

HAY FESTIVAL DIGITAL WINTER WEEKEND

2020 REPORT



HAY FESTIVAL

DIGITAL
WINTER WEEKEND

26—29
NOVEMBER
2020

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[HAYFESTIVAL.ORG/WW](https://www.hayfestival.org/ww)
#HAYWINTERWEEKEND
@HAYFESTIVAL

HAY FESTIVAL

DIGITAL
WINTER WEEKEND

Join us in a free digital
wonderland of thoughtful
conversation, candlelit
storytelling, comedy,
music and family fun



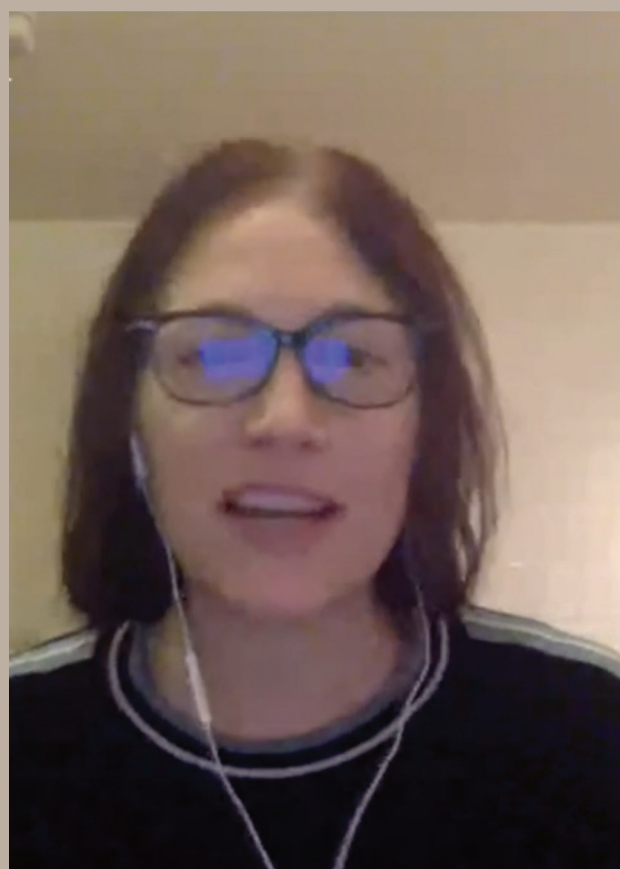


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Stephen Fry and Susie Dent



Natalie Haynes and Douglas Stuart



THE WINTER WEEKEND IN 2020

The 21st Hay Festival Digital Winter Weekend was a success despite the pandemic. Building on the knowledge gained from running four fully digital Festivals in 2020, the look and feel of this Winter Weekend was very different to previous ones but retained its festive local atmosphere.

Our first event welcomed everyone virtually to Hay Town with an introduction from the new King of Hay, Oliver Cooke (as nominated by his predecessor, the late Richard Booth) before a virtual tour of Hay Castle, while the pre-show reel showcased many of Hay's independent shops, with their owners, to a background of invigorating music. We organised Hay hosts (mostly staff members) to present each session and encouraged viewers to support the Festival by making a donation, becoming a Friend or buying books and Christmas gifts in the online shop. They expressed gratitude to all our sponsors and supporters. This was beamed out from a temporary studio in the Hay office, ensuring that Hay-on-Wye was in people's minds even if they couldn't visit at this time.

In terms of programming, the four-day Winter Weekend was by far the most ambitious, with

the necessity to go digital allowing us more freedom to innovate. The resulting line-up included many famous names such as **Dawn French, Lee Child, Irenosen Okojie, Joanne Harris, Ruth Jones, William Boyd, Elton John, Arsène Wenger, Antony Gormley, Helen Macdonald, Elizabeth Day, David Olusoga, Katya Adler, James O'Brien, Benjamin Zephaniah, Booker Prize winner Douglas Stuart** and Hay Festival President **Stephen Fry**.

