

HAY FESTIVAL

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Hay Festival 2018 ‘early birds’ released

Margaret Atwood, Sarah Churchwell, Philip Pullman, Marina Warner, Jack Zipes, Bridget Christie, Hannah Critchlow, Rowan Williams, Les Amazones d’Afrique and all-star Letters Live lead programme

Hay Festival has today released seven ‘early bird’ events for its summer festival in Wales, 24 May - 3 June 2018, offering a hint at the breadth of programming to come with award-winning fiction from past and present, fresh comedy, philosophy, late night music, and new perspectives on our changing world.

Margaret Atwood talks *The Handmaid’s Tale*; novelists **Philip Pullman** and **Marina Warner** join folklore scholar **Jack Zipes** to discuss tales of wonder, magic, resistance and hope; writer **Sarah Churchwell** delivers *The 2018 Raymond Williams Lecture: Behold America*; and neuroscientist **Hannah Critchlow** and theologian **Rowan Williams** explore the concept of consciousness. The early events released include an exciting trio of performances: an all-star **Letters Live** cast returns for a fifth year; comedienne **Bridget Christie** offers her new show *Stand Up: What Now?*; and the all-female collective of west African musicians campaigning for gender equality, **Les Amazones d’Afrique**, perform.

Early bird tickets are on sale to *Friends of Hay Festival* from Friday 12 January 2018 and go on general sale next Tuesday 16 January at www.hayfestival.org or on 01497 822 629.

The 31st Hay Festival will see over 800 conversations, lectures, workshops and performances featuring writers and thinkers from around the globe. The full programme will be announced this spring.

Peter Florence, director of Hay Festival, said:

“2018 marks the centenary of the Great War armistice and the 50th anniversary of May ‘68. The contemporary mood is one of disappointment, divisiveness and disagreement. The festival will explore all these contexts and will seek to amplify the ideas and stories that bind us together, that make us stronger, and that enable us to understand and encourage and celebrate each other.”

While the countdown to Hay Festival Wales is only just beginning, festival events further afield are already in full swing. Next week, [Hay Festival Scribblers Tour](#) takes writers direct to schools across Wales in free events featuring YA star and 2017 Creative Wales Hay Festival International Fellow **Jenny Valentine**; award-winning Welsh author and storyteller **Daniel Morden**; poet, author and playwright **Eric Ngalle Charles**; former teacher and RSE speaker with *Straight Talkers* **Amy Forbes-Robertson**; broadcaster and teen ambassador **Gemma Cairney**; and **Steven Camden** aka **Polarbear**, one of the UK’s most acclaimed spoken-word artists.

And later this month, [Hay Festival Cartagena](#) gets underway in Colombia (25-28 January), featuring over 150 internationally acclaimed writers and thinkers in events throughout Cartagena de Indias, Medellín, Riohacha, Bogota, Manizales, San Andrés, Buenaventura, Santa Marta and 11 principalities of Bolívar. Bringing together some of the most critically acclaimed names in fiction, non-fiction and poetry, the 13th edition in Colombia gives voice to some of the biggest issues of

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our time, with experts interrogating science, politics, art, journalism and philosophy, alongside late night entertainment from award-winning singers, musicians, and performers.

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Notes to editors

For IMAGES, INTERVIEWS, FURTHER INFORMATION or to apply for PRESS ACCREDITATION, please contact Hay Festival publicity director Christopher Bone at christopher@hayfestival.org or 07506 522540.

About Hay Festival

www.hayfestival.org

Hay Festival brings readers and writers together to share stories and ideas in sustainable events around the world. The festivals inspire, examine and entertain, inviting participants to imagine the world as it is and as it might be.

Nobel Prize-winners and novelists, scientists and politicians, historians and musicians talk with audiences in a dynamic exchange of ideas. The Festival's global conversation shares the latest thinking in the arts and sciences with curious audiences live, in print and online. Hay Festival also runs wide programmes of education work supporting coming generations of writers and culturally hungry audiences of all ages.

In 1987, the festival was dreamt up around a kitchen table in Hay. Thirty years later, the unique marriage of exacting conversations and entertainment for all ages has travelled to editions in 30 locations, from the historic town of Cartagena in Colombia to the heart of cities in Peru, Mexico, Spain and Denmark. The organisation now reaches a global audience of hundreds of thousands every year and continues to grow and innovate, building partnerships and initiatives alongside some of the leading bodies in arts and the media, including the BBC, Welsh Government Department of Education, Visit Wales, ACW, the British Council, Oxfam, TATA, Friends of Hay Festival, Baillie Gifford, Good Energy, and the National Trust.

Acclaimed author, actor and writer **Stephen Fry** is President of the organisation; **Peter Florence** is Director; and **Caroline Michel**, CEO of leading literary and talent agency Peters Fraser + Dunlop, is Chair of the Festival board.

Coming up...

- Hay Festival Cartagena de Indias, Colombia (25-28 January 2018)

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- Hay Festival Wales, UK (24 May - 3 June 2018)
- Hay Festival Querétaro, Mexico (6-9 September 2018)
- Hay Festival Segovia, Spain (20-23 September 2018)
- Hay Festival Arequipa, Peru (8-11 November 2018)
- Hay Festival Wales Winter Weekend, UK (22-25 November 2018)