

# Lambeth Readers and Writers Festival 2023

[lambeth.gov.uk/ReadersandWriters](https://lambeth.gov.uk/ReadersandWriters)

#LamLitFest23



## ■ Lambeth Readers and Writers Festival

### Welcome to this year's Lambeth Readers and Writers Festival.

The **2023** festival is here with another month-long programme of inspirational literary events. We hope you find something to enjoy. For more information contact your local library or email [readersandwriters@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:readersandwriters@lambeth.gov.uk).



@ReadersWritersF #LamLitFest23



Lambeth Readers and Writers Festival

I am delighted to welcome you to the Lambeth Libraries Readers and Writers Festival. For coming up to two decades it has been a regular highlight in the Lambeth calendar. In 2023 we have another month of events to suit all tastes - whether you enjoy reading, writing, discussion or simply sitting back and listening. Come and join us and express yourself! You'll be amazed at the fun you can have in your local library.



**Cllr Donatus Anyanwu,**  
Lambeth Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Leisure and Sport

## ■ Main Programme

### Stephen Coates – Bone Music: The Strange Story of Soviet Music on the Bone

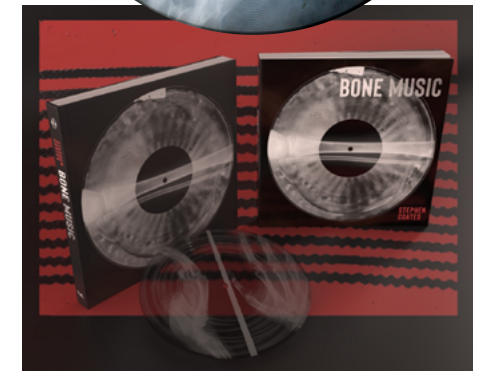
Thursday 4 May, 6.30pm  
Brixton Library. SW2 1JQ

Booking via [Eventbrite](#)



Credit: Paul Heartfield

Composer and author Stephen Coates tells the story of Bone Music. During the Cold War era, the songs that Soviet citizens could listen to were ruthlessly controlled by the state. But a secret underground subculture of music lovers and bootleggers defied the censors, building recording machines and making their own records of forbidden jazz, rock 'n' roll, and Russian music, cut onto used hospital x-ray film.



Who were they? Why did they do it and how was it even possible? Based on years of interviews and oral testimonies, Stephen Coates presents the stories of the original Bone bootleggers, their customers and persecutors, evoking their spirit of resistance to a repressive culture of prohibition and punishment.

## Christopher Bowden presents Mr Magenta

Tuesday 9 May, 7pm  
The Coffee Lounge, Herne Hill  
Baptist Church, Half Moon Lane.  
SE24 9HU

Booking via [Eventbrite](#)



Christopher Bowden presents his latest novel. It's a literary mystery about hidden lives and second chances, moving between a house in a south London square, a Brooklyn bookstore, a theatre in Marseille, and a cottage on the east coast of England. Christopher Bowden lives in south London, his six previous novels are *The Blue Book*, *The Yellow Room*, *The Red House*, *The Green Door*, *The Purple Shadow* and *The Amber Maze*.

Join Christopher and the Friends of Carnegie Library.

## Jill Abram presents Lucky Lambeth's Brilliant Bards

Wednesday 10 May, 6.30pm  
Streatham Library. SW16 1PN

Booking via [Eventbrite](#)



Lambeth is lucky to have fantastic poets of international renown living in the borough. For one night only, Jill Abram invites three of them to join her for a relaxing, thought provoking and entertaining night of poetry in Streatham library.

Poet, producer and presenter Jill Abram grew up in Manchester, travelled the world and now lives in Brixton. She was the Director of influential collective Malika's Poetry Kitchen for twelve years. Jill's debut pamphlet, *Forgetting My Father*, is published by Broken Sleep Books.

Joining Jill will be **Shazea Quraishi**, **Samatar Elmi** and **Sophie Herxheimer**. All welcome.

## The Radical Readers Discuss William Morris's Art, Wealth and Riches

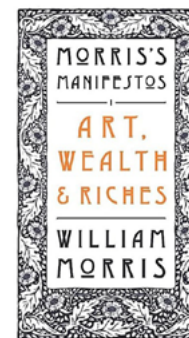
Friday 12 May, 7pm  
Brixton Library. SW2 1JQ

Booking via [Eventbrite](#)

This month the Radical Reading Group are reading William Morris's *Art, Wealth and Riches*.

