



Stratford
**Literary
Festival**

Autumn Festival

30th October - 2nd November 2025

Graham Norton

Sir Philip Pullman

John Cleese

Lyse Doucet

Gyles Brandreth

Mick Herron

Sir Tony Robinson

Nicola Sturgeon

Lady Brenda Hale

Alice Loxton

Mark Radcliffe

Joanna Page

Martin O'Neill

Dame Denise Lewis

Dr Rachel Clarke

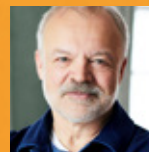
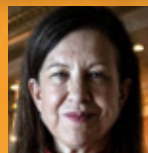
Lucy Easthope

Jonathan Dimbleby

Baroness Sue Campbell

Writers' Weekend

AND MUCH MORE



Halloween Fun for Kids


Plus Craft, Books & Comic Workshop



The RSC logo is in a bold, stylized, pink font. The letters 'R' and 'S' are connected, and the 'C' is a simple curve.

RSC

**STRATFORD-UPON-AVON
28 NOVEMBER – 10 JANUARY**

Three actors are shown from the chest up, wearing period costumes. The woman on the left has dark hair and wears a blue and red garment. The woman in the middle has dark, curly hair and wears a brown dress with a red collar. The man on the right has dark hair and wears a black suit with a white shirt and a red tie. They are all looking forward with serious expressions.

THE FORSYTE SAGA

PARTS 1 & 2

BY JOHN GALSWORTHY
ADAPTED BY SHAUN MCKENNA AND LIN COGHLAN

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RSC £10 Tickets
Sponsor

The TikTok logo consists of a stylized white 'd' inside a black circle, followed by the word 'TikTok' in its signature font.



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

Welcome to our Autumn Festival

We've grown! After the success of last year's Autumn Festival, we're now running over four days and we've packed them with great conversations, household names and a deep dive into history and science. We're looking at democracy and the law, contemporary and ancient history and the impact the past has on our present. Plus we're discovering why it's better for you to do much less! We've some exciting debut fiction and some brilliant bestselling authors and, always keen to support emerging writers, we're weaving in a Writers' Weekend with a range of workshops to support you wherever you are on your writing journey.

Join us for everything from Fawlty Towers to speed Scrabble, comedy to spooky Halloween fun. We look forward to having you with us.

Annie Ashworth | Festival Director

10% off when you book 5 events or more!

Go to our website at stratlitfest.co.uk for the latest news and any programme changes or additions

Follow us:  [stratfordlitfest](https://www.facebook.com/stratfordlitfest)  [stratfordlitfest](https://www.instagram.com/stratfordlitfest)

Stratford Literary Festival is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation No. 1164662

How to Book

By phone: **0333 666 3366** (Mon-Fri 9am-7pm)

Online: stratlitfest.co.uk

In person during the Festival:

At the Box Office and Information Desk,
Crowne Plaza Hotel, Bridge Foot,
Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 6YR

(during the Festival only)

Ticket prices include a booking fee
to cover the costs of our external
box office.

NEW

Scan me to book



Festival Team:

Annie Ashworth (Festival Director and Programming)

Charlotte Brennan (Festival Administrator and Fundraising Lead)

Nicole Park (Partnerships and Development Manager)

Jo James (Operations Director and Programming)

Suzanne Worthington (Stewards and Volunteers Coordinator)

Alison Morris (Author Care)

Liz Wise (Books with Friends Coordinator)

Truda Spruyt (Collective Wisdom PR)

Thursday 30th Oct

Julie Summers
WORKSHOP: Writing a Life

£48.11 | 11am-1pm

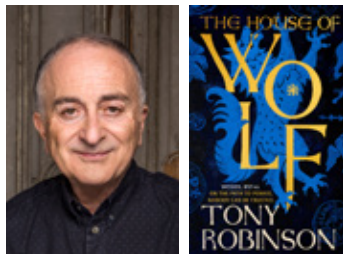


This is the perfect workshop for anyone wanting to write about their own life or an interesting family member or ancestor. Join the acclaimed contemporary historian as she gives you guidance on writing a family memoir. You'll take a close look at autobiography, memoir, biography, and creative non-fiction, and discuss how these stories are told and the extent to which this influences what we think we know about our own lives and those of others. There will be opportunities to explore contemporary examples of life-writing that challenge traditional autobiographical and biographical narratives, and the boundaries between fiction and non-fiction.

Thursday 30th Oct

Sir Tony Robinson
The House of Wolf

£17.10 | 12.30pm



Best known as the hapless Baldrick in *Blackadder*, historical expert and presenter of *Time Team*, the screen polymath talks about his career and his move into adult fiction with an earthy, entertaining and gloriously witty recreation of the Anglo-Saxons, Alfred the Great, and the making of England. It's an epic struggle between greed and idealism, ambition and betrayal, freedom and tyranny. Because change always meets with resistance and, on the path to power, nobody can be trusted.

Talking to Clare Clark

Thursday 30th Oct

Iain MacGregor
**The Hiroshima Men:
Building the Atomic Bomb**

£16.04 | 12.30pm



The war historian recounts the decade-long journey towards the first atomic attack, charting the race for the bomb during World War II as the Allies fought the Axis powers, and told through several key characters. He'll take us from the corridors of power in the White House and the Pentagon to the test sites of New Mexico; from the air war above Germany to the Potsdam Conference of Truman, Churchill and Stalin, and not forgetting the Japanese perspective. Iain MacGregor is the author of the acclaimed *Cold War Berlin: Checkpoint Charlie* and the award-winning *The Lighthouse of Stalingrad: The Hidden Truth Behind WWII's Greatest Battle*.

Talking to Tim Hubbard

Thursday 30th Oct

Lucy Upton
**The Ultimate Guide to
Children's Nutrition**

£12.83 | 2pm



During the first five years of a child's life it is critical to get nutrition right and to build a positive, healthy foundation that can shape their future. The Paediatric Dietitian and Feeding Therapist brings her expert voice to the noisy influencer-dominated landscape surrounding the feeding needs of your growing child. From milk feeding through weaning, to toddler food refusal and fussy eating, to dealing with specific diets, allergies and common feeding worries, she'll provide guidance on developmental benchmarks alongside useful ideas and strategies to help you navigate the feeding journey with ease.

Babies and toddlers welcome free of charge!

Thursday 30th Oct

Julie Summers
British Vogue - The
Biography of an Icon

£16.04 | 2pm



The contemporary historian tells the story of the iconic magazine from its first issue in 1916 up to the present day. She'll consider how it has defined the tastes and style of successive generations, playing a leading role in the continuing story of Britain's national identity, and will talk about the people behind it, from the indomitable Audrey Withers to the legendary stylist Grace Coddington, editor Alexandra Shulman and fashion editor Lucinda Chambers. Julie Summers is a writer and historian best known for the book *Jambusters*, the inspiration for the ITV series *Home Fires*.

Talking to Julia Wheeler

Thursday 30th Oct

Jonathan Dimbleby
Endgame 1944 and The
Palestinians - Quartet

£16.04 | 2.30pm



The historian, presenter and author of *Barbarossa* recounts the twists and turns of Operation Bagration in June 1944 - the Soviet offensive of more than 2 million Red Army soldiers facing 500,000 German soldiers. An offensive that won the Second World War for the Allies and cemented Stalin's post-war power. Drawing on previously untranslated German, Russian and Polish sources, he'll explain how Soviet triumphs effectively gave Stalin authority to occupy Eastern Europe and enabled him to dictate the terms of the post-war settlement, laying the foundations for the Cold War and our relationship with Russia today.

Talking to Iain MacGregor

Thursday 30th Oct

Baroness Sue Campbell
and Dame Denise Lewis
The Power of Sport

£14.97 | 4pm



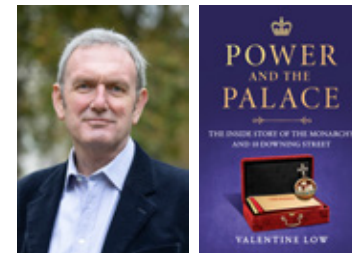
We welcome two women who know all about the transformative power of sport. Sue Campbell has been a part of some of the nation's most important sporting glories to date, from overseeing the iconic 2012 Olympics to becoming Director of Women's Football at the FA and helping the Lionesses raise the winning trophy at the Euros in 2022. Multi-medal-winning heptathlete Denise Lewis is one of Britain's greatest female multi-eventers. Both will share their careers and show how they embrace an inspiring, invigorating and engaging narrative of adaptability and resilience that can change lives and help us navigate the many different roles we have to juggle through life.

Talking to Jill Douglas

Thursday 30th Oct

Valentine Low
Power and The Palace

£14.97 | 4pm



The Royal commentator lifts the lid on the mysterious power dynamic at the heart of the British state: the secretive and little understood relationship between the monarchy and the government. He looks at the extraordinary political life of Queen Victoria, the effect that had on her son Edward VII, and the turbulent and fascinating political times of George V. Go behind the scenes of the wartime meetings between monarch and PM - including George VI and Winston Churchill, the Queen with Margaret Thatcher and Boris Johnson - and discover how personal chemistry has proved just as important as the constitutional relationship.

Talking to Julia Wheeler

Thursday 30th Oct

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Guy Hale and Howard Linskey

Murder Most Foul

£10.69 | 4.30pm



Meet two crime writers who base their crime and historical fiction in Stratford and use Shakespeare to underpin their writing. Guy Hale's latest series, *The Shakespeare Murders*, is set in Stratford in the 1970s and follows DC Toby Marlowe and DS Fred Williams as they attempt to solve a series of unsolved murders. *Sleep No More* is the fourth book in this series. Howard Linskey is a best-selling author of crime and historical fiction. His Shakespeare mysteries series begins with *A Serpent in the Garden*, and his debut novel *The Drop* was voted one of the top five thrillers of the year by *The Times*.

