

SOUTHBANK CENTRE

PRESS RELEASE

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Press Images [here](#)

Event listings [here](#)

Southbank Centre announces its twelfth London Literature Festival programme featuring Roger Daltrey, Marilynne Robinson and Salman Rushdie: 18 - 28 October 2018

Held over eleven days across Southbank Centre's 17-acre site, the festival features a packed programme of exclusive appearances, live readings, newly commissioned performances, talks, debates, poetry, visual displays, workshops, award ceremonies, book launches, family events, music, free activity and more.

Playing host to a wealth of award-winning literary greats, iconic artists, emerging talent, international writers and leading thinkers, Southbank Centre's twelfth *London Literature Festival* explores the world in which we live and celebrates the power of literature to reflect on the burning issues of our times.

Featuring **Akala, André Aciman, Yomi Adegoke, Ellah Allfrey, Becky Albertalli, Laura Bates, Mary Beard, Jay Bernard, Melvyn Bragg, Melvin Burgess, Sam Byers, Soraya Chemaly, Sarah Churchwell, Julian Clary and David Roberts, Roger Daltrey, Juno Dawson, Imtiaz Dharker, Carol Ann Duffy, Aida Edemariam, Esi Edugyan, Olafur Eliasson, Sally Field, Mohsin Hamid, Melissa Harrison, Terrance Hayes, E. Lockhart, Madeline Miller, Robert Muchamore, David Olusoga, Chibundu Onuzo, Sue Perkins, Marilynne Robinson, Salman Rushdie, Samanta Schweblin, Nikesh Shukla, Adam Silvera, Lemn Sissay, Sharlene Teo, Olga Tokarczuk, Elizabeth Uviebinené** and more.



Roger Daltrey © Fabrice Demessence, Chibundu Onuzo © Blake Images, Akala © Paul Husband, Carol Ann Duffy © Michael J Woods

Highlights include:

- Iconic artists and broadcasters reading from and discussing new books including **Sally Field, Olafur Eliasson, Sue Perkins, Melvyn Bragg** and the exclusive London launch of **Roger Daltrey's** new memoir *Thanks a lot, Mr Kibblewhite: My Life*
- A series of London exclusive in-conversation events with award-winning British and international writers including **Marilynne Robinson, Salman Rushdie, Mohsin Hamid, André Aciman, Olga Tokarczuk** and more
- A special one-off live reading of Homer's *The Odyssey* commissioned by Southbank Centre in partnership with the *TLS* and performed by a stellar cast alongside a series of panel discussions co-curated with the *TLS* and King's College London exploring this epic poem featuring **Mary Beard, Madeline Miller, Sharlene Teo, Simon Goldhill** and more
- The **world premiere** performance of **Chibundu Onuzo's 1991**, a new commission from Southbank Centre
- A series of discussions exploring contemporary America featuring writers and thinkers including **Soraya Chemaly, Laura Bates, Terrance Hayes** and **Sarah Churchwell**
- A series of events exploring race and society with writers and artists including rapper **Akala** and broadcaster **David Olusoga** in conversation together and *Slay In Your Lane* co-authors **Yomi Adegoke** and **Elizabeth Uviebinené**
- Live poetry readings from both emerging and established talent including **Jay Bernard, Sarah Howe, Richard Osman, Helen Mort, Imtiaz Dharker, Mark Pajak, Keith Hutson** and **Carol Ann Duffy** who presents her last collection as Poet Laureate in an exclusive event
- Inspired by *The Odyssey*, a series of discussions with novelists exploring the theme of homeland including **Esi Edugyan, Aida Edemariam, Samanta Schweblin, Laia Jufresa, Guiseppe Caputo, Melissa Harrison** and **Sam Byers**
- Awards celebrating marginalised voices in publishing including the **Creative Future Literary Awards** presented by **Lemn Sissay**, a panel with the **SI Leeds Literary Prize** shortlist chaired by **Ellah Allfrey** and the **Polari First Book Prize**
- **YA Day** featuring the best writers of Young Adult Fiction including **Nikesh Shukla, Juno Dawson, Nikita Gill, Robert Muchamore, Melvin Burgess, Adam Silvera, Becky Albertalli** and more
- A broad range of family events and free activity coinciding with half term week including writer **Julian Clary** and illustrator **David Roberts** with their latest tale in *The Bolds* series.

