

SOUTHBANK CENTRE

Press Release

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Images: [HERE](#)

Listings: [HERE](#)

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Southbank Centre announces its Summer Literature Season featuring Jarvis Cocker, Ian McEwan, Kamila Shamsie and more



Credits L - R: Orhan Pamuk (no credit); PJ Harvey photo by Steve Gullick; Tsitsi Dangarembga photo by Hannah Mentz.

Summer highlights include:

- Renowned musicians **Jarvis Cocker** and **PJ Harvey** each present their new books, with **Warren Ellis** celebrating the paperback release of his bestseller *Nina Simone's Gum: A Memoir of Things Lost and Found*
- Internationally acclaimed authors **Ian McEwan**, **Orhan Pamuk**, **Kamila Shamsie**, **Tsitsi Dangarembga** discuss their respective new books
- Two specially curated multi-art-form events mark the opening of the Hayward Gallery's *In the Black Fantastic* exhibition curated by Ekow Eshun
- The return of the National Poetry Library's far ranging live events programme as well as a newly commissioned free exhibition, *Future Cities*
- 'Out-Spoken' celebrates two years of its Southbank Centre residency with a special event featuring **Simon Armitage**, **Jackie Kay** and **Max Porter**

The Southbank Centre announces its Summer 2022 Literature Season taking place from May to September, featuring a diverse range of musicians and authors, renowned thinkers and contemporary poets. As the Hayward Gallery opens *In the Black Fantastic*, the UK's first

major exhibition dedicated to the work of Black artists who use fantastical elements to address racial injustice and explore alternative realities, the literature programme features two specially curated events in celebration. The National Poetry Library welcomes back its in-person live events programme for the first time since 2019.

Ted Hodgkinson, Head of Literature & Spoken Word, the Southbank Centre, said: “*Our summer of literature and spoken word is peppered with many of the most anticipated book launches of the year and we're thrilled to welcome the return of live events and exhibitions to our beloved National Poetry Library. With exclusive appearances from iconic music artists and internationally acclaimed authors alongside boundary-pushing performances, this is literature and poetry at its most expansive and life-enhancing.*”

LITERATURE FROM RENOWNED MUSICIANS

Launching his new book *Good Pop, Bad Pop* **Jarvis Cocker** talks about his creative process, writing and musicianship, performance and ambition, style and stagecraft in a special in conversation event at the Royal Festival Hall and on livestream (27 May). Coinciding with the paperback release of *Nina Simone's Gum: A Memoir of Things Lost and Found*, **Warren Ellis** discusses his bestselling memoir, a book which tells the unexpected and inspiring story of a piece of Simone's chewing gum, taken from her piano after her performance at the *Meltdown festival* in 1999. A stone's throw away from where the chewing gum was taken in the Royal Festival Hall, Ellis speaks to film critic Mark Kermode in the Queen Elizabeth Hall, about his life, artistic process, friendship, understanding and love (15 Sep). **PJ Harvey** recites poems from her new book, *Orlam*, the first full-length book written in the Dorset dialect for many decades and is joined by poet Paul Muldoon in conversation (2 Jun).

INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED AUTHORS

Ian McEwan discusses *Lessons*, his mesmerising new novel - a powerful meditation on history and humanity told through the prism of one man's lifetime, in conversation with literary journalist Alex Clark (14 Sep). Nobel Prize-winning author **Orhan Pamuk**, returns to the Southbank Centre in a London exclusive event to discuss his new novel *Nights of Plague*, a historical epic of murder and mystery (22 Sep). Bestselling author and winner of the 2018 Women's Prize for Fiction **Kamila Shamsie**, introduces her new novel about Britain today, about power and how we use it, and about what we owe to those who've loved us the longest, *Best of Friends* (28 Sep). **Tsitsi Dangarembga** launches her new essay collection, *Black and Female*, in an event run in partnership with English PEN. The collection offers a powerful vision toward 're-membering', those whose identities and experiences continue to be fractured by the intersections of history, race and gender (4 Sep).

IN THE BLACK FANTASTIC LIVE EVENTS

From 29 June to 18 September 2022, the Hayward Gallery presents *In the Black Fantastic*, the UK's first major exhibition dedicated to the work of Black artists who use fantastical elements to address racial injustice and explore alternative realities. To celebrate the exhibition, the Southbank Centre's literature programme features two very special multi-art-form events. *Writing In the Black Fantastic* welcomes **Courtia Newland** and **Michael Salu** as they join a panel, chaired by **Ellah P. Wakatama**, exploring the influence of fantastical traditions in their own books, artworks, films and television productions, building alternate worlds which recast historic and current injustices and traumas into their own

compulsive new narratives of Black possibility (15 Sep). *In the Black Fantastic: Live* is a specially commissioned multidisciplinary performance which draws on key writers from the Sunjata to Amos Tutuola, incorporating narratives as they mirror a journey from the African continent to the forced migrations of the diaspora, and the dreaming of possible futures as embodied by writers including Toni Morrison and Octavia E. Butler. Based on a text edited by **Ellah P. Wakatama**, this performance fuses extracts from a wide range of writers in this fantastical tradition into a dramatic dialogue between sister and brother. With live performances from actors (cast to be announced) and specially commissioned music and visuals, this unique event invites audiences on a journey *In the Black Fantastic* (30 & 31 Jul). For more information on the exhibition itself please see the press release [HERE](#).

