

The background of the poster is an abstract painting. It features a palette of earthy browns, from light tan and beige to deep, dark chocolate and near-black tones. There are some vertical streaks of a muted blue or teal color, particularly on the left side. The brushwork is visible, with some areas appearing more textured and layered than others. The overall composition is somewhat vertical, with a sense of depth and movement.

The 23rd Aldeburgh Literary Festival

Thursday 29th February to Sunday 3rd March 2024

At the Aldeburgh Jubilee Hall

Kate Bingham : Mike Brearley : Craig Brown : Elizabeth Burke

David Chater : Nick Cottam : Con Coughlin : Laura Cumming

Richard Dannatt : Daniel Finkelstein : Timothy Garton Ash

Katie Hickman : Lucy Hughes-Hallett : Julia Jones : Martha Kearney

David Kynaston : Jesse Norman : Susan Owens : Nick Robinson

Barnaby Rogerson : Oliver Soden : Francis Wheen

A Landmark Year

2024 marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of The Aldeburgh Bookshop. Thank you to all our customers who have supported us over the years.

Cover image: Kate Giles *Tigers in Red Weather* Oil on linen, diptych

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All events take place at the Jubilee Hall, Aldeburgh except event 12.

The film *We Fought Them in Gunboats*, presented by Julia Jones, will be shown at the Aldeburgh Cinema at 10.00 am on Sunday 3rd March

Thursday 29th February

Event 1: 6.30 pm Mike Brearley in conversation with Francis Wheen *Turning Over the Pebbles: A Life in Cricket and in the Mind*

Mike Brearley is not your average sportsman. Hailed as England's greatest cricket captain, he went on to train - and continues to work - as a psychoanalyst. His deeply thoughtful 'memoir of the mind' seamlessly blends all aspects of his life, delves into his private passions and candidly examines the shifts, conflicts and triumphs of his extraordinary time on and off the field.

Mike Brearley was educated at Cambridge University where he read Classics and Moral Sciences. He lectured on philosophy at the University of Newcastle on Tyne from 1968-1971. He first played for England in 1976 and captained the side from 1977 to 1980 winning seventeen Test matches and losing only four. He was recalled to the English Team in 1981 for the Ashes home series leading England to a famous victory. From 1981 he trained and continues to work as a psychoanalyst and is a lecturer on both leadership and on psychoanalysis. He is the author of the bestselling *The Art of Captaincy*, *On Form*, *On Cricket*, *Spirit of Cricket* and has written on cricket and the psychology of sport for many of the national newspapers.

Francis Wheen is a British journalist, writer and broadcaster. His books include a biography of Karl Marx which won the Deutscher Memorial Prize in 1999 and has been translated into twenty languages. He was deputy editor of *Private Eye* and makes regular appearances on *Have I Got News For You*.

Friday 1st March

Event 2: 10.00 am Oliver Soden in conversation with Elizabeth Burke. *Masquerade: The Lives of Noël Coward*

The voice, the dressing-gown, the cigarette in its holder remain unmistakable. There is rarely a week when *Private Lives*, *Hay Fever*, and *Blithe Spirit* is not in production somewhere in the world and at one point, Coward was the most highly-paid author in the world. As T.S. Eliot said, in 1954, 'there are things you can learn from Noël Coward that you won't learn from Shakespeare'. Yet some of his most striking and daring writing remains unfamiliar. In Oliver Soden's sparkling, story-packed new life, we finally get to meet The Master in all his guises.

Oliver Soden worked as literary assistant to RSC director John Barton, editing a volume of Barton's ten-play cycle *Tantalus* before becoming a researcher on BBC Radio 3's long-running programme *Private Passions*. He has written a highly-acclaimed life of Michael Tippett, as well as a dazzling 'biography' of the real eighteenth-century cat which lived in an asylum with the mad visionary poet Kit Smart and was immortalised in his poem 'For I will consider my cat Jeffry'.

Elizabeth Burke worked as a non-fiction editor in publishing before moving to the BBC, where she won numerous awards for her radio documentaries and became a Commissioning Editor for Radio 4. In recent years she ran Radio 3's *Private Passions*.

Event 3: 11.45 am Susan Owens on *Imagining England's Past: Inspiration, Enchantment, Obsession*

England has long built its sense of self on visions of its past. What does it mean for medieval writers to summon King Arthur from the post-Roman fog; for William Morris to resurrect the skills of the medieval workshop and Julia Margaret Cameron to portray the Arthurian court with her Victorian camera, or for Yinka Shonibare - in the final years of the twentieth century - to visualize a Black Victorian dandy?

