



Manchester Literature Festival

11–26 October 2025



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

GMCA GREATER
MANCHESTER
COMBINED
AUTHORITY



**MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL**

Festival Welcome

This year is the 20th anniversary of Manchester Literature Festival and we're excited to welcome hundreds of writers, readers and culture lovers back to the Festival. We've seen both Manchester and the literary landscape radically transform since 2006 but the one thing that's stayed consistent is people's desire for storytelling and connection.

We're lucky to have welcomed some of the world's greatest writers to our UNESCO City of Literature and we look back at some of the highlights of MLF in our special exhibition *From Page to Stage: 20 Years of Manchester Literature Festival*. Go see some of your favourite writers rubbing shoulders with musicians, activists and change makers in the Reading Room at Central Library.

This year's Festival includes authors from Japan, Korea, Sweden, Switzerland and the Netherlands alongside acclaimed novelists Kiran Desai, Zadie Smith, Jeanette Winterson, Irvine Welsh, Elizabeth Day, Sarah Hall and Mick Herron. We celebrate the legacies of Benjamin Zephaniah and Seamus Heaney and reimagine Tony Harrison's v.

We welcome fashion icon Mary Portas, designer Patrick Grant, scientist Marcus du Sautoy, photographer Martin Parr, barrister Monica Fera-Tinta and artist activists Led By Donkeys to have meaningful conversations about art, music, sustainability, politics, climate justice and how we can create a better world together.

As ever, we are grateful to our main funders Arts Council England, Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Manchester City Council, our Higher Education partner The University of Manchester, our Principal Hotel partner The Edwardian Manchester and all our sponsors, venues and partner organisations for their continued support.

As we look forward to the future, we'd like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all the authors, artists and audiences that have joined us on our journey so far. It's a privilege to be part of such a generous community and your creativity, curiosity and civic engagement are the pulse of Manchester Literature Festival.

Cathy Bolton and Sarah-Jane Roberts
Manchester Literature Festival Co-Directors

Thanks to our funders, sponsors and partners

Public Sector Funders



Higher Education Partner



Sponsors



Principal Hotel Partner



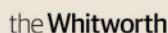
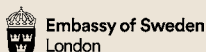
Associate Hotel Partner



Festival Partners



Event Partners



Exhibition



**From Page to Stage:
20 Years of Manchester
Literature Festival Exhibition**
12 September – 16 December 2025
Central Library (Reading Room)

Feast your eyes on two decades of literary magic with *From Page to Stage*, a photographic exhibition celebrating Manchester Literature Festival's 20th anniversary.

This intimate collection of photos charts the Festival's journey from its early days to becoming one of the UK's most distinctive literary events. Through striking images, we revisit the unforgettable moments and remarkable voices that have shaped the Festival – from award-winning novelists and poets, to leading songwriters and musicians, activists and change-makers.

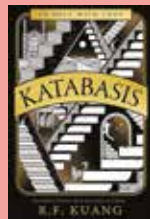
Featuring brilliant photos of homegrown favourites Lemn Sissay, Jeanette Winterson, Jackie Kay and Simon Armitage alongside much loved cultural figures Johnny Marr, Guy Garvey, Linton Kwesi Johnson and Vivienne Westwood, these images tell a story of inspired ideas, playful conversations and communities brought together. From intimate readings to bold, genre-defying events, the exhibition captures the energy, diversity and creativity that defines Manchester Literature Festival.

Come and join us in celebrating 20 years of bringing literature to life.

Open Mon – Sat during Library opening hours



Previews



An Evening with Rebecca F. Kuang
Friday 22 August 2025, 7.30pm
Aviva Studios

One of the most compelling young voices in contemporary fiction, Rebecca F. Kuang returns for a limited UK appearance. Hear the bestselling author of *Yellowface* discuss her new, highly anticipated dark fantasy novel. *Katabasis* plunges readers into the dark depths of the underworld, where two academic rivals embark on a rescue mission to save their advisor. Rebecca is renowned for her sharp, genre-defying novels which have won numerous accolades.

This event will be BSL interpreted.

**Tickets £20/£36 for ticket & a copy of *Katabasis*
Book on factoryinternational.org**



Yanis Varoufakis
Tuesday 30 September 2025, 7.30pm
RNCM

Bestselling economist and political thinker Yanis Varoufakis shares insights from *Raise Your Soul: A Personal History of Resistance* – his powerful new memoir of family, resistance, and political awakening. Blending personal stories of the remarkable women who shaped him with Greece's turbulent history, Yanis reflects on how great forces shape our lives. Author of *Technofeudalism* and *Adults in the Room*, Yanis remains one of Europe's most provocative and influential voices.

Tickets £25/£20

Culture



Hans Ulrich Obrist

Saturday 11 October 2025, 1pm
The Whitworth

Hans Ulrich Obrist, the art world's ultimate connector, shares stories from his unputdownable coming-of-age memoir, *Life in Progress*. From exhibitions in hotel bedrooms to collaborations with gamers, philosophers, and pop icons, Hans Ulrich has spent his life transforming how and where we experience art. His unstoppable energy and innovative thinking have made him one of the most influential curators and voices in culture today. Presented in partnership with The Whitworth.

Tickets £10/£8



Mary Portas

Saturday 11 October 2025, 7.30pm
Contact

Author, retail pioneer and one of the UK's most inspiring businesswomen Mary Portas shares insights from her bold new memoir, *I Shop, Therefore I Am*. Set against the vibrant backdrop of the 1990s – when fashion and Britpop reigned – Mary charts her transformation of Harvey Nichols from tired department store to global brand destination. Her memoir follows previous works *Shop Girl*, *Work Like a Woman* and *Rebuild*. Hosted by **Ellah P. Wakatama**.

Tickets £20/£38 for ticket & a copy of *I Shop, Therefore I Am* (RRP £20)
Book on contactmcr.com



Led By Donkeys

Monday 13 October 2025, 7.30pm
RNCM

From viral billboards to guerrilla projections on Parliament, Led by Donkeys have taken political satire and direct action to a whole new level. Hear the story behind their book, *Led by Donkeys: Art, Activism and Accountability* - a high-octane, visual journey through five years of political chaos and creative resistance.

