

The 21st Aldeburgh Literary Festival

Thursday 5th to Sunday 8th May 2022

At the Aldeburgh Jubilee Hall

Craig Brown : Alina Chan : Charles Cumming : Frank Gardner

James Hamilton : Rachel Hore : Anna Keay : Lucy Kellaway

Giles Milton : Jane Ridley : Matt Ridley : Miranda Seymour

Michael Sheridan : William Sieghart : Emma Soames

Charles Spencer : Peter Stanford : D. J. Taylor

Martin Vander Weyer : Stephen Walker : Joan Winterkorn



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Thursday 5th May

Event 1: 6.00 pm Stephen Walker. *Beyond: the Astonishing Story of the First Human to Leave our Planet and Journey into Space.*

Stephen Walker's book about the legendary astronaut Yuri Gagarin, the first human to leave the planet, has the pace and exhilaration of a thriller. In his historic journey aboard the Vostock 1 spacecraft, travelling at almost 18,000 miles per hour - ten times faster than a rifle bullet - Gagarin circled the globe in just 106 minutes. While his launch began in total secrecy, within hours of his landing he had become a world celebrity.

Drawing on extensive original research and the vivid testimonies of eyewitnesses, many of whom have never spoken before, Stephen Walker unpacks secrets that were hidden for decades and takes the reader into the drama - featuring the scientists, engineers and political leaders on both sides, and above all the American astronauts and their Soviet rivals battling for supremacy in the heavens.

Stephen Walker is an award-winning documentary filmmaker as well as a writer. His films have won BAFTAs, an Emmy, Royal Television Society awards and Europe's most prestigious documentary prize, the Rose d'Or. His previous book was *Shockwave: Countdown to Hiroshima*, a *New York Times* bestseller and a riveting narrative of the final three weeks before the dropping of the atomic bomb in August 1945. It is currently in development as a movie with the UK's leading film production company, Working Title. The screenplay is by Tom Stoppard and the film will be directed by Cary Fukunaga, director of the latest James Bond movie *No Time to Die*.

Friday 6th May

Event 2: 9.30 am Emma Soames. *Mary Churchill's War: the Wartime Diaries of Winston Churchill's Youngest Daughter*

In 1939, seventeen-year-old Mary Churchill found herself in an extraordinary position at an extraordinary time: it was the outbreak of the Second World War and her father, Winston Churchill, had been appointed First Lord of the Admiralty; within months he would be Prime Minister.

Mary was uniquely placed to observe this remarkable historical moment, and her diaries – most of which have never been published – provide a front-row view of the great events of the war, as well as exchanges and intimate moments with her father. But they also capture

the war, as well as exchanges and intimate moments with her father. But they also capture what it was like to be a young woman during wartime. Mary is an impulsive and spirited writer. Her diaries are consequently full of *joie de vivre*, unconstrained by self-censorship or nostalgia.

Writer and broadcaster Emma Soames, Mary's daughter and Winston Churchill's granddaughter, has edited and introduced the diaries. She is the former editor of the *Literary Review*, *Tatler* and *Saga*, as well as the *Evening Standard* and *The Daily Telegraph* magazines.

Event 3: 11.15 am Charles Spencer. *The White Ship: Conquest, Anarchy and the Wrecking of Henry I's Dream*

To commemorate the 900th anniversary of the shipwreck, Charles Spencer, a master of narrative history, gives a gripping account of the story of the sinking of the *White Ship* in 1120. Spencer describes the events before and after the shipwreck which was truly a disaster for the nation.

Its repercussions would change English and European history forever.

By 1120, Henry was perhaps the most formidable ruler in Europe, with an enviable record on the battlefield, immense lands and wealth, and unprecedented authority in his kingdoms. Everything he had worked so hard for was finally achieved, and he was ready to hand it on to his beloved son and heir, William Aetheling. On a freezing November night, Henry and the cream of Anglo-Norman society, including three of his children, were returning to England in triumph after four years of fighting the French. Hours later the drunken helmsman rammed the ship into the rocks. Only one passenger, a butcher from Rouen, survived.

