

Africa Writes 2017 Pop-Up: Bristol Programme

AFRICA  
WRITES  
2017  
The Royal African Society's  
annual literature festival



90% FREE and open to all!

Image: Africa Writes 2017 in London by Ivan Gonzalez

AFRICA  
WRITES

Celebrating contemporary literature and thought from Africa and the diaspora



# AFRICA WRITES

B R I S T O L



FRIDAY 6 & SATURDAY 7 OCTOBER 2017

HAMILTON HOUSE, 80 STOKES CROFT, BS1 3QY  
THE CUBE CINEMA, DOVE ST SOUTH, BS2 8JD

Book Launches • Film Screenings • Discussions • Family activities • Workshops • Poetry Night  
WITH CHINELO OKPARANTA, JOWHOR ILE, ELMI ALI, EDSON BURTON, EDWIGE DRO & MORE

Find the full programme on: [www.africawrites.org](http://www.africawrites.org)

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AFRICA  
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The Royal African Society's  
annual literature festival

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**Africa Writes**, the UK's biggest annual African literature and book festival brought to you by the Royal African Society, comes to Bristol for the first time, from Friday 6th October to Saturday 7th October 2017, presenting a vibrant programme of events at The Cube Cinema and Hamilton House. Curated with Bristol-based partners, this literary weekend brings together writers from Nigeria, Cote D'Ivoire, Somalia, Uganda, Ghana and across the diaspora for workshops, film screenings, panel discussions, performances and book launches. For African literature enthusiasts and newcomers alike, the festival presents an engaging programme looking at literary activism, adaptation, the cities we live in, forbidden love, hidden histories, and more.

## Friday 6th October, The Cube Cinema, Dove St S, Avon, Bristol BS2 8JD

Time	Event
18:00 - 22:30	<p><b><i>Africa Through the Lens of Fiction and Film</i></b>  <i>An evening of film and discussion. £7 / £6 concs</i></p> <p><b>Panel Discussion with Kivu Ruhorahoza, Yaba Badoe, and Ingrid Sinclair</b>  Ahead of a screening of Biyi Bandele's recent adaptation of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's acclaimed novel <i>Half of a Yellow Sun</i> and Ingrid Sinclair's short <i>Riches</i>, a panel of writers and filmmakers discuss the intersection of film and literature about and in Africa. How do creative processes compare and move across screen and text? How does financing work and differ for these media? What are the political implications of putting Africa on-screen in an era of 'spectacle culture' and 'poverty porn'? What are the challenges of putting literary fiction onscreen, and what different roles have poets and novelists had in shaping filmic representations of Africa?</p> <p><b>Screenings:</b>  <b><i>Riches</i> (26 min)</b>  A short film inspired by the influential writer Bessie Head, following the story of Molly McBride and her son Peter's journey from apartheid South Africa to an isolated school in Zimbabwe. She finds life tough and the villagers hostile and conservative. Molly's clash with the hypocritical headmaster leaves her jobless and in despair, but a simple gesture of friendship from one of the poorest members of the community inspires her to fight back and claim her place within her new society.</p> <p><b><i>Half of a Yellow Sun</i> (111 min)</b>  <i>With video introduction by director Biyi Bandele.</i>  An epic adaptation of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's landmark novel starring Thandie Newton and Chiwetel Ejiofor. In the late 1960s twin sisters Olanna (Newton) and Kainene (Anika Noni Rose) arrive back home in Nigeria, having finished their studies in England. While Olanna moves in with her boyfriend, professor Odenigbo (Ejiofor), and his young houseboy, Ugwu (John Boyega), Kainene becomes a businesswoman and gets involved with British writer Richard (Joseph Mawle). When the Nigerian Civil War breaks out the sisters' lives are changed forever. Bandele's brilliantly realised film explores moral responsibility, the end of colonialism, ethnic allegiances, race and class — and how love can complicate them all.</p> <p><i>In partnership with Afrika Eye</i>  Tickets £7/£6 concs: <a href="http://bit.ly/AW2017Lens">http://bit.ly/AW2017Lens</a></p>



