AUTUMN FESTIVAL

Stratford Literary Festival

27th-29th October 2023

stratlitfest.co.uk















Clare Balding Clive Myrie Philippa Gregory

Timothy West John Crace Maggie Aderin-Pocock

Sir Richard Eyre Matt Chorley Garth Marenghi

Tom Holland Linda Grant Jonathan Coe

AND MUCH MORE

Supported by



Events for Families:

Julia Donaldson, Sir Michael Morpurgo, Matt Lucas, Petr Horáček, Nicola Davies, Halloween craft and storytelling fun!



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www.bailliegifford.com/literaryprize





Stratford Literary Festival is a registered charity no.: 1164662

Cover painting by Warwickshire artist Ilona Pike facebook.com/ilonapike



Actual Investors

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Welcome to our Autumn Festival

This year we're packing in a line-up of fantastic speakers and shows, including two of the UK's bestselling children's authors. We're talking about legacy, the sky at night, news reporting, amazing women, and the state of politics and our democracy. We can't wait to have you with us.

Annie Ashworth | Festival Director

How to Book

By phone: 0333 666 3366 (Mon-Fri 9am-7pm, Sat 9am-5pm)

Online: stratlitfest.co.uk

In person: Box Office and Information Desk, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Bridgefoot, Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 6YY

(During the Festival only)

All tickets include VAT and incur a booking fee. Telephone bookings for Crowne Plaza events incur a £2.00 telephone service fee, which covers all methods of ticket delivery.

Go to our website at stratlitfest.co.uk

for the latest news and any programme changes







Crowne Plaza Hotel

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Marcus Brigstocke

Stand-up: Cheese and Whine

Sir Michael Morpurgo Tales from Shakespeare

Holy Trinity Church

£14 (Children 14 and under: £10)





The creator of such loved stories as War Horse and Private Peaceful brings his magic storytelling touch to Shakespeare. He'll be talking about how he created the re-tellings of ten of the best-known plays. including Macbeth, Hamlet, A Winter's Tale and A Midsummer Night's Dream, in a collection which provides an introduction to the Bard especially for children and young people. Each story is illustrated by a different well-known illustrator. Ages 8+

This event will also be live streamed.

Francesca Stone CRAFT WORKSHOP: Christmas Garland

Crowne Plaza Hotel

£20 inc all materials





Francesca is the award-winning blogger and creative business owner behind Fall For DIY, a space for encouraging creative design with a DIY attitude. She'll show you how to make a simple garland using traditional, low-cost materials to create something simple and beautiful to keep or give as a gift. This is one how-to from her new book Festive for styling the festive season your way.

Jill Dawson and Jo Baker A Sense of Unease - the craft of creating atmosphere £12



A pervasive sense of unease, chill, rumour and misunderstanding... the stock in trade of many fiction genres from thriller to domestic noir. But how does a writer create that subtlety to keep the reader on edge? Two bestselling authors share their techniques. Jill Dawson's latest novel The Bewitching re-tells the 16th century Witches of Warboys drama steeped in quilt and suspicion. Jill is author of many novels including The Language of Birds and The Great Lover. Jo Baker (Longbourn, The Body Lies) explores foreboding in her latest, The Midnight News, set during the Blitz.

Crowne Plaza Hotel

Tim Hubbard and Victoria Summerley Secret Gardens of Cornwall and The Cotswolds





Join us on a tour of some of the country's most beguiling gardens with two expert garden writers. They'll explore a wealth of history and horticulture that has combined with geography to provide an attractive and fascinating collection of gardens. Go behind the private garden gates to discover horticultural gems - some that have been in the possession of the same family for many generations. Victoria is an awardwinning journalist and author and is a former executive editor of The Independent Tim is a journalist, former BBC radio presenter and Festival interviewer

Crowne Plaza Hotel Jonathan Coe

and John Crace The State We're In £14



We invite two of our cleverest and sharpest social and political observers to dissect and explain what has ailed us for the last few vears. Guardian sketch writer and author of A Farewell to Calm. John Crace sharpens his pen once again for a lacerating trawl through the tawdry events at Westminster over the past two years, and Jonathan Coe, Costa-winning author of *Middle England*, Rotters Club and Bournville shares his brutally funny and brilliantly observed portraits of Britain. How do we navigate through cloving nostaligia, disappearing Empire and ropey leadership and emerge into a brave new world?

