

SOUTHBANK CENTRE

Press Release

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Images are available [HERE](#).

Southbank Centre announces Spring Literature Season 2025

featuring **Nnedi Okorafor, Abdulrazak Gurnah, Maggie O'Farrell, Kit de Waal, Amitav Ghosh, Michelle de Kretser, Laura Bates and Torrey Peters**
plus **Out-Spoken, International Booker Prize Shortlist Readings, The Moth: GrandSLAM and European Poetry Festival**



(L-R: Michelle de Kretser © Joy Lai; Amitav Ghosh © Mathieu Genon; Maggie O'Farrell © Dasha Tenditna)

The Southbank Centre is proud to announce its Spring Literature 2025 season from February to June 2025, with programming that spans authors from our home in London to literary talent around the world.

Celebrating new works by internationally-acclaimed names including Nnedi Okorafor (23 Feb), Abdulrazak Gurnah (27 Mar), Amitav Ghosh (10 Apr) and the International Booker Prize shortlisted writers (18 May), this season also celebrates the phenomenal talent of Maggie O'Farrell on the 25th anniversary of the publication of her debut novel *After You'd Gone*, marking her very first event at the Southbank Centre (30 Mar). Continuing to offer programming that aims to inspire the creators of the future, the National Poetry Library housed in the Royal Festival Hall welcomes back the European Poetry Festival (18 Jun) for the eighth consecutive year. Hosted for the first time at the Southbank Centre, the iconic live story competition, The Moth GrandSlam will decide the London storytelling champion in the Queen Elizabeth Hall (6 Jun).

Ted Hodgkinson, Head of Literature & Spoken Word at the Southbank Centre, says: *"Against a backdrop of cultural insularity, it has never been more important to hear from storytellers capable of*

reaching across divides and replenishing our sense of shared humanity. From Maggie O'Farrell and Kit de Waal through to globally-renowned writers Nnedi Okorafor and Amitav Ghosh, the Spring 2025 Literature season celebrates storytelling from home and away and reflects the Southbank Centre's pivotal role as Europe's largest art centre, a space loved both internationally and locally."

Spring 2025 Literature and Spoken Word Events

Images are available [HERE](#).

NNEDI OKORAFOR: DEATH OF THE AUTHOR

Sun 23 Feb 2025, 7.45pm, Purcell Room. Tickets £15. For ages 16+

The acclaimed science-fiction author of *Binti* and co-author of *Black Panther* presents her latest novel, *Death of the Author*, a sweeping look at family, culture, an examination of the relationship between writer and author - and robots.

POETRY LONDON SPRING READINGS

Sun 9 March 2025, 7.15pm, Level 5 Function Room. Tickets £12. For ages 16+.

Celebrating the launch of the Spring issue of Poetry London, this event includes extended reading from the latest issue's contributors, along with reflections from its editors. Speakers include Daljit Nagra, Vidyan Ravinthiran, Vona Groarke, Tom Bailey.

ABDULRAZAK GURNAH: THEFT

Thur 27 March 2025, 7.45pm, Purcell Room. Tickets £15. For ages 16+.

The 2021 Nobel Prize-winning novelist marks the publication of his latest novel, *Theft*. Set in Zanzibar in the 1990s, *Theft* tells a coming of age story of three young people - Karim, Fauzia and Badar - as they dream of the possibilities of their young nation.

AN EVENING WITH MAGGIE O'FARRELL

Sun 30 March 2025, 7.30pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall Tickets from £15. For ages 16+. STT.

One of the most beloved writers in the English language, Maggie O'Farrell celebrates 25 years since the publication of her acclaimed debut *After You'd Gone* at the Queen Elizabeth Hall with a special in conversation event celebrating her life and career.

OUT-SPOKEN: APRIL

Thur 3 April 2025, 7.45pm, Purcell Room. Tickets £15. For ages 16+. STT

Out-Spoken is the Southbank Centre's resident poetry and live music night, bringing the hottest UK poets to perform spoken word sets alongside world-class musicians. Hosted by TS Eliot and Polari Prize winning poet Joelle Taylor, with Sam 'Junior' Bromfield spinning the best in reggae, soul and R&B throughout the evening.

KIT DE WAAL: THE BEST OF EVERYTHING

Wed 9 April 2025, 7.45pm, Purcell Room. Tickets £15. For ages 16+

The author of *My Name is Leon* celebrates the publication of their mesmerising new novel, *The Best of Everything* with a special in-conversation event in the Purcell Room.

AMITAV GHOSH: WILD FICTIONS

Thur 10 April 2025, 7.45pm, Purcell Room. Tickets £15. For ages 16+.

Amitav Ghosh is the author of bestselling Ibis trilogy, comprised of *Sea of Poppies*, *River of Smoke* and *Flood of Fire*. Now with a new searing collection of essays, one of our most brilliant thinkers will explore how we tell stories and our relationship with the world around us in *Wild Fictions* - a collection spanning the past 25 years or so and published in various journals and periodicals.

RUG RHYMES AT THE NATIONAL POETRY LIBRARY

Fri 7 Feb, Fri 28 Feb, Fri 14 Mar, Fri 28 Mar, 11am 2025, National Poetry Library, Level 5, Blue Side, Royal Festival Hall. Tickets £4 (child ticket, includes adult). For ages 0 – 5

A welcoming and playful session run by the National Poetry Library staff offers an opportunity to introduce under-5s to the world of stories and poems. From sharing nursery rhymes to learning new ones, this event will also offer a chance to explore and borrow books from the National Poetry Library's Children Collection before it is open to the public at noon.

