



**WORDS
CULTURE
WORKSHOPS**

Falmouth Book Festival

**16th
–22nd
Oct**

falmouthbookfestival.co.uk

2023

Design:A-Side.

Welcome to

Falmouth Book Festival

2023

This is our third year, and once again we have another great line-up joining us over our week-long run. There will be award-winning novelists, stand-up comedians, poets, historians and environmentalists, and some wonderfully entertaining children's writers too.

We're proud to provide a platform for some of our finest local writing talent alongside international literary stars such as Nigerian-born novelist Ben Okri, and New Zealand author and screenwriter Eleanor Catton (who, lest we forget, are both former Booker Prize winners, too.)

We never try to impose themes on the festival, but Falmouth always ends up suggesting ones of its own. So once again we have events that look at the meaning of what it is to be Cornish and about the portrayal of the far South West in writing and wider culture. We also have talks and discussions that reflect on our relationship with the local

landscape and the sea, and authors talking about how writing can go some way to respond to the climate crisis.

So do come along and join us from 16-22 October. We hope you'll be entertained, amused and informed, and that one way or another you'll learn something new. Do dive in to this programme to find out more. We hope there's something for everyone!

While we're always delighted to hear about visitors coming from far and wide, we're eternally grateful for the reaction we've received from the local community. Without your continued support we wouldn't be able to keep the show on the road.

And support from local business has been a key factor too: one of the reasons we first decided to start a festival in town was because Falmouth has that unique combination (in Cornwall, at least) of an award-winning arts University and a legendary local independent bookshop. And so it is again that we can count ourselves grateful to have Falmouth University and the Falmouth Bookseller as our headline sponsors this year. Once again we're eternally grateful for support of the Falmouth BID, FEAST and Cornwall Council. And we're also hugely grateful to our hospitality sponsors at St Michael's Resort and our community sponsors, Heather & Lay's Estate agents and Reynolds and Slater's Opticians.

We look forward to seeing you around the festival.

Colin Midson
and Helen Waters

Monday 16th October

Louis de Bernières

A Cornish Tale

With Jemma Goodman

7pm, at the Poly. Tickets £8 and £5



Join Louis de Bernières as he talks about his new Cornish-based novel *Light over Liskeard*.

He'll be talking to Jemma Goodman about the story of Q, a man who works as a quantum cryptographer for the government, a job that has led him to believe a crisis is imminent for civilization. Looking for somewhere to ride out what's ahead he buys a ruined farmhouse in Cornwall and begins to build his own self-sufficient haven.

This entertaining and heart-warming novel pokes fun at modern mores, and makes us reconsider what is really precious in our short and precarious lives.

"Louis de Bernières is in the direct line that runs through Dickens and Evelyn Waugh... he has only to look into his world, one senses, for it to rush into reality, colours and touch and taste" – Evening Standard

Tuesday 17th October

Robin Ince

Bibilomaniac

7pm, at the Poly. Tickets £8 and £5



Award-winning comedian Robin Ince shares his love of books and bookshops.

In Autumn 2021, Robin Ince's stadium tour with Professor Brian Cox was postponed due to the pandemic. But rather than do nothing, he decided instead to go on a tour of over a hundred bookshops in the UK.

Packed with witty anecdotes and tall tales, *Bibliomaniac* takes the reader on a journey across Britain as Robin explores his lifelong love of bookshops and books. It is the story of an addiction and a romance, and also of an occasional points failure just outside Oxenholme.

"A unique, funny picture of Britain... A love letter to bookshops and the vagaries of public transport." – Richard Osman

"[This]account of a whirlwind tour of more than 100 stores is full of wry anecdotes shines with his love of reading." – Independent

Wednesday 18th October

Ben Okri Tiger Works

With Amy Greenhough

7pm, at the Poly. Tickets £8 and £5



Ben Okri is a Nigerian-born British poet, novelist, short story writer, essayist, playwright, and activist.

The celebrated author of over a dozen novels, in 1991 he won the Booker Prize for *The Famished Road*, a book that has been highly influential in the decades since its release. His new collection *Tiger Work* sees him turning to the subject of climate change: if we continue to live as we do now, he argues, there will be no world left for us to fix. Combining fiction, essay and poetry, *Tiger Work* showcases Okri's classic blend of storytelling, fantasy and magic and makes a case for the importance of writers in shaping our responses to the climate crisis.

