



## [ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival](#) unveils list of prolific speakers for 2019 edition

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### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- [Festival Speakers announced](#) - The Festival announced its line-up of over 350 speakers including Akhil Katyal, Ben Okri, Benyamin, Bettany Hughes, Colson Whitehead, Darryl Jones, David Olusuga, Ira Mukhoty, Jeffery Archer, Mary Beard, Navtej Sarna, Priyamvada Natarajan, Reni Eddo Lodge, Shashi Tharoor, Sven Beckert and Venki Ramakrishnan.
- [Jaipur Music Stage](#) - With discovery, variety and collaboration at the heart of its programming, the Jaipur Music Stage announced its headliners including DubFX, Jasbir Jassi, Kutle Khan, Nooran Sisters.
- [Jaipur Writers Shorts](#) - Teamwork Arts announced the Jaipur Writers Shorts, in partnership with Hotstar, featuring 75 exciting episodes on conversations from the 2018 edition of the Festival airing on its free to access platform.
- [Jaipur BookMark](#) - The B2B arm of the Festival, Jaipur BookMark (JBM) unveiled its list of close to 100 speakers for its 6th edition including Ananth Padmanabhan, Juergen Boos, Karthika VK, Michael Healy, Nandan Jha, Naveen Kishore and Urvashi Butalia.

Set to take place between 24-28 January 2019, the annual high noon of literature returns to its customary home, Jaipur's glorious Diggi Palace Hotel -for its 12th edition. This year's veritable power-house roster of speakers, like every edition, reflects the diversity of the Festival's programming in books, themes, subjects, and ideas representing literature and thoughts intrinsic to both India and the world.

The literary 'Kumbh' has hosted nearly 2000 speakers and welcomed over a million booklovers over the past decade, evolving into a global literary spectacle. This year, the Festival will host over 350 speakers writers, thinkers, politicians, journalists and popular cultural icons from across a vast array of nationalities,





representing several Indian and international languages as well as major awards such as the Nobel, the Man Booker, the Pulitzer, the Sahitya Akademi, the JCB Prize for Literature and the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature.

The list of speakers features a stellar line-up of Indian and international names covering issues as kaleidoscopic as the classics, war, espionage, intelligence, politics, environment and climate change, women and gender, management and entrepreneurship, technology, along with broader themes such as mythology, crime science, history, cinema.

On the list are some of the world's greatest thinkers and writers: Nobel laureate **Venki Ramakrishnan**, President of the Royal Society and author of *Gene Machine: The Race to Decipher the Secrets of the Ribosome* which unlocks the mysteries of the gene-reading molecule, one of humanity's greatest puzzles; **Ben Okri**, whose Man-Booker-winning *The Famished Road*, asks the haunting question "who is the prisoner?", and who will get to the heart of his own life and writing; **Colson Whitehead**, author of six novels, versatile columnist for the *New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *New York Magazine*, *Harper's* and *Granta* among others, winner of the 2016 National Book Award for Fiction and the 2017 Pulitzer for his heart-stopping tour de force, *Underground Railroad*; **Priyamvada Natarajan**, a cosmologist noted for her work in mapping dark matter, dark energy, and black holes, a Professor at Yale, and acclaimed author of *Mapping the Heavens: The Radical Scientific Ideas That Reveal the Cosmos*, who will take attendees on a tour to "map the heavens" across the greatest cosmological discoveries of the past century.

The 2019 line-up continues to scintillate minds thirsty for knowledge with Harvard Professor of History and Pulitzer finalist **Sven Beckert** whose *The Empire of Cotton* weaves together the story of cotton with how the present world order, amidst a constant and complex interplay between slaves and planters, merchants and statesmen, workers and factory-owners, came to exist while ushering in forces of modern capitalism; master of the twist-in-the-tale **Jeffery Archer** who will speak about his extraordinarily dramatic and chequered life, and introduce his recently-released *Heads You Win*, a work of fiction spanning two continents and thirty years. Celebrated British Nigerian broadcaster and film-maker **David Olusoga** will be





in conversation with **Sir Richard Evans**, formerly Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge University, as he defends the role of history as an imperative to our understanding of the way we live; in ‘The World’s War: Forgotten Soldiers of Empire’ Olusoga will focus on how Europe’s Great War became the World’s War -and discuss the chilling paraphernalia of the era’s racial obsessions which dictated which men would serve, how they would serve and to what degree they would suffer.

Olusoga will be in conversation with **Reni Eddo-Lodge** on the latter’s bestseller *Why I’m No Longer Talking to White People About Race* which won the 2018 British Book Awards Non-Fiction Narrative Book of the Year and sparked a national conversation in Britain on class and race and their complicated and bloody trail of conflict. Eddo-Lodge will be in discussion too with Cambridge Professor of Classics, classics editor of the *Times Literary Supplement* and vocal feminist **Mary Beard** about history’s flawed positioning of women under the shadow of dominating cultural misogyny, especially relevant in the aftermath of #MeToo. Beard will additionally talk of the history of Rome, a civilization and an empire which was the fulcrum of Western history controlling vast tracts between Spain and Syria, and laying the foundation for several subsequent realities such as slavery, citizenship, democracy, religious controversy, migration, with fellow historian, acclaimed broadcaster, and King’s College Professor **Bettany Hughes**, whose captivating book on Istanbul, that feisty and dazzling pastiche of a city rich with history, conflict and antiquity, will also feature in a discussion at the Festival with William Dalrymple.