TORREY PETERS: STAG DANCE

Wed 7 May 2025, 7.45pm, Purcell Room. Tickets £15. For ages 16+.

The American author marks the publication of her kaleidoscopic new quartet, *Stag Dance*. From the adventures of a lonely logger who, deep in the forest, joins his workmates to dance dressed as a woman, to the story of an obsessive boarding-school romance, to the dizzying spectacle of a gender apocalypse brought about by an unstable ex-girlfriend, Peters' keen eye for the rough edges of trans community and desire reveals fresh possibilities.

OUT-SPOKEN: MAY

Thur 8 May 2025, 7.45pm, Purcell Room. Tickets £15. For ages 16+.

Out-Spoken is the Southbank Centre's resident poetry and live music night, bringing the hottest UK poets to perform spoken word sets alongside world-class musicians. Hosted by TS Eliot and Polari Prize winning poet Joelle Taylor, with Sam 'Junior' Bromfield spinning the best in reggae, soul and R&B throughout the evening.

LAURA BATES: THE NEW AGE OF SEXISM

Fri 9 May 2025, 7.45pm, Purcell Room. Tickets £15. For ages 16+

The founder and author behind Everyday Sexism Project shatters the illusion of progress with her latest book about the future of sexism in an age of technology. Laura Bates traverses topics such as deepfakes, the metaverse, cyber brothels, to reveal how misogyny is entrenched in the technologies of the present day.

INTERNATIONAL BOOKER PRIZE SHORTLIST READINGS

Sun 18 May 2025, 7.45pm, Purcell Room. Tickets £15. For ages 16+. STT

The six authors shortlisted for the International Booker Prize 2025 and their translators will perform readings and enter an exclusive discussion of their books. This year's judging panel will be chaired by bestselling Booker-Prize longlisted author Max Porter, who will be joined by Caleb Femi, the director of Wasafari, Sana Goyal, author Anton Hur, and singer-songwriter Beth Orton.

INTERNATIONAL BOOKER PRIZE SHORTLIST READINGS: LIVE STREAM

Sun 18 May 2025, 7.45pm, Purcell Room. For ages 16+. STT

A live-stream of the event will be available to view online, giving global audiences an opportunity to hear from the six shortlisted authors and their translators.

MICHELLE DE KRETZER: THEORY & PRACTICE

Wed 4 June 2025, 7.45pm, Purcell Room. Tickets £15. For ages 16+.

The Sri Lankan writer who won the 2023 Folio Prize for the best selling novel, *Scary Monsters*, will discuss the presence of Virginia Woolf in her latest, and most personal novel to date, *Theory & Practice*.

OUT-SPOKEN: JUNE

Thur 5 June 2025, 7.45pm, Purcell Room. Tickets £15. For ages 16+.

Out-Spoken is the Southbank Centre's resident poetry and live music night, bringing the hottest UK poets to perform spoken word sets alongside world-class musicians. Hosted by TS Eliot and Polari Prize winning poet Joelle Taylor, with Sam 'Junior' Bromfield spinning the best in reggae, soul and R&B throughout the evening.

THE MOTH: GRANDSLAM

Fri 6 June 2025, 8pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall. Tickets from £15. For ages 16+.

The renowned storytelling non-profit, *The Moth*, will host ten storytellers who will share new works in a quest to be crowned the London Storytelling Champion.

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EUROPEAN POETRY FESTIVAL

Wed 18 June 2025, 8pm, National Poetry Library, Free. For ages 16+.

The UK's biggest celebration of continental poetry in performance, experimentation and collaboration, the European Poetry Festival returns to its home in the National Poetry Library for the eighth consecutive year. Hear new work by contemporary European poets and their Britain-based counterparts in the UK's biggest celebration of continental poetry, hosted by S.J. Fowler.

For further press information please contact: press@southbankcentre.co.uk |

Join the conversation: @southbankcentre @litsouthbank @nationalpoetrylibrary

NOTES TO EDITORS

About the Southbank Centre's National Poetry Library

The Southbank Centre's National Poetry Library is the largest public collection of modern poetry in the world and is housed at the Southbank Centre in London. Founded by the Arts Council in 1953 and opened by poets T.S. Eliot and Herbert Read, the library contains over 200,000 items spanning from 1912 to the present day, extensive resources for poets, academics, schools and families. Hosting exhibitions and events, as well as offering an extensive catalogue and ebook service accessible online, the library is free to use www.nationalpoetrylibrary.org.uk

About the Southbank Centre

The Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre occupying a prominent riverside location that sits in the midst of London's most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames. We exist to present great cultural experiences that bring people together and we achieve this by providing the space for artists to create and present their best work and by creating a place where as many people as possible can come together to experience bold, unusual and eye-opening work. We want to take people out of the everyday, every day. The site has an extraordinary creative and architectural history stretching back to the 1951 Festival of Britain. Southbank Centre is made up of the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and Hayward Gallery as well as being home to the National Poetry Library and the Arts Council Collection. It is also home to six Resident Orchestras (Aurora Orchestra, Chineke! Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, London Sinfonietta, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Philharmonia Orchestra). www.southbankcentre.co.uk/



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