teacher on the course. I found my first weeks of university difficult and Catherine kept her eye on me. Her thoughtful and caring eye remained on me throughout my degree, as she then became my personal advisor, and quickly became my most favourite teacher.

**Alex Legge**

I didn't know Dr. Silverstone, but I heard so many wonderful things about her and can see she must be deeply missed by those who did and wanted to express my sympathies for the mourners. Furthermore, I noticed that she was an advocate of LGBT+ representation, as a young gay man myself, I felt personally compelled to show a sign of respect. May she rest in peace.

**Sam O'Sullivan**

Catherine and I have been members of the Dean for Taught Programmes Advisory Group for a long time. Indeed, at the end of our tenure, we were the longest serving members of the group. I have thus had the privilege of interacting with her on multiple occasions.

I will always remember Catherine for her calm, rational and positive attitude, even during complicated discussions in the group. Her contributions were always insightful and to the point, and often decisive, allowing the group to reach a consensus, including on controversial issues. Her smile and her low but firm voice will sorely be missed by everyone who has had the privilege to meet her. I will certainly miss her.

**Roberto Veneziani**

Such a wonderful and inspirational person and so kind. She was wonderful with my little girl. We will have fond memories of our time spent with Cath. She will be greatly missed.

**Stephanie & Charlotte Harrop**

I only spoke with Catherine on a couple of occasions but she impressed me as a caring and thoughtful person with a passion for learning. It is no surprise that to discover how well-loved she was by those who knew her. The outpouring of grief is a testament to the place she occupied in the hearts and minds of those to whom she was a teacher, a colleague, and a friend. My thoughts are with Julia and her loved ones and I trust that the many positive memories of Catherine may bring comfort to you all at this very sad time.

**Stephen**

I am deeply saddened to learn of the death of Dr. Catherine Silverstone and send heartfelt condolences to her partner and family, friends and colleagues. I met Catherine some years ago, on the Shakespeare circuit and at Anglia Ruskin, appearing in the collection she edited with Sarah Annes Brown, *Tragedy in Transition*. When, in 2018, I co-hosted (with Erica Whyman of the RSC) a conference called 'Radical Mischief: Inviting Experiment in Thought, Theatre and Politics' in Stratford, I knew I wanted to get Catherine involved. We needed academics who could facilitate conversations between people from Universities and the arts, and I was delighted when Catherine agreed to run the session about theatre, thought and gender, in conjunction with the Director Kimberly Sykes. Catherine was brilliant at the conference: intelligent, focussed, encouraging, passionate and (where necessary) sceptical. I was also just very pleased to see her again, enjoying her easy kindness, good humour, modesty and commitment, and that ready, sympathetic laugh and smile. She was real and good; I'm so sorry she's gone.

**Ewan Fernie**

Catherine was simply exceptional, and we will all miss her so very very much. I can't believe I'm writing this: the past tense simply feels so entirely wrong. She was generous, thoughtful, imaginative, loving, quietly funny, quietly intense, immensely smart in an effortless way (but far too modest to admit it). A lovely lovely lovely person; a great and caring teacher; a lovely, generous, profoundly smart life concluded far too soon. And *\*so\** damn smart: I asked her if she'd like to edit Titus for the Norton Shakespeare, and she said yes, sure, why not learn a new skillset, and she did a brilliant job without fuss – a far better job than some of the established editors, frankly. I hadn't been in touch with her for a while – work and lockdown and all the rest of it – and I will always regret it. But the last time I saw her and Julia – both in hilarious form – was in a characteristically stylish, offbeat, excellent restaurant in Brixton Market, which is a right and proper way to remember her.

**Gordon McMullan**

In the too-short time I knew Catherine she was always supportive, insightful and radically kind.

Catherine held space for research that was both personal and vulnerable with great care and kindness and I am hugely grateful to her for this.

My deepest sympathies to Catherine's loved ones.

**Tobi Poster-Su**

Catherine was an amazing scholar, and someone I wish I could have hung out with for much, much longer. We've lost someone warm, funny and super sharp (in the best possible way), all the richness of her future scholarship, her insight, and her principled, ethical thinking. And she was just properly lovely.

