

MEDIA RELEASE – LEEDS LIT FEST 2024: 15-23rd JUNE

LEEDS LIT FEST 2024 HEADLINERS ANNOUNCED

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – APRIL 2024

LJR, John Agard, Stuart Maconie, Selena Godden, Helen Lederer and DJ Paulette are headlining Leeds Lit Fest 2024!

In its sixth year, the city's award-winning festival of words and thought will take place across a diverse range of the city's venues and aims to bring together, and help develop, the city's literary scene, with writers, poets and performers from Leeds, the UK and beyond, taking part in 35 events over 10 days.

LJR launch the Festival in great poetic and musical style at the historic Leeds Library (Thurs 13th). LJR comprises Poet Laureate, Simon Armitage, singer-songwriter Richard Walters and multi-instrumentalist and producer Patrick Pearson. The performance will feature poems read by Simon Armitage accompanied by music from Walters and Pearson. LJR has released two critically acclaimed albums *Call in the Crash Team* (2020) and *The Ultraviolet Age* (2023). They have appeared at many major festivals, including Green Man and Blu Dot, and have sold-out venues across the UK.



Come and revel in poems and oratory with one of the UK's most sought-after authors, the award-winning **John Agard**, at Leeds Minster (Sat 15th). Author of over 50 books including the much-shortlisted *Windrush Child* (Walker Books), his contributions to literature have been recognised through accolades including the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry and a BookTrust Lifetime Achievement Award. Agard will read from his works and perform classic treasures alongside new treats in an event that celebrates rhythm and wordplay. A Renaissance One produced event.



Best-selling writer, journalist, broadcaster and BBC Radio 6 Music show presenter **Stuart Maconie** brings *The Full English* to Leeds Minster (Sat 15th). Deftly weaving together history and politics, Maconie's book is a love-letter to England. He follows in the footsteps of Bradfordian polymath JB Priestley's *English Journey*. Ninety years on, Stuart Maconie undertakes his own inventory of the English in popular, timely and entertaining prose.



Globally-renowned superstar on the poetry scene, **Salena Godden**, makes a welcome return to Leeds after a 2 year hiatus. LIVEwire presents a night of electric spoken word poetry at the Hyde Park Book Club (Sat 15th). Godden will be reading from her brand-new collection, *With Love, Grief and Fury*, supported on the night by some of the region's finest emerging talent, in an event to transform your preconceptions around poetry forever.



Writer, stand-up comedian and actor **Helen Lederer** (*Absolutely Fabulous*, *Bottom*, *Happy Families*, *Naked Video*, *French and Saunders*, *Girls on Top*) will be at the Royal Armouries (Thurs 20th) with her powerful, frank, moving and characteristically funny memoir *Not That I'm Bitter*. Find out how tough it was for a woman to break through. Even in the ground-breaking 1980s, it was as much a struggle for women to be seen and heard in comedy as in any boardroom or workplace, and just as hard to avoid predators. Her book is a compelling, addictive mix of the sweet, the sour, and the genuinely laugh-out-loud.



In *Welcome To The Club*, the legendary, award-winning **DJ Paulette** shares the highs, lows and lessons of a thirty-year music career. Part personal account, part call to arms, she exposes the exclusivity of the music industry, highlighting the misogyny, racism and classism she's faced, while seeking to do justice to the often-invisible women who keep the beat going. DJ Paulette will be in conversation with writer, broadcaster and DJ, Dave Haslam at the Hyde Park Book Club (Wed 19th).



Jack Simpson, Leeds Lit Fest Chair and owner of the Hyde Park Book Club said: "This year's festival brings together an exciting and broad group of writers, with national favourites and excellent Leeds based talent. The city's literature scene is developing at pace. Renowned authors from around the country are coming here more and more too. With a developing publishing sector, and a collegial spirit - more and more eyes are on northern writing. Something that we are passionate to see, and role model for future generations here in Leeds and the West Yorkshire region."

Nina Corey, Leeds Lit Fest Trustee and recently appointed CEO of the Leeds Library said: "As a newcomer to Leeds and someone who is passionate about literature and culture in general, I am delighted to be part of the Lit Fest team delivering such a fantastic and diverse programme to the people of Leeds and beyond. There is something for everyone to be inspired by. Celebrating local and national talent, this is not to be missed. Leeds is consistently proving itself to be a stronghold for literature and culture. The Festival is one of the organisations driving this forward and it will continue to be at its heart."

There's all of this and so much more so get involved! Full details of the Leeds Lit Fest programme can be found at <https://www.leedslitfest.co.uk>.

Images: LYR by Katie Silvester; John Agard by Renaissance One; Stuart Maconie; Selena Godden; Helen Lederer; DJ Paulette by Lee Baxter.

CONTACT DETAILS

For further information, images and media requests contact Fiona Gell at fionagell1@gmail.com | 07742 861889 or Jack Simpson at jacksimpson@hydeparkbookclub.co.uk

About Leeds Lit Fest

Leeds Lit Fest 2024 will take place on Saturday 15th to Sunday 23rd June.

A newly registered Community Interest Company CIC, Leeds Lit Fest is delivered by a partnership of Leeds-based creative arts and literature-based organisations which are committed to celebrating and championing literature and writing in Leeds and to engaging and inspiring its people to get involved in creative activities linked to literature.

Current partner organisations include The Leeds Library, Hyde Park Book Club, The Leeds Big Bookend, Leeds Libraries, MILIM, Leeds Church Institute, Strix and Chapel FM.

Bookseller, independent bookshop Truman Books in Farsley, returns for a second year.

Tickets and further information for the Lit Fest can be found at www.leedslitfest.co.uk.

In 2022, Leeds Lit Fest won Best Literary Festival at the national Saboteur Awards for a second time. The festival celebrates the vibrant and thriving literature scene that exists in Leeds with local writers and performers showcasing their talents along with national and international artists with an exciting programme of author talks, workshops, panels, performance, digital, poetry and spoken word events.

For full information on the festival, including programme updates and ticket information head to its website or social media pages below:

<http://www.leedslitfest.co.uk> | Facebook: [@LeedsLitFest](https://www.facebook.com/LeedsLitFest) | Twitter: [@LeedsLit](https://twitter.com/LeedsLit) | [#LLF24](https://twitter.com/LeedsLit)