By exploring the imaginations of successive generations, this book reveals how diverse notions of the past have inspired literature, art, music, architecture and fashion. It shines a light on subjects from myths to mock-Tudor houses, Stonehenge to steam-

punk, and asks how – and why – the past continues so powerfully to shape the present. Not a history of England, but a history of those who have written, painted and dreamed it into being, *Imagining England's Past* offers a lively, erudite account of the making and manipulation of the days of old

Susan Owens is an art historian and curator who has worked at the Royal Collection and the Victoria and Albert Museum. Her previous books include *Spirit of Place: Artists, Writers & the British Landscape* (2020), *Christina Rossetti: Poetry in Art* (2018) and *The Ghost: A Cultural History* (2017).

Event 4: 2.30 pm Richard Dannatt. *Victory to Defeat: The British Army 1918-1940*

The British Army won a convincing series of victories between 1916 and 1918. But by 1939 it was an entirely different animal. The hard-won knowledge, experience and strategic vision that delivered victory after victory in the closing stages of the First World War had been lost. In the inter-war years there was plenty of talking, but very little focus on who Britain might have to fight, and how. *Victory to Defeat* clearly illustrates how the British Army wasn't prepared to fight a first-class European Army in 1939 for the simple reason that - as a country - Britain hadn't prepared itself to do so. The failure of the army's leadership led directly to its abysmal performance in Norway and France in 1940.

Victory to Defeat is a captivating history of the mismanagement of a war-winning army. It is also a stark warning that we neglect to understand who our enemy might be, and how to defeat him, at the peril of our country. The British Army is now to be cut to its smallest size since 1714. Are we, this book asks, repeating the same mistakes again?

General The Lord Dannatt GCB CBE MC DL is one of the UK's most respected military commentators, frequently appearing on television, radio and in print, most recently on the Russian invasion of Ukraine and its implications for the West.

As Chief of the General Staff, his leadership and example were critical in shaping the debate about the role of the professional army in modern warfare. He has written his autobiography, *Leading from the Front* and *Boots on the Ground, Britain and her army since 1945*. He entered the House of Lords as a Crossbencher in 2011.

Event 5: 4.00 pm Jesse Norman in conversation with Lucy Hughes-Hallett.
The Winding Stair

Power is shifting. Queen Elizabeth I is dying and James is waiting to become King. Everywhere, there is opportunity to ascend. But who will thrive and who will fail under the new King? Will it be the scholar Francis Bacon, whose brilliant mind is the envy of the royal court? Or his hated rival the attorney Edward Coke, already acclaimed as the greatest lawyer of his generation?

Described in *The Spectator* as a 'tour de force', *The Winding Stair* tells the gripping story of these two founders of our modern world and their battle for power, pre-eminence and the hand of the most eligible woman in the realm. Combining humour, wit and imagination with deep research, this novel is a dazzling synthesis of history and fiction that takes the genre to new places and holds a darkened mirror to our own contemporary politics.

Jesse Norman is MP for Hereford and South Herefordshire, Minister of State at the Department of Transport and a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford. His biography of *Edmund Burke: the Visionary who Created Modern Politics* was long-listed for the Orwell Prize and the prestigious Samuel Johnson prize for non-fiction.

Lucy Hughes-Hallett is a biographer, historian and novelist. In November 2013 she won the Samuel Johnson Prize for non-fiction for *The Pike*, her biography of the Italian writer Gabriele D'Annunzio, which also won the 2013 Costa Book Award and the Duff Cooper Prize. She has just finished a book on the Duke of Buckingham.

Event 6: 5.30 pm Daniel Finkelstein in conversation with Nick Robinson.
Hitler, Stalin, Mum and Dad: A Family Memoir of Survival

Political columnist and commentator Daniel Finkelstein has written a powerful memoir exploring both his mother and his father's devastating experiences of persecution, resistance and survival during the Second World War.

Danny's mother Mirjam Weiner was the youngest of three daughters born in Germany to Alfred and Margarethe Weiner. Alfred, a decorated hero from the Great War, is now widely acknowledged to have been the first person to recognise the existential danger Hitler posed to the Jews and began, in 1933, to catalogue Nazi crimes in detail. After moving his family to Amsterdam, he relocated his library to London and was preparing

to bring over his wife and children when Germany invaded Holland. Before long, the family was rounded up, robbed, humiliated and sent to Bergen-Belsen.

