

SOUTHBANK CENTRE

Press Release

Date: Tuesday 17 September 2024, 9am

Contact: press@southbankcentre.co.uk

Images: [HERE](#)

Listings: [HERE](#)

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Southbank Centre announces Winter Literature Season featuring Ali Smith, Judith Butler, Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, Shon Faye and a celebration of poet Thom Gunn



(L-R; Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe © The Cambridge Union Judith Butler © Stefan Gutermuth; Shon Faye © Issey Gladston)

- A UK exclusive event from **Judith Butler**
- New book launches from acclaimed authors **Ali Smith** and **Shon Faye**
- **Poetry** events include a celebration of legendary queer poet **Thom Gunn**, monthly live music & poetry night **Out-Spoken**, and the **National Poetry Library** hosts special exhibition **Poetry Buildings** and events series **Special Edition**
- The best new writing from the **T.S. Eliot Prize Readings** and **The Booker Prize Shortlist Readings**
- Also announced today, **Keanu Reeves** joins the **London Literature Festival 2024** line-up (22 Oct - 3 Nov) press release is linked [HERE](#)

The Southbank Centre today announces its Winter 2024 Literature and Spoken Word Season, taking place from November 2024 to March 2025. From revolutionary philosophy to ground-breaking poetry, the season offers audiences a chance to witness live readings from an unmissable line-up of genre-defying writers and thinkers.

Ted Hodgkinson, Head of Literature & Spoken Word at the Southbank Centre, says: “Celebrating many of the world’s most inspirational writers, leaders and thinkers from Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe and Judith Butler to celebrations of Edward Said and Thom Gunn, the Southbank Centre’s Winter Literature season 2024/25 presents an opportunity for new ideas to be forged, reinforcing the Southbank Centre’s commitment to sparking debate and nourishing the next generation of creators.”

UK EXCLUSIVE

The ground-breaking philosopher **Judith Butler** and author of the definitive texts *Gender Trouble* and *Bodies That Matter*, will explore how fear is fuelling the fire around gender politics (30 Mar).

NEW WRITING

Acclaimed authors and poets mark the launch of new works across the season, kicking off with a night in celebration of **Robert Popper** (10 Nov), the creator of the phenomenally funny *Friday Night Dinner* and *The Timewaster Letters*, who celebrates the release of his new book *The Elsie Drake Letters*, alongside comedian Cariad Lloyd. Internationally-renowned author **Ali Smith** (10 Nov) will celebrate the publication of *Gliff* - her latest novel and the first in a pair of new works which looks at the malleability of language. Lastly, author of *The Transgender Issue*, **Shon Faye** brings her meditations on love, transgender experience and the politicisation of love to *Love in Exile* - her wise and unsparing new novel (26 Feb).

Continuing in the tradition of platforming the best in new literature, the Southbank Centre will once again host the **Booker Prize Shortlist Readings** (11 Nov) which will return to the Royal Festival Hall for a large-scale celebration. The best in new poetry will be celebrated in the new year with the **T.S Eliot Prize Readings** (12 Jan), also available to audiences beyond London via a live-stream.

TIMELY DEBATES

This October, Fitzcarraldo Editions republished one of the seminal works of the late twentieth century, *The Question of Palestine* by the Palestinian-American thinker **Edward Said**. On the occasion of its republication, and one year after the start of Israel's war on Gaza, *Edward Said: The Question of Palestine* (20 Nov) brings together poets, thinkers and musicians to consider Said and his legacy.

Taking place at the Southbank Centre for the first time since its establishment in 1989, the annual **Orwell Memorial Lecture** will be given by **Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe** (5 Dec) - the British-Iranian author whose detainment in Iran in 2016 and was held hostage for six years, leading to a campaign for her during her incarceration leading to her release in March 2022. Exploring experiences of sound and listening through feminist theory, **Bodies of Sound: Becoming a Feminist Ear** (7 Nov) sees editors **Irene Revell** and **Sarah Shin** - accompanied by performances from the Chiron Choir, poetry and panel discussion - explore how sonic experiences are implicitly tethered to gender, literature, disability and anti-war movements. Award-winning broadcaster and journalist **Emma Barnett** celebrates the complex and often untold reality of maternity leave in her bracing new book, *Maternity Service*, at the Queen Elizabeth Hall (30 Mar).

POETRY

One of the UK and America's most revered Queer poets is celebrated with the publication of **Thom Gunn: A Cool Queer Life** (5 Dec) - a landmark text which reveals previously untold stories from Gunn's childhood, the publication of *Terms*, the AIDS crisis and beyond. The Southbank Centre's resident monthly live music and poetry event, **Out-Spoken** continues throughout the Winter season, bringing together the best in poetry and music, hosted by the T.S.Eliot Prize and Polari Prize winning poet **Joelle Taylor**.

The largest public collection of modern poetry in the world, the National Poetry Library at Southbank Centre hosts a series of events throughout the season including **Latinx Online Showcase** (13 Nov) - a free, online event in collaboration with the Poetry Translation Centre which will include poems from the Argentine poet Laura Wittner among others. The library will also continue the **Special Edition** series, with a sequence of events running throughout the Winter Season, including an event with **Young Roots** (6 Nov) a London-based charity working with refugee and asylum-seeking young people, a focus on experiences of working class creatives (4 Dec), an exploration of contemporary poetics and politics of **South-Asian writers** (15 Jan) and much more.

Tickets for the Winter season go on sale to Southbank Centre Members on Wednesday 18 September and to the general public on Thursday 19 September. www.southbankcentre.co.uk / 0203 879 9555

LONDON LITERATURE FESTIVAL (22 OCT - 3 NOV 2024)

Announced today, **Keanu Reeves** will open the Southbank Centre's London Literature Festival line-up with a UK exclusive event celebrating his book *The Book of Elsewhere* at the Royal Festival Hall (22 Oct). He joins an unbeatable line-up of international and local voices - more details below.

ENDS

Full event listings for the Winter Literature Season are available [HERE](#)

Full event listings for the London Literature Festival are [HERE](#)

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

Join the conversation:

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About the Southbank Centre's London Literature Festival, 22 October - 3 November 2024

Every year, the Southbank Centre's London Literature Festival brings together readers of every age to celebrate the power of the written and spoken word. Now in its 17th edition, it is the longest-running literature festival in the city that celebrates prestigious authors alongside rising literary stars and cultural icons. Whilst serving as a major gathering of voices from around the UK and the world, the festival also honours the multi-faceted literary communities in London. This year the Southbank Centre will welcome British rapper Ghetts as co-curator of the festival's opening weekend, along with recently announced events with **Keanu Reeves** (22 Oct), **Yulia Navalnaya** (23 Oct), **Alan Hollinghurst** (25 Oct), **Florence Given** (27 Oct).

Tickets for Keanu Reeves go on sale to Southbank Centre Members on Wednesday 18 September and to the general public on Thursday 19 September. www.southbankcentre.co.uk / 0203 879 9555

www.southbankcentre.co.uk/events/london-literature-festival

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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