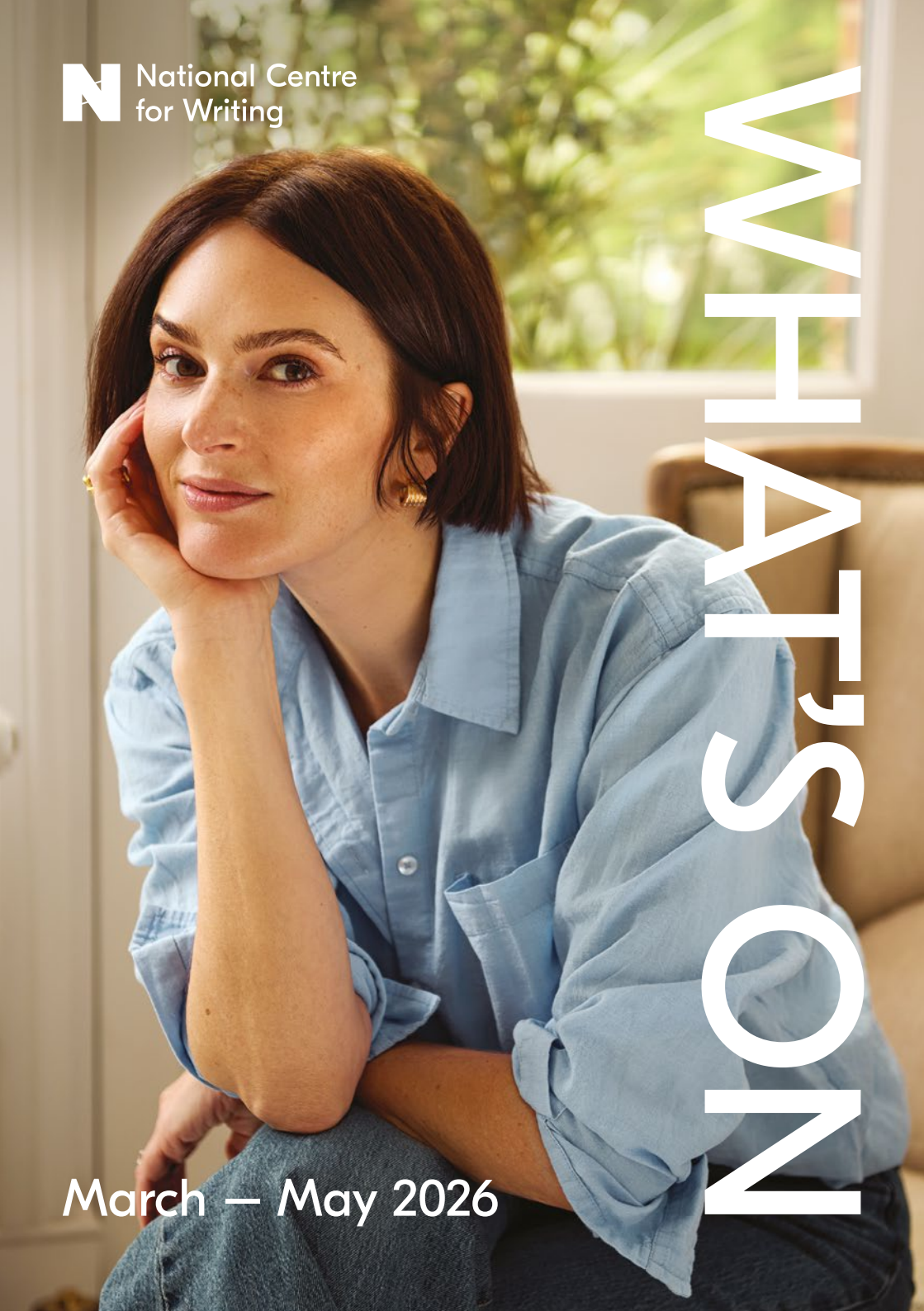


WHAT'S ON

March — May 2026



Miroslav Holub's poem 'The Door' is a favourite of mine. In it, he writes:

'Go and open the door.
Maybe outside there's
a tree, or a wood,
a garden,
or a magic city.'

After months of cold and darkness, spring beckons. We invite you to open your front door and step over the threshold of ours, joining us for our spring programme at the National Centre for Writing.

Inside, you'll discover a treasure trove of events at our Literature House: Daniel Hahn lifting the lid on translating Shakespeare (p.5); Elizabeth Day exploring politics and privilege in her bestselling novel *One of Us* (p.3); and activity days marking the annual reopening of Dragon Hall, with family fun and Easter surprises (p.10).

Launches? We have several. For young, talented writers, the Young Norfolk Writing Prize is now open for entries (p.11). For adults, we're delighted to launch the second volume of our online Writing Life 30-Day Challenge (p24).

You're also invited to embark on a National Year of Reading with us and partners across the country. Highlights include our City of Literature weekend at Norfolk & Norwich Festival (p.18), exploring how reading and writing can help us navigate the complexities of the world today, in the company of Rachel Clarke, Jarred McGinnis, Ali Smith, Ece Temelkuran and more.

If you're further afield, our website offers a universe of events, articles, podcasts and possibilities – so don't be a stranger.

Reading and writing: a magic city. Be with us there!

Warmest wishes,



Peggy Hughes
CEO, National Centre for Writing

What's on

One of Us: Elizabeth Day

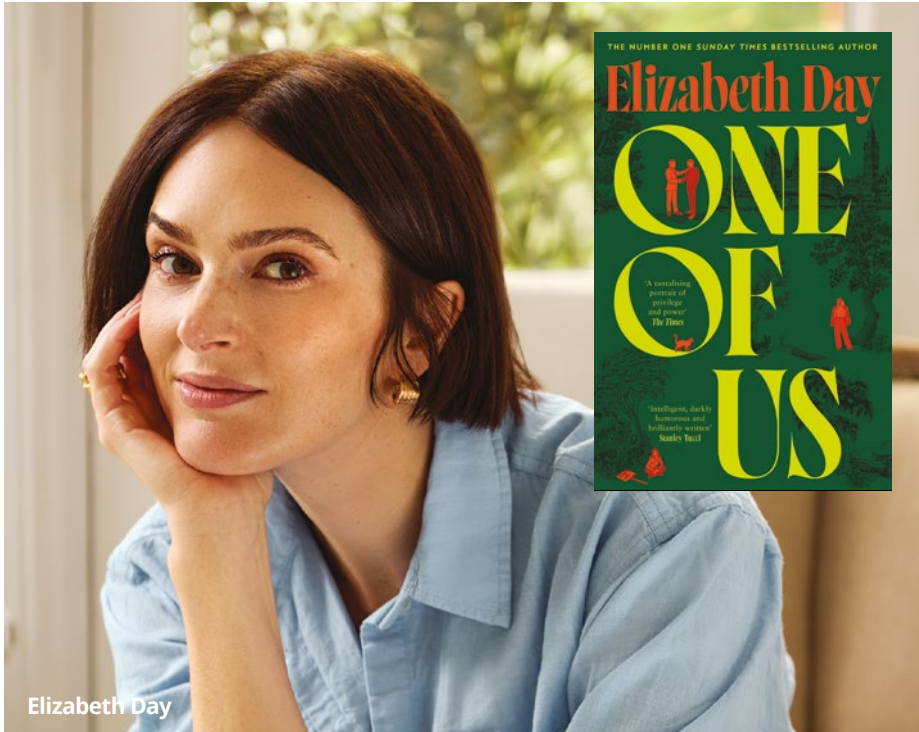
**TUE 16 JUNE, NORWICH
PLAYHOUSE, 6.30PM, £15**