Danny's father Ludwik was born in Lwow, the only child of a prosperous Jewish family. In 1939, after Hitler and Stalin carved up Poland, the family was sent by the communists to a Siberian gulag. Working as slave labourers on a collective farm, his father survived the freezing winters in a tiny house they built from cow dung.

Daniel Finkelstein is a British journalist and opinion writer. A former executive editor of *The Times*, he continues to write for the paper. He has been Political Columnist of the Year four times and recently joined the board of Chelsea Football Club. He was appointed to the House of Lords in 2013.

Danny will be in conversation with Nick Robinson who has been Political Editor for both the BBC and ITV News and is now best known as a presenter on Radio 4's Today programme. He is the author of two books on contemporary politics: *Live from Downing Street* (2012) and *Election Notebook* (2015).

The Festival Exhibition

**6.30 pm onwards The Aldeburgh Literary Festival Exhibition Party
at The Aldeburgh Gallery, 143 High Street**

The exhibition festival runs from Thursday 29th February to Monday 4th March

This exhibition presents work by artists who generously contributed to *A New Suffolk Garland*, the anthology of Suffolk writing and art published in 2022 for the Festival of Suffolk.

Saturday 2nd March

Event 7: 10.00 am **Timothy Garton Ash. *Homelands: A Personal History of Europe***

Timothy Garton Ash, has spent a lifetime studying Europe and this deeply-felt book is full of vivid experiences: from his father's memories of D-Day and his own surveillance at the hands of the Stasi to interviewing Albanian guerrillas in the mountains of Kosovo and angry teenagers in the poorest quarters of Paris, as well as advising prime ministers, chancellors and presidents.

Homelands is at once a powerful history of a period of unprecedented progress, a clear-eyed account of how so much then went wrong and an urgent call to the citizens of this great old continent to understand and defend what we have collectively achieved.

Timothy Garton Ash was seventeen when Britain joined the European Community and 64 when the country left it. In the intervening years he has lived and breathed European politics, witnessing some of the most dramatic scenes in its history, interviewing many of its key players and analysing how life has evolved for ordinary Europeans across the breadth of the continent.

He is Professor of European Studies at the University of Oxford and a columnist for the *Guardian*. He has won many prizes and plaudits for his journalism and books including *The File*, a riveting, autobiographical account of investigating the contents of his Stasi file after the fall of East Germany.

Event 8: 11.45 am **Katie Hickman on *Brave Hearted: The Dramatic Story of Women of the American West***

Whether they were the hard-drinking, hard-living poker players and prostitutes of the new boom towns, 'ordinary' wives and mothers walking two thousand miles across the prairies pulling their handcarts behind them, Chinese slave-brides working in laundries, or the Native American women displaced by the mass migration of the 'whites' to their lands, all had one trait in common: that of extreme resilience and courage in the face of the unknown. In 2023, *Brave Hearted* won the prestigious WILLA Award for non-Fiction and was a finalist in the non-fiction Category of the Reading the West Awards.

Katie Hickman is the author of nine previous books, including two bestselling works

of non-fiction, *Daughters of Britannia* and *Courtesans*. She has also written a trilogy of historical novels – *The Aviary Gate*, *The Pindar Diamond* and *The House at Bishopsgate* – which between them have been translated into twenty languages. Her other work includes two highly-acclaimed travel books: *Travels with a Mexican Circus* (originally published as *A Trip to the Light Fantastic*) was shortlisted for the Thomas Cook Travel Book Award and was one of *The Independent's* Books of the Year. Her history of British women in pre-Raj India, *She-Merchants, Buccaneers and Gentlewomen*, was published in 2019.

Event 9: 2.30 pm Barnaby Rogerson on *The House Divided: Sunni, Shia and the Making of the Middle East*

The book begins with the contemporary Middle East and the proxy wars between Saudi Arabia and its Sunni allies and Shiite Iran. To explore these, Rogerson suggests, we must first understand the origins of the Sunni-Shia divide, which go back to the death of the Prophet Muhammad in 632 in an accidental coup that set aside the claims of his son Ali, and the slaughter of Ali's own son Husayn at Kerbala. These events, known to every Muslim, have created a fault line in the Middle East.

