



WIGTOWN BOOK FESTIVAL

22 SEPTEMBER - 4 OCTOBER 2021



/wigtownbookfestival



@wigtownbookfest

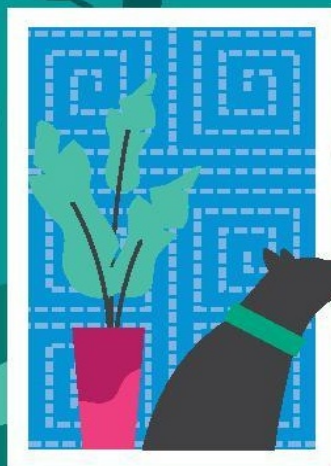


@wigtownbookfest



Wigtown Book Festival

Join us in person
or live online in
Scotland's National
Book Town



wigtownbookfestival.com

Charity No. SC037984

Dumfries
& Galloway

EventScotland

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How to Book

All tickets must be booked through the Box Office in advance.

BY PHONE

During office hours: Tel 01988 403222

IN PERSON

Our box office is behind our offices at 11 North Main Street, Wigtown, DG8 9HN.

Opening hours are: In advance of the festival: Mon-Sat 9am-5pm, Sun 10am-4pm

During the festival: Daily 9am-6.30pm

ONLINE BOOKING

Via our website 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at www.wigtownbookfestival.com

Watching online is free. By registering for a ticket you will receive a reminder email.

Covid Safety

We take the health and wellbeing of our audience, guests, volunteers and staff seriously, and have taken steps to keep everyone safe.

- Audience members and volunteers must wear a mask at indoor events.
- While queuing and when seated, 1m distancing will be implemented between groups.
- Booking name and order ID will be required at the door. There are no physical tickets.
- A volunteer will show audience members to their seats.
- Ventilation will be maximised at all times. You are welcome to bring a blanket.
- Where possible, one-way systems are in place in venues.
- Some events are also available online.

WEDNESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER



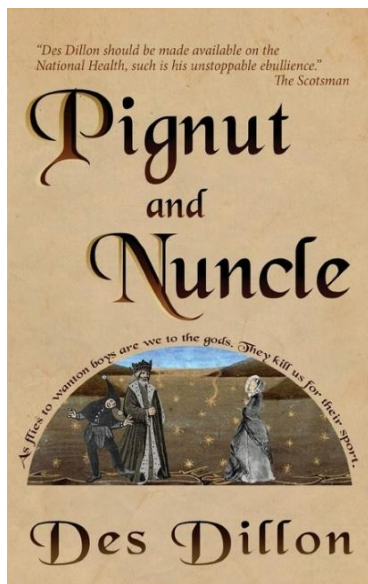
7pm, County Buildings (in-person and online)

Will Buckingham: Hello, Stranger || £5

In this event, the chairperson will be in the venue and the speaker will be joining remotely. £5 tickets will be redeemable against a copy of the book when purchased at the venue during the event.

Take a deep dive into our need to interact with strangers — as potential allies, companions, and friends. Following the death of his partner, Buckingham realised that opening up to others would help him steer a path through grief and became immersed in the rich tradition of hosting and meeting strangers. He'll share his insights from philosophy, anthropology, history and literature, to explain how our traditions of meeting the 'other' can mitigate the issues of our time — including the forced solitude of the pandemic — offering a powerful antidote to our increasingly atomised world.

THURSDAY 23 SEPTEMBER



12 noon, County Buildings

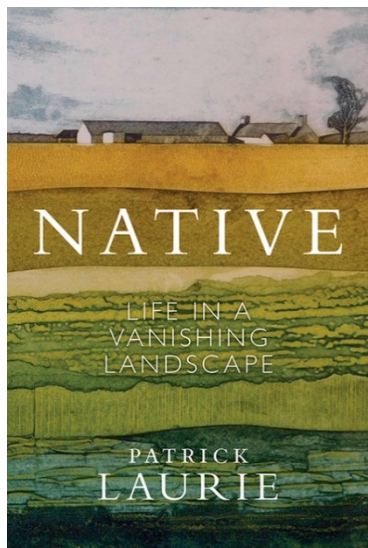
Des Dillon: Pignut and Nuncle || £8

In his extraordinary new novel, Des Dillon mixes familiar with surreal to explore the dark side of humanity's soul. Jane Eyre, beloved heroine of Charlotte Brontë's novel, finds herself alone and lost on a stormbound moor. Her only hope comes when she finally stumbles across two men trying to find shelter. There's only one problem, they claim to be King Lear and his faithful fool.

About the author: Des Dillon is an internationally acclaimed award-winning writer from Scotland. He studied English Literature and Popular Culture and later taught English. Des is a poet, short story writer, novelist and dramatist; he is also a scriptwriter for radio and screen. His novel, Me and Ma Gal, was included on the list of 100 Greatest Ever Scottish Books. Des also has two new poetry collections, Daily Bread and Muscle Work, Alcohol and Blame.

2pm, Wigtown Parish Church

Patrick Laurie: Native || £8



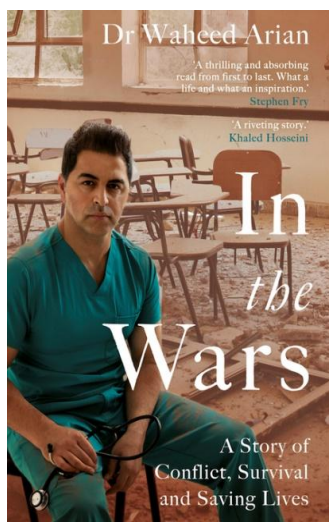
Desperate to connect with his native Galloway, Patrick Laurie plunges into work on his family farm in the hills of southwest Scotland. Investing in the oldest and most traditional breeds of Galloway cattle, the Riggie Galloway, he begins to discover how cows once shaped people, places and nature in this remote and half-hidden place. As the cattle begin to dictate the pattern of his life, Patrick stumbles upon the passing of an ancient rural heritage. The people and the cattle have gone, and this withdrawal has shattered many centuries of tradition and custom. Much has been lost, and the new forests have driven the catastrophic decline of the much-loved curlew, a bird which features strongly in Galloway's consciousness. The links between people, cattle and wild birds become a central theme as Patrick begins to face the reality of life in a vanishing landscape.

About the author: Patrick Laurie is a freelance journalist. His blog Working for Grouse is visited by over 30,000 visitors each year. As well as writing and farming, he works for Soil Association Scotland on a programme which supports conservation projects on farmland. His first book, The Black Grouse (Merlin Unwin, 2012), was the first natural history book on this rare and declining species.

THURSDAY 23 SEPTEMBER continued

4pm, County Buildings (in-person and online)

Waheed Arian: In the Wars || £5



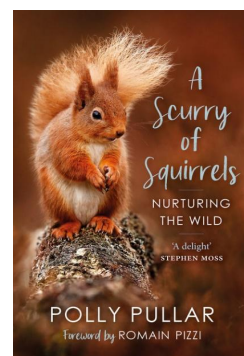
In this event, the chairperson will be in the venue and the speaker will be joining remotely. £5 tickets will be redeemable against a copy of the book when purchased at the venue during the event.

Born in war-torn Afghanistan, Waheed Arian's earliest memories are of bombs. Fleeing the conflict with his family, he spent much of his childhood in refugee camps in Pakistan. How does a boy with nothing hope to become a doctor? Working through PTSD and anxiety, he studied all hours to achieve his vocation. He was accepted to read medicine at Cambridge University, Imperial College and Harvard, and went on to become a doctor in the NHS. This is the extraordinary memoir of a boy who recognised the power of education and dreamed about helping others. It's a tale of courage, ambition and unwavering resilience in the face of all the challenges that life can throw in your way.

6pm, Wigtown Parish Church (in-person and online)

Polly Pullar: A Scurry of Squirrels || £8

Festival favourite Pullar has had a passion for red squirrels since childhood. As a wildlife rehabilitator working on a beautiful Perthshire farm, she's hand-reared numerous litters of orphan kits, eventually returning them to the wild. She'll share stories of her knowledge and experience, exploring how our perceptions of these animals have changed. Heavily persecuted until the 1960s, red squirrels have since become one of the nation's most adored mammals — but the species' future is not secure.



7pm, Online

Justin A. Reynolds || Forever Ends on Friday

From the author of *Opposite of Always*, *Forever Ends on Friday* channels science fiction to invest a tale of second chances and forced goodbyes with enormous emotional power.

Sunday Times Children's Book of the Week, *Forever Ends on Friday* weaves together loss, grief, friendship, and love to form a wholly unique homage to the bonds that bring people together for life – and beyond. What if you could bring your best friend back to life – but only for a short time?

8.30pm, Meet at County Buildings

Stargazing Walk || £10

Join freelance ranger Elizabeth Tindal for a stargazing walk around Wigtown and its environs. Meet outside the County Buildings.

FRIDAY 24 SEPTEMBER

10am, County Buildings

Andrew Painting: Regeneration || £8

What do we see when we look at our wild places? What should we see? In 1995 the National Trust for Scotland acquired Mar Lodge Estate in the heart of the Cairngorms. Home to over 5,000 species, this vast expanse of Caledonian woodlands, subarctic mountains, bogs, moors, roaring burns and frozen lochs could be a place where environmental conservation and Highland field sports would exist in harmony. The only problem was that due to centuries of abuse by human hands, the ancient Caledonian pinewoods were dying, and it would take radical measures to save them.

After 25 years of extremely hard work, the pinewoods, bogs, moors and mountains are returning to their former glory. Regeneration is the story of this success, featuring not only the people who are protecting the land and quietly working to undo the wrongs of the past, but also the myriad creatures which inspire them to do so.

10am, Meet at Martyrs' Stake Car Park

Saltmarsh Library Walk 1: Wigtown Bay || £10

Commissioned by Wigtown Book Festival for Scotland's Year of Coasts and Waters in 2020, The Saltmarsh Library is a new book by Saltire Award-winning writer Stephen Rutt exploring the history and ecology of Wigtown Bay's unique marshland. Join Stephen and countryside ranger Elizabeth Tindal for a rare chance to explore the secret of this extraordinary landscape in the company of experts. Dress for mud. (Two hours approximately)

This event has been made possible by support from the Together Again Fund, DG Unlimited, and Dumfries and Galloway Council.

12 noon, Wigtown Parish Church

Maggie Ritchie: Daisy Chain || £9

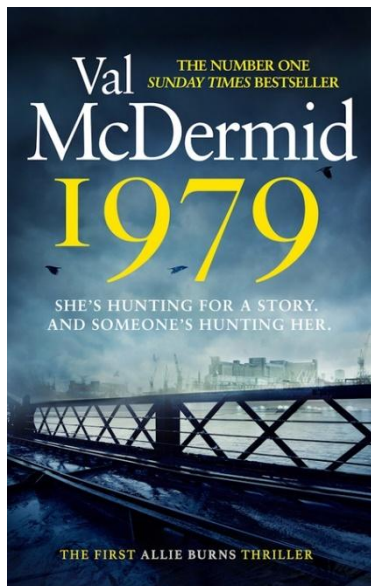
Lily Crawford and Jeanie Taylor, from very different backgrounds, are firm friends from their childhoods in Kirkcudbright. The lives of these two women are woven together, bringing them together only to be parted again. Together in Glasgow, they see a city at the height of its power in the years before the First World War - and a city of poverty and overcrowding. As Lily follows her husband to Shanghai in the early 1920s, the facade of glamour gives way to peril and her hope of survival lies with her old friend Jeanie.

12 noon, County Buildings

Dead Guid Scots || £8

Wigtown launches a unique exhibition and book involving 35 of Scotland's most celebrated poets. The installation comprises a model church and graveyard designed by Hugh Bryden. Each gravestone contains a memorial to a Scot, some brilliant, some quietly dynamic, some plain insane, who never quite made the history books. Some of the distinguished poets joining editor Hugh McMillan for readings during the event include Andy Jackson, Gerda Stevenson, Aileen Ballantyne, Morag Anderson, Douglas Lipton, Finola Scott and Chris Dolan.

FRIDAY 24 SEPTEMBER continued



2pm, County Buildings (in-person and online)

Val McDermid: 1979 || £12

Join the Queen of Crime as she travels back in time to kick off an exciting new series. *1979* takes place during the winter of discontent, when reporter Allie Burns is chasing her first big scoop. As one of the only women in the newsroom, she's looking for something explosive to break into the boys' club. Soon she's embroiled in exposing respectable Scotland's criminal underbelly — making dangerous enemies along the way.

About the author: Val McDermid is an award-winning, number one bestseller whose novels have sold over seventeen million copies. She's a Fellow of both the Royal Society of Literature and the Royal Society of Edinburgh and has been a judge for the Women's Prize for Fiction and the Man Booker Prize, and Chair of the Wellcome Book Prize in 2017.

2pm, The Bookshop Garden

Polly Pullar: Writing the Landscape || £10

Naturalist, author and photographer, Polly Pullar has been writing about landscapes and wildlife since she was a child when she filled copious diaries describing what she had experienced. Join her for a workshop that will inspire and enthuse you and help you to create words that build dramatic images with a strong sense of emotion and place.

This event has been made possible by support from the Together Again Fund, DG Unlimited, and Dumfries and Galloway Council.



4pm, County Buildings

Ewan Morrison: How to Survive Everything || £9

Billed as part thriller, part apocalyptic dystopia, and longlisted for the McIlvanney Prize 2021, Morrison's new novel focuses on a survivalist community in Northern Scotland as a deadly pandemic takes hold. Inspired by her father's advance planning and her own ingenuity and courage, this is one teenage girl's survival guide for navigating life under a new, even more deadly pandemic, from the confines of a prepper compound. Will she ride out the collapse of everything she knows with her family — and sanity — intact?

4pm, Wigtown Parish Church

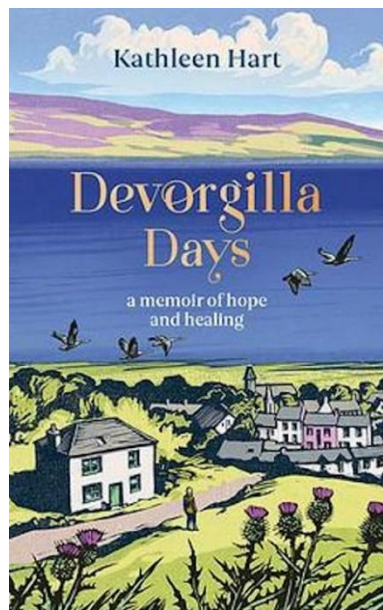
Donald S Murray: For the Safety of All || £9

Lighthouses punctuate Scotland's coastline, stoic lifelines for seafarers at the mercy of treacherous weather. Now, over 100 of Scotland's lighthouses are listed buildings. Donald S Murray explores the history of Scotland's lighthouses and what exactly fascinates so many about the life of a keeper. From ancient beacons to the work of the Stevensons and the Northern Lighthouse Board, and from wartime strife to automation and preservation, the lighthouses stand as a testament to the nation's innate connection to the sea.