The far-reaching nature of the digital format, together with the strong programme, wide-ranging PR and a well-designed and stocked 'shop-front', resulted in strong sales of books and merchandise, including the Jackie Morris giclée prints and the original artwork.

By delivering a digital festival that reached new audiences at home and abroad, we can truly say that in its 21st year, the Winter Weekend came of age.

EDUCATION & CHILDREN

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Scribblers Cymraeg launched on 26 November, delivering three free digital Welsh language workshops for transition pupils in Years 6 and 7 as part of the Hay Festival Scribblers Tour.

Poets and authors **Mererid Hopwood**, **Aneirin Karadog** and **Anni Llŷn** led creative and interactive digital events focusing on location, landscape and identity to celebrate the Welsh language. The host was broadcaster and #IMiliwn campaigner **Ameer Rhys Davies-Rana**.

All events are free to watch again and available with subtitles in Welsh and English.

A total of 1,049 pupils watched Scribblers Cymraeg during the Winter Weekend, and we anticipate this number will continue to grow as these resources are available year-round for teachers to use in lesson-planning and are also available on Hwb, the Welsh Government's digital learning site.

All of the teachers surveyed agreed (90% strongly agreed) that watching Hay Festival Scribblers Cymraeg films increased their pupils' engagement with creative writing in the Welsh language; 90% strongly agreed that this had been beneficial during Covid-19 when school visits are difficult.

WINTER WEEKEND CHILDREN'S EVENTS

Four children's events were programmed over the Winter Weekend, with free access for families and young adults. These were:

