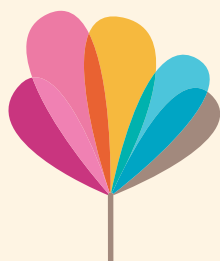


HAY FESTIVAL 2021 REPORT



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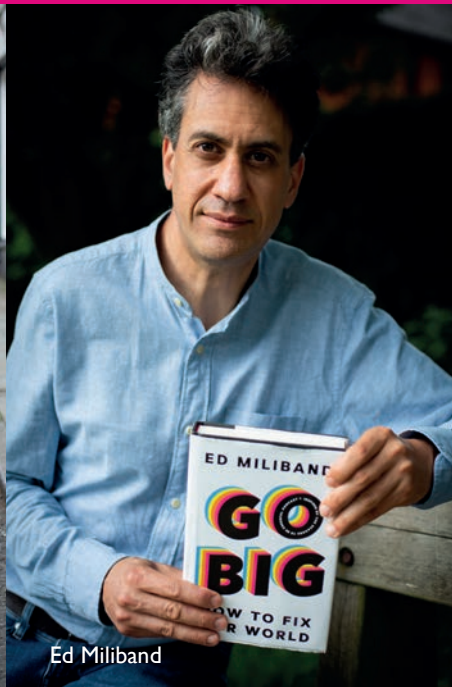


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Caitlin Moran



Ed Miliband



Suzette Llewellyn



Jay Griffiths



Ray Mears



Hafsa Zayyan



Simon Armitage



Mya-Rose Craig



Yvonne Witter

OVERVIEW

Hay Festival 2021 brought writers and readers together from 24 May-6 June for a fortnight of live and online conversations, debates and performances, and an inspiring, free Programme for Schools.

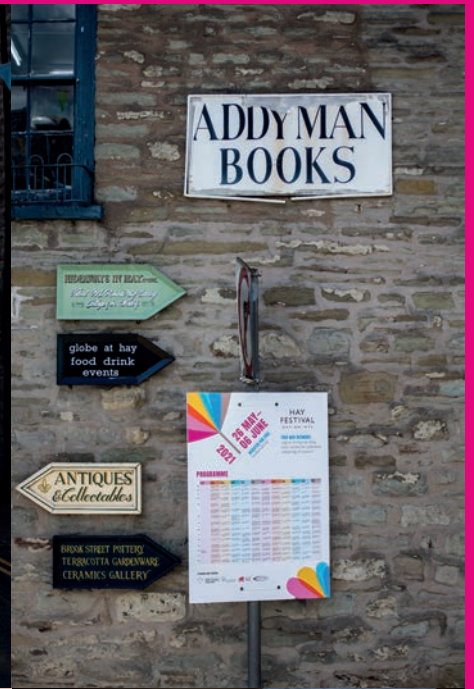
Broadcast from temporary studios in Richard Booth's Bookshop, Hay-on-Wye, within strict health and safety protocols, the 34th Hay Festival Wales shared the work of more than 300 acclaimed writers, global policy-makers, poets, historians, scientists, environmentalists and innovators. The Festival launched the best new fiction and non-fiction books while interrogating some of the biggest issues of our time, from climate catastrophe and global inequality to the future of the arts and world leadership.

This year's edition was the most accessible and inclusive yet. All events were closed-captioned, free to view, and available to watch for 24 hours after the initial broadcast. They then moved to Hay Player, our subscription archive platform, which now holds more than 8,000 Hay Festival events dating back to 1995.

Many thousands of book lovers tuned in from 135 countries to hear from guests including **novelists** Ali Smith, Lisa McInerney, Deborah Levy, Rachel Cusk, Colm Toibín, Ethan Hawke, Jojo Moyes, Sjórn, Maggie Shipstead, Val McDermid, Raven Leilani, Brit Bennett, Caleb Azumah Nelson, Marian Keyes and **Nobel Laureate** Mario Vargas Llosa; **artist** David Hockney; **poets** Simon Armitage, Hollie McNish, Lemn Sissay and Mererid Hopwood; **economists** Daniel Kahneman and former Bank of England governor Mark Carney; **activist** Gina Miller; **journalists and commentators** Anne Applebaum, Gary Younge, Laura Bates, Caitlin Moran, Bonnie Greer and Ash Sarkar; rapper Guvna B; **scientists** Suzanne Simard, Nobel Laureate Didier Queloz, Pragya Agarwal, Alice Roberts, Heidi Larson and the world's first human **cyborg** Peter Scott-Morgan; **historians** Natalie Haynes, Malcom Gladwell, Sathnam Sanghera, Simon Schama and Kehinde Andrews; **philosopher** Noam Chomsky; former **Australian PM** Julia Gillard, former **British PMs** Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, and COP26 president Alok Sharma; **comedians** Mel Giedroyc, Robert