FRIDAY 24 SEPTEMBER continued

6pm, County Buildings

Kathleen Hart: Devorgilla Days || £9



Eight years ago, Kathleen Hart was diagnosed with breast cancer. Further complications led to a protracted recovery and months spent in hospital, where Kathleen had to learn how to walk again. While recuperating, she came across a small, whitewashed cottage for sale in Wigtown, Scotland. Driving hundreds of miles on nothing more than a few photographs and an inkling, she bought it that very same day, and named it Devorgilla after the formidable 13th century Scottish princess. *Devorgilla Days* is the story of how Kathleen left behind her old life to begin again in Scotland's book capital. From renovating her cottage to exploring the seemingly quiet, but actually bustling town, she encounters a whole community of book lovers, beekeepers, artists and writers – and lobster fishermen. Heartwarming and deeply moving, *Devorgilla Days* is an inspiring tale of one woman's remarkable journey, a celebration of community, and a call-to-arms for anyone who has ever dreamt of starting over.

7pm, Online

Laura Bates: The Trial || FREE

No matter how you try to hide it, the truth will always come out ... the explosive new YA from the multi award-winning author, gender equality activist and founder of Everyday Sexism.

After a plane crash sees a group of seven teens washed up on a desert island, their first thought is survival. But a terrible secret from a party the night before has followed them ashore. Facing deadly threats and the fear of being stranded forever, they quickly discover that being the most popular kid in High School doesn't help when you're fighting to stay alive. As the island deals each of them a dangerous blow, it's clear that someone is looking for justice. Now survival depends on facing the truth about that party: who was hurt that night, and who let it happen?

8pm, Mercat Cross, Town Square

Festival Fireworks and Pipe Band || Not ticketed

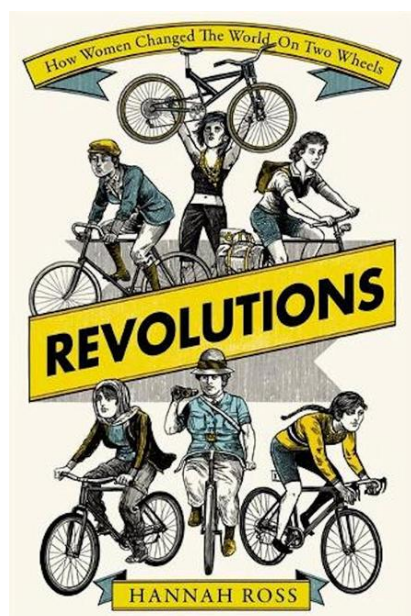
Marking the return of the festival to Wigtown, join us for the traditional first-Friday celebration. Join the walk from the Mercat cross to the field next to Bayview Nursery for fireworks over Wigtown Bay.

9pm, Online

Bookshop Band World Tour 1 || FREE

Join the Bookshop Band - Beth Porter and Ben Please - on the opening night of their concert tour of bookshops around the globe, featuring a host of special guests from the world of books brought to you by the magic of the interweb. Where will they venture tonight?

SATURDAY 25 SEPTEMBER



10am, Wigtown Parish Church

Hannah Ross: *Revolutions* || £9

History can be changed by the smallest act, even riding a bike. *Revolutions* by Hannah Ross highlights the forgotten females from cycling history and documents how cycling has been a driver of social and sexual change. From the streets of 1940s Paris, to the heart of the fight for suffrage, bicycles have been symbols of independence for some and lifelines for others. In this celebratory book, Hannah Ross introduces us to the women that changed the world through cycling, many of whom have been marginalised and forgotten.

About the author: Hannah Ross works for an independent publisher in London and volunteers for a charity that teaches refugee women to ride bikes. Given the choice, she would rather be pedaling up the side of a mountain than almost anywhere else.

10am, County Buildings

James Campbell: *Talking at the Gates* || £9

James Baldwin was one of the most incisive and influential American writers of the twentieth century. Active in the civil rights movement, open about his homosexuality, he was celebrated for eloquent analyses of social unrest and for daring portrayals of sexuality and interracial relationships. His writing has achieved the status of modern classics. James Campbell knew Baldwin, has interviewed many of the author's friends and associates, and examined hundreds of pages of correspondence. He was the first biographer to access the FBI's files. The result is a candid and original account of the life and work of a writer who believed 'the unexamined life is not worth living'.

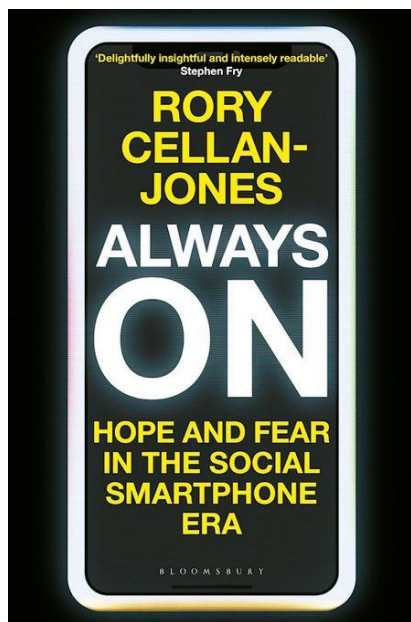
*About the author: James Campbell is the author of *Exiled in Paris*, and *This Is the Beat Generation*. He was born in Glasgow and was for many years an editor and columnist at the *Times Literary Supplement* in London.*

10am, Meet at Martyrs' Stake Car Park

Saltmarsh Library Walk 2: Wigtown Bay || £10

Commissioned by Wigtown Book Festival for Scotland's Year of Coasts and Waters in 2020, The Saltmarsh Library is a new book by Saltire Award-winning writer Stephen Rutt exploring the history and ecology of Wigtown Bay's unique marshland. Join Stephen and countryside ranger Elizabeth Tindal for a rare chance to explore the secret of this extraordinary landscape in the company of experts. Dress for mud. (Two hours approximately)

SATURDAY 25 SEPTEMBER continued



12 noon, Wigtown Parish Church (in-person and online)

Rory Cellan-Jones: Always On || £12

The smartphone is forcing radical changes in the way we live and work. This is an entertaining tour of the technology revolution, chronicling the rise and fall of tech empires, the excitement and wonder of new products and developments, and the clash between early utopianism about the mobile social revolution, versus the bullies and predators poisoning the well of social media. Learn more about the dramatic impact that hyper-connectivity, the smartphone and social media are having on everything from democracy to employment and health.

About the author: Rory Cellan-Jones is the BBC's chief technology correspondent. He has interviewed everyone from Jeff Bezos to Mark Zuckerberg, Elon Musk to Tim Berners-Lee. He hosts the BBC weekly podcast Tech Tent and is the author of Dot.Bomb: The Strange Death of Dot.Com Britain.

12 noon, County Buildings

Jini Reddy: Wanderland || £9

A London journalist with multicultural roots and a perennial outsider, Jini Reddy determinedly set off on an unorthodox path, to delve into the 'wanderlands' of Britain in search of the magical in the landscape. Serendipity and her inner compass guide her around the country in pursuit of the Other and a connection to Britain's captivating natural world. Whether following a 'cult' map to a hidden well that refuses to reveal itself, attempting to persuade a labyrinth to spill its secrets, embarking on a coast-to-coast pilgrimage or searching for a mystical land temple, Jini depicts a whimsical, natural Britain. Throughout, she rejoices in the wildness we cannot see and celebrates the natural beauty we can, while offering glimpses of her Canadian childhood and her Indian parents' struggles in apartheid-era South Africa. *Wanderland* is a book in which the heart leads, all things are possible and the Other, both wild and human, comes in from the cold. It is a paean to the joy of roaming, both figuratively and imaginatively, and to the joy of finding your place in the world.

12 noon, Sacred Heart Catholic Church

Tom Pow: Naranjas || £9

In his latest full collection of poems, Tom Pow's work is imprinted with landscapes, relationships and memories. They show how encounters with paintings, with reading and with history, through imaginative sympathy, can be transformed into personal lived experiences. The publication of *Naranjas*, marking Pow's seventieth year, shows him still writing poems "alive to the sounds, smells, noises and ironies of life," as Jim Burns commented on a previous collection. There is an urgency underlying the poems in this present work, as they seek to understand better how people live "in the green bone-yards of our world."

SATURDAY 25 SEPTEMBER continued

2pm, Wigtown Parish Church

Francis Spufford: *Light Perpetual* || £9

Called 'dazzling', 'brilliant', and 'exceptional', by critics and longlisted for the Booker Prize 2021, *Light Perpetual* begins in November 1944, when a German rocket strikes London and five young lives are instantaneously atomised. The novel imagines a world where that rocket never lands, where five lives go on to experience all the unimaginable changes of the twentieth century. Full of warmth and beauty, it is a story of the everyday, the miraculous and the everlasting.

2pm, The Bookshop Garden

Stephen Rutt: *Writing the Landscape* || £10

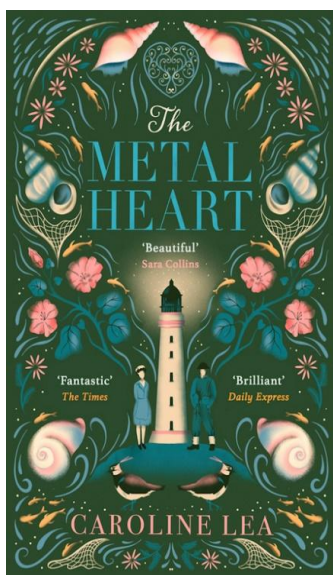
Join author Stephen Rutt for a workshop that will inspire and enthuse you and help you to create words that build dramatic images with a strong sense of emotion and place.

4pm, Wigtown Parish Church (in-person and online)

Alexander McCall Smith: *Bringing a Little Joy and Light to the World* || £12

Alexander McCall Smith hit lockdown with pen in hand and has not stopped writing since – so if you are ready for an hour of good cheer, laughter and uplifting conversation join us as he talks about his latest stand-alone novel and a new volume in the No.1 Ladies' Detective Agency series. *The Pavilion in the Clouds* is a hugely enjoyable psychological mystery set in the mist-shrouded hills high above a tea plantation in Ceylon, in the twilight days of British Empire. Meanwhile in *The Joy and Light Bus Company*, Mma Ramotswe's latest mystery is distinctly trickier than it initially appears, but she knows that most problems can be resolved with the support of loving friends and family, via tact, humour and goodwill.

About the author: Alexander McCall Smith is one of Scotland's best-loved authors, and has written and contributed to more than 100 books of fiction and non-fiction for adults and children. His works have been translated into forty-six languages and the No.1 Ladies' Detective Agency series alone has sold over twenty-five million copies worldwide.



4pm, County Buildings

Caroline Lea: *The Metal Heart* || £9

Wild and spellbinding, this is a compelling wartime story of freedom and love on Orkney. It is 1940, and 500 Italian POWs arrive to fortify these windswept islands. Most locals view them with suspicion, but orphaned sisters Dorothy and Constance, already outsiders, volunteer to nurse those who are injured or ill. Dorothy, especially, is entranced by an artist called Cesare, who plans to build an Italian chapel from war scrap and sea debris. But is he who he seems? And will the mistrust between islanders and prisoners bring danger home to roost?

*About the author: Caroline Lea grew up on the island of Jersey. Her fiction and poetry have been shortlisted for the Bridport Prize, and her debut novel, *The Glass Woman*, a gothic thriller set during the Icelandic witch trials, was shortlisted for the HWA Debut Crown Award.*

SATURDAY 25 SEPTEMBER continued

4pm, The Print Room

Imogen Stirling: Say the Word || FREE, ticketed

Join performance poet and theatre-maker Imogen Stirling (*Sky Arts, BBC, Neu! Reekie!*) for a welcoming and empowering workshop, exploring how to take your words from the page to the stage. Together, we'll explore techniques for writing spoken word poetry as well as delving into performance exercises, body language and vocal tips to teach you how to claim your space and express yourself with confidence. Suitable for all experience levels, this inclusive workshop will help participants to find their voices and tell their stories.

6pm, Wigtown Parish Church

Alistair Moffat: The Great Tapestry of Scotland || £9

The Great Tapestry of Scotland is an outstanding celebration of thousands of years of Scottish history and achievement, from the last Ice Age to Dolly the Sheep. 140 panels make up the tapestry, using 49,000 meters of yarn and taking 55,000 hours of sewing to complete. Like the Bayeux tapestry, it has been created on embroidered cloth, and is annotated in English, Gaelic, Scots and Latin. Alistair Moffat's book fuses full colour images of the tapestry together with descriptive and explanatory material to tell the full story behind the tapestry.

About the author: Alistair Moffat was born in Kelso, Scotland. He is an award winning Writer, Historian and former Director of the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and Director of Programmes at Scottish Television. He is the founder of Borders Book Festival and Co-Chairman of The Great Tapestry of Scotland.

6pm, County Buildings (in-person and online)

Salena Godden: Mrs Death Misses Death || £9

Meet Mrs Death. Exhausted and overworked she seeks someone to confide in, and asks a troubled young writer called Wolf to write her memoirs. Wolf is well acquainted with death, but has never met her before — this elderly, working-class black woman, the sort routinely ignored. Enthralled by her stories, Wolf becomes Mrs Death's scribe, and begins to write her memoirs. The unlikely pair explore deaths past and present. As they reflect on loss and the future of humanity, their friendship grows into an affirmation of hope and resilience.

7pm, Online

Caleb Azumah Nelson: Open Water || FREE

A stunning, shattering debut novel about two Black British artists falling in and out of love.

Gordon Burn Prize longlisted, Caleb Azumah Nelson's *Open Water* is at once an achingly beautiful love story and a potent insight into race and masculinity. *Open Water* asks what it means to be a person in a world that sees you only as a Black body, to be vulnerable when you are only respected for strength, to find safety in love, only to lose it.

Two young people meet at a pub in south-east London. Both are Black British, both won scholarships to private schools where they struggled to belong, both are now artists – he a photographer, she a dancer – trying to make their mark in a city that by turns celebrates and rejects them. Tentatively, tenderly, they fall in love. But two people who seem destined to be together can still be torn apart by fear and violence.

SATURDAY 25 SEPTEMBER continued

8pm, The Print Room

Imogen Stirling: Love the Sinner (Open Mic Night) || FREE

Imogen Stirling of Siren Theatre Company previews her forthcoming anthology *Love The Sinner* (Verve Poetry Press, 2022) and hosts an evening of spoken word, music and performance. We invite you to take to the stage or sit back and enjoy the evening's entertainment with a tippie in hand. This year's Open Mic takes the theme of The Seven Deadly Sins. You can sign up to share your work when you book your tickets or come along and sign up on the night.

8pm, County Buildings

Charles MacLean and Lance Butler: A Meeting of Spirits || £16

Mysterious, elusive, spine-tingling, and inspiring of endless stories: the worlds of whisky and paranormal have not a little in common. Join renowned whisky writer and raconteur Charles MacLean, and Lance Butler, chair of the Arthur Conan Doyle Centre, for a meeting of spirits, as they reflect on their experiences of things supernatural over a dram or two. Charles will also talk the audience through the whisky, which is provided. Over-18s only. Please drink sensibly. About the authors: Lance Butler taught literature, literary theory and stylistics at the Universities of Stirling in the UK, and Pau in France before retiring to Edinburgh. He is the author of books on Samuel Beckett and Philosophy, on Thomas Hardy, and on the Victorian Loss of Faith. Since discovering the Scientific and Medical Network in the 1980s he has been researching the question of 'life after death' and what is known about the possibility of the Survival of Consciousness beyond our final moments.

