

Sophia Hillan

706

May, Lou & Cass: Jane Austen's Nieces in Ireland

10am / Christ Church: Blue Boar / £10

The real-life dramas experienced by Jane Austen's nieces Marianne, Louisa and Cassandra Knight were straight out of a novel by the great writer herself. Author Sophia Hillan follows May, Lou and Cass from middle-class England to famine-ravaged Ireland in the early 19th century. It is a story of elopements, early deaths, years of exile and an unsuitable marriage regarded as so inappropriate it was mentioned in the House of Lords.

Hillan, a former assistant director of Queen's University of Belfast's Institute of Irish Studies, tells the extraordinary story of the three women who had Austen as an early companion and teacher. Through it, she uncovers new material on Jane Austen and her family and sheds light on a fascinating period in history.

Sophia Hillan



Val Bourne

709

Colour in the Garden

10am / Christ Church: Festival Room 2 / £10

Recognising the struggle to create colour combinations that are suitable to site and soil, and which take gardens through the seasons, award-winning gardener, photographer and writer Val Bourne has created this inspirational source on the use of colour in the garden with tried-and-tested planning schemes suitable for all seasons. Bourne, *The Oxford Times* gardening correspondent and a regular contributor to the *Daily Telegraph*, has also written several 10-minute gardening guides. With summer coming up, this session will give you many ideas for a varied and vibrant planting in your garden.

Alvin Hall

715

The Stock Market Explained

10am / Christ Church: Master's Garden Marquee / £10

Financial guru and renowned broadcaster Alvin Hall explains how to get smarter with our money in these difficult economic times. He presents a beginner's guide to stocks, shares and other investment choices. Investing in stocks and shares can be a complicated affair, but Hall uses practical examples to simply explain how you can make more informed choices, learn basic techniques to maximise reward, understand your own tolerance to risk and assess what investments suit you best.

Hall is an internationally known financial educator, broadcaster, author and columnist. In the UK, he is best known for hosting for five years the award-winning BBC series *Your Money or Your Life*, in which he helped people to take control of their finances. Hall lives in New York and is flying over to the UK to be at the festival.

Alvin Hall



HSBC 
Premier

Marcus Berkmann

729

A Shed of One's Own: Midlife Without the Crisis

10am / Christ Church: Festival Room 1 / £10

Journalist and comedy writer Marcus Berkmann says his new book about men in middle age is about 'humiliation, loss of dignity, crushing disappointment and aching knees'. But, he adds, although it moans incessantly and loses its temper once or twice, his book is at heart hopeful and optimistic. To compensate for what they have lost, middle-aged men have gained self-knowledge, guile and gravitas, he says.

Berkmann has contributed to a number of newspapers and magazines. He compiles the Dumb Britain column for *Private Eye* and is credited as one of the writing team for the BBC 3 comedy show *Monkey Dust*.

Name



Photo: Sophie Baker

Martin Kemp

734

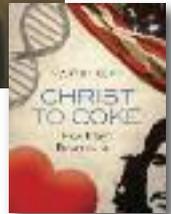
Christ to Coke: How Image Becomes Icon

10am / Corpus Christi College / £10

Image, branding and logos are obsessions of our age. But what makes an image achieve such mega stardom that it is instantly recognisable, instantly conveys powerful associations, and transcends its original purpose and meaning; in short – what makes an image iconic?

To answer this question, Martin Kemp, emeritus professor in the History of Art at The University of Oxford, selects 11 very different images. He begins with the image of Christ's face, the founding icon – literally. Other icons include the Mona Lisa, Che Guevara and the famous photograph of the napalmed girl in Vietnam. Others come from business, led by the Coca-Cola bottle, and from science, most notably the double helix of DNA.

Kemp tells the funny, improbable and illuminating stories woven around each icon. You will have your own opinion about the images – but you will not fail to be entertained and challenged by the narratives that emerge.