George Monbiot



Benjamin Zephaniah



Ali Smith

Webb, Frank Skinner and Graham Norton; **actors** Russell Tovey, Michael Sheen, Dafne Keen and Amir Wilson; **Reverend** Richard Coles; **children's writers and illustrators** Frank Cottrell-Boyce, Patience Agbabi, Cressida Cowell, David Walliams and Radzi Chinyanganya; while star line-ups for the two Festival galas included **HRH The Duchess of Cornwall**, Kate Winslet, Vanessa Redgrave, Romola Garai, Theresa Lola, Juliet Stephenson, Skin, Guvna B, Jessica Raine, Louise Brealey, Charly Arrowsmith, Rob Brydon and Margaret Busby.

While the Festival could not host ticketed audiences in person, the booktown of Hay-on-Wye embraced the Festival spirit, providing a free WIFI network throughout the town centre to offer unlimited event streaming for visitors.

A free digital Programme for Schools, captioned in English and Welsh, ran from 24-28 May for KS2-4 pupils, broadcasting storytelling and live performances to schools throughout the UK to inspire reading for pleasure. Partnerships with the Living Knowledge Network, Calibre Audio, LitHub and Monocle24 brought event highlights to thousands more.

This was the third Hay Festival under Covid-19 restrictions, so we were tasked with re-designing the festival online and re-thinking ways of engaging artists, audiences, sponsors and partners. It has set the course for an exciting hybrid future.





Joeli Brearley, Pragma Agarwal, Caitlin Moran, Laura Bates



Monique Roffey, author of *The Mermaid of Black Conch*

THE PROGRAMME IN DETAIL

Two headline galas bookended the programme. Main stage events got underway on Wednesday 26 May with the inaugural Opening Night Gala: a night celebrating the power of words to offer hope in dark times, with a selection of readings hosted by Natalie Haynes. On Saturday 5 June, 'From Women to the World' saw women writers, thinkers and performers reading excerpts from *The Penguin Book of Feminist Writing* and *From Women to the World: Letters for the Female Century*.

Author and poet Lemn Sissay curated a three-part Festival series, **George Floyd: One Year On**, to mark the anniversary of the killing in Minneapolis, while writers, campaigners, politicians and historians explored the crisis in racial inequalities globally.

The Festival launched some of the best fiction, non-fiction and poetry, including major prize-winners, while a daily **10@10 New Voices** session (at 10pm each night) introduced many new writers tipped to become the next generation of Festival stars.

This year's free digital **Programme for Schools** featured authors out on location, interactive workshops and varied content

aimed at engaging and inspiring audiences. Additional teaching materials were provided to support learning before, during and after the Festival.

The **HayDays** and **HayYA** strands were centred on contemporary issues and the value of reading for pleasure, broadcasting high-impact events with charismatic speakers from the UK and international authors beamed in to engage with young readers.

Thought leaders delivered **headline lectures** throughout the Festival, tackling some of the biggest questions of our times. These comprised Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Anne Applebaum (Christopher Hitchens Lecture), Gary Younge (Aneurin Bevan Lecture), Gordon Brown (Raymond Williams Lecture), former Bank of England governor Mark Carney (The Friends Lecture), Welsh poet Gillian Clarke (Anthea Bell Lecture), Jojo Moyes (The Reading Agency Lecture), Heidi Larson (John Maddox Lecture), Jini Reddy (the inaugural Jan Morris Lecture), and Margaret McMillan (British Pugwash Lecture), while leading universities shared their latest research in the Festival's new **Lunchtime Lectures** series.



Looking ahead to COP26, to be held in November 2021 in Glasgow, a 22-part **Hay-on-Earth** series explored the latest environmental science, sustainable policies and creative responses to the climate crisis, while Festivalgoers were encouraged to share their creative responses via the Festival's new Write for Change project.