'Both a work of lyrical imagination and a warning about the dangers we will face unless we take immediate action' – New Yorker

'Ben Okri is that rare thing, a literary and social visionary' – Ali Smith.

Thursday 19th October

James Holland Writing History

With Ron Johns

7pm, at the Poly. Tickets £8 and £5



James Holland has been described by Sebastian Faulks as 'the best of a new generation of Second World War historians'.

As an internationally acclaimed and award-winning historian, writer, and broadcaster James has presented -and written -many historical TV programmes and has a weekly Second World War podcast, *We Have of Making You Talk*, with Al Murray.

This year has seen him publish a definitive illustrated history of the Second World War, and this autumn's *The Savage Storm: The Battle for Italy 1943*.

He'll be talking about the importance of reflecting on the past, explaining his research methods and recounting some of the extraordinary stories he's uncovered along the way.

'Impeccably researched and superbly written' – Observer

Friday 20th October

Natasha Walter

Beyond Grief

With Cathy Rentzenbrink

6.30pm, at the Poly. Tickets £8 and £5



Natasha Walter talks to Cathy Rentzenbrink about her new memoir and how reexamining a family's history can make sense of grief.

One day in December, Natasha Walter's mother Ruth took her own life. At first, the grief and guilt that Natasha felt were overwhelming. As the author of feminist books and the founder of the charity Women for Refugee Women, Natasha had always been active in social justice. But in the aftermath of her mother's suicide, her personal grief intertwines with a sense of political despair.

This is a memoir that will resonate with those grappling with the loss of hope in these challenging political times, as well as those who are living in the shadow of bereavement.

'Deeply affecting and unexpectedly inspiring... the perfect read for daunting times'
– Sarah Waters

Friday 20th October

Seamas Carey

Help - I think I'm a Nationalist

8pm, at the Poly. Tickets £10 and £5



The sell-out comedy show on identity, second homes, xenophobia and bagpipes.

Cornwall is at a tipping point. House prices soar, the population shifts, tensions rise. Some people see it as a separate nation, whilst others see it as a prime holiday destination and playground for the rich.

Seamas Carey has watched a wave of gentrification sweep through his hometown. There's nowhere to live, yet second homes stand empty. He wishes Cornwall was more welcoming and inclusive, but watches "up country" money sow division and suspicion.

Could closing borders and nationalism be the answer? Where's the line between pride and power? What happens when it all goes too far?

Seamas needs help. He needs your help.

★★★★ "Entertaining and layered" – The Stage

Saturday 21st October

Charles Clover

Rewilding the Sea

With Hugo Tagholm

11am, at the Poly. Tickets £8 and £5



Charles Clover transformed the conversation around global fishing. Now he is now leading the campaign to save our oceans.

In this indispensable follow up to his acclaimed book and feature film documentary *The End of the Line*, Charles Clover chronicles how the crisis in our oceans can be reversed.

Rewilding the Sea celebrates what happens when we step aside and let nature repair the damage: whether it is the overfishing of bluefin tuna across the Atlantic, the destruction of coral gardens by dredgers in Lyme Bay or the restoration of oysters on the East Coast of America.

Essential and revelatory, *Rewilding the Sea* is a call to arms that propels us to rethink our relationship with nature.

'A game-changer! People are hungry for a plan to reverse ocean death so we can keep breathing!' – Margaret Atwood

Saturday 21st October

Tim Hannigan

The Granite Kingdom

With Elizabeth Dale

2pm, at the Poly. Tickets £8 and £5



Tim Hannigan sets off in search of the real Cornwall both ancient and modern.

Tim Hannigan was born and brought up in Cornwall and has lived here on and off ever since. For his latest book *The Granite Kingdom*, he set off on a walk of discovery, from the Tamar Valley to West Penwith to discover how Cornish landscapes, histories and communities intersect with the many projections and tropes that writers, artists and others have placed upon it.

Juxtaposing history, myth, folklore and literary representation *The Granite Kingdom* provides a compelling geographical and social assessment of the reality of Cornwall today.

'Travel writing used to be dominated by Old Etonians with colonialist tendencies; but [Tim Hannigan's] well-researched critique shows that the "travellers" are writing back'
– Guardian

Saturday 21st October

James Strawbridge Cooking with Salt

4pm, at St Michaels Resort. Tickets £5



Join us for a celebration of the simplest of ingredients, with Cornish chef and foodwriter James Strawbridge.