Ted Hodgkinson, Southbank Centre's Head of Literature and Spoken Word said "From a celebration of Homer's *The Odyssey* to an examination of contemporary America, London Literature Festival 2018 invites audiences on a journey across centuries and borders to explore the timeless power of literature to question and reflect on the burning issues of our times. Through live readings and discussions on identity, society, race, gender, travel, home and more, we are thrilled to gather together an incredible array of award-winning literary greats, iconic artists, emerging talent, international writers and leading thinkers to examine issues that have faced our world for millennia and continue to preoccupy us today."

ENDS

With the exception of Olga Tokarczuk's event, tickets go on sale to Southbank Centre Members on Tuesday 24 July and to the General Public on Wednesday 25 July. Please visit www.southbankcentre.co.uk

For more information or to buy tickets please visit the Southbank Centre website [HERE](#) or call 020 7960 4200

FURTHER PROGRAMME INFORMATION

IN CONVERSATION EVENTS

Southbank Centre's 2018 London Literature Festival presents a series of exclusive in-conversation events with leading writers and artists exploring their life and work. The festival opens with the exclusive London launch of **Roger Daltrey's** new memoir *Thanks a lot, Mr Kibblewhite: My Life*, as he discusses his life as frontman of iconic English rock band The Who with *The Times* rock and pop critic **Will Hodgkinson**. In a unique opportunity, fifty people randomly selected on the night get the chance to meet Roger at the end of the event for a photograph (18 Oct, RFH). The following evening two-time Academy Award-winning actress **Sally Field** makes her Southbank Centre debut in an exclusive London appearance to discuss her new memoir *In Pieces* which explores her Hollywood career and which reflects openly for the first time about the challenges she endured as a woman in a male-dominated industry (19 Oct, QEH).

Pulitzer prize-winning American author **Marilynne Robinson** presents her new collection of essays *What Are We Doing Here?* in an exclusive London event (20 Oct, QEH); critically-acclaimed author of *Call Me By Your Name*, **André Aciman** reads from and discusses his new novel *Enigma Variations* (22 Oct, PUR); Polish novelist and 2018 Man Booker International Prize-winner **Olga Tokarczuk** returns to London to launch her latest novel to appear in English, *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* (18 Oct, PUR); and Man Booker Prize-winning author **Sir Salman Rushdie** looks back on his life and works, from *Midnight's Children* to *The Golden House* in his first appearance at Southbank Centre in more than a decade (23 Oct, RFH).

Reflecting on the world today, BAFTA and MOBO award-winning hip-hop artist and writer **Akala** and historian, broadcaster and writer **David Olusoga** appear in conversation together to discuss empire, race, culture, class and the roots of modern British society (20 Oct, RFH).

Whilst looking across the pond in a series of events exploring contemporary America and coinciding with the midterm elections, writers and activists **Soraya Chemaly** and **Laura Bates** discuss Feminism in Trump's America (27 Oct, PUR) and American poet **Terrance Hayes** and Professor of American Literature **Sarah Churchwell** discuss the sentiments of the American Dream and America First (20 Oct, PUR).

Exploring the intersection between literature and the arts, internationally-acclaimed Icelandic-Danish artist **Olafur Eliasson** presents his new illustrated volume *Olafur Eliasson: Experience*, which showcases his career from its start to the present in a UK exclusive event (26 Oct, QEH); Broadcaster **Melvyn Bragg** reflects on twenty years at the helm of BBC Radio 4's *In Our Time* in an exclusive live event, coinciding with the publication of a companion book (25 Oct, PUR); and TV personality **Sue Perkins** closes the festival with stories from her forthcoming book, inspired by her popular BBC travel documentaries across Asia (28 Oct, RFH).

