



## Hastings LitFest 2019 to showcase wide range of literary talent

Hastings Literary Festival has announced its programme for 2019, featuring George Orwell's adopted son Richard Blair, musician and writer Tracey Thorn, TV presenters Alice Roberts and Lucy Cooke, and many local authors among a wide array of literary talent.

The festival runs from August 30 to September 1, with 52 events at venues throughout Hastings and St Leonards. Its theme 'in other words' reflects Hastings LitFest's ambition to bring together a diverse range of literary voices.

Richard Blair will make a rare appearance to discuss the huge cultural impact of his father George Orwell, whose real name was Eric Blair. Orwell, best known for his novels *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, also wrote literary criticism, poetry and polemical journalism.

Musician and writer Tracey Thorn, well known as half of Everything but the Girl, is author of the best-selling *Bedsit Disco Queen* and more recently *Another Planet: A Teenager in Suburbia*. Tracey will be in conversation with Hastings writer and actor Wayne Herbert.

TV presenters and best-selling authors Alice Roberts and Lucy Cooke are also taking part in the festival, which launched last year.

Alice, who is Professor of Public Engagement with Science at the University of Birmingham and has appeared on Time Team, Coast and Digging for Britain, will be talking about "the species that changed the world".

Author and explorer Lucy, who grew up in Sussex, began her career in TV production and is a presenter of the BBC's Springwatch, will be discussing "the unexpected truth about animals".

LitFest also includes a session by Dr Who writer Simon Guerrier, an author talk by MP Rachel Reeves on her new book *Women of Westminster*, and an enhanced programme of activities for children.

Sir David Hare, one of the greatest British post-war playwrights, is Hastings Literary Festival's Patron. Sir David, who was born in St Leonards and grew up in Bexhill, says: "Hastings is a natural for a literary festival. In 2018, we got off to a flying start. I confidently expect the second edition in 2019 to be just as warm-hearted and exciting."

As well as author talks, Hastings LitFest 2019 will feature panel discussions, workshops for budding authors - including a repeat of last year's popular 'meet the agent' sessions - and lots of creative

activities for children.

Order tickets and find out more, including details of early bird savings, at [www.HastingsLitFest.org](http://www.HastingsLitFest.org)

**Hastings LitFest runs from Friday, August 30 to Sunday, September 1 at venues throughout Hastings and St Leonards on Sea.**

Contact for journalists: Alison Steel - [alison@hastingslitfest.org](mailto:alison@hastingslitfest.org)