**Saturday 7th October, Hamilton House, 80 Stokes Croft, BS1 3QY**

Time	Event
<b>All Day</b> Conference Space at Hamilton House	<p><b>Dare to Write Library Exhibition</b>            See the work created by Bristol school children in the Numbi Arts creative writing and zine-making workshops on the theme of 'cities'.  <i>In partnership with Paper Nations, Book Kernel &amp; Numbi Arts</i></p>
<b>11:00 - 12:00</b> Conference Space at Hamilton House	<p><b>Storytelling Workshop: <i>The Secret of the Purple Lake</i></b>  <i>With author Yaba Badoe.</i></p> <p>Create your own stories and discover a world of interweaving tales: from Ghana to Orkney, and from Spain to Norway and Thailand. Meet the Walrus Prince, the Wild Princesses of Rousay, Imoro the magic elephant and the Fisherman's Daughter, and journey with us to the bottom of the sea, through the desert and across the mysterious purple lake.</p> <p><b>Participants:</b> This workshop is open to all the family, and is primarily aimed at young people aged 8 - 12 years.  <b>Registration:</b> Drop-in</p>
<b>11:30 - 14:00</b> <b>Freedom Room</b> at Hamilton House	<p><b>Literary Activism and Arts Management Workshop</b></p> <p><i>In partnership with the Centre for African Cultural Excellence &amp; University of Bristol</i></p> <p><b>Participants:</b> 18-35 year-old creatives, arts managers and literary activists  <b>Registration:</b> Sign up by email to <a href="mailto:ras_events@soas.ac.uk">ras_events@soas.ac.uk</a></p>
<b>11:00 - 14:00</b> Mild West Room at Hamilton House	<p><b>Creative Writing Workshop with Numbi Arts</b>, Facilitated by Elmi Ali</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Do you have a story to tell about your local neighbourhood?</li> <li>- Are you interested in developing your creative writing skills?</li> <li>- Would you like the chance to hear from experienced writers and poets on how to transform an idea into a piece of writing?</li> </ul> <p>Then join us for this interactive writing workshop, where we explore ideas about the local and the global. By looking at local neighbourhoods, we discover ways to create stories from the connections that arise between our local and global networks. You will be presented with a series of writing exercises and will have a chance to receive guidance and direct feedback from the workshop facilitator and celebrated poet Elmi Ali.</p> <p>This workshop is open to all ages and writing experiences, and will be delivered in both English and Somali. You will also have the opportunity to perform your work at the 'Cities and Watering Holes' spoken word and music night at Hamilton House, starting at 20:00.  <b>Registration:</b> Sign up by email to <a href="mailto:ras_events@soas.ac.uk">ras_events@soas.ac.uk</a></p>