Diplomat **Navtej Sarna** in ‘The Post American World’ will elaborate upon how the growth of India, China, Brazil, Russia and Africa is generating a new landscape and will soon push the West out of its position of complacency and hegemony to one that recognises this seismic power shift; Sarna will join **Kishwar Desai**, author of *Jallianwala Bagh, 1919*, among others, to seek the backstory of that fateful day of April 13, 1919 a century after; writer and columnist **Ira Mukhoty**, author of *Daughters of the Sun: Empresses, Queens and Begums of the Mughal Empire*, will discuss Nur Jehan and the other indomitable Mughal women who in many ways defined that era.





A session has been set for 'Tharoorisms' where the prolific **Shashi Tharoor** will speak of his personal and political beliefs and his vast oeuvre of work laced with his characteristic wit.

Australian Professor **Darryl Jones**, well-known ecologist and naturalist, author of *The Birds at My Table*, will focus on what is perhaps the modern world's most critical crisis: climate change, and the ingenuity required to reverse its shattering consequences while in another session he will discuss the fragile balance of human interaction with the other species with whom we share our planet; **Akhil Katyal**, poet, gay-rights activist and candid commentator, will feature in discussions on our visceral link with our mother-tongues as well as on Poetry Hour, a daily series of poetry readings. Malayalam author **Benyamin** whose intense *Jasmine Days* won the first JCB Prize for Literature and follows the story of the Arab Spring, examining love, loyalty, friendship, family, life and death along the way, will speak of the writing process in depth.

For the complete list of 2019 speakers see [here](#).

The ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival is supported and partnered by brands as much for its position as a pioneer amongst Literature festivals, as for its intrinsic value of providing an unbiased, democratic platform for diverse voices. Many of these partnerships are long-term, helping the Festival grow in scope and scale - ZEE Entertainment, Bank of Baroda and the Aga Khan Foundation, are a few such partnerships. Associations with brands that are at the forefront of innovation in the industry they belong to, help grow the stature of the Festival. The Festival is proud to be associated for the first time with JCB Prize for Literature - an Indian literary award established this year to recognise distinguished work of fiction by an Indian writer working in English or translated fiction by an Indian writer.

The incredible reach of the Festival also helps in the amplification of the path-breaking work being done by organisations like Population Foundation of India and Child Labour Free Jaipur, which are devoted to social causes, even as they reaffirm values the Festival stands for.





In an innovative partnership called Jaipur Writers Shorts, Teamwork Arts, producers of the ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival, has teamed up with Hotstar, to showcase a cross-section of Festival conversations from 2018 as an endeavour to deliver in short, succinct and intense 12-minute digital capsules, the exhilaration of literature and dialogue to a wider audience base, who have been unable to attend the Festival in person or want to reflect upon the lived experience later. The Jaipur Writers Shorts are available on the free-to-access Hotstar platform, bringing the gift of literature to one and all, much like the Festival! The episodes cover award-winning authors discussing ideas across genres, books and issues of national and international relevance.

The Jaipur Music Stage, which runs parallel to the Festival, celebrates “all things music”, with a variety of music genres coming together along with exciting collaborations between diverse artistes, and opens up a world of musical discovery. Apart from electrifying evenings of performances, the Music Stage will also feature workshops, masterclasses, talks and sessions, giving music-lovers a chance to interact with musicians, learn more about instruments and nuances within musical genres. The 2019 line-up of the Stage has unveiled some of its headliners including the earthy and soulful Nooran Sisters; leading Carnatic and world music vocalist Mahesh Vinayakram in collaboration with Dub FX (Benjamin Stanford), an unbelievably gifted street musician who creates powerful music with just his voice, synthesisers and loop machines. The ever-popular and effervescent Punjabi folk singer Jasbir Jassi will also be part of never-seen-before collaboration with Kutle Khan, sublime reinventor of Rajasthani folk. More details on the programming are expected to be revealed soon.

The Festival’s B2B arm, Jaipur BookMark (JBM), supported by governments of many countries as well as Indian and global publishers such as The Seagull School of Publishing, The Royal Norwegian Embassy, the Sahitya Academy, is now in its sixth edition, and remains a key platform for publishers, literary agents, translation agencies and writers wanting to talk business along with focussed sessions and major industry players from across the world. The 2019 edition features key industry stakeholders and heavyweights such as CEO of Harper Collins India, Ananth Padmanabhan; Westland Managing Editor Karthika VK; international copyright expert Michael Healy; Seagull publisher Naveen Kishore; Frankfurt Bookfair CEO and President



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Juergen Boos; Iconic Feminist Publisher of Zubaan Books, Urvashi Butalia; Senior Vice President, Penguin Random House, Nandan Jha; and Vani Prakashan's Aditi Maheshwari Goyal.

