

**ESSEX  
BOOK  
FESTIVAL**

31 May – 30 June 2024



**CELEBRATING  
25  
YEARS**

## Welcome to the 2024 Essex Book Festival – our 25th edition! Introducing the Festival Team

### Director

Ros Green

### Festival Manager

Claire Buskin

### Festival Assistants

Emma Kittle-Pey

Zoe Martin

### Trustees

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### Patrons

AL Kennedy

Sylvia Kent

Dave Monk

Sarah Perry

Brian Southall

Francis Wheen

## How To Book Your Ticket

To book tickets please visit [essexbookfestival.org.uk](https://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or where shown, tickets can be booked via Mercury Theatre Box Office (10am to 8pm Tuesday to Saturday) in person or by telephone 01206 573948. All booking links are shown on the website, this can direct you to the online booking platforms being used to deliver Essex Book Festival 2024.

Bookings will be taken up to 3 hours prior to the event commencing. If there is capacity, tickets will be available on the door.

### Refunds

The festival cannot refund money or exchange tickets except if an event is cancelled. In the event of a cancellation the Box Office will contact you and issue a refund within 30 days.

### Concessions

We offer concessions for Students, Under 27s and Unwaged.

### Accessibility

Information about access at participating venues is posted on the Essex Book Festival website. We also have a Roger Pen hearing system, so please let us know in advance if you would like to book this out by emailing us at: [hello@essexbookfestival.org.uk](mailto:hello@essexbookfestival.org.uk)

Essex Book Festival gratefully acknowledges the support of these key partners



Front cover by Katie Kennedy Design

## Welcome to Essex Book Festival 2024

Welcome to this year's Essex Book Festival - our 25th Edition – which is taking place in venues as far-flung as St Leonard-at-the-Hythe Church in Colchester, Cressing Temple Barns, erstwhile home of the Knights Templar, and Chalkwell Hall in Southend, home of Metal Culture and Essex Writers House.

We're delighted to be launching this year's festival with award-winning writer and festival patron Sarah Perry who will be talking to our Chair Peter Donaldson about her latest novel *Enlightenment*.

Other highlights include Absolutely Fabulous star Helen Lederer and Guardian columnist John Crace; authors Lionel Shriver, Vaseem Khan, A.K. Blakemore, Matt Cain, Alan Johnson, Nicci French, and Mark Cocker.

The theme for this year is THIS LAND. A nod to our wonderful county, its fascinating history and natural heritage, and most importantly, the people who inhabit it. Join us as we create our own Festival Ink from oak galls gathered from oak trees across Essex, and beyond that, a Festival Charter looking forward to the next 25 years. This is your festival. Make your mark. Tell us what YOU want.

Most of all, come and join in the fun!

See you soon,

Ros and Claire, Festival Team

## LAUNCH EVENT

SAT 01 JUN, 4.30PM

LAUNCH EVENT

### Sarah Perry Enlightenment

Multi award-winning and best-selling author, Festival Patron and University of Essex Chancellor, Sarah Perry, will be launching this year's festival with a talk on her highly anticipated new novel. Join us for this very special opening event celebrating both the 25th edition of Essex Book Festival and the 60th anniversary of University of Essex.

From the author of former Waterstones Book of the Year, *The Essex Serpent*, comes an intricately crafted exploration of love, religion and the supernatural, as two friends become obsessed with the ghost of a vanished nineteenth-century astronomer. *Enlightenment* is a story of love and astronomy, told over the course of twenty years through the lives of two improbable best friends.

Venue: Essex Business School, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, CO4 3SQ

Tickets: £10 / £8

Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](https://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or Mercury Theatre 01206 573948



© Sophie Davidson



**This Land: Launch Day, Saturday 01 June, University of Essex, Colchester**

Join us for a day of talks, performances, debates, walks and workshops to mark the 25th Edition of Essex Book Festival and the 60th Anniversary of University of Essex.



**SAT 01 JUN, 10.00AM LAUNCH EVENT GUIDED WALK FREE**

**Radical Essex Procession**

Essex Book Festival is teaming up with internationally acclaimed arts organisation, Kinetika, for its Radical Procession from St Leonard-at-the-Hythe Church, a key player in the Siege of Colchester (1648), to University of Essex, famed for its foundational radical innovation in the 1960s.



© Tessa Bunney

The Procession will include 500 pennants created as part of Beach of Dreams 2021 - an epic 500-mile journey which discovered hidden gems of the East Coast. This event will mark the launch of Beach of Dreams 2025 - an invitation to walk together along the coastline of the UK and Ireland in a collective moment of reflection and climate action in the month of May 2025.



Starting point: St Leonard-at-the-Hythe Church, Hythe Hill, Colchester, CO1 2NP  
 Tickets: Free, booking essential  
 Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk)

**SAT 01 JUN, 11.00AM – 3.00PM WORKSHOPS YOUNG ESSEX FREE**

**Selena Chandler, Lora Aziz, Katie Kennedy, Zoe Martin This Land: The Launch Pad Workshops**

Learn how to make traditional ink out of ink gall gathered from 25 destinations across Essex. Explore the art of calligraphy. Try your hand at a range of traditional printing and basic book-making techniques.



Venue: Art Exchange, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester CO4 3SQ  
 Tickets: Free, drop-in, no booking required



**SAT 01 JUN, 11.00AM – 1.00PM WRITING WORKSHOP**

**Gregory Betts & Philip Terry Radical Translation Workshop**

Can a poem be translated into a picture? Or a recipe? A novel? In the world of experimental translation, the answer is “yes”. Participants will explore different experimental translation methods in this hands-on workshop..



Venue: Lakeside Studio, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, CO4 3SQ  
 Tickets: £15 / £10  
 Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk)

**SAT 01 JUN, 11.00AM – 1.00PM WORKSHOP YOUNG ESSEX**

**Game Changer Workshop Signals**

Transform classic video games into arcade quests for environmental action and climate change awareness. Explore the world of video game remixing and discover how you can use game design to communicate environmental action. No previous coding experience required. All equipment provided. For ages 11-14 years.



Venue: Art Exchange, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester CO4 3SQ  
 Tickets: £3, accompanying adult free  
 Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk)



**SAT 01 JUN, 1.30 – 3.30PM WRITING WORKSHOP**

**Neil D’Arcy-Jones This Land: Writing the Place Workshop**

Author, playwright, journalist Neil D’Arcy-Jones will be running a Writing the Place Workshop based on the 25 Essex destinations that have contributed to the making of Essex Book Festival’s 25th Edition oak gall ink. Explore the magic of alchemy by turning places and ideas into new stories. You never know, your story or poem might make it into our 25th Edition festival anthology, This Land.