William Morris is perhaps best known today for the beautiful textile designs he created, which continue to decorate homes around the globe. As one of the leading lights of British socialism, however, he is less well known. Based on a lecture given at the Manchester Royal Institution in 1883, *Art, Wealth and Riches* is a thought-provoking essay that considers art as having educational and aesthetic value that should be shared with the many, rather than financial value that should be hoarded by the few.

All welcome, feel free to bring drinks and snacks. For a copy of the book please contact the library on 020 7926 1056.



## Didn't You Use To Be Chris Mullin?

Monday 15 May, 7pm  
Durning Library. SE11 4HF

Booking via [Eventbrite](#)

Celebrated diarist and retired MP, Chris Mullin returns with his trademark irreverence and keen eye for the absurd to chronicle the turbulent last decade of the second Elizabethan era.



*Didn't You Use to Be Chris Mullin?* charts the collapse of New Labour, the long years of austerity politics, the highs and lows of Brexit, the rise and fall of Jeremy Corbyn and no fewer than four Tory Prime Ministers, culminating in the death of the Queen.

Wise, witty and deeply perceptive, Mullin paints a vivid portrait of our recent political history, join him in the library for a great evening.

This event is organised with the Friends of Durning Library. Refreshments (cash donation £3 suggested).

## Maame with Jessica George

Tuesday 16 May, 7pm  
Brixton Library. SW2 1JQ

Booking via [Eventbrite](#)



Maame (ma-meh) has many meanings in Twi, but in this case, it means woman.

Meet Maddie Wright. All her life, she's been told who she is: the one who takes care of the family, her mum's stand-in, her father's carer, the one who keeps the peace – and the secrets. It's time for her to speak up and leave home, Maddie is determined to become the kind of woman she wants to be. But will it take losing everything to find her voice?

As blisteringly funny and achingly relatable as its heroine, *Maame* is an unforgettable coming-of-age story about finally becoming the heroine of your own life.

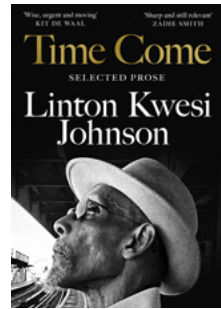
Join Jessica George for a great night with the author of the most discussed book of 2023!

## Linton Kwesi Johnson in Conversation

Wednesday 17 May, 7pm  
Brixton Library. SW2 1JQ

Booking via [Eventbrite](#)

Recognised as one of the great poets of modern times, and as a deeply respected and influential political and cultural activist and social critic, Linton Kwesi Johnson is also a prolific writer of non-fiction. In *Time Come*, he selects some of his most powerful prose – book and record reviews, lectures, obituaries and speeches – for the first time.



Written over many decades, it is a body of work that draws creatively and critically on Johnson's own Jamaican roots and on Caribbean history to explore the politics of race that continue to inform the Black British experience.

*Time Come* is a panorama of an exceptional life. A collection that ventures into memoir, it underscores Johnson's enduring importance in Britain's cultural history and reminds us of his brilliant, unparalleled legacy.

Join Linton in conversation with legendary actor, director, presenter and cultural activist, Burt Caesar.



## Celebrating the Legacies of Black Ink

Friday 19 May, 7pm  
Brixton Library. SW2 1JQ

Booking via [Eventbrite](#)

An evening with Desrie Thomson-George, co-founder of the Black Ink Collective, who will tell its story with readings and performances by Kadija George Sesay, Sandra Agard, Jason Lee, Derek Owusu, and Stxkz to commemorate the **45th Anniversary** of its birth.

In 1978, due to concerns about the lack of representation and the

continued denial of Black writer's existence, the Black Ink Collective was formed by eight young people, providing a platform for young Black Britons across the UK to write and have their work published.

Based in Brixton, Black Ink, the first of its kind, proved that it was possible to publish independently and paved the way for others. It was part of the wave of creativity that graced Britain in the '70s and '80s, as the first generation of post WWII young Black people came of age and were now having their voices heard.

Join us for an evening of stories, poetry, verse and music.