We are delighted to welcome Elizabeth Day, Sunday Times bestselling author and one of today's most influential podcasters, to Norwich Playhouse to discuss her suspenseful and compulsive new novel, *One of Us*.

A thrilling story of betrayal, old bonds, and buried scandals, the novel follows a British establishment family coming face to face with the consequences of privilege and the true cost of power. Described by Stanley

Tucci as 'intelligent, darkly humorous and brilliantly written,' *One of Us* is a razor-sharp dissection of class and power in contemporary society.

Elizabeth is the author of five novels and four works of non-fiction, including the bestselling novel *Magpie* and the hit memoir *How to Fail*. She is also the creator and host of the chart-topping podcast *How to Fail with Elizabeth Day*.



© JACQUETTA CLARK

Elizabeth Day

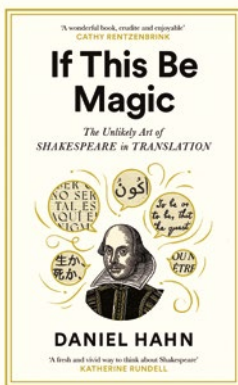


The Stepmother

Dragon Hall Social

WED 4 MARCH, WED 8 APRIL, WED 6 MAY & WED 10 JUNE, DOORS 5.30PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, FREE & DROP-IN

Open to anyone who makes, reads or works with words, our monthly drop-in social is an opportunity to grab a drink, meet people, cook up plans and compare notes, to talk books, and to hear what's happening in Norwich.



The Stepmother

THU 19 MARCH, 6.30PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, PAY WHAT YOU WISH

Through a dynamic suite of narrative poems performed live on stage, Rachel McCrum and Amélie Prévost examine the challenges, responsibilities, stakes and freedoms of an often misunderstood familial role. Part of a national tour that includes Manchester Poetry Festival and StAnza.

Supported by Canada Council for the Arts and the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec

Meet the Future of Literary Translation

TUE 31 MARCH, 4PM BST, ONLINE, FREE

Explore the outstanding work of our talented Emerging Translators, graduates of the 2026 mentorship programme. Their translations break new ground, spotlighting languages and literatures that are often underrepresented in English.

If This Be Magic: Shakespeare in Translation with Daniel Hahn

THU 16 APRIL, 6.30PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, PAY WHAT YOU WISH

In this illuminating event inspired by his new book, award-winning translator and lifelong Shakespeare enthusiast Daniel Hahn invites us to rethink not only Shakespeare, but language itself. He will be joined by guest readers for live performances of Shakespeare in translation, showcasing the plays and poems as they resonate across cultures and tongues.

In partnership with the British Centre for Literary Translation

A Family Affair: Yvette Edwards & Ashley Hickson-Lovence

THU 30 APRIL, 6.30PM, PAY WHAT YOU WISH

Family trees are a kaleidoscope of personalities and perspectives, of dreams and disappointments, hope and heartbreak. In this warm, open conversation, novelists Yvette Edwards and Ashley Hickson-Lovence come together to share insights into the beating heart of their latest novels.



Ashley Hickson-Lovence



Julian's Sensory World: Embodied Knowledge in Medieval Norwich

SAT 9 MAY, 1PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, FREE

Delivered by Margit Thøfner, a senior lecturer in art history, this year's Festival of Julian lecture explores the sensory details of Julian of Norwich's world through works of art and music from medieval Norwich and beyond.

Part of the Festival of Julian 2026. In partnership with the Friends of Julian

Like Mother, Like Daughter: Fran Fabriczki & Charlotte Mendelson

WED 13 MAY, 6.30PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, PAY WHAT YOU WISH

Multi award-winning writer and editor Charlotte Mendelson and vibrant literary newcomer Fran Fabriczki embark on an open and honest discussion about the joys and challenges of depicting messy mother-daughter dynamics in their fiction.



NORWICH FOOD WEEK

27 February – 8 March 2026

A city-wide celebration of Norwich's vibrant culinary culture featuring exclusive offers and one-off events.

Joining Norwich Wine Week (June) and Norwich Cocktail Week (September) to showcase the very best of Norwich food and drink.

Brought to you by



Norwich
Business
Improvement
District

Find out more at
norwichfoodweek.co.uk



Meet the World

Meet the World is the home of NCW's work on the international stage. Rooted in Norwich UNESCO City of Literature but with a global reach, we are proud to collaborate with writers, translators, and organisations from all languages and cultures.

The Global Page

Online events celebrating the art of writing in all its forms, connecting brilliant minds across styles, languages, and cultures.

Writing the Family

TUE 3 MARCH, 7PM GMT, ONLINE, FREE

For UK-based novelist Iqbal Hussain and Singapore author Melanie Lee, family lies at the heart of their Middle Grade and Young Adult fiction. Join them as they explore how families are portrayed across different cultures, the ways family shapes identity, and the craft of creating nuanced, authentic characters for younger readers.



Esther Vincent Xueming

Words That Remember: Tamil, Diaspora & Cultural Memory

TUE 17 MARCH, 7PM GMT, ONLINE, FREE

Tamil is one of the world's oldest living languages, spoken by millions of people across South and Southeast Asia. Sri Lankan poet Niroshini Somasundaram and Singaporean writer Inbha discuss how Tamil, family history, and life across borders shape their writing. Their conversation explores memory, belonging, and what it means to write as Tamil women today.

Poetry, Planet & Presence

TUE 31 MARCH, 7PM BST, ONLINE, FREE

Within the cycles of nature — life and death, grief and joy — what is the role of the writer? Join poets Jemma Borg and Esther Vincent Xueming for an intimate conversation on how themes of grief, nature, and evolution run through their work.

