



Marlborough
LitFest 2010

24-26 September 2010
www.marlboroughlitfest.org
tickets 01249 701628

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Welcome

Welcome to the inaugural Marlborough Literature Festival, which we hope will be the first of many. The town already boasts a very fine Jazz Festival, which has grown year on year, and we expect that the Marlborough Literature Festival will do the same. If the response from authors, publishers and sponsors - both national and local - and the enthusiasm of so very many willing, local helpers and supporters is anything to go by, it will continue and grow and become another much loved fixture in the town's calendar. And why not? Marlborough, with its wide market street, its lively personality and its many and varied venues, is the perfect setting for a Literature Festival. I can't think how the town has existed for so long without us, especially given its literary connections—from William Golding who lived on the Green, to Siegfried Sassoon and John Betjeman who were both educated at Marlborough College - fine writing has always been part of the Marlborough connection.

One of the most important aspects of this Festival is that it puts fine writing at its heart. So many Festivals have become more about celebrities and their books than about literature that it felt right to redress that imbalance. Our founding sponsor, The Authors' Licensing and Collecting Agency, exists solely to look after the rights of its author/members, and it seemed wonderfully appropriate that it was ALCS who supported the idea from the first. As you will see from this brochure, there is no shortage of fascinating books written by brilliant writers and we've got them. This inaugural year our programme begins with Margaret Drabble and jigsaws and ends with Don Paterson and Shakespeare, with many wonderful and varied writers in between. We hope there is something for everyone in the programme and look forward to seeing you all there.

Mavis Cheek



Mavis Cheek



Friday 24 September - Tickets £8

Margaret Drabble

The Pattern in the Carpet introduced by Mavis Cheek

Margaret Drabble will talk about the mysterious relationship between fact and fiction, with reference to *The Pattern in the Carpet: A Personal History with Jigsaws*, published in 2009 in which memoir and history are idiosyncratically linked and may appear - like a jigsaw - random. For her they are also strategies to defeat melancholy and avoid lament.

Margaret Drabble is one of our foremost writers. She was born in Sheffield in 1939 and educated at Newnham College, Cambridge, where she studied English Literature. She has published seventeen novels, most recently *The Sea Lady* (2006). She has also published biographies of Arnold Bennett (1974) and Angus Wilson (1995) and a memoir, *The Pattern in the Carpet* (2009). She edited the Fifth and Sixth editions of the *Oxford Companion to English Literature* (1985, 2000).

She is married to the biographer Michael Holroyd and lives in London and Somerset.



Assembly Room, Town Hall - 7.00pm

Saturday 25 September - Tickets £6



Photograph by Sam Jones

Cressida Cowell *How to Train Your Dragon*

Cressida Cowell, author of *How to Train Your Dragon*, will give an illustrated talk about her highly successful Dragon books.

How to Train Your Dragon was first published in 2003 to critical acclaim and has now been published in over 30 languages. A Dreamworks animation film of the book was launched in March this year.

'The next big thing in children's literature', *The Independent on Sunday*

Also the author of picture books, Cressida won the Nestle's Children's Book Prize 2006 and has been shortlisted for many others.

St John's School - 10.30 am

Saturday 25 September - Tickets £7



Valerie Grove *Love Life as the Key to Biography*

**Valerie Grove - *Love Life as the Key to Biography*
introduced by Mavis Cheek**

Valerie Grove will talk about the writing of biographies using her most recent biography of Kaye Webb, *So Much to Tell*, as an example.

Kaye Webb burst into the world of children's books in 1961 and changed the face of children's publishing forever. She was a brilliant editor and the genius behind the Puffin Club. However, her private life was not so great. Valerie Grove tells the story of the woman who brought the joy of books to children everywhere whilst battling serious emotional pain.

Valerie Grove has written several biographies including the much acclaimed biography of John Mortimer, *A Voyage Around John Mortimer* (2007).

