

MEDIA RELEASE

ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival to transform The British Library for the first time as headline speakers and sessions are announced



20 - 21 May 2017

- The British Library will host the London leg of the ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival for the first time as part of a new partnership
- Over [70 eminent authors and thinkers from across the globe](#) will [explore 'The Idea of India' in a programme](#) set to showcase South Asia's unique multilingual literary heritage and the Festival's global appeal
- The intense two-day taster of the original Festival takes its inspiration from the 70th anniversary of Indian Independence
- ZEE JLF@The British Library is one of the first major events in the UK as part of the [UK-India Year of Culture in 2017](#) which will showcase the cultural diversity of India in the UK
- The [ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival](#) is an extraordinary free literature festival in the 'Pink City' of Jaipur, Rajasthan each January, described by Time Out as "officially the Woodstock, Live 8 and Ibiza of world literature".

On May 20th and 21st the British Library will be transformed like never before as the ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival animates its iconic spaces for the first time in celebration of a significant cultural partnership. ZEE JLF@The British Library will present a sumptuous showcase of South Asia's literary heritage, oral and performing arts, music, cinema and illusion, books and ideas, dialogue and debate, Bollywood and politics in the context of this broader view of India and its relationship to the UK.

2017 marks the fourth London edition of the Festival, which is rooted in the Pink City of Jaipur, India. Held every January, this year commemorated the 10th anniversary of the flagship event.

Festival co-directors [Namita Gokhale](#) and [William Dalrymple](#) have programmed JLF@The British Library to provide UK audiences with a taste of what is frequently referred to as ‘the greatest literary show on Earth’ in celebration of 70 years of UK-India relations.

Programme highlights include Oscar-winning British director [Stephen Frears](#) who will be in conversation with journalist and writer [Shrabani Basu](#) to discuss Basu’s book *Victoria and Abdul* which is soon to be released as a major motion picture directed by Frears and starring Judi Dench as Queen Victoria, *You’ve Got Magic* from illusionist and new-age mentalist **Neel Madhav** whose tricks include criminal psychology and neuro-linguistic programming. **The Beatles in India: The Rishikesh Trip** which will see writer, playwright & music historian [Philip Norman](#) in conversation with leading Indian journalist [Ajoy Bose](#) in a fascinating session that explores the magic and mystery of the Beatles in India nearly 50 years since their trip to Rishikesh and an evening of vibrant musical celebration with **Kabir Café**. Festival co-director, writer and publisher [Namita Gokhale](#) will be in conversation with panellists; [Tahmima Anam](#), [Sarvat Hasin](#), [Amit Chaudhuri](#) and [Kunal Basu](#) as they share their insights on the art of the novel in **The Reading Room: Reshaping the Novel**. Literary exiles and migrants [Amit Chaudhuri](#), [Meera Syal](#), [Prajwal Parajuly](#) and [Lila Azam Zanganeh](#) compare notes on whether emigration positively affects the writing of an author in **Migrant Words**. Panellists including Indian MP’s [Swapan Dasgupta](#) and [Shashi Tharoor](#) discuss the enduring mystery of India’s fascination with **P.G. Wodehouse** one of the most popular English language writers in India and broadcaster [Anita Anand](#) and festival co-director [William Dalrymple](#) will discuss their book *Kohinoor* which explores the many mysteries which shroud the world’s most famous diamond alongside many more events which make up a packed programme of literary debate and social dialogue.

ZEE JLF@The British Library is the first of [five cultural strands which form part of the Year of UK-India of Culture in 2017](#), celebrating the deep cultural ties and exchange in what is a year of great significance for the world’s largest democracy as India marks 70 years as an independent democratic republic. The year-long programme also includes [India@Edinburgh](#) in August, [The Independence Gala@Southbank Centre](#) in October, a season of [Dance & Theatre](#) and the UK Premiere of the [Bharat Symphony by Dr L. Subramaniam and the London Symphony Orchestra](#) in November.

ZEE JLF@The British Library is part of a wider partnership between [Teamwork Arts](#) and The British Library which included the presentation of a facsimile of the 1215 Magna Carta

at the ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival in Jaipur this January, and will include the presentation of the Indian Constitution at the British Library during the two day event in May. To mark the UK-India Year of Culture, The British Library is also digitising 1 million pages of its South Asian Archives. Two Centuries of Indian print is a major programme to digitise the vast wealth of Indian printed books held by the Library dating from 1713 to 1914.

