

Stellar line-up for Southbank Centre's summer/autumn 2017 literature programme featuring Margaret Atwood, William Boyd, John le Carré, Teju Cole, Naomi Klein, Orhan Pamuk, Laurie Penny, Zadie Smith and Rebecca Solnit



Zadie Smith (c. Dominique Nabokov), John le Carré (c. Nadav Kander), Naomi Klein (c. Kourosh Keshiri)

www.southbankcentre.co.uk

Southbank Centre today announces its summer/autumn 2017 literature programme, featuring some of the greatest figures of modern literature who offer distinctive insights for the present times.

Two era-defining writers return to Royal Festival Hall to discuss their distinguished careers and most famous work. In a rare public appearance the internationally best-selling writer of espionage fiction **John le Carré** introduces his new novel, *A Legacy of Spies*, which sees the return of his most iconic Cold War character whilst best-selling author of *The Handmaid's Tale* **Margaret Atwood** reflects on her visionary work in the context of the Trump era and the real world it reflects.

Responding to the current political and social climate are three of contemporary literature's most radical and progressive writers. Internationally-acclaimed journalist, activist and bestselling author **Naomi Klein** discusses her new book *No Is Not Enough* which looks at the tactics used to bring Trump into power and what happens next. **Laurie Penny** and **Rebecca Solnit** each present their new essay collections, *Bitch Doctrine: Essays for Dissenting Adults*, a collection of Penny's writing which provokes challenging conversations

around the definitive social issues of today, and *The Mother of All Questions*, which aims to open up a feminism for everyone.

Southbank Centre's new season also sees the return of celebrated writers of fiction whose work reflects and responds to a changing and fragmentary reality. The multi-award-winning writer of *White Teeth* and *On Beauty* **Zadie Smith** reads from her most recent novel *Swing Time* and discusses writing fiction that responds to our current times. Nobel Prize winning Turkish author **Orhan Pamuk** discusses his latest novel, *The Red-Haired Woman*, and the city which has had such an influence on his writing - Istanbul. In a special event, acclaimed Nigerian-American author and photographer **Teju Cole** also presents his new work, *Blind Spot*, which explores the unexpected connections between the visual world and written word, and offers a guide to seeing in our changing times.

The season culminates with multi-award-winning author **William Boyd** who takes to the stage - alone - to talk about his life as a creator of many fictions, beginning with the publication of his first novel, *A Good Man in Africa* (1981) right through to an exclusive reading from his new book of short stories, *The Dreams of Bethany Mellmoth*.

Alongside this stellar line-up, Southbank Centre hosts the five shortlisted authors of **The 2017 Caine Prize**, Africa's leading literary award, who read from their work in a special event chaired by broadcaster and journalist **Bidisha**. **The Forward Prizes for Poetry** are awarded once again in a ceremony at Southbank Centre which also features readings from the ten collections chosen by the Forward judges. Southbank Centre welcomes London's award-winning LGBT literary salon, **Polari** for the 10th successive year, featuring leading authors from the LGBT community including **Susan Wilkins** and **Alys Fowler** in their summer programme.

In addition, Southbank Centre's **National Poetry Library** offers a broad range of free events including a new exhibition '**A Fair Field Full of Folk**' which explores William Langland's medieval poem *Piers Plowman* and features a rare opportunity to see an original sixteenth century manuscript of the poem, on loan from the University of London.

Ted Hodgkinson, Southbank Centre's Senior Programmer, Literature and Spoken Word, said: *"Literature has anticipated many of the changes we have seen in the last twelve months, and distilled seismic historical shifts into unforgettable writing. Few epitomise this power of literature to place global events on a human scale more than this exceptional array of authors we host this season, who illuminate worlds as distinctive as the Cold War, political upheavals in Istanbul and the current Trump administration. They are essential voices, whose work expands our sense of shared humanity, and offers vital insights into our times. Southbank Centre is proud to be exploring these important issues and providing a platform for some of our most era-defining and visionary writers."*

Further information on Southbank Centre's 2017 summer/autumn literature events is listed below in chronological date order.