Led By Donkeys was founded in early 2019 with late-night billboards quoting leading Brexiters' historic tweets. Suddenly reaching millions of people, they have continued to address everything from the Covid crisis to the shameful treatment of migrants, mixing art and activism to create some of the most memorable images and interventions of our political age. This is your chance to hear how four friends with a printer and a ladder became one of the most impactful protest groups of our time.

Tickets £20/£18



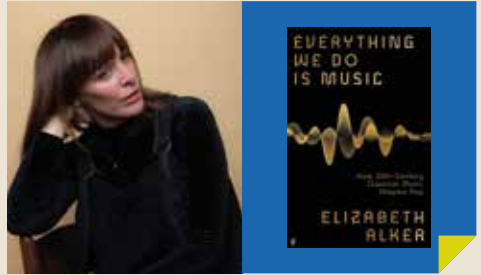


Alice Vincent

Tuesday 14 October 2025, 7pm
Central Library

Enjoy an evening with acclaimed writer and podcaster Alice Vincent (*Why Women Grow*) as she discusses her new book *Hark: How Women Listen*. Prompted by the birth of her child and the sensory overload of modern life, *Hark* traces her journey to rediscover listening as a restorative, grounding force. Alice invites us to listen more deeply, from nightingales to phantom cries, and to consider sound as a way of reclaiming presence, identity, and connection.

Tickets £10/£8



Elizabeth Alker

Wednesday 15 October 2025, 7pm
Central Library

From Paul McCartney to Pierre Henry, Nils Frahm to John Cage, Radiohead to Polish Sonorism, Donna Summer to Stockhausen. In her fascinating book, *Everything We Do is Music*, BBC Radio 3 broadcaster Elizabeth Alker explores how visionary classical composers helped shape the sound of modern pop and rock. See her uncover surprising connections between the genres, bringing a fresh and innovative perspective to music history in conversation with DJ and BB6 presenter **Deb Grant**.

Tickets £10/£8



The Faber Lecture 2025: Gary Younge

Thursday 16 October 2025, 7-8.30pm
Friends Meeting House

Award-winning author, broadcaster and Professor of Sociology at The University of Manchester, Gary Younge, delivers the inaugural Faber Lecture. In *Pigeonholed: Creative Freedom as an Act of Resistance*, Gary analyses the pressures exerted upon the relatively small group of people from underrepresented communities who break through into elite spaces and the expectations that may come from those with power and those without. Presented in partnership with CODE, Creative Manchester & Faber Members.

Tickets free but booking recommended



Jung Chang

Sunday 19 October 2025, 2pm
Central Library

Join international bestselling author Jung Chang as she explores *Fly, Wild Swans* – the long-awaited sequel to her iconic memoir *Wild Swans*, which defined a generation, sold 15 million copies worldwide and remains banned in China. Picking up where *Wild Swans* left off, the sequel looks at how the political and cultural shifts of the last five decades have shaped China, her life and that of her mother. Presented in partnership with Waterstones Deansgate.

Tickets £12/£10

Culture



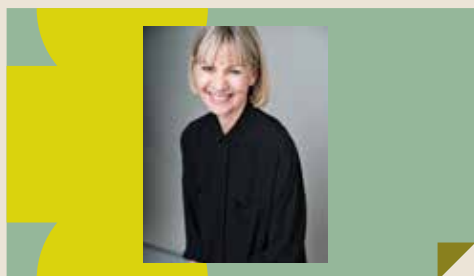
Martin Parr

Sunday 19 October 2025, 3pm
HOME

An unmissable afternoon with Martin Parr, one of the world's most idiosyncratic photographers, as he launches his autobiography, *Utterly Lazy and Inattentive*. Martin will share the stories behind his most iconic images – from early snapshots to the bold, colour-saturated photos of the British seaside that made his name. A unique opportunity to hear directly from the man who has spent fifty years noticing what the rest of us overlook. Hosted by **Helen Mort**.

Tickets £18/£16

Book on 0161 200 1500 or homemcr.org



How to Get Published with Kate Mosse

Monday 20 October 2025, 3–4.15pm
Central Library

Have you dreamed of a writing career but don't have the confidence to give it a go? Or feel that there are too many barriers to the publishing world to getting your work published? Join bestselling novelist and Discoveries Chair of Judges Kate Mosse for an inspiring talk about her journey and the Women's Prize Discoveries writing programme and prize, designed to address the specific challenges women writers face. Supported by Women's Prize Trust.

Tickets free but booking recommended



Marcus du Sautoy

Sunday 19 October 2025, 4.30pm
Central Library

In this fascinating talk, celebrated mathematician and leading scientist Marcus du Sautoy invites us to explore his new book *Blueprints: How Mathematics Shapes Creativity* and rethink the boundaries between art and maths. From prehistoric stone circles to Zaha Hadid's sweeping curves, to Shakespeare's rhythms and Radiohead's musical experimentation, Marcus discusses how symmetry and fractals have inspired artists across time. Presented in partnership with the Centre for New Writing and Creative Manchester.

Tickets £12/£10



Feminist History with Kate Mosse

Monday 20 October 2025, 7pm
Central Library

An inspiring evening with bestselling author and Women's Prizes Founder Kate Mosse, who will share stories from her powerful new non-fiction book. *Feminist History for Every Day of the Year* celebrates women from across the globe, from trailblazers such as Mary Wollstonecraft and Malala Yousafzai to warrior queens, pioneers and unsung heroes whose courage and determination helped shape the world. Sponsored by Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce.

Tickets £12/£29 for ticket & a copy of *Feminist History for Every Day of the Year* (RRP £20)



Hannah Ritchie
Tuesday 21 October 2025, 7pm
Central Library

A dynamic evening with one of the most refreshing voices in the climate conversation. Tackling big questions with optimism and energy, Hannah shares hopeful solutions and answers with clarity as she discusses *Clearing the Air: A Hopeful Guide to Solving Climate Change in 50 Questions and Answers*. One of *Prospect* magazine's 'Top 25 Thinkers', Hannah is the author of *Not the End of the World* and a Senior Researcher at the University of Oxford. Sponsored by Weightmans.