It's so clear how much Catherine was loved and valued, and that matters so much, especially when things are so dreadful.

**Clare McManus**

She was one of the reasons I chose to study at Queen Mary's. Her energy, spirit and kindness were incredibly inspiring. Though she will be so dearly missed ,by myself and many others, I know she will live on through the work she did and the lives she touched. I am incredibly grateful to have known her.

**Emma**

Dearest Catherine, my super-supervisor as I always called you, my respected comrade, colleague and ally, my treasured friend, my shero,

I am writing to you because you are, were and are, the deepest listener and I feel you can hear me and all of us now, somehow. Your listening often moved me, the way you would lean forward, mouth open, eyes fixed, drinking in someone's words and thoughts, and trying to understand not just what they said but what they wanted and how they were feeling. Thank you for listening like this to me, through the 7 years of my PhD and beyond. I wish I had listened more to you and asked you more questions. You knew me so much better than I knew you. But what I did know and what all of us know, is that you are, were and will always be an extraordinary human being. Your kindness, compassion, care, love, patience, playfulness, openness, curiosity, elegance, eloquence, precision, stamina, rigour, perseverance, wisdom, integrity, attention to detail, political and pedagogical anti-colonial commitment to equality, through creativity and learning, was life-changing, is world changing. You are and were a rare person of honour with remarkable humility, so much so that I know you would be overwhelmed with the knowledge of just how many people feel the way I feel and more.

You make the world a better place, really you do Catherine, and your legacy in love, friendship, writing, teaching, research, leadership and silver, will endure forever. Long after all of us follow you in transformation from this earth, your legacy will continue. As the Jewish saying goes, if you save one human being you save the world. Well, if you change one soul, you also change the world. You changed me, taught me, supervised me and believed in me. I would not have written that thesis without your gentle hand on my back, getting me up that mountain, writing those black queer histories, writing and reflecting on those plays. Thank you with all of my soul.

You are everywhere Catherine and I give thanks for you. I give thanks to Julia, to your parents and all the family and close friends who nurtured and supported you to be the truly beautiful person you are, were and will always be. I give thanks for your ancestors who are with you now.

Until we meet again, with Jarman and Baldwin and all our other queer heroes,

All my love,

UBUNTU Catherine Silverstone.

Thank you,

Mojisola

xxx

**Mojisola Adebayo**

Catherine, I am sorry you have passed. You were a big part of my QM experience, and I remember you as a kind and helpful teacher with a great sense of humour.

**Laura Kristine Graham Anderson**

My sincerest condolences to Catherine's partner, family and friends. My memory of Catherine is of a vibrant, enquiring, outstanding student in NZ during the 1980s - a sheer joy to work with. We studied Shakespeare and started a Shakespeare Club - what passionate discussions we had, what characters, what fun! Her nuanced, intelligent performance of County Paris in Romeo and Juliet was truly original and unique for one so young. She was always whole-hearted,, generous and loved language, ideas, performance and philosophy - that she went on to inspire others, does not surprise. Rest in peace, Catherine.

**Linda Arthur**

Dear Julia and family,

I was so saddened to hear of Catherine's passing, and am incredibly sorry for your loss.

Catherine was inspiration since I started working at Queen Mary. She was amazing at solving problems, and was somehow able to get things done while keeping everyone happy. Even when she approached me for advice, I'd be the one that ended up learning something, whether it was how to show more compassion at the end of a long day, or to not overthink everything (though I don't think I ever knew her to make the wrong decision on anything)!

We were all incredibly excited to start working with Catherine as Head of School, and I'll dearly miss her smile, her wit, sharing a laugh with her whenever we crossed paths, and calling out 'Night boss!' on the way past her office at the end of the day. Catherine always brought positivity to whatever was happening, and doing my best to emulate this, as even now any thought of her inevitably brings a smile to my face.

You're all in my thoughts.