Cheese Tasting with Marcus Brigstocke £25 inc a glass of wine



The well-known comedian Marcus Brigstocke is also a cheese expert and was a judge at the World Cheese Awards (where he tried 42 cheeses - almost a cheese too far). He'll be guiding you through a sampling of some very special local cheeses that hail from Warwickshire and the Cotswolds, and should grace your dinner table over the Christmas festivities. The cheeses will be supplied by The Cotswold Cheese Company and the ticket price includes a glass of wine or a soft drink to accompany the tasting. Join Marcus later in the evening matching cheeses to our whinges.

CHEESES SUPPLIED BY:



Clive Myrie **Everything** is **Everything**

Crowne Plaza Hotel



war reporter charts a career from paper

rounds in Bolton to the pinnacle of news

and how he refuses to be defined by his

broadcasting, reflecting on race, class

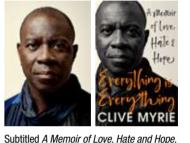
history has influenced his view of the

in 30 years reporting on some of the

from Ukraine.

CG

biggest stories of our time, most recently



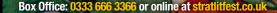
There are no problems that cannot be the newsreader. Mastermind presenter and improved by eating cheese. Fact. The award-winning comedian and International Cheese Judge guides you through the subtle art of pairing the best cheeses with a fine whine of your choosing, so whatever background. He'll talk about how his family your whinge there's cheese to match. Brigstocke is one of our most talented, world, and on how being black has affected versatile comedians, mixing satirical his perspective on issues he's encountered state-of-the-nation gags with top rate observational humour, killer impressions and important content about dairy produce.

> 'Charming, hilarious and utterly refreshing. Don't miss this incredible show.' Sunday Mirror

'Sharpest one-liner merchant. Sunday Times

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Jill Dawson WRITING WORKSHOP: Have you got what it takes to write a novel?

Crowne Plaza Hotel

£30



Have you always wanted to write that novel? You might even have started one but aren't sure how to progress? What does it take to firm up an idea, work out a plot, create characters and keep yourself going when the going gets tough? Come with an idea and leave with a firm plan under the guidance of leading novelist Jill Dawson, acclaimed author of Fred and Edie. The Bewitching and The Language of Birds which reimagines the Lord Lucan scandal Jill tutors for the Arvon Foundation, she has taught on the Creative Writing MA at UEA, where she held the Creative Writing Fellowship, and has taught at the Faber Academy and Guardian/UEA masterclasses.

Maggie Aderin-Pocock The Art of Stargazing £15

Crowne Plaza Hotel





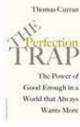
Join the award-winning space scientist and The Sky at Night presenter for the insider's quide to the night sky. Look upwards as she shares her expertise and unique insights into the marvellous world of stars. Take a tour of the 88 constellations and explore the science, history, culture and romanticism behind these celestial bodies Learn the sky map, how to identify stars and the basics of naked-eye observation. Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock is a space scientist and science communicator. She is Managing Director of Science Innovation Ltd. through which she shows children and adults the wonders of space.

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Thomas Curran The Perfection Trap and how not to be perfect





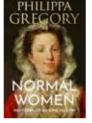
Burnout and depression are at record levels, driven by a combination of intense workplace competition, the comparative world of social media, the quest for elite credentials, and helicopter parenting. Society continually broadcasts the need to want more, and that we have to be perfect to get it. Why is this a trap, and how can we escape it? The Professor of Social Psychology at the London School of Economics explores the paradoxical effects of perfectionism on everything from performance to social and financial inequality, and suggests what we can do as individuals to resist the modern-day pressure to be perfect.