The Global Page is supported by the National Arts Council of Singapore and the Hawthornden Foundation



Ecce Karadag

Meet our residents

Meet our artists-in-residence at the National Centre for Writing, staying with us between March and May 2026.

Megan Bradbury is a British writer, tutor, and mentor, and author of the critically acclaimed novel, *Everyone is Watching*. An Escalator Early Career Residency.

Rachel McCrum is a Northern Irish poet and performer based in Montréal, whose work spans page, stage, and sound. She recently completed a bilingual stagetext with Amélie Prévost, called *La belle-mère* (*The Stepmother*).

Jane Menczer is the author of *An Unlikely Agent* (2017), written with the support of an Escalator New Writing Fellowship and a Grant for the Arts. She is working on a new novel during her Escalator Early Career Residency.

Amélie Prévost is an actress, poet and spoken word artist. She collaborated with Rachel McCrum to write and perform the bilingual stagetext *La belle-mère* (*The Stepmother*).

Dieter Rogiers is a Brussels-based Belgian author and film critic whose debut novel *Bot Mes* (*Dull Blade*) won the Fred Braeckman Award for Best Flemish Thriller Debut 2023. His next book is expected in 2026.

Alexandra Scarlett is a Brighton-based fiction writer. She will be working on her novel *Vanilla* during her Escalator Early Career Residency.

Emily Slade is a singer-songwriter and guitarist living in Cambridge. She is working on her first young adult novel, *Don't Tell*, during her Escalator Early Career Residency.

Anaïs Van Ertvelde is a Belgian writer and historian, working across books, essays, columns, and podcasts. She is currently writing her first novel.

Virtual residencies

Ecce Karadag is a Japanese-English literary translator and publishing professional based in London. She is currently working on multiple book-length literary translations.

Elete Nelson-Fearon is a translator, editor and educator working between Arabic, Spanish and English.

Yaqi Xi is a literary translator and postgraduate researcher based in Coventry. She is currently working on translations of Ban Yu's fiction.

With thanks to Fenton Arts Trust, Francis W Reckitt Arts Trust, Hawthornden Foundation and Passa Porta for support of our residencies

Norwich in Layers

Choo Yi Feng

What if these stones could speak? Singapore-based writer Choo Yi Feng explores the medieval past of Norwich during his writing residency in October 2025. His stay was supported by the National Arts Council of Singapore.

I often think of time as an accretive force. Trees deposit rings of new bark every growing season. Corals precipitate skeletons of calcium carbonate over thousands of years. Polar ice and sedimentary rock accumulate in strata. These are the shadows cast by deep time, by a *then* that stretches out long before recorded history—an archive and an awakening of our collective consciousness.



© ADOBE STOCK

The medieval past of Norwich is layered. In the dark of night, the dizzying steeple of the ancient cathedral glimmers in the Norwich skyline like a north star, a compass for the wanderers of its darkened streets. Churches yawning with histories rise from every corner—my personal favourites being the church of St Julian and St Peter Mancroft. These imposing presences are witnesses to the cathedral city's twenty-first century residents and their more modern furnishings. What if these stones could speak?

As an imaginative exercise, I took a fistful of city that I was wandering through one morning and tried to push it through the recesses of the past. What changed? What has remained? What were the roads of sleek bitumen, before they were paved for automatons of rubber and steel, and what sounds once echoed off these walls of flint and stone?

And as an environmental activist, it's also become an occupational hazard, of sorts, to think on the future as much as the past, of what people will think when they look back at us, when we become consigned to that inexorable *then*.

To live in space is also to live in time; these are not concepts that can be disentangled from one another.



Scan the QR code to continue reading.



Family Activity Days at Dragon Hall

Young people and families

Tiny Dragons: Early-Years Explorer Sessions

TUE 24 MARCH, TUE 21 APRIL, TUE 19 MAY & TUE 23 JUNE, 10–11AM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, FREE

A wonderful opportunity for young explorers to discover Dragon Hall through crafts, storytelling, and singing with guest creative facilitators. These monthly early-years sessions are designed for walking children up to four years old.

Family Activity Days

MON 30 MARCH, TUE 31 MARCH, SUN 5 APRIL, MON 6 APRIL, TUE 7 APRIL, MON 25 MAY & TUE 26 MAY, 10AM–3PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, FREE & DROP-IN

Step into Dragon Hall and discover 600 years of fascinating stories! Relax in the

book nook, borrow an activity bag, or join creative activities led by special guest artists. Bring your lunch and unwind in our garden — Dragon Hall is a place for everyone to enjoy!

Once Upon a What?! A Real Myth Mixup with Jade Causton

TUE 31 MARCH, 10AM–12PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, PAY WHAT YOU WISH

Monsters on roller skates? A ballet dancing Dragon? Medusa running a hair salon? Let's turn famous myths, legends and fairytales upside down with silly scenarios and unexpected sidekicks, creating tales that will make dragons snort out fireballs of laughter! Suitable for ages 8–10 years.

Dragon Egg Trail at Dragon Hall

SUN 5 APRIL, MON 6 APRIL & TUE 7 APRIL, 10AM-3PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, FREE & DROP-IN

Embark on an Easter egg trail with a twist! Our mischievous dragon has hidden eggs throughout the building — can you help us find them? Enjoy a day of storytelling, crafts, and games for all ages.

The Secret History of Dragon Hall with Rym Kechacha

TUE 7 APRIL, 10AM-12PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, PAY WHAT YOU WISH

Dragon Hall’s 600-year history is full of mysteries. What stories might be hiding in its ‘lost years’? Meet new friends and use the power of your imagination to create a piece of writing inspired by the building and your own experiences of your home city. Suitable for ages 11–13 years.

Story Tiles with Lucy Wheeler

WED 27 MAY, 10AM-12PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, PAY WHAT YOU WISH

Join Lucy Wheeler on a drawing and writing tour of Dragon Hall – complete with gargoyles, dragons and witches marks – before designing and making your own story tile out of clay! Suitable for ages 8–10 years.

Activities for young people and families are kindly supported by Card Factory Foundation, Educational Foundation of Alderman John Norman, Paul Bassham Charitable Trust and National Lottery Heritage Fund



Young Norfolk Writing Prize

The Young Norfolk Writing Prize, the popular annual competition celebrating creative writing in all its forms, returns this month. This exciting opportunity is available to 10–18-year-olds living or studying in Norfolk. Don’t miss your chance to showcase your talent and creativity!

Send us your stories, lyrics, game narratives, graphic stories, poems, spoken word, scripts, podcasts, plays, articles, journalism, or essays, and you could win a range of exciting prizes — from vouchers to unique creative experiences!