Talking to Deirdre Shields

Mark Radcliffe

Et Tu, Cavapoo?

£16.04 | 5.30pm



Thirty years after covering an England World Cup qualifier for Radio 1 in Italy, the broadcaster and Radio 6 DJ headed back to Rome with his wife and dog Arlo in tow. He'll recount what happened next including Italian cats, Arlo's fear of the Trevi Fountain, and discovering what exactly the Spanish had to do with those famous steps. This is a travelogue like no other as one man and his dog seek to understand each other in one of the great cities of the world.

Talking to Clare Clark

Andrew Bayliss

Sparta: The Rise and Fall of an Ancient Superpower

£14.97 | 6pm



Sparta and its legendary warriors with their mythic code of honour and steadfast resilience are famous throughout the world as a model for toughness, justice and masculinity. Their torch has been carried by footballers and politicians, video games and philosophers alike. But who really were the Spartans? And what was the driving force behind the rise - and dramatic fall - of Sparta? The Associate Professor in Greek history at the University of Birmingham traces the story of Ancient Greece's most iconic city-state and its legacy that is still shaping popular culture and politics today.

Talking to Tim Hubbard

Luke Kennard, Aimee MacDonald and Lucie McKnight Hardy

Proof Party and Fizz

£10.69 | 6.30pm



Discover the best of upcoming fiction from the leading publisher John Murray ahead of their publication dates. The award-winning poet and novelist, Luke Kennard's *Black Bag* is a novel about the crisis of masculinity, Aimee MacDonald's *The Last Witch on the Knock* is a fierce Scottish debut inspired by a local legend of witchcraft, and Lucie McKnight Hardy's *Night Babies* is a menacing slice of folk horror in which a troubled artist is haunted by her past in rural Wales. **Each ticket includes a glass of fizz, a proof copy and a tote bag.**

Talking to
Deirdre Shields

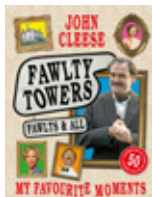
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



John Murray

Thursday 30th Oct

John Cleese
50 years of Fawlty Towers
From £19.24 | 7.30pm



Duck surprise. The car that wouldn't start. The psychiatrists. Those builders... Fifty years ago *Fawlty Towers* hit British TV screens for the first time, becoming an instant BAFTA-winning classic despite having only 12 episodes. Now for the first time the comedy legend tells his stories from behind the scenes of his favourite moments, from writing the scripts to how the show was almost cancelled before it started. He'll also share moments from a massive career on TV and in film and explain why his slapstick hotel creation continues to be regularly voted the best sitcom in British history.

Talking to Fiona Lindsay

Thursday 30th Oct

Dr Tara Porter
Good Enough Parent
£12.83 | 7.30pm



It's a tough enough job being a parent, without all the modern pressures like social media and raised anxiety that are impacting on our children. The bestselling psychologist explains what it means to be a 'good enough' parent to your children, especially adolescents, enabling you to instil that feeling of being 'good enough' in your child - a mindset that will give them the best chance of navigating the ups and downs of modern life. She'll show you how to find your 'good enough', allowing you to define your own role, avoid parental guilt and espouse an approach of balanced, boundaried emotional support, while retaining your sense of sanity and self as you do so.

Talking to Olivia Chapman

Thursday 30th Oct

Lynne Parker
COMEDY WORKSHOP:
Stand Up to Stand Out
£21.65 | 8pm-9.30pm



Lynne Parker is on a mission to help people express themselves more confidently. This fun, informal workshop has its roots in her work with Funny Women over the last 23 years, empowering women and their male allies to perform, write and do business with humour. Discover her tried and tested tricks of the comedy trade that will provide insights and inspiration for you including advice on how to 'perform', express yourself memorably and bring your ideas to life. You'll learn techniques to communicate more effectively and tell your own story, get ideas on how to connect with the people you need, and find out how humour can help you keep them interested. Perfect for your work and personal life and for people starting out in stand-up comedy. Bar open.

Friday 31st Oct

Alix Almond
WORKSHOP:
Linocut
£48.11 | 9.30am-12.30pm



Back by popular demand! Learn to linocut and create your own card - perfect for Christmas. Carve and handprint a single colour design of your choice, inspired by your favourite image, guided by printmaker Alix Almond. Come and find out all about the magic of the printing spoon! Suitable for beginners or those with some experience of linocut. Alix teaches linocut workshops across Coventry and Warwickshire. She uses a variety of linocut techniques to print single colour, reduction and layered linocuts and is inspired by landscapes, wildlife and colour.

Tickets price includes all materials

Friday 31st Oct

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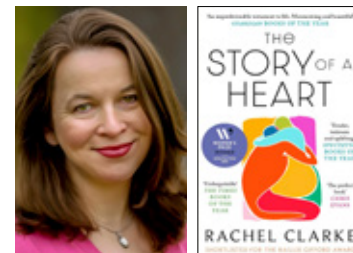
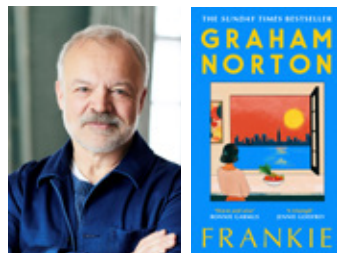
Friday 31st Oct

Ursula Jeakins
CRAFT WORKSHOP:
Make a Journal
£37.55 | 10am-12.30pm

Graham Norton
Frankie
From £19.24 | 12pm

Michael Mansfield KC
The Power in the People
£16.04 | 1.30pm

Dr Rachel Clarke
The Story of a Heart
£16.04 | 2pm



The Gloucestershire Guild bookbinder returns to the Festival with her fabulous workshop in which you'll construct and bind a playful album-style journal, personalising your pages with windows, pockets and fold-outs. Using special papers, you'll make a beautiful handmade gift or somewhere to store special memories. Craft knives will be used at the workshop, under supervision but at your own risk.

Tickets price includes all materials

The hugely popular broadcaster and TV presenter brings us his latest novel - a story that travels from post-war Ireland to 1960s New York. Always on the periphery, looking on, young Frankie Howe was never quite sure enough of herself to take centre stage - after all, life had already judged her harshly. Now old, Frankie finds it easier to forget the life that came before. Then Damian, a young Irish carer, arrives at her London flat, there to keep an eye on her as she recovers from a fall. A memory is sparked, and the past crackles into life as Damian listens to the story Frankie has kept stored away all these years.

Talking to
Julia Wheeler

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NATURE'S RARE JEWELS

Barrister Michael Mansfield KC, has spent his 50-year career fighting injustice, persecution and corruption. And, be it the Birmingham Six, Bloody Sunday, Stephen Lawrence, the Marchioness, Hillsborough or Grenfell, he will discuss the impact of people power and how groups can bring about difference despite governments, police forces, legal institutions and the establishment trying to block change and maintain the status quo in order to protect their interests. He'll revisit his most important cases and clients to prove that when people get together they can make lasting and positive change.

Talking to Clare Clark

The author of the bestselling *Your Life in My Hands*, *Breathtaking* (adapted for TV) and *Dear Life*, shares the eye-opening and incredibly poignant story that tracks the process of a heart transplant through the intertwined stories of two extraordinary children. The book, shortlisted for the Baillie Gifford Prize for Non-Fiction 2024 and winner of the the Women's Prize for Non-Fiction 2025, relates the urgent journey of a young girl's heart and explores a history of remarkable medical innovations, stretching back over a century and involving the knowledge and dedication not just of surgeons but of countless physicians, immunologists, nurses and scientists.

Talking to Tim Hubbard

Friday 31st Oct

Victoria Bateman
**Economica - Women,
Wealth and Power**

£14.97 | 2.30pm



Humanity's journey from poverty to prosperity is filled with men who have become household names. But how many female entrepreneurs, merchants and industrialists can you name? The historian weaves a thrilling, globe-spanning narrative that proves women weren't 'missing' from economic life, they were merely hidden from view. Starting in the Stone Age and continuing to the present day, she'll take you through the key economic milestones of the past twelve millennia - from the birth of farming to the advent of computing - all told through the experiences of women as well as men.

Talking to Julia Wheeler

Friday 31st Oct

Sandra Roycroft-Davis
**The Weight's Over -
Take Back Control**

£12.83 | 3pm



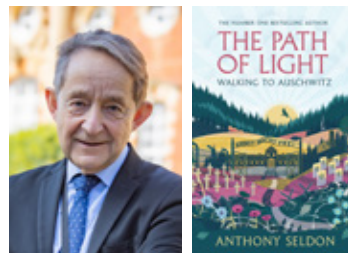
The bestselling author looks at an holistic approach to weight loss - reclaiming control of mind, body and life. With almost 20 years working in behavioural science and therapy, she'll explain how deeply our relationship with food is connected with our emotions, habits and sense of worth. She'll be bringing advice from her top 5 *Sunday Times* bestselling book to help you embark on a journey of self-discovery and empowerment, where lasting change is finally within reach, and will show you how to break free from unhealthy patterns, overcome emotional eating and develop a mindset rooted in self-compassion and resilience.

Talking to Olivia Chapman

Friday 31st Oct

Sir Anthony Seldon
The Path of Light

£16.04 | 4pm



Inspired by a fallen World War I soldier who dreamed of a 'Via Sacra' to commemorate the war dead and stand as a marker for the triumph of peace, the acclaimed educator and political biographer set out on a 1000km walk tracing the historic route of the Western Front. He'll talk about his journey and recount his next moving walk from where World War I ended to Auschwitz, how he discovered the towns and people who resisted in the face of unbearable destruction, and the legacy of World War II.

Talking to John Jefferies

Friday 31st Oct

**Joanne Briggs
and Jon Stock**
Hidden in Plain Sight

£12.83 | 4.30pm



Two writers explore the remarkable, even jaw-dropping, lives led by two celebrated men. In *The Scientist Who Wasn't There*, Joanne Briggs explores the deception around her father, a celebrated scientist, whose activities have left a terrible legacy. In *The Sleep Room* Jon Stock exposes the life of Dr William Sargant, whose bizarre psychiatric treatments were inflicted on hundreds of women with mental illness - among them the actor Celia Imrie.

