



## ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival Announces Programme for 2019 edition

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Set to take place between 24 and 28 January 2019, the ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival returns to its customary home at Jaipur's Diggi Palace Hotel for its 12th edition.

The programme for the 2019 edition of the Festival is vast and kaleidoscopic, with themes ranging from the classics, war, espionage, intelligence, politics, environment and climate change, gender issues, management entrepreneurship, science and technology, along with broader areas such as fiction, adapting screenplays, mythology, crime, history, cinema, art, activism and the psychological aftermath of migration.

Some highlights from the programme include **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 with fellow novelist Rana Dasgupta; and **Colson Whitehead**, author of six novels, versatile columnist, and winner of the 2016 National Book Award for Fiction and the 2017 Pulitzer for his heart-stopping tour de force, *Underground Railroad*, who will be in conversation with the brilliant Kanishk Tharoor.

Introduced by cosmologist and Yale Professor **Priyamvada Natarajan**, Nobel laureate **Venki Ramakrishnan**, President of the Royal Society and author of *Gene Machine: The Race to Decipher the Secrets of the Ribosome* will speak in **Gene Machine and the Science of Culture** about his work which unlocks the mysteries of the gene-reading molecule, one of humanity's greatest puzzles.

In an atmosphere charged with the outcry of #MeToo allegations, 'Women and Power' will have Cambridge Professor of Classics, classics editor of the *Times Literary Supplement* and vocal feminist with a sharp and wry wit, Mary Beard discuss history's flawed positioning of women under the shadow of dominating cultural misogyny with the powerful voices of Germaine Greer, Katty Kay, Reni Eddo Lodge and Urvashi Butalia in conversation with Bee Rowlatt.



  
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The journey of the book to the screenplay is one of transformative change, grit, toil and acceptance, both for the writer and the film-maker and adaptations thus form a prominent theme in the programme. **'After Trainspotting'** has the raw and edgy Scotsman-writer Irvine Welsh, author of the eloquent punk novel *Trainspotting*, which was adapted into a cult film of the same name by Danny Boyle, in conversation with Chandras Choudhury.

In the session **'Before and After Pi'**, Man Booker-winning Yann Martel, whose international bestseller *Life of Pi* scaled unbelievable heights, both as a novel and as a film, talks about his writing and life before and after the life-changing success of Pi, with novelist Jerry Pinto.

In another session on *Call Me by Your Name*, that 2007 *tour de force* of intimacy and sexuality, depicted in a gentle sweep across timelines, at once evocative yet unsentimental in writer André Aciman's lucid prose, and later scripted to film by James Ivory, the former will be in conversation with Anindita Ghose.

There are also conversation on books celebrating the world of cinema. Meghna Gulzar, acclaimed film director, is the author of *Because He Is*, a tribute to her legendary father, Gulzar. In conversation with book editor Shantanu Ray Choudhuri, she speaks of her childhood, the tender parenting she received and the creative connection that she continues to share with her father in the session **'Because We Are: A Portrait of My Father'**.

Language and its almost primeval relationship with writers are discussed in **'Reclaiming the Mother Tongue'** which examines our visceral link with our mother-tongues, an umbilical tie difficult to shed. Bilingual poet Akhil Katyal, and leading Malayalam litterateur N.S. Madhavan, will be in conversation with Kanishk Tharoor, writer and broadcaster whose debut short story collection *Swimmer Among the Stars* has been critically acclaimed worldwide.





Along with the writer's ties with language, the toil behind the hard-to-conquer process of writing has always fascinated readers. If the acute miasma of being uprooted is added to the arduous process of writing, we have '**Beyond Borders: On Migration and the Novel**' with literary exiles and migrant writers Álvaro Enrigue, Hari Kunzru, Jennifer Makumbi, Kaveh Akbar and Tania James comparing notes with Amitava Kumar and examining if migrating from one's roots does indeed inspire the writer's felicity in writing or otherwise.

