Why is Dylan Thomas so popular in America?
Death in New York

Kevin Powell:

Dylan Thomas, for me, is not just one of the greatest Welsh poets ever, but one of the greatest poets of the twentieth century in the world.

Huge, huge impact on my work for a couple of reasons. One, I loved that he was a gateway into Welsh culture and informed me as an American poet, as an African-American poet, how important it is to write about where you come from.

And then the second piece that I love about Dylan Thomas is that how he was really a self-made kind of writer. The fact that he organised his own reading and speaking tours in America and decided that he had to take his work to the people.

Melisa Annis:

There is a wonderful sense in New York of respect for the work of Dylan Thomas. People flock to see readings of his work, to see productions of his work; it's really quite incredible.

There is a huge sense of community within the writing community here to support his work even today.

There is also a daunting aspect of being a Welsh writer in New York City too because, of course, the first thing people say is 'Oh, Dylan Thomas'. It is a little intimidating, obviously, and as a playwright, Under Milk Wood is one of my favourite written pieces of all time.

Jimmy Carter:

I was in my warehouse with no customers one day and I was just reading a book of poetry, and I happened to read 'A Refusal to Mourn the Death, by Fire, of a Child in London'.

And I was just reading through it kind of casually and I got to the last line, 'After the first death, there is no other', and I was kind of shocked.

And I went back and re-read it and I became infatuated with the poem. And after that, as I said earlier, I even made my three sons memorise the poem so we could all say it together in unison.

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And after that I studied Dylan Thomas, I got all his books; I probably have 50 or 60 books now either by or about Dylan Thomas.

I still think, my own belief – and many people share this with me, is he was the best poet of the last century.