Talking to Tim Hubbard

HEALTHY
BACK
BAG



Rated 4.9 / 5 on

★ Trustpilot



Discover more

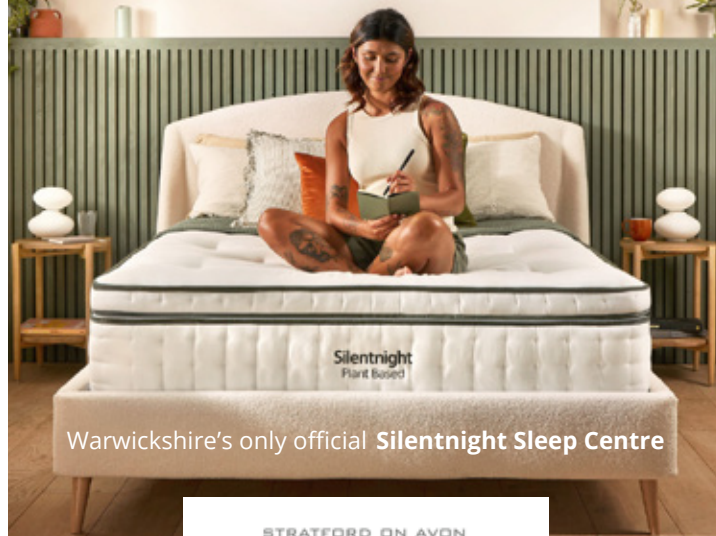
thehealthybackbag.co.uk

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love sleep

with the UK's most
trusted sleep brand



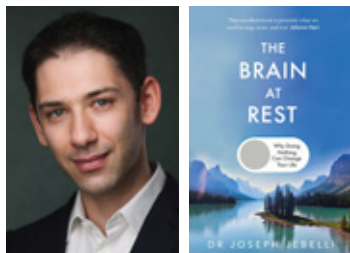
Warwickshire's only official **Silentnight Sleep Centre**



3 Maybrook Road, Stratford On Avon, CV37 0BT Tel: 01789 297111

Friday 31st Oct

Joseph Jebelli
The Brain at Rest
 £14.97 | 4.30pm



We all pack our lives with activity, certain it does us good. But what if doing nothing can actually help us be happier, healthier and more successful? The leading neuroscientist presents a compelling case that combines science and personal stories to reveal how neuroscience is solving the mystery of the brain at rest, with profound implications for intelligence, creativity and even life expectancy. Find out how long baths, walks in nature, meditation and simple daydreaming can be key to a more productive life. His books include *In Pursuit of Memory*, which was shortlisted for the Royal Society Trivedi Science Book Prize.

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 STRATFORD ON AVON
BEDCOMPANY

Friday 31st Oct

Annie Gray
**The Bookshop, The Draper,
 The Candlestick Maker**
 £14.97 | 5.30pm



The food and culture historian, and regular Radio 4 *Kitchen Cabinet* panellist, takes us down the street and through the ages, from medieval marketplaces to the purpose-built concrete precincts of the twentieth century, and peeps through the windows of tailors, tearooms and grocers. She'll consider the importance of these thoroughfares as the heartbeat of towns, how we shopped and lived in days gone by - and what the future may bring.

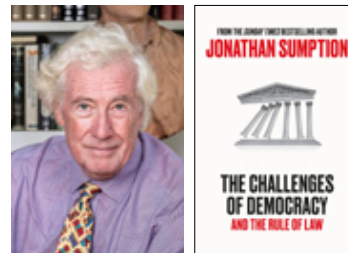
Talking to Julia Wheeler

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TIM COX
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Friday 31st Oct

Lord Jonathan Sumption
**The Challenges of Democracy
 and the Rule of Law**
 £16.04 | 6pm



Across the globe, democracy is under threat - in the UK alone, it has been rocked by Brexit, the pandemic and successive attempts by governments to bypass legal norms. But how did this happen, and where might we go from here? The former Supreme Court judge and *Sunday Times* bestselling author - also known as 'the cleverest man in Britain' - cuts through the political noise with acute analysis of the state of democracy today - from the vulnerabilities of international law to the deepening suppression of democracy, activism in Hong Kong and Trump's USA, and from the complexities of human rights legislation to the defence of freedom of speech.

Talking to Tim Hubbard

Friday 31st Oct

Caroline Lea
Love, Sex & Frankenstein
 £12.83 | 6pm



Villa Diodati, Lake Geneva, 1816. Eighteen-year-old Mary Shelley has fled London with her lover, Percy Shelley, and her sister, to Lord Byron's villa. Tormented by Shelley's betrayals, haunted by the loss of their baby and suspicious of her sister's intentions, Mary seeks a refuge. When Byron suggests each guest write a supernatural tale, Mary is as drawn to the challenge as she is, unexpectedly, to Byron himself. The latest compelling story by the author of *The Glass Woman*, *The Metal Heart* - a Waterstones Scottish Book of the Month - and *Prize Women*.

Talking to Clare Clark

Friday 31st Oct

Cally Beaton
Namaste Motherf*ckers

£12.83 | 7pm



The podcaster and stand-up comedian brings us her part memoir, part stereotype-defying manifesto, taking an irreverent look at her story of radical midlife reinvention - from the boardroom to *Live at the Apollo*. Sharing stories and experiences from her career, alongside lessons learned from the many celebrities and experts that have guested on her hit podcast of the same name, Cally challenges at every turn the age-old narrative that middle-aged women become invisible and looks, with her legendary wit, at what it means to be a woman who is willing to take a chance and who is also willing to fail.

Talking to Olivia Chapman

Friday 31st Oct

Mick Herron
Clown Town

From £17.10 | 8pm



The creator of the smash TV hit *Slow Horses* reveals the ninth installment in his bestselling *Slough House* series, as the gang of washed-up spooks becomes entangled in a dangerous game of blackmail with its roots in the Irish Troubles. Old spies grow ridiculous, River. Old spies aren't much better than clowns. Or so David Cartwright used to say, but he forgot to add they can be dangerous too, especially if they've fallen on hard times.

Talking to Clare Clark

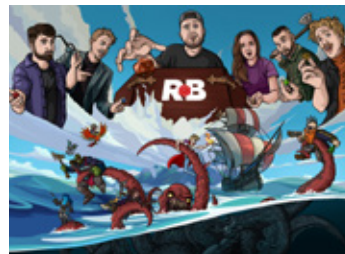
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Friday 31st Oct

Roll Britannia
D&D is Literature

£10.69 | 8.30pm



Set sail for adventure with Roll Britannia, the UK's comedy Dungeons & Dragons podcasters, packed with chaos, pirates and probably too many puns. In this live show, the cast dive into the ridiculous world of improvised fantasy storytelling and explore why tabletop games like D&D deserve a seat at the literary table (even if they're the ones flipping it over). Expect laughs, shenanigans, and a fresh look at how collaborative storytelling is reshaping what we call 'literature'.

Saturday 1st Nov

Layla Robinson
WORKSHOP:
Wreath Making
£64.14 | 10.30am-12pm



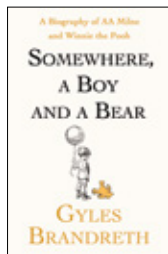
Join the floral artist who uses dried flowers and foliage to create vibrant, long-lasting, sustainable pieces that preserve nature's fleeting beauty. She'll show you how to cut and dry flowers while retaining their bright hues and step-by-step how to create a wow-factor wreath that will last for a long time and not just for Christmas.

Tickets price includes all materials

Saturday 1st Nov

Gyles Brandreth
Somewhere, A Boy
and A Bear

From £39.55 | 12.30pm



The broadcaster, Goggleboxer and former MP takes us on a journey to meet the much-loved Winnie-the-Pooh - his genesis, his life across a hundred years, the essence of Pooh's special philosophy and the reasons for his worldwide popularity. But AA Milne's famous bear is also a story about three generations of an unusual, fascinating and troubled family who knew fame and fortune, for many years despising both, but ultimately finding a profound reason to be grateful for the millions Pooh brought them.

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Tickets include
a signed and
discounted
book

Saturday 1st Nov

John-Paul Kunrunmi
Breaking into Social Media

£10.69 | 12.30pm

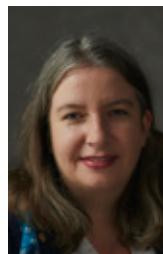


A workshop designed for anyone wanting to know how to promote themselves on social media. Whether you're an author, aspiring content creator or someone who loves to share their thoughts, this workshop will be for you. We'll cover TikTok, Instagram and a bit of X, and sharing best video practices, how to use the algorithm to your advantage and ways to make your content stand out. Pick up tips and tricks such as editing best practices, equipment recommendations for people looking to take their content to the next level, and how to make sure your captions are catchy and maximised.

Saturday 1st Nov

Lucy Easthope
Come What May

£14.73 | 1pm



The leading expert in recovery and emergency planning, and author of the bestselling *When the Dust Settles*, brings her uplifting guide to navigating the hard times in all our lives. After experiencing the fallout of countless earthquakes, fires and floods, she has observed how people rebuild: the work, the pitfalls and the fragile joy. She'll explain what shape a recovery journey might take, how to triage your life in an emergency, how to plan for 'the slump' (also known as the lasagne phase), how to take stock of what has happened to you, how to watch out for 'learned helplessness', and what good (and bad) help looks like.

