



27th June - 27th July 2023
PROGRAMME

PRESENTED BY THE LITERARY CONSULTANCY

#BEINGAWRITERFEST
@TLCUK



Being a Writer FESTIVAL

WEEK ONE: INSPIRATION

OPEN TO
ALL TICKET-
HOLDERS

Keynote

Tuesday 27th June, 2pm-3pm BST

Will Storr gives a Keynote address on what it means to be a writer. This event is open to all ticket-holders.

How I Did It (and Things I've Learned Since)

Wednesday 28th June, 7pm-8.30pm, BST

A panel discussion about what success looks like, feels like, and what it means to self publish, become a bestseller, and have a book optioned for film.

With Elliott Rae, Kerry Fisher, and Wiz Wharton.

Get Over the Hump

Thursday 29th June, 10am-11.30am BST

So you've hit a roadblock with your creative project. Now what? Creativity consultant Alice Broadway shares top tips to help you get over the line.

Writers' Cafe

Friday 30th June, 12pm-1pm BST

Every Friday of the Festival, a space for writers to meet, chat, and discuss writing and wellbeing.

WEEK TWO: INDUSTRY

Submissions 101

Tuesday 4th July, 10am-11.30am BST

Gyamfia Osei & Tom Killingbeck share their top tips on getting your fiction and non fiction submissions agent-ready, and talk through what happens once your submission hits an editor's inbox.

My Agent & Me

Wednesday 5th July, 7pm-8.30pm, BST

Author Clare Pooley and her agent Hayley Steed interview each other about the publishing journey from draft to bookshelf, and get candid about the author-agent relationship.

Indie Press Success

Thursday 6th July, 7pm-8.30pm BST

Hear from the author of runaway bestseller *Leonard & Hungry Paul*, Rónán Hession, about what it's really like to be published by a small press.

Writers' Cafe

Friday 7th July, 12pm-1pm BST

Every Friday of the Festival, a space for writers to meet, chat, and discuss writing and wellbeing.



WEEK THREE: WELLBEING

A Still Life

Tuesday 11th July, 1pm-2.30pm BST

Join author **Josie George** for an inspiring and candid reading, chat and Q&A on stillness, disability, the body, and inspiration.

Failure Lab

Wednesday 12th July, 7pm-8.30pm, BST

Three authors share a moment in which they felt they had 'failed' as a writer, how they dealt with it, and what they learned. With **Ronali Collings**, **Doug Johnstone**, and **Eve Ainsworth**.

Happy Writing

Thursday 13th July, 7pm-8.30pm BST

Get inspired at this seminar with **Elise Valmorbida**, who shares tips and tricks to help you build a happy writing habit.

Writers' Cafe

Friday 14th July, 12pm-1pm BST

Every Friday of the Festival, a space for writers to meet, chat, and discuss writing and wellbeing.



Being a Writer FESTIVAL

WEEK FOUR: COMMUNITY

How to Build a Village

Tuesday 18th July, 10am-11.30am BST

Writer Iqbal Hussain speaks about how to find and build your tribe as a writer, based on a writing life built around community.

It Takes a Village

Wednesday 19th July, 7pm-8.30pm, BST

Novelist Stefan Mohamed speaks about the people who have been the most influential in his writing life, as a reminder of the importance of having a support network in order to thrive as a writer. We also invite contributions from you, the audience, to honour those people who have impacted your own writing life.

OPEN TO
ALL TICKET-
HOLDERS

TLC Pen Factor Live Pitch

Thursday 20th July, 7pm-8.30pm BST

Our annual TLC Pen Factor Competition culminates in our special, and hugely popular, live pitch session. With industry judges Megan Carroll, Serena Arthur and Emma Leong.

Writers' Cafe

Friday 21st July, 12pm-1pm BST

Every Friday of the Festival, a space for writers to meet, chat, and discuss writing and wellbeing.