Charles Spencer was a reporter on NBC's *Today* show from 1986 until 1995 and is the author of seven books including *Blenheim: Battle for Europe*, *Killers of the King: The Men Who dared to Execute Charles I* and *To Catch a King: Charles II's Great Escape*. *The White Ship* was the Best Book of the Year 2020 in the *Guardian*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Daily Mail* and *Daily Express*.

Event 4: 2.00 pm Anna Keay. *The Restless Republic: Britain without a Crown*

On a raw January afternoon the Stuart king, Charles I, was executed for treason. Within weeks the English monarchy had been abolished and the 'useless and dangerous' House of Lords discarded. The people, it was announced, were now the sovereign force in the land. What this meant, and where it would lead, no one knew.

In her new book *The Restless Republic*, Anna Keay vividly brings to life the story of the Interregnum, perhaps the single most fascinating decade in the history of Britain and Ireland.

Anna Keay is a British architectural historian and has been director of the Landmark Trust since 2012. She is the author of many books on Stuart and Elizabethan history, including a biography of Monmouth, *The Last Royal Rebel*.

Event 5: 3.30 pm James Hamilton. *Constable: a Portrait*

‘Constable country’ conjures up images of biscuit-tin landscapes, but in this major re-evaluation of the artist’s work, James Hamilton explains that we’ve got Constable – Britain’s best-loved but perhaps least understood artist – wrong. ‘The Constable of [this] illuminating biography is a radical, an artist possessed of an “experimental burn” to paint the skies and seasons in new lights. In the twentieth century, Hamilton argues, Constable was a victim of “miscasting”, his pictures dismissed as “quaintly old-fashioned”. The Impressionists had stolen his thunder. Critics forgot that when it came to broken colour, modern subjects and the “lurid tones of industrialisation,” Constable had got there before Monet, Manet, Pissarro and all that Paris crowd. Constable was the overlooked revolutionary.’ (Laura Freeman, *The Times*).

Hamilton’s biography reveals a complex, troubled man and explodes previous mythologies about this timeless artist, establishing him in his proper context as a giant of European art.

James Hamilton is an art historian and biographer. His books include *Gainsborough: A Portrait*, a BBC Radio 4 Book of the Week and book of the year in *The Times*, *The Sunday Times* and *Observer*; *Turner: A Life*, shortlisted for the James Tait Black Memorial Prize, and *A Strange Business: Making Art and Money in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, which was named art book of the year by *The Sunday Times*. He was formerly Alistair Horne Fellow at St Antony’s College, Oxford and University Curator at the University of Birmingham, where he is an Honorary Fellow. He has curated many exhibitions in galleries in Britain and abroad.

Event 6: 5.00 pm Rachel Hore in conversation with D. J. Taylor: A Writer’s Journey

It is many people’s dream to write a book. Many achieve this, but only a few will actually get published. And even fewer will sell well, let alone become a real bestselling writer. Author of twelve novels, Rachel Hore has now sold over a million copies—an achievement to be

celebrated. Three of her novels have been picked by Richard and Judy for their Book Club, including her recent one, *A Beautiful Spy*, and her books feature regularly on *The Sunday Times* bestseller list. Hore’s latest book, *One Moonlit Night*, published this May, is set in Norfolk.

She writes: ‘As well as history, a sense of place is very important to my writing. These interests in turn relate to a common theme of my books, a sense of belonging. Suffolk,

Norfolk, London, Cornwall are frequent settings. I've often written about World War II and women's roles in it.' Hore has also taught publishing and creative writing as a lecturer at the UEA.

Hore will be discussing her work and her career with her husband, D. J. Taylor.

Event 7: 6.30 pm Jane Ridley. *George V: Never A Dull Moment*

The lasting reputation of George V is for dullness. His biographer Harold Nicolson famously quipped that 'he did nothing at all but kill animals and stick in stamps'. But is that really all there was to King George, a monarch confronted by a series of crises thought to be the most testing faced by any twentieth-century British sovereign? As Tommy Lascelles, one of the most perceptive royal advisers, put it: 'He was dull, beyond dispute – but my God, his *reign* never had a dull moment.'