This year’s special UNESCO City of Literature Award category honours the National Year of Reading 2026. Entrants are invited to write a creative response to the theme of ‘reading’ in any way they wish.

Submissions will open on Monday 16 February and close at 5pm on Monday 4 May.

For more information, visit nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/ynwp.

Supported by Arts Council England and Norfolk County Council

Step into Dragon Hall this spring

Dragon Hall is one of Norwich's most important medieval buildings, home to the National Centre for Writing and Norwich UNESCO City of Literature.

Our unique city-centre venue reopens on Monday 30 March, with weekly visitor drop-in hours running Sunday and Monday, 10am–3pm. Pick up a trail map, explore the historic Great Hall, get creative in our arts-and-crafts activity space, or enjoy nature in our enclosed garden.

Entrance is free – no booking required.

National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall, 115–123 King St,
Norwich, Norfolk NR1 1QE
01603 877177
nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/visit



Dragon Hall

**FREE &
DROP-IN**

Discover the story of medieval Norwich

Dragon Hall is at the heart of Norwich's medieval history; a rare example of a merchant's trading complex with a hidden story which dates back to the Anglo-Saxon period. Pick up a map from our entrance or download our audio tour to begin your journey.

Become a Dragon Hall Explorer!

Meet Dragon, our resident fire-breathing friend, who has made the Great Hall his Dragon's Lair. Embark on our trail and complete creative activities as you explore the building to earn your explorer stamp!

Find inspiration and get creative

There's plenty of inspiration to be found in our unique building, which welcomes writers and artists from all walks of life every day. Get involved with a workshop or activity session, make friends, and share your story — designed for adults and kids alike!

Relax and unwind

Join us for nature trails in the garden, poem writing, or light reading in the Gallery and Great Hall. The garden is also a perfect spot to bring your lunch, relax with a friend, and enjoy the spring sunshine.

Drop-in and Write (ages 60+)

MON 9 MARCH, MON 13 APRIL, MON 11 MAY & MON 8 JUNE, 2-4PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, FREE & DROP-IN

Join us in a quiet, supportive space, where you can start writing or continue existing projects, alongside like-minded people.

Supported by Norfolk Community Foundation through the Connecting Older People Fund and D'Oily Carte Charitable Trust

Family Activity Days

Drop into Dragon Hall and enjoy giant games, relax with a story in the book nook, pick up an activity bag, or join creative activities with artists. Free entry! For dates, please refer to p.10.

Tiny Dragons: Early-Years Explorer Sessions

These free, monthly early-years sessions are designed for walking children up to four years old to explore our building through crafts, storytelling and singing. For dates, please refer to p.10.

Guided Heritage Tours

MON 16 MARCH, MON 20 APRIL, MON 18 MAY & MON 15 JUNE, 2PM, £5 SUGGESTED DONATION

Take a guided tour of Dragon Hall and learn more about its architectural and social history from an experienced volunteer guide. Please book in advance as spaces are limited.

Norwich
Castle

EAST
ANGLIA
ART
FUND

Artists based
in East Anglia
explore experiences
of closeness.

In Proximity

NORWICH CASTLE OPEN ART SHOW

14 FEBRUARY – 14 JUNE 2026

Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery, Norwich, NR1 3JU



Supported using public funding by
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ENGLAND**



Funded by
UK Government



NORWICH
City Council

Norfolk
Museums
Pass[®]



One pass. Ten museums.
Unlimited discovery.

museums.norfolk.gov.uk/pass

Access all eras



Support for writers

How to connect, get involved, and access support for your creative projects this this spring.

Opportunities

City of Literature residencies & retreats

NCW hosts a year-round residency and retreat programme for UK and international writers and translators; a mix of in-person opportunities and virtual residencies. We collaborate with a variety of partners and funders to support our residencies, while also promoting international residencies from sister Cities of Literature around the world.

For the latest opportunities, visit nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/residencies.

Dragon Hall Retreats

A retreat at the Dragon Hall Cottage in the centre of Norwich is an investment in your writing and an opportunity to get away from everyday life. We welcome applications for 2026 for single or joint retreats from anyone interested in creative writing or literary translation.

To find out more, visit nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/dragon-hall-retreats.

NCW at London Book Fair 2026

TUE 10–THU 12 MARCH, OLYMPIA LONDON

Heading to London Book Fair? Join us at the Literary Translation Centre for a series of events programmed by NCW and partners in translation!

Visit londonbookfair.co.uk.

Resources & advice

Writing Hub

Our free online collection explores the craft of writing, creative ideas, and showcases new work. Whether you're looking for in-depth articles on writing techniques, podcast interviews with emerging and established authors, reading recommendations, or insights into the future of writing, our digital library offers a wealth of content to read, listen to, and watch.

Explore now at nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/writing-hub.

The Writers' Room at Dragon Hall

Your place to write in Norwich! The Writers' Room offers free, bookable desk space on Thursdays and Fridays each week, providing a retreat in the city for use by writers, artists and creatives. Facilities include free WiFi and access to the garden. Please book your desk in advance.

To book your spot, visit nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/writers-room.

Support reading & writing for young minds

Norwich is England's first UNESCO City of Literature, renowned for its rich storytelling heritage and vibrant community of writers and creatives. Yet, despite this cultural legacy, the city faces some of the UK's poorest educational and literacy outcomes.

In 2026, the National Year of Reading, join the National Centre for Writing to help deliver free creative sessions for **more than 4,000 children and young people**. Working with **80+ schools** across Norfolk and **40+ writers**, we will inspire a new generation of readers and storytellers.

Together, we can give children and young people the lifelong benefits of reading and writing for pleasure — building confidence, nurturing self-expression, and developing empathy.

Scan to donate today:



Visit nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/spring-campaign-26.