The Merchant's House - 12.00pm



Roma Tearne The Swimmer

Roma Tearne - The Swimmer
in discussion with Razia Iqbal, BBC arts correspondent

Roma Tearne fled Sri Lanka at the age of ten to come to Britain. Her debut novel Mosquito was shortlisted for the Costa Award 2008 and Brixton Beach appeared in Amanda Ross's new TV Book Club in February 2010. Roma was recently awarded a fellowship in visual arts by the Arts and Humanities Research Council of Great Britain and is on the advisory council of the international Sri Lanka Campaign for Peace and Justice.

Her latest novel, The Swimmer, is a captivating, emotional novel about love, loss and what 'home' really means. Roma will discuss her latest novel with journalist Razia Iqbal.

Josh Mowll Writing and Publishing Adventure Books for Children

Author Josh Mowll will be discussing the do's and don'ts of writing fiction for children and young teenagers using his most recent publication, The Great Space Race, as an example.

In The Great Space Race, the son of an impecunious family devises a secret money-making scheme of his own... what on earth could possibly go wrong?

Joshua Mowll's previous novels are Operation Red Jericho (winner of the Poppy Red Award for innovation in Children's Publishing), Operation Typhoon Shore and Operation Storm City.



How to be Pirate

A fun activity session for the under sevens. This is a free session but tickets are required. A parent or carer must remain with the children for the activity.

Pirates may come dressed up, but no swords please!

For further information, please contact the library on **01672 512633**

Anne Chisholm **Frances Partridge** The Biography

Anne Chisholm - Frances Partridge The Biography
introduced by **Sir John Sykes, Chairman of The Merchant's House**

Frances Partridge was one of the great British diarists of the 20th century. She became part of the Bloomsbury group encountering Virginia Woolf, Lytton Strachey, the Bells, Roger Fry, Maynard Keynes, Dora Carrington and Ralph Partridge. She and Ralph fell in love and married in 1933.

Anne Chisholm was a close friend of Frances Partridge during their final years. She will be talking about the life of this fascinating diarist.

Anne Chisholm has written biographies on Nancy Cunard, Rumer Godden, Lord Beaverbrook and Faces of Hiroshima: A Report. She is the current chairman of the Royal Society of Literature.

Saturday 25 September - Tickets £7



Photograph by Claire Spottiswoode

Tim Dee *The Running Sky, A Birdwatching Life*

Tim Dee- *The Running Sky, A Birdwatching Life*
introduced by novelist Tessa Hadley

The Running Sky records a lifetime of looking at birds. There have been many books on the birdwatcher's awkward obsession, but there has been nothing until this that brilliantly restores us to the primacy of looking, the thrill of watching and thinking about the flying wild creatures that share our planet. Tim Dee writes about what he has seen in a language we have never read before, in prose that is both precise and poetic.

Tim Dee will discuss *The Running Sky* with novelist and friend Tessa Hadley.

Tim Dee is a BBC radio producer based in Bristol.

Saturday 25 September - Tickets £7



Photograph by Caroline Forbes

Adam Foulds *The Quickening Maze*

Adam Foulds - *The Quickening Maze* introduced by Mavis Cheek

Adam Foulds will talk about his latest book, *The Quickening Maze* - a compelling tale centred on the life of the great nature poet, John Clare.

After years of struggling with alcohol, critical neglect and depression, Clare finds himself in High Beach Asylum. At the same time another poet, the young Alfred Tennyson, moves nearby and becomes entangled in the life and catastrophic schemes of the asylum's owner, the peculiar, charismatic Dr Matthew Allen.

'Exquisite and compelling.' *Matthew Parris*

Adam Foulds is the winner of the Sunday Times Young Writer of the Year and The Costa Prize for Poetry 2008. *Quickening Maze* was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize 2009.

Saturday 25 September - Tickets £7



Rachel Polonsky *Molotov's Magic Lantern*

Rachel Polonsky - *Molotov's Magic Lantern*, A Journey in Russian History introduced by Victoria Clark

Rachel Polonsky will discuss *Molotov's Magic Lantern* with journalist and novelist, Victoria Clark.

When Polonsky went to live in Moscow, she found an apartment block in Romanov Street, once a residence of the Soviet elite. One of those ghostly neighbours was Stalin's henchman Vyacheslav Molotov. Polonsky's discovery, in Molotov's apartment, of his library and an old magic lantern, leads her to renew her vision of Russia.

