

**NEWS RELEASE: Monday 26 March 2018**

## **Hay Festival and NERC launch Trans.MISSION project merging science and art**

Hay Festival and the UK Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) have joined forces for the first time to launch Trans.MISSION, a project pairing leading scientists with award-winning artists to communicate cutting-edge science to new audiences at Hay Festival 2018 and beyond.

Climate scientist and mathematician at British Antarctic Survey **Emily Shuckburgh** joins award-winning designer, author and illustrator **Chris Haughton** (*A Bit Lost, Oh No George!* and *Shh! We Have a Plan*) to explore polar science and climate change. **Ally Lewis**, atmospheric chemist at the National Centre for Atmospheric Science (NCAS), pairs Aardman Animation Studios' director **Dan Binns** to look at air pollution. And NCAS climate scientist **Ed Hawkins** joins children's author **Nicola Davies** to analyse extreme weather events.

Each pairing will produce a piece of work – an animation, a series of still pictures with text, an infographic or animated text – to be launched in a series of public events during Hay Festival's Hay on Earth programme (24 May–3 June 2018).

**View the full Hay Festival 2018 programme at [hayfestival.org](http://hayfestival.org). Booking opens today to Friends of Hay Festival online or via 01497 822 629; public booking opens Thursday 29 March.**

**Alison Robinson, NERC Director of Corporate Affairs, said:** “Understanding our changing planet is fundamental to all our futures, and art has the power to start conversations around how our environment affects our lives. We hope that bringing together high-profile artists with NERC's leading researchers to create compelling visuals will engage new audiences with our cutting-edge environmental science, from the freezing Antarctic and the world's changing climate to the air we breathe here at home in the UK. We are proud to be working with Hay Festival and excited to see what creativity and ongoing engagement Ed, Emily and Ally's work inspires.”

**Dr Emily Shuckburgh said:** “The findings of climate science affect all of us: they warn of the perilous state in which we have placed the planet and of the urgency with which we need to respond if we are to limit the risks to society of future climate change. I am very excited to be working with Chris to find new ways of engaging people in our scientific discoveries on this important topic. I am certain that the combination of Chris' wonderful creative talents with the profound and majestic insights Antarctica offers will prove to be captivating.”

**Chris Haughton said:** “I am so excited to work on this project. I hope I can communicate some of the research being done in the Antarctic and make it understandable to a wider audience. My picture-books rely on simplified images to tell stories. By using a similar approach I hope it can enable us to communicate some of the more difficult concepts about the earth's atmosphere and climate. The science behind climate change has often proved to be very difficult for the public to digest, so it is an exciting challenge. I hope we can help contribute to public knowledge around these very important topics.”



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**Andy Fryers, Sustainability Director at Hay Festival, said:** “Hay Festival is one of the few places where artists, scientists and policy-makers share the same stage, blending disciplines and art forms in exciting ways. Our Hay on Earth programme continues to address the big issues facing the planet, whether it’s through raising awareness with debates or looking after our own direct impacts. The new partnership with NERC takes this in an exciting direction and we can’t wait to see what these collaborations produce.”

NERC is the UK’s main agency for funding environmental science, covering the full range of research from the deep oceans to the upper atmosphere and from the poles to the equator. Tackling major issues such as clean air, water and energy, extreme weather and the impact of our environment on human health, NERC scientists play a critical role in understanding how our planet works.

Hay Festival addresses environmental concerns through its Hay on Earth programme of conversations and lectures, and through its own efforts to operate sustainably. This year’s festival will be powered entirely by renewable energy from Good Energy, while it will be the first festival in the UK to trial a reusable hot drink cups system; 80% of waste produced on site is recycled.

Featuring over 600 of the world’s greatest writers, global policy-makers, pioneers and innovators in 800 events across 11 days, the festival showcases the latest ideas in the arts, sciences and current affairs, alongside a rich schedule of music, comedy and entertainment for all ages. A galaxy of literary stars gather to launch new work, while the biggest ever HAYDAYS and #HAYYA programmes give young readers the opportunity to meet their heroes and get creative.

The festival site is free to enter, with ticketed events in 10 tented venues, plus a range of sites to explore, including the Festival Bookshop; the HAYDAYS courtyard; the Hay Festival Wild Garden; creative workshops in the Make and Take Tent, the Scribblers Hut, The Cube and the Mess Tent; and market stalls, cafés, and restaurants.