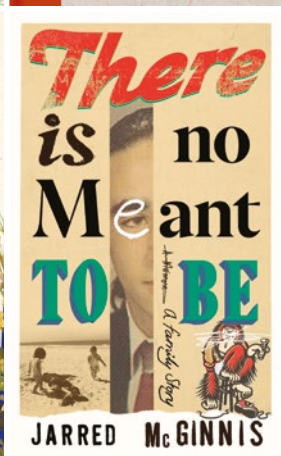
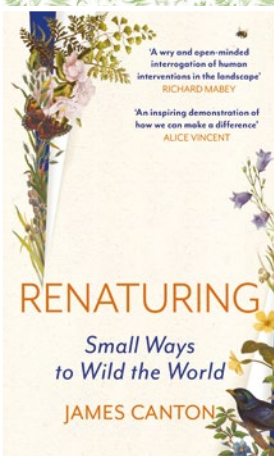
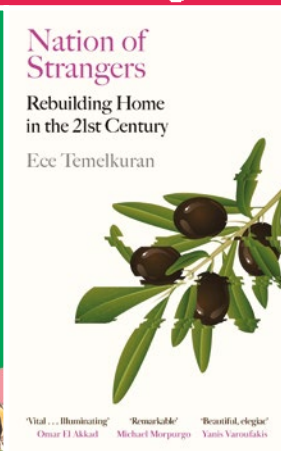
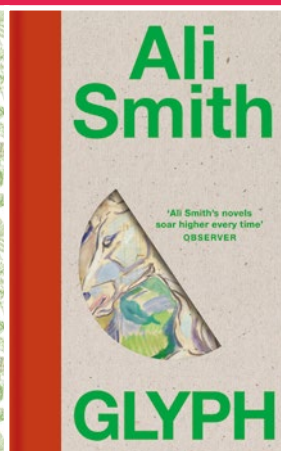
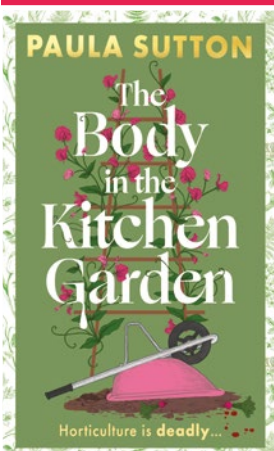
Registered Charity 1110725

Young readers enjoy events at the City of Literature weekend



City of Literature Weekend 2026

Friday 22 — Sunday 24 May



Set Sail! with Rob Starling**FRI 22 MAY, 10.30AM, THE SPIEGELTENT, £5 PER CHILD**

Join author and illustrator Rob Starling for a morning of drawing and storytelling. Meet some of Rob's characters, including Fergal the Dragon, and bring your own colourful ideas to life through drawing. We'll finish with a reading of Rob's newest book, *This is the Girl*. Suitable for families with children up to seven years old.

The Body in the Kitchen Garden: Vintage Cream Tea with Paula Sutton**FRI 22 MAY, 2PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £20**

Join interior stylist, author, columnist, and TV personality Paula Sutton for an in-conversation event over cream tea in the atmospheric grounds of Dragon Hall. She will discuss the second book in her cosy crime series, where tea is poured, secrets simmer, and murder is blooming once again...

From the Floorboards: Georgia Shackleton**FRI 22 MAY, 6PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £10**

Marking 125 years since Sir Ernest Shackleton first sailed to Antarctica aboard *Discovery* with Captain Scott, Georgia Shackleton presents a journey through history, music, and the sea — blending song, moving image, and conversation to honour the past while responding to the threat facing today's oceans.

The Given World: The Rural Uncanny with Melissa Harrison**SAT 23 MAY, 10AM, THE SPIEGELTENT, £10**

Hear award-winning nature writer and novelist Melissa Harrison discuss *The Given*

World, a 'dark pastoral' exploring the deep and fragile connection between humanity and the natural world. The inhabitants of an English country village are beset by an uneasy shift in the seasons, illuminating the natural, personal and national transitions of our time.

The Harriet Martineau Lecture: Rachel Clarke**SAT 23 MAY, 12PM, THE SPIEGELTENT, £12**

This year's Harriet Martineau Lecture will be delivered by writer and NHS palliative care doctor Rachel Clarke. Rachel is the award-winning author of four Sunday Times bestselling books, including *The Story of a Heart*, *Dear Life* and *Breathtaking*.

Supported by The Martineau Society



Paula Sutton



Ece Temelkuran

Page Against the Machine

**SAT 23 MAY, 2.30PM, THE CLOISTERS,
NORWICH CATHEDRAL, FREE**

Our shared reading event returns! Pick a book, bring a cool drink and turn off your phone for a well-deserved detox read in the beautiful surroundings of Norwich Cathedral cloisters. Simultaneous events will be taking place across Norwich and in UNESCO Cities of Literature across the world.

In partnership with The Book Hive

Nation of Strangers with Ece Temelkuran

**SAT 23 MAY, 3PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR
WRITING, £10**

We welcome internationally acclaimed author and political thinker Ece Temelkuran to Norwich, the City of Sanctuary, to

discuss her prescient new book, *Nation of Strangers*. Moving between the personal and the political, it reimagines exile and belonging in a world where we are all becoming 'unhomed.'

There Is No Meant to Be with Jarred McGinnis & Sarah Hall

**SAT 23 MAY, 6PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR
WRITING, £10**

In his groundbreaking memoir, Jarred McGinnis tells a family epic unlike any other. Tracing a life shaped by abuse, a near-fatal accident, and fatherhood as a disabled parent, he joins Sarah Hall for a candid conversation about masculinity, family, legacy, and love.

Glyph: Ali Smith

**SUN 24 MAY, 10.30AM, THE
SPIEGELTENT, £10**

Described as 'the Virginia Woolf of our times' (*Observer*), Ali Smith is one of our greatest living novelists. Don't miss the chance to hear her discuss *Glyph*, the second novel following *Gliff* — an anti-war work of of lightness that goes deep to counter the forces currently flattening the modern world.

City of Literature Publishing Fair

**SUN 24 MAY, 10AM-4PM, NATIONAL
CENTRE FOR WRITING, FREE & DROP IN**

Explore our region's vibrant publishing culture at our popular fair! From hardbacks to zines, meet publishers, browse and purchase their work, and enjoy lightning talks throughout the day. The perfect Sunday event for writers, readers, editors, and creators of all kinds.

Workshops at the City of Literature Weekend 2026

Wild The World: Nature Writing with James Canton

FRI 22 MAY, 10.30AM–12.30PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £40 (£30 CONC)

Step beyond your doorstep and into the beauty of the natural world around you. James Canton, author of *Renaturing: Small Ways to Wild the World*, invites you to explore the core techniques of nature writing through conversation, writing, and reflection.

Writing the Family with Yvette Edwards

FRI 22 MAY, 2–4PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £40 (£30 CONC)

Explore how to write about family with authenticity in contemporary fiction with Yvette Edwards, author of *Good Good Loving*. Through inspiring writing exercises, you'll reflect on how to create and represent the modern family in all its complexity and forms.

Borrowed Voices, Living Seas: Lyric Writing with Georgia Shackleton

SAT 23 MAY, 10.30AM–12.30PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £40 (£30 CONC)

Explore how historical texts and environmental perspectives become contemporary songs. Led by Georgia and rooted in her Shackleton Violin project, this session draws on polar expedition diaries, explorers' songs, and the living sea as inspiration for lyric writing.