Jason Lee



Derek Owusu



Kadija George Sesay



Sandra Agard



Desrie Thomson-George



Stxkz



## Mrs Meredith and the Convict Laundries of Vauxhall and Stockwell

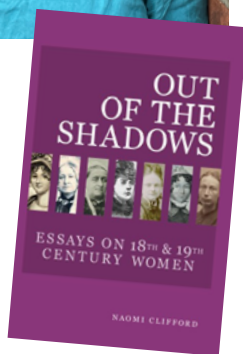
Monday 22 May, 7pm

Tate South Lambeth Library. SW8 1QP

Booking via [Eventbrite](#)



Join historian Naomi Clifford to discuss the work of 19th-century societies for the aid of discharged women prisoners. Naomi's latest book *Out of the Shadows* is a compilation of essays on women whose stories have been underexposed and here she talks in particular about the fascinating work of Susanna Meredith, who established steam laundries in Vauxhall and Stockwell to employ women convicts.



## Gary Younge - Dispatches from the Diaspora

Tuesday 23 May, 7pm

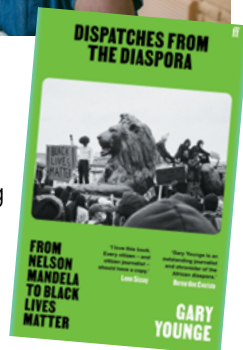
Clapham Library. SW4 7DB

Booking via [Eventbrite](#)



For the last three decades Gary Younge has had a ringside seat during the biggest events, and with the most significant personalities, to impact the Black diaspora: accompanying Nelson Mandela on his first election campaign, joining revellers on the southside of Chicago during Obama's victory, entering New Orleans days after hurricane Katrina or interviewing Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Maya Angelou and Stormzy. He has witnessed how much change is possible and the power of systems to thwart those aspirations.

Join Gary in conversation at Clapham Library!



## Small Worlds with Caleb Azumah Nelson

Wednesday 24 May, 7pm

Brixton Library. SW2 1JQ

Booking via [Eventbrite](#)



From the bestselling author of *Open Water* comes a new novel – *Small Worlds*. Set over the course of three summers, from London to Ghana and back again, *Small Worlds* is an exhilarating and expansive novel about the worlds we build for ourselves, the worlds we live, dance and love within.

Join Caleb in conversation with his Mum, Eugenia Ashie, discussing his new novel, intergenerational relationships and the stories and music which make us who we are.



## LGBTQ+ book club discuss Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit

Friday 26 May, 7pm

Brixton Library. SW2 1JQ

Online Event: [Eventbrite](#)

This is a hybrid event in person and online

This is the story of Jeanette, adopted and brought up by her mother as one of God's elect. Zealous and passionate, she seems destined for life as a missionary, but then she falls for one of her converts.



At sixteen, Jeanette decides to leave the church, her home and her family, for the young woman she loves. Innovative, punchy and tender, *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* is a few days ride into the bizarre outposts of religious excess and human obsession.

Join Lambeth Libraries LGBTQ+ book club to discuss Jeanette Winterson's classic *Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit*.

## StoryTrails: behind the creative process with Naresh Kaushal

Saturday 27 May, 2pm  
Brixton Library. SW2 1JQ

Booking via [Eventbrite](#)

In 2021 the StoryTrails project, led by the National Centre for Immersive Storytelling: StoryFutures Academy, recruited creative Naresh Kaushal to showcase the stories of our community using immersive 3D technology.



Naresh made the Lambeth StoryTrails interactive immersive map and here talks about the process of 3D mapping and storytelling from a creative's perspective. An artist and filmmaker for many years, Naresh has been working on participatory arts projects for some time. He has been keen to highlight the potential of the immersive technology, emphasising that "It's not just the fact it's using cutting edge technology, it's the fact that it is a platform for telling untold stories in a dynamic, vibrant and authentic way." Come see and discuss his work at Brixton Library.

Watch StoryTrails:  
[The People's map Lambeth at the BFI website.](#)



## Sex Bomb with Sadia Azmat

Wednesday 31 May, 6.30pm  
Brixton Library. SW2 1JQ

Booking via [Eventbrite](#)



*Sex Bomb* celebrates the joy of embracing sexuality and love as a British-Indian Muslim woman.

Sadia finds the funny in every experience she has, and this book explodes with personality, warmth and joy. To anyone who has ever felt different or alone; allow this book to fill you up and propel you forward, because we all deserve to feel like a *Sex Bomb*.