Sponsored by



Corpus Christi
College Oxford

Christopher Lloyd

721

What on Earth Happened?

11.10am / Christ Church: Next to Festival Cafe, Meadows Marquee / FREE

Journey through the entire history of the world with Christopher Lloyd using his amazing technicolour coat of 20 pockets and a giant edition of the highly acclaimed *What on Earth? Wallbook* as a backdrop. This is a 45-minute family show suitable for ages five to adult.

Lloyd is the founder of *What on Earth Publishing*. His books include *What on Earth Happened?* and *What on Earth Evolved?* He divides his time between writing, journalism and lecturing in schools, museums and at literary festivals.

Sponsored by



Helena Matheopoulos

701

Fashion Designers at the Opera

12 Noon / Christ Church: Festival Room 2 / £10

Opera is the most theatrical of arts, so it is no surprise that it has inspired top fashion designers such as Giorgio Armani, Karl Lagerfeld, Zandra Rhodes and Gianni Versace to create fabulous costumes. Helena Matheopoulos, a former fashion editor of *Tatler* and contributor to *The Times*, *Gramophone* and *Opera Now*, profiles ten leading designers working in opera. As well as those already mentioned, they include Marc Bohan, Christian Lacroix, Ottavio and Rosita Missoni, Miuccia Prada, Emmanuel Ungaro and Viktor & Rolf.

Matheopoulos, author of several books on opera, examines the challenge of designing for the opera and looks at the key differences between designing for the catwalk and for the stage.

Helena Matheopoulos



Andrew Lambert

702

The Challenge: Britain Against America in the Naval War of 1812

12 noon / Christ Church: Blue Boar / £10

Naval historian Andrew Lambert brings to life a little-known naval conflict between Britain and America in 1812. As Britain focused on the threat from Napoleon, America seized its opportunity to challenge her, invading Canada and attacking British merchant shipping.

Lambert tells how Britain emerged victorious, in part thanks to history's greatest frigate battle when HMS Shannon, under Captain Philip Broke, captured the USS Chesapeake in 13 blood-soaked minutes. Broke's triumph secured control of the Atlantic.

Andrew Lambert is professor of naval history at King's College, London. His books include *Nelson: Britannia's God of War*; *Admirals: The Naval Commanders Who Made Britain Great* and *Franklin: Tragic Hero of Polar Exploration*. His highly successful history of the British Navy, *War at Sea*, was broadcast on Channel 5.

Andrew Lambert



LEADERSHIP EVENT

Susan Cain

707

Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking

12pm / Corpus Christi College/ £10

We live in an age when loud and forceful personalities thrust themselves into the spotlight. As many as one third of us are introverts, however, and are often seen as the underdogs. And yet, introverts have given us the theory of relativity, Van Gogh's sunflowers and the Apple computer. Writer Susan Cain flies in from her home in the US to lead one of a series of festival events on leadership. She argues that the introverted quiet leader has much to offer.

Cain, who has been a negotiation consultant to many major corporations, shows how the brain chemistry of introverts and extroverts differs. And she offers introverts some tools to help them gain from introspection in their personal and professional lives.

Susan Cain



HSBC 
Premier

Corpus Christi
College Oxford 

Diana Athill and Joan Bakewell

713

A Life Fully Lived

12 noon / Christ Church: Master's Garden Marquee / £10

Diana Athill is one of the most remarkable writers you could hope to meet. She won the Costa Biography Award at the age of 82 for her memoir *Somewhere Towards the End*. She helped André Deutsch set up the publishing company and worked as an editor at Deutsch for four decades. Added to that, she has written five volumes of highly acclaimed memoirs. Her latest work is *Instead of a Book: Letters to a Friend*, her correspondence with American poet Edward Field from 1981 to the present day.