In an age increasingly characterised by abbreviated content and algorithmic recommendation, Hay Festival promotes serendipitous discovery through the long-form, immersive experience, offering a platform for informed conversation and the chance for inspiration to take hold.

The festival runs a wide programme of education work supporting coming generations of writers and culturally hungry audiences of all ages – Hay Festival Wales opens with two free Schools Days of programming, the Beacons Project gives students aged 16-18 the chance to learn from internationally acclaimed writers, students in tertiary education can get free tickets, and Hay Compass is a special space on site to learn and discover, with free access to inspiring speakers.

## **PROGRAMME IN BRIEF**

Award-winning novelists discuss their work, including **Margaret Atwood, Ian McEwan, Alexander McCall Smith, Asne Seierstad, Anuradha Roy, Colm Tóibín, Jilly Cooper, Andre Aciman, Maggie O’Farrell, Rose Tremain, Deborah Levy, Salman Rushdie, Marian Keyes, Lionel Shriver, Kamila Shamsie, Alan Hollinghurst, Jojo Moyes, Rachel**

**Cusk, Jack Zipes, Philip Pullman, Gail Honeyman, Ruth Jones, Simon Mayo, Juan Gabriel Vasquez and Javier Cercas.** Poets **Tishani Doshi, Owen Sheers and Mererid Hopwood** join **Margaret Atwood** in a special commemoration of Armistice 100.

Conversations around internationalism, democracy and peacekeeping feature world leaders, policy makers and award-winning journalists, including: political strategist **Donna Brazile**, General Secretary of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs **Maurice Gourdault Montagne**, *Fire and Fury* author **Michael Wolff**, **Sarah Churchwell**, **A. C. Grayling**, **Gordon Brown**, **David Miliband**, the British Army's **Adrian Bradshaw**, former Israeli Prime Minister **Ehud Barak**, **Shashi Tharoor** and peace builder **Scilla Elworthy**. Gender equality and race dominate conversations on Britain today that include **Akala**, **Afua Hirsch**, **Rose McGowan**, **James O'Brien**, **Laura Bates**, **Helen Pankhurst**, **Germaine Greer** and **Robert Webb**.

The past is reimagined by leading historians including **Anthony Beevor**, **Helen Rappaport**, **Sujit Sivasundaram**, **Alison Weir**, **Melvyn Bragg**, **David Olusoga**, **Simon Schama**, **Bettany Hughes**, **Emily Wilson** and **Amy Lamé**. Meanwhile, education is interrogated as **Amanda Spielman** discusses Ofsted and the future of education.

Health and wellbeing take centre stage in sessions with **Ruby Wax**, **Suzanne O'Sullivan**, **Johann Hari**, **Edmund de Waal**, **Daniel Davis**, Alzheimer's Society ambassador **Wendy Mitchell** and **Bryony Gordon**. Meanwhile, **Nigel Shadbolt**, **Ella McPherson**, **Philip Ball**, **Akram Khan**, **Marcus du Sautoy**, **Richard Dawkins**, **Elisa Passini** and **Anne-Marie Imafidon** showcase the latest ideas in STEM with talks.

**Hay on Earth** looks at innovations in sustainability and the future of farming, with Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs **Michael Gove** and Google's sustainability lead **Kate Brandt**. Meanwhile, nature and travel writers take audiences around the world, including **Monty Don**, **Horatio Clare**, **Patrick Barkham**, and adventurers **Bear Grylls**, **Ursula Martin**, **Andy Kirkpartick** and **Chris Bonnington**.

Stars of stage and screen appear including **Andrew Davies** (*Les Misérables*), actors **Jim Broadbent**, **Simon Russell Beale** and an all-star **Letters Live** cast. There's comedy from **Russell Kane**, **Shazia Mirza**, **David Baddiel**, **Dara O'Briain** and **Bridget Christie**, with music from **Jake Bugg**, **Laura Mvula**, **Les Amazones d'Afrique** and **Gabrielle Aplin**, while **Goldie** presents his memoir *All Things Remembered*.

HAYDAYS and #HAYYA events feature **Ed Vere**, **Michael Morpurgo**, **Judith Kerr**, **David Walliams**, **Beverley Naidoo**, **Jacqueline Wilson**, **Cressida Cowell**, **Lucy Worsley**, **Lauren Child**, **Katherine Rundell**, **Juno Dawson**, **Holly Bourne**, **Patrick Ness**, **Patrice Lawrence** and **Alex Wheatle**. Workshops blend creative writing, illustration, textiles, coding, dance, drumming and animation, while RSPB Cymru and Rooted Forest School take young people outdoors.