David Olusoga (for age 12+) – 2,341 views

Benjamin Zephaniah (for age 9+) – 1,225 views

Ed Vere (for age 3+) – 345 views

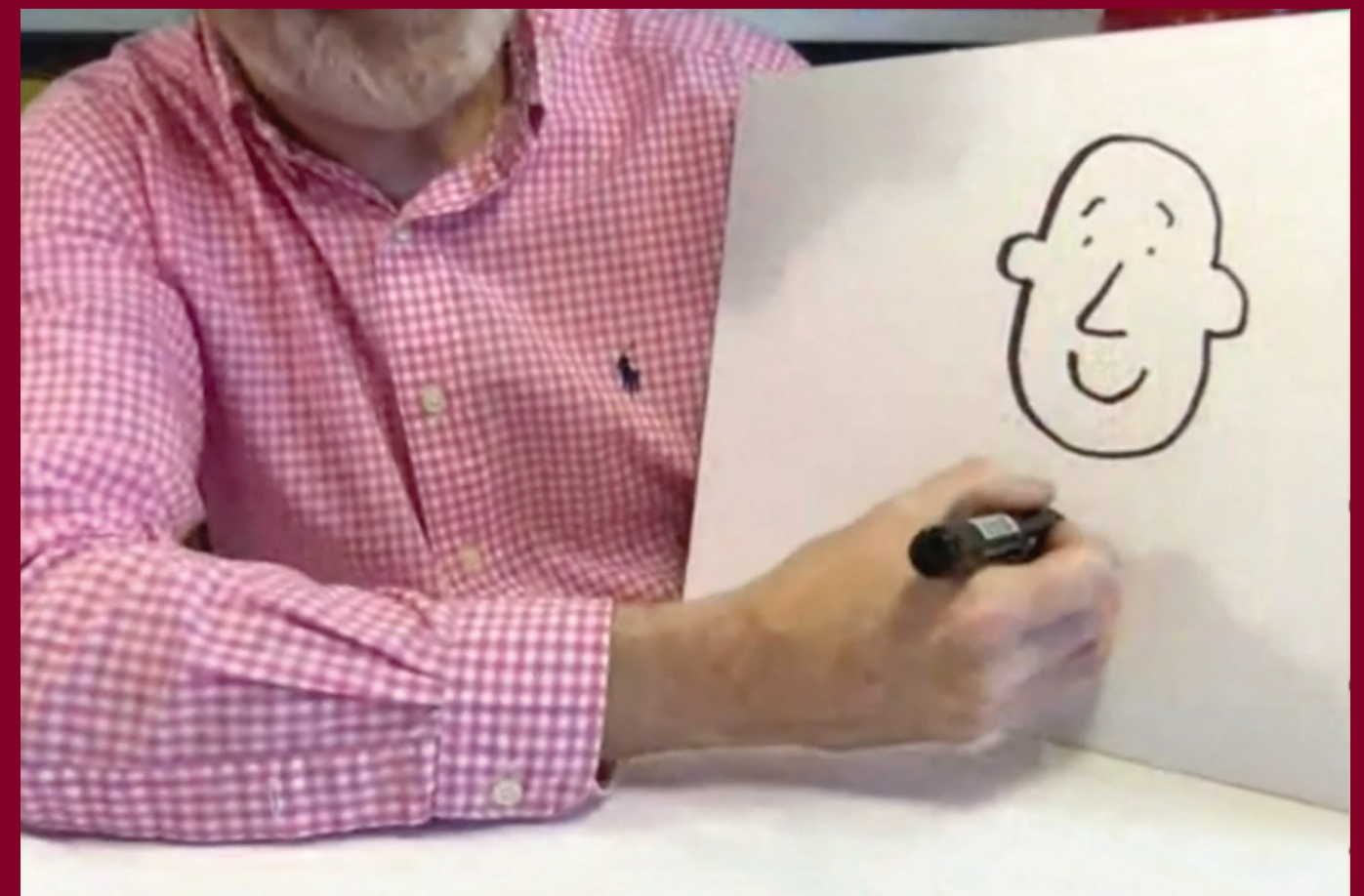
Nick Sharratt (for age 3+) – 274 views

“**A**nni Llŷn's presentation was an excellent resource which the pupils enjoyed. It inspired them to create some excellent poems. It also led to a valuable discussion on wellbeing, with the pupils being very open about their feelings in the current challenging Covid climate.”

Teacher, Ysgol Gynradd Llangynnwr



Ed Vere



Nick Sharratt



FESTIVAL NUMBERS IN 2020

4
days

36
events

55%
new
customers

63,629
unique viewings

72
artists

7m
Twitter
impressions

379k
Instagram
impressions

79m
social impressions
generated

70,822
newsletter
subscribers (5,571
signed up at Winter
Weekend 2020)

261k
Facebook post
impressions

41m
accounts:
estimated reach
on social media

1,650
books sold



BESTSELLERS

- | | | | |
|----------------------|--|-----------------------|--|
| 1 | <i>The Lost Spells</i>
Robert Macfarlane & Jackie Morris | 11 | <i>Orfeia</i>
Joanne Harris |
| 2 | <i>Word Perfect</i>
Susie Dent | 12 | <i>English Pastoral</i>
James Rebanks |
| 3 | <i>Flight Vespers</i>
Helen Macdonald | 13 | <i>Snow</i>
John Banville |