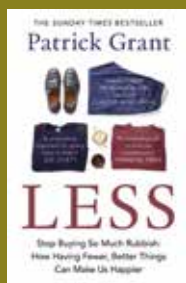
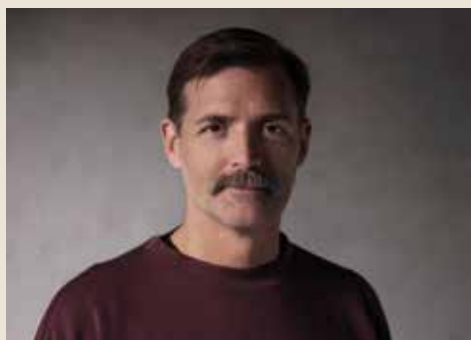
Tickets £12/£10



Monica Feria-Tinta
Thursday 23 October 2025, 7pm
Manchester Museum

At the forefront of the global climate justice movement, pioneering barrister Monica Feria-Tinta is breaking new legal ground – advocating not just for people, but for the rights of nature itself. In this inspiring event, she discusses her book *A Barrister for the Earth*, offering a behind-the-scenes look at landmark environmental cases. Don't miss this rare opportunity to hear from one of the most visionary voices in climate law today. Presented in partnership with Manchester Museum.

Tickets free but booking recommended



Patrick Grant
Sunday 26 October 2025, 7pm
HOME

Be inspired by menswear designer, *Great British Sewing Bee* judge, and sustainability champion Patrick Grant as he shares the story behind his bold new book, *Less: Stop Buying So Much Rubbish – How Having Fewer, Better Things Can Make Us Happier*.

In this must-see talk, Patrick takes on the global crisis of fashion and champions quality, craftsmanship, and how choosing fewer, better-quality items could spark a thriving new local economy. He'll also share insights from his journey through the world of design, his love of textiles and tailoring, and the inspiring story behind Community Clothing.

With a career in fashion spanning nearly two decades, Patrick is a regular broadcaster on the clothing and textile industries. In 2016 he launched Community Clothing, a social enterprise which supports thousands of UK jobs through making and selling affordable high-quality clothing.

Tickets £20
Book on 0161 200 1500 or homemcr.org

Fiction

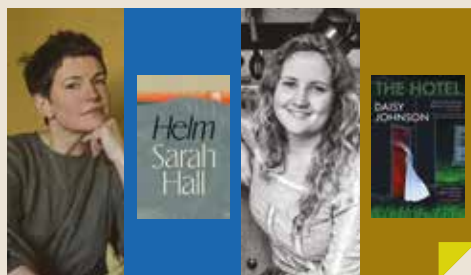


Kiran Desai

Tuesday 7 October 2025, 7pm
Manchester Museum

We're thrilled to welcome acclaimed author Kiran Desai to discuss her long-awaited new novel, *The Loneliness of Sonia and Sunny* – an epic, intimate love story set across India, the USA and Mexico, spanning a decade of shifting politics. This is a rare opportunity to hear from the Booker Prize-winning author of *The Inheritance of Loss*. Presented in partnership with Manchester Museum.

Tickets £12



Sarah Hall & Daisy Johnson

Saturday 11 October 2025, 3pm
Central Library

A captivating afternoon with two of Britain's most original literary talents, Sarah Hall and Daisy Johnson, as they discuss their haunting new books exploring nature, myth and folklore. From the wild winds of the Eden Valley (*Helm*) to a gothic hotel in the Fens (*The Hotel*), their new novels explore place, transformation and the elemental forces that shape us. Presented in partnership with the Centre for New Writing and Creative Manchester.

Tickets £12/£10



Jennie Godfrey & Andrew Walden

Sunday 12 October 2025, 2pm
Central Library

See debut authors Jennie Godfrey and Andrew Walden discuss their brilliant, best-selling novels, *The List of Suspicious Things* and *Bloody Awful in Different Ways* – two funny, moving and poignant stories of childhood, secrets, and shifting families in 1980s Yorkshire and Sweden. Jennie and Andrew will delve into characters, community portraits and growing up in a changing world. Supported by the Swedish Arts Council and the Embassy of Sweden, UK.

Tickets £10/£8



Stories From Sweden: Lisa Ridzén & Agnes Lidbeck

Sunday 12 October 2025, 4.30pm
Central Library

Join contemporary Swedish authors Lisa Ridzén and Agnes Lidbeck as they discuss their powerful debut novels and shared themes of care, memory, and emotional resilience. Swedish Book of the Year winner Lisa Ridzén depicts a poignant portrait of growing old, memory and love in *When the Cranes Fly South*, while Agnes Lidbeck explores the complexities of motherhood, desire and female identity in *Supporting Act*. Supported by the Swedish Arts Council and the Embassy of Sweden, UK.

Tickets £10/£8



Samantha Shannon & Saara El-Arifi

Tuesday 14 October, 7pm

Contact

Enjoy an electrifying evening of dystopian and fantasy fiction with two of the genre's most exciting voices. International bestseller Samantha Shannon (*The Bone Season*) introduces *Among the Burning Flowers*, a gripping standalone prequel to her *Roots of Chaos* series. Set in a fractured world facing rising threats, it follows Princess Marosa, her betrothed Aubrecht, and dragon hunter Estina, as they navigate power, resistance, and the hope of change.



Saara El-Arifi, bestselling author of *Faebound*, returns with *Cursebound*, the dazzling sequel in her epic fantasy trilogy. Yeeran and Lettle are no longer prisoners to the fae court, but they're now bound by the shackles of their hearts. Can they discover the secret behind the curse – and unite these two worlds before they destroy each other?

Together, Samantha and Saara will explore epic storytelling and character creation. Presented in partnership with Waterstones Deansgate and sponsored by The Maldron Hotel.

Tickets £15/£13

Book on contactmcr.com



Mick Herron

Wednesday 15 October 2025, 7.30pm

HOME

Join us for an evening with the master of British spy fiction Mick Herron, as he discusses his highly anticipated new thriller *Clown Town* and the hit Apple TV+ series *Slow Horses*. The ninth instalment in the Slough House series drags Jackson Lamb's team of misfit spies into dangerous territory as secrets from the past resurface and the slow horses find that nothing stays harmless for long. Sponsored by Weightmans.