Sponsored by BAILLIE GIFFORD Actual Investors

Crowne Plaza Hotel Philippa Gregory Normal Women

£14





2-3pm

The bestselling historical novelist reveals the book she has been working on for ten vears that challenges the assumption that women played no part in major historical events. She maps an alternative account of Britain's past through the eyes of guild widows, highwaywomen and other pivotal female figures, and tells the story of Britain through social and cultural transition, showing the agency, persistence and effectiveness of women in society including heroism, rebellion, crime, treason money-making, jousting and sainthood. And much rioting.

Sarah Marsh and Amy Twigg **Tinder Press Debuts' Proof Party**

2-3pm

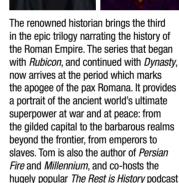


The publishing imprint celebrates ten years by showcasing two of its most exciting emerging writers. With free proofs of each book to give away, they introduce Sarah Marsh, whose book, A Sign of Her Own, is a novel about the hidden story of the connections that deaf people made before a widespread campaign to prevent and ban the use of sign language, inspired by her experiences of growing up deaf. Amy Twigg's simmering debut, Spoilt Creatures, is set in a women's commune where Iris. seeking an alternative way of life away from disastrous relationships, discovers even among the women there are power struggles, cruelty and transgressions that threaten their precarious existence.

This event will be BSL signed

Tom Holland Pax: War and Peace in Rome's Golden Age





with Dominic Sandbrook.

Sir Richard Evre A Life on Stage and Screen





The acclaimed biographer and obituarist reflects on a career spent pursuing life; a process, as she sees it, not of chronological narration but of trying to seize souls. In a blend of memoir, biography, observation and poetry, she reflects on the art and impossibility of capturing this phenomenon on the page. Through her experiences and those of others, through people she has known, studied or merely glimpsed through windows, she movingly explores what makes a life and how that life lingers after. From biography Wroe moves to intimations of a far greater life; one encountered in childhood, in artistic creation, dreams, birth and death.

country's most distinguished directors. He ran the National Theatre from 1987 to 1997, and is the director of film, theatre television and opera. His numerous triumphs include the noted 1982 revival of Guys and Dolls, his version of Ghosts, the musical of Mary Poppins, and the film of Zoe Heller's novel Notes on a Scandal. They also include a number of acclaimed productions of Shakespeare: Hamlet, with Jonathan Pryce and Daniel Day-Lewis; Richard III with Sir Ian McKellen: King Lear

with Ian Holm: and the television version

of Henry IV Parts 1 and II. He will reflect

on the challenges and rewards of bringing

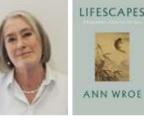
work to stage and screen and, author of

several books and a fellow of the Royal

new collection of poetry. Place to Place.

Society of Literature, he will read from his

Ann Wroe Lifescapes: A Biographer's Search for the Soul





Sat 28th October Crowne Plaza Hotel

Matt Chorley

Forget Westminster bust-ups and PMQs.

some of the key events that have shaped

modern British politics happened not in the

cloisters of parliament or Downing Street's

many corridors of power, but in car parks.

The hilarious *Times* columnist and *Times*

Radio presenter will takes us from Pitt the

Thatcher finding a voice coach on a train and

John Major having a dental appointment that

cleared his path to No. 10... those chance

meetings, untimely deaths or decisions

that have changed the course of politics.

Younger's Putney Heath duel to Margaret

village halls and seaside resorts where the

Politics

6-7pm

Crowne Plaza Hotel

An Evening of Incarcerat

Following the massive success of his

long-lost novel Terrortome, the Sunday

is back with us and with his latest

masterpiece, Incarcerat. It needs no

introduction except to quote the glowing

that it cannot safely be read while drinking

book tour" The Guardian. "Had the crowd

hooting and hanging, insatiably, on every

parody of terrible genre writing" Chortle.