Ridley has had unprecedented access to the archives, and for the first time is able to reassess the many myths associated with this dramatic time and take us right into the palaces Elizabeth II was born into.

Jane Ridley is Professor of History at the University of Buckingham, where she teaches an MA course on biography. She won the Duff Cooper Prize for her work on the architect Edwin Lutyens. Her study of Edward VII (Bertie) was on *The Sunday Times* bestseller list and was one of the most critically acclaimed books of the year in 2012. A Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, Ridley writes book reviews for the *The Spectator* and other newspapers, and has also appeared on radio and several television documentaries.

Saturday 7th May

Event 8: 10.00 am Alina Chan and Matt Ridley. *Viral: the Search for the Origin of Covid-19*

What do we know about the origin of Covid? Scientists Alina Chan and Matt Ridley believe this is the single most important issue facing the world right now. This disease will forever punctuate modern history. It has led to the deaths of millions, sickened hundreds of millions and affected the lives of every person on the planet. We now know that Covid is here to stay.

Understanding how Covid-19 started is important for the future of humankind. Determining whether the virus came from a market or from a lab will help us to safeguard against the next pandemic.

Genetic engineering expert Dr Alina Chan and renowned science writer Matt Ridley examine the origins of SARS-CoV-2, the virus responsible for Covid-19, using their skills to scrutinise arguments and rigorously analyse the sprawling data. Set in the caves and mine

shafts, food markets and wildlife smugglers' stores, laboratories and databases of China and elsewhere, *Viral* is a thrilling account of the search for the origin of Covid-19 and reads like a detective novel.

Dr Alina Chan is a postdoctoral fellow with a background in medical genetics, synthetic biology and vector engineering at the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard; she is also currently creating next generation vectors for human gene therapy. During the Covid-19 Pandemic, Chan began to investigate problems relevant to finding the origins of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, publishing her findings on Twitter.

Dr Matt Ridley is a bestselling author whose books include *Genome*, *The Rational Optimist* and *How Innovation Works*. Collectively they have sold over a million copies and have been translated into thirty-one languages and won several awards.

Event 9: 11.45 am D. J. Taylor. *Orwell Revisited: Writing a New Biography of the Author of *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four**

Never have the writings of George Orwell seemed more relevant. How often do we hear the latest news developments described as 'Orwellian'? Nearly 20 years after *Orwell: The Life*, D. J. Taylor is at work on a timely new book that will accommodate the very large amount of fresh material that has turned up and also examine Orwell from new vantage points.

D. J. Taylor's critically acclaimed Orwell biography, *Orwell: The Life* (2003) won the Whitbread Biography Award. It was hailed as 'not only the best recent biography of George Orwell ... but also one of the cleverest studies of the relationship of that life to the written word' (*Washington Post Book World*). The new biography, due to be published in 2023, will be a re-examination of the writer written from scratch, rather than just a reworking of the first book. Not only will it present Orwell for the twenty-first century, it will also demonstrate how a biographer's relationship with his subject can change over time. His book *Nineteen Eighty-Four: A Biography* was published in 2019.

D. J. Taylor was born in Norwich in 1960. He is an astonishingly versatile writer, the author of twelve novels (two Booker longlisted) and numerous non-fiction books, including an acclaimed biography of Thackeray and the recent *Lost Girls*. He is also well known as a critic and reviewer, author of *The Prose Factory*, *Literary Life in England since 1918*. His collection of short stories, *Steukey Blues*, was published in March this year.

Event 10: 2.30 pm Michael Sheridan. *The Gate to China: a New History of The People's Republic and Hong Kong*

The rise of China and the fall of Hong Kong to authoritarian rule are told with unique in

sight in this new history by Michael Sheridan, drawing on eyewitness reporting over three decades, interviews with key figures and documents from archives in China and the West.