James is passionate about cooking seasonally and using the best Cornish produce. He'll be talking about his new cookbook, *Salt and the Art of Seasoning* and demystifying the art of brining, curing, charring and preserving – techniques that bring out a world of hidden flavours.

James is also a renowned TV presenter, having fronted last year's BBC series 'Strawbridge over the Drawbridge' and made numerous appearances on 'Escape to the Chateau' on Channel 4. James has previously been short-listed for the Guild of Food Writers Awards and is the author of two previous cookbooks, *The Artisan Kitchen* and *The Complete Vegetable* cookbook, as well as various books with his father Dick Strawbridge.

Note: this event is held at St Michaels Resort.

'[The] recipe book that will make all your other recipe books taste better.' – The Telegraph

Saturday 21st October

Eleanor Catton Birnam Wood With Adrian Markle

6pm, at the Poly. Tickets £8 and £5



Join the Booker-winning novelist as she reflects on her career in writing and the influence of Macbeth, climate change, and social media.

In 2013 Eleanor Catton became the youngest winner in Booker Prize history for her genre defying epic *The Luminaries*. Ten years on, her follow-up is similarly unclassifiable but just as satisfying.

A gripping psychological eco-thriller, *Birnam Wood* is Shakespearean in its wit and drama and provides an unflinching examination of the human impulse to ensure our own survival.

Eleanor will be talking about life since the Booker, discussing her screenwriting work (the 2020 adaptation of *Emma*) and explaining what fiction can do to address the climate crisis.

'Glorious... [a] brilliant novel about the violence and tawdriness of late capitalism. Its ending, though, propels it from a merely very good book into a truly great one' – The Times

Sunday 22nd October

Tim Hubbard

Cornwall's Secret Gardens

With Jacqui Owen

6pm, at the Poly. Tickets £8 and £5



Esteemed broadcaster and author Tim Hubbard takes us behind the scenes of the best horticultural destinations in the Duchy.

Tim Hubbard reveals twenty of Cornwall's lesser known gardens in a new book -The Secret Gardens of Cornwall. In conversation with Jacqui Owen, an expert on Falmouth's free public gardens which are featured in the book, he'll be telling the stories of the landowners, seafarers, gardeners and plant hunters who have made Falmouth and its gardens such an important horticultural location.

Tim provides some personal and practical insights too: discover what grows well, when and where to visit, and find out about his own new clifftop garden facing out across the Atlantic Ocean.

'A glorious celebration of some of the finest gardens in a county whose climate makes them especially breathtaking.' – Alan Titchmarsh

Sunday 22nd October

Catrina Davies

Real Rural Lives

With Raynor Winn

2pm, at the Poly. Tickets £8 and £5



Raynor Winn interviews Cornish-based writer Catrina Davies as they discuss the portrayal of rural West Country lives.

Catrina Davies' latest book, Once Upon a Raven's Nest, is the story of a working-class man, one Thomas Hedley of Exmoor, and of the planet during the period of its great acceleration towards the current climate emergency.

Born in 1955 to a poor family in Devon, Thomas refused to conform. Catrina Davies came to know him in his last years and has given his life and times in his own words, in a knowing, poetic and poignant voice.

Join Catrina as she discusses the writing of the book with bestselling author Raynor Winn.

'A rich, beautiful and deeply moving book. I read it in one sitting, then was sorry that I had not drawn it out for longer, as I enjoyed it so much.' – George Monbiot

Sunday 22nd October

Nina Stibbe

Back to London

With Cathy Rentzenbrink

4pm, at the Poly. Tickets £8 and £5



Nina Stibbe delivers a funny and poignant account of a year-long break from married life in Cornwall.

The author of the bestselling *Love*, Nina traces the next chapter of her life as she departs for more endearing adventures in the capital, reflecting on what it means to turn your whole life around aged 60. Whether it's dinner parties with the great and the good of the London literati or micromanaging her son's online dating profile, Nina Stibbe's utterly inimitable wit is ever present throughout this diary of her first return to London since the *Love*, Nina years.