Imagining The Future Through Poetry with Rishi Dastidar

SAT 23 MAY, 2–4PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £30 (£20 CONC)

New writers and experienced poets alike are invited to join Rishi Dastidar for an optimistic session of thinking, reading, and writing — exploring how poetry can shape brighter personal and shared futures.

Make Your Own Medieval Mark with Darren Leader

SUN 24 MAY, 10.30AM–12.30PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £30 (£20 CONC)

Join designer and researcher Darren Leader for a hands-on creative workshop, exploring personal stories as inspiration to design your own medieval mark. Make your own signature symbol to take home!

Shared Stories: A Workshop For Family & Friends with Jarred McGinnis

SUN 24 MAY, 2–4PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £40 PER PAIR

A unique opportunity for family members or friends to come together and share stories and memories they may have never told before. Using collaborative exercises based on shared memories, author Jarred McGinnis will help you find a way to write those funny, profound, chaotic stories that shape your lives together.

JOIN OUR WRITING COMMUNITY

nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/academy



Nicolas Padamsee

© TAMSYN MORGANS

Workshops

Try something new or sharpen your writing skills with an informal creative workshop.

Exploding Archetypes with Rachel McCrum & Amélie Prévost

WED 18 MARCH, 6.30-9PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £45 (£35 CONC)

Explore what unfolds when you flip expectations of character, narrative, and process in this collaborative writing and spoken-word workshop. Whether you work in prose or poetry, this is a rare chance to break conventions, experiment boldly, and discover new creative possibilities.

Exploring Identity in Fiction with Nicolas Padamsee

SAT 28 MARCH, 10AM-12.30PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £45 (£35 CONC)

Explore the power of identity in a thought-provoking and morally nuanced way. Through a blend of group discussions and guided writing exercises, we'll examine character, plot, setting, and style to help you bring your stories to life.



Cai Draper

Fresh Eyes: Writing with Metaphor with Margaret Meyer

SAT 11 APRIL, 10AM–1PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £45 (£35 CONC)

Learn how to identify, shape, and deepen the metaphors in your writing with Margaret Meyer, author of *The Witching Tide*. Open to prose writers of all levels, working in fiction or creative non-fiction.

Poetry Pulse with Cai Draper

SAT 25 APRIL, 11AM–12.30PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £20 (£15 CONC)

Get your creative juices flowing in this vibrant and generative workshop with Cai Draper. Through a series of exercises you'll conjure new ideas for your poetry and begin to see them take shape on the page.

Industry Insights for Novelists

SAT 18 APRIL, 10AM–4PM, ONLINE, £22 (£18 CONC)

Join us for a day of inspiration and networking designed for early-career novelists. Gain valuable insights into agents, publishing, and the writer's life through sessions led by acclaimed authors and industry professionals.

Bright Spark: New Ideas & How to Grow Them with Abi Hynes

SAT 9 MAY, 10AM–12.30PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £45 (£35 CONC)

Leave the blank page behind in this invigorating workshop designed to bring structure and clarity to your creative ideas. Discover practical tips and techniques for generating fresh material across prose, poetry, drama, and creative non-fiction.

Short Story Sprint with Naomi Wood

SAT 6 JUNE, 10–11.30AM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £20 (£15 CONC)

Understand the key ingredients for cooking up an impactful short story in this insightful and practical workshop. You'll explore shape and form and learn how a strong grasp of structure can help your stories flourish — making them polished, purposeful, and ready for submission.



Naomi Wood

The Writing Life: 30-Day Challenge

Looking for a quick creative boost or to build a consistent writing routine? Whether you're writing for the first time or breaking old habits, our 30-day online writing challenge will help you achieve your writing goals.

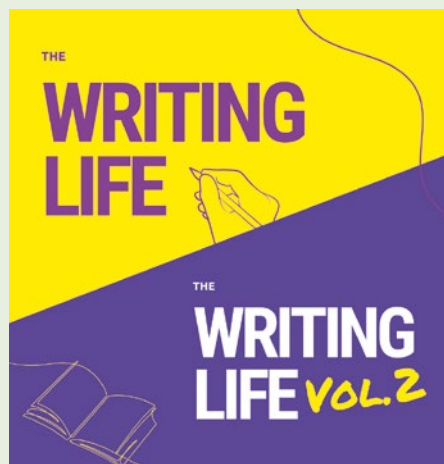
The Writing Life

WED 1 APRIL & MON 1 JUNE, £30

Spark your creativity and build a creative routine with our 30-day writing challenge! Each day, you'll receive a fresh, original prompt or exercise directly to your inbox. Just set aside 15 minutes to develop new skills, and cultivate a healthy, inspiring, and accountable writing habit.

As a bonus, our Head of Programme, Holly Ainley, will pop up throughout to offer encouragement and motivation to keep you inspired along the way.

Take part online from anywhere, at any time that suits you. Once purchased, it's yours to keep forever!



The Writing Life Vol.2

SUN 1 MARCH & FRI 1 MAY, £30

Get playful with *The Writing Life Vol. 2* and embark on a guided creative journey, from self-discovery and first explorations to deeper development, experimentation, and reflection.

Find a sense of play; journey through setting, character, and plot; write compelling scenes and beyond; and discover the power of reading and revisiting your work.

Designed as a standalone experience, it can either build on the progress you made in *The Writing Life* or serve as your first step toward developing a regular writing practice.

Book now at nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/writinglifechallenge



Online, self-paced courses

These short online courses can be completed at your own pace, and once purchased, they're yours to keep. Explore writing habits and routines, build confidence, develop character and plot, or experiment with a new genre.

The Writer's Refresh with Julia Bird

This self-paced course with Julia Bird invites you to move beyond the mechanics of craft and reimagine your writing practice as a lifestyle that is sustainable, connected, focused, and energising. Whatever form your writing takes, and whatever your level of experience, Julia will guide you in sparking new ideas, connecting with readers and collaborators, and building a fulfilling, productive writing practice.

NEW!

Craft

- How to Write Real People in Memoir
- How to Write True Crime
- New Ways with Short Form Poetry
- How to Write Unreliable Narrators
- How to Write Young Adult Fiction
- Writing Characters for Middle-Grade Fiction
- How to Create Suspense in Fiction
- Writing Science Fiction

Professional insights

- How to Make Money From Your Writing

Confidence & productivity

- How to Write More and Stay Happy
- How to be a Confident Poet
- Supercharge Your Writing

Many of our courses are free!

Online tutored courses

Join a global writing community and receive personalised feedback on your work with our flexible creative writing courses.