A fantastic night with comedian Sadia Azmat who talks about sex, horniness, hijabs, and smashing stereotypes.



## William Hussey: Killing Jericho

Thursday 8 June, 6.30pm  
West Norwood Library. SE27 9JX

Booking via [Eventbrite](#)



From the award-winning author of *The Outrage Jericho*, the gothic, helter-skelter thriller debut that introduces crime fiction's first ever Traveller detective, Scott Jericho.

Scott Jericho thought he'd worked his last case. Fresh out of jail, the disgraced former detective is forced to seek refuge with the fairground family he once rejected.

Join William and be introduced to a detective like no other.



## Windrush Stories with author Tony Fairweather and Alexis Keir

Thursday 15 June, 6.30pm  
Brixton Library. SW2 1JQ

Booking via [Eventbrite](#)



Photo credit: (c) Sharon Wallace

After WW2 England was on its knees, so the call went out to the British Empire for volunteers to rebuild the Mother Country. Young men and women from different Caribbean islands were quick to respond. In this 75th Anniversary of the arrival of the Empire Windrush and its passengers, join Tony and Alexis to discuss the importance of Windrush and their books: *Twenty - Eight Pounds Ten Shillings - A Windrush Story* and *Windward Family*.

Event in partnership with Spread The Word.

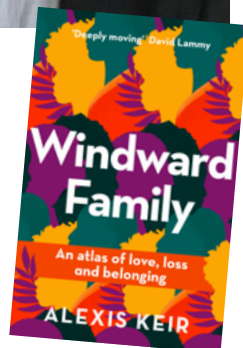


## Tony Fairweather

was born in Clapham, the son of Jamaican parents. He opened one of the first Black bookshops in the UK, worked for the Voice newspaper heading up its book club, founded 'The Write Thing' 29 years ago, and curated the *Windrush Collection* and *Windrush Exhibition of Artefacts*.



**Alexis Keir** grew up in Luton. His experiences living in New Zealand, including encounters with Maori culture and communities, inspired him to explore the stories of his own family and the Caribbean more deeply. His latest book is an extraordinary memoir that takes us inside the beating heart of a Black British family.



## Live Music at Clapham Library

### Naomi Bedford, Paul Simmonds and Band: Folk in the Library

Friday 19 May, 7pm  
Clapham Library. SW4 7DB  
Tickets £8

Booking via [Eventbrite](#)

Join **Naomi Bedford, Paul Simmonds** and their band for an evening of potent, exciting and emotional folk music - live in the Library!



Naomi Bedford and Paul Simmonds are a duo, based in the folk and country roots genre. Tonight, they come with their band for an amazing night. They have made 4 acclaimed albums and been nominated for a Radio 2 Folk Award (Best Original Song). They tour widely and have appeared at Cambridge Festival, Glastonbury, Celtic Connections and many others.

[www.naomibedford.com](http://www.naomibedford.com)

### "Amazing, Naomi pulls no punches" Iggy Pop

Doors Open 7pm, performance starts 7.30pm.  
A limited cash bar - wine, beer and water - will be available from 7pm.

### Folk Night at the Library with Topette!

Saturday 1 July, 7.30pm  
Clapham Library. SW4 7DB  
Tickets £14 + booking fee (concs available)

Booking via [WeGotTickets](#)

Anglo-French acoustic five-piece folk band Topette! are back for their first UK tour since 2019. With two albums released since lockdown (*Rhododendron*, 2019 and *Bourdon*, 2022) they are hot, and raring to go... **Book early!**



Featuring top English and French Bal-folk musicians.

Irresistible to ears and feet alike Topette bring a fantastic summer sound to Clapham Library – **A delight for any folkies.**

Doors Open 7.30pm, performance starts 8pm.  
A limited cash bar - wine, beer and water - will be available from 7.30pm.

## Other Events

### The Black Men's Consortium Performance Event

This community engagement event immerses you in film, interactivity, debate and includes improvisation. With a fantastic cast of performers, this interactive performance takes you into dimensions you have never seen, forcing you to consider the sometimes uneasy question of "what is needed to improve the lives of Black men in the UK?"

The Black Men's Consortium is a community-led exploration arts and health project in which Black men of African Descent meet to experience positive and meaningful interactions and discuss issues that matter to them.