<b>14:30 - 15:30</b> Conference Space at Hamilton House	<p><b>Book Launch: <i>And After Many Days</i> by Jowhor Ile</b>  <i>Jowhor Ile in conversation with Edwige-Renée Dro</i></p> <p>During the rainy season of 1995, in the bustling town of Port Harcourt, Nigeria, one family's life is disrupted by the sudden disappearance of seventeen-year-old Paul Utu, beloved brother and son. As they grapple with the sudden loss of their darling boy, they embark on a painful and moving journey of immense power which changes their lives forever and shatters the fragile ecosystem of their once ordered family. Jowhor Ile discusses his critically acclaimed and award-winning debut novel with Etisalat Prize judge Edwige-Renée Dro.</p> <p><i>In partnership with Spike Island's Novel Writers Series</i></p>
<b>16:00 - 17:30</b> Conference Space at Hamilton House	<p><b>Producing New Books and Readers: Literary Activism in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Africa</b></p> <p>Speakers: Bibi Bakare-Yusuf, Edwige Dro &amp; Henry Brefo            Chair: Madhu Krishnan</p> <p>The 21<sup>st</sup> century has seen the rise of a myriad of new literary initiatives on the African continent, from literary festivals to new writing prizes, publishing and translation initiatives to innovative book distribution outlets, podcasting to small magazines. This panel brings together literary producers involved in founding and directing influential new initiatives to discuss the agendas, structures and networks that enable the production and circulation of literature in Africa. What innovative modes of literary activism and engagement has the 21<sup>st</sup> century enabled and how do self-defined literary activists conceive of their role in contemporary Africa?</p> <p><i>In partnership with the Centre for African Cultural Excellence &amp; University of Bristol's Centre for Black Humanities</i></p>
<b>18:00 - 19:30</b> Event Space at Hamilton House	<p><b>Hidden Histories and Forbidden Love: Chinelo Okparanta in conversation with Zahrah Nesbitt-Ahmed</b></p> <p>Chinelo Okparanta's deeply searching and powerful debut novel is about the dangers of living and loving openly. Ijeoma comes of age as her nation does; born before independence, she is eleven when civil war breaks out in the young republic of Nigeria. Sent away to safety, she meets another displaced child and they, star-crossed, fall in love. Inspired by Nigeria's folktales and the set in the midst of the Biafran War, <i>Under the Udala Trees</i> (2015) uses the lifetime of one woman to explore love and truth of personal relationships, in the context of taboo, prejudice, conflict and division. The writer discusses identity, the testing of faith, and uncovering histories through the personal journeys of her characters.</p>
<b>20:00 - 23:30</b> Event Space at Hamilton House	<p><b>Cities and Watering Holes: An Evening of Spoken Word &amp; Music</b>  <i>Hosted by Numbi Arts &amp; Ujima Radio, Part of NumbiFest Cross-Currents 2017</i></p> <p>With Elmi Ali, Edson Burton, <i>My Song for Burundi</i> anthology (published by Huza Press) open mic &amp; more. Ujima Radio DJs spinning afrobeats, funk, house and afro-influenced sounds from across the world.            Tickets £5: <a href="http://bit.ly/AW2017Cities">bit.ly/AW2017Cities</a></p>



**Africa Writes 2017 Pop-Up: Bristol** is brought to you by the Royal African Society in partnership with Numbi Arts, The University of Bristol's Centre for Black Humanities, Afrika Eye, Ujima Radio, Spike Island, Centre of African Cultural Excellence, Coexist at Hamilton House, The Cube Cinema, Book Kernel and Paper Nations, and is supported by Arts Council England and Sigrid Rausing Trust.

### Speaker Bios

**Kinsi Abdulleh** is a visual artist, editor and educator. She is the founder of NUMBI Arts, a London based cross-arts and cross cultural non-profit – rooted in contemporary Somali Film Arts & Literature -an open archive and ongoing forum for shared diasporic experience - and the editor publisher of literary arts magazine SCARF. Her work as an artist educator focuses on social justice, histories and the female voice. [www.numbi.org](http://www.numbi.org).

**Elmi Ali**, a writer, performer/facilitator based in the North West of England. He writes poetry, short -fiction and drama. Ali has performed across the country including Westminster, The Southbank Centre & Contact Manchester. His work has been published in publications such as the Poetry Review and Scarf Magazine of which he is an Associate Editor. He facilitates Performance Poetry and Creative Writing workshops: both individually and in partnership with organisations such as Numbi Arts, Arvon Foundation, Young Identity and Wordsmith.

**Yaba Badoe** [bio forthcoming]

**Bibi Bakare Yusuf** is founder and publishing director of one of Africa's leading publishing houses, Cassava Republic Press [www.cassavarepublic.biz](http://www.cassavarepublic.biz). She is also an independent scholar with a PhD in Women and Gender Studies from the University of Warwick and is a board member of The Initiative of Equal Rights, the leading sexual minority rights organisation in Nigeria. Cassava Republic tweets @CassavaRepublic.

