

HAY FESTIVAL

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Hay Festival unveils *Writers at Work* 2018 selection

Hay Festival has today unveiled the line-up of Welsh writers taking part in this year's *Writers at Work* creative development programme at Hay Festival Wales (24 May – 3 June).

Heralding from across the country – Gwynedd to Gower, Anglesey to Saundersfoot – this year's selection blends emerging and established Welsh writers, including New Welsh Writing Award-winner **Eluned Gramich**; the *Wales Arts Review's* Young People's Book of the Year-winner **Eloise Williams**; Bridport First Novel Award-winner, **Alison Powell**; and co-founder of Cardiff's BAME open mic night *Where I'm Coming From*, **Hanan Issa**.

Writers at Work is a long-term professional development strategy to nurture Welsh talent writing in both languages. The project gives access to the unique gathering of the literary world and exploits the publishing and creative writing expertise on offer for the direct benefit of professional writers in Wales.

The fully programmed week allows the selected writers to engage in the main Festival events, to attend masterclasses and workshops with publishers, agents and, crucially, with established international artists. The writers work in English and Welsh across genres: fiction, non-fiction, creative non-fiction, poetry and script.

A Hay Festival project funded by Arts Council Wales, *Writers at Work* is led by former Creative Wales Hay Festival International Fellow Tiffany Murray and supported by Literature Wales. Now in its third year, participants to date have achieved a spread of award wins and shortlistings, including the International Dylan Thomas Prize, The New Welsh Writing Award, the Wasafiri New Writing Prize, Wales Media Award, Welsh Rising Star Award, and Creative Wales Award.

Tiffany Murray, *Writers at Work* coordinator, said: “*Writers at Work* is an unparalleled programme. Thanks to Arts Council Wales and Hay Festival we have our unique Hay M.F.A. Now a growing alumni of *Writers at Work* are putting contemporary Welsh literature firmly on the international map.”

Clare Potter, author and former *Writers at Work* participant, said: “Hay Festival *Writers at Work* is an invaluable professional development programme for new writers; an intense period of writing, critique, talks from editors, literary agents, and established writers who share insight into what's required to take the next step.”

Hay Festival Writers at Work: 2018 Participants

- Emily Blewitt, poet, Bridgend
- Eric Ngalle Charles, writer, poet and playwright, Cardiff
- Meg Elis, writer and translator, Gwynedd
- Rhian Elizabeth, poet and novelist, Cardiff
- Gareth Evans-Jones, writer and lecturer, Traeth Bychan
- Jane Fraser, novelist and short story writer, Gower
- Eluned Gramich, writer and translator, Aberystwyth

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- Hanan Issa, writer, poet and spoken-word artist, Cardiff
- Catrin Kean, novelist, filmmaker and short story writer, Cardiff
- Rufus Mufasa, activist, writer and performer, Pontypridd
- Elan Grug Muse, poet and editor, Swansea
- Samantha O'Rourke, playwright, North Wales
- Morgan Owen, writer and poet, Merthyr Tydfil
- Alison Powell, novelist, Bristol
- Ruth Richards, writer and photographer, Anglesey
- Durre Shahwar, writer and editor, Cardiff
- Emily Vanderploeg, writer and teacher, Swansea
- Louise Walsh, novelist, Cardiff
- Wendy White, novelist, Kidwelly
- Eloise Williams, children's writer, Saundersfoot

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 gathers to launch new work, while the biggest ever HAYDAYS and #HAYYA programmes give young readers the opportunity to meet their heroes and get creative.

For more information visit hayfestival.org/ask-hay. To explore the 2018 programme and book tickets visit hayfestival.org or call 01497 822 629.

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, 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, Salman Rushdie, Marian Keyes, Lionel Shriver, Kamila Shamsie, Alan Hollinghurst, Jojo Moyes, Jack Zipes, Philip Pullman, 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.

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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 Bonington**.

Stars of stage and screen appear including **Andrew Davies** (*Les Misérables*), **Bill Nighy** (*The Bookseller*), 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.

Keep up to date with Hay Festival news by signing up to the newsletter [here](#) or follow:

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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-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, NERC 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 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)