Designed for writers of all levels, our practical online courses feature engaging exercises, interactive Zoom sessions, curated resources, and fortnightly tutor feedback to help you refine your craft or embark on your writing journey.

Courses designed in partnership with the University of East Anglia



The Art of Noticing: Nature Writing (eight-week course)

BEGINS MON 23 MARCH, £300

Discover the art of writing about nature and the environment, mastering techniques to bring the natural world vividly to life. Learn to conduct field research and receive personalised feedback, empowering you to confidently create rich, immersive worlds in your work.



© ADOBE STOCK

How to Write a Novel (eight-week course)

BEGINS MON 23 MARCH, £300

If you've been dreaming of writing a novel, this course could be the motivation and structure you need to finally get started. Over eight weeks, you'll explore practical techniques for long-form storytelling through a rewarding mix of expert guidance, engaging writing exercises, and supportive feedback.

How to Write Fiction (12-week course)

BEGINS MON 4 MAY, £495

Master the essential tools to craft compelling fiction, from creating memorable characters and building captivating plots to discovering and honing your unique voice. This course is perfect for anyone starting out as a novelist or short story writer, offering the foundation you need to bring your stories to life.

How to Edit a Novel (eight-week course)

BEGINS MON 1 JUNE, £300

This eight-week online course is designed to help writers refine their manuscript and approach their work with fresh eyes. Through in-depth exploration of structure, perspective, and point of view, you'll learn how to transform your narrative and deepen its connection with readers.



Breeze Barrington

Writing the Past (eight-week course)

BEGINS MON 1 JUNE, £300

Learn and develop ways of writing confidently about the past. Whether you are writing fiction or non-fiction, this eight-week course will focus on helping you to develop your tools and techniques to create authentic depictions of historical worlds and lives.

Led by writer and cultural historian Breeze Barrington, this course focuses on world-building and narrative construction. You'll develop practical skills in conducting and using research, shaping an authentic narrative voice, and creating compelling settings and characters.

Whether you've already begun writing and need guidance to move forward, or you're nurturing an idea you've long wanted to develop, this course provides the essential tools to help you progress with confidence.

Finding your writing community

Writer and tutor Okechukwu Nzelu, author of *The Private Joys of Nnenna Maloney* and *Here Again Now*, shares his reflections on why finding your writing community matters.

Sometimes people compare books to children ('I've birthed my novel!' says the publication-day tweet) but most children have two parents, whereas most books have only one.

This aloneness isn't necessarily loneliness. After a day spent cramming thoughts about plot twists and dialogue into corners of the brain, it can be wonderful to set them free and watch them wander into the open, before assigning each one its place.

But after the wandering and the wondering comes the worrying.

Is this section too dialogue-heavy?



Okechukwu Nzelu

© C ALEX DOUGLAS

Do my characters resonate with people who didn't invent them?

Will anyone ever read this?

Should I just give up?

There are no panaceas for writers – like us, our problems are too complex and run too deep – but a good sense of a writing community comes close.

Its most immediate benefits might be for the editing process, where a second pair of eyes can be invaluable. Sometimes, it can be so helpful to have someone explain that the problems we thought were terminal, are only one stop along the journey.

But community is yet more complex than this, and runs deeper. Sometimes we need friends as well as critics.

The best writing communities might be online, founded and fostered through discussions about favourite books and shared literary frustrations. *Don't you just hate it when...?*

Sometimes meetup groups can be best in person, reminding us that we sometimes do exist in the real world, and we all have something difficult and special in common.

However we find writing communities, and however they find us, they are worth fostering and nurturing, giving us at least as much back as we put in.

One-to-one mentoring

Looking for advice? Need feedback on your writing?

Our expert mentors are uniquely placed to help writers of all levels, from the finer details of a specific project to the bigger picture of your life as a writer. Working one-to-one, each session is focused on how best to help you, wherever you are in your writing journey.



Kate Worsley

Single or introductory mentoring session

£95 FOR A ONE-HOUR SESSION

Try mentoring for the first time and get a taster of what the relationship can offer. Also useful if you have a particular challenge or area of advice you would like to address.

The Full Story: 12-month mentoring package for prose writers

£3,000 (PAYMENT PLANS AVAILABLE)

Guided by Megan Bradbury, you will grow a long-form prose project from its conception to its completion. Megan's teaching is process-led and uniquely tailored to each writer. You will receive feedback on up to 60,000 words of writing.

Aspire: mentoring package (three session minimum)

FROM £256.50

Sign up for a bespoke package of support and meet regularly with your mentor to refine your manuscript, work on a funding application or implement an action plan to improve your creative practice – whatever it is that will help you to achieve your writing goals.

Book three or more sessions in one transaction with the same mentor and receive a 10% discount on your total purchase.

NORWICH

CITY OF

LITERATURE

Norwich Science
Festival

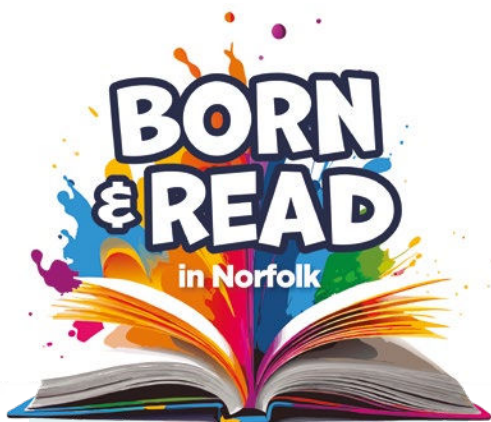
Welcome to Norwich – a UNESCO City of Literature, that dares to dream. We are a city built on stories, filled with creative minds who believe that reading, writing and their lifelong benefits should be nurtured for everyone.

In 2026, schools, workplaces, libraries, cultural organisations, and individuals across the country will celebrate the **National Year of Reading**. While statistics show that fewer of us are reading for pleasure than ever before, reading has never mattered more. It expands minds, builds confidence, and fuels creativity throughout our lives.

Led by the National Literary Trust on behalf of the Department for Education, and supported by more than 60 partners across the UK, the Year of Reading aims to reconnect reading with the things that already inspire us, from playlists and football matches to films, food and family time. It's reading that fits how we live, not the other way around.

Across our city and wider region of big skies and bold stories, we want everyone to rediscover the joy of reading, in whatever form that takes, and to take pride in our amazing community of creative thinkers, storytellers, booksellers, and publishers.

To find out more about the National Year of Reading, visit goallin.org.uk.



Inspired by the National Year of Reading 2026, National Centre for Writing is partnering with Newsquest — publisher of the *Eastern Daily Press*, *Norwich Evening News*, *Ipswich Star* and many other newspapers across Norfolk and Suffolk — to launch Born & Read, a year-long campaign to ignite a renewed passion for reading and writing across the East of England.