SOUTHBANK CENTRE'S NATIONAL POETRY LIBRARY EVENTS (11 May - 1 November)

Southbank Centre's **National Poetry Library** offers a broad range of free events including a new exhibition '**A Fair Field Full of Folk**' curated in collaboration with Pinned in the Margins which explores William Langland's medieval poem *Piers Plowman*. The exhibition provides a rare opportunity to see an original sixteenth century manuscript of *Piers Plowman*, on loan from the University of London, and also explores the poem's influence on contemporary writers and artists (11 May - 9 July). Later in the year a new exhibition curated by **Catherine Margangeli** celebrates the 50th anniversary of ***The Mersey Sound***, a 1967 anthology of Liverpool poets including Adrian Henri, Roger McGough and Brian Patten which went on to become the bestselling poetry anthology of all time (20 July - 24 September). Special Edition events at The National Poetry Library include a poetic exploration of the implications of Brexit (2 August), This Glorious Noise: Five British Indian Poets (4 October) and a celebration of novelist Joseph Conrad (1 November) through the lens of contemporary poets.

POLARI LITERARY SALON (June - July)

Southbank Centre welcomes back London's award-winning LGBT literary salon, **Polari**, for its 10th summer, curated and hosted by writer **Paul Burston**, and featuring leading authors from the LGBT community. Television script-writer **Susan Wilkins** reads from the final instalment in her Kaz Phelps Trilogy in an evening which also features **Paul Flynn**, **Emma Flint** and **Allie Rogers** and reveals the longlist for The Polari First Book Prize 2017 (6 June). Award-winning journalist and former presenter of BBC television programme *Gardeners' World* **Alys Fowler** headlines Polari in July, discussing her most recent book, *Hidden Nature: A Voyage Of Discovery*. She is joined by **Joelle Taylor**, **James Maker**, **Rosie Wilby** and **James Wharton** in an evening where the shortlist for The Polari First Book Prize 2017 is also announced (31 July).

THE 2017 CAINE PRIZE SHORTLIST READINGS (29 June)

Southbank Centre hosts the shortlisted authors of The 2017 Caine Prize, Africa's leading literary prize, awarded to an African writer of a short story published in English. The prize was launched in 2000 to encourage and highlight the richness and diversity of African writing by bringing it to a wider audience internationally. In this special event chaired by broadcaster and journalist **Bidisha**, the five shortlisted authors of the 2017 award read from their work and discuss the current output of contemporary African writing. Shortlist to be announced in mid-May, with the winner announced in London on 3 July.

NAOMI KLEIN (4 July)

Internationally acclaimed journalist, activist and bestselling author of *No Logo*, *The Shock Doctrine* and *This Changes Everything*, Naomi Klein returns to Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall to present her new book *No Is Not Enough*, an exploration of the tactics used to bring Trump into power as well as what happens next. In *No Is Not Enough*, Klein argues, among other things, that Trump's election was not a peaceful transition, but a corporate takeover, one using deliberate shock tactics to generate wave after wave of crises, disorientate the public and force through radical policies that will destroy people, the

environment, the economy and national security. Klein discusses this, and more, in this special pre-publication event.

ZADIE SMITH (6 July)

The multi-award-winning writer of *White Teeth* and *On Beauty* discusses her fiction and essays, how dance inspires her writing and reads from her new novel *Swing Time* which follows the friendship of two girls who both dream of being dancers. In discussing her latest work, which fittingly makes reference to Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall, Smith reflects on chronicling contemporary London, the diverse characters who make up the life of the city and how to capture a changing world on the page.

LAURIE PENNY (13 July)

One of Britain's most radical and progressive writers, journalist and author Laurie Penny presents her new book *Bitch Doctrine: Essays for Dissenting Adults*, a collection of her writing which provokes challenging conversations around the definitive social issues of today. Laurie Penny's writing has made her a touchstone for readers around the world, on issues ranging from Trump's presidency and the rise of the far right, to online harassment and transgender rights. In this special in conversation event, the *New Statesman* columnist reads from her work, discusses how to stay hopeful in today's world, and how to bring about change.

TEJU COLE (17 August)

The award-winning American-Nigerian author of *Every Day Is for the Thief*, *Open City* and *Known and Strange Things* and internationally exhibited photographer Teju Cole presents his innovative new work, *Blind Spot* which brings together his two great passions - words and photography. In a special live event, Cole (who is also the photography critic of *The New York Times Magazine*) uses images and words to transport the audience around the world on his travels, from a park in Berlin to a mountain range in Switzerland, a church exterior in Lagos to a parking lot in Brooklyn. He evokes landscapes, beautiful or quotidian, inspired by his memories, fantasies, and introspections.