| 4⁼ | <i>Black and British</i> by David Olusoga
<i>Shuggie Bain</i> by Douglas Stuart | 14 | <i>Troy</i>
Stephen Fry |
| 6 | <i>Us Three</i>
Ruth Jones | 15 | <i>How to Be a Lion</i>
Ed Vere |
| 7 | <i>How not to Be Wrong</i>
James O'Brien | 16⁼ | <i>Failosophy</i> by Elizabeth Day
<i>Wicked World</i>
by Benjamin Zephaniah |
| 8 | <i>Shaping the World</i>
Antony Gormley & Martin Gayford | 18 | <i>Ten Things About Writing</i>
Joanne Harris |
| 9 | <i>Trio</i>
William Boyd | 19 | <i>The Lost Spells CD</i>
Robert Macfarlane & Jackie Morris |
| 10 | <i>Scoff</i>
Pen Vogler | 20 | <i>Things I Learned on the 6.28</i>
Stig Abell |

AUDIENCE LOCATION

TOP TEN COUNTRIES REACHED

- * UK
- * IRELAND
- * FRANCE
- * GERMANY
- * SPAIN
- * ITALY
- * SOUTH AFRICA
- * USA
- * CANADA
- * AUSTRALIA

“The depth of this year’s programme is a true testament to Hay Festival’s global appeal and I know it will provide light, inspiration and optimism for the future to people across the world. As we approach the end of a year like no other, I once again applaud the continued resilience and endeavour of our friends across the rich cultural and artistic landscapes who are adapting to this challenging time in innovative ways to showcase Wales to global audiences.”