In one of a series of events around the theme of ageing in association with Age UK Oxfordshire, she talks to broadcaster, journalist and novelist Dame Joan Bakewell about a life that has been fully lived. Bakewell has criticised the absence of older women on British TV and was appointed as the 'voice' of the elderly by the last Labour government. She has had a long and fulfilling career as a broadcaster and journalist, and recently published her second novel at the age of 78.

'Athill's memoirs display a vivacious appreciation of the life she has lived and what is still to come'
New Statesman

Diana Athill



Joan Bakewell



In Association with

 Oxfordshire
ageUK

Students of Oxford Academy and of Oxford Brookes MA Creative Writing Course. Chaired by James Hawes

714

Chocolate is the Word

12 noon / Christ Church Hall / £7

'Chocolate is the Word' is a unique collaboration between pupils in Year 7 and 8 at the Oxford Academy in Littlemore and MA in creative writing students at Oxford Brookes University. Under the Brookes students' guidance, academy pupils have devised, written, and will perform here, a series of stories and poems based on chocolate, a theme they have also been studying in their classes.

The event is presented by Oxford Brookes University and chaired by Dr James Hawes, director of creative writing at the university's Department of English and Modern Languages, and author of *Speak For England, A White Merc With Fins, Excavating Kafka* and *Rancid Aluminium*.



Oxford Academy Students

Presented by

**OXFORD
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UNIVERSITY**

Simon Stokes, Christine Plews and Caroline van Zyl

733

Getting the Most out of the Law (and Lawyers)

12 noon / Christ Church: Festival Room 1 / £5

Negotiating a well drafted author/publisher contract is key to a successful author/publisher relationship. Authors also need to focus on how they deal with their literary assets and royalty streams both during their lifetime and after their death. This workshop, presented by festival lawyers Blake Laphorn, will explore the legal issues facing authors from the creation of their works onwards. It will offer practical advice on what to look out for in publishing contracts, how to avoid expensive libel law suits and what steps to take to protect and preserve your copyrights and other intellectual property whether on breakdown of a relationship or after your death.

The workshop will be led by partner Simon Stokes, of Blake Laphorn's publishing team, and supported by Christine Plews, partner, and Caroline van Zyl, senior solicitor, from Blake Laphorn's private client team.

Stokes is a publishing partner with Blake Laphorn and has been advising authors and publishers for almost 20 years. He is the author of several books, including *Art & Copyright* and *Digital Copyright Law & Practice* (3rd edition). The UK legal directories recommend him for his expertise in copyright, technology and publishing law.

Plews is a partner and heads up the family team at Blake Laphorn. She has particular expertise in divorce and financial issues on separation including cohabitee disputes and cases involving business assets, trusts and cases where substantial assets are involved. Plews also deals with disputes between executors and beneficiaries and claims. *Chambers UK, A Client's Guide to the Legal Profession 2012* features Plews as a leader in her field.

Sponsored by

**Blake
Laphorn**

Lawyers to the Festival

George Garnett

717

Norman Conquests: A Very Short Introduction

1.15pm / Christ Church: Meadows Marquee
Bookshop / FREE

Welcome to a Very Short Introduction soapbox. A short talk lasting 15 minutes from an expert in the field. The talk is free and takes place in the Blackwell book tent.

George Garnett, fellow in modern history at St Hugh's College, Oxford, reveals how dramatically the Norman conquests changed English life, from the language to the law, and focuses on the different ways in which the conquest has been viewed by historians and in folklore ever since.

Sponsored by Oxford University Press

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V S I

Rachel Cusk and Jane Shilling
Chaired by Rebecca Abrams

704

Aftermath and The Stranger in the Mirror: Women in Middle Age

2pm / Christ Church: Blue Boar / £10

Writers Rachel Cusk and Jane Shilling have a frank and thought-provoking discussion about some of the issues facing women in middle age.

Rachel Cusk explores the issues that arise for a woman after she has experienced the defining years of femininity in her work *Aftermath: On Marriage and Separation: Life After Marriage*. She discusses marriage, separation, motherhood, work, money, domesticity and love. Cusk considers the kinds of generational knowledge the contemporary woman harbours, and the terrors or expectations that have been passed down to her and that are refracted through the modern transformation of female status.