Talking to Julia Wheeler

Saturday 1st Nov

Edward Brooke-Hitching
The Madman's Orchestra

£12.83 | 2pm



The bestselling author and former BBC *Q/Elf* takes us on a fascinating journey through the entire history of music. Following on from *The Madman's Library*, he lifts the curtain on the strangest episodes from the entire history of music, from the musical secrets of prehistoric monuments to the future of compositions by artificial intelligence. Discover the song of a black hole, which composition requires four helicopters and a string quartet, musical hoaxes, compositions relayed by ghosts, the code-writing of 'musical cryptography', the pop songs smuggled past Soviet censors using X-rays and much more.

Talking to Clare Clark

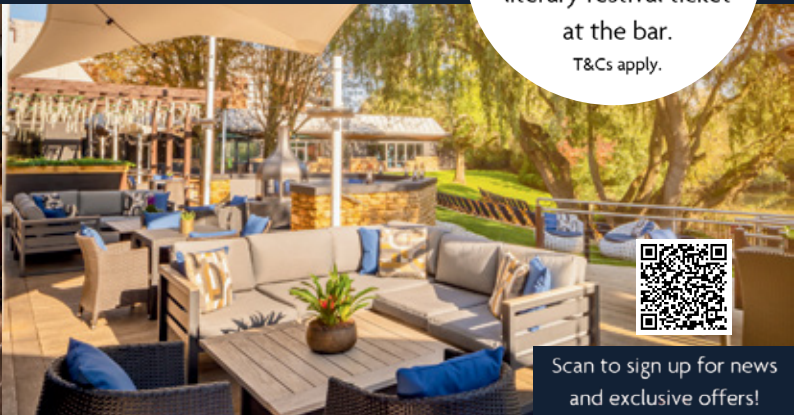
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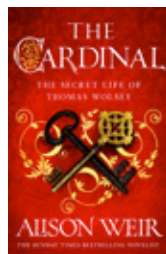


Bridge Foot, Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 6YR

Saturday 1st Nov

Alison Weir
The Cardinal

£14.97 | 2.30pm



The queen of historical fiction returns with her latest bestseller that retells the turbulent life of Tudor power-broker, Cardinal Wolsey. It begins with Thomas, the son of a Suffolk tradesman and a brilliant boy, sent to study at Oxford at the age of eleven. It ends with a disgraced Cardinal, cast from the King's side and estranged from those he loves, who paid the price of his success. Alison Weir has published more than 30 titles and sold more than 3 million books.

Saturday 1st Nov

Saabira Chaudhuri
and Julia Shaw
Environmental Crime -
Taking on the Big Boys

£12.83 | 2.30pm



Our world and its future is being manipulated by global corporations and criminal minds. Consumer goods makers have turbocharged their profits, convincing us we need disposable plastic and plastic-packaged ultra-processed foods. Journalist Saabira Chaudhuri asks how did plastic take over our lives and why have we been unable to rein it in? The criminal psychologist Dr Julia Shaw takes us deep into some of the worst environmental crimes of our time - the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, the Dieselgate emissions scandal, and the Shuidong wildlife crime syndicate - to reveal the impact of green crimes right to our doorsteps. How can this hold on our lives be loosened?

Talking to Tim Hubbard

Saturday 1st Nov

Clare Leslie Hall
and Claire Lynch
Festival Reads: Broken
Country and A Family Matter

£10.69 | 3.30pm



Two exceptional novelists bring us cleverly crafted stories of family secrets. Clare Leslie Hall's *Sunday Times* and *New York Times* bestseller is a story of obsession and lies set in Dorset, and considers how far someone would go to protect people's lives. Claire Lynch's *A Family Matter* is set between 1982 and 2022 and asks how we might heal from the wounds of the past, and what we might learn from them.

Talking to Jenna Smith

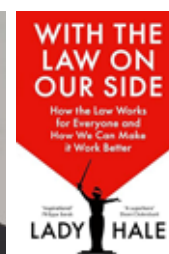
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Saturday 1st Nov

Lady Brenda Hale
With the Law on Our Side

From £17.10 | 4.30pm



Our laws and justice system are vast and ancient: they might touch our lives when we have an accident, a wrong is done to us, or we have a family difficulty. And they cover everything from the personal to the regulation of our government. But to most of us they are a web of intimidating institutions and practices. The former President of the Supreme Court admired for her historic achievements (including famously challenging Boris Johnson) takes us into the complexities of real courts and real decisions.

Talking to Deirdre Shields



SPONSORED BY

Saturday 1st Nov

Gaming Event 11-16 Dungeons & Dragons

£10.69 | 5pm-6.30pm



Are you a budding young adventurer ready to slay? Bring your family along to play Dungeons & Dragons with our talented team of Dungeon Masters. Borrow some dice and a ready-made character from us and get stuck in! This event is all about finding the fun in telling a story together. No previous experience necessary.

Young people under 14 years can attend alone but a contact number for a responsible adult must be left. The Festival cannot be responsible for their care.

Saturday 1st Nov

James Cheshire The Library of Lost Maps

£12.83 | 5.45pm



The University College London Professor explains his astonishing discovery of a long-forgotten map library packed with thousands of maps and atlases, and how he spent three years sifting through hundreds of dusty drawers to uncover some of the most significant maps and atlases from the last two centuries. He'll share the stories of maps that were wielded by those in power to wage war and negotiate peace and pioneering maps produced to settle borders in central Europe, maps that have played a vital role in shaping our world, encouraging both beneficial reforms and horrific conquests, the consequences of which we continue to live with today.

Talking to Tim Hubbard

Saturday 1st Nov

Nicola Sturgeon Frankly

From £17.10 | 6.30pm



The former leader of the SNP was one of Britain's most significant political leaders of recent times. She'll be discussing how she went from a working-class family in Ayrshire to become Scotland's first female and longest-serving First Minister. She'll share her interactions with a range of notable figures, giving her unique in-the-room perspective on the most eventful and tumultuous era in modern Scottish and British politics from the establishment of the Scottish Parliament, the SNP's election to government, and the Scottish Independence Referendum, Brexit, Covid and much more.

Talking to Julia Wheeler

Saturday 1st Nov

The Booklovers' Wine Club

Wines to Match Your Book

£39.55 | 7pm



Our Wine Club sells out every time so book early for a night of excellent wines chosen by James Richards of Vin Neuf matched perfectly to the book and the author. The inimitable Lynn Taylor will read snippets from books by some of the best known speakers appearing at the Festival this autumn - and James will have matched the ideal wine. Then for a bit of fun we'll have a quiz to match the speaker with what they've told us is their favourite wine. Over 18s only. Ticket price includes all tasting wines.

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Saturday 1st Nov

Martin O'Neill The Changing Game

£16.04 | 7pm



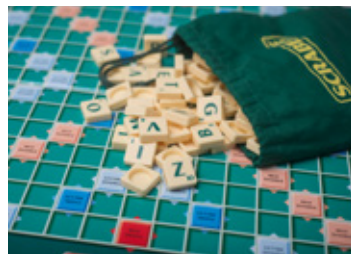
From Clough to Mourinho and beyond, the highly respected and successful football manager and pundit analyses the careers of the great managers and identifies the traits and qualities that contributed to their success. Encompassing the successes, failures and near-misses of iconic managers including Clough, Cruyff, Wenger, Ferguson, Mourinho, Klopp and Guardiola, the former Aston Villa, Leicester City, Celtic and Republic of Ireland manager brings his unique perspective to decades of footballing history.

Talking to Brendan McLoughlin

Saturday 1st Nov

Games Café Speed Scrabble

£10.69 | 7.30pm-9pm



Think of it like speed dating (or parents' evening at school) but with a twist. Start a game of Scrabble on a table of four and after 10 minutes the bell goes and it's all change! You move to another table and take over someone else's tiles. Come on your own or bring friends - it's a great way to meet new people as you mix and match onto different tables when you hear the bell. What could possibly go wrong? Bar available (that'll help...).

Saturday 1st Nov

Looking for Me Friend A Tribute to Victoria Wood

£17.10 | 8pm



We bring you 'The most feel-good show in town' (*Daily Mail*) that has spread nostalgia and laughs throughout the UK and has the seal of approval from Victoria's own colleagues and school chums. Featuring the star of BBC1's *All Together Now*, Paulus The Cabaret Geek, with Michael Roulston (*Fascinating Aida*) on piano, it's an evening of pure joy filled with Victoria's best-loved songs. This show is for fans of Victoria, and for those yet to discover her, to come together and relish her breathtaking wizardry with words. So, pair your stilettos with your oven glove, grab your *Woman's Weekly*, zip up your cocktail slacks and have a blast!

Saturday 1st Nov

Rhys James You'll Like it When You Get There

£14.97 | 8.30pm



Subtitled *A Life Lived Reluctantly*, the comedian's new book brings us a guide to life from someone who doesn't want to do anything. A deep dive into regret, humiliation, failure and pretending to be French for personal gain. From the Wild West of early internet chatrooms to the sticky circus of the Kavos strip, and a Buddhist monk asking him for five stars on TripAdvisor. Rhys has had two international sell-out tours, appeared on *Live at The Apollo*, *QI*, *A League of Their Own*, as a regular panellist on BBC Two's *Mock the Week*, and created three critically acclaimed shows for BBC Radio 4, including *Rhysearch*.

Talking to Clare Clark

Sunday 2nd Nov

Nicola Sturgeon, Andrew Lownie, Ian Acheson
Review of the Sunday Papers

£10.69 | 9.30am



The former leader of the SNP, the bombshell biographer of leading figures including Prince Andrew, and the former prison governor and now advisor to the government on counter terrorism take a look at the morning papers, as well as our very own *Stratford Herald*, and talk about what's making the headlines, who has an opinion on what, what our politicians are up to and what we ought to know about the world. Coffee available at the Hotel Bar.

Talking to Tom Gatti, *The Observer*
Literary Editor

Sunday 2nd Nov

Mark Goodliffe and Simon Anthony
WORKSHOP: Cracking The Cryptic - Sudoku

£12.83 | 10am



Flummoxed by sudoku or going great guns and want to go up a level? Back by popular demand after their sell-out event last time, the puzzlers behind *Cracking The Cryptic* (the most popular YouTube sudoku channel) will attempt to solve one of the fiendishly difficult sudokus they tackle in their videos in a 'live' edition of *Cracking The Cryptic*, giving hints and tips along the way. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions afterwards.