WEEK FIVE: MASTERCLASSES

Illuminations: Short Story

Tuesday 25th July, 10am-12pm BST

Short Story Masterclass with Vanessa Onwuemezi.

Keeping it True: Life Writing

Wednesday 26th July, 10am-12pm, BST

Life Writing Masterclass with Xanthi Barker.

The Sweet Spot: Page-Turning Literary Fiction

Thursday 27th July, 10am-12pm BST

Literary Fiction Masterclass with Imogen Hermes Gowar.

Writers' Cafe

Friday 21st July, 12pm-1pm BST

Every Friday of the Festival, a space for writers to meet, chat, and discuss writing and wellbeing.

Being a Writer FESTIVAL

FESTIVAL SPEAKERS



Will Storr

Will Storr is an award-winning writer. He's the author of six critically acclaimed books, including the novel *The Hunger* and *The Howling of Killian Lone* and the Sunday Times bestseller *The Science of Storytelling*. His journalism has appeared in titles such as *The Guardian*, *The Sunday Times*, *The New Yorker* and *The New York Times*. His prizes include a National Press Club award for excellence and the AFM award for Best Investigative Journalism. His work on sexual violence against men earned the Amnesty International Award and a One World Press Award. He's also been presented with the AIB Award for Best Investigative Documentary for his BBC radio series.

Elliott Rae

Elliott Rae is the founder of the parenting platform *MusicFootballFatherhood*, called the 'Mumsnet for Dads' by the BBC. He is the curator of the bestselling book, *DAD*, presenter of BBC documentary 'Becoming Dad' and one of the UK's most prominent speakers on fatherhood, mental health and masculinity.

Elliott has been recognised by the United Nations for his work on gender equality and was awarded the #HeForShe award by UN Women UK.



Kerry Fisher

Kerry Fisher is the author of ten novels, selling over a million copies worldwide.

She has self-published, been traditionally published and is now with a digital-first publisher. Her books have been translated into ten languages, with the USA Today bestseller, *The Silent Wife*, optioned for TV. She is fascinated by complex families and describes her books as 'contemporary fiction for women who've lived long enough not to expect the fairytale'.

Wiz Wharton

Wiz Wharton was born in London of Chinese-European heritage. She is a prize-winning graduate of the National Film and Television school, where she studied screenwriting under the filmmakers Mike Leigh, Stephen Frears and Kenith Trodd. Her debut novel *Ghost Girl, Banana* - a dual narrative set in 1960s London and 1990s Hong Kong on the cusp of its handover to China - will be published by Hodder and Stoughton (UK) and HarperVia (US) in May 2023 with translated editions to follow. Adaptation rights have also been optioned by a leading UK production company. She lives in the Scottish Highlands.



Being a Writer FESTIVAL

FESTIVAL SPEAKERS



Alice Broadway

Alice Broadway is a bestselling author and creativity consultant living in Lancashire. Her award winning trilogy, *Ink, Spark and Scar* (Scholastic) have been translated into more than 15 languages. Recently, Alice has set up *KINDLING* (makekindling.com), a space where broken-hearted creatives can find their lost sparks.

Tom Killingbeck

Tom specialises in nonfiction, seeking fresh, expert perspectives on history, science, nature, politics, big ideas, economics, and arts and culture, especially music. He is particularly interested in writers who can open readers' minds and help them see the world differently, through untold histories, ground-breaking science, or revelatory journalism. But equally, he loves books that are simply a pleasure to read, be they a hilariously gossipy memoir or a gripping true crime investigation. As an agent with over a decade of experience as an editor, Tom relishes working closely and creatively with academics who want to reach the broadest possible readership for their writing, and journalists and memoirists with the storytelling abilities of the best novelists.



