

# BARE LIT 2017

JOIN US TO CELEBRATE THE WORK OF REMARKABLE WRITERS.

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For immediate release

Following last year's phenomenal success, we are excited to announce BARE LIT 2017.

Founded in 2016 to celebrate the remarkable literature of writers in diaspora, BARE LIT is yet again bringing internationally established and emerging writers based across the UK together to share works of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, playwriting and journalism.

Taking place over two days, from **22–23 April** at **Toynbee Studios** in East London, the programme features a spectacular range of events including panel discussions (see below) on fantastical fiction and magical realism: **From Real to Unreal and Back**; Erotic literature: **Sexy Times**; histories of culture in diaspora: **Letters from Yesterday**; **New Print Cultures**; science writing: **In Experts We Trust**; and **The Art of Editing**, amongst many others.

Speakers include: **Robyn Travis** (*Mama Can't Raise No Man*, 2016), **Bibi Bakare-Yusuf** (Cassava Press), **Leone Ross** (*Come Let Us Sing Anyway*, 2017), **Sangeeta Bandyopadhyay** (*Panty*, 2016), **Valisa Iskander** (*Fixi*), **Sabrina Mahfouz** (*The Things I Would Tell You*, 2017), **Lopè Ariyo** (*Hibiscus*, 2017), **Ali Bader** (*Iraq +100*, 2016), **Angela Saini** (*Inferior*, 2017), **Olumide Popoola** (*When We Speak of Nothing*, 2017), **Wei Ming Kam** (BAME in publishing).

The keynote speech, which is sponsored by BARE LIT partner *The Royal Literary Fund*, will be held by **Kerry Young**, author of the three works of fiction including *Show Me A Mountain* (2016), *Pao* (2011) and *Gloria* (2013), and Honorary Creative Writing Fellow at the University of Leicester.

Coinciding with BARE LIT 2017, we are proud to announce the **launch of our first anthology**, published by Brain Mill Press. The anthology includes original, previously-unpublished short stories and poetry from participants of the inaugural festival in 2016 and was edited by award-winning writer **Courtia Newland**, author of seven works of fiction and co-editor of *IC3: the Penguin Book of New Black Writing in Britain*; **Kavita Bhanot**, editor of the short story collection *Too Asian, Not Asian Enough*; and BARE LIT cofounder and Skin Deep editor **Mend Mariwany**.

Website: [barelitfestival.com](http://barelitfestival.com)

Twitter: [@BareLit](https://twitter.com/BareLit)

Facebook: [/BareLit](https://www.facebook.com/BareLit)

Tickets: <https://igg.me/at/barelit2017/x>

For further information please contact the festival assistant Sabeena Akhtar at [barelitfestival@gmail.com](mailto:barelitfestival@gmail.com)

#### **PANELS:**

##### The Art of Editing

A panel discussion delving into the process of editing, from compiling anthologies to getting a manuscript ready for publication. We address questions on the role of the editor and their relationship to the writer.

##### New Print Cultures

A collaborative session with the creators of a new wave of radical, activist and community print publications. We ask why there's been a resurgence in print, and the role of the physical object in a world of digital media.

##### Sexy Times

A panel discussion exploring writing on themes of sex and erotica. We talk about changing desires, and trends in appetites, as well as sexual variation through society.

##### Letters From Yesterday

A panel discussing different approaches to exploring and presenting histories of culture, food, music and community. We ask how to find these stories and what's at stake in preserving and discussing them today.

##### How to Write a Cookbook

A panel discussion on the process of writing a cookbook, from finding inspiration to testing recipes and the publication process. Where does innovation meet tradition?

##### From Real to Unreal and Back

A panel discussing how fiction can use fantastical elements to talk about the real world. We'll be exploring how the authors create these elements for their work, and also how they envisage their readers translating the fantastical back into their own realities.

##### In Experts We Trust

This session explores writing about scientific topics, and the role of the expert in communicating these to audiences. Where do creativity and the technical meet? And are they at odds with one another?

##### When Bad Things Happen

A panel discussion on writers' experiences of creating fiction addressing themes of violence and trauma. How and why do we tread the difficult ground when we might be accused of triggering readers, making light of suffering or sensationalism?

##### Finding a Way to the Audience

A panel discussion about new the ways of getting stories to audiences that are emerging all around us, from crowd-funding to self-publishing and everything in between. Are some routes from writer to reader better than others?

##### How to Judge a Book Prize

Representatives from the judging panel of the newly-established Jhalak Prize for a writer of colour talk about their experiences of judging the literature award in its first year.

**NOTES FOR EDITORS:**

The festival directors are Henna Zamurd-Butt and Mend Mariwany.

**PARTNERS**

Arts Council England

Royal Society of literature

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**ABOUT BARE LIT**

BARE LIT is a literature festival celebrating the work of remarkable writers in diaspora. In 2015, the UK's three largest literary festivals featured over 2000 authors. Of those 2000+ authors, only 4% were from Black Caribbean, Black African, South Asian or East Asian backgrounds, based on a report published by SPREAD THE WORD.

With an inaugural festival in 2016, BARE LIT took a step toward empowering the voices of authors that are often silenced in the literary mainstream.

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