Very best wishes,

Jonathan

**Jonathan Boffey**

Catherine is the first teacher I met at Queen Mary. I was a scared, excited, ignorant first year being catapulted in the midst of London and what seemed more like a maze than a university campus. Catherine was my personal advisor - she opened the door of her office, asked me how I was, and showed me the way around university buildings. I could not speak English very well - I had just arrived from Italy and every word that came out of my mouth seemed wrong. But she didn't mind waiting for me to find a better word, and nodded in assent even before I knew what I was going to say. She smiled, and smiled, and understood what I meant, and had the perfect reply always ready. I admired her shyness because I was shy too, but she valued it and made it her strength rather than feeling ashamed of it as I was. I think she openly laughed at something slightly funny I said, and I was more grateful than words could express. Thanks to Catherine and our small group tour of campus, on that very first day, I met one of the best friends I have at Queen Mary. We commented - but to speak the truth I can't remember if it was with her or some other of the many people I talked to in those chaotic days - we commented about the magnificent ring of Catherine's surname.

Whenever, during the course of that year, we received an email from Catherine, it opened with "Dear My Advisees", and I smiled every time. After a while I knew it came from Catherine because of those three warm words, rather than her email address. I was doing a joint honours in English and Drama, and she was my personal advisor for Drama. I never met my other advisor, and I couldn't tell you who it was. So when I decided to drop Drama and switch to an all-English degree I went to see Catherine. I was quite scared to tell her that I didn't enjoy my Drama modules - I think I only told her I wanted to concentrate on one subject because I felt that I was learning little of either, doing both. Which was also true. Catherine understood how I felt and never reproved me for my choice, not with a look of disappointment, nor a silence, nor a word of surprise. She supported me unconditionally. She is important to me in ways that I did not fully grasp, she helped me more than anyone else at university. She is the reason I am now happier than I would have been.

**Leda Maiello**

Catherine was a kind and thoughtful person, a fantastic teacher and an inspiring scholar. When I taught on a module she convened at Queen Mary I learned so much from her and I will always appreciate her guidance and warmth. She was a generous, engaging teacher and a caring, supportive colleague. My heartfelt condolences to Julia, Catherine's family and loved ones.

**Helena Walsh**

Catherine was the most gregarious, open, wonderful, brilliant colleague one could wish for - I had the incredible pleasure of working with her at King's when she was our external examiner; but more than this, she is someone it was a pleasure to bump into at all times - at the library, at events. I am so profoundly sorry to hear of her passing. This is an absolute shock. I can only express the deepest sorrow for her partner, family and friends in the UK, in New Zealand and everywhere she has been loved and known. Your spirit remains strong and with us Catherine.

**Kéline Gotman**

**Catherine Silverstone was my Dissertation Advisor in 2018. She was kind, brilliant and always took the time to listen to me. She also supported me in seeking an extension, when I was going through some serious health issues. Her passing is deeply felt by me. She was an awesome Professor, Head of Department and overall a Gem.**

**Tashina Keller**

I loved working with Catherine. Her thoughtful, gracious and sharply intelligent approach to the myriad problems we faced as heads in 2020 was a powerful antidote to the brutal forces which shaped those problems. I learned so much from her quiet, witty and deeply compassionate approach to student concerns and collegiality. It was a special privilege to know her and I am so happy to have had the chance to become her friend. Her death is a profound loss for us all at Queen Mary. My heart goes out to Julia and her family and hope that they take comfort from just how wonderful we all thought she was.

**Penny Green**

QMUL 2007-2013.

For Catherine:

And I always thought: the very simplest words  
Must be enough. When I say what things are  
like

Everyone's hearts must be torn to shreds.

That you'll go down if you don't stand up for  
yourself—

Surely you see that.