Gyamfia Osei

Gyamfia began her career in publishing working as a Bookseller at Waterstones, before joining Caskie Mushens as Literary Assistant to Juliet Mushens and Robert Caskie. She returned to the U.K. after living in Amsterdam for two years, where she managed international sales for The Pepin Press and held the role of Editor for *Plural Magazine*. Gyamfia is now an agent at The Good Literary Agency and is building a list focused on commercial and upmarket women's fiction, diverse romance, cultural history and contemporary Children's books.

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FESTIVAL SPEAKERS



Clare Pooley

Clare Pooley spent 20 years in the heady world of advertising, working hard and playing harder. In 2015 she realised that her wine habit was out of control, and she quit drinking. By way of therapy, she started a blog called Mummy was a Secret Drinker which became a viral sensation. The story of Clare's battle with addiction and cancer was published in 2018 as a 'dark but hilarious' memoir - The Sober Diaries. Clare now writes fiction. Her debut novel - The Authenticity Project - was a BBC Radio 2 bookclub pick and a New York Times bestseller. Clare's second novel - The People on Platform 5 is out now. Clare's work is published in 30 languages.

Hayley Steed

Hayley Steed is a Senior Literary Agent at Madeleine Milburn Literary Agency, where she works with authors of fiction and non-fiction including Clare Pooley, Yomi Adegoke, Henry Fry and Leah Hazard. She joined the MM Agency in 2016 and was named a Rising Star in The Bookseller in 2019. In 2022, she became a Trailblazer Award Winner for her innovation, creativity and passion in publishing, and also joined the board of Spread the Word.



Rónán Hession

Rónán Hession is an Irish writer and musician. He has published two novels: Leonard and Hungry Paul and Panenka, which have been listed for a number of major awards. Rónán's story The Translator's Funeral was longlisted for the Irish Short Story of the Year. His album Dictionary Crimes was shortlisted for Irish Album of the Year. Rónán reviews fiction in translation for the Irish Times and has been a judge at both the Irish and British Book Awards. He is currently working on his third novel, Ghost Mountain, which will be published in 2024.

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FESTIVAL SPEAKERS



Josie George

Josie George is a writer and artist living in the West Midlands. She is the author of the highly acclaimed *A STILL LIFE*, a memoir about life as a chronically ill mother with a big heart and wide-open eyes. She's also a regular columnist for *The Guardian Country Diary* sharing a different view of nature from her urban neighbourhood, often from her mobility scooter. Josie spends her days finding doorways into remarkable places right where she is (even if that's often in bed). She believes the ordinary world around us has something to say and she's determined to listen.

Ronali Collings

Ronali Collings was born and bred in Middlesex, has a degree in English Literature from King's College London, studied law and worked in international tax for 16 years. After several years as a stay at home mother and decades of vicarious living through books, she rediscovered her passion for writing and graduated with a MA in Creative Writing from Brunel University under the supervision of Bernardine Evaristo. Her first novel, *Love & Other Dramas*, was published by Embla Books in 2022.



Doug Johnstone

Doug Johnstone is the bestselling author of fifteen novels, most recently *The Space Between Us* (Orenda). Three of his books have been shortlisted for Scottish Crime Novel of the Year, while one was longlisted for the Theakston Crime Novel of the Year. He's won the Fiction Uncovered Award and been shortlisted for Capital Crime's Independent Voice. He's taught creative writing or been writer in residence at festivals, libraries, universities, schools, prisons and a funeral directors. He's also a journalist, songwriter and musician, plays drums for the Fun Lovin' Crime Writers, and is a co-founder of the Scotland Writers Football Club.

Eve Ainsworth

Eve Ainsworth is a working class award-winning and Carnegie nominated children's author who has written for both middle grade and teen readers. Her debut novel for adults, *Duckling*, was published by Penguin Random House in Spring 2022. Eve has vast experience working as a public speaker and creative workshop coordinator for schools, libraries and other events both nationally and internationally. She also is an experienced mentor and is very passionate about helping those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Eve is fiercely proud of her working class roots and her large, loud family. She lives in Crawley with her husband, two young children and crazy pets.



