

SOUTHBANK CENTRE

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Image: available to download [here](#)

Dua Lipa announced as curator of 2026 London Literature Festival in the Southbank Centre's 75th anniversary year

Dua will curate a series of events in the opening weekend of the festival



Dua Lipa © Madison Phipps

The Southbank Centre today announces Grammy and Brit award-winning global superstar and founder of the Service95 Book Club, **Dua Lipa**, as curator of its 2026 London Literature Festival (Wednesday 21 October - Sunday 1 November). Dua will curate a series of events in the opening weekend (Saturday 24 & Sunday 25 October) as well as events across the whole festival with her Service95 Book Club.

Presented as part of the Southbank Centre's 75th anniversary year, and taking place during the National Year of Reading, this year marks the nineteenth edition of the London Literature Festival, the longest running literature and spoken word festival in the capital.

In 2023, Dua launched the Service95 Book Club, part of her global culture platform Service95. Each month, she selects a book she loves and sits down with the author for the

book club's accompanying podcast. As a passionate advocate for reading, she also speaks up for marginalised readers who face barriers to books, including those affected by [book bans](#) or [incarceration](#).

Commenting on her curatorship, Dua Lipa said: *“Reading has anchored me through every chapter of my life - from being the new kid at school in a new country to finding quiet refuge on tour. Curating the Southbank Centre’s London Literature Festival is a dream come true. I’m thrilled to indulge one of my greatest obsessions: books and the brilliant minds behind them. I can’t wait to dive into the imaginations of some of my favourite authors in one of London’s most iconic cultural spaces.”*

Mark Ball, Artistic Director of the Southbank Centre, said: *“The Southbank Centre was borne out of the 1951 Festival of Britain - a moment that galvanised the nation using art, music, science and design to imagine a brighter future. 75 years later our anniversary programme is capturing that optimistic spirit of ‘51 by inviting global creative talent to help us celebrate the unifying power of arts and culture and to conjure up visions of the future.*

“Dua Lipa is a global cultural force with millions of fans around the world, and her passion for the written and spoken word has inspired a new generation of readers. We’re absolutely thrilled that Dua will take the reins of our flagship London Literature Festival, applying her incredible creative talent, her advocacy and her reach to connect audiences to our finest writers.

Ted Hodgkinson, Head of Literature & Spoken Word at the Southbank Centre, said: *“Books and reading belong to us all and Dua is the ultimate champion of the role they can play in our lives. From her thoughtful interviews with writers to her appetite for arresting new voices, Dua’s passion and insight have sparked a global conversation around books and shone a light on reading as a creative and collaborative act.*

“In the National Year of Reading, we’re delighted to be collaborating with Dua for the Southbank Centre’s London Literature Festival, to draw fresh audiences into our iconic spaces. It promises to be a momentous year for the festival and a highlight of our 75th anniversary.”

Dua’s curatorship of the London Literature Festival will be in partnership with the Service95 Book Club, and will include events that feature a mix of Dua’s favourite writers – both established and emerging – along with an array of free programming.

Dua Lipa’s London Literature Festival is a highlight of the Southbank Centre’s 75th anniversary programme. The programme includes **You Are Here** – a spectacular takeover of the site created, directed and designed by Danny Boyle, Paulette Randall, Gareth Pugh and Carson McColl (3 May), **Harry Styles’ Meltdown** (11 - 21 June), **Goalhanger: The Rest Is Fest** (4- 6 September) and **Anish Kapoor** returning to the Hayward Gallery (16 June - 18 October).

The onsite activity is joined by a national programme of art, literature and music – aiming to reach 1 million people in over 40 towns and cities across all four nations of the UK.

Dua Lipa's London Literature Festival takes place from Wednesday 21 October - Sunday 1 November. Full line-up and dates for ticket releases will be announced in Summer 2026.

London Literature Festival is the longest-running literature festival in the city that celebrates prestigious authors alongside rising literary stars and cultural icons. The festival was previously curated by Self-Esteem in 2025, and headliners in prior years include Ai Weiwei, Greta Thunberg, Malala Yousafzai, Margaret Atwood, Philip Pullman, Tom Hanks and Yulia Navalnaya.

A survey by the National Literacy Trust last year in 2025 found that just one in three children aged eight to 18 read in their spare time (33%) – a 36% decrease from 2005. The survey indicated a particularly steep drop over the last year among primary school children, and that reading continues to be less popular among boys than girls. The London Literature Festival – which takes place across the Southbank Centre's iconic 11 acre site – will feature events designed to engage young people with books and storytelling – with some creative collaborations from the world of gaming and special workshops, and a programme of free events. This is made possible through the generous support of Bukhman Philanthropies.

For more information about the Southbank Centre's 75th anniversary celebrations, visit the 75th Anniversary page [here](#).

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NOTES TO EDITORS

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About the Southbank Centre

The Southbank Centre is the UK's largest multi-arts centre and engages the most diverse audiences of any performing arts organisation in the UK. Our biggest venue, the Royal Festival Hall (2,700 seats) is the lasting legacy of the 1951 Festival of Britain and the ambition and values of that project – that arts, ideas, innovation and culture can heal communities and should be available and accessible to everyone – are still our guiding principles today. The Southbank Centre is uniquely able to offer a wide-ranging, inclusive and world-class artistic programme spanning contemporary visual arts, music, dance, performance, literature, comedy and spoken word across the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room, the Hayward Gallery and our free spaces. We are also home to the National Poetry Library, the National Academy for Social Prescribing (NASP), two resident organisations (Kinetika Bloco and Tomorrow's Warriors) and 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

About the Southbank Centre's London Literature Festival

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 19th 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. Dua Lipa curates the festival following Self-Esteem's curation in 2025. Headliners in previous years include Ai Weiwei, Greta Thunberg, Malala Yousafzai, Margaret Atwood, Philip Pullman, Tom Hanks and Yulia Navalnaya. The Southbank Centre's London Literature Festival is generously supported by Bukhman Philanthropies.

About Service95 Book Club

Founded by Dua Lipa, the Service95 Book Club is the cultural and intellectual heart of Service95: a global cultural platform and community built around the belief that books, ideas, and the conversations they spark make us more informed, more empathetic, and more alive to the world.

The Book Club is where Dua brings her personal reading life into public view: monthly reads chosen straight from her bookshelf, paired with reviews, contextual essays, and author interviews that go far beyond the surface of the page. Her conversations — with writers from around the world including Margaret Atwood, Olga Tokarczuk, and Ocean Vuong — have earned her recognition from *The Telegraph* as “*one of Britain's foremost literary tastemakers*”. The Book Club podcast launched to critical acclaim, named among *The Guardian's Best Podcasts of the Week* and ranked as one of *Spotify's Best Video Podcasts of 2025*.

It is, at its core, a place where reading is treated as a community act — and where the right book, at the right moment, can change how you see everything.

About The National Year of Reading

A Department for Education initiative, in collaboration with the National Literacy Trust, The National Year of Reading 2026 is the biggest campaign in a generation designed to help more people (re)discover the joy of reading and make it part of their everyday lives.

literacytrust.org.uk

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