Speaking on the occasion of today's preview, **author and Festival Co-Director Namita Gokhale** said, *"The ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival has, through the last decade, helped articulate and foster a unique literary and creative culture across the world. Our programme remains determinedly diverse and multilingual, with over sixteen Indian languages, twelve International languages, and almost thirty nationalities represented at Jaipur this January."*

*The 2019 edition has a special emphasis on the importance of Science, on Genetics, Astronomy and Astrophysics, Artificial Intelligence, and what the future holds for the planet. We also explore music, poetry and the arts, and delve into fiction, short stories, adaptations and translations. We examine different facets of myth, memory and religion. We interrogate rural distress, think aloud about migration and identity, and reflect on the ongoing struggles for gender equity, from the landmark judgement on section 377 to the tumultuous watershed of the #metoo movement.*

*We look forward to seeing you in Jaipur this coming January as we set off on another rewarding pilgrimage of the mind and spirit."*

**Writer and Festival Co-Director William Dalrymple** said, *"I am thrilled to launch our line-up and look forward to welcoming literature lovers from across the world at the ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival 2019 at the Diggi Palace in January."*

**Sanjoy K. Roy, Managing Director of Teamwork Arts, producers of the ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival,** said, *"The annual ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival brings the world to India and takes India to the world. Over 300 speakers covering a range of topics will converge on one of the loveliest heritage cities in the world weaving stories of hope and resilience, love and betrayal. A veritable celebration of the written word!"*





The upcoming edition of the ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival will once again bring together book-lovers, globe-trotters, backpackers, vacationers, students and ideas-seekers for the world's definitive annual marathon of books.

-- ENDS --

#### NOTES TO MEDIA PERSONS

Information on **Registration** for the ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival can be found here:

<https://jaipurliteraturefestival.org/registration/>

For **media enquiries** on the ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival, please contact Edelman India:

[IndiaJLF@edelman.com](mailto:IndiaJLF@edelman.com)

#### About the ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival 2019

Described as the 'greatest literary show on Earth', the ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival is a sumptuous feast of ideas.

The past decade has seen it transform into a global literary phenomenon having hosted nearly 2000 speakers and welcoming over a million book lovers from across India and the globe.

The Festival's core values remain unchanged: to serve as a democratic, non-aligned platform offering free and fair access.

Every year, the Festival brings together a diverse mix of the world's greatest writers, thinkers, humanitarians, politicians, business leaders, sports people and entertainers on one stage to champion the freedom to express and engage in thoughtful debate and dialogue.



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Writers and Festival Directors Namita Gokhale and William Dalrymple, alongside producers Teamwork Arts, invite speakers to take part in the five-day programme set against the backdrop of Rajasthan's stunning cultural heritage and the Diggi Palace in the state capital Jaipur.

Past speakers have ranged from Nobel Laureates J.M. Coetzee, Orhan Pamuk and Muhammad Yunus, Man Booker Prize winners Ian McEwan, Margaret Atwood and Paul Beatty, Sahitya Akademi winners Girish Karnad, Gulzar, Javed Akhtar, M.T. Vasudevan Nair as well as the late Mahasweta Devi and U.R. Ananthamurthy along with literary superstars including Amish Tripathi, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and Vikram Seth. An annual event that goes beyond literature, the Festival has also hosted Amartya Sen, Amitabh Bachchan, the late A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Oprah Winfrey, Stephen Fry, Thomas Piketty and former president of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai.

The ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival is a flagship event of Teamwork Arts, which produces it along with over 25 highly acclaimed performing arts, visual arts and literary festivals across more than 40 cities globally.

Over the years, Teamwork Arts has produced ZEE JLF at The British Library, ZEE JLF at Boulder, JLF at Houston, JLF at New York and JLF in Adelaide.

Website: [www.jaipurliteraturefestival.org](http://www.jaipurliteraturefestival.org)

### About Teamwork Arts

For over 25 years, Teamwork Arts has taken India to the world and brought the world to India.

In countries such as Australia, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, Korea, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, UK and USA, Teamwork produces over 25 highly acclaimed performing arts, visual arts and literary festivals across more than 40 cities.







Teamwork Arts produces one of the world's largest literary gatherings, the annual [ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival](#), the [Ishara International Puppet Festival](#) and the annual [Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards \(META\) and Festival](#) in New Delhi, international festivals [Shared History](#) in South Africa, [Eye on India](#) in the United States of America, [India by the Bay](#) in Hong Kong, [Confluence - Festival of India](#) in Australia, [India@70 2017: Year of Culture in the United Kingdom](#), and many more.

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