Venue: Art Exchange, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester CO4 3SQ  
 Tickets: £15 / £10  
 Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk)

**SAT 01 JUN, 2.00 – 4.00PM WRITING WORKSHOP FREE**

**James Canton Beach of Dreams 25 Launch and Creative Writing Workshop**

Come along and meet the Kinetika team, our flag-makers/bearers, and find out how you and/or an organisation you belong to, can get involved in the epic new nationwide Beach of Dreams 25 project. Then, take part in a special Beach of Dreams creative writing workshop led by Dr James Canton, and the Wild Writing team based in the Centre for Creative Writing at the University of Essex.



Venue: Lakeside Studio, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, CO4 3SQ  
 Tickets: Free, booking essential  
 Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk)

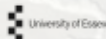


**SAT 01 JUN, 11.00AM – 3.30PM** EXHIBITION FREE

### Sarah Demelo Charters and Radicals

From charters that trace the region's heritage to student protests and social movements, this exhibition explores continuity and change in Essex's identity.

Venue: Special Collections Reading Room, University of Essex Library, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, CO4 3SQ  
 Tickets: Free, drop-in, no booking required



**SAT 01 JUN, 11.45AM – 12.30PM** DISCUSSION FREE

### Marina Cusi, Jordan Savage Don't Starve the Arts – Feed Them

A much-needed LONG TABLE conversation about the Arts as part of our INCUBATOR programme. *Don't Starve the Arts – Feed Them* will be debated by authors, artists, poets, performers, actors, and students. All welcome to join in. Talking is the only course!

Venue: Lakeside Theatre, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, CO4 3SQ  
 Tickets: Free, booking recommended  
 Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk)



**SAT 01 JUN, 1.00 – 3.00PM** PERFORMANCE EXHIBITION VIDEO

### Tasalla, Fahri Bradley, Roshi Rouzbehani, Malu Halasa Woman Life Freedom

Saqi Books presents *Woman Life Freedom: Voices and Art from the Women's Protests in Iran*, a celebration of the women the regime has tried and failed to silence. This highly original and savagely topical event includes a live sound art performance, a documentary video, artist presentation, panel discussion and an artwork exhibition.

Venue: Lakeside Theatre, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, CO4 3SQ  
 Tickets: £10 / £8  
 Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk)



© Shiva Khademi, b. [1998].  
 Courtesy of Saqi Book



**SAT 01 JUN, 1.00 – 3.00PM** EXHIBITION FREE

### The Tasting Menu

Come and hear headline poets from the University of Essex, student voices, and share and explore all things Essex poetry. All are welcome to perform – arrive early to assure a place!

Venue: Art Exchange, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, CO4 3SQ



© Sinjin Li, 2023  
 University of Essex

## APPETISERS

A couple of early events to tickle your taste buds before the festival is in full-swing... [cultural](#)

**MON 13 MAY, 6.00PM** FICTION

### Onyi Nwabneli Allow Me to Introduce Myself

Anuri's stepmother, Ophelia, is the ultimate 'mumfluencer'. Throughout Anuri's childhood, she catalogued every minute, milestone and carefully curated family outing on social media. But when Anuri sees her little sister being pushed down the same rocky path by Ophelia, she decides to take back control. Her stepmother, however, isn't giving up without a fight. Put away your phone and get ready to rethink your 'harmless' social media habit, in this darkly hilarious page-turner from an exciting new voice.



© Precious Mayowa Agbabiaka

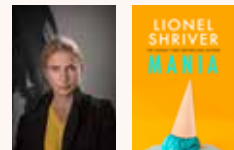


Venue: Art Exchange, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester CO4 3SQ  
 Tickets: £8 / £7  
 Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or Mercury Theatre 01206 573948

**FRI 31 MAY, 7.00PM** FICTION

### Lionel Shriver Mania

What if calling someone stupid was illegal? In a reality not too distant from our own, everyone is equally clever, and discrimination based on intelligence is 'the last great civil rights fight'. Author of best-selling *We Need To Talk About Kevin*, Lionel Shriver, turns her piercing gaze on the policing of opinion and intellect, and imagines a world in which intellectual meritocracy is heresy. *Mania* is hilarious, deadpan, scathing and at times frighteningly plausible.



Venue: Anglia Ruskin University, Bishop Hall Lane, Chelmsford, CM1 1SQ  
 Tickets: £10 / £8  
 Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or Mercury Theatre 01206 573948

**04 – 28 JUNE** EXHIBITION FREE

### Harlow College Photography Students All Change

Harlow College Photography students have created their own books in response to the theme of *All Change*. The students chose this theme to express their sincere concerns for their environment and ideas for a better future, but also the desire to see change that is collective. As Tolstoy once said: *'Everyone thinks of changing the world, but nobody thinks of changing themselves'*. The time is upon us to All Change.



© Beth Burnett



Venue: Harlow Central Library, Cross Street, Harlow, CM20 1HA  
 Tickets: Free, no booking required

## ESSEX WRITERS HOUSE

**03 – 28 June 2024**

**Metal, Chalkwell Hall, Chalkwell Park, Southend-on-Sea, SS0 8NB**

This June, Metal Southend will become a house for writers to read, to write overlooking the Thames Estuary, to get help and feedback on your work or to have lively, meandering conversations with other writers.

You can book a writing desk, join a writing group for sharing and solidarity, meet our writers in residence or have an advice session with Metal and our associate writers.

This is the seventh edition of Essex Writers House and we're always amazed by the connections made and the ideas that come up when writers take over this special building.

For full event listings, visit [www.metalculture.com/whats-on/](http://www.metalculture.com/whats-on/)



Image credit: © Mark Massey

## Essex Writers House Programme Highlights Include:

### Writers Hot Desks

Book a free desk in our Attic Studio and take some time to focus on your work. Whether you're on the east or west side of the building, you are guaranteed a changing view across the Estuary, along with some space to think.

### Writers in Residence

Joining us in residence will be Essex-based writers as well as wordsmiths from further afield. Keep up to date via our social media channels to see who is coming to stay.

### Open Advice Sessions

These free sessions are available for Essex writers of all genres and experience levels. Book an hour-long slot, with a panel of the Metal team and our associate writers, to discuss your writing practice, talk through ideas, find signposting to references and opportunities or simply get feedback on your works in progress.

### Get A Room

Led by special guests, we'll be holding space for different writers to find new connections and solidarity. In these precarious times, writers can gather at Essex Writers House to enjoy talking, sharing and eating together, whilst finding new ways to explore supported and fruitful conversations. Who knows, you might form a new collective while you are at it!

### Extracts

If you are looking to share your written work aloud with an audience, this is your chance! With 3 minutes on the clock, anything goes. Find kinship and confidence through the magic of a creative community. There will be a host on the night who can read your work for you, if you'd rather it be shared through another voice. This event will be BSL interpreted. We also welcome sharings in BSL on the night. If you have any queries please do get in touch.