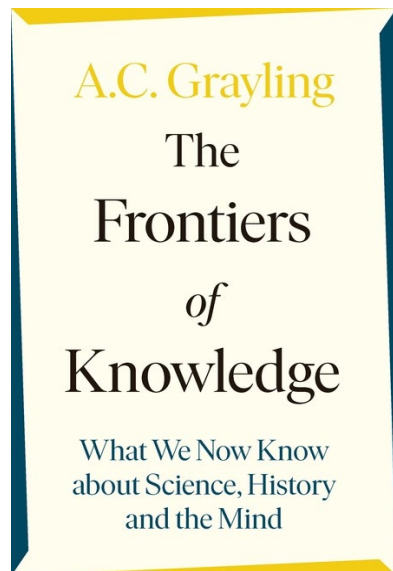
Scotland's leading whisky writer Charles MacLean was founding editor of Whisky Magazine. He has published 18 books to date, including the standard work on whisky brands, *Scotch Whisky* and the leading book on its subject, *Malt Whisky*, both of which were shortlisted for Glenfiddich Awards. He was granted the rare honour of being elected Master of the Quaich, the industry's highest accolade, in October 2009. In 2021, he received an MBE for services to Scotch whisky, UK exports and charity.

SUNDAY 26 SEPTEMBER

9am, Meet outside County Buildings

RSPB Wigtown Bird Walk || £10

Join RSPB ranger Paul Tarling for a gentle walk around the town and its environs in search of Wigtown's birdlife. Meet outside the County Buildings.



10am, County Buildings (in-person and online)

AC Grayling: The Frontiers of Knowledge || £5

In this event, the chairperson will be in the venue and the speaker will be joining remotely. £5 tickets will be redeemable against a copy of the book when purchased at the venue during the event.

Humanity has learnt a vast amount about the universe, but our remarkable successes in acquiring knowledge have mainly taught us how much we still have yet to learn. For example, our current science only addresses 5% of the universe; pre-history is still being revealed; and the neurosciences of mind and brain are in their infancy. What do we know, and how do we know it? What do we now know that we don't know? And what have we learnt about the obstacles to knowing more? Grayling seeks to answer these questions across three crucial areas: science, history and psychology.

10am, Meet at Wigtown Harbour

Saltmarsh Library Walk 3: Wigtown Bay || £10

Commissioned by Wigtown Book Festival for Scotland's Year of Coasts and Waters in 2020, The Saltmarsh Library is a new book by Saltire Award-winning writer Stephen Rutt exploring the history and ecology of Wigtown Bay's unique marshland. Join Stephen and countryside ranger Elizabeth Tindal for a rare chance to explore the secret of this extraordinary landscape in the company of experts. Dress for mud. (Two hours approximately)

11.30am, County Buildings (in-person and online)

Amy Jeffs: Storyland || £9

Soaked in mist and old magic, Storyland is a new illustrated mythology of Britain, set in its wildest landscapes. It begins between the Creation and Noah's Flood, follows the footsteps of the earliest generation of giants from an age when the children of Cain and the progeny of fallen angels walked the earth, to the founding of Britain, England, Wales and Scotland, the birth of Christ, the wars between Britons, Saxons and Vikings, and closes with the arrival of the Normans. Told with narrative flair and embellished in stunning artworks, we visit sacred places that include prehistoric monuments like Stonehenge and Wayland's Smithy, spanning the length of Britain from the archipelago of Orkney to as far south as Cornwall; mountains and lakes such as Snowdon and Loch Etive and rivers including the Ness, the Soar and the story-silted Thames in a vivid, beautiful tale of our land steeped in myth.

SUNDAY 26 SEPTEMBER continued

11.30am, The Print Room

Lovely Nelly || £8

A ship of hope, imagined journeys, from two winter workshops with Vivien Jones. In 1775 the Snow Class brig Lovely Nelly left the Solway with 120 emigrant families, heading for Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and what they hoped would be a better life. From a variety of historic sources twelve writers have imagined the experiences they may have had. Join us for a reading of their work accompanied by 18th-century sea songs.

12 noon, The Gardens

The Festival Picnic || FREE

Hello Stranger - welcome back. Drop into the Gardens and join festival staff, volunteers and authors, between noon and 2pm, The Festival Picnic is an informal chance to break bread together, make new friends and renew old acquaintances. We suggest you bring your own food, a rug and possibly an umbrella.

1pm, County Buildings

AK Blakemore: The Manningtree Witches || £9

Wolf Hall meets *The Favourite* in a beguiling debut that plunges us into the life of a small English town in the grip of the seventeenth-century witch trials, the young woman tasked with saving its inhabitants from themselves. In Manningtree, depleted of men since Puritanical fever took over and the wars began, the hot terror of damnation burns in the hearts of its abandoned women. When the Witchfinder General arrives and starts asking questions, dangerous rumours surface, making the future as frightening as it is thrilling. It's a world of suspicion and betrayal, and a story full of contemporary energy and resonance.

About the author: AK Blakemore is the author of two collections of poetry: Humbert Summer and Fondue. She has also translated the work of Sichuanese poet Yu Yoyo. Her poetry and prose has been widely published and anthologised, appearing in the London Review of Books, Poetry, The Poetry Review, and The White Review.

1pm, The Print Room

Josie Neill: There's Ma Mammy Wavin' || £8

The Scottish publishing event of 2021 is possibly the launch of 86-year-old Scots poet Josie Neill's first full collection. Comprising poems in Scots and English painstakingly assembled from a lifetime's recording and publishing, this work reveals Josie at her playful and moving best, evoking a rural lifestyle and language that has largely disappeared. She writes in beautiful, elegant, rooted language. Josie's poetry often evokes a bygone way of life, and the folk who once inhabited it in a way that isn't mawkish, but engages, elevates and pierces us. You'll not read or hear better Scots poetry anywhere.

SUNDAY 26 SEPTEMBER continued



2.30pm, The Print Room

Jarred McGinnis: The Coward || £8

The Coward is a compelling, darkly humorous exploration of what it means to come to terms with a broken body, rebuild a broken relationship, and find love when the prospect seems hopeless. It's the story of a man whose life has been hedonistic, self-destructive, and driven by anger at the world. He has a life-changing car accident and wakes up to the discovery that he'll never walk again. But it's soon obvious that a wheelchair is the least of his problems. The Coward is about hurt and forgiveness, about how we rewrite the stories we tell about our lives — and try to find a happy ending.

2.30pm, County Buildings (in-person and online)

Rob Young: The Magic Box || £9

The cross-genre feast of moving pictures produced in Britain between the late 1950s and late 1980s – from Quatermass and Tom Jones to The Wicker Man and Brideshead Revisited, from A Canterbury Tale and The Go-Between to Bagpuss and Children of the Stones, and from John Betjeman's travelogues to ghost stories at Christmas – contributed to a national conversation and collective memory. In The Magic Box, Rob Young takes us on a fascinating journey into this influential golden age of screen and discovers what it reveals about the nature and character of Britain, its uncategorisable people and buried histories – and how its presence can still be felt on screen in the twenty-first century.

2.30pm, Bladnoch Distillery

Whisky Tasting with Charles Maclean || £30

Join us at Bladnoch Distillery on the edge of Wigtown as Scotland's best-known whisky writer leads the audience through a special festival tasting. Price includes all whiskies. Please drink sensibly. Numbers are strictly limited. Over-18s only.

About Charles MacLean: A renowned raconteur, Scotland's leading whisky writer Charles MacLean MBE was founding editor of Whisky Magazine. He has published 18 books to date, including the standard work on whisky brands, Scotch Whisky and the leading book on its subject, Malt Whisky, both of which were shortlisted for Glenfiddich Awards. He was elected a Keeper of the Quaich in 1992 for 'his services to Scotch over many years' and granted the rare honour of being elected Master of the Quaich, the industry's highest accolade, in October 2009. In 2021 he received an MBE for services to Scotch whisky, UK exports and charity.

4pm, The Print Room

Rab Wilson: The Flying Scot || £8

The Flying Scot is an evocation of the golden age of hand-built bikes in a sonnet redoublé, or heroic crown of sonnets and jazz. First created and performed in 2011 at Wigtown Book Festival, as a collaboration between poet Rab Wilson, artist and book maker Hugh Bryden and his son Jazz saxophonist Ben Bryden. In this reinterpretation, Rab's lyrical poetry in Scots is accompanied by a jazz composition from Ben Bryden commissioned by Castle Douglas Development Forum for the Food and Bike Festival. Ben combines a lyrical sound with a melodic approach to composition.

SUNDAY 26 SEPTEMBER continued

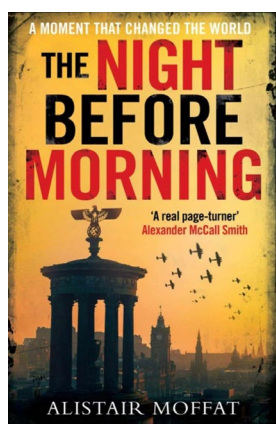
4pm, County Buildings

The Anne Brown Essay Prize || Free, ticketed

Anne Brown was a hugely respected BBC journalist and a passionate advocate of Wigtown Book Festival, of which she was the first chair of Trustees. The Anne Brown Essay Prize for Scotland has been established by Anne's family in her memory and will be awarded to the best literary essay by a writer in or of Scotland.

Join us for the prize-giving where we will raise a glass to Anne, get a flavour of the entries and learn the identity of the winner.

In association with BBC Scotland.



4pm, Wigtown Primary School (in-person and online)

Alistair Moffat: The Night Before Morning || £9

June 1945. Hitler has triumphed, Britain is under German occupation and America cowers under the threat of nuclear attack. The moment where everything changed is recorded by a young soldier, David Erskine, who saw a mushroom cloud rise over London: an atomic bomb detonated by the Germans in a last desperate roll of the dice. Now, Erskine and his fiancée are on the run to the town of St Andrews, where the occupying forces have set up a secret laboratory. When its purpose becomes clear, David and his small but trusted band of allies must adopt a desperate plan to thwart Nazi domination.

6pm, County Buildings (in-person and online)

Frank Gardner: Outbreak || £5

In this event, the chairperson will be in the venue and the speaker will be joining remotely. £5 tickets will be redeemable against a copy of the book when purchased at the venue during the event.

Deep within the Arctic Circle, three scientists from the UK's Arctic Research Station trudge through a blizzard in search of shelter. They see a cabin ahead. It appears abandoned. No lights. No snowmobile outside. But as they push open the door, the smell hits them. Within hours, a full-scale operation to contain a contagion is underway. Samples are rushed to the laboratories at Porton Down on high alert. What they discover changes everything. Supported by phone and data intercepts, British Intelligence reaches a terrifying conclusion: that Russia has been developing a new generation of bio-weapons. Dispatched to investigate, MI6's Luke Carlton finds himself on a serpentine trail of lies and deception.

About the author: Frank Gardner is the BBC's Security Correspondent. In June 2004, while reporting in Riyadh, Frank and his cameraman, Simon Cumbers, were ambushed by Islamist gunmen. Simon was killed outright, Frank was shot multiple times and left for dead. Against all expectations, he survived and, in 2006, published his acclaimed and bestselling memoir, Blood and Sand. In 2009 he published Far Horizons, a much-praised account of his life as an inveterate traveller and explorer. His first novel, the thriller Crisis, was a No.1 bestseller. Awarded an OBE for services to journalism, Frank has also written for the Economist, Sunday Times, Daily Telegraph and Time Out and has been published in The Best of Sunday Times Travel Writing. He lives in London with his family.

SUNDAY 26 SEPTEMBER continued

6pm, The Print Room

The Galloway Consort || £10

Join us for an hour of Renaissance music played on Renaissance instruments, including popular madrigals, fantasias and dance music from the 1500s in all their infinite variety, mostly on viols and recorders. A unique musical offering from Galloway-based early musicians Vivien and Richard Jones.

7pm, Online

William Hussey: The Outrage || Free, ticketed

A potentially pertinent and powerful YA dystopian thriller re-imagining a country where homosexuality is illegal at a time when LGBTQ+ rights remain a fundamental issue.

You know, when you live in a time of progress, it seems that progress is the only possible way. The idea that everything we'd gained, all of those hard-won rights, could be taken away from us, and that open minds could be closed again? But then the Outrage happened.

Welcome to a country, where the Protectorate enforces the Public Good. Here, there are rules for everything - what to eat, what to wear, what to do, what to say, what to read, what to think, who to obey, who to hate, who to love. Your safety is assured, so long as you follow the rules.

Gabriel is a natural born rule-breaker. And his biggest crime of all? Being gay. Gabriel knows his sexuality must be kept secret from all but his closest friends, not only to protect himself, but to protect his boyfriend. Because Eric isn't just the boy who has stolen Gabriel's heart. He's the son of the chief inspector at Degenerate Investigations - the man who poses the single biggest threat to Gabriel's life. And the Protectorate are experts at exposing secrets.

About the author: William Hussey is an author based in Skegness. As a child William loved horror comics, which inspired his writings today. His father owns a ghost train.

9pm, Online

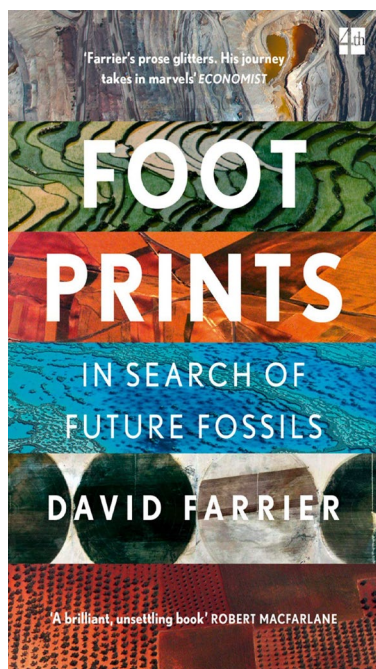
The Bookshop Band World Tour 2 || Free, ticketed

Join the Bookshop Band - Beth Porter and Ben Please - on their concert tour of bookshops around the globe, featuring a host of special guests from the world of books brought to you by the magic of the interweb. Where will they venture tonight?

MONDAY 27 SEPTEMBER

10am, County Buildings

David Farrier: Footprints || £9



What will the world look like ten thousand or ten million years from now? Award-winning author David Farrier explores the traces we will leave for the very distant future. What will remain of our civilization as centuries and millennia roll past? From long-lived materials like plastic and nuclear waste, to the 50 million kilometres of roads spanning the planet, in modern times we have created numerous objects and landscapes with the potential to endure through deep time. Our carbon could linger in the atmosphere for 100,000 years, and the remains of our cities will still exist millions of years from now as a layer in the rock. These future fossils have the potential to tell remarkable stories about how we lived in the twenty-first century. Blurring the boundaries between literature, art and science, Footprints invites us to think about how we will be remembered in the myths, stories, and languages of our distant descendants. Travelling from the Baltic Sea to the Great Barrier Reef, and from an ice core laboratory in Tasmania to Shanghai, one of the world's biggest cities, David Farrier tells a story of a world that is changing rapidly, and with long-term consequences.