Tickets £20/£18

Book on 0161 200 1500 or homemcr.org



Elizabeth Day

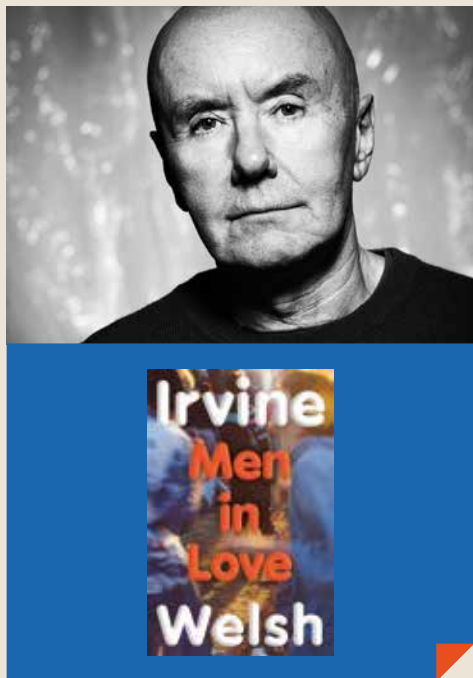
Friday 17 October 2025, 7pm

Central Library

Award-winning author Elizabeth Day (*The Party, Friendaholic*) discusses politics and scandal in her gripping new novel, *One of Us*. Once best friends, Martin and rising political star Ben Fitzmaurice unravel under the weight of secrets – a story of family, power and betrayal. Elizabeth Day is also a celebrated journalist, broadcaster and creator of the chart-topping *How to Fail* podcast. Sponsored by The Edwardian Manchester.

Tickets £12/£10

Fiction



A Night with Irvine Welsh

Sunday 19 October 2025, 7.30pm

HOME

Choose life. Choose love? One of Scotland's most iconic literary voices, Irvine Welsh takes us back to the notorious world of *Trainspotting* in his new novel *Men in Love*. A blazing and riotous journey, the sequel reunites Renton, Spud, Sick Boy and Begbie on a new quest: not for heroin, but for love. Set during the birth of rave culture in the late '80s and into the wild heart of the '90s, the novel follows the crew through Edinburgh, London, Amsterdam and Paris as they chase sex, music, romance – and a shot at redemption.

Irvine Welsh was born and raised in Edinburgh. His debut, *Trainspotting*, became an era-defining novel and film. He has since published thirteen novels and multiple short story collections including *The Acid House* and *The Blade Artist*. His *Crime* series, starring Dougray Scott, was adapted for television.

Tickets £18/£16

Book on 0161 200 1500 or homemcr.org



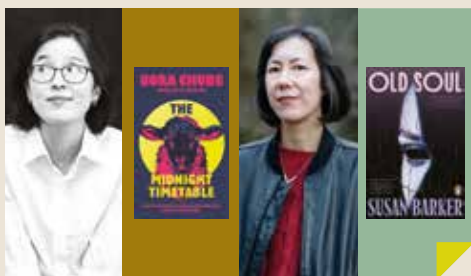
Sayaka Murata

Saturday 18 October, 7pm

Central Library

Award-winning Japanese writer and literary phenomenon Sayaka Murata (*Convenience Store Woman*) explores the reengineering of love, sex, and parenting in her provocative and visionary new novel *Vanishing World*. When Amane joins a radical experiment in artificial reproduction and collective child-rearing, she must confront whether this utopia offers freedom – or threatens to break her completely. Presented in partnership with Centre for New Writing and the The Japan Foundation. Sponsored by The Edwardian Manchester.

Tickets £12/£10



Bora Chung & Susan Barker

Tuesday 21 October, 7pm

Waterstones Deansgate

A chilling evening of ghost stories with internationally-acclaimed Korean author Bora Chung (*Cursed Bunny*) and British novelist Susan Barker (*The Incarnations*), as they discuss their gripping new novels. In Bora's *The Midnight Timetable* (translated by Anton Hur), a narrator uncovers eerie research centre secrets told through ghostly tales from the night guard, while in Susan's immersive *Old Soul* two strangers uncover linked deaths tied to a mysterious dark-haired woman. Supported by LTI Korea.

Tickets £10/£8



The Working Class Library Live Podcast
 Wednesday 22 October 2025, 7pm
 International Anthony Burgess Foundation

You join **Richard Benson** (*The Farm*) and **Claire Malcolm** (New Writing North) from the Working Class Library podcast as they seek to explore and reclaim working-class people's contribution to English literature. For this live edition of the podcast they will be joined by special guest, writer **Helen Mort** (*Ethel*, *The Illustrated Woman*) to discuss Jeanette Winterson's seminal rites of passage novel, *Oranges are not the Only Fruit*, which celebrates its fortieth anniversary this year.

Tickets £10/£8



John Murray Proof Party
 Saturday 25 October 2025, 4pm
 Central Library

You're invited to our first proof party with John Murray Press and Dialogue Books. Be among the first to hear from three exciting new voices: **Ashani Lewis** (*Everest*), **Liv Little** (*Rosewater*), and **Djamel White** as they give us an exclusive sneak peek into their 2026 novels *All Them Dogs*, *Suckerfish* and *Bitter Melon*. Then take home a goody bag packed with two exclusive proofs, a special sampler and John Murray fiction zine.

Tickets £12



Zadie Smith
 Tuesday 4 November 2025, 7.30pm
 RNCM

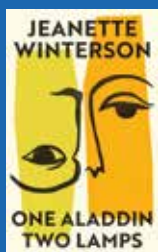
Zadie Smith, one of the most beloved writers of her generation, joins us to discuss her illuminating and keenly-awaited new book, *Dead and Alive*. Written with her usual wit and insight, Zadie takes us from an exploration of artists – including Kara Walker and Celia Paul – to Glastonbury with Stormzy and to the cinema for *Tár*. She mourns and celebrates the legacy of literary greats Joan Didion, Martin Amis, Hilary Mantel, Philip Roth and Toni Morrison and reflects on writing, reading, culture, her beloved North West London, and what it means to live and grieve in our times.

