

Edinburgh International Book Festival 2022 – All Together Now

This year's book festival calls people to Edinburgh with the rallying call, All Together Now, ticking so many boxes in the first proper literary fest since the pandemic, asking people to convene in person to enjoy the many aspects of books and reading.

This is the festival which leaned heavily, and most successfully, on 'by appointment' broadcast events during the pandemic, many of which can still be viewed on the Book Festival website. But moving from Charlotte Square the festival then took up residence at Edinburgh College of Art with a smattering of in person events for limited numbers last year. In 2022 the festival team are finally all based in Edinburgh and raring to go.

The Book Festival will not return to its former home Charlotte Square, mainly due to a commitment to reducing its carbon footprint. Instead from 2024 the festival will move to the new space at the Edinburgh Futures Institute currently under construction. This is the £100 million reincarnation of the old Royal Infirmary designed by architects, Bennetts Associates, which will have a cavernous underground space for indoor events, and "the football pitch" above ground. It is

there that there will be power outlets meaning that the festival no longer needs to rely on noisy diesel generators as it did previously.

The programme is all-encompassing with children's stories in the first half hour of each morning in the Storytime Yurt and everyone from Brian Cox, CBE, who is being released from filming Season Four of Succession, to The Gruffalo and Stick Man author, Julia Donaldson, food activist Jack Monroe and literally hundreds of others in between. Some, such as Noam Chomsky, will join virtually from New York where he lives, and we hope that others such as Martha Wainwright who is meeting Karine Polwart might just include a little bit of music during the hour long event which takes place on the opening night.

Nick Barley, Director of the Edinburgh International Book Festival, said: "We've learned a great deal in the last two years, so that alongside the return of our full-scale in-person festival we can also offer the accessibility and international reach of live-streamed events. The world has changed immeasurably since 2019: we're learning to live with the effects of the pandemic and war in Europe – but we're also beginning to imagine what a better future should look like. Exploring these issues in inspiring conversations with scientists, historians, poets and novelists is exactly where the Book Festival comes into its own. I'm thrilled that thanks to Baillie Gifford, every young person coming to a Schools event gets a free ticket and a free book this year. With all online events and a selection of our in-person theatre tickets also available on a Pay What You Can basis, we're doing everything we can to make the festival accessible to everyone."



Book Festival Director Nick Barley. at Edinburgh International Book Festival Launch, Edinburgh College of Art, 8th June 2022
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All Together Now is the rallying call from the Edinburgh International Book Festival which returns 13 – 30 August 2022. Launching the programme at the Festival Village site at Edinburgh College of Art are festival fan Oona Dooks (daughter of Citizen programme Writer in Residence Eleanor Thom), family favourite The Gruffalo (created by famous children's author Julia Donaldson) spoken word artist Bemz who appears as part of The Business of Books programme, and Book Festival Director Nick Barley at Edinburgh College of Art, 8th June 2022 © 2022 J.L. Preece

There will be appearances by Nobel Peace Prize winner, Maria Ressa, and the winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, Abdulrazak Gurney, who will talk about his novel Afterlives,

and no fewer than six Booker Prize winners including one of the most recent successful authors, Scotland's own Douglas Stuart.

Maggie Farrell will launch her new book during the festival. The next book after her supremely successful *Hamnet*, *The Marriage Portrait*, is a portrayal of the battle for survival by a captivating young duchess in 16th century Florence. Stockbridge local Val McDermid will follow last year's bestseller *1979 with 1989*, the latest in the series chronicling modern Scotland. Irvine Welsh will discuss for the first time his new crime novel, *The Long Knives*.

The creator of *The Thick of It*, Glaswegian writer, producer and performer, Armando Iannucci, will appear at Central Hall on 19 August along with Jenny Niven talking about *Pandemonium*, an epic poem written in mock-heroic style with all his usual wit and anger. One of the main characters is Queen Dido and she does battle with a "wet and withered bat" from Wuhan. Expect some laughs.

With war continuing in Ukraine there is a session on 16 August with Allan Little who will speak with Ukrainian historian, Serhii Plokhyy, who is Professor of Ukrainian History at Harvard about Ukraine and its position at the Crossroads of Europe and Russia. Little is the BBC's former Moscow correspondent.

In a nod to the real world and problems which have to be addressed by everyone such as the cost of living crisis, Jack Monroe will speak about her activism around food, creating austerity recipes to help people bringing up families on a strict budget. Monroe has written for many publications, published many books and writes a blog entitled *Cooking on a Bootstrap*.

School pupils will be invited back to the festival with Bailie Gifford sponsoring free tickets for all and a free book for

every child or young person attending an event. There is also a bus fund available for schools to make applications for help with travel. This approach is all about making it as easy as possible for people to join in person or virtually.

This is but a very small selection of the 600 events featuring 550 authors, performers, musicians and thinkers who come from 50 countries. The programme is now online, and booking opens on 23 June 2022 at 10am for Friends of the Book Festival. Friends will be restricted in how many tickets they can buy, ensuring that there will be some left for everyone else. But this is the hot ticket event of the summer, and anyone who wants to book would be well-advised to book early.

Based at the Book Festival Village at the Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) Hub on Lauriston Place the largest events for audiences of around 750 will take place at Central Hall and many of these will be live streamed or available to watch later on demand. Other venues at ECA range from The Wee Red Bar to the 400 seater Sculpture Hall.

The 2022 festival will continue its hybrid format with all online events available for free, but incorporating a Pay What You Want element to try and ensure the sustainability of the Book Festival for the future.

This format also allows continued accessibility for those who are unable to come to Edinburgh for any reason and, according to Director, Nick Barley, was greatly welcomed last year when the hybrid model was first trialled.

Edinburgh International Book Festival 2022 – 13 – 29 August 2022 at Edinburgh College of Art.

<https://www.edbookfest.co.uk>



Festival fan Oona Dooks with the Gruffalo at the Edinburgh International Book Festival Launch, Edinburgh College of Art, 8th June 2022

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