Copies of Incarcerat will be available for

purchase on the day. Be warned: signings

are strictly time limited. You'll get no more

than one minute with the world's greatest

Frightenerman, Darkscribe, Doomsage

(plus Man-Shee) before you're moved

on and/or manhandled.

reviews: "So dense with brilliant jokes

hot liquid" iNews. "Puts the 'boo' into

line." The Telegraph. "A pitch-perfect

Times bestseller and Archduke O'Darkdom

Sat 28th October

Garth Marenghi

8-9.30pm

Crowne Plaza Hotel

Sun 29th October

CRAFT WORKSHOP:

£20 inc materials

Hooked on Shakespeare

Gurinder Kaur Hatchard

Sun 29th October

Crowne Plaza Hotel

Timothy West CBE Pru & Me

12-1pm







You've read the plays, you've seen the plays and now you can crochet the characters! Only the smallest knowledge of crochet will enable you to learn the basics of creating Yorick's famous skull from Gurinder and get you going, then you'll be equipped to tackle iconic characters from Romeo and Juliet to Hamlet and the Ghost and not forgetting Woolliam Shakespeare himself. This workshop is a unique way to mark the 400th anniversary of the publication of the First Folio.



With major roles at the RSC. The National Theatre, and on TV and film, Timothy West is one of our leading and most recognised actors. He has been married to Prunella Scales for 60 years and they are an enduring double act that has delighted us most recently with their Great Canal Journeys, which has included Pru's struggle with dementia. He'll be sharing the course of their lives, from the years before they met - treading the boards in the 50s - to their secret courting, marriage and establishing themselves at the heart of theatre, television and film in some of the nation's favourite shows, from Fawlty Towers to Brass.

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We offer non-invasive treatments which give immediate improvement for eye discomfort and provide a long term solution.



Sun 29th October

The Story of the Forest

From the award-winning and multi-

nominated writer comes her latest novel.

half of the 20th century from the edge of

the Baltic Sea to Soho via Liverpool. The

Story of the Forest connects the personal

revolution and the power of family. Linda

Grant won the Orange Prize for Fiction for

When I Lived in Modern Times (2000).

Still Here (2000) was longlisted for the

Man Booker Prize and A Stranger City,

Literary Prize for 2020. The Story of the

Forest was shortlisted for The Orwell Prize

published in 2019, won the Wingate

for Political Fiction 2023.

to the political in a story of migration,

a sweeping family saga that spans the first

Crowne Plaza Hotel

Linda Grant

£12

12-1pm

Sun 29th October

Michael Wooldridge

Al - what's the future

for the creative industries?

Al has already proved it can imitate the

creative industries, generating work that is

hard to differentiate from the authentic. Will

pay, infringements of copyright and the use

this impact on jobs for writers and artists.

of artists' work without their permission?

How do we move forward? Professor

Michael Wooldridge is a leader in the Al

field. A Professor of Computer Science at

the University of Oxford, he is Director of

Institute. Susie Alegre is an international

ethics through the lens of human rights.

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BAILLIE GIFFORD

Actual Investors

lawver and author with expertise on tech

Foundational Al Research at the Alan Turing

and Susie Alegre

Crowne Plaza Hotel

2-3pm

Crowne Plaza Hotel

Anthony Bale

Sun 29th October

A Travel Guide to the Middle Ages

2-3pm

3.30 -4.30pm Sun 29th October

Crowne Plaza Hotel

Clare Balding Isle of Dogs £29 inc a copy of her book





From the bustling bazaars of Tabriz to the mysterious island of Caldihe, where sheep were said to grow on trees, the Professor of Medieval Studies at Birkbeck brings history alive - inviting you to travel across a medieval world punctuated with miraculous wonders and long-lost landmarks. Journeying alongside scholars, spies and saints, from western Europe to the Far East, the Antipodes and the ends of the world, this is no ordinary travel quide. containing everything from profane pilgrim badges, Venetian laxatives and flying coffins to encounters with bandits and trysts with princesses.



We welcome the BAFTA-winning presenter and all-round national treasure, who will be talking about her favourite subject - dogs. From hunting to our hearths, and from herding sheep to guiding humans, our dogs have accompanied us through centuries of change, and that special relationship is still evolving today. So, just what is it that makes our bond so special? She'll explore our unique heritage of canine tradition and consider the mysteries of extinct breeds to the ancient dogs still thriving today.