One of our most distinctive literary voices, Zadie is the best-selling author of *The Fraud*, *Swing Time*, *On Beauty*, *NW* and *White Teeth*. She is the recipient of numerous awards including the Women's Prize. Presented in partnership with the Centre for New Writing and Creative Manchester. Sponsored by The Edwardian Manchester.

Tickets £18/£35 for ticket & a copy of *Dead and Alive* (RRP £20)



Fiction



Jeanette Winterson

Tuesday 11 November 2025, 7pm
RNCM

I can change the story because I am the story. Forty years after her era-defining debut *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*, Jeanette Winterson returns with *One Aladdin Two Lamps* – a bold, brilliant celebration of the transformative power of storytelling and a radical look at the future.

One Aladdin Two Lamps cracks open the legendary story of Shahrazad in *One Thousand and One Nights* to reveal timeless questions and answers about imagination, trust, happiness, and love. In her guise as Aladdin – the orphan who changes his world – Jeanette Winterson asks us to reread what we think we know and look again at how fiction works in our lives, giving us the courage to change our own narratives and alter endings we wish to subvert.

Presented in partnership with the Centre for New Writing and Creative Manchester. Sponsored by Weightmans.

Tickets £18/£34 for ticket & a copy of *One Aladdin Two Lamps* (RRP £19)

Get Closer Manchester Literature Festival Membership

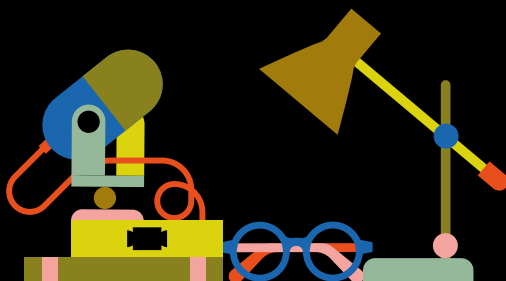
If you share our passion for literature and spoken word, why not become a member? Most of our events with high profile authors sell out in advance. **With our Get Closer Membership, be the first to hear the latest news and get:**

- Priority booking 48 hours in advance
- 10% discount off Waterstones books at our events
- A complimentary copy of *Palm Poems* – *New Commissions* pamphlet
- Subscription to members only bi-monthly e-newsletter
- Occasional ticket offers and discounts from MLF and our partners
- Festival brochure posted to your home
- Membership card

Your support helps us to showcase emerging and diverse talent, commission new work and upskill children and young people through creativity.

Membership starts at £25 per annum.

For full details and to join visit manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk or call Quaytickets on 0161 876 2015



MANCHESTER
1824

The University of Manchester



Centre for **New Writing**

The Centre for New Writing at The University of Manchester is proud to be the Higher Education Partner of the Manchester Literature Festival.

Our team of award-winning novelists, poets, playwrights, screenwriters and non-fiction writers can help you develop your craft and confidence as a writer through intensive workshops and seminars, with access to expert industry guidance and contacts.

Find out more about our programmes, including:

- **MA in Creative Writing**
- **MA in Playwriting**
- **MA in Screenwriting**

Discover more at:

www.manchester.ac.uk/cnw



 @newwritingMCR  CentreforNewWriting

Poetry

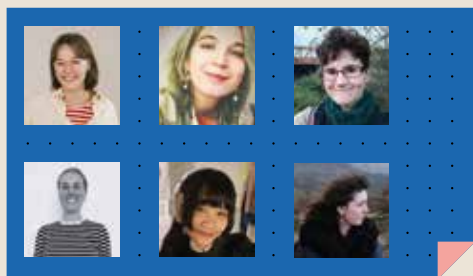


Simon Armitage

Saturday 11 October 2025, 7pm
Central Library

Poet Laureate and Festival favourite Simon Armitage returns to Manchester Literature Festival to read from his two new collections, *Dwell* and *New Cemetery*. From the animal dwellings of the Lost Gardens of Heligan to reflections on mortality, loss and landscape in a Pennine graveyard, these new collections blend folklore, wit and environmental insight. Don't miss this chance to hear one of Britain's most beloved poets live.

Tickets £14/£12



ReWrite

Thursday 16 October 2025, 6.30pm
International Anthony Burgess Foundation

Discover new voices from Manchester and Denmark as talented young writers **Elizabeth Gibson, Tallulah Howarth, Asta Birkler, Loc-An Thi Nguyen, Cody Sander and Johanne Bisgaard** share new work exploring the impact of colonialism and language in our relationship to land and to each other through poetry and prose. The writers are part of ReWrite – an international writing programme created in collaboration with Danish Literature Festivals Ordkraft (Aalborg) and LiteratureXchange (Aarhus), MLF and The Writing Squad.

Tickets free but booking recommended



Reimagining v.: Malika Booker, Jo Clement & Paul Farley

Monday 13 October 2025, 7pm
Manchester Poetry Library

Tony Harrison's poem *v.* was written in 1984 during the Miners' Strike and describes a visit to his parents' graves which had been vandalised. The poem explores class, alienation, anger and Northern identity. Forty years on, Durham Book Festival and poet **Andrew McMillan** bring together three acclaimed and distinctive Northern poets to re-imagine this seminal piece of public poetry and read from their newly commissioned poems. Presented in partnership with Manchester Poetry Library.

Tickets £10/£8



Caroline Bird & Rachel Long

Friday 17 October 2025, 7pm
Manchester Poetry Library

A joyful, irreverent, and moving evening of poetry celebrating love in all its glorious forms. Poets Caroline Bird and Rachel Long launch their new anthology, *Something New: Alternative Poems for Alternative Weddings* – a vibrant collection of fresh, funny, and unconventional poems you won't find in a frantic Google search. Come and hear poems that celebrate love in all its complexity, honesty, and joy. Presented in partnership with Manchester Poetry Library.