'Vulnerable, sharp, funny, wise' – Bonnie Garmus

'A unique comic voice' – David Nicholls

'Like spending time with my most clever, insightful, funny, FUNNY friend' – Marian Keyes

'So sharp and funny, blissfully gossipy, enviably well-observed . . . I loved it' – India Knight

Sunday 22nd October

Tim Key

Chapters

With Colin Midson

6pm, at the Poly. Tickets £10 and £5



Join comedian, actor and poet Tim Key in conversation about life, comedy, and his new poetry collection, *Chapters*.

Chapters is a slim book of the crap he's been churning out over the past eighteen months. Poems about men getting stuck in webs, poems about the ancient city of Canterbury, poems about canoodling with a rose.

He'll be talking about what, if anything, the point of it all is, and sparking a healthy debate as to whether it should be broken up into chapters and, if so, why. All of these discussions are also documented in the leftover space around the poems. The result is a splurge of words which very occasionally shine a light on modern times.

'His brief verses range from the whimsical to the sinister . . . He is quick and mischievous...' – Guardian

'He's a genius plain and simple' – Time Out

Monday 16th October

Young & Talented Cornwall

Creative Writing Awards

5pm, at the Poly



We're delighted to be launching our festival with an event in support of a fabulous initiative that champions young writing talent in Cornwall.

Young & Talented Cornwall has supported eight young wordsmiths this year through its Creative Writing Award. This initiative provides invaluable mentorship with established Cornish authors to nurture young talent and help them achieve their writing dreams.

The award, sponsored by Falmouth University and Seasalt Cornwall and supported by the Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants, was launched last year. The group -consisting of future poets, journalists and scriptwriters -is the second cohort of young people to benefit from the Creative Writing Award.

They will be presented with their awards by Lord Lieutenant Colonel Edward Bolitho OBE and Award Curator, Philip Marsden.



Weekend children's events

Our children's events are held at the Library on Saturday 21st October. Children's places must be booked in advance of the session. Children's tickets are subject to a £1.50 fee (£1 Poly Fund & 50p booking fee).



Illustration & Storytelling

With Rebecca Cobb

10.30am, Ages 4 - 8

Rebecca Cobb's illustration and storytelling workshop is an inspirational session for creative young minds.

Rebecca Cobb works as a picture book illustrator and writer, illustrating her own books as well as books by authors, including Julia Donaldson, Helen Dunmore, Richard Curtis and Katherine Woodfine. In 2013, Rebecca won the Waterstones Children's Book Prize for Picture Books with her book *Lunchtime*, and she has been shortlisted for the prestigious CILIP Kate Greenaway Medal three times.



Manga Workshop

With Keith Sparrow

10.30am, Ages 8 - 16

Keith Sparrow is an artist, writer and performer. He has published several books on the art of drawing manga, and runs workshops all over Cornwall helping to inspire artists of all ages to develop the art of storytelling through pictures. He has also produced manga strips and art highlighting notable Cornish figures. His workshops are a brilliant way to develop your creative skills! No previous experience is needed and you'll get plenty of one-to-one support.



Story-making

With Craig Barr-Green

11.30am, Ages 4 - 8

Come and join writer and all-round storytelling genius Craig Barr-Green as he shows you how to turn words into magic in this interactive storytelling workshop.

Craig is a children's book author and teaches Children's Literature at Falmouth University. His latest book, *Gina Kamniski Saves the Wolf*, published by Little Tiger, is out now. His workshops are a brilliant way to develop your creative skills! No previous experience is needed and you'll get plenty of one-to-one support!



Reading & Craft Workshop

With Sarah Tagholm

1pm, Ages 2 - 7

Come and join illustrator Sarah for a reading and craft session for inquisitive little ones.

Sarah Tagholm is a children's author who loves writing about confused animals, mischievous children and all things bizarre.

Sarah's first picture book *Wolves In Helicopters*, was published in 2022 and tackles nightmares head on. This was followed by *Sam Francisco King Of The Disco* a rhyming book about cats sneaking out to dance.



Huw Lewis Jones

Do Bears Poop in the Woods?

2pm, Ages 7-12

Join Huw Lewis Jones, a polar-exploring author and naturalist who is lucky to have met many bears in the wild as he helps us learn about all the 'bear' necessities.

Bears are familiar to us all, but what you might not realise is that behind their big, grizzly image are wild animals who really need our help. So put on your walking boots, grab your binoculars and come along on a journey to see the eight incredible bear species in the wild. Not only will you discover why bears poop so much, you'll also find out how to avoid getting eaten by one, and what we can do to protect them.

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