### Hosted At Metal

Readers, writers and those in between will be popping up at Chalkwell Hall during the month to host events. Keep an eye on our website listings to see what else we've got coming up!



© Mark Massey

**For booking details and full event listings, visit  
[www.metalculture.com/whats-on](http://www.metalculture.com/whats-on)**



© Metal



© Metal



© Mark Massey

WEDS 12 JUN, 7.00PM **FREE**

### Stand Up for Diversity

An evening of three-minute mini-talks and short soap-box shout-outs that put a spotlight on diversity, writing, words and storytelling.

Hosted in partnership by Essex Cultural Diversity Project, for this event we are teaming up with Metal and Essex Writers House in Southend-on-Sea, bringing together people who want to champion and celebrate diversity in the arts and in our communities, share the work they do with others, and collectively celebrate strong diverse voices. All welcome.

Venue: Metal, Chalkwell Hall, Chalkwell Park, Southend, SS0 8NB  
 Tickets: Free, booking recommended  
 Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk)



Essex Cultural Diversity Project



Metal

For booking details and full event listings, visit [www.metalculture.com/whats-on](http://www.metalculture.com/whats-on)

MON 03 TO SUN 16 JUN **EXHIBITION** **PERFORMANCES** **WORKSHOPS** **FREE**

### How We Live In Essex Through the Seasons Jaywick Martello Tower

Walk-in Story Book, Performances and Workshops

Step into an interdisciplinary world of poetry, sustainable textiles, illustrations, photography, performance, community collaborations, and workshops.

University of Essex PhD candidate Lelia Ferro has been researching *How We Live in Essex Through the Seasons* since 2018 through residencies, volunteering, interviews, and community projects.

This exhibition features Lelia's poems, and writing collaborations with Tendring Community Writers, Jaywick Writers, Poetry Plus Manningtree, The Writers' Company, and local school children. The poems have been responded to by up-and-coming local talent including photographer Dan Sceats, illustrator Louisa Charrington, textiles artist Clare Sams, and theatre director Sofia Bagge. It explores themes of heritage, locality, nature, and climate change.

A programme of free events and workshops is open to all throughout the duration of the exhibition. They include performances, a spoken word workshop with professional performers, an open mic evening, a coastal botanical illustrations workshop with Louisa, a sea and sky photography workshop with Dan, a netting and knotting plant fibres workshop with Clare, and local seasonal poetry workshops with Lelia.

Keep an eye out on the Essex Book Festival website and social media for workshop dates and times.

The exhibition finale and spoken word evening will take place on Saturday 15th June 3.00-8:30pm.

Jaywick Martello Tower, The Promenade, Belsize Avenue, Jaywick, Clacton-on-Sea CO15 2LF  
 01255 822783



WED 05 JUN, 7.00PM HISTORICAL FICTION

**Bridget Collins** *The Silence Factory*

Henry dreams of silence. A world without the clattering of carriages through cobbled streets, the distant cries of drunken brawls, the relentless ticking of the clock. Then he meets a fascinating, mysterious gentleman who sells just that. Precious silk that can drown out the clamour of the world – and everything Henry is so desperate to escape. Bridget Collins, author of breakout sensation and number one bestseller *The Binding* will be discussing her latest book. An inventive, spellbinding blend of speculative and historical fiction, *The Silence Factory* is a story of complicity, desire and corruption - a novel to lose yourself in.

Venue: Wivenhoe Library, 104/6 High Street, Wivenhoe, CO7 9AB  
 Tickets: £8 / £7  
 Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or Mercury Theatre 01206 573948



Essex County Council  
Libraries

THU 06 JUN, 7.00PM CONTEMPORARY FICTION

**Matt Cain** *One Love*

From the author of *Becoming Ted* and *The Secret Life of Albert Entwistle* comes an utterly joyful novel about 20 years of love and friendship, culminating at Manchester Pride.

'Matt's books just keep getting better and better and *One Love* is a rich, funny, poignant and unflinchingly honest portrayal of friendship, love and everything in between' - Ruth Hogan

Venue: Harlow Central Library, Cross Street, Harlow, CM20 1HA  
 Tickets: £8 / £7  
 Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or Mercury Theatre 01206 573948



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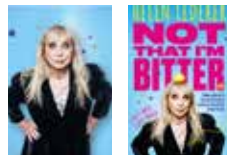
Essex County Council  
Libraries

THU 06 JUN, 7.00PM MEMOIR

**Helen Lederer** *Not That I'm Bitter*

A hilarious and alarmingly honest memoir by one of Britain's first female stand-up comedians of the 80s, Helen Lederer is in joyous flow, mixing startling self-revelation with nail-sharp observation. Occasionally painful, yet unashamedly revealing, this laugh-out-loud account offers a front row seat to Helen's life and explores how laughter can defeat the darker moments.

Venue: Anglia Ruskin University, Bishop Hall Lane, Chelmsford, CM1 3SQ  
 Tickets: £10 / £8  
 Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or Mercury Theatre 01206 573948



a.r.u.

## LISTEN UP!

Saturday 08 June

Venue: Samaritans, Walsingham Road Community Hall,  
34 Walsingham Road, Colchester, CO2 7BN

SAMARITANS

Colchester  
City Council

Essex Book Festival is delighted to be partnering with Colchester Samaritans, Essex Cultural Diversity Project and Human Library for this very special day of events. Part of Colchester Samaritans 60th anniversary celebrations.

SAT 08 JUN, 11.00AM – 3.00PM FREE

**Human Library** unJudge Someone

Welcome to the Human Library. Just like in a real library, a visitor to the Human Library can borrow a book from a range of titles. The difference is that books are PEOPLE, and reading is a CONVERSATION. Books in our Human Library come from all walks of life, and each has a different story to tell. Come along, connect with people you wouldn't normally meet, and celebrate positive differences in our community.

In partnership with Essex Cultural Diversity Project  
 Find out more at <https://essexcdp.com>

Tickets: Free, no booking required



Essex Cultural  
Diversity Project

HUMAN LIBRARY

SAT 08 JUN, 4.00PM CONTEMPORARY FICTION

**Olumide Popoola** *Like Water Like Sea*

*Like Water Like Sea* is set against the vibrant backdrop of London and is an immersive novel of self-discovery, resilience, and the unifying power of love. It follows the life of Nia, a queer, bi/pansexual naturopath, as her life unfolds across three pivotal moments, spanning from her 28th year to a life-altering realisation at the age of 50.

Tickets: £8 / £7

Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or Mercury Theatre 01206 573948



SAT 08 JUN, 5.30PM SHORT STORIES

**Hafsa Zayyan** *Will You Read This, Please?*

*Will You Read This, Please?* is a frank and impactful collection of twelve stories as told to our best British writers, based on the lived experience of people who have faced mental illness. It shines a light on the stigma and isolation of living with mental illness while also showing the strength and resilience of the human spirit. Join contributing author, Hafsa Zayyan (*We Are All Birds of Uganda*) for an open and honest conversation about mental health and the power of giving a platform to unheard voices.