Tickets £10/£8



Cabaret for Freedom
With Salena Godden, Nick Makoha,
J. Chambers & Young Identity
Saturday 18 October, 7.30pm
St John's Church, Old Trafford

Join us for an evening celebrating the legacy of influential writer, dub poet and political activist Benjamin Zephaniah. Enjoy some reggae-infused hip hop from J. Chambers & The Redemption Sound, electrifying poetry from award-winning writers Salena Godden (*Pessimism is for Lightweights*) and Nick Makoha (*The New Carthaginians*), and the premiere of new work created especially by Young Identity.

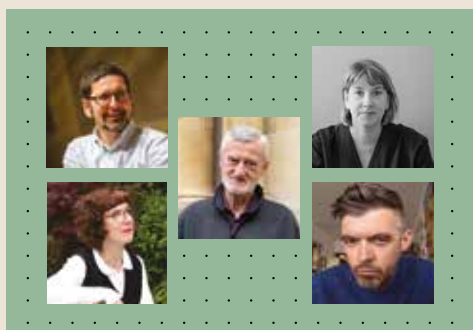
Tickets £14/£10



Manchester Multilingual City Poets: Charlotte
Shevchenko Knight & Nóra Blascsó
Wednesday 22 October 2025, 7pm
Manchester Poetry Library

Charlotte Shevchenko Knight and Nóra Blascsó celebrate the city's vibrant multilingual spirit as they debut powerful new commissions exploring themes of Welcome and Sanctuary. Commissioned by MLF and Manchester UNESCO City of Literature, their work will be performed in English, Ukrainian and Hungarian, creating a unique cross-cultural conversation. Presented in partnership with Manchester Poetry Library.

Tickets free but booking recommended



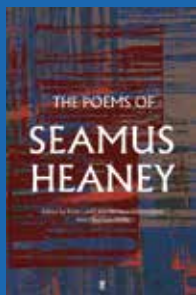
The Poems of Seamus Heaney
Monday 20 October 2025, 7.30pm
Martin Harris Centre for Music & Drama

Don't miss this special evening celebrating the life and work of Seamus Heaney, as five acclaimed poets gather to mark the publication of *The Poems of Seamus Heaney*. The definitive edition of his work, it encompasses all the poems that Seamus published in his lifetime (from *Death of a Naturalist* (1966) to *Human Chain* (2010)) alongside a number of previously unpublished poems.

Featuring intimate readings and reflections by **John McAuliffe** (*National Theatre*), **Bernard O'Donoghue** (*The Anchorage*), **Sinéad Morrissey** (*Found Architecture*), **Leontia Flynn** (*Taking Liberties*) and **Nick Laird** (*Up Late*), this event honours Seamus Heaney's lasting legacy and lyrical brilliance. Join us to celebrate a body of work that shaped modern poetry and continues to resonate across generations.

Presented in partnership with Faber, the Centre for New Writing and Creative Manchester.

Tickets £15/£13



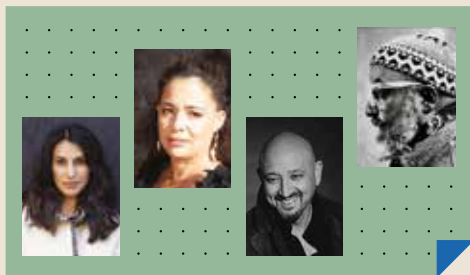
Poetry



Mimi Khalvati: Rylands Poetry Reading
Thursday 23 October 2025, 7pm, Drinks 6pm
John Rylands Research Institute & Library

Join us for the annual Rylands Poetry Reading, this year delivered by one of our best-loved poets Mimi Khalvati. Mimi's award-winning lyrical poetry has been inspired by everything from her Persian background to her travels in the Mediterranean. She has published ten poetry collections with Carcanet brought together in her 2024 *Collected Poems*. She was awarded the 2023 King's Gold Medal for Poetry and won the Jhalak Poetry Prize 2025.

Tickets free but booking recommended



WritersMosaic: Mona Arshi, Karen McCarthy Woolf & Roger Robinson
Friday 24 October 2025, 7pm
Central Library

Nature writing has seen a powerful resurgence in recent years, but we must ask – whose voices are being heard? And who is being welcomed into the landscape? In this thoughtful reading and conversation, acclaimed poets Mona Arshi, Karen McCarthy Woolf and T.S Eliot Prize winner Roger Robinson come together with **John Siddique** of WritersMosaic to explore the deep connection between earth, spirit, and the human experience.

Tickets £10/£8

Support Manchester Literature Festival

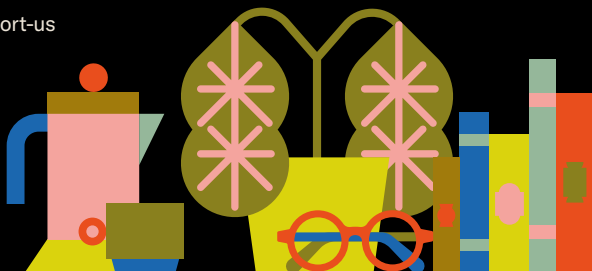
Manchester Literature Festival is a registered charity. Your support will encourage more people to discover the joy of reading, writing, imagination and creativity.

Here's a few ways you can help us to survive and thrive.

- Become a Get Closer Member
- Sponsor an event
- Make a regular or one-off donation of £10, £25 or £50

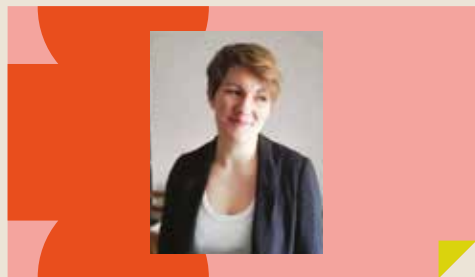
Find out more

manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk/support-us



Workshops

Book on 0161 876 2015 or manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk

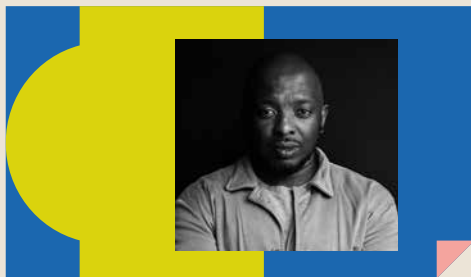


Caroline Bird: Dazed and Stranded Workshop

Friday 17 October 2025, 3–5pm
Manchester Poetry Library

In this intimate workshop, we'll be channelling the strange, thrilling power of the unenlightened speaker. How does it feel to be the least knowledgeable character in your own poem? What might happen? What might you encounter? Will you end the poem knowing more or even less? Prepare to write an almost criminal amount of brand new, dazed material. Caroline is an award-winning poet (*Rookie*) known for her inventive and vivid poetry. Presented in partnership with Manchester Poetry Library.