Bertolt Brecht

**Anna Sereni**

I am deeply saddened by the loss of our beloved colleague Catherine Silverstone, we are all utterly devastated in the School. Catherine was an exceptional human being with a big heart, warm, intelligent, caring, wonderful. Catherine has been our Head of School, but I have also been so blessed to have worked closely with her on many occasions, taught with her - I have learned so much from her teaching strategies and care, the discussions we had, her notes, her ideas; also on other occasions she observed my teaching -her feedback was so detailed, encouraging (even when she had to point out some negative aspects) and generous that greatly helped me for developing myself as a human being and my skills. Catherine was always asking me about things with genuinely interest and we use to have chats in the staff room in the middle of a busy workday about projects/performances; she could make time for people; she would always find time to send a quick encouraging note or acknowledging something good, even if it was tiny; she supported me in getting the academic fellowship; she supported me in getting a funding application right; she supported me in becoming a better person. I had sent her a message when she was ill and she immediately responded, although I can imagine that she was going through a very difficult time, asking me how I am.... I will never forget her calm presence, her soft voice, her big smile that made me smile, her generosity, and feeling that if Catherine is around all is going to be all right. There are so many that Catherine did and was that could be said. I feel truly blessed to have met Catherine, and share parts of our journeys in this life.

Thank you Catherine for making this world a better place. I will greatly miss you. You will always be in my heart.

My thoughts are with her partner Julia, her family and her friends.

My heartfelt condolences.

I was told she is gone  
but I can still reach her in the skies  
I was told she is gone  
but I can still read her words  
I was told she is gone  
but I can still feel her warm smile  
she is there  
guiding us  
shining  
with enveloping love  
shining  
in night stars

**Hari Marini**

My thoughts are with all Catherine's family and friends, at such a terrible and sad time. I am so very sorry for your loss.

**Kate Wilkinson**

I want to send my deepest condolences to everyone who worked with Catherine in the School of English and Drama, her friends and family. What a terrible loss she is, and I can only imagine how much you must miss her already.

I met Catherine in 2012, when she became the secondary supervisor of my PhD. In fact, it was only due to her generous and encouraging response to my initial email that I ended up applying for the PhD at all, as I was on the verge of giving up. Throughout my time at QM, I don't know how to put it other than to say she was very "there", totally present, in each conversation, training session, seminar, email, and supervision meeting. I still remember things she told me, really wise and practical things that helped me get my head around teaching, navigating academia, getting writing done, and just feeling OK, surviving. I refer to them all the time in my own work, still, and pass them on to others.

If I had to single out one particular moment, it is the time she made each of us in the PhD cohort do an "elevator pitch" of our project, but literally. She made us ride the elevator with her, in Arts One, and summarise our project in the time it took to get from the ground floor to the top. Those 2 minutes with her in the lift were somehow both terrifying and hilarious. And somehow very typical of her humour, inventiveness, the liveliness of her thinking. She must have gone up and down in that lift about 8 times.

Emma

**Emma Bennett**

Although I never had the pleasure to meet Catherine in person, I was very lucky to have her as a potential mentor for my postdoctoral project. Her warmth and generosity were certainly visible through our email exchange, a most precious gift that I will always cherish.

**Inma Sanchez**

During my MA in Live Art it was suggested that I speak to Catherine about a subject that I was interested in pursuing, and at the end of the conversation she suggested that I might like to look at a postcard. Well, we ended up in hysterical laughter and fell into a long stream of reminiscences. The picture was of a Jaffa, a round ball of chocolate covered with an orange covering. These had a particular associative memory of going to the movies, where someone would inevitably drop their Jaffas on the floor. There followed a rapid exchange of other NZ lollies, Pinkie bars, chocolate fish, (which end did you eat first?), Minties guaranteed to pull any filing out, liquorice straps, Pineapple Chunks/ Lumps, Coconut Ice, Blackballs, Hokey Pokey covered in chocolate, Strawberry or Lime milkshakes, Pavlova and Irish Moss. This led on to other Kiwi expressions, she'll be right, no worries, good on ya mate! Bring a plate, Paua fritter, Pipi, Kumera, Mountain Oyster, Haka, Hangi, cozzies, Poi, Fish'n chips, Pa, Waitangi, ANZAC biscuits, and finally a dunny. So, Catherine from Aotearoa, a Maori Blessing.

Kia hora te marino  
Kia whakapapa pounamu te moana  
Kia tere te karohirohi I mua I to huarahi.