JOHN LE CARRÉ (7 September)

In an exclusive one-off event, the internationally best-selling writer of espionage fiction John le Carré makes a rare public appearance to introduce his new novel, *A Legacy of Spies*, which sees the return of his most iconic Cold War character. From his extraordinary Cold War novels – such as *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* and *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* – to his powerful descriptions of the War on Terror in *A Most Wanted Man*, and *A Delicate Truth*, the writing of John le Carré has come to define the last half century. In this unique Question + Answer session, le Carré discusses the full breadth of his career spanning five decades, and reflects on the continuing story of his most famous creation, the tubby, bespectacled spy, George Smiley.

ORHAN PAMUK (15 September)

Nobel Prize winning author Orhan Pamuk reads from and discusses his latest novel *The Red-Haired Woman*, which interweaves an investigation into a murder thirty years ago in Istanbul and a fictional inquiry into the fundamental myths of the West and the East. From

his many acclaimed books, including *Snow*, *The White Castle*, *My Name is Red* for which he received the 2003 International IMPAC Award, to *A Strangeness in my Mind*, which was shortlisted for the 2016 Man Booker International Prize, Pamuk is one of the world's most celebrated and formally inventive authors. In this immersive event combining imagery and extracts from his books, Pamuk reflects on reading and seeing, the tension between state and individual freedom, and chronicling the life of a city - Istanbul - in which civilisations continue to collide, and which has had such an influence on his writing.

FORWARD PRIZES FOR POETRY (21 September)

Southbank Centre once again hosts the annual **Forward Prizes for Poetry** on 21 September 2017. Now in their 26th year, the Forward Prizes remain dedicated to heralding fresh new voices as well as commemorating famous names from the world of poetry. Between the prize givings, the audience hears readings from the ten collections chosen by the Forward judges from the full range of poetry published in the UK and Ireland over the last 12 months. Journalist and broadcaster Andrew Marr chairs the jury alongside Mona Arshi, Ian Duhig, Sandeep Parmar and Chris Riddell. Longlist to be announced.

MARGARET ATWOOD (2 October)

Following a sought-after appearance at Southbank Centre's London Literature Festival in 2016, legendary writer of science-fiction, Margaret Atwood returns to Royal Festival Hall in an exclusive London appearance to discuss her career and her most famous works, including *The Handmaid's Tale*. With the recent premiere of a new TV series, well-timed for the Trump era, Atwood reads from *The Handmaid's Tale* and discusses not only its past, present and future, but the real world it reflects.

REBECCA SOLNIT (30 October)

In an exclusive London event, award-winning author Rebecca Solnit presents her new collection of essays, *The Mother of All Questions*, which aims to open up a feminism for everyone. Following on from the success of her national bestseller *Men Explain Things to Me*, Solnit, who coined the term 'mansplaining', offers indispensable commentary on women who refuse to be silenced, misogynistic violence, the fragile masculinity of the literary canon, the gender binary, the recent history of rape jokes, and much more. With fans as diverse as Beyoncé, Michelle Williams and Lena Dunham, Solnit is a potent force for social change and combines razor sharp humour, keen analysis and powerful humour to discuss how to reimagine feminism for the future.

WILLIAM BOYD (6 November)

Multi-award-winning author of fifteen novels, four short story collections, seventeen screenplays and three produced plays, William Boyd is one of Britain's most prolific storytellers alive today. In this exclusive London event, Boyd takes to the stage - alone - to talk about his life as a creator of many fictions, beginning with the publication of his first novel, *A Good Man in Africa* (1981), right through to an exclusive reading from his new book of short stories, *The Dreams of Bethany Mellmoth*. Along the way he shares the inspirations for some of his most famous novels – *Brazzaville Beach*, *Any Human Heart* and *Sweet Caress* - and discusses his life and career as a writer, from the particular problems of trying

to write a James Bond novel to his collaboration with David Bowie in the evolution of the entirely made-up American artist Nat Tate and the hoax which fooled the art world.

LONDON LITERATURE FESTIVAL AND POETRY INTERNATIONAL (13 - 29 October)

Southbank Centre's longest-running festival *Poetry International* marks its 50th anniversary by joining with *London Literature Festival* for the first time in October 2017. The biennial festival, founded in 1967 by Ted Hughes, forms the opening weekend of 2017 *London Literature Festival*, which is an established highlight in the literary calendar having celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2016. The festival runs from 13 - 29 October 2017 with the programme to be announced.

ENDS

FULL EVENT LISTINGS BELOW

Tickets for John le Carré are on sale to members on Monday 8 May and on general sale on Tuesday 9 May. All other events (unless stated otherwise below) are on sale to members on Wednesday 11 May and on general sale on Thursday 12 May.