Tickets £15



Nick Makoha: Reframing the Gaze The Black Ekphrastic Mode Workshop

Saturday 18 October 2025, 2–4pm
Manchester Poetry Library

Join award-winning poet Nick Makoha for a poetry workshop exploring The Black Ekphrastic Mode, a bold writing practice that reimagines European art, music, and cities through a Black cultural lens. In this dynamic session, you'll create original poems inspired by art, music and architecture. Through guided prompts and creative exercises, you'll engage with the Western canon while developing your own poetic voice. Presented in partnership with Manchester Poetry Library.

Tickets £15

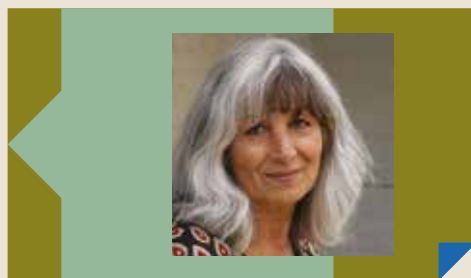


Translation as Activism Workshop with Kasia Szymanska

Monday 20 October 6pm–8pm
Manchester Poetry Library

Aimed at aspiring and early-career translators, this workshop will ask whether translation is an inherently activist act, or whether “activist” translation is something translators must choose to do. Led by Kasia Szymanska, this participatory conversation will ask: how can we use our languages to make the change we want? Should all activists want to translate? Should all translators want to be activist? Presented by Comma Press and English PEN.

Tickets £15/£7.50



Mimi Khalvati: The Line Break Poetry Workshop

Friday 24 October 2025, 10.30am–12.30pm
John Rylands Research Institute & Library

Acclaimed poet and founder of the Poetry School, Mimi Khalvati will lead an interactive workshop for practising poets. The line break, the sine qua non of free verse, is the most precise and powerful of instruments. Explore how to employ, refine and empower your use of line breaks and, through exercises and by example, discover varying styles of lineation and how to give new life and meaning to your poems.

Tickets free – details of how to book on website



Look ahead to the future you want.

We can help you get more out of your money,
so you can get more out of life.

For further information, please contact Richard Greenhalgh
on 0161 832 6868 or email richard.greenhalgh@rathbones.com

rathbones.com

Invest well. Live well.

When you invest your capital is at risk.
You could lose some or all of your investment.

Rathbones is a trading name of Rathbones Investment Management Limited which is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority. Registered office: Port of Liverpool Building, Pier Head, Liverpool L3 1NW. Registered in England No. 01448919.

WATERSTONES

PROUD TO SUPPORT



**Manchester
Literature
Festival**

**JOIN US AFTER THE EVENTS FOR
BOOK SIGNINGS WITH THE GUEST AUTHORS.**

Visit us instore on Deansgate

Waterstones, 91 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 2BW



**Manchester
Metropolitan
University**

Manchester Writing School

Directed by Professor Dame Carol Ann Duffy OBE CBE, we are one of the UK's biggest and most successful literary communities. Join us and study Creative Writing or Publishing at the heart of Manchester, an international UNESCO City of Literature.

- Work with world-leading writers, researchers and industry experts on our MA and MFA programmes.
- Develop your expertise through specialist workshops and make industry connections.
- Take part in local and global events at Manchester Poetry Library and through our connections with the UNESCO City of Literature network.

Register for updates: mmu.ac.uk/writingschoolmasters

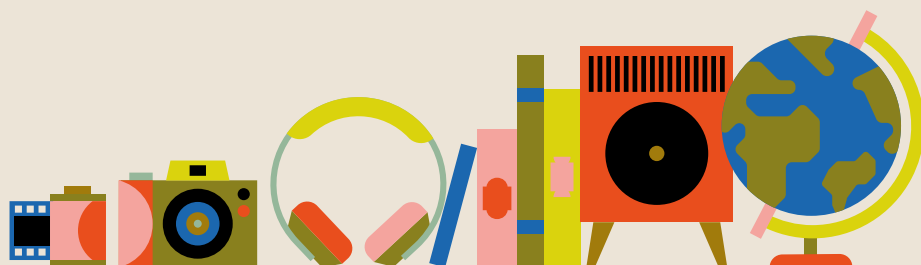


Professor Dame Carol Ann Duffy OBE CBE

Festival Diary

Friday 22 August	7.30pm	An Evening with Rebecca F Kuang / Aviva Studios	page 3
Tuesday 30 September	7.30pm	Yanis Varoufakis / RNCM Theatre	page 3
Tuesday 7 October	7pm	Kiran Desai / Manchester Museum	page 8
Saturday 11 October	1pm	Hans Ulrich Obrist / The Whitworth	page 4
	3pm	Sarah Hall & Daisy Johnson / Central Library	page 8
	7pm	Simon Armitage / Central Library	page 14
	7.30pm	Mary Portas / Contact	page 4
Sunday 12 October	2pm	Jennie Godfrey & Andrev Walden / Central Library	page 8
	4.30pm	Stories From Sweden: Lisa Ridzén & Agnes Lidbeck / Central Library	page 8
Monday 13 October	7pm	Reimagining v.: Malika Booker, Jo Clement & Paul Farley / Manchester Poetry Library	page 14
	7.30pm	Led by Donkeys / RNCM	page 4
Tuesday 14 October	7pm	Alice Vincent / Central Library	page 5
	7pm	Samantha Shannon & Saara El-Arifi / Contact	page 9
Wednesday 15 October	7pm	Elizabeth Alker / Central Library	page 5
	7.30pm	Mick Herron / HOME	page 9
Thursday 16 October	6.30pm	ReWrite / International Anthony Burgess Foundation	page 14
	7 – 8.30pm	The Faber Lecture 2025: Gary Younge / Friends Meeting House	page 5
Friday 17 October	3 – 5pm	Caroline Bird: Dazed and Stranded Workshop / Manchester Poetry Library	page 17
	7pm	Caroline Bird & Rachel Long / Manchester Poetry Library	page 14
	7pm	Elizabeth Day / Central Library	page 9
Saturday 18 October	2 – 4pm	Nick Makoha: Reframing the Gaze Workshop / Manchester Poetry Library	page 17
	7pm	Sayaka Murata / Central Library	page 10
	7.30pm	Cabaret for Freedom / St John's Church	page 15