Our **post-Covid future** was highlighted with discussions on the impacts of the pandemic and the potential for a new green recovery. *Everyday Sexism* founder Laura Bates led a series of discussions around the ways Covid-19 has impacted the gender divide and its effect on mothers in particular.

To mark 300 years since the UK first appointed a Prime Minister, the Festival encouraged contributors to draw on lessons from the past to inform solutions to the global crisis in democracy. Participating in **PM300** were former PMs Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, and historian Anthony Seldon, author of political biographies of six former British Prime Ministers.

The past was reimagined by historians sharing their insights that included a showcase of the Wolfson History Prize shortlist. Developments in tech and our understanding of the natural

world were centre-stage in a series of conversations with scientists, nature writers and innovators, featuring events with The Royal Society and the The British Academy.

Collaborations with global Hay Festivals showcased international prizewinners such as Nobel Laureate Mario Vargas Llosa and Cymrawd Rhyngwladol Cymru Greadigol Hay Festival/Creative Wales Hay Festival International Fellow Mererid Hopwood. Book Aid International hosted a session on library activism, and we marked 100 years of English PEN in a discussion around free speech, chaired by its president Philippe Sands.

Entertainment was provided by leading comics and musicians including Mel Giedroyc, Graham Norton and rapper Guvna B, who performed to evening audiences, while a special series of workshops encouraged audiences to get creative themselves.

A photograph of a town street decorated with colorful bunting. In the background, a stone clock tower with a spire is visible. To the right, a building with a balcony has signs that read 'RICHARD BOOTH', 'BOOKSHOP', 'CAFE', and 'AND'. The scene is set against a cloudy sky.

THE FESTIVAL IN NUMBERS

208

events

1,570

press mentions
generated an
estimated OTS
(opportunity to
see/hear)
of 802m

23

million impressions
generated by
@hayfestival across
Twitter, Facebook
and Instagram

302,138

event views

91%

of teachers agreed
that watching the
Programme for
Schools had enriched
and supported
creative learning
during the pandemic

