

Celebrating 30 years of Edinburgh International Book Festival



EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL CELEBRATES 30 YEARS WITH A HEADY COCKTAIL OF FACT AND FICTION

The Edinburgh International Book Festival finished the public programme of events today with appearances from William Dalrymple, Margaret Atwood and Neil Gaiman and, fresh from reporting for the BBC in Egypt, Jeremy Bowen. Over the last 17 days, the Book Festival has welcomed 800 authors from 40 countries taking part in 700 events including Salman Rushdie, Andrew Marr in his first public appearance this year, US statistician Nate Silver who predicted a No vote in the Scottish Independence referendum, five of the authors longlisted for the 2013 Man Booker Prize and some of the world's leading graphic novelists and illustrators. Margaret Atwood, David Peace, Simon Sebag Montefiore, Alfred Brendel, DBC Pierre and Daniel Rachel all launched their brand new books and Alan Warner and Tanya Harrod were announced as the winners of the University of Edinburgh's James Tait Black Prizes.

On the final Sunday evening authors and audience members joined together to celebrate the life and work of Iain Banks in an emotional event hosted by Ian Rankin, Val McDermid and Ken MacLeod with readings of Iain's work by Valerie Edmond. Book Festival organisers confirmed during the event that one of the paper sculptures anonymously donated during the Festival, a black crow celebrating Bank's *The Crow Road*, will be gifted to the University of Stirling who will be the beneficiary of the Iain Banks Archive.



Nick Barley, Director of the Edinburgh International Book Festival, said “In this, the 30th year of the Book Festival, we have looked back over the explosion of culture and the arts in the last 30 years and looked forward to where we think we will be 30 years hence. It’s about so much more than the numbers. We have welcomed an extraordinary array of writers, thinkers, politicians and poets to discuss everything from the representation of women in the arts to the question of Scottish Independence. We have enjoyed lively and informative debates, extraordinary life stories, and touched the heart of the Egyptian revolution by bringing the music and poetry of Tahrir Square from Cairo to Edinburgh with Amin Haddad and Eskerendella. It really has been a wonderful two weeks.”

In the popular Baillie Gifford Children’s Programme Judith Kerr celebrated her 90th birthday with a look back over a remarkable career, Illustrator in Residence Barroux was joined in a Big Draw by children of all ages and Robert Muchamore, Darren Shan, Julia Donaldson and Children’s Laureate Malorie Blackman all spoke to entranced, and sell-out, audiences. Almost 3,000 primary school children from 40 schools across Scotland will visit the Book Festival tomorrow for the Baillie Gifford Schools Gala day to enjoy events, activities, workshops and readings from authors including Julia Donaldson, James Carter, Joan Lingard and Joanna Nadin.



Stripped, a new strand for 2013 supported by the Scottish Government’s Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund, celebrated graphic novels and comics and the people that create them with over 40 events across the adult and children’s programme. World renowned graphic novelists including Grant Morrison, Joe Sacco, Chris Ware and Melinda Gebbie spoke about their work,

and other events included reading workshops on Batman, illustration workshops with Sonia Martinez and Gary Northfield and the announcement of the winner of the inaugural 9th Art Award. (Stephen Collins with *The Gigantic Beard That Was Evil*)



The Book Festival's late night Jura Unbound events included a comics edition of Literary Death Match featuring Neil Gaiman and Dawn O'Porter, poetry from Iraq, the Bookshop Band and an evening of music from members of Fife's Fence Collective including King Creosote and James Yorkston.

42 debut novelists were included in the 2013 Book Festival programme including authors from as far afield as Australia, South Africa, Ireland and Iran. Readers and visitors to the Book Festival are invited to vote for their favourite in the First Book Award, sponsored by eBooks by Sainsbury's. Voting is open through the [Book Festival website](#) until the end of September



With around 225,000 visits this August Charlotte Square Gardens was busy with visitors attending events, visiting the Bookshops and cafes and relaxing in the sunshine. Ticket sales were up nearly 6% on 2012 and sales of books in the Book Festival's two bookshops also increased by 6%.

The 2014 Edinburgh International Book Festival will take place from Saturday 9 to Monday 25 August and the programme will be announced in June. Audio from events in the 2013 Book Festival are now available on [the website](#) with more to be released over the coming months

And here is our little time lapse from last week...