Shilling, a journalist who writes on books for the Telegraph and *Daily Mail*, says middle age took her by surprise. *The Stranger in the Mirror* is an attempt to come to terms with what middle age means for her. She considers whether a revolution is under way as a new generation of women turn 50 and discovers that there is fun to be had in middle age.

Rachel Cusk



Photo: Adrian Clarke

Jane Shilling



Photo: KT Bruce

Jeremy Paxman

711

Empire: What Ruling the World Did to the British

**2pm / Christ Church: Master's Garden
Marquee / £10**

One of our foremost broadcasters Jeremy Paxman takes a typically forthright look at what the Empire did for the British. He argues that the influence of empire is everywhere. It is there in the very existence of the United Kingdom, in the ethnic makeup of our cities, in the sports we think we are good at and in the architecture of our buildings. It influences our decisions to go to war as well as the way we travel and the food we eat. Paxman, presenter of *Newsnight* and *University Challenge*, has written five books. His latest accompanies a major new BBC TV series on the impact of the British Empire.



Sponsored by



Lawyers to the Festival

Sasha Dugdale talks to Jem Poster 705

Conversations with Poets

2pm / Christ Church: Festival Room 2 / £7

In *Red House*, her third collection, Sasha Dugdale evokes the ghosts and presences that flit about on the margins of our lives, finding them at the edge of towns where superstores and allotments blur an older landscape, in Europe where emigrants leave their gods, their neighbours, their memories 'jettisoned like old clothes', and across the chalk downs of her native Sussex. Haunted by history, confronted by primal brutalities, the poems in *Red House* proclaim the fierce, bright authenticity that is 'all the proof we need that we're alive'.

Richard Bradford talks
to DJ Taylor

723

Martin Amis: The Biography

2pm / Christ Church: Hall / £10

Richard Bradford's *Martin Amis: The Biography* was one of the most controversial books of 2011. In conversation with fellow biographer D.J. Taylor, Bradford discusses some of the difficulties involved in writing the life of a living subject, his view of Amis's achievements, his relationship with Amis during the time that the book was being written and the occasionally tortuous path from completion to publication.

Bradford is also author of biographies of Philip Larkin, Kingsley Amis and Alan Sillitoe. Taylor has written biographies of Thackeray and Orwell.

D J Taylor



Helen Graham, Paul Preston 727
and Francisco J. Romero Salvadó.
Chaired by Jean Seaton

Homage to Catalonia:
The Spanish Civil War

2pm / Christ Church: Festival Room 1 / £10

George Orwell fought in the Spanish Civil War 75 years ago, an experience that nearly killed him but was crucial to his later political work and formed the basis of *Homage to Catalonia*. Our experts look back at the Spanish War, and reflect on the place of this crucial conflict in modern European history.

Helen Graham is professor of Spanish history at Royal Holloway, University of London and author of *The Spanish Republic at War* and *The Spanish Civil War: A Very Short Introduction*. Paul Preston is professor of contemporary Spanish studies at the LSE and author of *We Saw Spain Die* and the forthcoming *The Spanish Holocaust*. Francisco Romero Salvadó is a senior lecturer in modern Spanish history and politics at the University of Bristol. The discussion is chaired by Jean Seaton, director of the Orwell Prize.

Sponsored by *The Orwell Prize*



Jan Zalasiewicz and 728
Mark Williams

The Goldilocks Planet: The Four-
Billion-Year Story of Earth's Climate

2pm / Corpus Christi College / £10

Earth is known as the Goldilocks Planet because it is 'not too hot, not too cold and not too dry' and so has consistently supported life for more than three billion years. University of Leicester geologists Jan Zalasiewicz and Mark Williams show how Earth's climate has continuously changed over its 4.5-billion-year history. They demonstrate how geologists are becoming ever more adept at reading the changes in the climate from the evidence left behind, despite some of it being puzzling and often contradictory. Zalasiewicz and Williams map the extreme changes in climate and explain the impact on plant and animal life and on the Earth's physical appearance.