10am, The Print Room

Patrick Laurie: Writing the Landscape || £10

Join Patrick Laurie, author of *Native: Life in a Vanishing Landscape*, for a workshop that will inspire and enthuse you and help you to create words that build dramatic images with a strong sense of emotion and place. *Native* was shortlisted for the Wainwright Prize for UK Nature Writing 2020.

This event has been made possible by support from the Together Again Fund, DG Unlimited, and Dumfries and Galloway Council.

12 noon, County Buildings (in-person and online)

Adam Andrusier: Two Hitlers and a Marilyn || £9

Adam Andrusier spent his childhood in pursuit of autographs. After writing to every famous person he could think of, from Frank Sinatra to Colonel Gaddafi, he soon jostled with the paparazzi at stage doors and came face-to-face with the most famous people on the planet. For young Adam, autographs were a backstage pass to a world beyond his chaotic family home in Pinner, and his Holocaust-obsessed father. But as Adam turned from collector to dealer, learning how to spot a fake from the real deal, he discovered that in life, as in autographs, not everything is as it first appears. When your obsession is a search for the authentic, what happens when you discover fraudulence in your own family? *Two Hitlers and a Marilyn* is a hilarious and moving account of discovering that idols are mortals. It's a story of growing up, forgiveness and discovering a place in the world.

MONDAY 27 SEPTEMBER continued

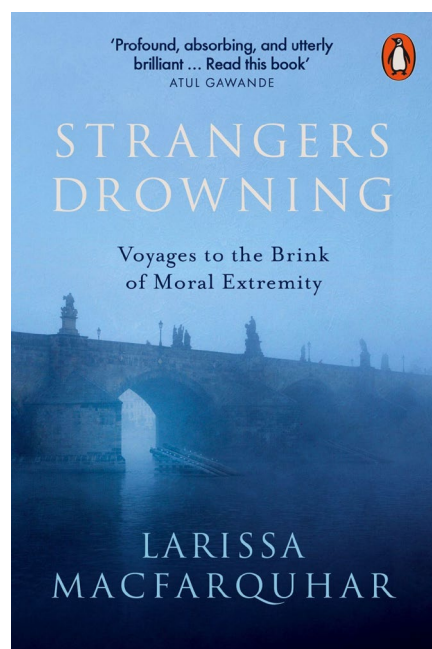
2pm, County Buildings

John Quin: Dr Quin, Medicine Man || £9

John Quin worked for thirty-three years as a physician for the NHS in both Scotland and England. Days on the wards were uproariously funny one minute, infinitely tragic the next. From tackling fraudulent medical students to trying and failing to induce hypoglycaemia in Glaswegian alcoholics (all in the name of research), Dr Quin, Medicine Man is packed with vividly told tales of the joy and reward of getting the diagnosis right, the disaster of getting it wrong. Darkly amusing and with a keen eye for the absurd, this sharply observed memoir is not only an acute insight into the farcical frustrations and tensions of working in a chronically underfunded system, but also a timely reminder of the humanity of the NHS staff who care for us.

4pm, County Buildings (in-person and online)

Larissa MacFarquhar: Strangers Drowning || £5



In this event, the chairperson will be in the venue and the speaker will be joining remotely. £5 tickets will be redeemable against a copy of the book when purchased at the venue during the event.

What does it mean to devote yourself wholly to helping others? In *Strangers Drowning*, Larissa MacFarquhar seeks out people living lives of extreme ethical commitment and tells their deeply intimate stories; their stubborn integrity and their compromises; their bravery and their recklessness; their joys and defeats and wrenching dilemmas. We honour generosity and high ideals, but when we call people do-gooders there is skepticism in it, even hostility. Why do moral people make us uneasy? Between her stories, MacFarquhar threads a lively history of the literature, philosophy, social science, and self-help that have contributed to a deep suspicion of do-gooders in Western culture. Through its sympathetic and beautifully vivid storytelling, *Strangers Drowning* confronts us with fundamental questions about what it means to be human.

6pm, County Buildings

Hugh McMillan: Whit If? || £9

What if St Columba had been strangled when he came ashore? What if King Alexander III had Twitter? What if Jacques Brel joined the Corries? These and other Scottish micht-hae-beens are explored in Hugh McMillan's first Scots language collection. Hilarious but also strangely informative!

MONDAY 27 SEPTEMBER continued

7pm, Online

Ginny Myer Sain: *Dark and Shallow Lies* || FREE

An intensely romantic and atmospheric thriller for young adults, full of twists and turns with a simmering supernatural undercurrent. Perfect for fans of Holly Jackson, Karen McManus and Delia Owens' *Where the Crawdads Sing*. When seventeen-year-old Grey makes her annual visit to La Cachette, Louisiana – the tiny bayou town that proclaims to be the “Psychic Capital of the World” – she knows it will be different from past years: her childhood best friend Elora went missing several months earlier and no one is telling the truth about the night she disappears. Grey can't believe that Elora vanished into thin air any more than she can believe that nobody in a town full of psychics knows what happened. But as she digs into the night that Elora went missing, she begins to realize that everybody in town is hiding something—her grandmother Honey; her childhood crush Hart; and even her late mother, whose secrets continue to call to Grey from beyond the grave.

When a mysterious stranger emerges from the bayou – a stormy-eyed boy with links to Elora and the town's bloody history – Grey realizes that La Cachette's past is far more present and dangerous than she'd ever understood. She doesn't know who she can trust. In a town where secrets lurk just below the surface, and where a murderer is on the loose, nobody can be presumed innocent – and La Cachette's dark and shallow lies may just rip the town apart.

Haunting and arresting, this is one stunning debut. Ginny Myers Sain has written a totally engrossing small-town mystery about what happens when you finally dig up long-buried secrets. – Jessica Goodman, bestselling author of *They Wish They Were Us*

8pm, Wigtown Parish Church

Silent Movie Night with The Bookshop Band || £10

Join The Bookshop Band - Ben Please and Beth Porter - as they provide live musical accompaniment to five short silent films from the early 20th century and talk about the art of film composition and their lives as musicians.

Supported by BFI and Film Hub Scotland

TUESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER

9am, White Loch Monreith

Polly Pullar: Red Squirrel Walk || £10

Naturalist, wildlife writer and rehabilitator Polly Pullar has been working with red squirrels for over 30 years and knows them intimately. Join Polly and East Wigtownshire Red Squirrel Group for a woodland walk looking for red squirrels. Learn more of the fascinating life of nature's finest arboreal acrobat, and some of the other species that share their world on a relaxing walk around the woods at White Loch, Monreith. Dress for a woodland walk and soft ground.

12 noon, County Buildings (in-person and online)

Kathryn Harkup: Death By Shakespeare || £9

The deaths in Shakespeare's work have been shocking audiences for the last four hundred years. But just how realistic are these deaths, and did Shakespeare have the knowledge to back them up? Death was a part of everyday life back in the Bard's time and he kept informed on the latest medical and anatomical advances. Kathryn Harkup turns her scientific eye to Shakespeare and the deaths of his more unfortunate characters and if the writing matches the reality. Death By Shakespeare will tell you all this and more in a rollercoaster of Elizabethan carnage, poison, swordplay and bloodshed, with occasional death by bear-mauling for good measure.

About the author: Kathryn Harkup is a chemist and author. Kathryn completed a doctorate on her favourite chemicals, phosphines, and went on to further postdoctoral research before realising that talking, writing and demonstrating science appealed more than hours slaving over a hot fume-hood. Kathryn is now a science communicator, giving regular talks on the disgusting and dangerous side of science.

2pm, Wigtown Parish Church

Richard Atkinson: Mr Atkinson's Rum Contract || £9

Like many well-heeled Georgian families, the Atkinsons' wealth was acquired at a terrible cost, through the labour and lives of enslaved Africans. Drawing on his ancestors' private correspondence, Richard Atkinson pieces together their unsettling story, from a weather-beaten house in Cumbria, to the ruins of their sugar estates in Jamaica. Mr Atkinson's Rum Contract is an extraordinary work of detective biography, and a uniquely personal account of one of the most disturbing chapters in Britain's colonial past.

4pm, County Buildings

Alexis Fleming: No Life Too Small || £9

A few years ago Alexis Fleming was bedridden with a chronic illness. Things became so bad that she wanted to end her life many times, but her beloved dog, Maggie, kept her going, especially when doctors gave her just six weeks to live. Incredibly, Alexis fought her way back to health with Maggie by her side, only for Maggie to die of lung cancer two years later on a vet's operating table. Alexis was devastated that Maggie had died without her and decided to start an animal hospice in her name in the hope that she could ensure other animals nearing the end of their life would not have to die alone. No Life Too Small is the joyful and inspiring story of the world's first animal hospice, celebrating the power and beauty of nature, the strength of the human and animal spirit, and the importance of love, friendship and community. It will leave you with a tear in your eye, a smile on your face and a renewed belief in human kindness.

TUESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER continued

6pm, Wigtown Parish Church (in-person and online)

Gillian Tett: Anthro-Vision || £5

In this event, the chairperson will be in the venue and the speaker will be joining remotely. £5 tickets will be redeemable against a copy of the book when purchased at the venue during the event.

Anthropologists have spent over a century immersing themselves in unfamiliar cultures to uncover the secrets that govern how humanity has developed. Now, that knowledge is applied to a different context to understand how anthropology can make sense of people's behaviour in business and beyond. Gillian Tett outlines how anthropology shapes consumer habits, the cultural shift taking place within businesses and how it all affects the decisions that we make every day. The result is a wholly new way to make sense of human behaviour.

7pm, Online

Phil Stamper: As Far As You'll Take Me || FREE, ticketed

From the break-out author of *The Gravity of Us* comes a heartfelt coming-of-age story about finding your chosen people. Perfect for fans of Becky Albertalli.

Marty arrives in London with nothing but his oboe and some savings from his summer job, but he's excited to start his new life – where he's no longer the closeted, shy kid who slips under the radar and is free to explore his sexuality without his parents' disapproval.

From the outside, Marty's life looks like a perfect fantasy: in the span of a few weeks, he's made new friends, he's getting closer with his first ever boyfriend, and he's even travelling around Europe. But Marty knows he can't keep up the facade. He hasn't spoken to his parents since he arrived, he's tearing through his meagre savings, his homesickness and anxiety are getting worse and worse, and he hasn't even come close to landing the job of his dreams. Will Marty be able to find a place that feels like home?

8pm, County Buildings

Robin Ince: The Importance of Being Interested || £12

Comedian Robin Ince abandoned science at school, bored by a fog of dull lessons, and intimidated by the barrage of equations. Twenty years later he fell back in love in a big way and today, presents *Infinite Monkey Cage*, one of the world's most popular science podcasts, and tours with physicist Brian Cox. He's picked the brains of some of the world's greatest thinkers, along the way. In *The Importance of Being Interested*, Robin reveals why scientific wonder isn't just for professionals. Warm, witty, passionate, and filled with interviews featuring astronauts, comedians, teachers, quantum physicists, and neuroscientists, *The Importance of Being Interested* proves that science isn't distant or difficult.

9pm, Online

The Bookshop Band World Tour 3 || FREE, ticketed

Join the Bookshop Band - Beth Porter and Ben Please - on their concert tour of bookshops around the globe, featuring a host of special guests from the world of books brought to you by the magic of the interweb. Where will they venture tonight?

WEDNESDAY 29 SEPTEMBER

9am, White Loch Monreith

Polly Pullar: Red Squirrel Walk || £10

Naturalist, wildlife writer and rehabilitator Polly Pullar has been working with red squirrels for over 30 years and knows them intimately. Join Polly and East Wigtownshire Red Squirrel Group for a woodland walk looking for red squirrels. Learn more of the fascinating life of nature's finest arboreal acrobat, and some of the other species that share their world on a relaxing walk around the woods at White Loch, Monreith. Dress for a woodland walk and soft ground.

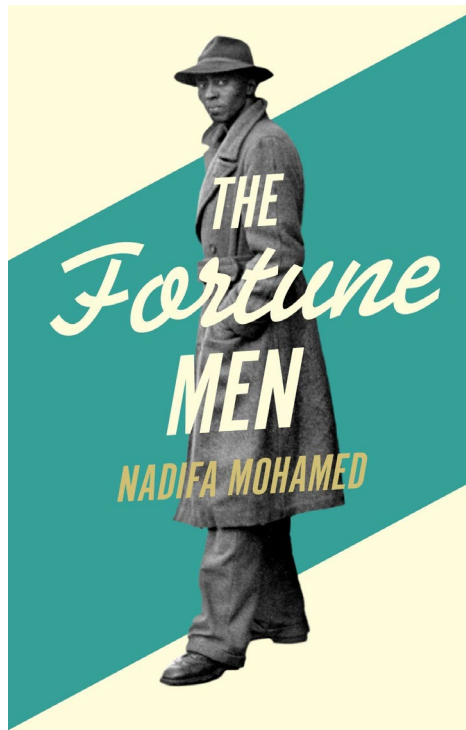
12 noon, The Print Room

Paths to Publication || FREE, ticketed

Four authors at different stages in their careers and who have each taken a different route to publication talk about their work and their journeys to becoming authors. Featuring Tariq Ashkanani, whose debut thriller *Welcome to Cooper* is published on 1 October by Thomas & Mercer, Amazon Publishing's crime imprint; Wigtown's own Tim Cowen, who has recently self-published his debut novel, *Banquet of the Beasts*, with Matador; established Galloway author Gerry Cameron, who has extensive experience of self-publishing with Amazon; and award-winning author Karen Campbell, who followed a more traditional route to publication – Karen's most recent book, *The Sound of the Hours*, was published by Bloomsbury and her forthcoming novel, *Paper Cup*, will be published by Canongate next year. Come along to find out some fascinating insights into different aspects of the book world and the publishing process.

12 noon, County Buildings (in-person and online)

Nadifa Mohamed: The Fortune Men || £5



In this event, the chairperson will be in the venue and the speaker will be joining remotely. £5 tickets will be redeemable against a copy of the book when purchased at the venue during the event.

Nadifa Mohamed talks about her exceptional new book, longlisted for the Booker Prize 2021.

Mahmood Mattan is a fixture in Cardiff's Tiger Bay, 1952, which bustles with Somali and West Indian sailors, Maltese businessmen and Jewish families. He is a father, chancer, some-time petty thief. He is many things, in fact, but he is not a murderer. So when a shopkeeper is brutally killed and all eyes fall on him, Mahmood isn't too worried. It is true that he has been getting into trouble more often since his Welsh wife Laura left him. But Mahmood is secure in his innocence in a country where, he thinks, justice is served. It is only in the run-up to the trial, as the prospect of freedom dwindles, that it will dawn on Mahmood that he is in a terrifying fight for his life – against conspiracy, prejudice and the inhumanity of the state. And, under the shadow of the hangman's noose, he begins to realise that the truth may not be enough to save him.