PURCELL ROOM EVENTS

The Purcell Room plays host to a number of literary events this summer, including an evening of discussion, live readings and music with **Sabrina Mahfouz**, who launches her debut non-fiction book, *These Bodies of Water: Notes on the British Empire, the Middle East and Where We Meet* (11 May). **Katie Leung, Naomi Shimada, Claire Kohda, Helena Lee** and **Will Harris** mark East and Southeast Asian Heritage Month, and the launch of *East Side Voices* in paperback in *East Side Voices: Celebrating ESEA Identity*. The evening features poetry, discussion and live readings by contributors to this first-of-its-kind anthology (1 Sep).

OUT-SPOKEN

To mark 10 years of *Out-Spoken* - the Southbank Centre's resident music and poetry night - and two years of its residency at the Southbank Centre, poets **Simon Armitage, Jackie Kay** and **Max Porter**, along with singer **bshp**, come together for London's premier evening of poetry and live music, this time in the Queen Elizabeth Hall. Each month at its home in the Purcell Room, *Out-Spoken* celebrates diversity in voice and performance, with bills featuring brilliant poets and musicians, and this special event will be its biggest to date. T.S Eliot prize-winner **Joelle Taylor** hosts, with **Sam 'Junior' Bromfield** spinning the best in reggae, soul and R&B throughout the evening (18 May). Meanwhile, the monthly *Out-Spoken* masterclasses return (May -Sep) for writers of all levels of experience, with a special Pride-themed poetry workshop in June led by Joelle Taylor.

NATIONAL POETRY LIBRARY

For the first time since reopening in May 2021 the National Poetry Library, situated at the heart of the Royal Festival Hall, plays host to a newly curated live events programme, and a newly commissioned free exhibition **Future Cities**. The exhibition is created by poets' responses to works of art imagining the spaces we may one day live in, taking visitors on a narrative journey of visual art and poetry that speculates on the world to come (12 May - 18 Sep). Following a two year hiatus, **Special Edition** - a series of poetry events that take place on the first Wednesday of every month - is back. The series showcases different facets of the poetry scene and highlights the treasures of the library's collection and kicks off with **An Evening of Ethiopian Poetry** (4 May). The Library is excited to host **Find Your Poetry Day** (10 Jul) - a day of free workshops and readings, especially for ages 11-17. In partnership with The Poetry Society, the day features interactive workshops with professional poets, readings, including Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award-winners, and library tours. NPL Presents continues with hosting Poetry London's Summer Readings, headlined by **Grace Nichols** (25 Jun).

CELEBRITY MEMOIRS

Rylan talks about his heartfelt and funny new memoir, which marks a decade since he first stepped into the public spotlight, in a special event in the Royal Festival Hall. Rylan reflects on all the things he's learnt since entering the public eye, while pulling back the curtain on his personal journey. Covering everything from fame and celebrity to his mental health and identity, family and relationships to his love of reality TV, Rylan recounts his life lessons with humour and candour (21 Sep).

PRIZES AND READINGS

The **International Booker Prize: Shortlist Readings** return to the Queen Elizabeth Hall to offer audiences the chance to hear the most exciting voices in global literature and celebrate the art of translation. The event introduces authors and translators shortlisted for the 2022 International Booker Prize in an evening of readings and discussion, chaired by writer and broadcaster **Bidisha** (22 May). The line-up is to be announced nearer the time.

LONDON LITERATURE FESTIVAL 2022

The dates for the 2022 London Literature Festival are **20 - 30 October 2022**. 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 15th edition, it is the longest-running literature festival in the city that celebrates prestigious authors alongside rising literary stars and cultural observers. 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. Programme to be announced.

ENDS

Tickets go onsale to Members on Tuesday 29 March and to the general public on Wednesday 30 March.

Please find all Listings information [HERE](#)

For further press information please contact:
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Join the Conversation:

@southbankcentre @litsouthbank @nationalpoetrylibrary

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. The 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 four Resident Orchestras (London Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, London Sinfonietta and Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment) and four Associate Orchestras (Aurora Orchestra, BBC Concert Orchestra, Chineke! Orchestra and National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain).

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



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