The complex and delicate craft of the short story will be in focus in '**Beginnings and Endings**' where four prominent writers will read from and contextualise beginnings and endings in the structure of their work. On the panel are Andrew Sean Greer, *New York Times* bestselling-author of six works of fiction, including the 2018 Pulitzer Prize winning novel *Less*; Jayant Kaikini, four-time recipient of the Karnataka Sahitya Akademy Award and DSC 2018 Prize-nominee and Mahesh Rao, whose debut novel, *The Smoke is Rising* won the Tata First Book Award for fiction, in conversation with award-winning writer Paul McVeigh, co-founder of London Short Story Festival.

Spotlight on the specialised skill of writing continues in **Mahasamar: Writing the Epic**. In an age of mythological bestsellers, perhaps the most significant, scholarly and compelling body of work has been created by the iconic Hindi writer Narendra Kohli. The legendary novelist, playwright and satirist will speak of his retelling of the Indian epics, and the nine volumes of the *Mahasamar* series putting a cultural context to the contemporary understanding of the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* and the *Puranas* with Yatindra Mishra.

This year's programming also features Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Climate Change as frontrunners in keeping with the rising tide of narrative around them. In '**The Future is Now**', Scientia Professor of Artificial Intelligence at the University of New South Wales Toby Walsh, a leading AI researcher and author of *2062: The World that AI Made* and former journalist and writer Meredith Broussard, author of *Artificial Unintelligence: How Computers Misunderstand the World*, will discuss our future under the steady but ambivalent influence of AI and the possible choices we need to make to remain in control of our lives when threatened with the intervention of powers far beyond human paradigms.





Solar energy, once a niche application for a limited market, has become the green activist's buzzword as the cheapest and fastest-growing power source on Earth. Its potential is nearly limitless—every hour the sun beams down more energy than the world uses in a year. In **'Taming the Sun: Innovations to Harness Solar Energy and Power the Planet'**, energy expert, and Philip D. Reed Fellow for Science and Technology at the Council on Foreign Relations, Varun Sivaram warns that the world is not yet equipped to harness its erratic sunshine to meet most of its energy needs. Discussing with him the way forward for solar power to become the centre-piece of a global clean energy revolution will be Marcus Moench, founder of ISET-International who has worked extensively on water, climate, and urbanization particularly in Asia.

January 25<sup>th</sup> marks India's National Voters' Day and 70 years of the Election Commission of India even as the world's largest democracy prepares for its 17th General Election, **'India Decides: The Great March to Democracy'** cuts out the frills and looks at the actual process of bringing India's vast electorate to poll and the staggering challenges therein of conducting free and fair elections across diverse geographies and difficult terrain.

Apart from an election, in a democracy, information empowers, and no one knows this better than Aruna Roy, the activist. In **'The Right to Know'** she and activist Harsh Mander speak with Sreenivasan Jain, making a passionate appeal for democracy's citizenry's 'Right to Knowledge' in order to challenge existing and systemic ambiguities currently abounding in power.

From India to the politics of the world: diplomat Navtej Sarna in **'The Post American World'**, along with a distinguished panel comprising Jon Lee Anderson, Peter Bergen and Steve Coll, will elaborate upon how the growth of India, China, Brazil, Russia and Africa is generating a new landscape which will soon push the West out of its position of complacency and hegemony, with BBC Anchor Katty Kay. The uneasy but unavoidable question about Britain's relationship with Europe which has divided the country, brought down a government and threatens havoc in the near future, will be asked in **Brexit and British Politics** by four informed onlookers: Jeremy Paxman, Nikesh Shukla, Rachel Johnson, Roy Strong.