WEDNESDAY 29 SEPTEMBER continued

2pm, County Buildings (in-person and online)

Jill Hopper: The Mahogany Pod || £9

What if you knew from the beginning how your relationship was going to end? When Jill Hopper first met Arif, they were living in a shared house on the island of Osney in the River Thames. Surrounded by willow trees, birds and reflections, it was an idyllic home. But no sooner had they begun to fall in love than Arif was given the news that he had only a few months to live. Everyone told Jill to walk away, but she was already in too deep. Years later, Jill rediscovers Arif's parting gift – an African seedpod – and finally sets out to trace the elusive patterns that shaped their relationship. The Mahogany Pod is a tender and vital account of what it means to live, and love, fully.

About the author: Jill Hopper has a background in newspaper journalism and magazine editing. A member of writers' collective 26 Characters, she lives in London with her husband and son. The Mahogany Pod is her first book.

4pm, Wigtown Parish Church

JoAnne McKay and Karen Campbell: Atlas Pandemica || £9

Join local writers JoAnne McKay and Karen Campbell as they discuss their contributions to the 'Atlas Pandemica: Maps to a Kinder World' project. Conceived by The Stove Network, the project produced 10 creatively led investigations, each exploring a theme highlighted by life during the COVID pandemic in Dumfries & Galloway and designed to encourage innovative approaches in charting the impacts and learning from the pandemic, trying to navigate the way forward into a more hopeful and shared future.

JoAnne set out to research the extent and nature of what remains from earlier pandemics in our public archives and museums and in our civic and sacred spaces. Karen was writer in residence within D&G Council, using a mix of workshops and one-to-one discussions to write 'Here Is Our Story', a collection of short stories and monologues, all fictional but founded on the real-life experiences of Council staff during the initial COVID response.

About the authors: JoAnne McKay is a widely published poet who has appeared at literary festivals throughout the country. JoAnne currently works at Dumfries Museum. Karen Campbell is the author of seven novels, most recently The Sound of the Hours, Rise and This is Where I Am, all published by Bloomsbury Circus. Karen is an experienced creative writing tutor and mentor, working with organisations such as Scottish PEN, Moniack Mhor and Wigtown.

5pm, Online

Open Book: Community Project Pamphlet || FREE, ticketed

Open Book groups write together in community settings across the length and breadth of Scotland from Ullapool to Eyemouth and from the islands off Shetland to several groups (including those in Scots and Gaelic) here in Galloway. Chaired by Open Book co-founder Claire Urquhart, join us to celebrate the publication of a pamphlet of work written during their sessions and hear the voices of community writers across Scotland.

WEDNESDAY 29 SEPTEMBER continued

6pm, Wigtown Parish Church

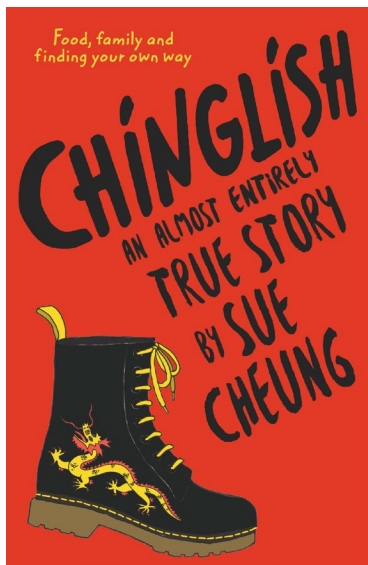
Jake Tyler: A Walk From the Wild Edge || £9

After coming terrifyingly close to suicide, Jake Tyler was determined to take back control of his life from the clutches of depression. With only a pair of walking boots and a backpack, he left his home town of Maldon and began a 3,000-mile walk around the British mainland. In documenting every step of his adventure, Jake shares the ways in which his road to recovery was enhanced by the kindness of strangers, who helped him to better understand himself and the power of human connection. This is the story of Jake's journey around the UK, and of his journey to finding peace within himself and the world around him.

About the author: Jake Tyler is a mental health advocate and broadcaster. Jake's BBC Radio Sussex and Surrey show, Open Up with Jake Tyler, launched in September 2019 with guest Matt Haig. A Walk from the Wild Edge is his first book.

7pm, Online

Sue Cheung: Chinglish - The Diverse Book Award Event || FREE, ticketed



A story of tragedy, abuse, neglect and hope, both hilarious and heartbreaking. In partnership with our friends at the Diverse Book Awards.

Jo Kwan is a teenager growing up in 1980s Coventry with her annoying little sister, too-cool older brother, a series of very unlucky pets and utterly bonkers parents. But unlike the other kids at her new school or her posh cousins, Jo lives above her parents' Chinese takeaway. And things can be tough – whether it's unruly customers or the snotty popular girls who bully Jo for being different. Even when she does find a BFF who actually likes Jo for herself, she still has to contend with her erratic dad's behaviour. All Jo dreams of is breaking free and forging a career as an artist. Told in diary entries and doodles, Jo's brilliantly funny observations about life, family and char siu make for a searingly honest portrayal of life on the other side of the takeaway counter.

7pm, The Print Room

Southlight 30 Launch || FREE, ticketed

Join us for the launch of the latest print edition of Southlight, Dumfries & Galloway's very own literary magazine, publishing the best of new poetry and short stories alongside black and white prints and photography. Hosted by Southlight's editors, the evening will feature a curated selection of this edition's contributors with a lively variety of readings. Copies of the magazine will be available to buy on the night.

THURSDAY 30 SEPTEMBER

10am, Wigtown Parish Church (in-person and online)

Fred Pearce: A Trillion Trees || £8

Trees have helped sustain life on earth, a delicate balance that is put at risk by deforestation. As we rush towards a tipping point, where woodland and forests can no longer thrive, Fred Pearce brings us a seed of hope. An additional trillion trees could help tilt the environmental scales back in our favour, but is planting them en masse the answer? In his inspiring new book, Fred Pearce takes us from illegal logging sites to the smouldering Amazon rainforest, showing how we can reforest our planet by taking a step back and giving nature room to breathe.

About the author: Fred Pearce is an award-winning journalist and author, reporting from 87 countries. He has been the environmental consultant of New Scientist since 1992, a regular broadcaster and contributor to the Guardian, Washington Post and others. He has written fourteen books on environmental and development issues, translated into 26 languages.

12 noon, Wigtown Parish Church (in-person and online)

Fiona Sampson: Two Way Mirror || £9

'How do I love thee? Let me count the ways,' Elizabeth Barrett Browning famously wrote, shortly before defying her family by running away to Italy with Robert Browning. But behind the romance of her extraordinary life stands a thoroughly modern figure, who remains an electrifying study in self-invention. Elizabeth was born in 1806, a time when women could neither attend university nor vote, and yet she achieved lasting literary fame. She remains Britain's greatest woman poet, whose work has inspired writers from Emily Dickinson to George Eliot and Virginia Woolf. This vividly written biography, the first full study for over thirty years, incorporates recent archival discoveries to reveal the woman herself: a literary giant and a high-profile activist for the abolition of slavery who believed herself to be of mixed heritage; and a writer who defied chronic illness and long-term disability to change the course of cultural history.

12 noon, County Buildings

Vicky Allan and Anna Deacon: The Art of Wild Swimming || £9

Writer Vicky Allan and photographer Anne Deacon celebrate taking the plunge in characteristically unstuffy fashion. In *The Art of Wild Swimming* Scotland (and its companion volume for England and Wales) they draw upon the passion and expertise of the wild swimming community to identify the most refreshing places to dip a toe or more. How do you get started? What - if anything - do you need? And why is it so good for you? In this informal session, they share their passion.

About the authors: Vicky Allan is a columnist and feature writer for The Herald. Anna Deacon has worked as a photographer for 11 years following a career in the music industry. Their previous books together include For the Love of Trees: A Celebration of People and Trees.

THURSDAY 30 SEPTEMBER continued

2pm, Wigtown Parish Church

The Magnusson Lecture: Rosemary Goring: The Afterlife of Mary Queen of Scots || £9

The annual Magnusson Lecture celebrates the life and interests of the broadcaster, academic and polymath Magnus Magnusson. Historian and novelist Rosemary Goring takes a fresh look at the life of Scotland's most famous monarch and how it has been interpreted through the ages. Has Mary Queen of Scots been good for Scottish women, or have her mistakes been used posthumously to support the idea that women are not capable of holding positions of power? This is a revised and illustrated version of Rosemary's 2020 lecture, which was cancelled on account of technical difficulties.

About the speaker: Rosemary Goring was born in Dunbar and studied at the University of St Andrews. She worked at W&R Chambers as a reference editor before becoming literary editor of Scotland on Sunday. She was also the literary editor for the Herald and Sunday Herald, and is the author of two historical novels, After Flodden and Dacre's War. She is the editor of Scotland: Her Story and Scotland: An Autobiography.

2pm, County Buildings

Des Dillon: Muscle Work, Alcohol and Blame || £9

One of Scotland's leading writers, Des Dillon, has been described by Dr Linda Jackson of the University of Strathclyde as having the 'keen eye of the hunter and the bountiful heart of a lion'. Twenty-one years of living with Galloway's seascapes and landscapes has nudged some of Dillon's Coatbridge steel aside and made its own special place in his writing. Working with Wigtown's Second Sands Publishing, Des launches his new collection of poetry and art, *Muscle Work, Alcohol and Blame*.

4pm, Wigtown Parish Church

Anja Shortland: Lost Art || £9

Countless dollars of art are stolen or looted every year, yet governments often consider art theft a luxury problem. With limited public law enforcement, what prevents thieves, looters and organised criminal gangs from flooding the market with stolen art? How can theft victims get justice – even decades after their loss? What happens if the legal definition of a good title is at odds with what is morally right? Enter the Art Loss Register, a private database dedicated to tracking down stolen artworks. Blocking the sale of disputed artworks creates a space for private resolutions – often amicable and sometimes entertainingly adversarial. This book is based on ten cases from the Art Loss Register's archive, showing how restitutions were negotiated, how priceless objects were retrieved from the economic underworld and how thieves and fences end up in court and behind bars. A fascinating guide to the dark side of the global art market.

About the author: Anja Shortland is a Professor in Political Economy at King's College London specialising in the economics of crime. She studies private order systems in the world's trickiest markets: hostages, hijacked ships, fine art and antiquities. She researches how people work and invest in complex and hostile territories and studies trades between legal and illegal enterprises. Her previous book, Kidnap: Inside the Ransom Business, revealed how special risk insurance at Lloyd's of London helps to bring abducted people home safely.

THURSDAY 30 SEPTEMBER continued

4pm, County Buildings

Harry Josephine Giles: Deep Wheel Orcadia || £9

Deep Wheel Orcadia is a magical first: a science-fiction verse-novel written in the Orkney Dialect. A chance encounter between two interstellar travellers may change both of their lives forever. Astrid is on her way home from art school on Mars, seeking inspiration. Darling is looking for a place to hide from a life that never fitted in before. Their paths cross on Deep Wheel Orcadia, a distant space station struggling for survival as the pace of change threatens to leave the community behind.

About the author: Harry Josephine Giles is a writer and performer from Orkney, now living in Leith. They have lived on four islands, each larger than the last. They have an MA in Theatre Directing from East 15 Acting School and a PhD in Creative Writing from the University of Stirling. Harry Josephine's work generally happens in the crunchy places where performance and politics get muddled up.

6pm, The Print Room

Mara Menzies: Blood and Gold || £8

Join storyteller Mara Menzies as she talks about and shares stories from Blood and Gold, based on her acclaimed storytelling performance, which premiered at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 2019 to rapturous praise and has toured in 27 countries. The book follows the story of Jeda, a girl on the cusp of adulthood, living in Edinburgh; with a white father and a black mother, who feels self-conscious and out of place. Her mother's last gift to her is a box of stories. When the box is flung open, the stories escape, setting in motion an incredible journey. Jeda learns more about her African ancestry through tales of slavery, cruelty and colonisation, but she also discovers pride and love and sacrifice, ultimately embracing her dual heritage and her unique place in the world. Filled with tragedy, wonder and magic, Blood and Gold explores the themes of loss and oppression, while asking us to examine our own identities, attitudes, and humanity.

6pm, County Buildings (in-person and online)

Loyd Grossman: An Elephant in Rome || £5

In this event, the chairperson will be in the venue and the speaker will be joining remotely. £5 tickets will be redeemable against a copy of the book when purchased at the venue during the event.

In 1655, a new Pope, Alexander VII, fired with religious zeal, political guile and a mania for building, determined to restore the prestige of his church by making Rome the must-visit destination for Europe's elite. He enlisted the talents of Gian Lorenzo Bernini, already celebrated as the most important artist of the age. Together, Alexander VII and Bernini made one of the greatest artistic double acts in history, creating Baroque Rome as a city grander and more beautiful than the days of Emperor Augustus. Loyd Grossman's love of Rome was kindled by his first encounter with the enigmatic monument to this relationship between artist and pope: the elephant carrying an obelisk outside Santa Maria sopra Minerva. With the elephant as his starting point, this richly illustrated book teases out all the intertwined strands of history, power and art that make up the Baroque.

THURSDAY 30 SEPTEMBER continued

7pm, Online

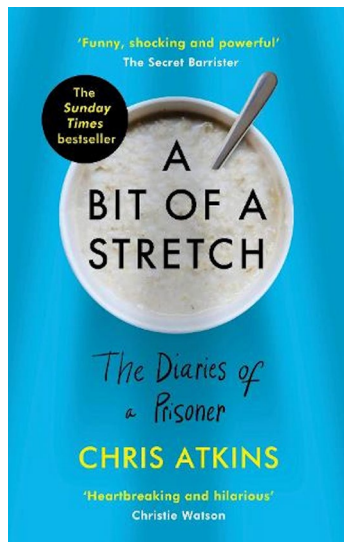
Sue Divin: Guard Your Heart || FREE, ticketed

Both a touching love story and a sensitive exploration of the Northern Irish Troubles, Divin's beautifully wrought debut brings a Catholic boy and a Protestant girl together in the wake of a sectarian attack.

Derry. Summer 2016. Aidan and Iona, now eighteen, were both born on the day of the Northern Ireland peace deal. Aidan is Catholic, Irish, and Republican. With his ex-political prisoner father gone and his mother dead, Aidan's hope is pinned on exam results earning him a one-way ticket out of Derry. To anywhere. Iona, Protestant and British, has a brother and father in the police. She's got university ambitions, a strong faith and a fervent belief that boys without one track minds are a myth. At a post-exam party, Aidan wanders alone across the Peace Bridge and becomes the victim of a brutal sectarian attack. Iona witnessed the attack; picked up Aidan's phone and filmed what happened, and gets in touch with him to return the phone. When the two meet, alone and on neutral territory, the differences between them seem insurmountable. Both their fathers held guns, but safer to keep that secret for now. Despite their differences and the secrets they have to keep from each other, there is mutual intrigue, and their friendship grows. And so what? It's not the Troubles. But for both Iona and Aidan it seems like everything is keeping them apart, when all they want is to be together...

8pm, County Buildings (in-person and online)

Chris Atkins: A Bit of a Stretch || £12



Welcome to Her Majesty's Prison Service, where you can exchange a tin of tuna for clean clothes, find 'spice' more easily than paracetamol and where self-harm barely raises an eyebrow. Like most people, Chris Atkins didn't consider what life inside would be like... until he was sent down for five years. His new home would be HMP Wandsworth, one of the largest and most dysfunctional prisons in Europe. Filled with dark humour and shocking stories, *A Bit of a Stretch* reveals why our creaking prison system is sorely costing us all.