**Carolyn Naish**

Catherine was one of the most amazing people I have ever met. Bright, compassionate, highly skilled, she made things better in every single thing she did. The world is a much poorer place without, her but her extraordinary legacy will on in all of those she knew and touched. Thinking of you and holding you in the light Julia, and many condolences to other friends and family.  
All my love, Emily

**Emily Hunka**

I didn't know Catherine well, but every encounter with her made me wish I did. The last time I saw her, we co-examined a PhD. The student was very fragile, and so was I, in ways that prevented me from realising I was not well enough for this task. Catherine had to shoulder a huge responsibility that day, and she did so with extraordinary warmth, grace and insight. The student performed brilliantly and has entirely positive memories of her viva. I am very grateful to Catherine for bearing both of us up, and I am very sad that we have lost her remarkable presence.

**Kate Chedgzoy**

I've been wanting to write my memories of Catherine on this page for some time and I think part of me has wanted to continue to pretend that this hasn't happened. Covid has meant not seeing so many friends and colleagues, and I think I've wanted to pretend that I would come back to campus and bump into her and have the joy of talking to her. But I can't keep pretending that, so here are a few small things

Catherine was a joy to talk to about anything and everything. Because she was the School's director of teaching and learning and then the Head of School, some of the things we had to talk to her about weren't necessarily the most exciting of our jobs. She was a brilliant researcher, writer, teacher, strategist, leader. All of those things that it's impossible for an academic to be all-round brilliant at, she was entirely brilliant at all of them. But what I'm remembering now is the times I dropped by her office to discuss some tiny, ordinary, boring thing, or some frustrating thing - and I would come out feeling refreshed and excited and supported and ready to go again. Her brilliance at everything never made me feel small, just excited to get on with things and do better. It's hard to describe how she made this work. In the end I guess it was her mix of wide-reaching intelligence and deep empathy, that meant she could understand every issue you brought to her, and understand your perspective on it. I knew that she understood the intention behind whatever I was saying or doing at work, even if I didn't do it as brilliantly as her. She made every encounter a genuine conversation, every topic genuinely interesting.

As so many colleagues and friends have said since her passing, Catherine was really, really funny person. When she was researching and writing on Shakespeare in performance, I went to the occasional performance with her, and one evening we went to see a truly dreadful production of Macbeth, we both hated it. Its only redeeming feature was that it was cut to two hours straight through. But that meant that there was no interval to escape in. Catherine didn't need to mutter a question in my ear to know we were feeling the same. We were sitting right at the back of a steep rake of seats with a scaffolding barrier at the top. Catherine leant over and whispered, a propos of seemingly nothing, "we could always climb through these bars". There was something so fantastically funny about the idea of calm, dignified Catherine clambering out of the back of an auditorium to escape bad Shakespeare, and she said it so dryly whilst still looking as if she was giving the actors her full attention, that I spent the next 20 minutes nearly crying with laughter.

Catherine and Julia came the wedding party in our local cheese and beer shop after my partner Gary and I got married. Looking through the photos of that evening some time ago, my mum said "oh look, there's those beautiful girls!" (apologies fellow feminists - my mum calls all women, even fellow 84 year olds, girls). Catherine was a beautiful person in every way that it's possible to think about beauty. I know it's a cliché to say someone's inner beauty shines forth from them but Catherine's really did. Even in photographs - I don't think I've ever seen a bad photograph of Catherine. Thank you for coming to our party, Catherine and Julia. It was one of those moments that makes me think how lucky I was to have such a person as a work colleague and in my life.

Serene, kind, principled, funny, warm, beautiful Catherine, we miss you so much.

## **Bridget Escolme**

I knew Catherine as a lovely, friendly Drama colleague, and was delighted to get to know her better when she was a delegate on one of my MHFA courses. Her loss is simply awful and my heart goes out to her friends and family. Such utter sadness.

**Sue Harris**

My heartfelt condolences to Catherine's family, friends and colleagues - Catherine was a warm, generous, collegial, inspiring and dedicated teacher and scholar, and always so friendly and welcoming. She is in my thoughts.