Sunday 2nd Nov

Andrew Lownie
Entitled: The Rise and Fall of the House of York

£14.97 | 11am

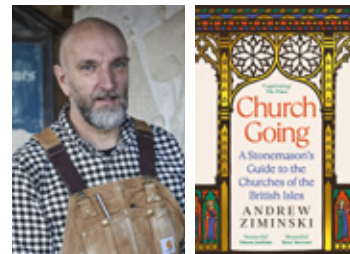


The bestselling biographer of Lord Mountbatten delivers the much anticipated joint biography of Prince Andrew and his ex-wife, Sarah Ferguson. Drawing on four years of research, numerous FOI requests and interviews with over a hundred people who have never spoken before, he reveals the extent their lives are still deeply entwined and new details of how the couple have been able to financially sustain their extravagant lifestyles. He also delves deeper into links with Jeffrey Epstein, which began earlier, continued longer and were much more frequent than reported. Talking to Julia Wheeler

Sunday 2nd Nov

Andrew Ziminski
Church Going - A Stonemason's Guide

£14.97 | 11.30am



Churches are many things to us - they are places of worship, vibrant community hubs and oases of calm reflection. To know a church is to hold a key to the past that unlocks an understanding of our shared history - and many are closing through lack of congregations. Andrew Ziminski has spent decades as a stonemason and church conservator, acting as an informal guide to curious visitors. He'll reveal their fascinating histories, features and furnishings, from flying buttresses to rood screens, lichgates to chancels in a celebration of British architectural history.

Sunday 2nd Nov

Darren Hardy Self-Publishing Workshop

£10.69 | 12:30pm



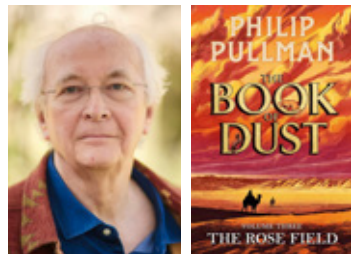
Increasingly authors are taking control of publishing their work themselves and with huge success. But where do you begin and how do you do it effectively? Darren has over 30 years' experience in publishing, 20 of which are with Amazon, and will show you how self-publishing works and walk you through the Kindle Direct Publishing process, giving you top tips on how you can engage readers on Amazon. He'll also share case studies of some author success stories.

Sunday 2nd Nov

Sir Philip Pullman The Rose Field

From £19.24 | 12.30pm

The Philip Ladbury Heath Memorial Talk



Marking 30 years since the world was first introduced to Pullman's remarkable heroine Lyra Belacqua in *Northern Lights*, *The Rose Field* is the culmination of the cultural phenomenon of *The Book of Dust* and *His Dark Materials* in which Lyra and Malcolm's quests converge in the most dangerous, breathtaking and world-changing ways. Philip Pullman is one of our most respected and multi award-winning writers. The first two in *The Book of Dust* Trilogy have sold several million copies worldwide.

Talking to Simon Mason



Sunday 2nd Nov

Nicola Kelly and Aamna Mohdin The Refugee Crisis - Finding a Solution

£12.83 | 1pm



An important conversation about the UK's failed asylum system, a subject that is politicised and toxic. With unparalleled access to asylum interviewers, immigration barristers and Home Office staff, the award-winning journalist and former Home Office insider Nicola Kelly tells the complicated behind-the-scenes story behind the small boats crisis. The family of journalist Aamna Mohdin were refugees from Somalia and she is uniquely placed to explore the refugee experience and its aftershocks in a system that has all but collapsed.

Talking to Tim Hubbard

Sunday 2nd Nov

Ian Acheson and Gen Glaister Banged Up - Britain's Prison Crisis

£12.83 | 2pm



Though it seems like another world, anyone of us could go to prison, and when Daniel Khalife escaped from Wandsworth in September 2023, the nation got a glimpse into the chaos of the prison system: overcrowding, drugs, 60% reoffending statistics. This comes as no surprise to Professor Ian Acheson, former prison governor and Director of Community Safety at the Home Office. With Gen Glaister, author of *The Prison Officer*, they'll discuss the politics and operational decisions that have driven our prisons to the state they're in, how to change the public's perception of people in prison and advocate justice reform.

Talking to Deirdre Shields



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Sunday 2nd Nov

**Joe McLaren
and Phoebe Morgan**
Book Jackets - The Story
Behind The Cover

£12.83 | 2.30pm



Readers make instant decisions about whether they feel a book is for them. A cover needs to express immediately the genre, whether it's light or literary and so much more. Discover the conversations that go on behind this critically important publishing decision from the point of view of an editor and a book jacket designer. Phoebe is an author and Executive Publisher at Simon and Schuster. Joe designed the cover for the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *James* by Percival Everett.

Talking to Clare Clark

Sunday 2nd Nov

**James Fox
and Clare Hunter**
The Lost Art of Craft
and Creativity

£12.83 | 2.30pm



Britain has always been a craft land. For generations what we made with our hands defined our identities, built our communities and shaped our regions. James Fox chronicles the vanishing skills and traditions that once governed every aspect of life on these shores and seeks out the country's last remaining master craftspeople. Bestselling author Clare Hunter explores the loss of our own creativity in a digital world and how craft and play are so good for our well-being and imagination.

Talking to
Julia Wheeler



Sunday 2nd Nov

Lyse Doucet
The Finest Hotel in Kabul
From £17.10 | 4pm



The BBC's Chief International Correspondent traces five decades of Afghanistan's dramatic recent history through the story of Kabul's Inter-Continental Hotel, and offers a vivid and deeply humane window into the life of ordinary Afghans. When the Hotel opened in 1969, it reflected the hopes of the country. Now it's a dilapidated, shrapnel-damaged shell. But its decaying grandeur still hints at ordinary Afghans' hopes of stability and prosperity.

Talking to Clare Clark



Sunday 2nd Nov

Vanessa Taylor
Seven Rivers: A Journey
Through the Currents of
Human History

£12.83 | 4.30pm



The leading historian of rivers, water and environmental history at the University of Greenwich tells the fascinating story of our relationship with rivers. We have navigated them, dammed them, built empires around them and worshipped at them. From the ancient ecosystems of Egypt to the sinking cities of Shanghai and London, what we do with our rivers tells us about who has power and what we value. Now, when a passion for wild swimming is flourishing but the Amazon is on fire and some of our major river systems are dying, it has never been clearer that rivers are intertwined with humanity at our best and our worst.

Talking to Tim Hubbard

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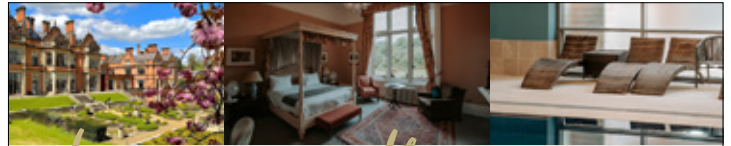


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Sunday 2nd Nov

Sunday 2nd Nov

Sunday 2nd Nov

Sunday 2nd Nov

**Jamie Tahsin
and Matt Shea**
**Clown World - Andrew Tate
and the Manosphere**
£14.97 | 4.30pm

Alice Loxton
**Eighteen - A History of
Britain in 18 Young Lives**
£14.97 | 5.30pm

Fergus Butler-Gallie
Twelve Churches
£12.83 | 6pm

Joanna Page
Lush!
From £17.10 | 7pm



An important conversation about misogyny and a disturbing ideology that is impacting young men and their view of women. In 2022, Andrew Tate went from a little-known kickboxer and failed reality TV star to a lifestyle icon for legions of men and boys, and a figure that would define a new era of misogyny. We meet the two writers who had unprecedented access to his Bucharest compound and infamous War Room to make the documentary that would result in the first women coming forward to accuse him publicly of sexual and physical violence. But the story hasn't ended. What's behind his influence and how can minds be changed?

Talking to Tom Gatti,
The Observer Literary Editor

In an unconventional and witty history, the award-winning writer and broadcaster - and one of the most exciting historians writing today - delves into Britain's past, exploring the country through eighteen notable figures at that most formative age. From a young Elizabeth Tudor facing deadly intrigue at court, to Empress Matilda, Geoffrey Chaucer and Richard Burton, join an eclectic cast of young Britons across the nation and throughout its history. With fascinating stories of royalty, explorers, writers and entertainers, she'll ask what lessons we can learn for modern Britain.

Talking to Olivia Chapman

Subtitled *An Unlikely History of The Buildings That Made Christianity*, the acclaimed writer and witty cleric is on a quest for a new people's history of Christianity, telling it through the stories of twelve churches scattered across the globe. Through a patchwork of interlinking and varied human stories, he will take us on a physical and historical journey, exploring the role of hope, faith and beauty in Christianity, but also its fraught relationships with sex, violence and power.

Talking to Professor Emma Smith

A treat for lovers of *Love Actually* and *Gavin & Stacey*, the Welsh actress shares her story, from finding herself away from her close family in the strange world of RADA to a glowing career via the RSC, *The Cazelets*, *Dr Who* and now as a regular presenter of *Loose Women*. She'll bring bags of stories about her famous co-stars, from James Cordon and Ruth Jones to Hugh Grant and Martin Freeman. (Who can forget his gentlemanly line in Richard Curtis' classic: 'It's Junction 13 that's just murder, isn't it? Total gridlock this morning?')

Talking to Julia Wheeler

Thursday 30th Oct

Julie Summers
WORKSHOP:
Writing a Life

£48.11 | 11am-1pm



This is the perfect workshop for anyone wanting to write about their own life or an interesting family member or ancestor. Join the acclaimed contemporary historian as she gives you guidance on writing a family memoir. You'll take a close look at autobiography, memoir, biography, and creative non-fiction, and discuss how these stories are told and the extent to which this influences what we think we know about our own lives and those of others. There will be opportunities to explore contemporary examples of life-writing that challenge traditional autobiographical and biographical narratives, and the boundaries between fiction and non-fiction.