Tickets: £8 / £7

Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or Mercury Theatre 01206 573948

© JMoore photos



SAT 08 JUN, 9:30AM – 12:30PM **FREE****Living Books**

Borrow a human as well as a book from the library! Turn up on the day and explore a different kind of book as people share their life experience with you. Be challenged, excited and inspired as you browse a range of human books. Have a drink and a sociable chat. The saying is true – never judge a book by its cover.

Venue: Grays Library, Thameside Complex, Orsett Road, Grays, RM17 5DX

Tickets: Free, no booking required

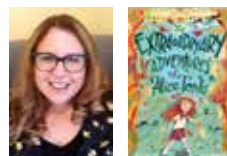
Contact: 01375 413976 for further details


 © Freepik
SAT 08 JUN 2.00PM **YOUNG ESSEX****Emily Kenny Meet the Author**

Calling all Middle Grade book lovers! Join this Q&A session with Emily Kenny, author of *The Extraordinary Adventures of Alice Tonks*. Bookish and animal-loving autistic tween Alice Tonks takes us on a magical adventure in a story about finding your voice, friendship and unlikely heroes.

Venue: Chicken and Frog Bookshop, 30 Crown Street, Brentwood, CM14 4BA


Tickets: Free, or £7 including a copy of the book

Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk)THU 13 JUN, 1.00PM **IN CONVERSATION****Rebecca Smith Taking the Long View - Rural**

In this beautifully observed book, Rebecca Smith paints a picture of the working class lives that often go overlooked. In conversation with Festival Director, Ros Green, they will discuss the relations between nature and human nature, the land, education, class and welfare.

Venue: Chelmsford Cathedral, New Street, Chelmsford, CM1 1TY

Tickets: £10 / £8

Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or Mercury Theatre 01206 573948
 © Lina Hayes
THU 13 JUN, 7.00PM **HISTORICAL FICTION****A.K. Blakemore The Glutton**

From the winner of the 2021 Desmond Elliot Prize comes a novel of desire and destruction set in Revolutionary France and inspired by a true story. *The Glutton* is an electric, heart-stopping journey into a world of tumult, upheaval and depravity, wherein the hunger of one peasant is matched only by the insatiable demands of the people of France.

Venue: Maldon Library, Carmelite House, White Horse Lane, Maldon, CM9 5FW

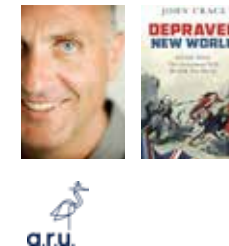
Tickets: £8 / £7

Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or Mercury Theatre 01206 573948
 © Alice Zoo
FRI 14 JUN, 7.00PM **POLITICAL SATIRE****John Crace Depraved New World**

Join bestselling author John Crace for a blisteringly hilarious tour through the whirlwind of post-Brexit Britain, from the ousting of Boris to the dawn of a new era...sort of. Despite all the nonsense that has spewed forth from Westminster over the past two years, John Crace's brilliantly lacerating political sketches have provided the nation with some desperately needed relief. *Depraved New World* is a worryingly funny collection which captures British politics at its most absurd.

Venue: Anglia Ruskin University, Bishop Hall Lane, Chelmsford, CM1 1SQ

Tickets: £10 / £8

Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or Mercury Theatre 01206 573948

FRI 14 JUN, 7.00PM **THRILLER****Louise Doughty A Bird in Winter**

Bird is a woman on the run. One minute, she's in a meeting in her office - the next, she's walking out on her job, her home, her life. It's a day she thought might come, and one she's prepared for. As she flees north, Bird has to work out who exactly is on her trail, and who - if anyone - she can trust. Is her greatest fear that she will be hunted down, or that she will never be found? Hear Sunday Times bestselling writer Louise Doughty, author of *Apple Tree Yard* and *Platform Seven*, discuss her electrifying new novel.

Venue: Basildon Library, Basildon Centre, St Martin's Square, Basildon, SS14 1EE

Tickets: £8 / £7

Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or Mercury Theatre 01206 573948

© Max Kennedy


SAT 15 JUN, 10.00AM – 4.30PM **GUIDED WALK PARTNER EVENT FREE****Phil East In My Steps: Radical Walks in Essex - A Peasants' Pilgrimage**

This six-mile walk, organised in partnership with Kinetika's T100 Festival, commemorates the 1381 Peasants' Revolt's links to Fobbing, as Thurrock's walking, talking and making festival T100 Goes Wild for 2024. Guided by Walk Leader Phil East, walkers will discover the origins of the revolt and the day will conclude with free medieval street entertainment by The Thameside Mummings.

Venue: St Michael's Church, High Road, Fobbing, Stanford-le-Hope, SS17 9JH

Tickets: Free, booking required

Box Office: [t100festival.co.uk](http://t100festival.co.uk) or [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk)
 Radical ESSEX





## RESTLESS BRILLIANCE

**Sunday 16 June**

**Hylands Estate, London Road, Writtle, Chelmsford, CM2 8WQ**

Join us for a special day of author events, storytelling and walks under the banner of Restless Brilliance. Linking up with the J.A. Baker exhibition of the same name, (Chelmsford Museum: 23 Mar-3 Nov) we will be focussing on all things nature and ornithology: activities include multi-award-winning author and naturalist, Mark Cocker and free bird-watching walks.

Coinciding with Hylands Open Estate Day with Urban Food Festival, live music at the Stables Visitor Centre, artist studios to explore, lawn games and book-themed arts and crafts, it's the perfect way to spend Father's Day.



© Aaron Crowe Photography

**11.30AM NATURE WRITING**

**Mark Cocker** One Midsummer's Day

Join Mark Cocker, one of our greatest nature writers, as he discusses his most ambitious and wide-ranging book to date. Drawing deeply on science, history, literature and a lifetime of close observation, *One Midsummer's Day: Swifts and The Story of Life on Earth*, is a dazzling celebration of the natural world and how we are all inextricably connected.

Tickets: £10 / £8

Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or Mercury Theatre 01206 573948



© Rachael Cocker

**1.30PM NATURE WRITING**

**Helen Pilcher** How Nature Keeps Time

*How Nature Keeps Time* discovers the natural world's most important and intriguing patterns of time. From the lifecycle of immortal jellyfish and identifying the perfect amount of time for a 'good sleep', to mass extinction and the destruction of the coral reef, Helen Pilcher will tackle highly relevant and fascinating topics in this thought-provoking and deeply entertaining discussion.