**Chris Megson**

Catherine was the loveliest, loveliest person and a brilliant friend. It is so hard to accept that someone so giving should be taken away so soon. My most heartfelt condolences to her family and the love of her life. Jim x

**Jim Reynolds**

I first met Catherine in London in the early 2000s. I was instantly struck by her gentle manners and keen intelligence. I asked her to write for a collection I was putting together at the time because I thought that her work was just as insightful and uncompromisingly engaged as she was. The last time we were in touch I was still trying to get her to write for another collection I was putting together with a colleague of mine because we knew that her contribution would bring a unique depth of perspective to it. I am feeling sad beyond words that I didn't get a chance to say goodbye and thank you to Catherine for being Catherine - a lovely, lovely person and a wonderful colleague and gifted scholar. Good bye, Catherine. My love and sympathy to all your loved ones. Sonia

**Sonia Massai**

I wish to send all my warmest thoughts and deepest condolences to Catherine's family and her partner Julia. Catherine was an undeniable force, radiating warmth, kindness, integrity, intelligence and wry humour in every interaction I ever had with her. How rare it is to say that about someone and lucky we all were to work with someone so golden.

**Molly Macdonald**

I was saddened to hear of Catherine's passing. I remember Catherine as a wonderful teacher and a great advocate for research students. She was caring and generous, as well as intellectually rigorous. She was a great help to me during my time at Queen Mary, and for that, I will always be grateful. She made a difference. I wish her loved ones and all those whose lives she touched comfort.

**Bret Jones**

Catherine will endure in my memory for her gentle and invaluable guidance during my undergraduate dissertation at Queen Mary. Her teachings still hold great store in my everyday reconciliatory practice, living and working in contemporary Canada on the traditional territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation. Catherine will be missed deeply. Rest well, Siem.

**Bryony Dixon (née: Skelton)**

I vividly remember a meeting with Catherine during a particularly tough time at university. I was struck by her calmness, her clarity in suggesting practical strategies to help, and her warmth. She really made me believe that I would be OK- that everything would be OK. I am so grateful for her support that day in helping me turn things around. What a loss, but what a privilege to have known her.

**Anna Weddell (Salmon)**

Dear Catherine,

I didn't realise that I wouldn't have the chance to thank you for how you have shaped me as a teacher, academic, and as a human being. I honestly thought that I'd be seeing you here in Aotearoa NZ in the near future or introducing Lucie to you when we were next in London.

I am sitting here in my office at VUW in Wellington in part because of your efficiency in answering email (I think over the Christmas break) and your generosity in being my referee for my first position in NZ back in 2016.

Your warmth, your calm professionalism and preparedness, your dedication to your students (both undergrad and us as postgrads), continue to inspire me. You are also cheeky and fierce when you were protecting us. I remember when you ripped down an offending sign over a photocopier in defence of your teaching assistant charges. I remember relying on your expert knowledge of where to source drinkable coffee in London. I had the privilege of working with you on a number of projects and I quote you all the time in teaching situations. You are a dear mentor and you are missed. My heart goes out to Julia, your family, everyone at QM, and all of the people you have touched and shaped over the years.

All my love from your home country, Sarah

**Sarah Thomasson**

It's so hard to write about Catherine when I can hear her voice so clearly, quick, sharp and brave during School meetings on Teams in the spring of 2020 when everything was uncertainty and anxiety. She kept us calm by being a model of calmness and optimism. Later in the summer I'm remembering her voice as she talked us through some of the ways she'd been using digital spaces in her teaching and demonstrated the lively engagement they'd provoked among her students. She'd flipped the digital 'quiz' to ask why we have knowledge about some things and not others. She'd used a forum to enable students to define new keywords for the module and to develop definitions iteratively and collaboratively. In just this small corner of her teaching you could see her intellectual creativity, her irreverence and her care for her students shining out.

I would hear in her voice too, her warm, encouraging smile. I will always be grateful to Catherine for the warmth of her support for my projects in public engagement and student attainment, and especially the extraordinary care she took in advising me on my professorial application, which she read and commented on in minute detail. She did not just want to manage our School, she wanted to make it a better place, a more ethical, more inclusive, more enabling place – principles to which she committed her labour as well as her words. Her example was bracing, galvanising, inspiring.

Catherine made me feel really valued as a colleague. But this was not only her skill in communication: I felt too her genuine pride and delight in her colleagues. She knew how to express collegial love.