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Christopher Lloyd 722

What on Earth Evolved?

**3.10pm / Christ Church: Next to Festival Cafe,
Meadows Marquee / FREE**

Join Christopher Lloyd and Dippy the Diplodocus on a whistle-stop voyage through four billion years of life on Earth flanked by a giant edition of the Natural History Museum's newly published *What on Earth? Wallbook of Natural History*.

This is a 45-minute family show suitable for ages five to adult.

Sponsored by



Hanif Kureishi, Joe Dunthorne 731
and Andrew Holgate.

Short Fiction: Choosing the Best

4pm / Christ Church: Hall / £10

The *Sunday Times* EFG Private Bank Short Story Award has established an international prize for a beloved form of fiction that's never been more vital.

How is the short story evolving? Where is new talent emerging? Just a few hours before the winner of the £30,000 award is announced, these questions will be debated by master storyteller, novelist and playwright Hanif Kureishi and Joe Dunthorne, known for his first novel *Submarine* and previously shortlisted for the prize. They will be joined by the literary editor of *The Sunday Times*, Andrew Holgate and some of the shortlist.

The event is chaired by Cathy Galvin, award director and deputy editor of *The Sunday Times Magazine*.

Sponsored by



Rosie Thomas 726

A Love of Travel and Adventure

4pm / Christ Church: Festival Room 1 / £10

Author Rosie Thomas travelled the same routes as the ancient pashmina trade, crossing the Himalayas from Ladakh to the Vale of Sringar in Kashmir, to research her recent novel *The Kashmir Shawl*. She spent time in Cairo and the desert as she worked on *Iris and Ruby*, named 2007 Romantic Novel of the Year. Here she talks about how her love of travel and adventure has inspired her writing.

Thomas has competed in the Peking to Paris car rally, sailed across the Atlantic and travelled the Silk Road through Asia. In this polar anniversary year, she recently recreated Shackleton's sea journey across the southern ocean to South Georgia, then followed his epic mountaineering journey across the island to the Stromness whaling station.

Bill Cash 703

John Bright: Statesman, Orator, Agitator

4pm / Christ Church: Blue Boar / £10

A series of *Punch* cartoons in 1878 featured John Bright alongside Disraeli and Gladstone as one of the three greatest politicians of the age. Unlike Disraeli and Gladstone, Bright's role has largely been forgotten. Bill Cash, a prominent backbench Conservative MP and descendant of Bright, sets out to put that right. Bright played a central role in most of the important political movements of the Victorian age. He was a founder of the Anti-Corn Law League and played a big part in achieving the abolition of the Corn Laws in 1846. Cash makes links between Bright and the modern Conservative Party and argues that his striving for a vibrant democracy makes him a man for our times.

Bill Cash



Sponsored by



Lawyers to the Festival

Joan Bakewell

712

She's Leaving Home**4pm / Corpus Christi College / £10**

Broadcaster and journalist Dame Joan Bakewell returns to Liverpool for her second novel, *She's Leaving Home*. It is the 1950s and Bakewell tells the story of three members of one family, a suppressed mother, a projectionist father working at a rundown cinema and their daughter Martha. Liverpool is on the verge of an unprecedented era of freedom with Beatlemania and the sexual revolution, and Bakewell chronicles the impact of this new age on the family.

Bakewell is a veteran journalist and broadcaster. She is particularly known for being the main presenter on the BBC's discussion and documentary series *Heart of the Matter* between 1988 and 2000. She has written one other novel, *All the Nice Girls*.