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## ENDS

### 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](mailto:christopher@hayfestival.org) or 07506 522540.

### Trans.MISSION biographies

**Dr Emily Shuckburgh** is a leading climate scientist, mathematician and author working at the British Antarctic Survey. She holds a number of positions at the University of Cambridge (fellow of Darwin College, fellow of the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership, associate fellow of the Centre for Science and Policy and member of the Faculty of Mathematics). In the past Emily has worked at Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris and at MIT. She is a fellow of the Royal Meteorological Society and co-chair of their Climate Science Communications Group. She has also acted as an advisor to the UK Government on behalf of the Natural Environment Research Council. In 2016 she was awarded an OBE for services to science and the public communication of science. She is co-author with HRH The Prince of Wales and Tony Juniper of the *Ladybird Book on Climate Change*.

**Chris Haughton** is an Irish author/illustrator based in London. He was listed in *Time* magazine's 'DESIGN 100' for the work he has been doing for fair-trade clothing company People Tree. He has written and illustrated four books: *A bit Lost*, *Oh No George!*, *Shh! We Have a Plan* and *Goodnight Everyone*. His iOS app, Hatmonkey came out in 2014 and virtual reality experience Little Earth launched in August 2017. Chris has also created a social business, [madebynode.com](http://madebynode.com) to connect design and fair trade, and make rugs and toys. [chrishaughton.com](http://chrishaughton.com)

**Professor Ally Lewis** is an atmospheric chemist who works for the National Centre for Atmospheric Science (NCAS) and the University of York. Ally's main research focus is air pollution and how to detect chemicals in the atmosphere. He also regularly provides advice to government about the quality of the air in cities and inside buildings.

**Dan Binns** is a designer and director at Aardman. Since having a short film screened at the 'onedotzero' film festival in 2010, Binns has worked in the animation industry for multiple studios across Bristol and London, and in various roles for clients Tesco, Disney, Google and Sky TV on projects for broadcast, advertising, short films and series. Later, as a director, he has been involved in a variety of projects from short films for charities to advertising and promotional work. <https://vimeo.com/danielbinns>

**Professor Ed Hawkins** is a climate scientist who works for the National Centre for Atmospheric Science (NCAS) and the University of Reading. Ed focuses on improving predictions of climate change and its impacts, but he is also passionate about the history of climate science, rescuing lost weather measurements using volunteer citizen scientists ([weatherrescue.org](http://weatherrescue.org)) and engaging the public about climate change, especially with novel visualisations. Find Ed on twitter: [@ed\\_hawkins](https://twitter.com/ed_hawkins).

**Nicola Davies** is the author of more than 50 books for children, fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Her work has been published in more than 10 languages and has won major awards in the UK, US, France, Italy and Germany. Nicola trained as a zoologist, she has a degree in Natural Sciences from King's College Cambridge, and spent some years as a field biologist and studied humpback and sperm whales and bats before joining the BBC Natural History Unit as a researcher and then presenter. Following the start of her writing career she became a senior lecturer in Creative Writing at Bath Spa University but has been writing full-time for over a decade. She runs workshops for children and adults to help them find their voices as writers and advocates for nature. In 2017 she was the first recipient of the SLA's award for Outstanding Contribution to Children's Non Fiction and in 2018 had four picture-books longlisted for the Greenaway Award. She is a Trustee of the World Land Trust, a conservation organisation with partners in countries across the world.  
[www.nicola-davies.com](http://www.nicola-davies.com)

## About Hay Festival

[www.hayfestival.org](http://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-one 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.



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### Coming up...

- 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)
- Hay Festival Cartagena de Indias, Colombia (31 January-3 February 2019)

### About NERC

[www.nerc.ac.uk](http://www.nerc.ac.uk)

@NERCscience

NERC is the UK's main agency for funding and managing research, training and knowledge exchange in the environmental sciences. We coordinate some of the world's most exciting research projects, tackling major issues such as climate change, environmental influences on human health and the genetic make-up of life on Earth. From 1 April 2018, NERC is part of UK Research and Innovation, a non-departmental public body funded by a grant-in-aid from the UK government. NERC has six research centres, including British Antarctic Survey and the National Centre for Atmospheric Science.