Catherine's memory will stay with me as a role-model for how to be a colleague, a mentor and a leader. She was direct and utterly trustworthy. She made me understand that brilliant leadership is about humility, comradeship and integrity. I feel incredibly lucky to have known her, and her influence will be with me for the rest of my life.

My condolences to Julia, to Catherine's family in New Zealand and friends everywhere.

**Professor Nadia Valman**

Catherine was my second supervisor on my PhD towards the end of my final year. She played a vital role in helping me get it finished by sitting down with me and organising and planning my time. She gave me a huge confidence boost in terms of feeling like I could get it finished! She was also amazingly supportive when I started out teaching at QMUL a few years earlier. I was incredibly sad to hear of her death. Her life was too brief. I wish that her brilliance had had a little longer to shine.

**Sarah Grochala**

Catherine and I quickly became good friends when I joined Anglia Ruskin in 2004. She was so warm and welcoming and she helped me to settle quickly into my first full-time lecturing post. Her dedication and care with her students and her rigour in every part of her work were really inspiring and she was always willing to share her teaching materials and would always help to work things through. She was wonderful company on nights out in Cambridge and various theatre trips in London and beyond, with a playful sense of humour and a twinkle in her eye that I already miss so much. She was always there if I needed any advice and would share her work with infinite generosity. I cannot fathom that she has gone so soon and she leaves an enormous, unfillable gap in my life and work as an academic. She was the kindest, gentlest, most generous friend and inspirational colleague.

**Gianna Bouchard**

Catherine, in addition to being a careful, understanding, rigorous, and attentive second supervisor to my PhD, was a phenomenal advocate for student/TA issues. Where it sometimes felt that senior members of university staff might just be paying lip service to our concerns, Catherine was an advocate and an ally. She was a caring and loving person.

My encounters with Catherine are permanently imprinted on who I am, and the person, academic, and colleague I hope to become. I will keep her memory of her with me, always.

**Alessandro Simari**

It is impossible to quantify in words the profound impact Catherine has had on the lives of so many. I was fortunate to work with and learn from Catherine throughout my undergraduate, MA and PhD studies at Queen Mary. In all that time her singular mind, her care, attention to detail, patience, generosity, politics, integrity, rigour, support, humour, strength and kindness were unwavering. In a sector - and sometimes in a world - where we can be made to feel valueless or less-than, Catherine saw, nurtured and celebrated the value in everyone. It will forever be one of my greatest privileges to have known her and to have experienced the very best that a scholar, teacher, mentor, leader and person can be. She was - and will continue to be - a model to us all.

**Cat Follow**

Catherine was such a lovely person who made me feel really welcome in the Department of Drama at Queen Mary. Though she was not my PhD supervisor, she interviewed me and I benefited from many research and teaching training sessions with her – always impeccably prepared and presented! She always greeted me with a smile, took an interest in my project and was an encouraging, positive presence, as well as a committed mentor and advocate for us as PhD student Teaching Associates. She was obviously a really hard-working, passionate researcher and teacher, and I was delighted when I heard she was Head of School. It is a tragic loss to the School and the Drama department, and of course, even more so, to all those close to her. My deepest sympathies for their loss to her partner, family, friends and colleagues.

**Sarah Barnes**

**My sincere sympathy with her family, friends  
and colleagues.**

**Rest In Peace  
Rest In Peace**

**Muhamad Tawfiq Ali**

I keep thinking about how Catherine paid so much attention-- to people, to detail. Paid feels off as a word because it implies something transactional or economic. She gave, and made, and directed, so much attention. Receiving that attention felt so special. I felt lucky to receive Catherine's attention, and I so appreciated being able to give her mine. Some places or moments of attention with Catherine that mean a lot to me: when we happened to be on the same overground train back to south London; talking about the joy that is Theo's; video calls after March to talk through equalities matters; when Catherine consulted me about one of the necessary [and that we wouldn't-have-wanted-anyone-else-to-be-writing-to-us-then] emails she had to send to the school during the pandemic; her support (and editing!) of my promotions application. I was so proud to tell Catherine I got the promotion, to get her email back, with all she had going on. I sat with Catherine in many equalities meetings, and meetings about how to make the world of QM better for students. I learnt and will keep learning from her work in and between those meetings: her care, and focus, and her imagination for making structures that so easily fail us, hold us up instead.