Dafydd Elis-Thomas MS,
Deputy Minister for Culture



FEEDBACK

FROM VIEWERS

“It’s been terrific. My soul and mind have been fed this weekend.”

Judith Mills

“These talks are so fabulous. I can’t believe they’re free! Where else could you find Elton John talking to Arsène Wenger!?”

Tom Seaward, Swindon Advertiser

“My abiding memory from these lockdown times will not be all the things missed but of this, of Hay Festival!”

Joani M

“Thank you to everyone who organised the Winter Weekend. Great speakers who shone light into the present gloomy time.”

Carolyn Lody

“Thank you to everyone involved in making this Winter Festival possible. It has been wonderful. It was great fun reading the ‘Live Chat’ for each event. Amazing that people from all over the world were united in supporting the Festival. Just magical! Thank you.”

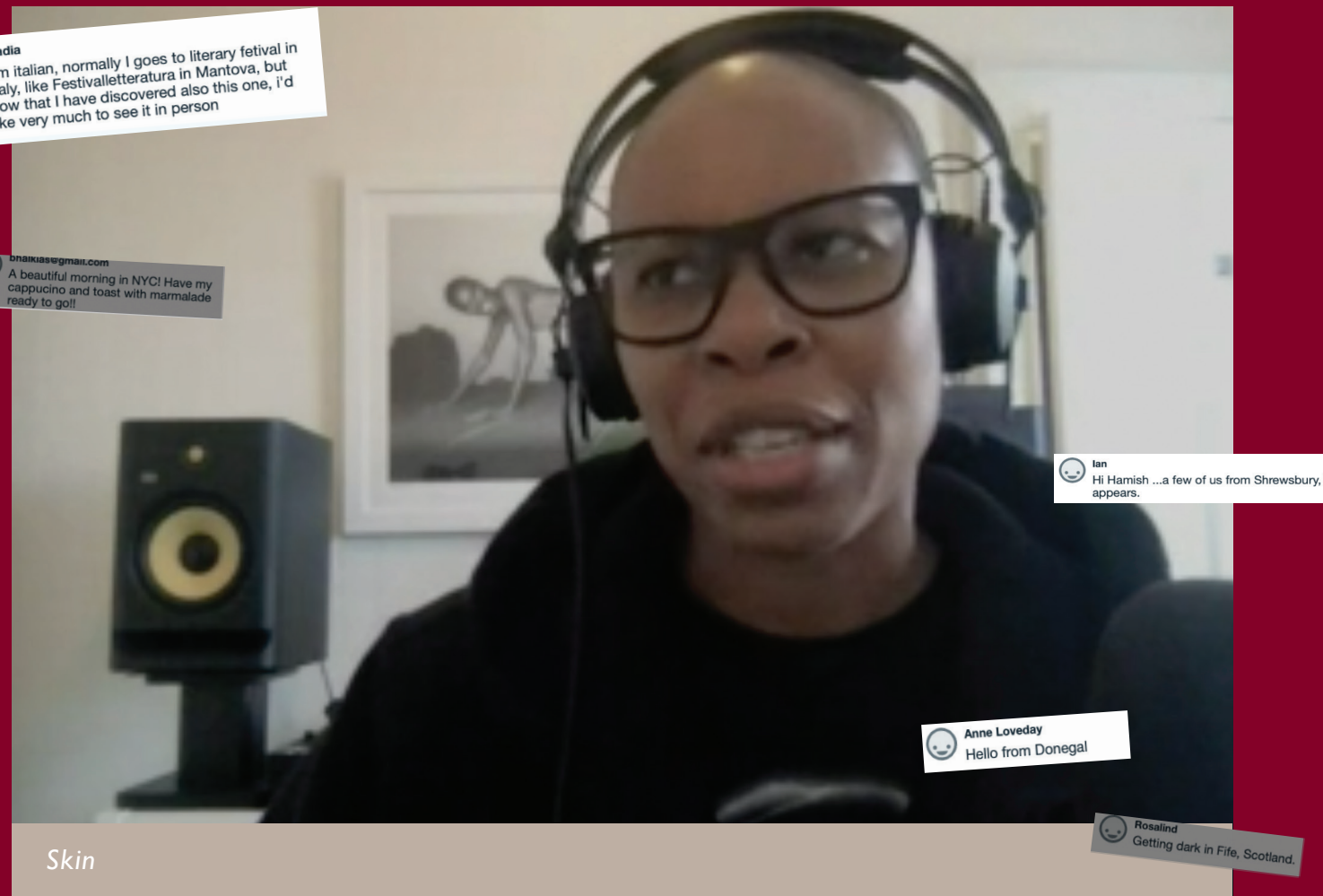
Frances Byrne

“Thanks to the festival we’ve all had the opportunity for our minds to be transported to another place. So essential currently. Many thanks to the hard-working team.”