Thursday 30th Oct

Lynne Parker
COMEDY WORKSHOP:
Stand Up to Stand Out

£21.65 | 8pm-9.30pm

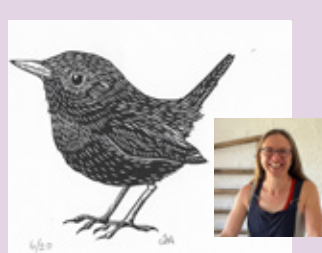


Lynne Parker is on a mission to help people express themselves more confidently. This fun, informal workshop has its roots in her work with Funny Women over the last 23 years, empowering women and their male allies to perform, write and do business with humour. Discover her tried and tested tricks of the comedy trade that will provide insights and inspiration for you, including advice on how to 'perform', express yourself memorably and bring your ideas to life. You'll learn techniques to communicate more effectively and tell your own story, get ideas on how to connect with the people you need, and find out how humour can help you keep them interested. Perfect for your work and personal life and for people starting out in stand-up comedy. Bar open.

Friday 31st Oct

Alix Almond
WORKSHOP:
Linocut

£48.11 | 9.30am-12:30pm



Back by popular demand! Learn to linocut and create your own card - perfect for Christmas. Carve and handprint a single colour design of your choice, be inspired by your favourite image, guided by printmaker Alix Almond. Come and find out all about the magic of the printing spoon! Suitable for beginners or those with some experience of linocut. Alix teaches linocut workshops across Coventry and Warwickshire. She uses a variety of linocut techniques to print single colour, reduction and layered linocuts and is inspired by landscapes, wildlife and colour.

Ticket price includes all materials

Friday 31st Oct

Ursula Jeakins
CRAFT WORKSHOP:
Make a Journal

£37.55 | 10am-12.30pm



The Gloucestershire Guild bookbinder returns to the Festival with her fabulous workshop in which you'll construct and bind a playful album-style journal, personalising your pages with windows, pockets and fold-outs. Using special papers, you'll make a beautiful handmade gift or somewhere to store special memories. Craft knives will be used at the workshop, under supervision but at your own risk.

Ticket price includes all materials

Saturday 1st Nov

Layla Robinson
WORKSHOP:
Wreath Making

£64.14 | 10.30am-12pm



Join the floral artist who uses dried flowers and foliage to create vibrant, long-lasting, sustainable pieces that preserve nature's fleeting beauty. She'll show you how to cut and dry flowers while retaining their bright hues and step-by-step how to create a wow-factor wreath that will last for a long time and not just for Christmas.

Ticket price includes all materials

Workshops

Numbers are limited so book early!

Sunday 2nd Nov

Mark Goodliffe
and Simon Anthony
WORKSHOP: Cracking
The Cryptic - Sudoku

£12.83 | 10am



Flummoxed by sudoku or going great guns and want to go up a level? Back by popular demand after their sell-out event last time, the puzzlers behind *Cracking The Cryptic* (the most popular YouTube sudoku channel) will attempt to solve one of the fiendishly difficult sudokus they tackle in their videos in a 'live' edition of *Cracking The Cryptic*, giving hints and tips along the way. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions afterwards.

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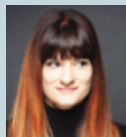
Writers' Weekend

31st October to 2nd November 2025

Whether you're confident in your writing and need advice, don't know where to start or have simply hit a wall, this is the writing experience for you. With seven events, including a one-to-one with an editor from a leading publishing house, plus the opportunity to make the most of all the other events happening at the Festival around your sessions, this will be a wonderfully immersive experience for writers in the setting of a luxurious 4* riverside hotel.

We especially want to encourage writers whose work reflects their cultural diversity and/or lived experience of being part of an underrepresented community and, thanks to the generosity of the Amazon Literary Partnership, we are also delighted to be able to offer supported places for people in education, or on a low income and in receipt of benefits.

About the Tutors



Caroline Lea

Fiction writer, teacher and writing mentor, her latest novel, *Love, Sex & Frankenstein*, was published this year. Her fiction and poetry have been long and shortlisted for many prestigious prizes and she has taught creative writing at the University of Warwick and has run courses for Writing West Midlands.



Phoebe Morgan

Author and Executive Publisher at Simon and Schuster. Her psychological thrillers include *The Doll House* and *The Girl Next Door* and her books have sold over 150,000 copies and been translated into nine languages.

Friday 31st October

From 6pm

Arrival and Writers'
Weekend welcome supper

Meet your fellow workshopppers over an informal supper.

Saturday 1st November

9.30am-12pm

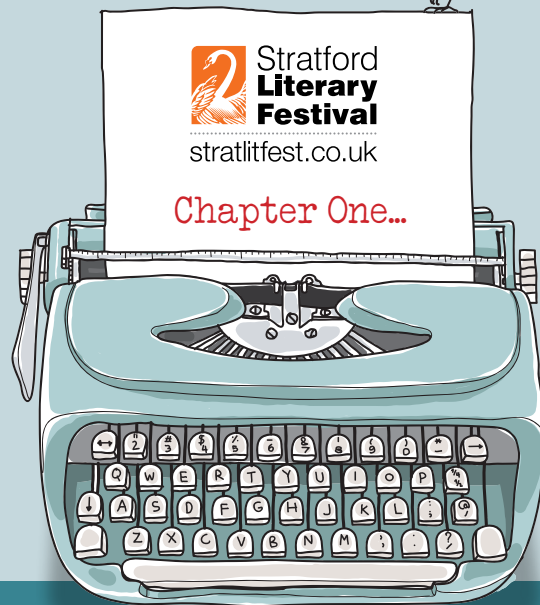
Caroline Lea
Creating Compelling
Characters and Dialogue

This session will look at character development and the interaction between your characters, and help you to draw authentic protagonists and communication between them.



 **Stratford
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stratlitfest.co.uk

Chapter One...



12.30pm-1.30pm

John-Paul Kuniunmi
Social Media for Authors (Optional)

A workshop designed for anyone wanting to know how to promote themselves on social media.

2.30pm-4.30pm

Caroline Lea
Researching your Ideas and Crafting Atmospheric Settings

Whatever your chosen genre, this session is aimed at helping you to tackle research and create compelling settings.

Sunday 2nd November

10am-12pm

Phoebe Morgan
Getting that Hook - Crafting Your Elevator Pitch

In this interactive session, Phoebe will show you how to craft an elevator pitch that will catch the attention of agents and editors.

12.30pm-1.30pm

Darren Hardy
Self-Publishing Workshop (Optional)

Darren has over 30 years' experience in publishing and will show you how self-publishing works and walk you through Amazon's Kindle Direct Publishing process.

12.30pm-2pm

Phoebe Morgan
Meet the Editor

Your chance to have a personal ten-minute session with the Hodder & Stoughton commercial fiction editor.

2.30pm-3.30pm

Joe McLaren and Phoebe Morgan
Judging a Book by its Cover (Optional)

Discover the conversations that go on behind this critically important publishing decision from the point of view of an editor and a book jacket designer.

Writers' Weekend Cost

Residential Place

Including two nights' stay with breakfast and dinner on Friday and Saturday evening, two course lunch on Saturday 1st November and seven workshop sessions

£670 per person

Non-Residential Place

Including dinner on Friday and Saturday evening, two course lunch on Saturday 1st November and seven workshop sessions

£400 per person

Supported Residential Place

Including two nights' stay with breakfast and dinner on Friday and Saturday evening, two course lunch on Saturday 1st November and seven workshop sessions

£335 per person

Supported Non-Residential Place

Including dinner on Friday and Saturday evening, two course lunch on Saturday 1st November and seven workshop sessions

£200 per person

Supported Places

We want to ensure that the opportunity to learn the craft of creative writing is within the reach of everyone, regardless of your financial circumstances.

Thanks to the support by the Amazon Literary Partnership, we can offer 3 residential and 3 non-residential places on a first-come first-served basis to writers from the following groups.

■ **Students** ■ **People on income support** ■ **Unwaged People**

How to Book

Email us at info@stratfordliteraryfestival.co.uk





Events for Families

Please note:
Adults are also
expected to buy
a ticket to events
unless otherwise
stated.

Thursday 30th Oct

Maz Evans
The Last Bard

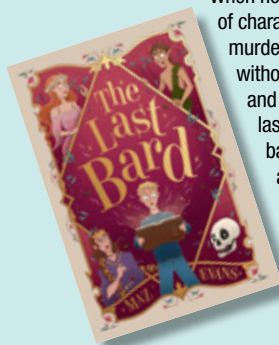
£8.55 | 10.30am | Age 8+



While clearing out his late grandfather's flat, Will Davenant discovers a surprising copy of *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*.

When he opens the book, a group of characters tumble out: the murderous Lady Macbeth, Juliet without Romeo, a mumbling skull and a fairy called Puck. Will is the last descendant of the legendary bard, William Shakespeare, and he's accidentally summoned them to help with some neighbourly troubles. Comedy, tragedy, history: Will's world has it all... the superstar author Maz Evans is back with a new standalone story.

Join her and find out more!



Thursday 30th Oct

Cat Weatherill
A Visit from Mother Goose

FREE | 2pm | Age 3+



Fire imaginations and get creative with a joyous introduction to the traditional fairy tale character of Mother Goose. Presented by storyteller Cat Weatherill, this hugely entertaining session will feature stories, nursery rhymes and puppets.

Please note
that this
event is at
Stratford
Library!



Friday 31st Oct

Ursula Jeakins
Craft Workshop:
Stationery and Bookmaking

£16.04 | 2-4pm | Age 11+*

Make your own stunning notebooks and stationery using bookbinding techniques under the expert guidance of Ursula Jeakins. There'll be take-home kits available for purchase. Please note: sharp craft knives are used at this workshop. Instruction will be given but participants use them at their own risk.