Joan Bakewell



Corpus Christi
College Oxford

Clare Morgan and Susan Sellers

720

Fictional Freedoms: Rewriting Virginia Woolf**4pm / Christ Church: Festival Room 2 / £10**

How might a writer go about rewriting an iconic figure like Virginia Woolf? How might this relate to Woolf's own attitude to (re)writing life – her own and that of her family and friends? Clare Morgan and Susan Sellers explore these questions through the lens of their own rewritings of Woolf, and their critical engagement with Woolf and other writers.

Clare Morgan's novel *A Book for All and None* reveals mysterious and unexpected links between Woolf and Friedrich Nietzsche, which reverberate down to the present day. Susan Sellers's *Vanessa and Virginia* imagines the intricate artistic and emotional relation between Woolf and her sister, Vanessa Bell. How might these novels relate to other 'remakings', whether in biography, stage, film or fiction? 'Fictional Freedoms' invites the audience to contribute to this consideration of a writer whose ability to compel the imagination of readers, writers and scholars throughout the world remains unabated.

Clare Morgan



Susan Sellers

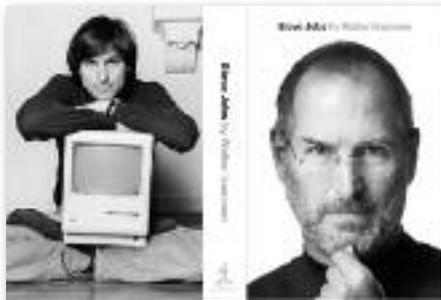


Walter Isaacson

730

Steve Jobs: The Exclusive Biography

4pm / Christ Church: Master's Garden
Marquee / £10



Walter Isaacson has written the landmark biography of Steve Jobs, the man who gave us the Apple computer, the iPhone and the iPad. Isaacson drew on 40 exclusive interviews to paint a portrait of arguably the most innovative and creative business leader of the modern age. He uncovers the public and private life of Jobs, throwing light on his childhood, the influence of Buddhism, and his drive to explore the intersection of art and technology.

Isaacson, who is flying over from the United States to be at the festival, has written bestselling biographies of Benjamin Franklin and Albert Einstein. He was approached by Jobs to write the biography shortly before Jobs underwent his first operation for the cancer that was to eventually claim his life. Jobs encouraged those who spoke to Isaacson to be open and honest and the result is a highly acclaimed, bestselling book that captures the passions, desires, demons and artistry of its subject.

Walter Isaacson



Sponsored by The Oxford Times.

The Oxford Times

Dorothy Crawford

716

Viruses: A Very Short Introduction

5.15pm / Christ Church: Meadows Marquee
Bookshop / FREE

Welcome to a Very Short Introduction soapbox. A short talk lasting 15 minutes from an expert in the field. The talk is free and takes place in the Blackwell book tent.

Dorothy Crawford demonstrates how tiny parasites are by far the most abundant life forms on the planet. With up to two billion of them in each litre of sea water, viruses play a vital role in controlling the marine environment and are essential to the ocean's delicate ecosystem, says the emeritus professor of medical microbiology at the University of Edinburgh.

Dorothy Crawford



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V S I

Andy Hamilton

724

Booze For Free: Tasting and Talk**6pm / Christ Church: Hall / £10**

Carrot whisky, sloe and damson rum, parsnip sherry and pumpkin beer are all on Andy Hamilton's menu. Hamilton is an experimental brewer and expert forager who has produced a guide to making wines and beers from vegetables, fruit and foraged plants. All his recipes are cheap, easy to follow and simple to execute, with no need for expensive equipment. And there will be an opportunity to taste the results for yourself.

Hamilton is founder of the Bristol Brewing Circle and runs brewing workshops and an allotment. He writes a 'wild drinks' blog for *The Guardian* online, a foraging column for *Home Farmer* magazine and features for BBC's *Countryfile* magazine and for *Kitchen Garden* magazine. He is a frequent consultant for TV and radio.