THE ODYSSEY

At the heart of the festival is a celebration of Homer's epic poem *The Odyssey*, explored through live readings, panel discussions, workshops, performance and visual displays throughout the festival. Marking the first ever translation by a woman of this seminal text, a stellar cast of writers and actors (names to be announced) give an abridged live reading of Emily Wilson's 2017 translation in a newly-commissioned performance directed by Cedering Fox, Artistic Director of WordTheatre® and featuring live music. Ahead of the live reading broadcaster and *TLS* Classics editor **Mary Beard** leads a panel discussion introducing the text alongside writer **Madeline Miller** and classicist **Simon Goldhill** in a special event in partnership with the *TLS* and King's College London (21 Oct, QEH). Further discussions and workshops throughout the festival explore *The Odyssey's* themes from myth and legacy to gender and the nature of belonging with writers and thinkers including **Madeline Miller**, **Sharlene Teo**, **Andrew McMillan**, **Joseph Cassara** and **Michael Hughes** (20 Oct, L3FR).

Taking inspiration from *The Odyssey*, writers and artists reflect on modern day journeys. Pakistani novelist and author of the Booker shortlisted *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* **Mohsin Hamid** reflects on why stories of migration have captivated our imaginations from the Ancient Greeks to his most recent novel *Exit West* (28 Oct, PUR); and in a **new commission** from Southbank Centre, award-winning Nigerian writer, musician and singer **Chibundu Onuzo** tells the story of her life in the **world premiere** performance of *Chibundu Onuzo's 1991*. Through narrative essays, music, song and dance, featuring a live band and choir, Onuzo takes the audience on a journey from her birth in 1991 in Lagos through two military dictatorships, one internet revolution, two boarding schools, five grandmothers and a book deal, signed when she was nineteen, in this modern day odyssey (21 Oct, PUR).

Linked to *The Odyssey's* theme of homeland, three leading Latin American authors **Samanta Schweblin**, **Laia Jufresa** and **Guiseppe Caputo** present visions of their homelands - Argentina, Mexico City and Colombia - and a changing continent, as featured in *Bogotá39-2017*, a new selection of the best fiction writers under 40 from across Latin America in partnership with Hay Festival (27 Oct, L5FR). British novelists **Melissa Harrison** and **Sam Byers** read from and discuss new novels which present distinctive visions of

England, from a pastoral past to a dystopian post-Brexit future (27 Oct, L5FR). And Canadian novelist **Esi Edugyan** discusses her new novel *Washington Black* which tells the story of a young slave on a Barbados sugar plantation who embarks on an odyssey across the Canadian Arctic to London with Ethiopian-Canadian novelist **Aida Edemariam** whose debut *The Wife's Tale* is both an intimate memoir of the author's grandmother and a vivid portrait of Ethiopia (18 Oct, L5FR).

POETRY EVENTS

In an exclusive one-off event, **Carol Ann Duffy** presents *Sincerity*, her new collection and her last as Poet Laureate in an evening of readings with friends and fellow poets **Imtiaz Dharker**, **Keith Hutson** and emerging talent **Mark Pajak** whose work she has championed (20 Oct, QEH). Celebrating the 20th anniversary of its Foyle Young Poets Award, the Poetry Society presents a showcase of readings and live performance from previous winners including **Jay Bernard**, **Helen Mort**, **Sarah Howe** and **Richard Osman** (23 Oct, PUR). And in a special event celebrating the 10th Anniversary of Somali Week Festival, Kayd Somali Arts & Culture presents an evening showcasing young and emerging Somali women poets and spoken word artists (25 Oct, Blue Room).

Inspired by the festival focus on Homer's *The Odyssey*, Southbank Centre's **National Poetry Library**, housed on the fifth floor of the Royal Festival Hall and home to the world's largest collection of modern poetry, presents its annual open day offering visitors the opportunity to engage with texts related to *The Odyssey* and to hear newly commissioned work in response to the epic poem, performed by an array of poets (21 Oct, St Paul's Pavilion).

Other events at Southbank Centre's National Poetry Library include a special appearance by celebrated Emirati poets **Nujoom Alghanem** and **Ali Al Shaali** reading their work in both Arabic and English (24 Oct, NPL) and a free exhibition **Constructing Spaces** (19 Oct - 31 Mar, NPL) exploring the poetry and creative practice of the Scottish poet W.S. Graham, as part of a centenary celebration of his life and work.