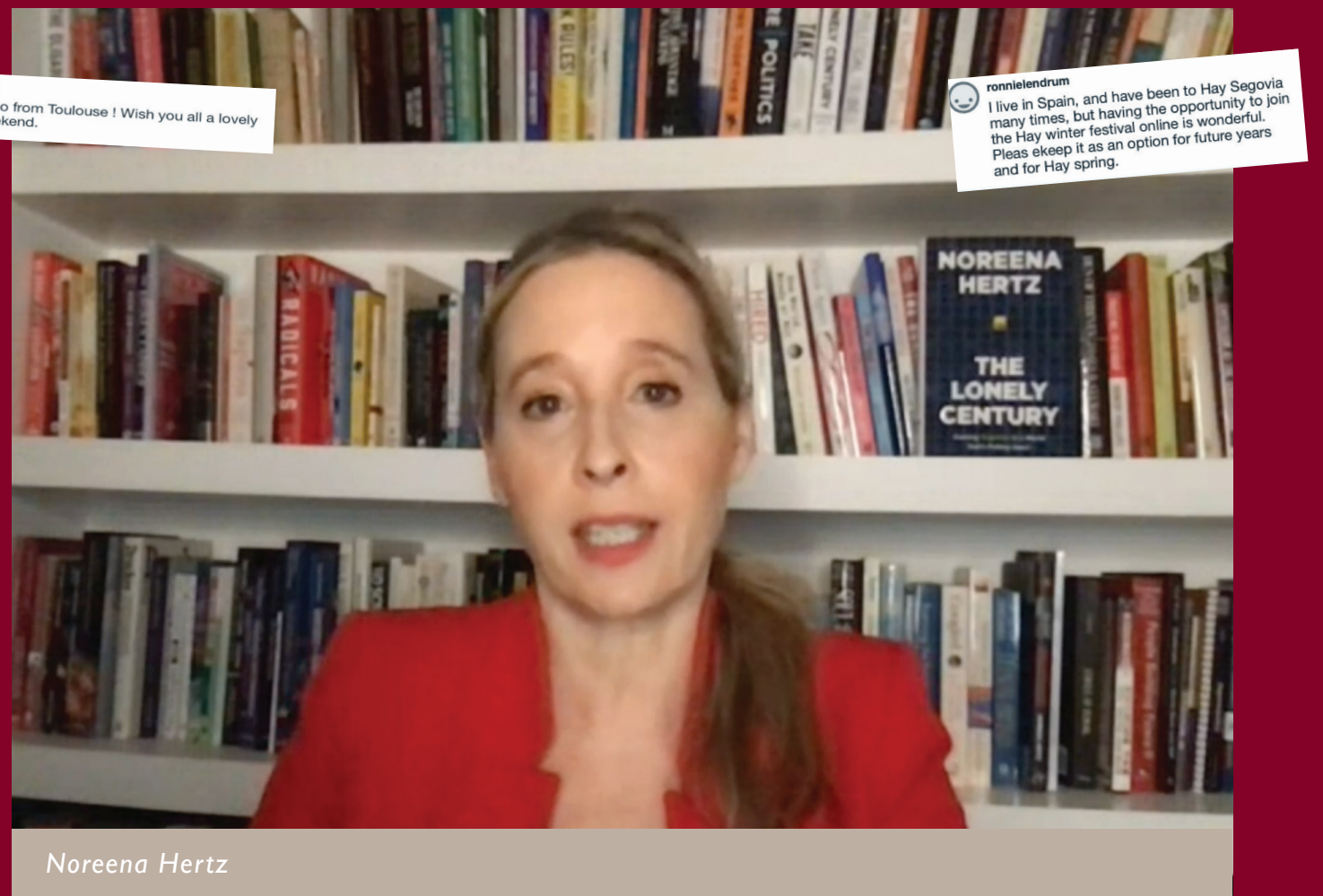
Maris Watkins

“Oh, I’m going to have an extended Hay Festival next week on the Hay Player. What a feast!”

Jackie Scott-Mandeville



Skin



Noreena Hertz

FEEDBACK

FROM SPEAKERS

“I was rather proud to have been a part of the festival. I hope it was successful. I can only imagine how difficult it must have been to put together.”

Gary Numan

“I loved it. Thank you so much for asking me.”

Dolly Alderton

“Thanks, was great fun.”

David Olusoga

“I enjoyed the conversation – as much as one can enjoy anything on Zoom the Merciless.”

John Banville

“Thanks again for asking me – really enjoyed doing it. Hope to be back IRL very soon – congratulations on a fab programme.”

Stephanie Merritt

“I loved doing this event, thank you so much for asking me.”

Miranda Sawyer

HAY
FESTIVAL



Heather Martin and Lee Child



Irenosen Okojie



Clockwise from top: Sophie Williams, Candice Brathwaite, Charlie Brinkhurst-Cuff, Elisabeth Fapuro



James O'Brien

THE FESTIVAL IN THE MEDIA

248 media mentions (and counting), **up by 68%** on Winter Weekend 2019, including mentions across national broadcasting (BBC Radio 2, TalkRadio, Times Radio, Monocle24, Virgin Radio); print (*The Times*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Daily Mail*, *Daily Express*, *Sun*, *Daily Star*); consumer (*GQ*, *Waitrose Weekend*, *The Week*, *Country Life*); online (LitHub, Attitude, MailOnline), and locally (BBC Radio Wales, BBC Radio Hereford and Worcester, *Hereford Times*, *Western Mail*, *Brecon & Radnor Express*).

“Congratulations for an excellent Winter Weekend – really enjoyed the fantastic variety of entertaining, enlightening and some slightly spooky fare!”

Caroline Dinenage
MP and Minister of State DCMS

Overall, our social media campaign generated:

- 7 million** Twitter impressions
up 280% on Winter Weekend 2019
- 379k** Instagram impressions
up 29% on Winter Weekend 2019
- 261k** Facebook post impressions
up 18% on Winter Weekend 2019

During the Festival week, there were **3,328** public posts about Hay Festival across social platforms, generating **79 million** social impressions with an estimated reach of **41 million** accounts.

“An incredible programme, which represents the Winter Weekend’s most comprehensive schedule ever.”

British GQ

PRINCIPAL PARTNERS & PROJECT PARTNERS

Huge thanks to our Principal partners Baillie Gifford and Visit Wales for sponsoring the Digital Winter Weekend stages. Their continued support enabled us to share so many great events with audiences from around the world, free of charge.