Andy Hamilton



Photo: Roy Hunt

Sponsored by *The Litmus Partnership*

Ben Okri

732

Wild: Official Launch of a New Collection of Poetry Including Drinks Reception**6pm / Queen's College Library / £20**

Booker prize winner Ben Okri launches his first collection of poetry in more than a decade at this year's Sunday Times Oxford Literary Festival. Okri will read from his new collection, *Wild*, and the launch will be followed by a drinks reception.



The poems range widely across many subjects. Some are autobiographical and some are philosophical. They treat subjects as diverse as war, love, nature and the difficulty of truly seeing. For Okri, 'wild' is an alternative to the familiar, 'where energy meets freedom, where chaos can be honed'.

Okri is author of nine novels including *The Famished Road*, which won the 1991 Booker Prize, and *Starbook*. He has published various volumes of short stories and two previous works of poetry, *African Elegy* and *Mental Fight*. He is a fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and has been awarded the OBE and a number of international prizes, including the Commonwealth Writers Prize for Africa.

Sponsored by *Chartwells***Reception and Nigerian Dinner with Ben Okri and Patti Boulaye**

736

7pm / The Queen's College / £95

Singer Patti Boulaye has designed a special Nigerian menu to mark the launch of Ben Okri's new poetry collection, *Wild*. Boulaye is a singer, painter, actor and choreographer. She has released nine albums and 25 singles and has starred in a number of West End productions. In recent years, she has been organising, presenting and producing shows for her charity Support for Africa. Boulaye will sing an African song during the event.

Sponsored by *Chartwells*

Patti Boulaye

Simon Jenkins 708

A Short History of England

**6.30pm / Christ Church: Master's Garden
Marquee / £10**

'This is English history, not as isolated stories and incidents, but as a linked biography,' says Simon Jenkins, chairman of the National Trust and author of classic books about England's best churches and best houses. 'It was in response to pleas for a return to narrative history, to the core events that shaped the English nation over time.' From the early dark ages to today's Coalition Government, the book traces England's journey through its challenges, tribulations and triumphs. Jenkins focuses on the vital dates, events and individuals, combining a strong narrative thread with telling insights to convey the country's story in this definitive, concise history of England.

Sponsored by



Lawyres to the Festival

Michael Arditti 710

I've Always Meant To Read . . . A La Recherche du Temps Perdu

6.30pm / Christ Church: Festival Room 2 / £10

Novelist and critic Michael Arditti shares his passion for Proust, with whom he has always felt a personal connection. He reveals why he feels this is the greatest novel of the 20th century and why you should read – or return to – this classic about love in its many forms. The nature of love is the subject of Arditti's latest novel *Jubilate*. Arditti has written seven novels including *Easter*, which won the first Waterstone's Mardi Gras award. He is a regular book reviewer for newspapers and an occasional arts critic for the BBC. This event is part of a series on books 'I've always meant to read . . .'

Philip Hensher and Zaved Mahmood. Chaired by James Hawes 718

Scenes from Early Life

6.30pm / Corpus Christi College / £10

Novelist Philip Hensher discusses his new novel *Scenes from Early Life* with his husband, Zaved Mahmood, on whose early life the work is based. Mahmood was born in Dacca, then in Pakistan, in late 1970. Shortly after his birth, East and West Pakistan split during a vicious war of independence. The war led to millions of innocent deaths and the emergence of a new country, Bangladesh. *Scenes from Early Life* is part novel, part autobiography and part history of a brutal civil war.

Hensher has published a number of novels including *The Mulberry Empire*. In 2003 he was listed as one of Granta's 20 best young British novelists. His semi-autobiographical novel *The Northern Clemency* was shortlisted for the Man Booker in 2008. Mahmood is a human rights lawyer.

The discussion will be chaired by Dr James Hawes, director of creative writing at Oxford Brookes University's Department of English and Modern Languages and author of *Speak For England*, *A White Merc With Fins*, *Excavating Kafka* and *Rancid Aluminium*.