**Henry Brefo** [bio forthcoming]

**Edson Burton** [bio forthcoming]

**Edwige-Renée Dro** is a writer, a translator and a literary activist. She was the laureate of the Africa39 project and the judge of PEN International New Voices award 2015 and Etisalat Prize for Literature 2016. She is the co-founder of Abidjan Lit, a literary initiative seeking to restore to Côte d'Ivoire its literary glory. She currently works as a project coordinator for cultural and digital entrepreneurship in west Africa. She tweets @DroEdwige

**Jowhor Ile** is the author of *And After Many Days* which was awarded the Etisalat Prize for Literature. His writing has appeared in McSweeney's Quarterly, Lit Hub, Litro Magazine. He earned his MFA at Boston University where he was recipient of the Leslie Epstein Global Fellowship. Jowhor was born in Obagi and reared in Port Harcourt, both in Rivers State, Nigeria.

**Madhu Krishnan**, Lecturer of 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> Century Postcolonial Writing, University of Bristol, is the author of *Contemporary African Literature in English: Global Locations, Postcolonial Identifications* (2014). Her work centres on African and African diaspora writing, publishing and culture, with a particular focus on 'making' of African literary institutions. She has published widely in the field of African literatures and her forthcoming monograph, *Writing Spatiality in West Africa: Colonial Legacies and the Anglophone /Francophone Novel*, will be released by James Currey Press's African Articulations series in 2018. She convenes the AHRC Research Network, 'Small Magazines, Literary Networks and Self-Fashioning in Sub-Saharan Africa' and organises regular literary events in Bristol and the surrounding areas.



**Zahrah Nesbitt-Ahmed** is a researcher, writer and blogger with extensive experience in gender, urbanisation and international development. She is currently a Technical Specialist on Women's Economic Empowerment at Social Development Direct. Zahrah is also the founder and editor of bookshy – a labour of love dedicated to African literature – and the curator of ABC, a visual showcase of African Book Covers. She holds a BSc in Human and Physical Geography from University of Reading, an MSc in Urbanisation and Development and a PhD in Human Geography and Urban Studies, both from London School of Economics (LSE). She tweets @zahrahnesbitt.

**Chinelo Okparanta** was born in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. A University of Iowa Provost's Postgraduate Visiting Writer in Fiction as well as a Colgate University Olive B. O'Connor Fellow in Fiction, Okparanta received her BS from Pennsylvania State University, her MA from Rutgers University, and her MFA from the Iowa Writers' Workshop. She was one of Granta's six New Voices for 2012 and is a Lambda Award winner for Lesbian Fiction, an O. Henry Short Story Prize winner, a finalist for the Rolex Mentors and Proteges Arts Initiative, a finalist for the Etisalat Prize for Literature, and a finalist for the Caine Prize, among others. Her stories have appeared in the New Yorker, Granta, Tin House, The Kenyon Review, and elsewhere. In 2017, Okparanta was named one of Granta's Best of Young American Novelists.

**Kivu Ruhorahoza** [bio forthcoming]

**Ingrid Sinclair** is a director and screenwriter who moved from England to Zimbabwe and became involved in the liberation struggle. Her pivotal first feature *Flame*, received prizes and standing ovations world-wide. *Flame* was selected for Director's Fortnight at Cannes. In *Flame* and her previous prize winning documentary *Bird From Another World*, she deals with the day-to-day drama of politics, history, geography, culture and the way they affect people, turning them into both villains and heroes.

**Kate Wallis** is Lecturer in Global Literatures in the Department of English at the University of Exeter. Her research interests include African literature (emphasis on Kenya and Nigeria), material cultures of the book, global literary networks and African literature's relationship to memory and place. Her work has been published in *Wasafiri* and is forthcoming in *Research in African Literatures*. She is an Editor for Huza Press and [africanwords.com](http://africanwords.com). She was Producer of the Africa Writes festival in London in 2015 and is Associate Producer of the 2017 Africa Writes Bristol Pop-Up.