Tickets: £10 / £8

Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or Mercury Theatre 01206 573948



© Abena Kusi

**3.00PM CONTEMPORARY FICTION**

**Joanna Glen** Maybe, Perhaps, Possibly

Joanna Glen, author of the Costa Prize shortlisted debut, *The Other Half of Augusta Hope*, explores her latest novel. Two introverts with turbulent pasts and wary hearts take individual comfort in swimming in the ocean, birdwatching, books and the sounds of the sea. Sol and Addie are both drawn to nature far more than to people – until they catch sight of one another in the wild. *Maybe, Perhaps, Possibly* is a beautifully observed and life-affirming story about finding yourself, and then allowing someone else to find you.

Venue: £10 / £8

Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or Mercury Theatre 01206 573948



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23 MARCH – 03 NOVEMBER 2024

EXHIBITION

PARTNER EVENT

FREE

## Restless Brilliance: The story of J.A. Baker and The Peregrine

*The Peregrine* by J.A. Baker was first published in 1967. The book was an immediate success. Reviews called it a masterpiece of nature writing and it won several awards. Since then, Baker's unique poetic writing has continued to inspire a new generation of nature writers and naturalists, and *The Peregrine* was recently voted one of the UK's top 10 favourite nature books. But despite all this success, very little was known about Baker himself.

John Alec Baker (1926–1987) was born, and lived almost his whole life, in Chelmsford. His writing is based on walks and cycle rides around the Blackwater estuary, Danbury Hill and the Chelmsford area. Here he followed and studied peregrine falcons, condensing all his observations into the book *The Peregrine*.

*"For ten years I spent all my winters searching for that restless brilliance, for the sudden passion and violence that peregrines flush from the sky."*

The exhibition explores J.A. Baker's life, his love of nature and writing, through the archive of his work held by the Albert Sloman Library, University of Essex. It is the first time that this archive has been on public display. For more information on the exhibition and related events programme, please visit the website [chelmsford.gov.uk/museums/whats-on](https://chelmsford.gov.uk/museums/whats-on)

Venue: Chelmsford Museum, Oaklands Park, Moulsham Street, Chelmsford CM2 9AQ  
Tickets: Free, no booking required



MON 17 JUN, 2.00 – 4.00PM

GUIDED WALK

PARTNER EVENT

FREE

## David Simmonds A Walk in J.A. Baker Country

Join us for a walk through 'Baker Country' visiting sites listed in J.A. Baker's diaries and identified in his seminal work *The Peregrine* (1967). Starting in Little Baddow, this approx. 7 km / 4.5 mile walk will guide you along country lanes and – possibly muddy – fields taking in the Essex landscapes that Baker describes as being 'as profuse and glorious as Africa'.

Led by David Simmonds, organised by Chelmsford Museum as part of the exhibition *Restless Brilliance: The story of J.A. Baker and The Peregrine*, on until 3 November 2024.

Visit David's website about J.A. Baker at [www.jabaker.co.uk](http://www.jabaker.co.uk)

Terrain: Country lanes and fields, some uneven ground and stiles.  
Meeting Point: Little Baddow History Centre, Chapel Lane, Little Baddow, Chelmsford, CM3 4BE  
Tickets: Free, booking essential  
Box Office: [chelmsford.gov.uk/museums/whats-on](https://chelmsford.gov.uk/museums/whats-on)



WED 19 JUN, 7.00PM

THRILLER

## Alan Johnson Death on the Thames

Much-loved former politician turned award-winning author, Alan Johnson, makes a welcome return to Essex Book Festival to discuss his latest thriller, *Death on the Thames*. The third novel in the Detective Mangan series sees the young Detective Constable Louise Mangan crossing the Thames one misty morning in pursuit of a killer. She finds a tranquil community on a leafy island close to Hampton Court Palace, but soon realises that all is not as it seems. There is something evil at play in this quiet suburb.

Venue: Chelmsford Library, County Hall, Market Road, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH  
Tickets: £8 / £7  
Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](https://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or Mercury Theatre 01206 573948



© Abena Kusi



WED 19 JUN, 7.00PM

OPERA

PARTNER EVENT

## Noah Max Rapture

Text from the award-winning collection by Carol Ann Duffy

Duffy's *Rapture* follows the narrator as they fall in love and then lose their beloved. Noah Max's setting rearranges the story, starting with what has been lost before working back to the height of love, almost in a dream: "You pass the moon to me, like a loving cup. I roll you the sun." The performance will be the world premiere of the work.

Part of the Essex Summer Opera Festival at Layer Marney Tower, in partnership with Wild Arts

Venue: The Opera Barn, Layer Marney Tower, Near Colchester, CO5 9US  
Tickets: £35 front rows, £20 general admission  
Box Office: [tickettailor.com/events/wildarts](https://tickettailor.com/events/wildarts)



THU 20 JUN, 7.30PM

HISTORICAL FICTION

## Syd Moore The Grand Illusion

Syd Moore is back with a thrilling opener to a new historical fiction series set in WW2. *The Grand Illusion* is inspired by an event alleged to have taken place in the New Forest in the summer of 1940 - a spectacular magical ritual - "The Cone of Power" - that would be witnessed by German agents in the area and reported back to the Führer. Its goal: to avert invasion on British shores.

Venue: South Woodham Ferrers Library, Trinity Square, South Woodham Ferrers, Chelmsford, CM3 5JU

Tickets: £8 / £7  
Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](https://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or Mercury Theatre 01206 573948



© J Moore Photos



## MIDSUMMER MADNESS FAMILY FUN DAY

Sunday 23 June, 12–4pm

Crossing Temple Barns, Witham Road, Braintree, Crossing, CM77 8PD

Pack your picnic and make a beeline for what promises to be a fantastic day at Crossing Temple Barns, one of the County's favourite heritage venues.



### Andrew Millham Singing Like Larks Nature Workshop

Uncover the remarkable relationship between birds and traditional folk music and try your hand at Forest School skills and bug-hunting in this family nature workshop. Andrew will also read from his book, Singing Like Larks, and sing accompanying songs. All ages welcome.



© Nick Ilott

### Signals Game Changer Workshop

Transform classic video games into arcade quests for environmental action and climate change awareness. No previous coding experience required. All equipment provided. For ages 11-14 years.



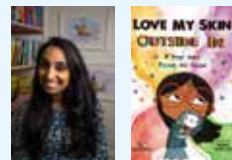
### Sam Scott Top Writing Tips Workshop

For budding writers aged 11-16 years. Join Essex children's and YA author, Sam Scott, for this creative writing workshop and discover your potential as a writer. Explore different writing techniques; how to create a believable character, how to build a plot arc and the importance of using varied vocabulary.



### Leema Jabbar Love My Skin Outside In Workshop

Join this fun, inspiring and interactive session about celebrating individuality and showing kindness. Using fun games and simple experiments, Leema will show how talking about feelings can make problems so much smaller. Including a reading from her book, Love My Skin Outside In, and using colourful visuals from nature you'll discover just how stunningly beautiful we all are both inside and out. For ages 6-10.