Rupert Sheldrake

719

The Science Delusion: Freeing the Spirit of Enquiry

6.30pm / Christ Church: Blue Boar / £10

Biologist and writer Rupert Sheldrake is the bestselling author of *Dogs That Know When Their Owners Are Coming Home* in which he argued there was a connection between animals and humans beyond what science understood. Now, in *The Science Delusion*, he argues that science is being constricted by assumptions that have hardened into dogma. He says that science would be better off without beliefs that all reality is material or physical; that the world is a machine, made up of dead matter; that nature is purposeless; that consciousness is nothing but the physical activity of the brain; and that free will is an illusion.

Sheldrake, a former research fellow of the Royal Society, examines this dogma from a scientific viewpoint, and says science would be freer and more fun without it.

Rupert Sheldrake



Lev Grossman

725

Storytelling: The Past and Future of the American Novel

6.30pm / Christ Church: Festival Room 1 / £10

American writers have been trying for almost a century to move past an idea of the novel that was established by the modernists. With hybrid works – like the fiction of Michael Chabon, Paul Auster, Kelly Link, Jonathan Lethem, Neal Stephenson and Lev Grossman himself – writers are beginning to cross the divide between literary fiction and genre fiction. The old hierarchies are collapsing, and the emphasis on high style is falling away. Storytelling is becoming central to the art of the novel.

Lev Grossman is a journalist at *Time Magazine* and the author of best-selling novels *Codex*, *The Magicians* and *The Magician King*.

Read more about his talk at www.rai.ox.ac.uk

This event marks the launch of an American literature and culture strand within the festival to be based at the Rothermere American Institute of Oxford University from 2013. The RAI is the foremost academic institution for teaching and research in US culture, history and politics beyond America's shores.

Lev Grossman



In association with the Rothermere American Institute



Nick Bicât, Nicholas Pitts-Tucker 735
and Peter Champness

Perpetua: Music in the Making

7.30pm / Christ Church: Cathedral / £12

Composer Nick Bicât, librettist Nicholas Pitts-Tucker and director Peter Champness discuss the art of crafting words, music and staging for their new multimedia dramatic cantata *Perpetua*, which tells the story of the martyrdom of St Perpetua in English, Greek and Latin. The event includes extracts from the production.

Nick Bicât has written more than 150 scores for film, television and theatre, and 11 operas and musicals. Peter Champness was for 12 years a producer and director at the BBC before becoming a freelance filmmaker. Nicholas Pitts-Tucker, who studied classics at Christ Church, makes his debut as a librettist.

Presented by Christ Church Cathedral



Michelle Obama in Christ Church Great Hall, 2011



Photo: Jon Lewis/Newsquest (Oxfordshire)

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To find out more about our American Literature Research Community, our full academic programme and our conference facilities, visit www.rai.ox.ac.uk

St Hilda's College Writers' Day

Saturday 31st March 2012

At the Sunday Times Oxford Literary Festival, Christ Church

Chaired by Nicolette Jones, Sarah Baxter and Eileen Roberts



**The Hemlock Cup: Socrates, Athens and the Search
for the Good Life 10am**

Bettany Hughes

Murder Mystery: Bloodbath or Brainteaser? 12 noon

Simon Brett and Sophie Hannah

The State of Education, 4pm

Zeinab Badawi, Bettany Hughes, Gillian Shephard

Waiting for Sunrise, 6pm

William Boyd





Philip Pullman

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Tower Poetry is an organization based at Christ Church, University of Oxford, which offers opportunities and resources to young British poets. The winners of the 2012 competition for 16-18 year olds in the UK will be announced on 19 April at a lunchtime reception in Christ Church.

Since 2000, when Tower Poetry was created, over 7,000 students have taken part in the annual competition, over 80 have attended 7 summer schools, 7 volumes of contemporary poetry have been published and over 10 workshops and events have been organized.

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