Namita Gokhale, author and ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival Co-Director said, *"Delighted that the fourth edition of JLF in London will be hosted by the British Library. London is a uniquely cosmopolitan and literary city, and we look forward to celebrating diversity through a series of vibrant sessions that reflect the special spirit of Jaipur. "*

William Dalrymple, author and ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival Co-Director said, *"In only a decade the Jaipur Literature Festival has grown from 14 lost tourists to third of a million people and it's now the biggest festival of literature in the world. We can't wait to bring its energy and colour to the British Library: our Jaipur-on-Thames."*

Sanjoy K. Roy, Managing Director of Teamwork Arts and producers of the ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival, said, *"Our collaboration with the British Library is reflective of the shared history between the sub-continent and UK. The festival will continue to be a platform for diverse voices and will celebrate 70 years of India's independence."*

Jamie Andrews, Head of Culture and Learning at the British Library said, *"The British Library is delighted to be hosting the ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival this year as we celebrate the UK-India Year of Culture. The exciting programme reflects the richness of this new cultural partnership."*

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LISTING

ZEE JLF@The British Library, London

20 - 21 May 2017

All events and sessions take place at the **British Library, 96 Euston Rd, Kings Cross, London NW1 2DB**

[Prices range from £8-£75 with day, weekend and premium weekend passes available.](#) For full details and booking visit: jlfatbritishlibrary.jaipurliteraturefestival.org

About the ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival

The ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival is the world's largest free event of its kind.

The past decade has seen the Festival host over 1600 speakers and welcome over a million booklovers.

Celebrating writers and thinkers from across the globe, past speakers have ranged from Nobel Laureates and Man Booker Prize winners to debut writers including Amish Tripathi, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Eleanor Catton, Ian McEwan, J.M. Coetzee, Margaret Atwood, Mohammed Hanif, Orhan Pamuk, Paul Beatty, Salman Rushdie, Stephen Fry, Vikram Seth and Wole Soyinka along with renowned Indian language writers such as Girish Karnad, Gulzar, Javed Akhtar, M.T. Vasudevan Nair, Uday Prakash as well as the late Mahasweta Devi and U.R. Ananthamurthy. An annual event that goes beyond literature, ZEE JLF has also hosted Amartya Sen, Amitabh Bachchan, the late A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Oprah Winfrey and Thomas Piketty.

Writers and Festival Directors Namita Gokhale and William Dalrymple invite speakers to take part in the five-day programme set against the backdrop of Rajasthan's stunning cultural heritage and the Digg Palace in the state capital Jaipur.

Equity and democracy run through the Festival's veins, placing some of the world's greatest minds, humanitarians, historians, politicians, business leaders, sports people and entertainers from all walks of life together on stage. This free and egalitarian access to these renowned thinkers and writers is a powerful statement in a country where access to such individuals remains the privilege of a few. The ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival provides a potentially life-changing opportunity for audiences from Rajasthan, across India and the world to learn from and exchange ideas with contemporary literary stalwarts.

The ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival is a flagship event of Teamwork Arts, which produces over 25 highly acclaimed performing arts, visual arts and literary festivals across more than 40 cities globally, and is produced by Sanjoy K. Roy.

In 2014, ZEE JLF spread its wings beyond the borders of India with an annual event in May in London. In 2015, it headed across the pond to Boulder, Colorado where it hosts a similar event every September.

Website: www.jaipurliteraturefestival.org

About ZEE JLF@The British Library

The ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival returns to London, presenting a stunning celebration of South Asia's literary heritage, oral and performing arts, books and ideas, dialogue and debate in its fourth edition.

The British Library spaces will be brought to life in a two-day taster of what Time Out Magazine referred to as 'the Woodstock, Live 8 and Ibiza of world literature', the extraordinary free festival which takes place in the Pink City of Jaipur, India, every January. Directed by writers Namita Gokhale and William Dalrymple, it was founded in 2008, and attracts some of the world's leading authors, thinkers and performers, and huge crowds.

The British Library is the national library of the United Kingdom and one of the world's greatest research libraries. It provides world-class information services to the academic, business, research and scientific communities and offers unparalleled access to the world's largest and most comprehensive research collection. The Library's collection has developed over 250 years and exceeds 150 million separate items representing every age of written civilisation and includes books, journals, manuscripts, maps, stamps, music, patents, photographs, newspapers and sound recordings in all written and spoken languages. Up to 10 million people visit the British Library website - www.bl.uk - every year where they can view up to 4 million digitised collection items and over 40 million pages.

About Teamwork Arts: For over 25 years, Teamwork Arts has taken India to the world and brought the world to India.

In countries such as Australia, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, Israel, Korea, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, UK and USA, Teamwork produces over 25 highly acclaimed performing arts, visual arts and literary festivals across more than 40 cities.

Teamwork produces one of the world's largest free literary gatherings, the annual ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival, international festivals Shared History in South Africa, Eye on India in the United States of America, India by the Bay in Hong Kong, and many more.

Website: <http://www.teamworkarts.com>