

# Edinburgh International Book Festival 2019: The Baillie Gifford Schools Programme

Communities come in many forms. A school; a housing development; a hospital; a village; a religious group; even an online forum – all might be communities, but equally they might not. Proximity by itself is not enough; social exchange, cohesion and mutual support are what matter – shared purpose, shared values;

*‘community brings people together in ways that allow them to do things they couldn’t have done in isolation.’*

In an increasingly anonymous world, people look for a sense of identity and belonging, and being part of a community can provide that – but how do we build communities? Declaring that we are all **‘Citizens of the World’**, this year’s Edinburgh International Book Festival (EIBF) Baillie Gifford Schools Programme sets out to investigate the answer to that question.

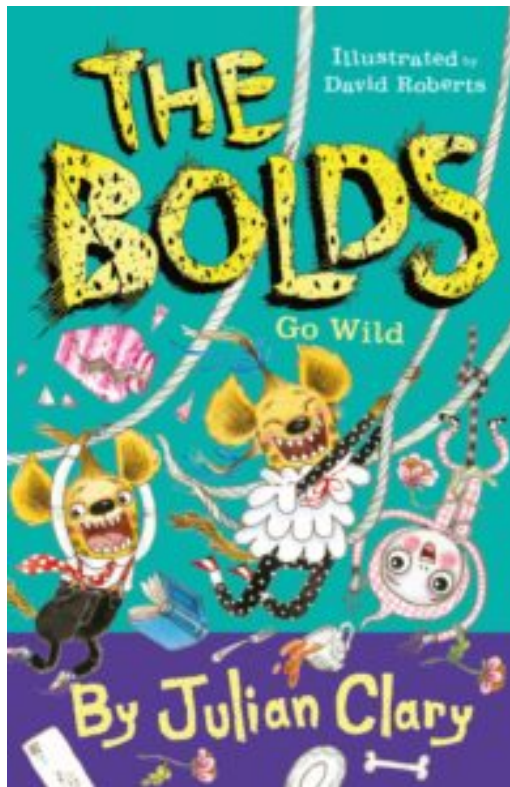


Janet Smyth

Launching the 2019 programme at The Edinburgh Academy, EIBF's Janet Smyth said;

*'Stories and books are how we orient ourselves, how we find out place in the world. They help us to build our resilience as we build into the future.'*

This year EIBF has been working around the city, seeking people's ideas of neighbourhood, community, and what it means to be an active citizen. In 'Citizen', a new arc of work, writer Claire Askew has asked students at Liberton, Craigroyston and Broughton schools what they want to see in this year's festival. As a result 19 and 20 August have been renamed '**Citizen Takeover**' and will feature a series of events encouraging pupils to think about society as a whole and their place within it.



Some events have been created by the students themselves – they will interview local author Lari Don and run workshops on making Zines (Citi-Zines...), writing poetry and finding your own voice. Citizen Takeover will also include sessions with some fabulous authors; young children can *Go Wild with Julian Clary and David Roberts*, while author and translator Thomas J Clark invites them to *get ready to gie it laldy* as he takes Jeff Kinney's famous creation, Greg Heffley, into a Scottish classroom in *Diary of a Wimpy Wean*.



Kirkland Ciccone

Older primary pupils are invited to enjoy some magic and mystery with Scarlett Thomas (*Worldquake Sequence*) or meet Shakirah Bourne (*My Fishy Stepmom*) and Lisa Thompson (*The Day I Was Erased*), two authors of very unusual novels. High school students can hear Kirkland Ciccone (*Glowglass, Shopping for Blood*) on growing up in Cumbernauld, and Jason Reynolds on how rap music saved him from a life of gangs and gun violence and led him to poetry. Now he's a NY Times bestselling writer.

The programme continues throughout the festival with all manner of events, some addressing the big issues for today's young people, and some just offering good old escapism and fun.