Rachel Polonsky is a highly respected academic and journalist who has written for *Prospect*, *The Guardian*, *TLS* and *The Spectator* among others. She lives in Cambridge.



Saturday 25 September - Tickets £8



Lynn Barber *An Education*

Lynn Barber - *An Education* introduced by Tony Lacey, Publishing Director, Penguin Books

Lynn Barber will talk about *An Education*, her remarkably honest biography, recently turned into a major film of the same name scripted by Nick Hornby. It tells of how at sixteen an ambitious schoolgirl, working towards a place at Oxford, is picked up at a bus-stop by an attractive older man in a sports car. So begins a relationship that almost wrecks her life.

'Candid, fun and down to earth... *An Education* reads like a gossip over coffee with an irreverent mother in law' *Sunday Times*

Lynn Barber currently writes for *The Observer*. She has published two volumes of her celebrated interviews, *Mostly Men* and *Demon Barber*.



The Merchant's House - 6.00 pm

Assembly Room, Town Hall - 7.30 pm



The Poetry Cafe

There will be readings from twenty poets: the Brickwork Poets from Reading; the BlueGate Poets from Swindon; and Writers in the Brewery from Cirencester. In addition there will be poets from Avebury, Chippenham, Stanton St Bernard and Marlborough's Riverbank Writers.

The poetry will be organised as a read-around with each poet taking a turn.

The Cafe will be a celebration of poetry. If you would like to come and enjoy poetry in a relaxed and informal setting, do join us.

The committee of the Marlborough Litfest thank Jay Arr of Swindon BlueGate Poets for kindly organising and managing this event.

Louise Doughty *Whatever You Love*

Louise Doughty - *Whatever You Love*
introduced by **Leslie Spencer, St John's School**

Doughty's latest novel is about love, loss and revenge. She will be reading extracts and discussing *Whatever You Love* with Leslie Spencer from St John's School.

Louise Doughty is the author of five novels - *Crazy Paving*, *Dance with Me*, *Honey-Dew*, *Fires in the Dark* and *Stone Cradle*. She has also written one book of non-fiction, *A Novel in a Year*, based on her hugely popular Daily Telegraph column. Doughty also writes radio plays and broadcasts regularly for BBC Radio 4, as well as teaching for the Faber Academy.





Christopher Wakling and Paul Sussman

Christopher Wakling and Paul Sussman introduced by Mavis Cheek

Wakling and Sussman will discuss the ups and downs of writing historical fiction. The discussion will be followed by a question and answer session.

Christopher Wakling - *The Devil's Mask*

This is Christopher Wakling's first historical crime novel: why not start with mankind's worst crime? The author of four previous novels - *Towards the Sun*, *The Undertow*, *Beneath the Diamond Sky*, and *On Cape Three Point*, Christopher Wakling has worked as a city lawyer, teacher and farm hand. Educated at Oxford University, he now lives in Bristol with his wife and two children.

Paul Sussman - *The Hidden Oasis*

Three unconnected events come together at a funeral for a desert explorer who has inexplicably taken her own life... it is the start of a terrifying, life or death adventure -one that will lead the protagonists into the forbidding waste of the Sahara. Their goal: one of archaeology's greatest mysteries and the astonishing secret at its heart.

Paul Sussman is a freelance journalist and has written extensively for *The Big Issue*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Daily Express*, *The Evening Standard*, *The Independent*, *The Sunday Herald* and *The Spectator*.



Sunday 26 September - Tickets £8

Don Paterson

Introduced by Michael Ponsford, Department of English,
Marlborough College

Shakespeare's sonnets of 1609 are as thrilling and persuasive today as they were when first published. Don Paterson, an award winning sonneteer and lyric poet, will give a short talk as a preview to his forthcoming book on Shakespeare's sonnets in which he offers an illuminating and accessible guide to these unforgettable verses which are still relevant to the 21st century. He will also give a reading from his most recent collection, *Rain*, together with some of his new poetry.

