

NEWS RELEASE: Thursday 8 March 2018

Hay Festival and *The Pool* launch #VOTE100BOOKS campaign celebrating literature by women from the past 100 years

Hay Festival and *The Pool* have joined forces for the first time in a new project – #VOTE100BOOKS – to mark 100 years since some British women first got the vote and reflect on how far equality has come, and how far we still have to go.

#VOTE100BOOKS is a public call-out to select and celebrate 100 books by women from the past 100 years that deserve more attention. These books will be discussed and celebrated in a special event hosted by *The Pool* at Hay Festival Wales, 24 May – 3 June, while the discussion will continue at Hay Festival events in Mexico, Peru, Spain and Colombia throughout the year.

Books of all genres, fiction or non-fiction, and for all ages are eligible for submission. There are only two criteria: they must be written by women and published in 1918 or later.

Submissions can be made at hayfestival.org/vote-100-books/. Anyone can submit – readers, writers, and publishers from all around the world – with each submission entered into a prize draw to win a selection of 10 of the final titles.

The final #VOTE100BOOKS selection will be unveiled on the eve of Hay Festival Wales on Wednesday 23 May 2018.

Sam Baker, co-founder, CEO and editor of *The Pool*, said: “Since its launch, *The Pool* has prided itself on amplifying and celebrating women’s voices, so I can think of no better way to celebrate this historic year than by celebrating women’s writing with #VOTE100BOOKS. We’re thrilled to be working with Hay Festival to bring more attention to women’s stories and storytellers.”

Peter Florence, Director of Hay Festival, said: “We want a new library of 100 great books by women that have inspired readers over the last century. Books have liberated and empowered people, books have enabled readers to imagine the world to be braver, more equal and more dynamic. Democracy is vulnerable to cynicism. Books offer empathy and hope.”

The full Hay Festival 2018 programme will be announced on Monday 26 March, but a handful of early bird events have already been released including: **Margaret Atwood, Sarah Churchwell, Hannah Critchlow, Rowan Williams, Philip Pullman, Marina Warner, and Jack Zipes;** comedy from **Shazia Mirza, Bridget Christie, and Dara O Briain;** and music from **Jake Bugg, Trio HLK and Evelyn Glennie, Les Amazones d’Afrique, and Sam Lee.**

Meanwhile, the festival’s free Schools Days programme was announced Monday 5 March, featuring a stellar selection of internationally-acclaimed scientists, historians, poets, novelists and entertainers, including authors **Julian Clary, Cressida Cowell, Laura Dockrill, Eoin Colfer, David Almond, Patrice Lawrence;** poets **Joe Coelho and Eric Ngalle Charles,** storyteller **Daniel Morden;** maths prodigy **Anne-Marie Imafidon;** BBC presenter **Katie Thistleton;** and broadcaster and teen ambassador **Gemma Cairney.**

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Blending live performance, workshops and storytelling, the two specially curated days - Thursday 24 May (KS 2) and Friday 25 May (KS 3 and 4) - are free for State schools and funded by the Welsh Government and Hay Festival Foundation. Last year's Schools Days saw 21,461 pupils attend from 105 primary schools and 78 secondary schools from across England and Wales. Schools can find out more and sign up at hayfestival.org.

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Notes to editors

For IMAGES, INTERVIEWS, FURTHER INFORMATION or to apply for PRESS ACCREDITATION, please contact Hay Festival publicity director Christopher Bone at christopher@hayfestival.org or 07506 522540.

About Hay Festival

www.hayfestival.org

Hay Festival brings readers and writers together to share stories and ideas in sustainable events around the world. The festivals inspire, examine and entertain, inviting participants to imagine the world as it is and as it might be.

Nobel Prize-winners and novelists, scientists and politicians, historians and musicians talk with audiences in a dynamic exchange of ideas. The Festival's global conversation shares the latest thinking in the arts and sciences with curious audiences live, in print and online. Hay Festival also runs wide programmes of education work supporting coming generations of writers and culturally hungry audiences of all ages.

In 1987, the festival was dreamt up around a kitchen table in Hay. Thirty-one years later, the unique marriage of exacting conversations and entertainment for all ages has travelled to editions in 30 locations, from the historic town of Cartagena in Colombia to the heart of cities in Peru, Mexico, Spain and Denmark. The organisation now reaches a global audience of hundreds of thousands every year and continues to grow and innovate, building partnerships and initiatives alongside some of the leading bodies in arts and the media, including the BBC, Welsh Government Department of Education, Visit Wales, ACW, the British Council, Oxfam, TATA, Friends of Hay Festival, Baillie Gifford, Good Energy, and the National Trust.

Acclaimed author, actor and writer **Stephen Fry** is President of the organisation; **Peter Florence** is Director; and **Caroline Michel**, CEO of leading literary and talent agency Peters Fraser + Dunlop, is Chair of the Festival board.

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Coming up...

- Hay Festival Wales, UK (24 May-3 June 2018)
- Hay Festival Querétaro, Mexico (6-9 September 2018)
- Hay Festival Segovia, Spain (20-23 September 2018)
- Hay Festival Arequipa, Peru (8-11 November 2018)
- Hay Festival Wales Winter Weekend, UK (22-25 November 2018)
- Hay Festival Cartagena de Indias, Colombia (January 2019)