393

writers and
artists

198,490

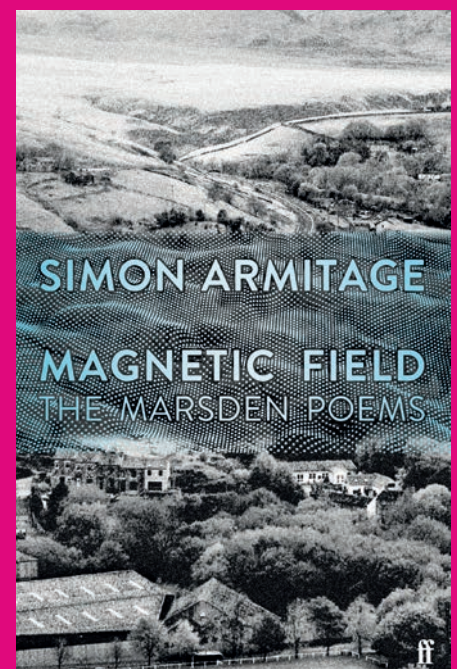
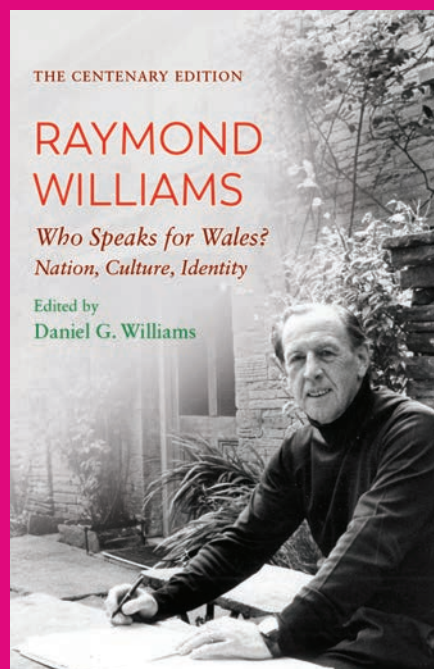
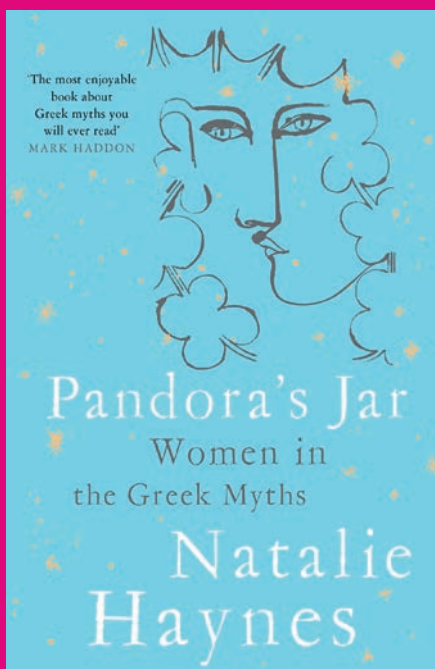
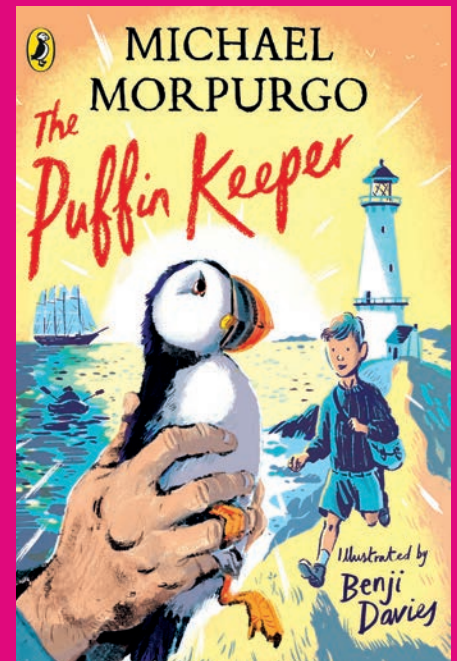
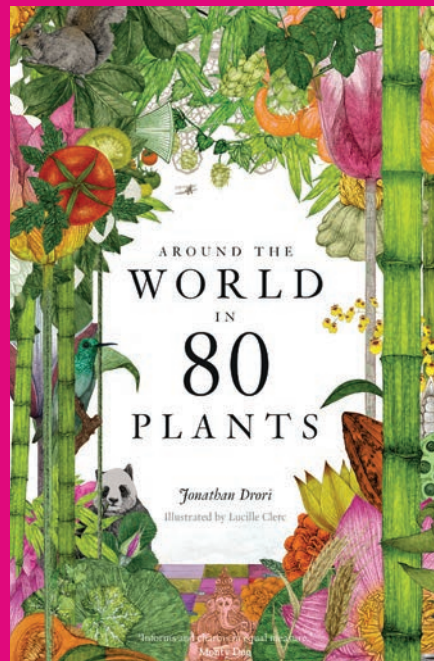
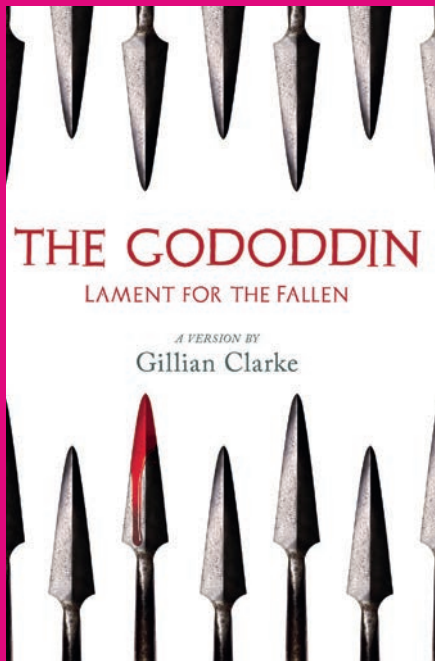
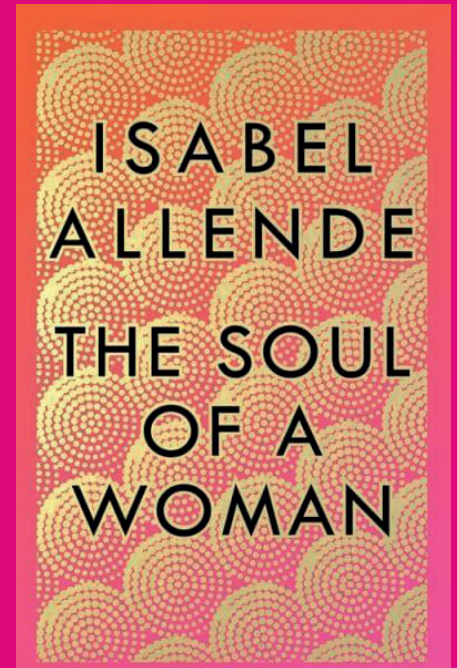
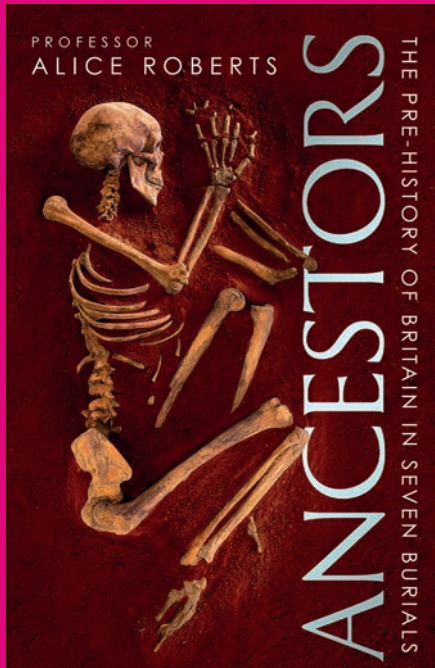
estimated
Programme
for Schools
attendees