The story sweeps the reader from the earliest days of trade through the Opium Wars of the nineteenth century to the age of globalisation and the handover of Hong Kong from Britain to China. It ends with the battle for democracy on the city's streets and the ultimate victory of the Chinese Communist Party.

The Chinese side of this history, so often unheard, emerges from memoirs and documents, many new to the foreign reader, revealing how the party's iron will and negotiating tactics crushed its opponents. Yet the voices of Hong Kong's people - eloquent, smart and bold - speak out here for ideals that refuse to die. Sheridan's book tells how Hong Kong opened the way for the People's Republic as it reformed its economy and changed the world, emerging to challenge the West with a new order that raises fundamental questions about progress, identity and freedom.

Michael Sheridan read History at Jesus College, Cambridge and became a foreign correspondent in Asia, the Middle East and Europe. He first reported from Hong Kong and China in June 1989 and later served as Far East correspondent for the *The Sunday Times* for twenty years, covering the rise of China, the handover of Hong Kong in 1997 and the city's struggle for democracy. Earlier he worked for Reuters, ITN and *The Independent*, reporting on war in the Middle East, global diplomacy and European politics, with postings to Rome, Beirut and Jerusalem. His work has also appeared in *The Spectator*, *The Tablet*, *Vanity Fair* and the *Hong Kong Economic Journal*. He is the author of *Romans: their Life and Times*.

Event 11: 4.15 pm Miranda Seymour in conversation with Joan Winterkorn, discussing *I Used to Live Here Once: the Haunted Life of Jean Rhys*

An obsessive and troubled genius, Jean Rhys is one of the most compelling and unnerving writers of the twentieth century. Memories of a conflicted Caribbean childhood haunt the four fictions that Rhys wrote during her extraordinary years as an exile in 1920s Paris and later in England. Her experiences of heartbreak, poverty, notoriety, breakdowns and even imprisonment, all became grist for her writing, forming an iconic 'Rhys woman' whose personality – vulnerable, witty, watchful and angry – was often mistaken, and still is, for a self-portrait.

Many details of Rhys's life emerge from her memoir *Smile Please*, and the stories she wrote throughout her long and challenging career. But it's a shock to discover that until now, no biographer has researched the crucial seventeen years that Rhys spent living on the remote Caribbean island of Dominica, the island which haunted Rhys's mind and her work for the rest of her life.

Luminous and penetrating, Seymour's unforgettable biography reveals a proud and fiercely

dependency, romantic and sexual turmoil – and yet was never a victim. *I Used to Live Here Once* enables one of our most excitingly intuitive biographers to uncover the hidden truth about a fascinatingly elusive woman.

Miranda Seymour is an English literary critic, novelist and biographer. She is the author of the prize-winning memoir *In My Father's House* and many acclaimed novels and biographies including the lives of Mary Shelley, Robert Graves, Ottoline Morrell, and Helene Delange, the Bugatti Queen. She is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and in recent years has been visiting Professor of English Studies at Nottingham Trent University.

Joan Winterkorn is an independent advisor on archives and manuscripts. She worked as an archivist in London and a rare book librarian in America before joining the booksellers Bernard Quaritch Ltd in 1979. There she handled the valuation and sale of a large number of literary, political, scientific, theatrical and historical archives. She was awarded the Benson Medal by the Royal Society of Literature in 2006.

Event 12: 6.00 pm Charles Cumming, Frank Gardner and William Sieghart

As the BBC's Security Correspondent, Frank Gardner knows a lot about the world of politics and espionage and so he is well placed to write about global intelligence. He has so far written three gripping thrillers in the Luke Carlton series, and Penguin have already signed him up to write more. We first meet Luke, the troubled MI6 operative, in *Crisis*, where he tackles the sinister world of drug lords in Colombia. This was followed by *Ultimatum*, which takes the hero to Iran and the threat of nuclear weapons. His latest, *Outbreak*, is terrifyingly prescient, centring on a deadly, man-made contagion ...