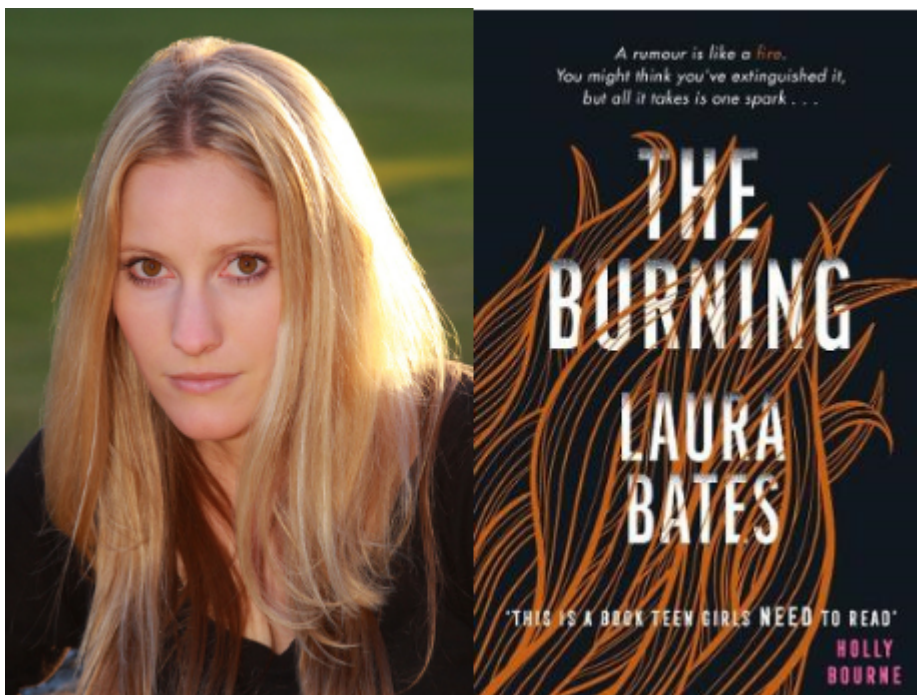




Steve Cole

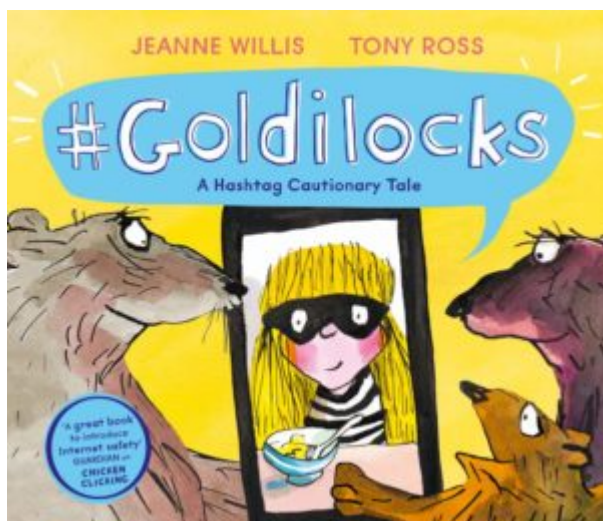
In the fun category, there's Macastory, who will take P1-3s on an interactive voyage of storytelling around the globe.

*Astrosaurs* author Steve Cole will offer *Madcap Storytelling*, and in *Show and Tell* Rob Biddulph, will share some of the fantastic drawings from his new picture book. James Nicol will talk about the inspirations for his witchy *Apprentice Witch* creation Arianwyn Gribble, and artist Edward Ross will run a *Comic Book Draw-Along*. We all tend to remember famous opening lines, but what about the last lines of books? On 23 August, composer Gareth Williams invites P6 & P7 pupils to bring along their favourites – and right there on the spot he'll compose a unique song to match the words.



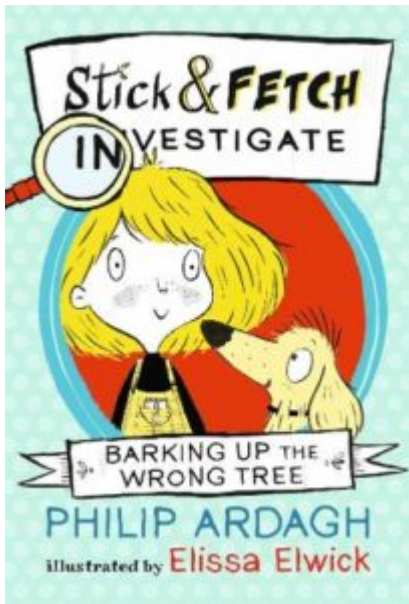
(Image: Scottish Book Trust)

Claire Askew's work with high school pupils has confirmed just how concerned young people are about everything from world politics to bullying, mental health, LGBTQ rights, feminism, freedom of speech and climate change. Founder of the Everyday Sexism Project, Laura Bates, has written a debut novel, *The Burning*, telling the interwoven stories of two girls suffering at the hands of others, their lives separated by hundreds of years. Author, musician and part-time football supremo Doug Johnstone's new thriller *Breaking Point* is about a boy from one of the city's poorest areas who's bullied into burglary, and what happens when a crime escalates out of control. And in *Finding Your Place*, Kwame Alexander discusses his coming-of-age hip-hop influenced verse-novels about sports, family and staying true to yourself.