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FESTIVAL SPEAKERS



Elise Valmorbida

Elise Valmorbida has published journalism, poetry, short stories, three non-fiction books and four novels including *The Madonna of the Mountains* (Faber), which was translated into several languages and won Australia's biggest literary award in 2019. For her work as script consultant, film producer and author, Elise won an Edinburgh International Film Festival Trailblazer award. She has a firm belief that creative writing can deepen your appreciation of life, and empower you as an agent of positive change in the world. Her creative writing guide *The Happy Writing Book* is inspired by her 20+ years of experience as writer-teacher.

There's more info at www.elisevalmorbida.com and you can follow her on instagram: @elisevalmorbida

Iqbal Hussain

Iqbal has been writing since he was able to hold a pencil. He won first prize for Writing Magazine's Grand Flash competition 2022. He was joint runner-up in the Evening Standard Short Story Competition 2022. He has stories in anthologies by Retreat West, London Libraries, Leicester Writes and Lancashire Libraries. He won Gold in the Creative Future Writers' Awards 2019 and is a recipient of the inaugural London Writers' Awards 2018. Iqbal's first book, *Northern Boy*, is out on submission. He lives with his partner and labradoodle in north London. Twitter: [ihussainwriter](https://twitter.com/ihussainwriter). Website: www.ihussainwriter.com



Stefan Mohamed

Stefan Mohamed is an award-winning author, performing poet and creative writing tutor based in Bristol. He is the author of the *Bitter Sixteen Trilogy* and *Falling Leaves* (Salt Publishing), *The Marketplace of Ideas* (Stewed Rhubarb) and *Farewell Tour* (Verve Poetry Press). Stefan can be found on Twitter and Instagram

(@stefmowords) or at www.stefmo.co.uk

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TLC PEN FACTOR JUDGES



Serena Arthur

Serena Arthur is fiction editor at Trapeze Books, an imprint of Orion Books (a division of Hachette UK), that focuses on conversation-starting fiction and non-fiction. She is editing and publishing across the list and is drawn to books that are bold, distinctive and memorable. She joined Orion in June 2022 after a few years at Headline Books (another Hachette UK division), where she was first an editorial trainee for the Headline Fiction team and then editorial assistant within the Wildfire Books team. Outside of work, she is a writer and performer of spoken word poetry.

Megan Carroll

Megan Carroll graduated from Goldsmiths with a BA in English and American Literature in 2013 and has been at Watson, Little since 2014, first as the assistant and now as a Literary Agent. She represents a wide range of fiction and non-fiction for both children and adults, and is particularly keen on building a list that champions underrepresented voices. Her key areas of interest are women's fiction (both commercial and upmarket), MG, YA, memoir, narrative non-fiction, essays and experts looking to write for children on a range of topics. You can follow her on Twitter: @MeganACarroll.



Emma Leong

Emma started her publishing career here at Janklow and Nesbit in 2019, after finishing a degree in Law and Psychology. She is now an Associate Agent, building her own new list of writers, editorially hands-on and keen to work with debut writers in both fiction and non-fiction. Her clients include Chukwuebuka Ibeh, Olivia Petter, Helena Echlin and on behalf of our US office, Erica Berry, Aisha Muharrar and the late Katherine Min; all of whom have secured publishing deals in the UK and internationally.

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MASTERCLASS TUTORS



Xanthi Barker

Xanthi Barker is the author of *Will This House Last Forever?* a memoir about growing up with and grieving an absent father and the novelette *One Thing*. Her short fiction has appeared in various magazines and anthologies including *Litro*, *Mslexia* and *Bare Fiction*. She lives in London and is a writer-in-residence for the charity *First Story*.