In the first of several features, National Centre for Writing CEO Peggy Hughes invites us to celebrate what makes reading truly magical: ‘...its unique power to open doors to anything that sparks your curiosity, no matter where your interests lie.’

Stay tuned for editorial features, community events, competitions and school initiatives, all aimed at making reading more accessible!

If you're into it, read into it

Whatever you're interested in, and however you prefer to read – books, magazines, audio or online – make this the year you go all in and rediscover the joy of reading.

Visit your local library

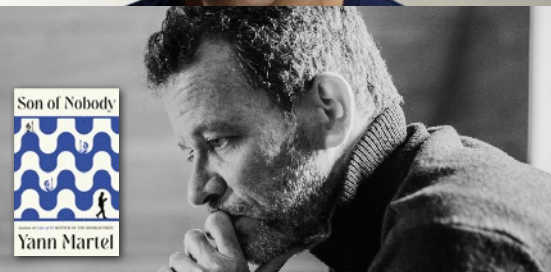
Make the most of the brilliant services on offer at your local library. Borrow a book, sign your child up for a reading club, dig into the history of your area, or simply drop in for a knit and a natter.

Create shared book spaces

Start a book swap, set up a reading corner, or create a community bookshelf in offices, receptions or waiting areas...or even in your front garden! Shared spaces spark shared stories.

Volunteer to read with others

Giving your time to help others build confidence and joy through reading is one of the most rewarding gifts you can offer. Get involved with organisations across the city, from The Norfolk Reading Project and school literacy programmes to leading baby bounce and rhyme time sessions in local libraries.



BOOK NOW

The spring series of UEA Live continues with an impressive lineup of award-winning authors

Tickets: £15 / £10 / £6

WWW.UEALIVE.COM

TASH AW

TUESDAY 10 MARCH, 6.30PM

Three-time Booker Prize nominee and UEA graduate Tash Aw joins us in March to discuss the first of a quartet of novels, *The South*.

YANN MARTEL

FRIDAY 27 MARCH, 6.30PM

The author of Booker Prize-winning *Life of Pi* comes to UEA to discuss his new novel, *Son of Nobody*.

CECILE PIN

TUESDAY 21 APRIL, 6.30PM

Following the success of her debut novel *Wandering Souls*, French writer Cecile Pin join us to talk about her new novel *Celestial Lights*.

Shop independent

Norwich's medieval streets are home to a wealth of independent bookshops, offering everything from rare and antiquarian finds to comics, children's books, cookery, travel and more. Better still, their booksellers are wonderfully knowledgeable and always ready with a recommendation.

Share a reading moment

Read together with family and friends, indoors or outdoors, or alongside like-minded strangers at special events. Page Against the Machine, an annual shared reading event, takes place at Norwich Cathedral this May (p.18) as part of the City of Literature weekend at Norfolk & Norwich Festival. Cafés, parks, bookshops and even staff rooms all make perfect places to read together.

Attend a book event

Go behind the scenes of a favourite book, meet your writing hero, or explore a subject you're curious about. From talks and workshops to festivals and performances, book events take place throughout the year at the National Centre for Writing, UEA Live, Norfolk Library Service, Norwich Book Festival, and many more venues across the city. To find out more head to **visitnorwich.co.uk/whats-on**.

Read more at norwichcityofliterature.com and follow us on Instagram @norwichcityoflit.

UEA Evening Language Programme



The UEA Evening Language Programme offers courses to the general public, taught to the highest standard by our experienced and friendly tutors.

Languages taught include **Arabic, BSL, Chinese, Dutch, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Russian, Spanish, Portuguese** and **Polish**.

Find out more at: www.uea.co/ulp

Got questions?
Email: ulp@uea.ac.uk



Five questions with... Rezent Project

Who are Rezent Project?

We create unique, accessible creative learning environments that enhance the lives of young people and diverse communities and support those who may be at risk of social or economic disadvantage.

Tell us about your recent project in Norwich?

We created a mural on the former Chamberlins building that tells the story of Chamberlins Department Store and the family name, highlighting its strong

connection to the culture and heritage of Norwich's high streets. It also celebrates Norwich as a UNESCO City of Literature!

Why did you want to incorporate Norwich City of Literature into the mural?

At its core, the mural is about storytelling. We wanted the artwork to be both creative and educational, telling the story of the building and the city while celebrating Norwich as a city of stories.

Were any other murals inspired by Norwich's writing and storytelling history?

Yes! Our murals are always rooted in storytelling — of community, place, and future. Norwich's status as a City of Literature naturally influences much of our work, and there are three other Rezent Project murals in the NR2 area that reflect this approach.

What's your favourite story about Norwich?

We're particularly moved by the history of the Jenny Lind Infirmary for Sick Children, a story embedded in Norwich's heritage and still shared with young people today. We also love the legend of Black Shuck!

Find out more
at rezentproject.co.uk.



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City of Literature mural



DRAGON HALL

Marry. Celebrate. Meet.

Dragon Hall is a magnificent 15th-century trading hall and courtyard garden in the heart of Norwich. It's the perfect creative canvas for weddings, parties, and important events.

Join us at our Wedding Open House on Sat 11 April, from 11am–3pm.

Find out more at weddingsdragonhall.co.uk
[hires@nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk](mailto: hires@nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk)

Home to the
N National Centre
for Writing




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PURE BRIDES & SUITS

**The Spring Bridal Show at Dragon Hall – Dragon Hall, Norwich
26th March**

Join us for an unforgettable evening where Pure Brides and Pure Suits come to life on the runway, celebrating modern bridal and menswear in one of Norwich's most iconic venues.

Pure Brides & Pure Suits are based in the heart of Norwich – just like Dragon Hall – and bring bridal and menswear together under one beautiful roof. Our truly joined-up, luxury experience includes private fitting rooms, relaxed two-hour one-to-one appointments, expert stylists, and in-house bars both upstairs and downstairs.

Discover designer gowns and perfectly tailored suits – with 10% off suits for our brides once they say yes to their dress.

No other boutique offers this level of care and experience – it's what makes Pure, Pure.



Contact us

Online: nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk

Phone: 01603 877177

Email: info@nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk

Office hours are between 9am–5pm

Monday to Friday for queries

by telephone or email.

Visit Dragon Hall

National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall,

115–123 King St, Norwich NR1 1QE

Open every week, Sunday & Monday,

10am–3pm, from Monday 30 March.

Free, no booking required.

Registered Charity in UK 1110725

N National Centre
for Writing



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