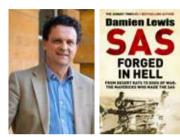


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6 or online at st

Crowne Plaza Hotel

Damien Lewis SAS Forged in Hell



We welcome back the acclaimed military historian whose latest book is subtitled From Desert Rats to Dogs of War: The Mavericks who Made the SAS. In the summer of 1943, the largest invasion fleet ever assembled sailed for Europe, aiming to bulldoze its way onto Nazi shores. At its vanguard went a few hundred elite forces soldiers led by the legendary SAS commander Blair 'Paddy' Mayne. He'll talk about how they bludgeoned their way through the most heavily defended enemy shoreline, so enabling the ensuing forces to follow on. and what happened next.

Sponsored by



Hilary Mantel Remembered A Memoir of My Former Self: A Life in Writing



One of this country's greatest writers died in 2022 and her talent is sorely missed. However, her legacy lives on in her work and we'll be celebrating a brand new collection of her journalism spanning four decades. It includes literary criticism and personal writing, much of it is first person and in her inimitable voice: needle sharp. funny, incisive and brilliantly on point. Join us as those that knew her share their memories of her and her best work. including the actress Lucy Briers who played Catherine of Aragon in the stage play of Wolf Hall. They will remind us why she was one of the best, if not the best, writer of her generation.



Signed copies by authors and illustrators attending the Festival will be available to buy at our Pop-Up Shop at The Crowne Plaza.

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When it comes to the news, do you ever feel like you're only seeing one side of the story?

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Fri 20th October

Sir Michael Morpurgo

Tales from Shakespeare

£14 (Children 14 and under: £10)

The creator of such loved stories as War

magic storytelling touch to Shakespeare.

He'll be talking about how he created the

re-tellings of ten of the best-known plays,

including Macbeth, Hamlet, A Winter's Tale

collection which provides an introduction

Each story is illustrated by a different

well-known illustrator. Ages 8+

and A Midsummer Night's Dream, in a

to the Bard especially for children.

Horse and Private Peaceful brings his

Holy Trinity Church

6pm

Fri 27th October

1.45 -2.45pm

Crown Plaza Hotel

Matt Lucas

The Boy Who Slept **Through Christmas**





Leo LOVES Christmas, And this Christmas needs to be absolutely perfect, because it's the first one without Mum. Only it all keeps going wrong! The fairy lights are in a tangle, the tree's wonky and the Christmas biscuits taste AWFUL. Soon Leo decides he's had enough - he makes a heartfelt wish that it would all GO AWAY... be careful what you wish for! Join the popular comedian with his debut book for children. including original songs, written and recorded by Matt to accompany the story.

*Ticket price for public bookings. Please email info@stratfordliteraryfestival.co.uk for schools' group booking details.

Sat 28th October

Crowne Plaza Hotel

2-4pm

Sun 29th October Crowne Plaza Hotel

11am -12pm

Stratford Play House

Sun 12th November

12pm & 3.30pm

Spooky Halloween Afternoon Activities, Stories and Craft



Get ready for trick or treating with spooky craft and storytelling, have your face painted and your picture taken on your broomstick. Get stuck in to our **Monstrous Puppet Laboratory** with artist Jonny Nicholds for a fun creative session where you will make your own puppet to take home. Your character can be hair-raising, spine-chilling or cute and cuddly - you get to be Dr Frankenstein and choose your creation! (No actual body parts or electricity will be required.) All materials and instructions will be provided.

Events suitable for children 6yrs+ but children must be supervised by parent or carer.

Petr Horáček and Nicola Davies The Star Whale



Join internationally acclaimed duo Nicola Davies and Petr Horáček for a unique celebration of our beautiful planet, in verse and live drawing. Discover a pangolin at dusk, fly on a bat's back, visit a lion, and hear about his plight! You might even spot a kingfisher, that 'small glint of wonder', and see how 'wild reclaims

the world' in the urban niaht-time!