Imogen Hermes Gowar

Imogen Hermes Gowar is the author of the Sunday Times Bestseller *The Mermaid and Mrs Hancock*. Set in 1780s London, it charts the fortunes of a merchant and a courtesan on the make: it was a finalist for the MsLexia First Novel Award and the Deborah Rogers Prize; shortlisted for the Women's Prize For Fiction and the Sunday Times PFD Young Writer of the Year Award, and winner of a Betty Trask Award. The subject of her forthcoming second novel is *Lady Eleanor Talbot*, a shadowy historical figure alleged by some to have been secretly married to Edward IV.



Vanessa Onwuemezi

Vanessa Onwuemezi is a writer living in London. She is the winner of The White Review Short Story Prize in 2019 and her work has appeared in literary and art magazines, including *Granta*, *Frieze* and *Prototype*. Her debut story collection, *Dark Neighbourhood*, was published in 2021 and was named one of the Guardian's Best Books of 2021. It was shortlisted for both the Republic of Consciousness Prize and the Edge Hill Prize in 2022. Her short story *Green Afternoon* was shortlisted for the BBC National Short Story Award 2022.



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FAQS

What is Being A Writer Festival?

- Being A Writer Festival is a unique online summer event inspiring you to write well and feel well. Across five weeks and nineteen sessions, we invite you to hear from a range of inspiring speakers across the publishing and wellbeing industries.

Do I need to be a Being a Writer Member to attend?

- No! Tickets are available to both members and non-members, though if you are a member you'll be able to take advantage of a hefty 30% discount. You can become a member by clicking [here](#).

When does the Festival take place?

- The Festival will be held between 27th June 2023 and 27th July 2023, across nineteen online seminars, workshops, Masterclasses and presentations, kicking off with a Keynote from award-winning writer Will Storr on 27th June.

Will the whole Festival be held online?

- The Festival will be held exclusively online, though each week we will be hosting a new Writers' Cafe, facilitated by TLC's very own Cairo Aibangbee, where you will have space to chat with other writers, and discuss your work in a Zoom meeting setting.

How much do the tickets cost?

- We have a broad range of tickets, to make the Festival as accessible as possible, and the prices range from £15 for a member weekly ticket, to £60 for a full Festival Pass with access to every part of the Festival. We will also have x100 free tickets for low-income or marginalised writers. No need to provide any proof, just apply. We feel that the Festival is great value for money, but as things feel quite squeezed at the moment, we've REDUCED the ticket price in recognition of the current cost of living crisis (this does not affect our speaker fees and we remain as committed as ever to fair pay).



FAQS (CONTINUED)

How will I receive my tickets?

- When you purchase your ticket you will receive an email confirmation containing a downloadable digital ticket, containing Zoom links for each session of the Festival. We will also be sending out reminders, including all the links you'll need, and a video with tips on how to get the most out of the Festival sessions you have signed up to.

What are 'Weekly Tickets'?

- We've introduced themed weeks so that you can either pick the week of sessions that works best for you, or come to the whole thing and really focus on one topic each week.

What if I'm unable to attend a session?

- Don't worry, there will be watchback links sent after each session, and a Video Ticket available if you'd just like to watch the sessions back. We've also introduced new time slots and increased on-demand access from 30 days to 60 days.

What is the weekly Writers' Cafe?

- We've introduced a one hour Writers' Café into each week where we come together for a cup of tea and a chat. Join us for non-networky networking!

What is the TLC Pen Factor Competition and how do I enter?

- The TLC Pen Factor Writing Competition is a competition for new, unpublished writing across fiction and non-fiction, open exclusively to Being A Writer Festival ticket-holders. Last year, we went fully virtual, welcoming an even bigger audience, and continuing to showcase the work of talented writers with our live pitch session. As a competition, TLC Pen Factor has an impressive track record for finding talent, with many of our previous finalists going on to be published – including as a direct result of meeting their agent at the event! When you purchase your ticket you will receive an email confirmation containing downloadable Submission Guidance. Prize pot to be announced soon.

We look forward to welcoming
you to the Festival!

BOOK NOW



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