135

countries
tuned in

58%

new audiences
reached



FESTIVAL BESTSELLERS

Isabel Allende *The Soul of a Woman*

Alice Roberts *Ancestors*

Simon Armitage *Magnetic Field*

Jonathan Drori *Around the World in 80 Plants*

Michael Morpurgo *The Puffin Keeper*


Gillian Clarke *The Gododdin*

Raymond Williams *Who Speaks for Wales?*

Frank Skinner *A Comedian's Prayer Book*

Benjamin Zephaniah *Windrush Child*

Natalie Haynes *Pandora's Jar*

 ur audience selected books of the highest quality – intelligent, well-written, imaginative and intellectually curious. The range of authors shows a gender balance and a diversity of cultural influences: Anglo-Saxon, Celtic, Caribbean and Hispanic. There are books for children, novels, poetry, history, feminism, politics, religion and nature all represented.

In addition to the Book of the Month live events, there are many ways to enjoy the festival year-round.

Hay Player gives you access to the world's great thinkers and writers on film and audio.

Authors from our Programme for Schools filmed over the past four years can be watched free of charge.

Our series of podcasts give audiences a snapshot of all the incredible content that can be found in long form on Hay Player.

Hay Festival is in full swing!

ORGANISERS of Hay Festival have shared these images as the event is now underway with a free digital extravaganza of conversations, performances, debate, music and laughter running until 6 June.

More than 200 acclaimed writers, global policy makers, historians, poets, pioneers and innovators will take part online, launching the best new fiction and non-fiction, interrogating some of the biggest issues of our time, and spreading joy and inspiration with their stories. From Hay-on-Wye to the world, all sessions will be streamed for free at hayfestival.org/wales. All images credited to Bille Charity.



David Williams HQ
@davidwilliams

David will be returning to the @HayFestival for a Q&A about his children's books with the hilarious @1Judilove. The event will be LIVE on the 29th May at 11.00AM. Register here for the chance to join: hayfestival.com/wales/home #HayFestival2021



You Retweeted

Professor Benjamin Zephaniah @BZephaniah · Jun 7
A Hay Festival medal and a @BAFTA in the same week. My mum thinks I'm joking. @bignartie thinks I'm smoking. But I'm just meditating on the legacy we're creating.

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Books

Sofinco

Retrouver le goût des projets d'été, c'est Smart.



Hay Festival 2021: Noam Chomsky, Julia Gillard and Gordon Brown join line-up for online event

The sessions will be free to view with registered users able to pose questions to the speakers



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autumnleavesto It was a real delight being able to watch it online here from Brazil. Thanks a lot for the opportunity. Hope next year we get to do that as well.