We are delighted to welcome Afrori Books as a first time Project Partner and look forward to working with them in the future.

A huge thank-you to **local businesses** Gabbs, The Woodee, Old Chapel Gallery and The Coffee Cart, innovative **creatives** TooFar Media, **national institution** The National Library of Wales and **global consultancy** Accenture Strategy.



HAY FESTIVAL FOUNDATION

Donations made to Hay Festival Foundation help to make our work possible, and this year's Haymakers have enabled us to reach much wider audiences than ever before, as have our incredibly loyal supporters: our Friends, Patrons, Benefactors and Chair's Circle members. We could not do this without their contribution.



Robert Macfarlane



Benjamin Zephaniah

WINTER WEEKEND DIGITAL PRESENCE

ONLINE PROGRAMME

REGISTRATION REMINDER

Robert Macfarlane and Jackie Morris talk to Nicola Davies

THE LOST SPELLS

Join us online: Thursday 26 November 2020, 12.30pm - 1.30pm GMT Baillie Gifford Digital Stage

This magical new book from the creators of the literary phenomenon and Hay Festival Book of the Year 2017, *The Lost Words*, introduces a beautiful new set of natural spell-poems and artwork by the creative duo Robert Macfarlane and Jackie Morris. As in *The Lost Words*, these 'spells' take their subjects from relatively commonplace but under-appreciated, animals, birds, trees and flowers – from Barn Owl to Red Fox, Grey Seal to Silver Birch, Jay to Jackdaw. But they find new shapes, new spaces and new voices with which to conjure. Dazzlingly inventive, they are written to be read aloud, painted in brushstrokes that call to the forest, field, riverbank and to the heart. *The Lost Spells* summons back what is often lost from sight and care, and inspires protection and action on behalf of the natural world. Above all, it celebrates a sense of wonder; bearing witness to nature's power to amaze, console and bring joy. Featuring the *Silver Birch Spell* a beautiful new video that will premiere at Hay.



SPONSORED BY OLD CHAPEL GALLERY

 BUY THE BOOK

SHOWREEL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

EVENT PLATFORM

Hay Festival Digital
Winter Weekend 2020

Welcome to Hay

Thursday 26 November 2020, 10am GMT

Behind the Scenes at Hay Castle

We know most of you can't visit at the moment so here's a little taster of Hay at this time last year and as it is today. We will also join TV presenter and archaeologist Jules Hudson (*Escape to the Country, Countryfile*) as he tours the restoration work at Hay Castle with site historian Mari Florde. This is a unique opportunity to get a glimpse behind the scenes of the incredible transformation of this historic building which over the centuries has been a fortress, a family home, and world-famous bookshop. Hay Castle will reopen to the public in 2021, and Jules and Mari will show you some of the surprises you can look forward to.

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Accenture Strategy

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The Coffee Cart Company

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The Woodee

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NEWSLETTER
REACHES 70K+
SUBSCRIBERS

ostyngiad
10% Discount

HAY10

Welcome to Hay

Thursday 26 November 2020, 10am GMT

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Your event is due to start shortly. Please [click here to proceed directly to the event](#), making sure you are logged in with the email address you used to register.

If you have time before the start of this event, you might like to [browse our bookshop](#). If you would like to, [please make a donation to Hay Festival Foundation](#) to help secure our future.

You can re-watch the session until 1 December, after which time it will be available on [Hay Player](#). If you have any issues accessing the event, please contact us at boxoffice@hayfestival.org or connect via our back-up stream on YouTube.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank all our supporters and [sponsors](#) who have made the Digital Weekend possible.

Hope you enjoy the event and see you inside.

Hay Festival team

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, historians, environmentalists 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 the recipient of a Queen's Award for Enterprise in 2009 and 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).

hayfestival.org



Festival-goers pre-pandemic at Hay Festival in Hay-on-Wye, Wales



Jacqueline Wilson on stage at Hay Festival in Hay-on-Wye, Wales



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