



Media release: February 2024

David Nicholls, Olivia Laing and Percival Everett

Manchester Literature Festival welcomes three brilliant writers to the city this Spring, setting the tone for a celebration of the power of words in 2024

Percival Everett in Conversation, 10 April 2024, 7pm, Central Library

'With my pencil, I wrote myself into being.' Everett's forthcoming novel *James* is a retelling of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* in which the enslaved Jim is allowed to tell his story for the first time. While journeying down the Mississippi with Huck, Jim has a series of adventures and encounters. Often terrifying but hilariously recounted, they highlight the absurdity of white superiority and the ways in which Jim has been forced to hide his true intellect and abilities. Percival is the author of over thirty books, including *The Trees* which was shortlisted for the Booker Prize and won the Bollinger Everyman Wodehouse Prize. *Erasure* has been adapted into the Oscar-nominated film *American Fiction*.

Presented in partnership with the Centre for New Writing and Creative Manchester.

David Nicholls in Conversation, 22 April 2024, 7pm, Central Library

One of the UK's best loved authors returns to Manchester to discuss his witty and engrossing new novel *You Are Here*, the story of two lonely people. Thirty-eight-year-old Marnie and forty-two-year-old Michael, battered by break-ups and the loss of the futures they'd hoped for are brought together by a mutual friend. When they embark on the Coast to Coast walk they are reminded how to open up to new people, how to have fun in sometimes arduous conditions, and, ultimately, how to love.

David is the best-selling author of five previous novels including *Starter for Ten*, which has recently been turned into a musical, and *One Day*, which has been adapted into a new Netflix series. His screenplay of Edward St Aubyn's *Patrick Melrose* novels won a BAFTA for Best Writer and was nominated for an Emmy.

Presented in partnership with the Centre for New Writing, Creative Manchester and Waterstones Deansgate.

Olivia Laing: *The Garden Against Time*, 10 May 2024, 7pm, Central Library

'A garden is a time capsule, as well as a portal out of time.' A compelling new work of non-fiction *The Garden Against Time*, brings to life her own slice of paradise: the restoration of a garden designed by Mark Rumary of Notcutts. Alongside her own endeavours, Olivia explores the idea of paradise and gardens, real and imagined, through the work of John Milton, John Clare, W.G. Sebald, Derek Jarman, William Morris and many others. She considers how gardens are political and how these slices of Eden survive war and bring joy during difficult times. A widely acclaimed author and critic, she is the author of seven books including *The Lonely City*, *Everybody* and *Funny Weather*. Her first novel, *Crudo*, was a Sunday Times bestseller and won the 2019 James Tait Memorial Prize. In 2018 she was awarded a Windham-Campbell Prize for non-fiction.

Presented in partnership with the Centre for New Writing and Creative Manchester.

World Book Day and The 100 Story Hotel

In March, the Festival joins forces with Z-arts to celebrate World Book Day, (Wednesday 6 March). Best-selling and award-winning author Rob Biddulph will lead two workshops which are free for Greater Manchester schools. Rob's latest book, *Charlie McGrew*, is the official £1 book for World Book Day. This is a unique chance to meet Rob, listen to a story and see him draw. Any schools unable attend will be able to access a free interactive film and digital resources.

The Festival is also working in partnership with Z-arts on *The 100 Story Hotel: an interactive world of play and storytelling* created by Rob and Discover Story Centre, which opens its doors on Wednesday 21 February.

Ends

For press enquiries and review tickets please contact:

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Notes to editors

<https://www.manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk/allevnts>

Join the conversation: #MLF2024 @McrLitFest

To book

Tickets are on sale for MLF Members from Wednesday 14 February and on general sale on Friday 16 February.

To buy an MLF Get Closer Membership and book advance tickets visit :

<https://www.quaytickets.com/mlf/screenloader.aspx?page=usercontent/html/manchesterliteraturefestival/memberships.html&type=include>

Listings information

Percival Everett in Conversation

Wednesday 10 April 2024, 7pm

Central Library, Manchester

Tickets: £12/£10

David Nicholls in Conversation

Monday 22 April 2024, 7pm

Central Library, Manchester

Tickets: £12/£10

Olivia Laing: The Garden Against Time

Friday 10 May 2024, 7pm

Central Library, Manchester

Tickets: £12/£10

Manchester Literature Festival has been building on its previous success expanding audiences and creating new partnerships across the national and international literary world. Patrons of Manchester Literature Festival include former Poet Laureate Carol Ann Duffy, award-winning journalist and Observer critic Rachel Cooke, poet and former Scottish Makar Jackie Kay, broadcaster and anchor of BBC Radio 4's Woman's Hour Dame Jenni Murray, poet and publisher Michael Schmidt, acclaimed novelist Kamila Shamsie and author and broadcaster Erica Wagner.

Over the past 19 years, the Festival has featured many of the biggest names in literary fiction and spoken word as well as prominent cultural figures from across the globe, including Monica Ali, Martin Amis, Tori Amos, Richard Armitage, Simon Armitage, Nihal Arthanayake, Margaret Atwood, Kate Atkinson, Malorie Blackman, William Boyd, Jung Chang, Susanna Clarke, Angela Davis, Jeremy Deller, Roddy Doyle, Margaret Drabble, Carol Ann Duffy, Jennifer Egan, Inua Ellams, Edward Enninful, Anne Enright, Bernadine Evaristo, Neil Gaiman, Guy Garvey, Bobby Gillespie, Lauren Groff, Natalie Haynes, Seamus Heaney, Alan Hollinghurst, Nick Hornby, Howard Jacobson, Alan Johnson, Paterson Joseph, Barbara Kingsolver, Hanif Kureishi, Linton Kwesi Johnson, Deborah Levy, Armistead Maupin, Johnny Marr, Val McDermid, David Mitchell, Thurston Moore, Kate Mosse, Maggie O'Farrell, David Olusoga, Max Porter, Ian Rankin, , Kit de Waal, A.M Homes, Kazuo Ishiguro, Doon Mackichan, Paul Mason, Val McDermid, David Mitchell, Paul Morley, Walter Mosley, Andrew Motion, Jo Nesbo, Patrick Ness, Audrey Niffenegger, Ben Okri, Arundhati Roy, Will Self, Kamila Shamsie, Elif Shafak, Lemn Sissay, Zadie Smith, Elizabeth Strout, Kae Tempest, Neil Tennant, Colm Toibín, Rose Tremain, Sarah Waters, Vivienne Westwood, Colson Whitehead, Jeanette Winterson and Xinran.

The festival has also welcomed prominent activists, campaigners, politicians and disruptors including Patrisse Cullors (co-founder of Black Lives Matter), Angela Davis, Reni Eddo-Lodge, Caroline Criado Perez, George Monbiot, Lisa Nandy, Bernie Sanders, Rebecca Solnit and Gloria Steinem.

Manchester Literature Festival gratefully acknowledges the generous support of our main funders **Arts Council England, Manchester City Council** and **the Greater Manchester Combined Authority**, our Higher Education Partner, **The University of Manchester**, and our hotel partners **The Edwardian Manchester** and **The Midland Manchester**.