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Hay Festival: George Floyd series features in 2021's digital event

20 April

George Floyd death



THE FESTIVAL IN THE MEDIA

Press mentions created an estimated OTS (opportunities to see/hear) of 802m (Gorkana, June 2021). There were news pieces, features and interviews across BBC Arts, BBC World, BBC Radio 2, BBC Radio 3, BBC Radio 6Music, BBC Wales, BBC Radio Hereford & Worcester, ITV Wales, LBC, Absolute Radio, TalkRadio, Times Radio, Press Association, *The Guardian*, *The i*, *Metro*, *The Independent*, *The Times*, *FT*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Daily Mail*, *The Sun*, *Daily Express*, *Western Mail*, *Evening Standard*, *Hereford Times*, *B&R Express*, *British GQ*, *Waitrose Weekend*, *House & Garden*, *Lodestars*, *Country Living*, *The English Garden*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Tatler*, *The Big Issue*, *New Statesman*, *History Revealed*, *National Geographic*, *Mslexia*, *Countryfile*, *The Week Junior*, *The School Librarian*, *School Travel Organiser*, and with media partners *LitHub*, *The TLS*, *Country & Town House*, *Monocle24*, *The Bookseller* and *Happiful*.

On social media, 23 million impressions were generated on Festival feeds, while 12,834 users posted about the event on public feeds for a total reach of 121 million.

In the UK book trade, 51 libraries and bookshops supported the event with point-of-sale displays, while our Bookshop.org partnership reached 195k book lovers with the Festival's curation of new titles. Twenty-one wider event partnerships were created to reach the largest possible audience, including co-streaming with The British Library's Living Knowledge Network and Estuary Festival, plus post-event content packaging with Calibre Audio, *Graham Norton's Book Club* Podcast, Vince Cable's Podcast, *Country and Town House* magazine, Literary Hub and Monocle24.



Vanessa Kisuule



David Hockney



Tahmima Anam

THE FESTIVAL IN QUOTES

“ Hay Festival stays ahead of the literary curve... this annual literary extravaganza has been identifying subjects that matter, and tracking down top writers and authorities to talk about them, since it was founded in 1987.”

*Waitrose Weekend,
May 2021*

“ Hay Festival is one for all seasons, balm in a calm, a mainstay in a storm.”

novelist Ali Smith

“ After a tumultuous year, Hay’s programme is reassuringly stellar, with the world’s leading writers, speakers and thinkers lined up for a free, digital festival. With events addressing the climate crisis and Black Lives Matter, as well as readings, debates, film screenings and interviews with novelists, poets and journalists, the Welsh Borders are set to become a literary paradise this spring.”

British GQ, April 2021

“ Thank you for providing such a diverse and engaging programme. It really helped my children recapture a love of learning following the recent lockdowns. Diolch yn fawr!”

Teacher, Llangorse Primary School

“ We loved it! So easy to follow and it was great having such talented authors in the classroom. Very well organised. Diolch yn fawr.”

Teacher, Ysgol Gymraeg Cwmbrân

“ I so appreciate this Festival and all the celebrating of work that they’re doing”

*actor/writer/director
Ethan Hawke*

“ The combination of book-browsing heaven and cafés, all of them independent, as well as the surrounding natural landscape, and welcoming locals, means I’ll definitely be returning to Hay-on-Wye, and likely not only during the Festival.”

author Jini Reddy

“Having a worldwide stage like Hay Festival where you can speak so candidly about the most intimate issues is extraordinary.”

Reverend Richard Coles

“I’ve lost count of how many years I’ve been going to Hay Festival as a poet, novelist, musician, as an audience member, and now digitally. So, when I say that receiving the Hay Festival Medal for Poetry is a great moment for me, you must understand, I really mean it. I love the Festival, I love the people who work on the Festival, and I love the town. For me, this medal is all about love. Thank you.”

Benjamin Zephaniah on receiving the Hay Festival 2021 medal for poetry

“I’m over the moon to receive this medal, and very grateful to Hay Festival not only for the award but for all its brilliant work over the years. Anyone working on environmental and social justice must swim against the prevailing currents: though these are the most important issues on Earth, they are all too often marginalised and neglected. So it’s a lovely surprise to be recognised for my work in these areas. Thank you.”