**Thursday 18 May, 5pm to 7pm**  
**Brixton Library. SW2 1JQ**

Booking via [Eventbrite](#)

**Saturday 20 May, 12pm to 3pm**  
**Streatham Library. SW16 1PN**

Booking via [Eventbrite](#)



### Learn Dominoes with the Brixton Immortals

The Brixton Immortals Domino Club brings the opportunity to learn how to play dominoes and the skills you need to win. A great way to get children engaging in maths and probability while having fun – and a good social game for adults too.

The Brixton based international and national champions, the Immortals, will be playing and teaching their Domino art, with all the tricks and tactics for beginner and advanced players, at a Lambeth library near you.

**Come along for an afternoon of fun.**

**Saturday 20 May, 2pm to 4pm**  
**Carnegie Library. SE24 0AG**

**Saturday 10 June, 2pm to 4pm**  
**Minet Library. SE5 9QY**



Photo credit: Charli Folscher  
Unsplash

## Exhibitions

### Yair Meshoulam: Signs Of Our Time: Mobiles, Paintings & Prints

**Showing 25 April to 26 May**  
**Brixton Library. SW2 1JQ**

**Exhibition available during Library opening hours**



Yair Meshoulam is a maker of beautiful and extraordinary paintings and installations, as well as a part-time guitarist, and self-proclaimed 'King of Wallpaper'. Born in Haifa in 1963, he has lived in London since 1966. His subject matter ranges from the mythological to the magical to the mystical but in a contemporary or timeless setting. The style is figurative from the imagination - surreal, symbolic, magic realist - label it how you will.

Meshoulam's latest volume in the series 'Textures of Consciousness' (Tambar Press, 2022) explores through images, poetry and photography, the themes and signs of changes in the patterns of human behaviour during and after the Covid 19 virus pandemic.

### Jim Grover: Windrush Photography Exhibition

**Showing 1 June to 2 September**  
**Clapham Library. SW4 7DB**

**Exhibition available during Library opening hours**

To mark the 75th anniversary of the arrival of SS Windrush, a major new photographic exhibition will be staged at Clapham Library.



It is being created by award-winning local social documentary photographer, Jim Grover, who created and exhibited the critically acclaimed, 'Windrush: Portrait of a Generation', in 2018 to celebrate the 70th anniversary.

[www.jimgroverphotography.com](http://www.jimgroverphotography.com)





# Lambeth Libraries

## Libraries contact details:

### **Brixton Library,**

Brixton Oval SW2 1JQ.

Tel: 020 7926 1058

### **Carnegie Library,**

192 Herne Hill Road SE24 0DG.

Tel: 0207 926 6050

### **Clapham Library,**

Mary Seacole Centre,

91 Clapham High Street, SW4 7DB.

Tel: 020 7926 0717

### **Durning Library,**

167 Kennington Lane SE11 4HF.

Tel: 020 7926 8682

### **Minet Library,**

52 Knatchbull Road, SE5 9QY.

Tel: 0207 926 6073

### **Streatham Library,**

63 Streatham High Road SW16 1PN.

Tel: 020 7926 6768

### **Tate South Lambeth Library,**

180 South Lambeth Road SW8 1QP.

Tel: 020 7926 0705

### **Upper Norwood Library,**

39-41 Westow Hill. SE19 1TQ.

Tel: 0207 926 1063

### **Waterloo Library,**

The Oasis Centre,

1 Kennington Road, SE1 7QP.

Tel: 0207 926 8751

### **West Norwood Library,**

1-5 Norwood High Street SE27 9JX.


Tel: 020 7926 8092.

This information was believed to be correct at the time it was published but may be subject to changes and circumstances outside of the control of the organisers.

For more events and information visit

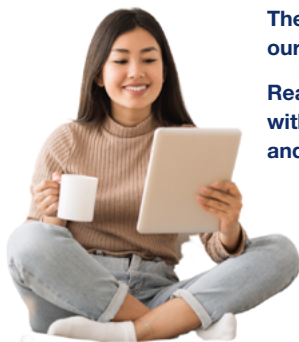
[www.lambeth.gov.uk/events](http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/events).

For Library bookings:

All library event can be found at Eventbrite/  
Lambeth Libraries 

Otherwise for further details please phone  
the local library or email

[readersandwriters@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:readersandwriters@lambeth.gov.uk)



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our digital offer.**

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and PressReader**