Ticket prices includes all materials



*Young people under 14 years can attend alone but a contact number for a responsible adult must be left. The Festival cannot be responsible for their care.

Saturday 1st November

Sammie Horton and Playbox

Spooky Halloween Theatre Workshop

£8.55 | 10.30am-12pm | Age 7+



Join the brilliant Playbox Theatre for an imaginative and action-packed workshop! Dive into spooky stories and ghostly tales through a blend of mime, movement, role play, and improvisation. This 90-minute session is perfect for boosting imagination, confidence, and creative energy.

Saturday 1st November

Spooky Drop In and Do Spoooooky Halloween

FREE | 11am-12.30pm | Age 4-11



Join Becci Smith and get crafty with us this Halloween! With malevolent masks, petrifying puppets and creepy colouring to choose from. Drop in... if you dare!



Saturday 1st November

Thiago de Moraes Comic Workshop

£10.69 | 12.30pm OR 2.30pm | Age 7+

In partnership with *The Phoenix* comic, join the brilliant comic illustrator as he shows you how to create your own characters so you can start to make your own characters and stories for your own comic.



In partnership with
The Phoenix comic

Saturday 1st November

Sara Johnson Children's Facepainting

FREE | 11am-12.30pm | Age 3+



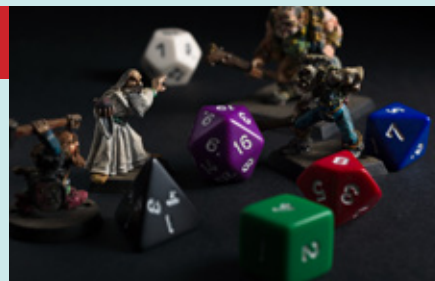
Sara Johnson will transform you into something ghoulish and ghastly to terrify friends and family!

Saturday 1st November

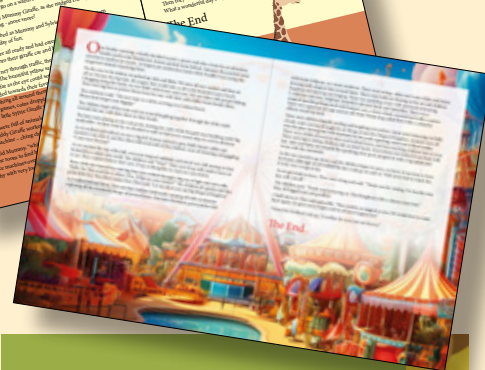
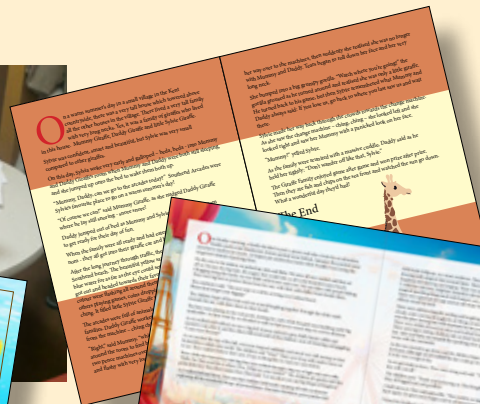
Gaming Event

£10.69 | 5pm-6.30pm | Age 11-16*

Are you a budding young adventurer ready to slay? Come and play Dungeons & Dragons with our talented team of Dungeon Masters. Borrow some dice and a ready-made character from us and get stuck in! No experience necessary - we'll help you all the way.



Festival in the Community



Books with Friends

We run three free sessions on the last Thursday of the month in the centre of Stratford at which over a cup of coffee members share their thoughts on a book they've all read. We especially welcome people who find themselves a bit isolated for whatever reason. If you would like to join the group, please email us at info@stratfordliteraryfestival.co.uk

Bedtime Story Workshops in Prisons

Since 2017, we've run over 55 workshops in prisons across the country with the children's authors Hollie Hughes and Smriti Prasad-Halls, and author and teacher Patrick Kincaid, teaching prisoners to write a bedtime story for their children, which we then professionally produce for them. The aims of the workshops are to reduce the trauma for the child of having a parent in prison, and to discourage reoffending. Find out more on our website: stratlitfest.co.uk

Our outreach programme is supported by:

The 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust
The Seccombe Trust, Stratford Town Trust
STRADFAS and The Allen Lane Trust
Victoria Wood Foundation
World of Books
Friends of the Festival and private benefactors

Festival in Schools

Throughout the year we run projects and take authors into schools to inspire young people to have a lifelong love of books. Our events are designed to respond to National Literacy Trust research on the drop in the number of children reading for enjoyment. We've been working or will be working with the following brilliant authors in 2025:

Gareth P Jones
Tom Percival
Onjali Q Raúf
Tim Minshall
Kate Wakeling
Nadia Shireen
Maz Evans

Charlie Higson
Jasbinder Bilan
Nikesh Shukla
Cat Weatherill
Jenny McLachlan
Holly Swain

If you'd like us to bring an author to your school, please email at info@stratfordliteraryfestival.co.uk



Your Visit

We want to make it as enjoyable as possible

FESTIVAL INFORMATION DESK AND BOX OFFICE

We'll be there from before the first event of the day until after the last to answer your questions and guide you to venues. You can buy tickets here too (subject to availability) and pay by cash or card.

LOCAL AUTHORS' POP-UP

We're celebrating independently published local writers once again. Meet them for a chat and buy copies of their books.



WATERSTONES POP-UP BOOKSHOP

You'll find the bookshop behind the Festival Information Desk and you can buy signed copies of books by all the authors appearing at the Festival. Signings will take place there or in the venue where the author is speaking.

FESTIVAL CAFÉ

This year the Festival has its own hub café in the Seymour Room for cold drinks and coffee or tea. A place to rest between events, meet up with friends and talk about what you've seen or are planning to see.

FESTIVALGOERS' SPECIAL DISCOUNT

Show your ticket for an event that day and you'll receive **10% off food and drinks** at the Crowne Plaza Hotel.





ACCESSIBILITY

All venues have step-free access, and toilets that are accessible to wheelchair users and those with mobility challenges.

Tickets are available for those attendees who are disabled and/or use a wheelchair and include a companion ticket.

If you have sight or hearing impairment, please email us at info@stratfordliteraryfestival.co.uk and we will endeavour to seat you close to the stage.

We use microphones at all events except workshops.

YOUR TICKETS

When you book by phone, tickets will be posted or emailed to you as eTickets. When you book online you will be emailed eTickets. These will come from TicketSource, not from the Festival, so please check your spam.

You can either print out your tickets to show our Stewards or show us on your phone.

Can't find your ticket? eTickets (print at home) can be re-sent to you by our ticketing agent, TicketSource, by going to ticketSource.co.uk/help#contact-eo and completing the form under the heading Lost your eTicket?

For lost mobile or postal tickets, please email support@ticketSource.co.uk with your details. TicketSource will re-send the tickets.

During the Festival week in May, please go to the Information Desk in the Foyer of the Crowne Plaza Hotel and we will be pleased to assist.

Tickets for events that still have availability can be bought from our Box Office desk in the Foyer of the Crowne Plaza Hotel up to 10 minutes prior to an event starting. We can accept card or cash.



Stratford
**Literary
Festival**

stratlitfest.co.uk



PARKING

There is free parking at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, but **you must register your car at Reception or you will incur a fine.** The Festival cannot be responsible for any fines incurred.

N.B. Roads around Stratford can get busy. Please allow enough time for your journey.

Our Sponsors and Supporters

The Festival would like to thank the following for their sponsorship and support.

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The Phoenix comic



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Shane Tingey
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If you would like to become a Festival Friend or Benefactor and support our outreach work, please go to stratlitfest.co.uk or email info@stratfordliteraryfestival.co.uk

Festive Dining



SCAN TO VIEW OUR
SAMPLE MENU

FESTIVE SET MENU

Three-course lunch - £37.50 per person*

Three-course dinner - £37.50 per person*

(*Available every day in December)

FESTIVE AFTERNOON TEA

£37.50 per person*

(*Available every day in December)

CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH

Join us for a magnificent four-course Christmas Day lunch...

£125.00 per person

BOXING DAY

Set four-course menu and a glass of fizz.

Lunch | £45.00 per person

Dinner* | £65.00 per person

(*Dinner includes live music)

NEW YEAR'S DAY BRUNCH

A wonderful continental selection available,
paired with one hot dish and a glass of Champagne.

£35.00 per person



Terms and Conditions

Most events take place at the Crowne Plaza Hotel,
but please check your ticket and our 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 or any details change.
- » Tickets are sold through an external box office. Tickets are non-refundable and cannot be exchanged. All tickets booked by phone or online include a booking fee. This booking fee is charged by our external box office. Postal ticket delivery is an additional £2.50. 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 will be on sale at the Festival Information Desk during the Festival, 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 unreserved. Some events may have staggered pricing based on where you will be seated in the auditorium.
- » No animals are permitted into the Crowne Plaza Hotel except assistance dogs.
- » Accessibility: all venues can accommodate wheelchairs and those with mobility issues, and there is an accessible toilet. 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. All speakers use a microphone except in workshops.
- » 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 unless otherwise stated. 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 Instagram 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 if applicable 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 for signature not purchased at the event.
- » 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.

Stratford Literary Festival is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation No. 1164662

Making the Festival Happen

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; all the staff at Waterstones Stratford and the Crowne Plaza Hotel; our interviewers; and of course our Friends and Benefactors, audiences, sponsors and advertisers who make the Festival possible.