For information on ticket prices, please see listings below. To book, visit Southbank Centre's website southbankcentre.co.uk or call the box office on 020 7960 4200

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Please find a link to press images [here](#)

Join the conversation @southbankcentre and @litsouthbank

LISTINGS

Exhibition: 'A Fair Field full of Folk'

11 May - 9 July, The National Poetry Library at Southbank Centre, Free

A new exhibition exploring the Medieval poem *Piers Plowman*, featuring an original 16th century manuscript of the work on loan from the University of London, as well as new artwork from Larry Achiampong and Nicola Jedrzejczak. In collaboration with Penned in the Margins.

<https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whats-on/fair-field-full-folk>

Polari Literary Salon - Susan Wilkins

Tuesday 6 June, 7.30pm, Level 5 Function Room at Southbank Centre, £5, On sale Now

London's award-winning LGBT literary salon returns to Southbank Centre for its 10th summer, curated and hosted by writer Paul Burston. Television script-writer Susan Wilkins reads from the final

instalment in her Kaz Phelps Trilogy in an evening which also features Paul Flynn, Emma Flint and Allie Rogers

<https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whats-on/121313-polari-2017>

“African Writing of the Future”: Caine Prize Shortlist Readings

Thursday 29 June, 7:30pm, Level Three Function Room at Royal Festival Hall, £10, On sale now

The 5 shortlisted authors of The Caine Prize, Africa’s leading literary award, read from their work and discuss the future of African writing. Chaired by journalist Bidisha.

<https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whats-on/121889-african-writing-future-caine-prize-shortlist-readings-2017>

Naomi Klein: No is Not Enough

Thursday 4 July, 7.30pm, Royal Festival Hall, £15, £25, £35

Internationally acclaimed journalist, activist and bestselling author of *No Logo*, *The Shock Doctrine* and *This Changes Everything*, Naomi Klein discusses her new book *No Is Not Enough*.

Zadie Smith: Swing Time

Saturday 6 July, 7.30pm, Royal Festival Hall, £15, £25, £35

Visitors are invited to hear Zadie Smith read from her new novel, *Swing Time*, as well as listen to her speak about her fiction, essays and how dance has inspired her writing.

Laurie Penny: Bitch Doctrine

Thursday 13 July, 7.30pm, Level Five Function Room at Royal Festival Hall, £15

In a special in conversation event, Laurie Penny reads from her new book, *Bitch Doctrine: Essays for Dissenting Adults*, and discusses staying hopeful in today’s world, and how to bring about change.

What The Trees Know / The Blindfold Session

Part of Africa Utopia

Saturday 15 July, 6 - 6.30pm and 7.30 - 8pm, St Paul’s Roof Pavilion at Royal Festival Hall, £10, On sale now

Poetry/music duo Gertrude & Jemma lead a performance of experimental and improvised sound exploring the relationship between words, music and silence. The artists and audience are blindfolded in these sessions which is shaped and informed by the processes, elements and forms of trees.

<https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whats-on/122485-what-trees-know-blindfold-session-2017>

Cosmic Ashoke: An Evening of Afrofuturism

Part of Africa Utopia

Sunday 16 July, 6.45pm, St Paul’s Roof Pavilion at Royal Festival Hall, £12, On sale now

An evening of Afro-futuristic poetry and music through unique visual and auditory experiences including pop-up performances and diasporic storytelling. Featuring sets from Transits and Theresa Lola with more acts to be announced soon. Produced by ART!VIST UK & Afro Futures UK

<https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whats-on/122491-cosmic-ashoke-evening-afrofuturism-2017>

Exhibition: The Mersey Sound at 50

Thursday 20 July - Sunday 24 September, The National Poetry Library at Southbank Centre, Free

A new exhibition celebrating the 50th anniversary of *The Mersey Sound*, the bestselling poetry anthology of all time. Curated by Catherine Marcangeli, the exhibition displays original manuscripts, ephemera, posters, audio and video material which retrace the emergence of Adrian Henri, Roger McGough and Brian Patten onto the 1960s poetry scene.

Polari Literary Salon - Alys Fowler

Monday 31 July, 7.30pm, Level 5 Function Room at Southbank Centre, £5, On sale now
London's award-winning LGBT literary salon returns to Southbank Centre for its 10th summer, curated and hosted by writer Paul Burston. Award-winning journalist and former presenter of BBC Gardeners' World Alys Fowler discusses her most recent book, *Hidden Nature: A Voyage Of Discovery*. She is joined by Joelle Taylor, James Maker, Rosie Wilby and James Wharton.
<https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whats-on/121382-polari-2017>

Special Edition: Brexit Poetics

Wednesday 2 August, 8pm, The National Poetry Library at Southbank Centre, Free

Teju Cole: Blind Spot

Thursday 17 August, 7.30pm, Level 5 Function Room at Royal Festival Hall, £15
The award-winning American-Nigerian author, essayist and internationally exhibited photographer Teju Cole presents his innovative new work, *Blind Spot*.