About the author: Chris Atkins is best known as a documentary maker. In 2016 he was prosecuted for his involvement in an illegal tax scheme which was used to fund one of his films. He is now back in North London working on a music documentary and making a podcast series about prison life.

9pm, Online

The Bookshop Band World Tour 4 || FREE, ticketed

Join the Bookshop Band - Beth Porter and Ben Please - on their concert tour of bookshops around the globe, featuring a host of special guests from the world of books brought to you by the magic of the interweb. Where will they venture tonight?

FRIDAY 1 OCTOBER

7am, Meet at Rigg Bay, Garlieston

Vicky Allan and Anna Deacon: Sunrise Swim || FREE, ticketed

Join Vicky Allan and Anna Deacon, the authors of *The Art of Wild Swimming*, for an early morning dip in Rigg Bay, Garlieston. Novices and experienced swimmers are equally welcome. Directions provided on booking.

10am, Online

Helen Sedgwick: Editing as the Creative Process || FREE, ticketed

The idea of editing is enough to fill some writers with dread – but Helen Sedgwick wants to change all that. As part of our series of events for writers, in this online seminar Helen will talk about the interplay between writing and editing in her own creative work, and how editing is an essential part of the creative development of her novels. Covering the different types of editing there are and looking at how the editing process feeds into structure, plot, character development and storytelling, she will dispel the common fear of edits and show how editing can be exciting, creative, and even liberating. With examples from her most recent novel, *Where the Missing Gather*, and her own experience as both author and literary editor, she will give you a fresh look at the process of editing your own work as the craft at the heart of creative writing.

About the author: Helen Sedgwick is the author of The Comet Seekers and The Growing Season, which was shortlisted for the Saltire Society Fiction Book of the Year in 2018. The opener to her Burrowhead Mysteries crime trilogy, When the Dead Come Calling, was published in 2020, followed by Where the Missing Gather in 2021. She has an MLitt in Creative Writing from Glasgow University and has won a Scottish Book Trust New Writers Award. She is the 2021 Dr Gavin Wallace Fellow. Before she became an author, she was a research physicist with a PhD in Physics from Edinburgh University. She lives in the Scottish Highlands.

10am, County Buildings

Tabitha Lasley: Sea State || £8

A candid examination of the life of North Sea oil riggers, and an explosive portrayal of masculinity, loneliness and female desire. In her mid-30s, Tabitha quits her job at a woman's magazine and moves from London to a dodgy neighbourhood in Aberdeen, planning to build on an idea for a book about oil rigs. Going 'offshore' is a way of life for generations of British workers, but is also a potent metaphor for many things we would rather keep at bay - class, masculinity and the North-South divide, among other things.

About the author: Tabitha Lasley was a journalist for ten years. She has lived in London, Johannesburg and Aberdeen. Sea State is her first book.

10am, Wigtown Parish Church

Fiona Sampson and Alison Grant: Come Down and Stone Moon || £8

Fiona Sampson is one of the UK's most eminent poets. In this event, she presents her bravura new collection, *Come Down*, in which she traces her Australian father and his roots in that country, as well as the valley in Herefordshire where she lives and writes. In addition to reading, in this illustrated event she will be discussing her collaboration with Edinburgh-based printmaker Alison Grant, whose exhibition *Stone Moon* (on show during the festival) takes inspiration from seven of the works.

FRIDAY 1 OCTOBER continued

12 noon, County Buildings

Malachy Tallack and Linden Bicket: George Mackay Brown || £8

George Mackay Brown (1921–96) was one of the twentieth century's most distinguished and original writers. To mark his centenary, Scottish publisher Birlinn has republished some of his most seminal work in newly edited editions. Malachy Tallack and Linden Bicket, two of the series' editors, celebrate this great Orcadian poet, author and dramatist. Malachy Tallack introduces *Simple Fire*, his edited collection of Mackay Brown's short stories, and Linden Bicket explores *An Orkney Tapestry*, a rich fusion of ballad, folk tale, short story, drama and environmental writing.

About the authors: Linden Bicket is Lecturer in Literature and Religion in the School of Divinity at the University of Edinburgh. She is the author of George Mackay Brown and the Scottish Catholic Imagination (Edinburgh University Press, 2017). Her research focuses on patterns of faith and scepticism in twentieth-century fiction and poetry. Malachy Tallack is an award-winning author and singer-songwriter from Shetland, whose books – both fiction and non-fiction – explore questions about community, memory, and the relationship between people and places.

12 noon, Wigtown Parish Church

Rachel Morris: The Museum Makers || £8

Part memoir, part detective story, part untold history of museums, this is a fascinating and moving family story. After ignoring the boxes under her bed for decades, Rachel Morris opened them to uncover a rich bohemian family history. The experience was revelatory - searching for her absent father in the archives of the Tate; understanding the loss and longings of her grandmother who raised her - and transported her back to the museums that had enriched her lonely childhood. By teasing out the stories of those early museum makers, and the unsung daughters and wives behind them, Morris digs deep into the human instinct for collection and curation.

About the author: Rachel Morris is a novelist as well as founding director of Metaphor, a museum-making company that has worked all over the world. She also blogs on time, memory, museums, novels and creativity.

12 noon, Garlieston

Galloway Wild Foods: Coastal Forage || £37.50

Explore the remarkable, tasty and nourishing wild larder of Galloway's coast with Scotland's leading wild food educator, Mark Williams of Galloway Wild Foods. Over the course of about 1 mile of very gentle walking, over 2 hours we will explore a wide range of wild foods of salt marsh, sandy beach, rocky shore, and maritime hedgerows in an exceptionally beautiful area of Galloway. Wild tipples, seaweed snacks, nourishing greens and aromatic coastal herbs will all feature. Novices and experienced foragers looking to increase their repertoire will enjoy this event. Please note, social distancing measures will be followed (further details will be provided in advance of the walk).

FRIDAY 1 OCTOBER continued

2pm, County Buildings (in-person and online)

Denise Mina: Rizzio || £9

Award-winning author Denise Mina offers a radical new take on a crime so brutal no one wanted to talk about it for 200 hundred years — the murder of David Rizzio, Mary Queen of Scots' friend and secretary. Tense, terrifying, this is a tale of sex, seduction, secrets and lies. It looks at history through a modern lens and explores the lengths that people go to for love and power. It takes place on Saturday evening, 9 March 1566. Mary, Queen of Scots, six months pregnant, is hosting a supper party. She doesn't know her Palace is surrounded, or that an army of men is creeping upstairs to murder the handsome Italian man who is smiling across the table at her. . .

About the author: Denise Mina's novels include The End of the Wasp Season and Gods and Beasts, both of which won the Theakstons Old Peculiar Crime Novel of the Year Award. The Long Drop won the McIlvanney Scottish Crime Novel of the Year award, and Conviction was a Reese Witherspoon Book Club Pick and a Sunday Times, Observer, and Telegraph Book of the Year.

2pm, Wigtown Parish Church

Alex Renton: Blood Legacy || £9

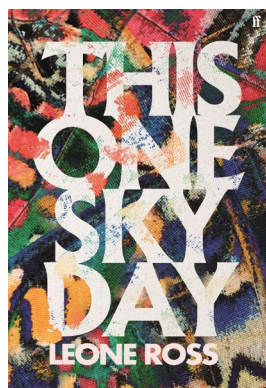
Through the story of his family's history as slave and plantation owners, Renton looks at the political, economic, and moral inheritance that was passed on to both the descendants of slave owners and the descendants of the enslaved, asking how the former can make reparations for the past. For when British Caribbean slavery was abolished across most of the Empire, it was not the newly liberated who were compensated, but the enslavers, many of whom became phenomenally wealthy. With the call, now, to pay trillions of dollars for the damage done by slavery, this is the moment to reflect on a history of abuse and exploitation.

2pm, Meet at Wigtown Harbour

Saltmarsh Library Walk 4: Wigtown Bay || £10

Commissioned by Wigtown Book Festival for Scotland's Year of Coasts and Waters in 2020, The Saltmarsh Library is a new book by Saltire Award-winning writer Stephen Rutt exploring the history and ecology of Wigtown Bay's unique marshland. Join Stephen and countryside ranger Elizabeth Tindal for a rare chance to explore the secret of this extraordinary landscape in the company of experts. Dress for mud. Meet at Wigtown Harbour. (Two hours approximately)

This event has been made possible by support from the Together Again Fund, DG Unlimited, and Dumfries and Galloway Council.



4pm, County Buildings

Leone Ross: This One Sky Day || £9

Set in a fictional archipelago called Popisho, where goats are jealous, gods are mischievous, vaginas drop out unexpectedly and everyone is a tiny bit bored with magic, the novel spans a single day. As dawn breaks, the residents — each endowed with a unique special trait — wake with lists of things to accomplish. Meanwhile, two star-crossed lovers try to find their way back to one another, and to earn the wisdom that will allow room for their love. By the end of this unusual day, filled with incident and enlightenment, no one will ever be the same.

FRIDAY 1 OCTOBER continued

4pm, Wigtown Parish Church (in-person and online)

Iain MacGregor and Helena Merriman: Cold War Stories || £9

The fall of the Berlin Wall marked the end of an era, an earthquake that has shaped the geopolitical landscape ever since. This event brings together two outstanding accounts of the mistrust, oppression and paranoia that gripped Berlin in the Cold War. For *Checkpoint Charlie*, Iain MacGregor sought out the stories of those caught up in the conflict, from border guards and spies to anti-communists and intellectuals. Following on from her celebrated podcast Tunnel 29, the BBC's Helena Merriman has drawn from a wealth of Stasi documents and in-depth interviews to tell the incredible true story of a secret get-away tunnel dug under the Berlin Wall in 1962.

6pm, Wigtown Parish Church (in-person and online)

The StAnza Event || £5

For this live audience event, some contributors, including Lucy Burnett will be in the venue with others, such as Don Paterson joining by video link. The event will also be simultaneously streamed on our website. Online access is free but please pay what you can. Booking for online events is optional, but by reserving an online ticket you will receive a reminder beforehand. Don Paterson's latest poetry collection, *Zonal*, is an experiment in science-fictional and fantastic autobiography, with all of its poems taking their imaginative cue from the first season of *The Twilight Zone* (1959-1960), playing fast and loose with both their source material and the author's own life. The narrative style is a departure for Paterson, and this evening's event will feature the poet in conversation with new StAnza Director Lucy Burnett, exploring the possibilities and pitfalls of narrative poetry, in a special preview event for StAnza 2022, incorporating discussion, poetry and music. StAnza's 25th anniversary festival will have the title *Stories like Starting Points* -- and the conversation starts here!

6pm, County Buildings

Laura Thompson: Heiresses || £9

Laura Thompson explores the phenomenon of the heiress from the seventeenth to the twenty-first centuries. Take Mary Davies, a child bride at the age of twelve, and her thousand-acre dowry of today's Mayfair and Belgravia, which gave the Grosvenors their stupendous wealth. Or Consuelo Vanderbilt, Duchess of Marlborough, whose American railroad fortune helped sustain Blenheim Palace. Winnaretta Singer showcased the work of Debussy in her Parisian salon; Daisy Fellowes enjoyed parties, fashion – and other people's husbands – without shame or conscience. Alice de Janzé shot one of her lovers and was suspected of murdering a second; Woolworth heiress, Barbara Hutton, married seven times. Money should mean power and opportunity, but in the hands of these women it was so often absent. Why did so many struggle to live with so much? With her signature intelligence and wit, Laura Thompson tells these women's stories – glittering and fascinating but often sad and scandalous – on a gripping search for the answer.

*About the author: Laura Thompson is the author of several critically acclaimed works of non-fiction. Her first book *The Dogs: A Personal History of Greyhound Racing* won the Somerset Maugham Award. *Rex V. Edith Thompson: A Tale of Two Murders* was shortlisted for a CWA Dagger Award. She has written biographies of Nancy Mitford and Agatha Christie, *A Different Class of Murder* about the Lord Lucan scandal, *The Last Landlady* about her grandmother, and the New York Times-bestselling *Take Six Girls: The Lives of the Mitford Sisters*.*

FRIDAY 1 OCTOBER continued

6pm, Bladnoch Distillery

Bladnoch Distillery Whisky Tasting || £40

One of Scotland's oldest, Bladnoch Distillery just outside Wigtown is over 200 years old, and now one of only six Lowland distilleries. Join the Bladnoch management team for a tasting of some of Bladnoch Distillery's finest Single Malt Scotch Whiskies. Guests will be taken through the detailed tasting notes and how the Bladnoch team hand craft each of the beautiful Single Malts on show.

7pm, Online

Faridah Àbíké-Íyímídé: Ace of Spades || FREE, ticketed

The hugely anticipated YA high-school thriller: ACE OF SPADES is Gossip Girl meets Get Out, with a shocking twist. Buried secrets come to light when two students are targeted by an anonymous bully with an explosive agenda.

New York Times Bestseller, Faridah Àbíké-Íyímídé's Ace of Spades introduces us to Niveus Private Academy, where money paves the hallways, and the students are never less than perfect. Until now. Because anonymous texter, Aces, is bringing two students' dark secrets to light. Someone is out to get them both. Someone who holds all the aces. And they're planning much more than a high-school game...

About the author: Faridah Àbíké-Íyímídé is the instant New York Times and IndieBound bestselling author of ACE OF SPADES. She is an avid tea drinker, a collector of strange mugs and a recent graduate from a university in the Scottish Highlands where she studied English Literature. When she isn't spinning dark tales, Faridah can be found examining the deeper meanings in Disney channel original movies. She is represented by Zoë Plant at The Bent Agency.

8pm, County Buildings (in-person and online)

Ruth Jones: Us Three || £12

We're thrilled to welcome acclaimed novelist, screenwriter, and actress Ruth Jones, to discuss her second novel, the instant *Sunday Times* bestseller, *Us Three*. It's the story of Lana, Judith and Catrin, best friends since primary school, where they swore an oath that they would always be there for each other. But can that innocent childhood promise hold good over the course of four tumultuous decades — years marked by addiction, infidelity, toxic relationships, grief and betrayal? Or is there too much to forgive, let alone forget? Filled with Jones' trademark warmth, humour, and insight, this is an uplifting novel about how our friendships define us.

SATURDAY 2 OCTOBER

Various times, The Print Room

Karen Campbell: Writers' Clinic || £5

Whether you're looking for some impartial feedback on an extract of work or just have some specific questions you'd like answered, why not book yourself into our writers' clinic for a 30-minute one-to-one with author Karen Campbell? Places are limited. Sessions will take place in person in Wigtown or online by arrangement. If you'd like to submit an extract of work for Karen's feedback, please limit this to 500 words or a side of A4 and submit it to isla@wigtownbookfestival.com at least a week in advance of your session.