George Monbiot on receiving the Hay Festival 2021 medal for journalism

Michael Rosen, Jim Down and Rachel Clarke



WITH THANKS TO...

Sponsorship, grant funding and donations to Hay Festival Foundation all contributed to this year's successful Hay Festival. With a Cultural Recovery Grant from the Arts Council of England, major sponsorship from Visit Wales and Baillie Gifford, and Hay Festival Foundation donations, we sustained our creative programming and wider operations to produce the Festival and offer access free of charge.

Project sponsorship from Keystone Positive Change Trust supported our work to measure the carbon footprint of our digital content, while consultancy support from Accenture has informed our development and marketing strategies, supporting us in reaching new audiences.

Sharing academic research is a fundamental aspect of our work through collaboration with our university partners (Aberystwyth, Swansea, Birmingham, Worcester), national institutions The Royal Society, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, The British Academy, The British Library, Eccles Centre for American Studies, The National Library of Wales, and the science journal, *Nature*.

We are incredibly grateful to all our local sponsors who help to create a very special sense of place: Farmers' Welsh Lavender, The Haymakers Gallery, Bartrums Stationery,

Starry Meadow Camping, Ewemoo, Hill and Dale Caravan Park, Gabbs Solicitors, Mostlymaps, Randan Stables Gallery and Shepherds Parlour.

In addition, we would like to thank the following for their invaluable support: the Welsh Government's Department for Education and Skills, British Pugwash, English PEN, Estuary, Hachette, TooFar Media, Virtual Writers Weekend, *Prospect* magazine, Scottish Mortgage Investment Trust, Scottish American Investment Company, British Council, Acción Cultural Espanola, Embassy of Colombia and media partners *Country & Town House*, *Happiful*, *Monocle24*, *Lit Hub*, *The Bookseller*, *The TLS* and *VCA*.

Partnerships with disability charities Calibre Audio and Leonard Cheshire helped us to reach new, diverse audiences, while collaborations with The Reading Agency, Bookshop.org and independent bookshops encouraged wider national engagement.

Donations and memberships (Friends, Patrons, Benefactors) contributing to Hay Festival Foundation have given us enormous moral and financial support throughout the pandemic.

Special thanks to the team at Richard Booth's Bookshop for hosting the Festival and making us so welcome.

Carolyn Dunster and Arthur Parkinson



ABOUT HAY FESTIVAL

Hay Festival is a not-for-profit organisation that brings readers and writers together to share stories and ideas in sustainable events live and online. The Festivals inspire, examine and entertain globally, inviting participants to imagine the world as it is and as it might be.

Nobel Prize-winners and novelists, scientists and politicians, environmentalists, historians and musicians take part in the Festival's global conversation, sharing the latest thinking in the arts and sciences with curious audiences. A wide programme of education and outreach work runs alongside all of the festival's events, supporting coming generations of writers and culturally hungry audiences.

In 1987, the Festival was dreamt up around a kitchen table in the booktown of Hay-on-Wye, Wales. Thirty-four years later, the unique marriage of exacting conversations and entertainment for all ages has travelled to editions in 30 locations, from the historic town of Cartagena in Colombia to the heart of cities in Peru, Mexico, Spain, and this year to Croatia. The organisation

now reaches a global audience of millions each year and continues to grow and innovate, building partnerships and initiatives alongside some of the leading bodies in arts and the media. Hay Festival was awarded Spain's Princess of Asturias Award in Communication and Humanities in 2020.

In 2020, the Festival launched a series of new digital initiatives to expand its global audience, including the Hay Festival Podcast in English and Spanish, the *Imagina el Mundo* film series, and Book of the Month Live Q&As. Meanwhile, thousands of audio and film recordings from the Hay Festival archive can be enjoyed on Hay Player (hayfestival.org/hayplayer).

Coming up... Hay Festival Querétaro, Mexico (1-5 September 2021); Hay Festival Segovia, Spain (16-19 September 2021); Hay Festival Arequipa, Peru (28 October-8 November 2021); Hay Festival Hay-on-Wye Winter Weekend, Wales (24-28 November 2021); Hay Festival Medellín, Colombia (January 2022); Hay Festival Cartagena de Indias, Colombia (January 2022); Hay Festival Hay-on-Wye, Wales (26 May-5 June 2022).



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