**Zara Dinnen**

It's taken me a while to know how to write this. I am a colleague of Catherine's at Queen Mary's Drama department. She hadn't been there very long when I joined, first as a PhD student, then postdoc, then lecturer. We taught several modules together, and later Catherine mentored me. Catherine was an outstanding teacher. I would always go to her if I needed to learn not just how to do something, but how to do it well: the first time I designed a module, the first time I examined a PhD. Sometimes I would enter her office feeling tired and disengaged with what I viewed as 'some tedious admin task' and leave feeling that what we were doing mattered, that it was worth trying to get right, that there was nothing so important in the world as educating young people. Her commitment to students was completely infectious.

Catherine was so sprightly, wry, ironic, playful, silly, witty, and smart at work. She was also incredibly generous and kind. Sometimes I did wonder what it cost her to be so extraordinarily supportive to both her students and colleagues. I'm sure her partner Julia will know better than most. It may have been in her character to care so much, but I think it must have also been a choice to behave with such integrity. A choice she must have made over and over again – sometimes hour by hour – to align her values and behaviour. I feel extraordinarily privileged to have witnessed that and been the recipient of it.

I will miss Catherine more than I can say. In that way of work friends, we always said we should hang out, get together, go for a drink – but never managed it. I regret that now, of course, and I hope to do better in the future. We had a shared love of the Kent coast, particularly the dodgy seaside town of Broadstairs with the world's silliest ice-cream parlour. We also shared a love of the absurdly over-stuffed walrus at the Horniman Museum which I visited growing up and where Julia works. I loved the jewellery she made, her always extremely stylish hair, the calm of her neatly organised office, and the way she ironically said in this cheesy DJ voice 'good times' when times were evidently not at all good. I remember how proud she was of her navy blue kitchen. When I was 18 I spent a year travelling and working in New Zealand, so I took great pleasure in hearing her talk of her home country too, and how much love she had for it and its beautiful landscape (hard to imagine her enjoying the Kent coast when she grew up holidaying on NZ's beaches!). Looking back at my last email from her it says 'hope I see you soon'. Of course, I didn't get to see her. But what I do see, when I close my eyes and think about her, is the way she'd grin and raise her beer across the room at some party or event to say hello.

What has struck me most when I've been remembering Catherine over these past weeks is how much I trusted her. She had a rare gift of being able to let others know that she valued them, and she did this in a way that felt true and wholehearted. I think that is what I will remember most about Catherine: how easy she made it to trust her.

## Tiffany Watt Smith

My thoughts are with Julia and Catherine's family. I loved working with Catherine. I will miss her brilliant smile, but most of all the lightness she brought to everything. She was serious in intent yet always funny, patient when it mattered but untroubled by what doesn't matter. She was a superb Head of School. She had the gift of bringing clarity to the most difficult of decisions and she was an ardent advocate of all the things we most value about Queen Mary. Somehow she had time for everyone. I just wish we had more time with her.

**Scott McCracken**

Very sorry to hear about Catherine. I remember her as a very warm and kind colleague with a great sense of fun. Please give my condolences to Julia and to Catherine's family.

**Andrew Lincoln**

Dr Catherine Silverstone was and remains a model of kindness, grace, integrity and scholarly excellence. Catherine convened the first module I undertook for the Theatre and Performance MA course at Queen Mary and I was immediately inspired by her enthusiastic, creative and critical approach to performance. Her deft handling of the group dynamic meant everyone was made to feel included and their voice valued. Throughout my studies Catherine provided invaluable advice and support. She helped expand my thinking about what performance can be and do and why it matters. After I graduated and pursued further study Catherine remained a source of encouragement and guidance. I will always be grateful for her generosity and inspired by her intellectual curiosity and love of performance. My heartfelt condolences to Catherine's partner, family, friends and colleagues.

**Gwyneth Donlon**