After leaving university, Charles Cumming was approached for recruitment by MI6. His first novel, *A Spy by Nature* (2001), is partly based on these experiences. Hailed as a successor to John le Carré, Cumming has gone on to write 12 highly acclaimed thrillers. His third novel, *The Spanish Game* (2006), was described by *The Times* as one of the six finest spy novels of all time, alongside *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*, *Funeral in Berlin* and *The Scarlet Pimpernel*. Cumming's latest book, *Judas 62*, is the second of a new series featuring the covert Anglo-American intelligence agency Box 88. He also co-wrote the screenplay for the forthcoming Gerald Butler action movie *The Plane*.

Frank Gardner and Charles Cumming will be discussing novels, life and spies with William Sieghart, author, publisher, philanthropist and founder of the Forward Prize for Poetry.

Sunday 8th May

Event 13: 10.00 am Martin Vander Weyer. *The Good, the Bad and the Greedy: Why We've Lost Faith in Capitalism*

From the Industrial Revolution to the Internet, capitalism has been a great engine of human progress. But now it stands accused of allowing the greedy few to ride roughshod over the rest of society, exploiting workers and recklessly damaging the planet in pursuit of profit. Where did these accusations come from – and are they true?

In this lively and thoughtful critique of twenty-first century capitalism, *Spectator* business editor Martin Vander Weyer argues that capitalism has indeed lost its moral compass and is in urgent need of repair. The system must be reformed and faith in it restored, before the next generation commits the ultimate act of self-harm by rejecting capitalism in favour of something worse.

Martin Vander Weyer is the weekly 'Any Other Business' columnist of *The Spectator* and a regular contributor to the *Daily Telegraph*. He also leads the *The Spectator's* Economic Innovator of the Year Awards for Young Entrepreneurs. While writing *The Good, the Bad and the Greedy* he was an Academic Visitor at St Antony's College, Oxford. Before turning to journalism, he was an investment banker in London, Brussels and the Far East. He has previously published *Falling Eagle: the Decline of Barclays Bank*, *Closing Balances: Business Obituaries from The Daily Telegraph*, *Fortune's Spear*, *Any Other Business: In and Out of the City* and *January Poet*.

Event 14: 11.45 am Giles Milton. *Checkmate in Berlin*

Berlin's fate was sealed at the 1945 Yalta Conference: the city, along with the rest of Germany, was to be carved up between the victorious powers – American, British, French and Soviet. On paper, it seemed a pragmatic solution. In reality, once the four powers were no longer united by their common purpose of defeating Germany, they wasted little time reverting to their pre-war hostility toward each other. The veneer of civility between Allies and Soviets was to break down in spectacular fashion in Berlin. Rival systems, rival ideologies and rival personalities ensured that the German capital became an explosive battleground.

Checkmate in Berlin is an exhilarating tale of intense rivalry and raw power, a story of flawed individuals who were determined to win, and Milton does a masterful job of bringing the key players to life.

Giles Milton is a writer and historian. He is the author of twelve best-selling books of narrative history including *Nathaniel's Nutmeg*, *White Gold*, *Russian Roulette* and *Churchill's Ministry of Ungentlemanly Warfare*.

Event 15: 2.30 pm Peter Stanford. *If These Stones Could Talk: the History of Christianity in Britain and Ireland in Twenty Buildings*

Christianity has been central to the lives of the people of Britain and Ireland for almost 2,000 years. It has given us laws, customs, traditions and our national character. From a persecuted minority in Roman Britannia through the 'Golden Age' of Anglo-Saxon monasticism, the devastating impact of the Vikings, the alliance of church and state after the Norman Conquest, to the turmoil of the Reformation and the Puritan Commonwealth that replaced the king, it is a tangled, tumultuous story of faith and achievement, division and bloodshed.