About Karen Campbell: Galloway-based Karen Campbell is the author of seven novels, and a graduate of Glasgow University's Creative Writing Masters. She's the recipient of an SAC New Writers Award and a Creative Scotland Artists Bursary. Her novels range from writing about the police, to refugee issues, politics and Italy in World War Two. Until January this year she was writer in residence at Dumfries and Galloway Council, writing a collection of short stories based on Council staff experiences during COVID (as part of the region wide Atlas Pandemica project). Karen is an experienced creative writing tutor and mentor, working with organisations such as Scottish PEN, Moniack Mhor and Wigtown. Her next novel, Paper Cup, will be published by Canongate in Spring 2022. More at www.karencampbell.co.uk.

10am, Wigtown Parish Church (in-person and online)

Suzanne O'Sullivan: The Sleeping Beauties || £8

Earning comparisons to Oliver Sacks and Henry Marsh, this is a touching scientific investigation into psychosomatic illnesses — medical disorders that are as influenced by the idiosyncrasies of culture as by human biology. Here, among others, are accounts of refugee children in Sweden who fall asleep for months and years at a time, and high school students in upstate New York who develop contagious seizures. O'Sullivan investigates fascinating stories from an array of people, attempting to unravel their complex meaning while asking: who gets to define what is and isn't an illness?

About the author: Suzanne O'Sullivan is a neurologist. She won the 2016 Wellcome Book Prize for her first book, It's All in Your Head: True Stories of Imaginary Illness, which also won the Royal Society of Biology General Book Prize.

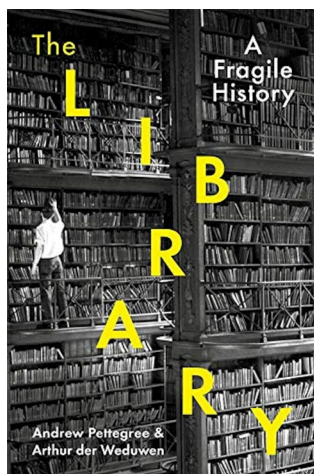
10am, County Buildings

Daisy Lafarge: Paul || £8

From an award-winning writer, comes a mesmeric novel about a young woman falling under the spell of an older man. Frances is a young graduate student spending a summer volunteering in rural France. At the eco-farm Noa Noa, she comes under the influence of its charismatic and domineering owner, Paul, and finds herself entangled in a disorienting, uneven relationship. They embark on a fraught road trip across the South of France that forces them to reckon with uncomfortable truths about power, passivity, and the idea of "being good."

About the author: Daisy Lafarge was born in Hastings and studied at the universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow. Her poetry collection Life Without Air, was shortlisted for the T.S. Eliot Prize. Paul, the winner of a Betty Trask Award, is her debut novel. She lives in Glasgow.

SATURDAY 2 OCTOBER continued



12 noon, Wigtown Parish Church

Andrew Pettegree and Arthur der Weduwen: *The Library: A Fragile History* || £9

Famed across the world, jealously guarded by private collectors, built up over centuries, destroyed in a single day, ornamented with gold leaf and frescoes, or replete with bean bags and children's drawings — the history of the library is rich, varied and stuffed full of incident. This dramatic and contested history, the first of its kind, is filled with stories about antiquarians and philanthropists, changing fashions, rare manuscripts, and avarice leading to crimes and misdemeanours. It reveals that while collections are fragile and easily ruined, the idea of the library itself has been remarkably resilient.

12 noon, County Buildings

Sarfraz Manzoor: *They* || £9

Sarfraz Manzoor grew up in a working-class Pakistani Muslim family in Luton – where he was raised to believe that they were different, they had an alien culture and they would never accept him. 'They' were white people. In today's deeply divided Britain we are often told they are different, they have a different culture and values and they will never accept this country. This time 'they' are Muslims. Weaving together history, reportage and memoir, Sarfraz Manzoor journeys around Britain in search of the roots of this division – from the fear that Islam promotes violence, to the suspicion that Muslims wish to live segregated lives, to the belief that Islam is fundamentally misogynistic. There is also Manzoor's search for a more positive future. We hear stories from Islamic history of a faith more tolerant and progressive than commonly assumed, and stories of hope from across the country which show how we might bridge the chasm of mutual mistrust. *They* is at once fiercely urgent, resolutely hopeful and profoundly personal. It is the story of modern, Muslim Britain as it has never been told.

About the author: Sarfraz Manzoor is a journalist, author and broadcaster. He has written and presented documentaries for BBC radio and television, and is a regular columnist for the Guardian, Sunday Times Magazine and Times. His first book, Greetings from Bury Park, was published to critical acclaim. In 2019, it was adapted for the big screen and released around the world under the name Blinded by the Light. He lives in London and is married with two children and a cat called Socks.

12 noon, The Print Room

Sandy NicDhòmhnaill Jones, *An Seachdamh Tonn/The Seventh Wave* || £8

An Seachdamh Tonn is Sandy's second collection of Gaelic poetry and songs, published in June 2021 by Acair, who described it as a 'gem of a collection'. It comprises fifty new poems in a wide variety of poetic forms, and a dozen of them are set to music as new songs, and arranged by Sandy and several other composers. Join us for a sneak preview before the collection is formally launched at the Royal National Mòd in Inverness in October 2021. In English and Gaelic (with translation).

SATURDAY 2 OCTOBER continued

2pm, County Buildings

Graeme Macrae Burnet: *Case Study* || £9

Beautifully balanced between harrowing and humorous, *Case Study* is set in London during the Swinging Sixties. It's the story of a woman who seeks out the psychotherapist she believes is responsible for her sister's suicide. Under an assumed name she presents herself as a client, recording her experiences in a series of notebooks. But she's drawn into a world of uncertainties, forced to question the idea of truth itself. Combining her notebook entries with his research into the actual therapist A. Collins Braithwaite, Burnet blends fact and fiction in a powerful exploration of sanity and identity.

About the author: Graeme Macrae Burnet is the author of four novels including the Man Booker shortlisted His Bloody Project. He was named Author of the Year in the Sunday Herald Culture Awards 2017.

2pm, Wigtown Parish Church

Helen Scales: *The Brilliant Abyss* || £9

This is the story of our relationship with the deep sea — how we imagine, explore and exploit it. It describes the current golden age of discovery, and revisits how we arrived here. There have always been two distinct groups of deep-sea explorers with opposing ambitions. One group seeks knowledge, the other, has more commercial ends in mind. The tension between them permeates this book, which ends by looking forwards to humanity's impact on the deep, including mining and pollution and what we can do about it.

4pm, Church Hall

Sarah Stewart: *Printmaking Workshop*

Join Printmaker Sarah Stewart in this 90min workshop where you will design and screenprint your own tote bag - perfect for carrying your festival books in! Materials provided, wear old clothes.

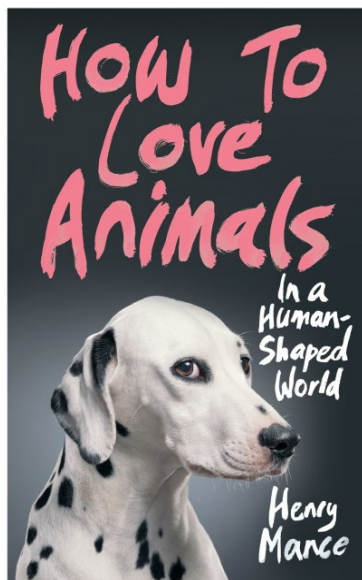
4pm, Wigtown Parish Church

Fatima Manji: *Hidden Heritage* || £12

Hidden Heritage recontextualises the relationship between Britain and the people and societies of the Orient. Journeying across Britain and exploring its cultural landmarks, Manji searches for a more honest story of a nation struggling with identity and the legacy of the empire. For instance, why did a Turkish mosque adorn Britain's most famous botanic garden in the eighteenth century? Objects, lost, concealed or overlooked expose the diversity of pre-twentieth-century Britain and the misconceptions around modern immigration narratives.

About the author: Fatima Manji is an award-winning news correspondent for Channel 4 News. In 2015 she was a finalist for the Royal Television Society's Young Journalist of the Year. During the last General Election she presented Britain's first Alternative Election Debate.

SATURDAY 2 OCTOBER continued



4pm, County Buildings (in-person and online)

Henry Mance: How To Love Animals || £9

We all love animals, but does that make their lives happier? As pets, cattle and even neighbours, our lives are full of animals. How does living in our world of uncertainty affect the experiences of our animal companions? Henry Mance takes on a quest to find a more stable existence between us and other species. He meets with chefs, farmers, activists, philosophers, scientists and tech visionaries to find out not what animals can do for us, but what we can do for animals.

About the author: Henry Mance is the award-winning Chief Features Writer at the Financial Times. He has contributed to a number of other publications including Tatler, GQ and Radio Times. He lives in London with his wife and two young daughters, plus their cat and various frogs.

6pm, County Buildings

Paula Hawkins: A Slow Fire Burning || £12

Paula Hawkins, the bestselling author of *The Girl on the Train* and *Into the Water*, is in conversation about her wonderful new novel, *A Slow Fire Burning*. It's a character-driven tale of love and loss that finds three women caught up in the aftermath of a brutal murder. One is known to be hot-tempered, troubled, maybe even dangerous. Another realises that appearances are deceptive – someone leaving a murder scene covered in blood isn't necessarily the killer. The third, the murder victim's aunt, bears scars and secrets connected to an earlier loss. Innocent or guilty, everyone in this novel is damaged in some way – and someone is damaged enough to kill! *"With a beautifully wrought cast of characters who are real and likeable even when they are complicated and flawed, a fantastic, picturesque London setting, twists and turns galore and exquisite prose, this is a high class read. Paula Hawkins is a genius."* – Lisa Jewell

6pm, Wigtown Parish Church (in-person and online)

Wigtown Poetry Prize | £5

Wigtown Poetry Prize celebrates wonderful writing from across the globe. Hear from our Prize supporters and judges as they announce the winners of this year's five categories. William Letford presents the awards for both the Wigtown Prize and the Alastair Reid Pamphlet Prize, Robert Alan Jamieson announces the Wigtown Scots Prize winner and Sandy NicDhòmhnaill Jones reveals her Wigtown Scottish Gaelic Prize choices. The winner of the Dumfries and Galloway Fresh Voice Award will also be announced.

Supported by The Gaelic Books Council and the Saltire Society

SATURDAY 2 OCTOBER continued

6pm, The Print Room

Theatre: Lot 52 || £8

A new play by Vivien Jones and directed by Ken Gouge. Set in 1775, this is a story of migration. A family leave their home in Annan to sail to Nova Scotia in search of a better life. Their resilience and fortitude will resonate with the causes of modern-day mass emigration. A Buskers production in association with Fox and Hound Theatre company.

Commissioned by Annan Harbour Action Group. Supported by Dumfries & Galloway Council.

7pm, Online

Adiba Jaigirdar: Hani and Ishu's Guide to Fake Dating || FREE, ticketed

Hani and Ishu couldn't be less alike – and they definitely don't like each other. But when fates collide and they pretend to date each other, things start to get messy... A heart-warming queer YA love story perfect for fans of Becky Albertalli.

Everyone likes Hani Khan - she's easy going and one of the most popular girls at school. But when she comes out to her friends as bisexual, they don't believe her, claiming she can't be bi if she's only dated guys. Panicked, Hani blurts out that she's in a relationship... with a girl her friends can't stand - Ishu Dey.

Ishu is the polar opposite of Hani. An academic overachiever, she hopes that becoming head girl will set her on the right track for university. Her only problem? Becoming head girl is a popularity contest and Ishu is hardly popular. Pretending to date Hani is the only way she'll stand a chance of being elected.

Despite their mutually beneficial pact, they start developing real feelings for each other. But some people will do anything to stop two Bengali girls from achieving happily ever after.

8pm, Wigtown Parish Church (in-person and online)

Emma Soames: Mary Churchill's War || £12

In 1939, at the outbreak of World War II, Mary, then 17, found herself in an extraordinary position. Her father, Winston Churchill, had been appointed First Lord of the Admiralty and within months would be Prime Minister. Mary was uniquely placed to observe what happened next, and her diaries, most never before published, provide a front-row view of the great events of war, as well as exchanges and intimate moments with her father. They also capture what it was like to be a young woman during wartime, from air raids at 10 Downing Street, to cocktail parties with presidents and royals. These diaries are full of colour, insight, and charm.

About the author: Emma Soames is Mary's daughter, and Winston's granddaughter. She is editor at large of Saga Magazine.

9pm, Online

Bookshop Band World Tour 5 || FREE, ticketed

Join the Bookshop Band - Beth Porter and Ben Please - on their concert tour of bookshops around the globe, featuring a host of special guests from the world of books brought to you by the magic of the interweb. Where will they venture tonight?

SUNDAY 3 OCTOBER

9am, Meet outside County Buildings

RSPB Wigtown Bird Walk || £10

Join RSPB ranger Paul Tarling for a gentle walk around the town and its environs in search of Wigtown's birdlife. Meet outside the County Buildings.

11.30am, County Buildings (in-person and online)

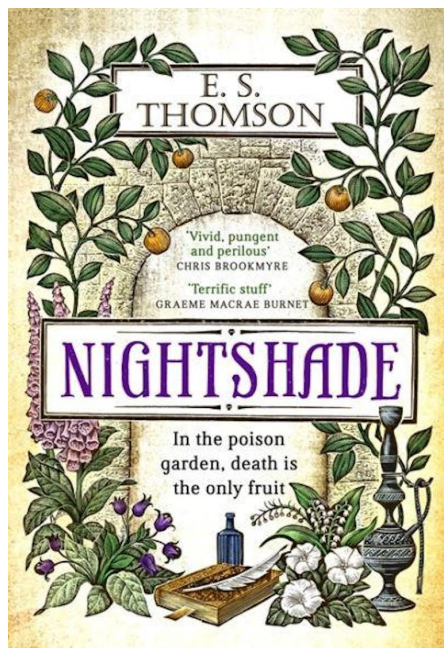
Charlotte Higgins: Greek Myths || £9

From an award-winning writer comes this vividly imagined, female-centric interpretation of some of the most enduring stories of all time, with female characters taking centre stage. Here are myths of the creation of Heracles and Theseus, and the Trojan war. There are stories of love and desire, adventure and magic, destructive gods, helpless humans, fantastical creatures, and resourceful witches. This is a world of extremes, resonating deeply with our own: mysterious diseases devastate cities; environmental disasters tear lives apart; women habitually suffer violence at the hands of men.

About the author: Charlotte Higgins is The Guardian's chief culture writer and a member of its editorial board. She has published four books, including Latin Love Lessons, It's All Greek To Me, and Red Thread: On Mazes and Labyrinths which was a BBC Radio 4 Book of the Week.

11.30am, The Print Room

ES Thomson: Nightshade || £8



London, 1851. Restless and bored, apothecary and poison expert Jem Flockhart decides to redesign her physic garden. But discovery of a man's skeleton beneath the deadly nightshade, and that of a child-like skeleton curled at its feet, throw plans into disarray. The body bears evidence of knife wounds and is accompanied by a collection of macabre objects. When Jem starts investigating who this might be, fresh murders begin, and every victim has a connection to her garden that strikes at the very heart of Jem's own history. This time, the poison is personal...