AWARDS

Poet **Lemn Sissay** presents **The Creative Future Literary Awards** featuring live readings from the twelve prize-winning new writers alongside award-winning author, **Kerry Hudson**. The Creative Future Literary Awards is a national literary competition which celebrates talented writers who are under-represented in mainstream publishing including those with mental health issues, disability, neurodiversity, ex-offenders, survivors of abuse, care leavers, and people from the LGBTQ+ and Black, Minority Ethnic and Refugee communities (25 Oct, L5FR). Editor and literary critic **Ellah Allfrey** chairs a panel discussion on women writers of colour with the shortlisted authors of the **SI Leeds Literary Prize**, an award for unpublished fiction by UK-based Black and Asian women (23 Oct, L5FR). And Southbank Centre welcomes back London's award-winning LGBTQ+ literary salon, **Polari**, for a special festival edition curated and hosted by writer **Paul Burston**, featuring writer **Stella Duffy** as well as the announcement of the **2018 Polari First Book Prize** winner (20 Oct, L5FR).

FAMILY EVENTS

Coinciding with half term week, London Literature Festival presents a broad range of family events and free activity including Pram Jam: Words and Rhymes, daily Bedtime Stories and Rise and Rhyme morning events. Special guests include writer **Julian Clary** and illustrator **David Roberts** with their latest tale following the adventures of Teddington's wildest family, *The Bolds*, featuring live illustration (22 Oct, PUR). Coinciding with the live reading of *The Odyssey*, Southbank Centre also presents special family and children events which delve into tales from the epic poem across the opening weekend of the festival, as well as a schools day for primary schools featuring creative workshops and interactive performances exploring the key themes and characters (19 Oct).

YOUNG PEOPLE EVENTS AND YA DAY

Exploring race and society, co-authors of *Slay in Your Lane: The Black Girl Bible* **Yomi Adegoke** and **Elizabeth Uviebinené** offer advice for young Black women on everything from education and work, to dating, representation, money and health (19 Oct, PUR) whilst American writer and National Book Award finalist **E Lockhart** leads a workshop for emerging writers on "Finding Your Voice", encouraging them to look at heritage, family, fandoms, regionalisms, inside jokes and slang vocabularies as tools for getting your unique mind onto the page (20 Oct, L3FR).

An exciting array of Young Adult Fiction writers come together in a special **YA Day** (27 Oct). **Nikesh Shukla**, editor of British Book Award-shortlisted anthology *The Good Immigrant*, discusses his new YA novel *Run, Riot*, alongside YA Book Prize 2018 shortlisted author **M. A. Bennett** and winner of the YA Book Prize 2018 **Will Hill** in a panel discussion exploring class, privilege and upbringing. Author of *Fierce Fairytales & Other Stories to Stir Your Soul* **Nikita Gill** discusses a reimagining of traditional fairytales through a feminist lens with poet and creator of Octavia Poetry Collective for women of colour **Rachel Long** and author of *A Jigsaw of Fire and Stars* **Yaba Badoe**, chaired by journalist and co-founder of BAME In Publishing **Sarah Shaffi**. Shaffi also chairs an event with multi-award-winning authors **Juno Dawson**, **Robert Muchamore** and **Melvin Burgess** who discuss how they create believable characters and how far YA fiction can go. And co-authors of a new book *What If It's Us* American writers **Adam Silvera** and **Becky Albertalli** explore the normalisation of LGBTQ+ themes in literature and what it's like to live and love in America today in an event chaired by **Juno Dawson**.

FULL EVENT LISTINGS [HERE](#)

PRESS IMAGES [HERE](#)

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Join the Conversation:

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#LondonLitFest

NOTES TO EDITORS

About Southbank Centre

Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre, occupying a 17 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 National Poetry Library and the Arts Council Collection. For further information please visit www.southbankcentre.co.uk

About Southbank Centre's National Poetry Library

Southbank Centre's National Poetry Library is the largest public collection of modern poetry in the world and is housed at 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, the library is free to use www.nationalpoetrylibrary.org.uk