Ages 7+

Star Whale

The Gruffalo, The Giant and The Mermaid

with Julia Donaldson

£14

Following their sell-out 2018 show. UK's bestselling author Julia Donaldson and a cast of four return with a brand-new show based on her much-loved books including *The* Smartest Giant in Town. The Singing Mermaid. The Highway Rat. and The Gruffalo. Packed full of songs, puppetry and audience interaction, join Harry and Betty at their scarecrows' wedding, go on an adventure with Cave Baby and a woolly mammoth, and see if the grumpy Go-Away Bird would like a friend after all. Every performance will be followed by a book signing with Julia Donaldson. Ages 3+



Ages 8-11

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Stratford-upon-Avon 8 Wood Street Tel 01789 262 606





Terms and Conditions

Most events take place at Crowne Plaza Hotel, Bridge Foot CV37 6YY, but please check your ticket and website before you travel.

- All events take place at the venue printed on your ticket. You will be contacted by email in advance of an event if the venue changes.
- Tickets are sold through an external box office. Tickets are non-refundable and cannot be exchanged. All tickets include VAT. All tickets booked by phone or online incur a booking fee. This booking fee is charged by Ticketsource, the Festival's ticketing agents, which goes towards the cost of running the booking system and is not income for the Festival. Should a ticket be refunded because of an unavoidable cancellation or circumstances beyond the Festival's control, the booking fee will not be returned.
- Tickets may be on sale on the door for events, unless an event is sold out. The booking number and online booking link can be found on each page of our programme and on our website
- » All seats are normally unreserved. No animals are permitted into venues except assistance dogs.
- Accessibility: all venues can accommodate wheelchairs and those with mobility issues, and there is an accessible toilet at all venues. All venues have step-free access. Please contact us on info@stratfordliteraryfestival. co.uk if you have particular needs or require a seat close to the stage due to hearing or sight challenges. The Ballroom has a hearing loop in operation and all speakers use a microphone.

- Children under 14 years must be accompanied by a responsible adult (over 18 years of age). We cannot accept responsibility for unaccompanied children. Children over 14 may attend alone but must be delivered and collected by a responsible adult, and are not the responsibility of the Festival. Adults attending children's events are expected to buy a ticket. Children under 2 and babes in arms who do not require a seat do not need a ticket.
- We reserve the right to alter the programme or substitute performers if circumstances dictate and we will do our very best to replace like with like. Please check our website or follow us on Twitter/X @stratlifest for programme change alerts. Ticket-bookers will also be emailed about any programme changes.
- All events are an hour long unless otherwise stated. Books are available to buy at each event and authors will sign copies of their books after each event. Books featured at the Festival and those signed at earlier events will be on sale at Waterstones, 8 High Street. We request that you do not bring copies of books not purchased at the event for signature.
- Some events may be filmed or recorded. By buying a ticket you are giving your consent to be filmed or recorded as a member of the audience. Please let one of the Festival team know if you do not wish to be in a photograph.
- All details and prices are correct at time of going to press.
- Please check our website before you travel for any last-minute changes.

We would like to thank the following for their help and support:

All the wonderful authors, illustrators and artists who come to the Festival; the publishers who have worked with us; all who steward and volunteer for the Festival; Michelle McLeod at Baillie Gifford and Co; Mike Nicholas at Shock the Senses; all the staff at Waterstones Stratford, the Crowne Plaza, Friends of Holy Trinity Church and Stratford Play House; our chairpersons; and of course our Friends and Benefactors, audiences, sponsors and advertisers who make the Festival possible.

Our Interviewers: Olivia Chapman, Tim Hubbard, John Jefferies, Fiona Lindsay, Meg Sanders. Deirdre Shields. Julia Wheeler

Festival Photographer: Rupert Barnes

Festival Faces Photographer: Lorentz Gullachsen

Festival Team: Annie Ashworth (Festival Director), Charlotte Brennan (Festival Administrator and Fundraiser), Jo James (Operations Director), Judy Reaves (Stages Design), Suzanne Worthington (Stewards and Volunteers Coordinator), Alison Morris (Author Care), Liz Wise (Books with Friends Coordinator), Tamsin Williams (PR), Ellie Waters (Box Office Manager)

Production: ProSound

Stratford Literary Festival is a registered charity no. 1164662

Festival Trustees: Annie Ashworth, David Fletcher, Philip Heath, Archie Kane (Chair). Diana Owen OBE. Madeleine Parker and Julia Wheeler

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DAVID HUNT lighting



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NATURE'S RARE JEWELS