Online safety, cyberbullying and radicalisation are huge concerns for many parents. In *Virtual Realities* Muhammad Khan (*Kick the Moon*) and Tom Pollock (*Heartstream*) look at the world of internet-based relationships and the shifting borders between our analogue reality and digital existence. For younger readers *#OnlineSafety* introduces Tony Ross and Jeanne Willis's new book *#Goldilocks*, an hilarious (but also cautionary) tale of the fairy tale heroine reimagined as a vlogging superstar. Stealing porridge *#pipinghot*, breaking chairs *#fun*, and using someone else's bed *#sleep*: how's that

going to go down with Daddy Bear when he sees it online?



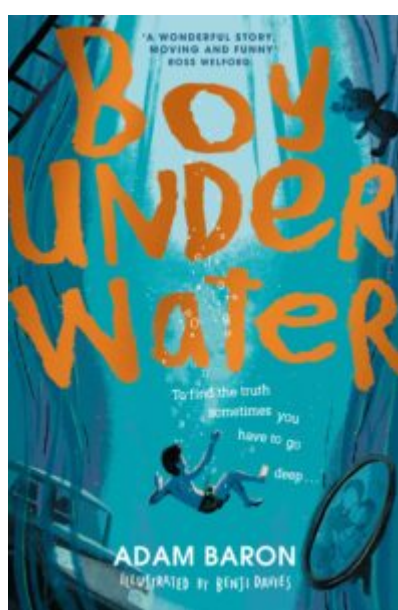
On 26 August there will be a special event for pupils with severe learning disabilities. *Mystery Solving with Philip Ardagh and Elissa Elwick*, based on the *Stick and Fetch Investigate* series, is a gentle interactive session featuring lots of sensory elements. Later that day Mel Darbon will talk about *Rosie Loves Jack*, her debut novel showing us the world through the eyes of a feisty heroine with a disability.



Tongue Fu (Image: [www.tonguefu.co.uk](http://www.tonguefu.co.uk))

Not every child just picks up a book and starts reading; sometimes a different approach is needed to show reluctant readers what they might be missing. Enter Tongue Fu, a spoken

word and music show that's part gig, part experiment. Poets, comedians, storytellers and rappers are invited to improvise with quick-witted genre-hopping musicians – they've won acclaim at Glastonbury, the Albert Hall and indeed across the world, and they'll be at EIBF on 21 August. For younger children Sue Hendra and Paul Linnet's *Spud-Tacular!* is a brand new 'all-singing, all-prancing' show, while Karine Polwart and Kate Leiper will bring their beautiful collaboration, *A Wee Bird Was Watching*, to life in an hour of live drawing and music.



EIBF authors don't only want to talk about their own stuff – they also want to encourage young people to try writing for themselves. Justin Davies (*Help! I Smell a Monster*) will talk about how he came up with his monstrous cast and why he thinks writing funny stories can help change the world, Imam Baksh (*The Dark of the Sea*) discusses sensory descriptions and how to target your readers' fears, and spoken word artist, poet and author Steven Camden (*Nobody Real, Tape, It's About Love*) explains how he comes up with his characters and settings. Matt Wesolowski (*Six Stories, Hydra, Changeling*) will be running a special workshop on crime writing for S4-S6 students, and Adam Baron will share the inspiration for his *Boy Underwater* novel (whose hero rejoices in the wonderful name of Cymbeline Igloo) and the different elements that go



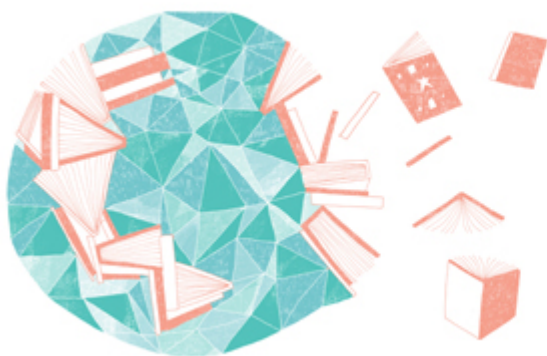
into making a good story.

Teachers aren't left out either, with eight professional learning events, from creative writing sessions to tips on using picture books in the classroom, a debate on modern masculinity, and ideas to help them spark pupils' interest in environmental issues and science books.

Tuesday 27 August will be **Baillie Gifford Gala Day**; Charlotte Square will be given over exclusively to primary schools, with author events, free entertainment, experiments with mad scientists, face paints, willow weaving, dressing up, and astronauts and asteroids galore. Children can even meet Bob and Cat, two intergalactic alpacas.

The Schools Programme brochure offers ideas on how each event can be followed up back in the classroom, and there are many more resources for schools and libraries on EIBF 's special website: <https://learning.edbookfest.co.uk/>. Booking is open now, and schools can also pre-order books at a discount of 25%.

**Edinburgh International Book Festival: 10-26 August 2019.** The programme for the main festival will be launched on 6 June, with booking opening on 25 June. For more information and to request a brochure visit <https://www.edbookfest.co.uk/>.



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International  
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