

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
10 June 2019

The inaugural Africa Writes - Bristol celebrates contemporary literature and thought from
Africa and the diaspora

From Friday 28 June to Thursday 4 July 2019 Africa Writes – Bristol will be celebrating contemporary literature from Africa and the African diaspora with a series of performances, book launches, panels and workshops in Bristol. Presented by the Royal African Society and Saseni!, this exciting literary week brings together over 30 writers and creatives drawing on histories and geographies from across Botswana, Cameroon, Jamaica, Kenya, Nigeria, Somaliland, South Africa, Uganda, UK, USA and Zambia.

Over seven days and six venues, the 2019 edition of Africa Writes – Bristol will take place across the city at Malcolm X Community Centre, Arnolfini, Waterstones, Foyles, The Cube and the Wickham Theatre.

2019 marks the launch of ***New Daughters of Africa***, an anthology edited by Margaret Busby (following on from her landmark *Daughters of Africa* published in 1992) and featuring the work of over 200 writers from across the globe – from Trinidad and Tobago to Kenya, Equatorial Guinea to the USA – to celebrate a unifying heritage, illustrate an uplifting sense of sisterhood, and showcase the remarkable range of creativity from the African diaspora. *New Daughters of Africa* has very much inspired our programming for Africa Writes – Bristol 2019, with nearly every panel featuring a contributor to this important new anthology (from **Ros Martin** to **Jay Bernard** to **Nadifa Mohamed**), and a particular emphasis on showcasing the extraordinary literary achievements of Black women writers from Bristol-based **Liz Mytton**'s new play *Back Home* to **Namwali Serpell**'s debut novel *The Old Drift*. The headline event *New Daughters of Africa* event is held in partnership with **St Paul's Carnival**, where Dialogue Books' **Sharmaine Lovegrove** will be in conversation with **Margaret Busby** and contributors to this influential anthology at the Malcolm X Community Centre.

60% of the events are free and open to all. Tickets for paid events can be booked online:
<http://bit.ly/AfricaWritesBristol>

Other programming highlights across the week include:

- A rare appearance by legendary Somali musician Hudeidi (Saturday 29 June, Malcolm X Community Centre, 2pm, FREE).
- A poetry night featuring award-winning South African poet Koleka Putuma and 2019 Ted Hughes Award winner / Temple Quarter resident poet Jay Bernard, followed by the Africa Writes - Bristol festival party with a DJ set from Miss Divine (Saturday 29 June, Malcolm X Community Centre, 8pm, £6).
- A rare opportunity to see 2019 Caine Prize for African Writing shortlisted writers outside of London with Lesley Arimah and Cherrie Kandie in conversation with Nikesh Shukla (Sunday 30 June, Waterstones, 6pm, £8 / £6).
- A screening of critically acclaimed Kenyan film *Supa Modo* about a terminally ill girl who dreams of becoming a super-hero, followed by Come the Revolution's Liz Chege in conversation with one of the film's writers Wanjeri Gakuru (Tuesday 2 July, The Cube, 7.15pm, £8/£6).
- Editor of gal-dem Charlie Brinkhurst-Cuff talks to contributors of her new edited collection *Mother Country: Real Stories of Windrush Children* sharing rich and previously undocumented insights into intergenerational black British experiences (Thursday 4 July, Waterstones, 7pm, £8/£6).

Following a successful pop-up event in 2017, The Royal Africa Society and Saseni! are now proud to now establish Africa Writes in Bristol as a stand-alone festival, which will now happen biennially and become a regular fixture in the city's cultural life.

There are opportunities for Bristol-based creatives to get more involved in the festival by registering for our fiction, poetry and literary producers workshops. Get in touch at africawritesbristol@gmail.com with the title 'poetry' or 'fiction' or 'book-making' to indicate interest.

There are also still opportunities to join our team of volunteers and help us produce the festival by sending your CV to africawritesbristol@gmail.com before 26 June 2019.

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Contact: Kate Wallis & TJ Dema, Co-Producers, africawritesbristol@gmail.com or 07947514662.

[Full programme and tickets](#)

For Images, Logos and Artist Bios, [Download the Press Pack](#) on Dropbox

W: africawrites.org/category/bristol-2019/

FB: [AfricaWritesBristol](https://www.facebook.com/AfricaWritesBristol)

T: [@AfricaWritesBrs](https://twitter.com/AfricaWritesBrs)

In: [@AfricaWritesBristol](https://www.instagram.com/AfricaWritesBristol)

#AfricaWritesBristol

Notes to Editors:

1. Saseni! is a new African creative writing teaching initiative that connects higher and vocational education and the creative arts on the African continent. As part of this work Saseni! hosts workshops and literary events, produces new publications and builds new creative writing and creative industries pedagogies. Saseni! is inspired by the Kenyan sheng greeting that loosely translates as sasa nyinyi. According to go.sheng.co.ke saseni suggests more than a greeting - it is a call to people of common values and interests. Saseni! is therefore set up to respond to the human innate need for gathering, talking, exchanging and open-ended engagement.
2. The Royal African Society is a membership organisation that provides opportunities for people to connect, celebrate and engage critically with a wide range of topics and ideas about Africa today. Through events, publications and digital channels it shares insight, instigates debate and facilitates mutual understanding between the UK and Africa. The society amplifies African voices and interests in academia, business, politics, the arts and education, reaching a network of more than one million people globally. www.royalafricansociety.org/
3. The festival has been made possible through the financial support of Arts Council England, University of Bristol, University of Exeter and Bristol Cultural Development Partnership, and the partnership of these institutions and organisations: African Poetry Book Fund, Afrika Eye, Afrikult, Caine Prize for African Writing, Cassava Republic, Centre for Black Humanities, Come the Revolution, Festival of Ideas, Hargeysa International Book Fair, Kiki, Max Minervas, No Bindings, St Paul's Carnival and Ujima.
4. Festival venues: Malcolm X Community Centre, 141 City Rd, Bristol BS2 8YH, Arnolfini, 16 Narrow Quay, Bristol BS1 4QA, Waterstones, 11A, Union Galleries, Broadmead, Bristol BS1 3XD, Foyles, SU21 Brigstowe St, Bristol BS1 3BH, Wickham Theatre, 62 Corkscrew Hill, West Wickham BR4 9BA, The Cube, Dove Street South, Kingsdown, Bristol, BS2 8JD.