Tickets: Each workshop £3 per child, accompanying adult free

Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk)

All those aged under 12 must be accompanied by an adult.

## A magical afternoon of Midsummer Madness

Free parking, free entry + lots of free drop-in activities. No booking required, just turn up. All welcome.

Aloo o! African storytelling, crafts, drumming and Mancala workshops with Sade Fadipe, Portia Mushambi and Margaret Omoniyi. Immerse yourself in the mesmerising music, colours and stories of amazing Africa.



Pop-Up Storytelling Armchair – come along and hear a story or two. Hosted by BBC Essex's Rob Jelly with different storytellers throughout the afternoon.



This Land: The Book Project Exhibition – take a look at our This Land Giant Concertina Book created by school children across the county as they tell their story of what makes Essex special to them.

This Land Scribble Board – Pop along to see artist/illustrator Michael Young and contribute to our Scribble Board, celebrating the rich diversity, heritage and natural environment that makes Essex special.



Pop-up Library Book Tent and Storytelling with Essex Library Service.

Eco-crafts including paper-making, ink-making, cork-printing, DIY notebooks, fairy headbands, willow-weaving and leaf-printing.

Learn to Letterpress using an original Adana letterpress, with Colchester Makerspace.

Re-Wilding Workshop with sound installation artist, Lily Hunter Green – Viewing Google Earth satellite images of Essex, design your own healthy satellite landscape.



© Nick Ilott

Treasure Hunt – Explore the Walled Garden and hunt for treasure.

The Poetry Shed – Get writing!

Sand Art, Mindfulness Colouring and Sound Healing with Heads2Minds.

For full details of all Midsummer Madness events and activities visit [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk)  
All those aged under 12 must be accompanied by an adult.



## RAINHAM HALL, NATIONAL TRUST

Come along to Rainham Hall Community Garden for a weekend of story sharing and nature inspired art and poetry.



**SATURDAY 22 JUNE, 11.00AM – 4.00PM** **FREE** **YOUNG ESSEX**

### Rainham Story Book

Taking inspiration from *Fens, Forests and Fields*; a partnership project between Thames Chase Trust and Kinetika, which collected 100 stories to celebrate our community. See the Rainham story flags showing the incredible stories and memories already captured. Share your stories and add to a Rainham Story Book. All ages welcome. Free, drop-in, no booking required.



**SUNDAY 23 JUNE, 11.00AM – 3.00PM** **FREE** **WORKSHOP** **YOUNG ESSEX**

### Leaf and Flower Pounding

Join us for noisy, energetic and fun leaf and flower pounding. A great way to get the natural pigments of the leaves and flowers into fabric to create beautiful card designs. All ages welcome, adult supervision required. Free, drop-in, no booking required.

**SUNDAY 23 JUNE, 11.30AM – 12.15PM & 1.45PM – 2.30PM** **WORKSHOP**

### Making Natural Dye Solar Jars

Using just the UV light of the sun, solar dyeing uses natural dyes from plants to create beautiful colours on yarn, fibre and fabric. Join us as we guide you through this step-by-step process to create your own solar jar. Take it home and leave it closed for at least one month before revealing your unique colour. Age 16+ . Tickets: £5 per jar

**SUNDAY 23 JUNE, 11.45AM – 12.30PM & 1.30PM – 2.15PM** **WORKSHOP** **YOUNG ESSEX**

### Justin Coe Go Wild with Words

Take your words for a walk on the wild side with this busy-buzzy, fun and family-friendly poetry workshop with poet and performer Justin Coe. Write an unruly rhyme or an excitable ramble inspired by your awesome outdoor adventures today at Rainham Hall. Tickets: £2 per person



© Suzi Corker

**SUNDAY 23 JUNE, 3.00PM – 3.30PM** **FREE** **POETRY SLAM** **YOUNG ESSEX**

### Justin Coe Go Wild with Words Poetry Slam Sharing

Poet and spoken word theatre creator, Justin Coe, reads his fantastic poetry and invites audience members to share their own poems. Free, no booking required

Rainham Hall, The Broadway, Rainham RM13 9YN

To Book: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/rainham-hall](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/rainham-hall)

For further information email [rainhamhall@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:rainhamhall@nationaltrust.org.uk) or telephone 01708 525579.

**TUES 25 JUN, 7.00PM** **HISTORY**

### Marion Gibson Witchcraft: A History in 13 Trials

The world of witch hunts and witch trials sounds antiquated, relics of an unenlightened and brutal age. However, 'witch hunt' is heard often in the present-day media, and the misogyny it is rooted in is all too familiar today. A woman was prosecuted under the 1735 Witchcraft Act as recently as 1944. This book explores the history of witchcraft and witch hunts through the stories of the victims, stories which have too often been overshadowed by those of the powerful men, such as King James VI and I and "Witchfinder General" Matthew Hopkins, who hounded them. Marion Gibson will be in conversation with Syd Moore, author of *The Essex Witch Museum Mysteries* series.

Venue: Essex Record Office, Wharf Road, Chelmsford, CM2 6YT

Tickets: £10 / £8

Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or Mercury Theatre 01206 573948



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**WED 26 JUN**

### Tyler Luke Cunningham, Write2Speak Spoken Word Workshop

Professional poet, actor and performance educator, Tyler Luke Cunningham will deliver a workshop to prisoners supporting them to express themselves and develop communication skills through spoken word. Workshops and events at the prison provide a platform for prisoners to connect with the outside world.

Venue: HMP & YOI Chelmsford, Prison Library



**THU 27 JUN, 11.00AM** **SCI-FI** **THRILLER**

### Helen MacDonald and Sin Blaché Prophet

Join us for this very special Book Club event in collaboration with Appetite Book Club and Red Lion Books.

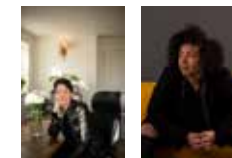
Award-winning poet and naturalist, Helen Macdonald (*H is for Hawk*) has collaborated with musician and writer Sin Blaché to write this dazzling, breath-taking and genre-blending science fiction thriller. This is *Prophet*. It knows when you were happiest. It gives life to your fondest memories and uses them to destroy you...

Hybrid event – you can either attend in person or participate online via Zoom.

Venue: Colchester Arts Centre, Church Street, Colchester, CO1 1NF

Tickets: In person: £14.99 includes paperback copy of book; Online: Free

Box Office: [www.redlionbooks.co.uk/product/essexbookfestivalprophet](http://www.redlionbooks.co.uk/product/essexbookfestivalprophet)



© Tom Oliver Lucas for Helen MacDonald and © Stevie Toye, Logopix for Sin Blaché



THU 27 JUN, 7.00PM **CRIME FICTION****Vaseem Khan DLS Lecture – Death of a Lesser God**

In the fourth rip-roaring thriller in the award-winning Malabar House series, set in 1950s Bombay, Persis and Archie travel to the old colonial capital of Calcutta, where they collide head-on with the prejudices and bloody politics of an era engulfed in flame.