About the author: Dr ES Thomson has a PhD in the social history of medicine — and found the things she discovered too exciting to leave to the history books. Her work has been long listed for the CWA Endeavour Historical Dagger, and shortlisted for the Saltire Prize, the Scottish Arts Council First Book Award and the William McIlvanney Crime Book of the Year Award.

1pm, Meet at Wigtown Harbour

Saltmarsh Library Walk 5: Wigtown Bay || £10

Commissioned by Wigtown Book Festival for Scotland's Year of Coasts and Waters in 2020, The Saltmarsh Library is a new book by Saltire Award-winning writer Stephen Rutt exploring the history and ecology of Wigtown Bay's unique marshland. Join Stephen and countryside ranger Elizabeth Tindal for a rare chance to explore the secret of this extraordinary landscape in the company of experts. Dress for mud. Meet at Wigtown Harbour. (Two hours approximately)

Wigtown Book Festival 22 September - 4 October 2021

SUNDAY 3 OCTOBER continued

1pm, County Buildings (in-person and online)

Andrew Lownie: Traitor King || £9

Nuanced and meticulously researched, *Traitor King* is an unflinching exploration of the dramatic and controversial lives of Edward VIII and Wallis Simpson after his abdication. Beginning at the moment when most turn away, Lownie reveals the dramatic story of a Royal forced into exile, and a couple obsessed with their status, who financially exploited their position and manipulated the media to portray themselves as victims. Drawing upon hitherto unexplored archives, Lownie shows how their glittering, brittle world was riddled with treachery and betrayal, and why the Royal family never forgave the Duke for choosing love over duty.

1pm, The Print Room

David Keenan: Monument Maker || £8

Is it possible for books to dream? For books to dream within books? Is there a literary subterranea that would facilitate ingress and exit points through these dreams? These are some of the questions posed by David Keenan's genre-straddling *Monument Maker*, an epic romance of eternal summer, and a descent into the horrors of the past. It runs from the siege of Khartoum and the conquest of Africa in the 19th century, through the Second World War, and up to the present day, where the memory of a single summer's love affair reveals a secret initiatory cult with roots in macabre experiments in cryptozoology in pre-war Europe.

2.30pm, Church Hall

Cal Flyn and Karen Lloyd: Abandonment and Abundance || £9

Join Cal Flyn and Karen Lloyd for a fascinating examination of how humans have chosen to entangle themselves in nature and our lasting impact on the natural world. Cal Flyn's book, *Islands of Abandonment*, talks about abandoned places: ghost towns and exclusion zones, no man's lands and fortress islands – and what happens when nature is allowed to reclaim its place, exploring the extraordinary places where humans no longer live. While Karen Lloyd explores abundance and loss in the natural world, relating compelling stories of restoration, renewal and repair. In an era of urgent ecological challenge, her timely book reveals the places that people are coming together to bring species and habitats back from the edge of extinction. Yet, elsewhere, many other species are being allowed to disappear forever.

2.30pm, County Buildings (in-person and online)

Gavin Hastings: Legacy of the Lions || £9

Rugby is a game that rewards creative expression, toil, teamwork and a never-say-die attitude. It can be joyful, vibrant and beautiful. Equally, it can brutally expose human flaws and frailties – even more so in the hugely pressurised environment of a Lions tour. In *Legacy of the Lions*, former Lions captain Gavin Hastings draws on his own experiences in the famous red jersey and interviews other greats of the game to explore how to forge a successful team in this most rarefied of environments, the difficulties they each encountered and what leadership lessons they learned. Inspiring, humorous and illuminating, *Legacy of the Lions* casts a unique light on leadership, team-building and elite performance and reveals a new perspective on touring with – and playing against – the British & Irish Lions in the modern era.

SUNDAY 3 OCTOBER continued

4pm, County Buildings (in-person and online)

Alan Johnson: *The Late Train to Gipsy Hill* || £12

Alan Johnson's thriller, *The Late Train to Gipsy Hill*, finds the former Home Secretary and bestselling memoirist reinvented as a debut novelist, with a fast-paced, warm-hearted story that begins with an unremarkable young man making his unremarkable London commute. But when a beautiful woman he's been too shy to approach holds up a mirror bearing the message "HELP ME" scrawled in mascara, a terrifying chase ensues. Along the way there are hair-raising encounters with Russian mobsters, the FSB, and even the Metropolitan police. Johnson, a Labour MP for 20 years, is the author of three award-winning memoirs. He hosts a podcast called *How To Change the World*, and writes an Agony Uncle column for *Saga Magazine*.

4pm, The Print Room

Katie Goh: *The End: Surviving the World Through Fictional Disasters* || £8

The Greek root of "apocalypse" means to reveal or uncover, and we've recently seen how a global pandemic reveals economic and welfare inequalities. *The End* explores a wealth of apocalypse fiction — from *War of the Worlds* through *The Handmaid's Tale* and beyond — and its role in how we manage, manifest, and imagine social, economic and political disaster and crises. What do these narratives reveal about how we imagine our place in history? Why do we fantasise about the end of the world? What does this say about our anxieties?

6pm, County Buildings

Jessica Fox: *Stella* || £8

Join us for a session with writer-director Jessica Fox as she discusses the process of working to create her directorial debut, *Stella*. Producer Tabitha Mudaliar joins her for an evening of anecdotes from the set, and an insight into the little-seen world of filmmaking. Shot on location in Galloway House, Garlieston, and Wigtown, set in 1937 as the threat of war looms, *Stella* is a story of love, defiance, and secrecy. A special guest from the leading cast to be confirmed.

7pm, Online

Sara Barnard: *Destination Anywhere* || FREE, ticketed



A breath-taking novel about finding yourself and finding a friend by the award-winning author of *Beautiful Broken Things*.

Sometimes you have to leave your life behind to find your place in the world. After five years at secondary school spent without any friends, Peyton King starts sixth form college determined that things will be different. Whatever happens, she will make friends at any cost. When she finds the friends she's always dreamed of, including an actual boyfriend, she's happier than she's ever been. But when they let her down in the worst way, Peyton is left no better off than when she started. Now Peyton knows the only chance she has of finding happiness is to look for it somewhere else. Her life may feel small, but it doesn't have to be. With nothing but her sketchpad and a backpack, she buys a one-way ticket and gets on a plane. . .

MONDAY 4 OCTOBER

10am, The Print Room

Cal Flynn: Writing the Landscape || £10

Join award-winning writer Cal Flynn for a workshop that will inspire and enthuse you and help you to create words that build dramatic images with a strong sense of emotion and place.

10am, County Buildings

Elizabeth Tindall and Stephen Rutt: The Saltmarsh Library Event || £8

Join award-winning nature writer Stephen Rutt and ranger Elizabeth Tindal as they talk about the majesty and mystery, culture and history of Wigtown Bay's unique marshlands - the subject of Stephen's new work, *The Saltmarsh Library*, which was commissioned by Wigtown Book Festival in 2020 as part of Scotland's Year of Coasts and Waters. The event will also feature excerpts from Colin Tennant's accompanying film of the same name.

The salt marshes are one of south-west Scotland's greatest natural assets. Sometimes known as The Inks, they are now part of the 2,845-hectare Wigtown Bay Local Nature Reserve, sitting within the Unesco Biosphere. The reserve hosts three species of migrant geese and overwintering whooper swans that migrate from the arctic. The area is also special for its fish species with sparring and twait shad breeding, and eelgrass beds that are important wildlife habitats.

The Saltmarsh Library will look at the saltmarsh as a keeper of stories. The marshland literally shaped Wigtown as tide patterns changed, and in its turn it was shaped by man. It has seen human drama like the drowning of the Wigtown Martyrs and has hidden secrets (such as evidence of the Chernobyl disaster revealed via isotopes in mud). As a huge carbon sink and at the mercy of flooding, it also reveals tales of our future climate.

2pm, Meet at Wigtown Harbour

Saltmarsh Library Walk 6: Wigtown Bay || £10

Commissioned by Wigtown Book Festival for Scotland's Year of Coasts and Waters in 2020, *The Saltmarsh Library* is a new book by Saltire Award-winning writer Stephen Rutt exploring the history and ecology of Wigtown Bay's unique marshland. Join Stephen and countryside ranger Elizabeth Tindal for a rare chance to explore the secret of this extraordinary landscape in the company of experts. Dress for mud. Meet at Wigtown Harbour. (Two hours approximately)

2pm, County Buildings

Shaun Bythell: A Bookseller's Bookshelf || £9

It would be wrong to say that there is never a dull day in a secondhand bookseller's life. But some days are more interesting than others, revealing books that have their own stories, often quite separate apart from what lies within their covers. Shaun Bythell, Wigtown's most self-confessedly curmudgeonly bookshop owner and author of the bestselling *Diary of a Bookseller*, shares with the audience the oddities that have crossed his path.

BIG WIG CHILDREN'S PROGRAMME

SATURDAY 25 SEPTEMBER

10am, Church Hall

Alan McClure: Jack's Well || £4

Ages 8-12

Join Galloway author Alan McClure as he launches his second Middle Grade novel, *Jack's Well*, a multi-layered story exploring celebrity, mental health and the scary point when childhood fantasy meets adolescent reality. Alan will share the real-life inspiration behind the tale, including youthful heroes like Christopher Robin and Alice Liddel (of *Alice in Wonderland* fame). With live readings, tales of an author's adventures in lockdown, and audience Q+A.

"*Jack's Well* confirms McClure as one of the most exciting children's writers working in Scotland today." - Ross Sayers, author of *Daisy on the Outer Line* and *Sonny and Me*.

12 Noon, Church Hall

Alasdair Hutton and William Gorman: The Castle Cat || £4

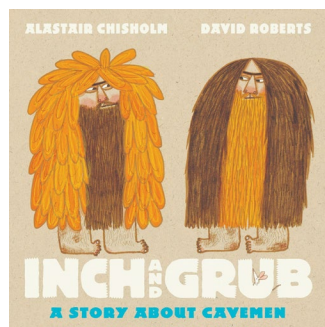
After following some soldiers to their barracks, a lost and hungry kitten finds himself with a new life in Edinburgh Castle. After such a big change for a small kitten, will he ever be able to feel at home in the busy bustle of city life?

Illustrated by William Gorman

2pm, Church Hall

Alastair Chisholm: Inch and Grub: A Story About Cavemen || £4

Ages 3+



Inch and Grub are cavemen. Grub's cave is bigger, and he says that makes him the best. So Inch adds a water feature to his cave. But Grub has made fire! So Inch makes a chair. And a house. And a car. Grub, meanwhile, has made a castle, a train and a radio! And so the contest spirals out of control, until they each have a huge wobbly pile of stuff. But what happens when the piles collapse? A funny story about being competitive and how 'stuff' is not what really matters.

Illustrated by David Roberts.

SUNDAY 26 SEPTEMBER

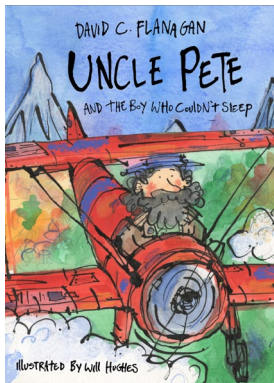
12 Noon, Church Hall

Vivian French: The Runaways of Haddington Hall || £4

Ages 8-12

Vivian French takes us on a trip to Dickensian England in a wonderfully twisty tale of a Victorian laundry maid sent to live in a boarding-home for wayward orphans. Her friends are going to help plot a plan to get her out, but they'll have to outwit Mrs Haddington, a wicked philanthropist, and Obadiah Marpike, a dastardly conman, to do it!

In conversation with Ross MacKenzie, author of the award-winning Nowhere Emporium trilogy.



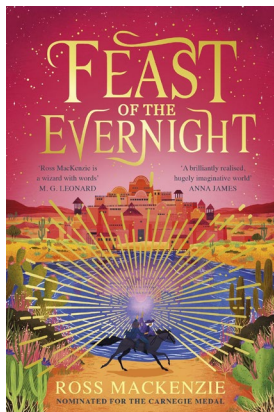
2pm, Church Hall

David Flanagan: Uncle Pete and the Boy Who Couldn't Sleep || £4

Ages 6-8

No matter what his parents try - bedtime stories, songs, milky drinks - Harry just cannot sleep. In fact, the young boy has never slept a wink in his entire life. An unexpected visit from Harry's eccentric uncle, Pete, changes everything. Uncle Pete and his tiny mouse companion set out on a magical and hilarious adventure in a rickety old biplane to find a very special sheep!

Illustrated by Will Hughes.



4pm, Church Hall

Ross Mackenzie: Feast of the Evernight || £4

The Evernight has been defeated and the villainous Mrs Hester is no more. While Larabelle Fox should be celebrating with her friends Joe and Double Eight, a new threat begins to emerge from the mists of the Veil, a dangerous forest to the Silver Kingdom's south. There are mysterious deaths taking place, and Double Eight is the prime suspect! Can Lara and Joe uncover the truth to clear their friend's name while trying to stay one step ahead of the secret police themselves?

Ross Mackenzie chats with author Vivian French and welcomes your questions too.

WEDNESDAY 29 SEPTEMBER

5.45pm, The Print Room

Renita Boyle: Tuck-in Tales || Free

Wigtown's resident storyteller Renita Boyle hosts a live tuck-in tale. With teasers, tunes and tales, this event offers something for the whole family to enjoy just before bedtime. Pyjamas and teddy bears are welcome.

SATURDAY 2 OCTOBER

12 noon, Church Hall

Adam Bushnell: Myth Makers Workshop || £4

Ages 7-12

Greek Myths are full of terrible monsters and glorious heroes, but now it's time to tell your own tale! First, you'll need to design your own beastly creature to star in your myth, then you'll get to build your story around it. Along the way, you'll get to grips with actual ancient weaponry and armour, before writing your mythical saga. No previous experience necessary. Paper and pencils provided.



2pm, Church Hall

Abby Gray || Princess Dangerous || £4

Princess Pistachio is bored of life in Caste Humungous. There's nothing to do and her siblings are always annoying her! They don't know about her double life as Princess Dangerous, who wears a tartan scarf, teams up with her disgruntled cat and fights bad guys. When her baby brother Cashew is kidnapped by the evil King Villy, it's up to her to save the kingdom, with the help of her sister Pieface, of course!

Written with Alan Grant. Illustrated by Shalla Gray

SUNDAY 3 OCTOBER

12 noon, Church Hall

Big Wig Picnic in the Park with Renita Boyle || £4

Pack your picnic basket and join storyteller-in-residence Renita Boyle for a family-friendly afternoon of songs, stories and tale twisters. A special blue-haired and green-spotted guest might make an appearance too. Big Wig can NEVER resist a picnic, especially if there are jam sandwiches.

TICKETING POLICY

Under 12s must be accompanied by a ticket-buying adult. Under 2s who do not need a seat are free. Ages in listings are for guidance only. Tickets must be booked in advance for all events.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photographs are taken during the festival for future publicity. Please advise the steward at events if we may not photograph your family or give the photographer a thumbs down and they will know not to take a picture.

COVID-SAFETY

The safety of our audiences, speakers, volunteers and staff is important to us. Adults and children over the age of 12 are required to wear a mask throughout indoor events. We respectfully ask everyone to maintain a safe distance and to follow one-way systems when they are in place.