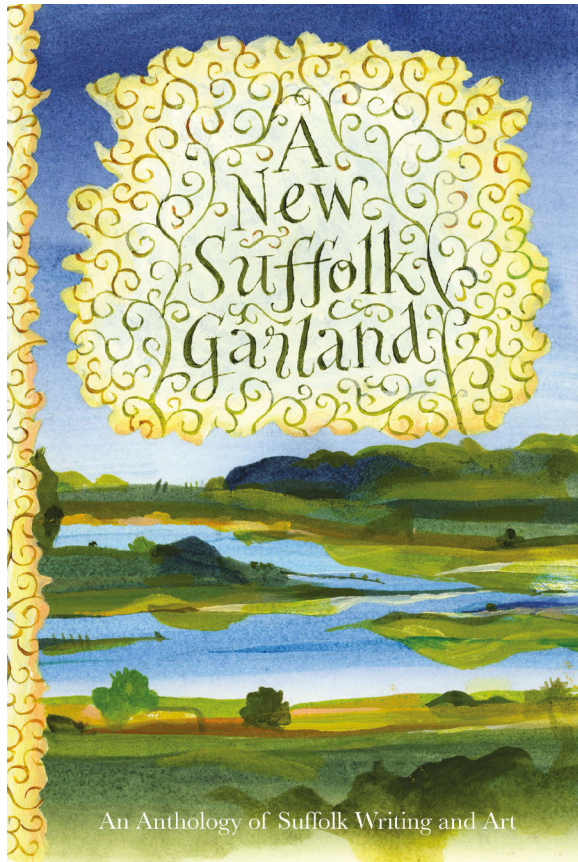
In *If These Stones Could Talk* Peter Stanford journeys through Great Britain to churches, abbeys, chapels and cathedrals, grand and humble, ruined and thriving, ancient and modern, to chronicle how a religion that began in the Middle East, came to define our past and shape our present.

Peter Stanford is a writer, journalist and broadcaster. His previous investigations into the history, theology and cultural significance of religious ideas include *Angels*, *The Devil: a Biography*, *Judas* and *Martin Luther*. He has written books on Pope Joan, Bronwen Astor, C. Day Lewis and Lord Longford. He is a former editor of the *Catholic Herald* and writes for the *The Daily* and *Sunday Telegraph* as well as *The Observer* and *The Tablet*.

Event 16: 4.15 pm Lucy Kellaway in conversation with Craig Brown: *Re-educated: How I changed My Job, My Home, My Husband and My Hair*

In 2016, aged 57, Lucy Kellaway abandoned a career as a successful *Financial Times* columnist to retrain as a teacher. In this witty and inspirational book, she explains how hard it is to teach and to secure respect from pupils, after decades of taking professional respect for granted. She became a co-founder of Now Teach, a charity to encourage others to embrace education as a second career, and this book helps to explain some of the reasons why British education is struggling. Max Hastings chose *Re-Educated* as his favourite book of 2021: 'So many of us lead essentially selfish lives that it is moving to read an account of a talented woman striving, with mixed success, to do something decent, important and unselfish.'

Kellaway will be discussing her book, *Re-educated*, with author and satirist Craig Brown. Brown is the author of the dazzling history of The Beatles, *One, Two, Three, Four*, which won the Baillie Gifford Prize, a kaleidoscopic biography of Princess Margaret and he is a frequent contributor to *Private Eye*.



The Aldeburgh Bookshop has been asked by the Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk to publish an anthology of Suffolk writing for the Festival of Suffolk as a gift from our county to H. M. The Queen, in celebration of her Platinum Jubilee. Copies will be on sale at the Aldeburgh Literary Festival from publication date: 5th May 2022. All profits from the sale of this book will be directed to The Festival of Suffolk Legacy Fund administered by Suffolk Community Foundation. Pre-order your copy on the enclosed form or visit

newsuffolkgarland.co.uk

Cover Design *Black Shuck* by Celandine Mitchell Cotts



Celandine studied Illustration and Visual Communications at the University of Brighton. She has developed a range of beautifully printed silk scarves based on East Anglian legend and folklore with *Babushka Design*. For further information visit

ceddie.co.uk

The 21th Aldeburgh Literary Festival

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