James Whitby, sentenced to death for the murder of prominent lawyer and former Quit India activist Fareed Mazumdar, is less than two weeks from a date with the gallows. In a last-ditch attempt to save his son, Whitby's father, arch-colonialist, Charles Whitby, forces a new investigation into the killing which uncovers a possible link to a second case. How are the cases connected? If Whitby didn't murder Mazumdar, then who did? And why?

Bestselling author and audience favourite, Vaseem Khan will be discussing all things crime fiction in this annual Dorothy L Sayers Lecture.

Venue: Witham Library, 18 Newland Street, Witham, CM8 2AQ

Tickets: £8 / £7

Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or Mercury Theatre 01206 573948

SAT 29 JUN, 9.30AM – 12.30PM **FREE****Thurrock Local Authors Fair**

Discover the rich wealth of local writing in Thurrock at this new annual opportunity to chat and talk to local writers. Discuss writing, enjoy the mini writers slam as you hear short extracts and browse their books to buy and take home.

Venue: Grays Library, Thameside Complex, Orsett Road, Grays, RM17 5DX

Tickets: Free, no booking required

Contact: 01375 413976 for further details



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thurrock.gov.uk

**Felixstowe Book Festival, 26 - 30 June 2024****A celebration of "Books by the Sea"**

Your chance to combine a weekend of author events with seafood suppers, walks along the prom with its colourful beach huts, a wander in the award-winning seafront gardens and even a bracing swim.

For details visit [felixstowebookfestival.co.uk](http://felixstowebookfestival.co.uk)

**Chelmsford Theatre****Spot's Birthday Party**  
02 – 03 June, Various times

Spot is having a very special birthday party and everyone's invited! Based on the book by Eric Hill, this colourful, interactive show with integrated Makaton, catchy songs, dancing and party games is for everyone age 2+ and their grownups.

**Luke Wright's Silver Jubilee**  
05 June, 7.30pm

Luke Wright has built up a reputation for being one of Britain's most popular live poets. Regularly touring with John Cooper Clarke and The Libertines, Wright navigates his audience through a warm and honest hour of poems and stand up.

**Ruby Wax: I'm Not As Well As I Thought I Was**  
20 June, 7.30pm

Ruby Wax's rawest, darkest, funniest and most compelling stage show yet comes to Chelmsford Theatre. Her journey to find meaning, peace and happiness ends in a psychiatric ward. There's an opportunity to meet Ruby with a book signing and Q&A after the show.

**The Tiger Who Came To Tea**  
21 – 22 June, Various times

Join the tea-guzzling tiger in this delightful family show; packed with oodles of magic, sing-along songs and clumsy chaos. Don't miss this stage adaptation, based on the book by Judith Kerr, of a tale of teatime mayhem.



Chelmsford Theatre, Fairfield Road, Chelmsford, CM1 1JG

**Find out more and book tickets at [chelmsfordtheatre.co.uk](http://chelmsfordtheatre.co.uk) or call 01245 606 505 between 10am and 3pm, Mon to Sat.**

**A CRIMINALLY GOOD DAY**

Saturday 29 June, Harwich

Join us for a fabulous day of criminally good events in Harwich. With author talks and a film-screening at Electric Palace, one of Essex's leading cultural venues; a family 'Litter is Criminal' workshop on Harwich Beach and a Game Changer Workshop with award-winning Signals, there really is something for everyone.



**Make a day of it! Buy a ticket to 2 author events, get the 3rd event free**

Venue: Electric Palace, King's Quay Street, Harwich, CO12 3ER  
 Tickets: £10 / £8 per event  
 Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or Mercury Theatre 01206 573948

**SAT 29 JUN, 1.00PM CRIME**

**Nicci French Has Anyone Seen Charlotte Salter?**

An exciting new collaboration between Essex Book Festival and Felixstowe Book Festival. *Has Anyone Seen Charlotte Salter?* is the 25th novel from International #1 Bestselling Author and legendary crime writing duo, Nicci Gerrard and Sean French. Discover more about the husband and wife writing team and their creative processes as they discuss their latest thriller.



**SAT 29 JUN, 2.30PM COSY CRIME**

**Cara Miller The Antique Hunter's Guide to Murder**

Miller's winning debut exposes the dark underbelly of the antiques trade. Freya Lockwood has avoided the quaint English village in which she grew up for the last twenty years until news arrives that her estranged mentor has died and the circumstances seem suspicious. This book was written in consultation with Cara's mother, international antiques expert Judith Miller (1951-2023), a regular specialist on the BBC's *Antiques Roadshow*.



© Dan Kennedy



**SAT 29 JUN, 4.00PM THRILLER**

**Peter Hain The Lion Conspiracy**

Having thwarted murderous poachers in *The Elephant Conspiracy*, the Veteran, Thandi and Mkhize are back battling to save lion prides from being killed for their claws, teeth and bones. The team find themselves embroiled in mafia-style smuggling, illicit night flights and tense shoot-outs. Join member of the House of Lords, author and life-long human rights campaigner, Peter Hain, as he delves into his gripping third thriller.



**SAT 29 JUN, 11.30AM – 1.30PM FAMILY WORKSHOP YOUNG ESSEX**

**Libby Scarfe, Seaside Explorers Litter is Criminal Beach Workshop**

Join Libby Scarfe, a local beach-enthusiast with a passion for education and outdoor adventures for this special Litter is Criminal Beach Workshop. There will be stories about marine creatures and sea pollution and a chance to explore the natural coast environment. Take part in a beach clean and then get creative with the items you find. Suits ages 5-11 but everybody welcome!



Venue: Harwich beach, near Harwich Town Sailing Club  
 Meeting point: What3words ref ///existence.bridge.sailors  
 Tickets: £3 per person  
 Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk)

**SAT 29 JUN, 1.00 – 3.00PM WORKSHOP YOUNG ESSEX**

**Game Changer Workshop Signals**

Transform classic video games into arcade quests for environmental action and climate change awareness. Explore the world of video game remixing and discover how you can use game design to communicate environmental action. No previous coding experience required. All equipment provided. For ages 11-14 years. This workshop is delivered by Signals, an award-winning charity who use technology and creativity to inspire, engage and empower people of all ages and backgrounds.



Venue: Harwich Arts and Heritage Centre, Main Road, Harwich, CO12 4AJ  
 Tickets: £3, accompanying adult free  
 Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk)

**SAT 29 JUN FILM**

**Classic crime film-screening Title TBC**

Don't miss this opportunity to watch a classic crime film (details tbc) at one of the country's oldest purpose-built cinemas to survive complete with its silent screen, original projection room and ornamental frontage still intact.



