



# Manchester Literature Festival

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## **Mediterranean magic in Manchester – from Classical Greece to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Tuscan sunshine**

**Manchester Literature Festival announces two more events for its Spring Summer season with Natalie Haynes and Andrew Sean Greer ahead of the main festival in October.**

Festival favourite bestselling author and broadcaster **Natalie Haynes** returns to Manchester on **15 June** to discuss her powerful new novel *No Friend to This House* - an extraordinary reimagining of the myth of Medea.

Based on Euripides's classic tragedy, *No Friend to This House* explores love, vengeance, power and survival as Medea faces an impossible choice that will change the course of her and her family's lives. Known for her bold and compassionate retellings of Greek mythology, placing one of literature's most misunderstood women centre stage, Natalie brings fresh life to this ancient story.

**Natalie Haynes** is a *Sunday Times* bestselling author and award-winning broadcaster. She is the author of: *The Amber Fury*; *A Thousand Ships*; *Stone Blind* and *The Children of Jocasta*, a feminist retelling of the Oedipus and Antigone stories. Her non-fiction works include: *The Ancient Guide to Modern Life*; *Pandora's Jar*; and *Divine Might: Goddesses in Greek Myth*. She has written and presented eleven series of BBC Radio 4's *Natalie Haynes Stands Up for the Classics* and is celebrated for bringing Greek myth and classical history to a wide contemporary audience.

Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist **Andrew Sean Greer** introduces his dazzling and witty new novel *Villa Coco* in Manchester on **23 June**.

Andrew Sean Greer says: "What ever happened to the 'charm novel'? You know, the kind of warm and funny story packed with characters and incident and description – something like Graham Greene used to call his 'entertainments', or Nancy Mitford wrote based on her eccentric family, or

Gerald Durrell about his own? There used to be a kind of novel where you wanted to remain in its pages forever: a world in which even the worst of circumstances could provide a funny story and a sense of hope. A book to reread yearly as a balm to the soul.

We've certainly needed them the past few years. At least: I've needed them. But I couldn't find any modern ones. So, I decided to write one."

Broke and directionless, a young American takes a mysterious job assisting Lisabetta – known as Coco – a formidable aristocrat living in a crumbling Tuscan villa. He believes he has been hired to catalogue the contents of the beautiful mansion nestled in the green hills; his real duties are yet to be discovered. The days soon fill with eccentric guests, missing martens and schemes involving long-lost love as the secrets of Villa Coco slowly come to light. This sun-soaked adventure is an unforgettable story of the enduring power of friendship.

**Andrew Sean Greer** is the bestselling author of eight books, including the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Less*. From 2016 - 2018, Greer was the first Executive Director of the Santa Maddalena Foundation, working alongside the president Beatrice Monti della Corte to invite authors from around the world for a writing residence in Tuscany.

The Spring programme, on sale now, continues with Booker Prize-winning novelist Douglas Stuart (26 May) introducing his profoundly moving new novel *John of John* set on the Isle of Harris, and Women's Fiction Prize-winning novelist Tayari Jones (2 June), discussing her highly anticipated new novel *Kin*, a richly told tale about mothers, daughters and lifelong friendship in the American South in the 1950s. Both events are presented in partnership with the Centre for New Writing and Creative Manchester.

//Ends

**Manchester Literature Festival 2026 will run from 9 – 25 October. The full programme will be announced in August.**

**For press enquiries and review tickets please contact:**

Catharine Braithwaite [cat@we-r-lethal.com](mailto:cat@we-r-lethal.com) 07947 644 110

Shelagh Bourke [she@we-r-lethal.com](mailto:she@we-r-lethal.com) 07971 819 016

<https://www.manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk/allevents>

**Join the conversation: #MLF2026 @McrLitFest**

**To book: Tickets are on sale for MLF Members from Wednesday 18 March and on general sale on Friday 20 March.**

To buy an MLF Get Closer Membership and book advance tickets [visit our box office](#).

### **Listings information**

**Natalie Haynes**, Monday 15 June, 7pm

Central Library, Manchester.

Tickets £12/£10

Event page: <https://manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk/events/natalie-haynes>

**Andrew Sean Greer**, Tuesday 23 June, 7pm

Waterstones, Deansgate, Manchester

Tickets £10/£8

Event page: <https://manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk/events/andew-sean-greer>

**Tayari Jones**, Tuesday 2 June, 7pm

Central Library, Manchester.

Tickets £12/£10

Event page: <https://manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk/events/tayari-jones>

**Douglas Stuart**, Tuesday 26 May, 7pm

Contact, Manchester.

Tickets £15/£13

Event page: <https://manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk/events/douglas-stuart>

### **Notes to editors**

In 2025 Manchester Literature Festival celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> birthday and as well as attracting writers of the highest calibre, looked back over the past two decades with a photographic exhibition, *From Page to Stage* at Manchester Central Library. Over the years, MLF has featured many of the biggest names in literary fiction and spoken word as well as prominent cultural figures from across the globe, including Monica Ali, Martin Amis, Tori Amos, Raymond Antrobus, Simon Armitage, Kate Atkinson, Margaret Atwood, Malorie Blackman, Malika Booker, Joe Boyd, Jung Chang, Neneh Cherry, Gillian Clark, Susanna Clarke, Kit de Waal, Kwame Dawes, Jeremy Deller, Roddy Doyle, Margaret Drabble, Jennifer Egan, Anne Enright, Bernardine Evaristo, Percival Everett, Guy Garvey, Matt Haig, Paula Hawkins, Natalie Haynes, Seamus Heaney, Mick Heron, Lindsay Hilsum, A.M. Homes, Alan Hollinghurst, Jackie Kay, Rebecca F Kuang, Kazuo Ishiguro, Howard Jacobson, Alan Johnson, Daisy Johnson, Linton Kwesi Johnson, Barbara Kingsolver, Karl Ove Knausgaard, Hanif Kureishi, Deborah Levy, Olivia Laing, Valeria Luiselli, Johnny Marr, Paul Mason, Armistead Maupin, Val McDermid, David Mitchell, Paul Morley, Michael Morpurgo, Walter Mosley, Kate Mosse, Andrew Motion, Sayaka Murata, Jo Nesbo, Maggie O'Farrell, Andrew O'Hagan, Ben Okri, David Olusoga, David Peace, Max Porter, Richard Powers, Ian Rankin, Kamila Shamsie, Will

Self, Elif Shafak, Lemn Sissay, Zadie Smith, Meera Sodha, Elizabeth Strout, Douglas Stuart, Kae Tempest, Neil Tennant, Colm Toibín, Rose Tremain, Dame Harriet Walter, Sarah Waters, Colson Whitehead, Jeanette Winterson, Xinran and Asako Yuzuki.

The festival has also welcomed prominent activists, campaigners and disruptors including Led By Donkeys, Mary Portas, Patrisse Cullors (co-founder of Black Lives Matter), Angela Davis, Reni Eddo-Lodge, Edward Enniful, Afua Hirsch, Caroline Criado Perez, Caroline Lucas, George Monbiot, Arundhati Roy, Rebecca Solnit, Gloria Steinem, Senator Bernie Sanders, Yanis Varoufakis and Vivienne Westwood.

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