

Big Names Line Up for Barnes Children's Literature Festival

First wave of artists to be announced includes Tony Ross, Michael Rosen, Judith Kerr, Axel Sheffler, David Baddiel, Adrian Edmonson, Clare Balding and Francesca Simon

London's largest dedicated children's literature festival will be returning to the capital in May 2017 for the third consecutive year. The Barnes Children's Literature Festival programme offers over fifty events for ages 0-12 and beyond, spanning Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th May, including author talks, workshops, story time and craft sessions, music, film and much more.

Confirmed authors and illustrators for 2017 include former Children's Laureates Michael Rosen and Anthony Browne as well as a raft of bestselling authors including Nick Sharratt, Francesca Simon, Steve Cole, Lauren St John, Guy Parker-Rees and Book Trust Illustrator in Residence, Sarah McIntyre. They're appearing alongside a few famous faces including David Baddiel, Clare Balding, Lucy Worsley and Christian O'Connell. Actor Adrian Edmondson will be making his first festival appearance at Barnes with his debut children's novel, *Tilly and the Time Machine*.

The Barnes Festival is committed to programming some of the best known names in children's books alongside new talent and a few treats the audience is unlikely to see at festivals elsewhere. Very special events this year include another festival first featuring Barnes's best known resident, Judith Kerr joining her dear friend Axel Scheffler for an event called 'When Mog Meets Zog' and an exclusive interview with mega bestselling illustrator, Tony Ross.

Other highlights include a brand new interactive *Harry Potter* show, a new production of *Roald Dahl's Revolting Rhymes* – set to live music – for young children, an exclusive screening of the short animation based on Jon Klassen's award-winning *I Want My Hat Back* picture book, and a series of workshops from Aardman Animation, the Oscar-winning creators of *Wallace & Gromit*, *Morph* and *Shaun the Sheep*.

To continue the expansion, the Festival will open on Friday 12th May with a new education and outreach programme involving local schools. This features, in a rare festival appearance, the author of *Goodnight Mr Tom*, Michelle Magorian, and the Children's Poetry Prize winner, Joseph Coelho, among others.



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Festival Director, Amanda Brettargh, who is a Barnes resident and publishing PR specialist, launched the festival in 2015 as a one-day celebration, with a stellar line-up which included Axel Sheffler, Roger McGough, Sally Gardner and Piers Torday. After selling out 70% of events and welcoming more than 2,000 visitors to 25 different events in the inaugural year, Brettargh expanded the programme in 2016 to make Barnes the capital's largest dedicated children's literature festival, with more than 50 events over two days, hosted on and around Barnes Pond. This proved hugely successful, with 5,500 tickets sold.

The Barnes Festival is a true community event, set up and entirely run by Brettargh and a group of ninety volunteers, in partnership with the Barnes Community Association and leading independent, the Barnes Bookshop, as well as the University of Roehampton and other local organisations, schools and residents. A percentage of book sales and surplus from ticket sales is donated to several local primary school libraries each year.

Payment of authors' and illustrators' fees at literary festivals has been a point of contention in recent years, but Barnes is proud, in line with The Society of Authors guidelines, to have paid its authors and illustrators a professional fee for appearances, plus expenses, since the outset. Ms Brettargh explained: "We really value the time and words of all our visiting authors and illustrators, and want them to have as good a time as our audience. Barnes is a place that loves its books. There's a rich literary heritage here, one of London's best independent bookshops too, and our setting, under the magnificent trees around Barnes Pond, provides a literary experience like no other – world class events in a village setting." She also outlined ambitious plans to grow the festival even more in the coming years: "We hope that Barnes will eventually become a week-long celebration of children's literature involving every library, nursery, school and community group in southwest London, as well as an annual highlight on the national literary calendar."

Tickets will be on sale from mid-March, when the full line-up is announced. Follow us online to keep up date:

www.barneskidslitfest.org

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

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

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