© Electric Palace Trust

For more information and booking details visit [electricpalace.com](http://electricpalace.com)

Venue: Electric Palace, King's Quay Street, Harwich, CO12 3ER  
 Tickets: TBC  
 Box Office: [electricpalace.com](http://electricpalace.com)





## THE HISTORY BOOKS

Sunday 30 June, Layer Marney Tower, Near Colchester, CO5 9US



Step back in time for a series of fascinating conversations at the beautiful Layer Marney Tower. Boasting the UK's tallest Tudor Gatehouse and stunning grounds, no wonder it was one of Henry VIII's favourite Tudor Palaces. Festival tickets include free entry to the Tower and Gardens.

Make a day of it! Ticket Deal: All three events for £36

SUN 30 JUN, 12.00 MIDDAY SOCIAL HISTORY

## Ysenda Maxtone Graham Jobs for the Girls

A brilliant and accessible new history of women's lives in the workplace by the Sunday Times bestselling author of *British Summer Time Begins*. Using interviews with women from a variety of industries across the UK, Ysenda Maxtone Graham paints a vivid portrait of young women setting out into their working lives in Britain from the 1950s up to the first ping of emails in the early 1990s.

Covering themes such as the joys of workplace gossip, the daily struggle of knowing how to spend lunch hours, office crushes and romances, the feeling of that first job and the terrifying job interview, *Jobs for the Girls* is an important piece of social history which brings the British workplace in the second half of the twentieth century to life.

Venue: Layer Marney Tower, Near Colchester, CO5 9US  
 Tickets: £14 (includes entrance to Layer Marney Tower)  
 Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or Mercury Theatre 01206 573948



© Joseph Sevier



SUN 30 JUN, 2.00PM HISTORY

## Estelle Paranque Thorns, Lust and Glory

Anne Boleyn has mesmerised the English public for centuries. Her tragic execution, orchestrated by her own husband, never ceases to intrigue. How did this courtier's daughter become the queen of England, and what was it that really tore apart this illustrious marriage, making her the whore of England, an abandoned woman executed on the scaffold? While many stories of Anne Boleyn's downfall have been told, few have truly traced the origins of her tragic fate.

Join Estelle Paranque, historian and acclaimed author of *Blood, Fire and Gold: Elizabeth I and Catherine de Medici*, for a fascinating new perspective on Tudor history's most enduring story.

Venue: Layer Marney Tower, Near Colchester, CO5 9US  
 Tickets: £14 (includes entrance to Layer Marney Tower)  
 Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or Mercury Theatre 01206 573948



SUN 30 JUN, 4.00PM HISTORY

## Simon Heffer Sing As We Go

In partnership with EA Festival

The fourth and final volume in Simon Heffer's critically-acclaimed sequence of books that chart the history of Britain in the century from the accession of Queen Victoria to the outbreak of the Second World War.

*Sing As We Go* explores and explains the politics of the period, and puts such moments of national turmoil as the General Strike of 1926 and the Abdication Crisis of 1936 under the microscope. It traces the changing face of Britain as cars made their first mass appearance, the suburbs sprawled, and radio and cinema became the means of mass entertainment. And it probes the deep divisions that split the nation.

Venue: Layer Marney Tower, Near Colchester, CO5 9US  
 Tickets: £14 (includes entrance to Layer Marney Tower)  
 Box Office: [essexbookfestival.org.uk](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk) or Mercury Theatre 01206 573948



# MERCURY

## Charlie Cook's Favourite Book

31 May – 02 June

A Little Angel Theatre and Lowry Co-Production.

Based on the original book *Charlie Cook's Favourite Book* – written by Julia Donaldson and illustrated by Axel Scheffler.

Charlie loves reading. Especially books about pirates. But his sister hates it – it's boring! Can Charlie convince her that reading is fun? Perhaps if she read a book about a pirate, who is reading a book about Goldilocks, who is reading a book about a knight...

Come and delve into a range of books with Charlie Cook, brought to life with puppetry and enchanting songs.



## Bindweed, written by Martha Loader

13 – 22 June

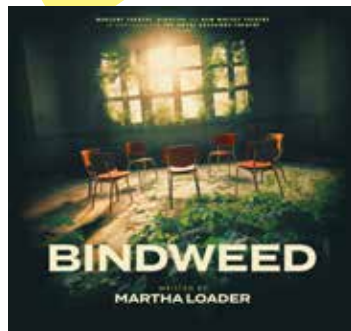
A Mercury Original in co-production with HighTide and New Wolsey Theatre, in association with the Royal Exchange Theatre. Winner of the Bruntwood Prize for Playwriting 2022.

The world premiere of an award-winning black comedy.

“Thursdays, curry night. Curry and a pint for a fiver. Go at five thirty, home by ten. Beat my mum up for a while. Bed by ten thirty.”

Four men convicted of domestic abuse offences meet each week to undergo a perpetrator programme. But as Jen, the new group facilitator, starts to make progress with the men inside the room, their lives outside begin to buckle.

Bindweed is a shattering and darkly funny new play about responsibility and rehabilitation, which looks at what can be done to tackle abuse at its root.



Mercury Theatre, Balkerne Gate, Colchester CO1 1PT  
**Find out more and book tickets at [mercurytheatre.co.uk](http://mercurytheatre.co.uk)**

## Colchester Makerspace x Essex Book Festival

A 25th Anniversary Collaboration

### COLCHESTER MAKERSPACE



A month-long celebration of printmaking, inspired by the 2024 Essex Book Festival theme 'This Land'. Associate Artists at Colchester Makerspace have developed a series of classes that explore the rich and diverse landscapes, cultures and histories of Essex.

25  
YEARS  
ESSEX  
BOOK  
FESTIVAL

### Experience the beauty of lino cutting

Create your own print inspired by the county's biodiversity. Learn how to carve your design into the linoleum surface and then print it onto paper or fabric.



### Discover the art of letterpress

Learn how to design, typeset and print your own postcard to your future self. Use our vintage type and presses to create your unique message.



### Create a limited edition risograph print

Be inspired by the Essex landscape and learn how to cut and paste shapes and colours to make your own collage. Then print it using this addictive DIY printing process.



### Design your own tote bag

Learn the basic principles of screen printing and come away with a bag that celebrates the character(s) of Essex and its diverse communities.



Don't miss this opportunity to unleash your creativity and learn new skills in a friendly and supportive environment.

Book your place now at [www.makercampus.co.uk/EBF25](http://www.makercampus.co.uk/EBF25)

Colchester Makerspace, Trinity Works, 24 Trinity Street,  
Colchester, Essex, CO1 1JN

Get 25% off  
with promo  
code EBF25



# All this would not be possible without the support of these partners:

## Key partners



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www.essexbookfestival.org.uk  
07913 061948

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