John le Carré – An Evening with George Smiley

Thursday 7 September, 7.30pm, Royal Festival Hall, £25, £50, £75, £100
In a rare public appearance, best-selling author John le Carré introduces his new novel, *A Legacy of Spies*, which sees the return of his most iconic Cold War characters, in this unique Q+A session.
<https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whats-on/121010-john-le-carre-evening-george-smiley-2017>

Orhan Pamuk in conversation

Friday 15 September, 7.30pm, Royal Festival Hall, £15, £20
In an immersive event combining imagery and extracts from his books, Orhan Pamuk reads from his latest novel, *The Red-Haired Woman* and reflects on chronicling the life of a city - Istanbul - which has had such an influence on his work.

The Forward Prizes for Poetry 2017

Thursday 21 September 2017, 7.00pm, Royal Festival Hall, £15
See the 26th annual Forward Prizes for Poetry awarded live on stage and hear readings from the ten best collections published in the UK and Ireland over the last year as chosen by the Forward judges.

Margaret Atwood

Monday 2 October, 7.30pm, Royal Festival Hall, £20, £30, £45
In this one-time London appearance, Margaret Atwood will read from her work; then, in conversation, she will discuss not only her career, but the past, present, and future of her best-known novel, *The Handmaid's Tale*, and the real world it reflects.

Special Edition: This Glorious Noise: 5 British Indian poets

Wednesday 4 October, 8pm, National Poetry Library at Southbank Centre, Free
Five South Asian diaspora poets celebrate the UK-India Year of Culture 2017 by reading poems showcasing their different experiences. Featuring Mona Dash, Prof Bashabi Fraser, Dr Debjani Chatterjee MBE, Rishi Dastidar and Yogesh Patel.

2017 London Literature Festival and Poetry International

Friday 13 - Sunday 29 October, Southbank Centre, On sale to be announced
Southbank Centre's longest-running festival *Poetry International* marks its 50th anniversary by joining with *London Literature Festival* for the first time in October 2017. Programme to be announced.

Rebecca Solnit In Conversation

Monday 30 October, 7.30pm, Royal Festival Hall, £15, £25, £35,

In an exclusive London event, award-winning author Rebecca Solnit reads from her new essay collection, *The Mother of All Questions*, and discusses how to re imagine feminism for the future.

Special Edition: A Poetic Celebration of Joseph Conrad

Wednesday 1 November, 8pm, National Poetry Library at Southbank Centre, Free

The Many Fictions of William Boyd

Monday 6 November, 7.30pm, Royal Festival Hall, £20, £25, £35

William Boyd takes to the stage to talk about his life as a creator of many fictions, beginning with the publication of his first novel, *A Good Man in Africa* in 1981 and ending with an exclusive reading from his new book of short stories, *The Dreams of Bethany Mellmoth*, publishing in November.

NOTES TO EDITORS

About Southbank Centre

Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre, occupying a 21 acre site that sits in the midst of London's most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames. The site has an extraordinary creative and architectural history stretching back to the 1951 Festival of Britain. Southbank Centre is home to the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and Hayward Gallery as well as The Saison Poetry Library and the Arts Council Collection. For further information please visit www.southbankcentre.co.uk. Southbank Centre is carrying out vital restoration work on the Hayward Gallery, Queen Elizabeth Hall and Purcell Room to make the buildings fit for future generations to enjoy, more information can be found here: letthelightin.southbankcentre.co.uk

Let the Light In

In September 2015, our iconic Brutalist arts venues Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and Hayward Gallery closed their doors for two years so we could give them the essential refurbishment they deserve. Renowned for their architectural significance, the buildings are most importantly recognised for the exceptional performances and exhibitions that have happened in them since they first opened nearly 50 years ago. The £25 million refurbishment project has been funded by Arts Council England, Heritage Lottery Fund and through the generous support of Southbank Centre friends. We launched the Let The Light In campaign to raise £3.9 million and have just £1.9 million left to raise so we can transform these buildings for the reopening in 2018 and for future generations to enjoy. For more information, visit: letthelightin.southbankcentre.co.uk