Don Paterson was born in Dundee in 1963. He is the author of *Nil Nil* (1993), *God's Gift to Women* (1997) - winner of both the TS Eliot Prize and the Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize - and *Landing Light* (2003), which also won the TS Eliot Prize and the Whitbread Prize for Poetry. *Rain*, his most recent collection, won the Forward Prize for Best Collection in 2009, the same year he was awarded the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry.

This event is sponsored by Marlborough College.

Marlborough College, Ellis Theatre - 7.30 pm



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The Committee of the Marlborough Litfest would also like to thank the following for their very generous support:

The Merchant's House, Marlborough College, St John's School, Marlborough Library, Hills, The White Horse Bookshop, The Hungerford Bookshop, Printha, Susie Watson and Peter Page.

Graphic Design: Jenna Higgins, Full Circle Design

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Maps, venues and parking



The Merchant's House



Ellis Theatre
Marlborough College



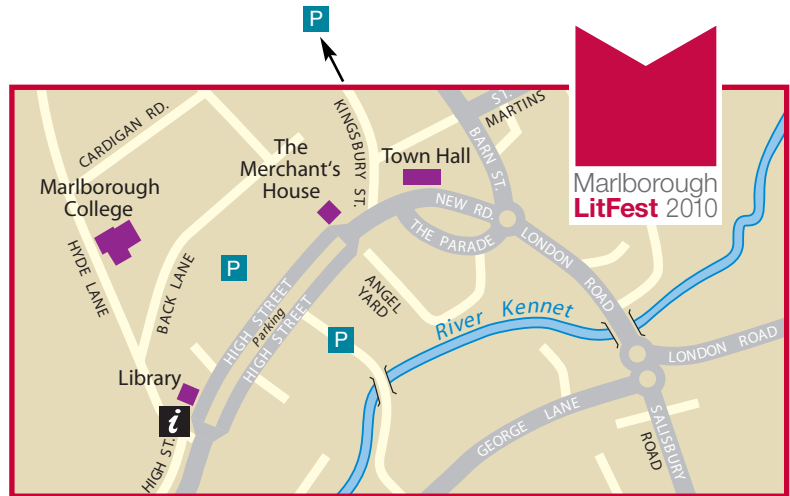
The Town Hall



The Library



St John's School



Box Office - Tickets for the events

By telephone Pound Arts on **01249 701628** www.poundarts.org.uk

In Person The White Horse Bookshop **telephone 01672 512071**
The Hungerford Bookshop **telephone 01488 683480**
www.hungerfordbooks.co.uk

Please note that all events will run for approximately 1 hour.

Festival Venues

The Town Hall - Assembly Room and Court Room

A late Victorian building which dominates the east end of the High Street. The Assembly Room is the main festival venue; the Court Room will be a bookshop and cafe for the weekend.

The Merchant's House

The Merchant's House is an outstanding 17th century building (listed Grade II*) with unique wall paintings and an unspoilt interior. It belonged to a wealthy silk merchant, Thomas Bayly. The festival venue will be the Panelled Room with its elaborate fireplace and glass sundial. The Merchant's House is situated on the High Street, 200 yards from the Town Hall.

Marlborough Library

Marlborough Library is situated on the north side of the High Street, at the opposite end from the Town Hall.

Theatre on the Hill, St John's School

This impressive new theatre venue is in St. John's School, Granham Hill. The school overlooks the town of Marlborough. From the High Street, follow signs towards Pewsey and Oare. Take the A345 to Oare and Pewsey and at the top of Granham Hill, look out for signs for St John's on your left.

Ellis Theatre, Marlborough College

From the High Street, take the A4 westwards towards Calne and Devizes. Pass under a brick footbridge and ignore the main College gates on your left. After 150 metres, turn left into the College Parade Ground car park. College students will direct you to the Ellis Theatre from there - a very short walk.

Festival Cafe and Bookshop

While the Festival is running there will be an informal cafe and bookshop in the Court Room of the Town Hall.



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For more information please contact Shelley Smith on 01672 519027 or visit www.brewin.co.uk/marlborough

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