Festival Patron: Maggie O'Farrell

Festival Outreach Patron: Julia Donaldson

Festival Trustees: Neil Davis, David Fletcher, Dr Diana Owen OBE (Acting Chair), Madeleine Parker, Professor Emma Smith and Julia Wheeler

Graphic Design: Mike Nicholas at Shock the Senses

Festival Photographer and Film: Rupert Barnes

Festival Faces Photographer: Lorentz Gullachsen

Production: ProSound & Light

Our Interviewers:

Olivia Chapman

Clare Clark

Jill Douglas

Tom Gatti

Tim Hubbard

John Jefferies

Fiona Lindsay

Iain MacGregor

Simon Mason

Brendan McLoughlin

Deirdre Shields

Jenna Smith

Julia Wheeler

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At a Glance

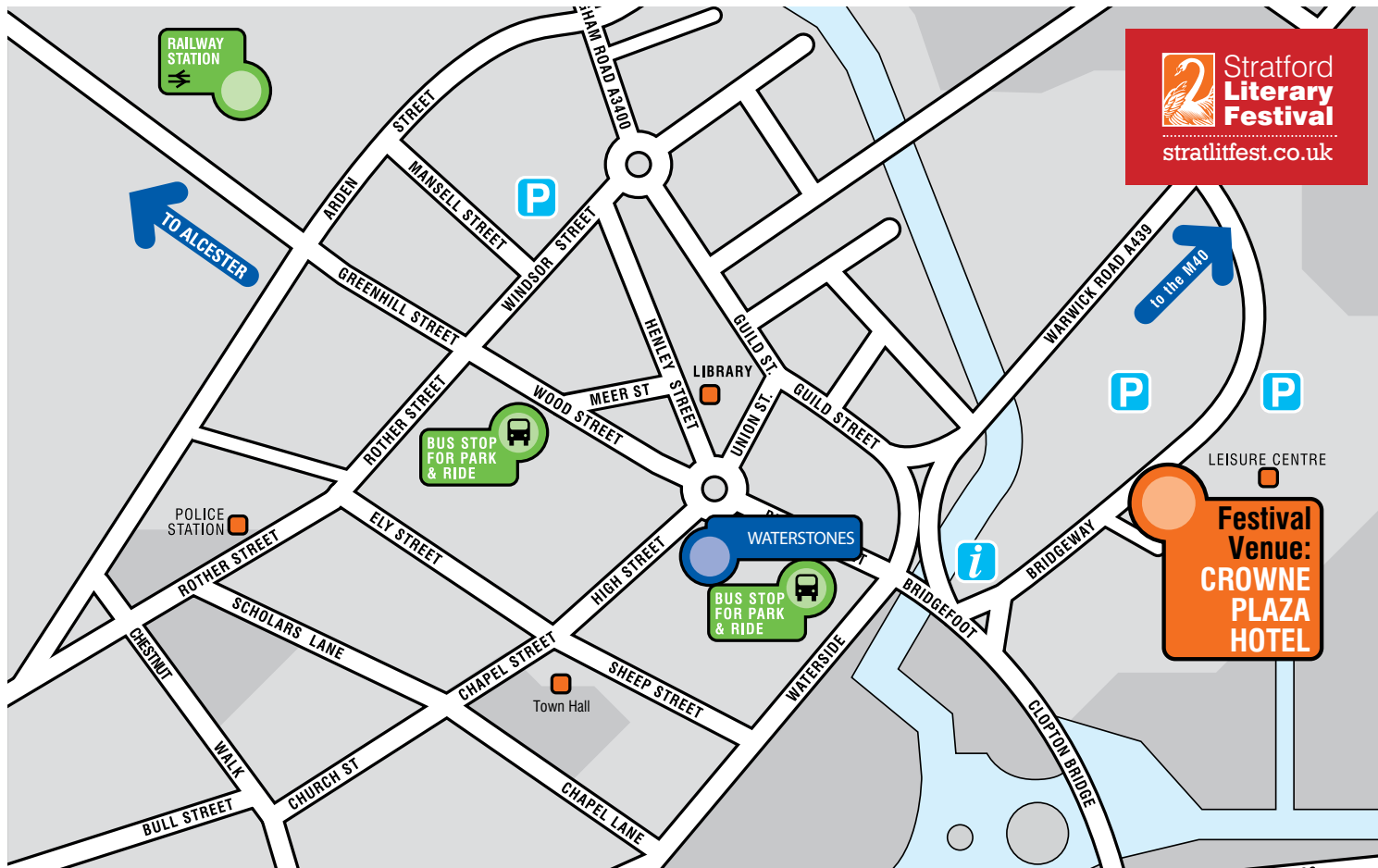
Date	Time	Event/Workshop	Booked
Thur 30 th Oct	11am-1pm	Workshop - Julie Summers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thur 30 th Oct	12.30pm	Sir Tony Robinson	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thur 30 th Oct	12:30pm	Iain MacGregor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thur 30 th Oct	2pm	Lucy Upton	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thur 30 th Oct	2pm	Julie Summers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thur 30 th Oct	2.30pm	Jonathan Dimbleby	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thur 30 th Oct	4pm	Baroness Sue Campbell and Dame Denise Lewis	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thur 30 th Oct	4pm	Valentine Low	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thur 30 th Oct	4.30pm	Guy Hale and Howard Lindsey	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thur 30 th Oct	5.30pm	Mark Radcliffe	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thur 30 th Oct	6pm	Andrew Bayliss	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thur 30 th Oct	6.30pm	Luke Kennard, Aimee MacDonald and Lucie McKnight Hardy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thur 30 th Oct	7.30pm	John Cleese	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thur 30 th Oct	7.30pm	Dr Tara Porter	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thur 30 th Oct	8pm-9.30pm	Lynne Parker	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fri 31 st Oct	9:30am-12:30pm	Workshop - Alix Almond	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fri 31 st Oct	10am-12.30pm	Workshop - Ursula Jeakins	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fri 31 st Oct	12pm	Graham Norton	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fri 31 st Oct	2pm	Michael Mansfield KC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fri 31 st Oct	2.30pm	Victoria Bateman	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fri 31 st Oct	3pm	Sandra Roycroft-Davis	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fri 31 st Oct	4pm	Sir Anthony Seldon	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fri 31 st Oct	4.30pm	Joanne Briggs and Jon Stock	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fri 31 st Oct	4.30pm	Joseph Jebelli	<input type="checkbox"/>

Date	Time	Event/Workshop	Booked
Fri 31 st Oct	5.30pm	Annie Gray	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fri 31 st Oct	6pm	Lord Jonathan Sumption	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fri 31 st Oct	6pm	Caroline Lea	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fri 31 st Oct	7pm	Cally Beaton	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fri 31 st Oct	8pm	Mick Herron	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fri 31 st Oct	8.30pm	Roll Britannia	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat 1 st Nov	10.30am-12pm	Workshop - Layla Robinson	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat 1 st Nov	12:30pm	Gyles Brandreth	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat 1 st Nov	12:30pm	John-Paul Kunrunmi	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat 1 st Nov	1pm	Lucy Easthope	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat 1 st Nov	2pm	Edward Brooke-Hitching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat 1 st Nov	2.30pm	Alison Weir	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat 1 st Nov	2.30pm	Saabira Chaudhuri and Julia Shaw	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat 1 st Nov	3.30pm	Clare Leslie Hall and Claire Lynch	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat 1 st Nov	4.30pm	Lady Brenda Hale	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat 1 st Nov	5pm-6.30pm	Gaming Event 11-16	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat 1 st Nov	5.45pm	James Cheshire	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat 1 st Nov	6.30pm	Nicola Sturgeon	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat 1 st Nov	7pm	The Booklovers' Wine Club	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat 1 st Nov	7pm	Martin O'Neill	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat 1 st Nov	8pm	Looking for Me Friend	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat 1 st Nov	7.30pm-9pm	Games Café	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat 1 st Nov	8.30pm	Rhys James	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sun 2 nd Nov	10am	Workshop - Sudoku	<input type="checkbox"/>

Date	Time	Event/Workshop	Booked
Sun 2 nd Nov	10am	Nicola Sturgeon, Andrew Lownie, Ian Acheson	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sun 2 nd Nov	11.30am	Andrew Ziminski	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sun 2 nd Nov	12pm	Andrew Lownie	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sun 2 nd Nov	12:30pm	Darren Hardy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sun 2 nd Nov	1pm	Nicola Kelly and Aamna Mohdin	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sun 2 nd Nov	2pm	Ian Acheson and Gen Glaister	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sun 2 nd Nov	2.30pm	Joe McLaren and Phoebe Morgan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sun 2 nd Nov	2.30pm	James Fox and Clare Hunter	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sun 2 nd Nov	4pm	Lyse Doucet	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sun 2 nd Nov	4.30pm	Vanessa Taylor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sun 2 nd Nov	4.30pm	Jamie Tahsin and Matt Shea	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sun 2 nd Nov	5.30pm	Alice Loxton	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sun 2 nd Nov	6pm	Fergus Butler-Gallie	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sun 2 nd Nov	7pm	Joanna Page	<input type="checkbox"/>

Events for Families

Date	Time	Event/Workshop	Booked
Thur 30 th Oct	10.30am	The Last Bard	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thur 30 th Oct	2pm	A Visit from Mother Goose	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fri 31 st Oct	2pm-4pm	Journal making 11+	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat 1 st Nov	10.30-12pm	Spooky Halloween Theatre Workshop 7+	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat 1 st Nov	11am-12.30pm	Children's Facepainting	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat 1 st Nov	11am-12.30pm	Spookoooy Halloween 4-11 yrs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat 1 st Nov	12.30pm	Comic Workshop	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat 1 st Nov	2.30pm	Comic Workshop	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sat 1 st Nov	5pm-6.30pm	Gaming Event	<input type="checkbox"/>





Pragnell

CRAFTING NATURE'S RARE JEWELS

—

Authentic Victorian jewellery is characterised by its ornate sentimental symbols such as hearts, or nature motifs including flowers and leaves. Often highly embellished or intricately engraved, this era of jewellery is testament to a bygone era of artisan expression.

—

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