Sunday 19 October	2pm	Jung Chang / Central Library	page 5
	3pm	Martin Parr / HOME	page 6
	4.30pm	Marcus du Sautoy / Central Library	page 6
	7.30pm	A Night with Irvine Welsh / HOME	page 10
Monday 20 October	3 – 4.15pm	How to Get Published with Kate Mosse / Central Library	page 6
	6 – 8pm	Translation as Activism Workshop with Kasia Szymanska / Manchester Poetry Library	page 17
	7pm	Feminist History with Kate Mosse / Central Library	page 6
	7.30pm	The Poems of Seamus Heaney / Martin Harris Centre	page 15
Tuesday 21 October	7pm	Hannah Ritchie / Central Library	page 7
	7pm	Bora Chung & Susan Barker / Waterstones Deansgate	page 10
Wednesday 22 October	7pm	Manchester Multilingual City Poets / Manchester Poetry Library	page 15
	7pm	The Working Class Library Live Podcast / International Anthony Burgess Foundation	page 11
Thursday 23 October	7pm (drinks 6pm)	Mimi Khalvati: Rylands Poetry Reading / John Rylands Research Institute & Library	page 16
	7pm	Monica Feria-Tinta / Manchester Museum	page 7
Friday 24 October	10.30am – 12.30pm	Mimi Khalvati: The Line Break Poetry Workshop / John Rylands Research Institute & Library	page 17
	7pm	WritersMosaic: Mona Arshi, Karen McCarthy Woolf & Roger Robinson / Central Library	page 16
Saturday 25 October	4pm	John Murray Proof Party: Ashani Lewis, Liv Little & Djamel White / Central Library	page 11
Sunday 26 October	7pm	Patrick Grant / HOME	page 7
Tuesday 4 November	7.30pm	Zadie Smith / RNCM Theatre	page 11
Tuesday 11 November	7pm	Jeanette Winterson / RNCM Theatre	page 12



The Festival team

Festival Co-Directors

Cathy Bolton and Sarah-Jane Roberts

Children and Young

People's Programme Producer

Miriam Wild

Marketing & Audience Development Manager

Claire Saville

Festival Fundraiser

Charlotte Platt

Digital Engagement Coordinator

Angie Lee

Volunteer Coordinator

Liz Coupe

Admin Assistant

Melanie McMinn

Board of Trustees

Karl Jackson, Chris Jeffries, Peter Mearns (Chair),
Anne-Marie Nugnes, Gwen Oakden,
Erinn Roocroft, Becca Parkinson, Jo Somerset,
Bonnie Turnbull, Ben Ward & Andrew Westle

Press and PR

Lethal Communications (Catharine
Braithwaite & Shelagh Bourke)

Design

Field Studio

Manchester Literature Festival

The Department Store, 5 Oak Street,
Manchester M45JD

office@manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk

Company Registration No. 4369668

Charity Registration No. 1121276



Events for Children and Families

Our special programme of events and participatory activities for children and families includes a big Birthday Bash featuring fun-packed events with Supertato creator **Sue Hendra** and Pia's Pet Club author **Serena Patel** who will be joined by real life animals from Wild Science; hilarious draw-alongs and storytelling with **Jim Smith** (*Genius Kid Goes Viral*); creative workshops with Comics Laureate **Bobby Joseph**; an inspirational conversation with YA author **Kimberly Whittam** (*Quiet Storm*); and the launch of a magical new film by award-winning illustrator **Chris Riddell** to celebrate 160 years of Alice in Wonderland.

For full details please check
manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk

How To Book

Please check event listings for booking details. Tickets for most Manchester Literature Festival events can be booked through our main Box Office agent Quaytickets. Tickets are sold subject to terms and conditions available at quaytickets.com

For all events booked through Quaytickets there is a one-off e-ticket transaction charge of £1.75 but no additional booking fees on tickets.

Tickets for MLF events at Aviva Studios, Contact, HOME and Z-arts are sold directly through the venue and additional booking fees may apply.

Online 24 hours:
manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk
Quaytickets: quaytickets.com/mlf

Telephone:

Quaytickets on 0161 876 2015

**Box office is open Monday – Friday: 9am – 6pm,
Saturday: 10am – 6pm.**

If an event is not sold out, tickets will be available for walk-up customers at the venue just prior to an event starting. Check social media for updates on ticket availability.

Most Festival events have unreserved seating, except for events at Aviva Studios, Contact, HOME and RNCM.

Latecomers may be admitted at a suitable break in an event; however, this is at the discretion of the venue and Festival. Tickets cannot be refunded except on the cancellation or substantial alteration of an event.

Access

The Festival aims to be as accessible as possible and welcomes disabled people. If you have any enquiries about Festival venues, you can contact the venue directly using the venue links on our webpage.

If you would like to request a BSL interpreter for an event or have any other special assistance requirements, please don't hesitate to email the Festival team at office@manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk

Festival staff and volunteers will be on hand to provide information and assist at events.

For a map and list of disabled parking bays in Manchester city centre, please visit the Manchester City Council website: manchester.gov.uk

For information about Changing Places toilet facilities, please visit: changing-places.org

Concessions and Discounts

Where a concessionary ticket is listed for an event, this is available to: recipients of Pension Credit, full-time students, jobseekers, and disabled people. A carer or assistant attending with a disabled person can attend for free but please advise when booking.

Event Changes and Updates

To the best of the Festival's knowledge, all programming information is correct at the time of going to print. Please check the following for event updates:
[@McrlitFest](http://manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk)



ML
20
years