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**'Directorate S: The CIA and America's Secret Wars in Afghanistan and Pakistan'** discusses the Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Steve Coll's new book, which tells the turbulent story of America's involvement in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2016 and how in the wake of 9/11, the CIA scrambled to destroy Bin Laden and his associates. Exploring the taut web of assumptions, old contacts, favours and animosities that were activated in this effort, the book uncovers the bitter and unexpected turns foreign policy decisions can take. It delineates the feared 'Directorate S', a highly secretive arm of the Pakistan State with its own views on the Taliban. Coll discusses his work with Shiv Shankar Menon of the MEA and CNN's national security analyst Peter Bergen, in conversation with Jon Lee Anderson.

Art will also be in focus in the session **Contemporary** featuring Anish Kapoor, one of India's finest artists and sculptors. Kapoor, whose sculptures are almost lyrical, will discuss how he coerces objects to spill out of their own parameters while standing serenely in meditative focus.

The full programme will be available to view at <http://jaipurliteraturefestival.org/programme/>

The Festival's B2B arm, Jaipur BookMark (JBM) is now in its sixth edition, and remains a key a 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.

For emerging writers looking to find publishers, JBM has announced a new initiative - iWrite, calling out for unpublished manuscripts, be it short-stories, poems, and works of fiction or non-fiction, with literary stalwarts who will critique and fine-tune them. Even though only when an entry makes it to the top 10 shortlist, it gets a chance to be shared with international publishers, literary agents, translators and other industry experts in a face-to-face pitching session for a potential book deal, all submitted entries are entitled to receive feedback from experts.



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Apart from scouting for unpublished manuscripts, JBM also recognises excellence in the industry with three important awards: the Vani Foundation Translation Award given to a translator of Indian origin for his/her body of work in the field of translating between two Indian languages; the Romain Rolland Literary Prize 2019 to recognise publishers and translators working on translations of French works into Indian languages and the Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize.

The ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival itself hosts important literary and artistic awards to honour talent including the Ojas Art Award, the Kanhaiyalal Sethia Poetry Prize and sessions with the shortlisted authors and jury members from the JCB Prize for Literature.

Literature lovers, book enthusiasts, ideas-seekers and Festival-goers from across the globe can look forward to an inimitable experience with the vast diversity of sessions at the world's distinctive annual celebration of literature, art and culture - the ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival.

-- 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.



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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.

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.



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### 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.

**Royal Opera House, Mumbai** is widely touted as Mumbai's Cultural Crown Jewel and India's only surviving Opera House. The original idea for the space was conceived of in 1908, inaugurated in 1911 by King George V, and eventually completed in 1916. The design incorporated a blend of European and Indian detailing. The space became a cinema in later years before falling into disrepair and shutting by the 1990s. Fittingly, the space has been owned by the Royal Family of Gondal since 1952 and was eventually restored by conservation architect, Abha Narain Lambah under the leadership of His Highness, Maharaja Shri Jyotendrasinhji of Gondal. The Royal Opera House Mumbai, now one of the last remaining Baroque structures in the city, reopened after 23 years in October 2016. The building was included on the 2012 World Monuments Watch to raise awareness about its history and significance, and support preservation efforts. The building has since been recognized with an Award of Merit in the 2017 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation. The restored facilities feature a 575-seater 3-level auditorium with an orchestra pit and state of the art technological upgradations, including acoustics, stagecraft, lighting and air-conditioning, alongside retaining the old world charm of the proscenium stage, the royal boxes and the magnificent regal



  
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chandeliers. Some more enhancements to the venue include a motorized screen, co-axial ceiling speaker system, Four-zone volume control and all round wifi access. Today, it stands as a key performance and creative hub in the city's cultural landscape, while being a premier heritage landmark.

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**Avid Learning**, a public programming platform and cultural arm of the Essar Group, has conducted over 950 programs and connected with more than 100,000 individuals since its inception in 2009. Driven by the belief that Learning Never Stops, AVID's multiple formats like Workshops, Panel Discussions, Gallery Walkthroughs, and Festival Platforms create a dynamic and interactive atmosphere that stimulates intellectual and creative growth across the fields of Culture & Heritage, Literature, Art and Innovation.

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