This is a vivid tale full of doomed heroes and secret conspiracies as Rogerson shows how the rivalry between Arabs, Turks and Persians has shaped the modern chessboard of nation states, oil wells, mountains and minorities. It is vital, Rogerson contends, to both understand and empathise with the struggles of the Islamic world with a conflict that matters not only to the Middle East but also to the world at large.

Barnaby Rogerson is an author, publisher and journalist. Together with his partner Rose Baring, he runs Eland Publishing, which specializes in keeping the classics of travel literature in print. He has also written dozens of travel articles, book reviews and historical essays on various North African and Islamic themes.

**Event 10: 4.00 pm David Kynaston in conversation with Craig Brown.
*A Northern Wind: Britain 1962-65***

How much can change in less than two and a half years? In the case of Britain in the Sixties, the answer is: almost everything - from the groundbreaking rise of the Beatles to a sex scandal that rocked the Tory government and the arrival at No 10 of Harold Wilson, a prime minister utterly different from his Old Etonian predecessors.

A Northern Wind is the latest instalment of his acclaimed series of books covering the history of post-war Britain (1945-1979) under the collective title *Tales of a New Jerusalem*. Previous titles include *Austerity Britain*, *Family Britain*, *Modernity Britain* and *On the Cusp*.

David Kynaston has been a professional historian since 1973 and has written eighteen books, including *The City of London* (1994-2001) and *W.G.'s Birthday Party*, an account of the Gentleman v. Players match at Lord's in July 1898.

Event II: 5.30 pm Kate Bingham in conversation with Martha Kearney.
The Long Shot: The Inside Story of the Race to Vaccinate Britain

Catapulted into an international crisis, Kate Bingham knew the odds were heavily stacked against a workable Covid-19 vaccine. This is the inside story of how the Vaccine Taskforce beat those long odds and delivered a scientific miracle.

From a remote cottage, Bingham juggled vaccine suppliers, Whitehall and the media circus, as the deaths mounted and the world shut down. Political manoeuvring, miscommunications and administrative meddling nearly jeopardised the project, but perseverance and expertise paid off.

Bingham's eclectic team secured the first vaccine doses administered in the West, saving thousands of lives in the UK as new variants struck. Now, nearly every adult in Britain has had the jab, lockdowns have ended and we are finally living with Covid.

Dame Kate Bingham served as chair of the UK Vaccine Taskforce, on a seven-month unpaid secondment. She is Managing Partner at life sciences venture capital firm SV Health Investors. SV's investments have led to the launch of twenty drugs for inflammatory and autoimmune disease, blindness and cancer. At SV, Kate co-manages a number of global biotech venture funds and she helped launch the Dementia Discovery Fund. She is a board member of the Francis Crick Institute and was awarded a DBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours for her services as Chair of the UK Vaccine Taskforce. The proceeds from this book are donated to the new university The New Model Institute for Technology and Engineering (NMITE) and to the early years education, development and advocacy charity, Kindred Squared.

Martha Kearney is a broadcaster, journalist and presenter of Radio 4's Today pro-

gramme. Her awards include Political Commentator of the Year (House Magazine), Radio Presenter of the Year (TRIC) and Best Individual Contribution to Radio (Voice of Listener and Viewer).

Sunday 3rd March

Event 12: 10.00 am At the Aldeburgh Cinema: *We Fought Them In Gunboats*, a new short film directed by Tim Curtis. The screening will be followed by a discussion between Julia Jones and Nick Cottam

When you look out to sea from Aldeburgh, you are looking at a World War II battlefield. This film explores the stories of some of the heroes of HMS Beehive, the Coastal Forces base at Felixstowe Dock (now part of the Port of Felixstowe), who took on the German E-Boats in the North Sea during the Second World War.

The main focus of the film is based around the personal account of Robert Hichens, the first RNVR (Volunteer Reserve) officer to command a Motor Gun Boat. Hichens was the most highly-decorated RNVR officer of the war, a hero in his own time. There was shock across the nation when he was killed in action in April 1943, returning to Beehive from night action in the North Sea.

During the last six months of his life, Hichens had been writing *We Fought Them in Gunboats* – a book that details his struggles with the Admiralty as well as with the enemy. It also offers a unique view of daily life on this wartime Suffolk base. The first edition of the book was heavily censored by the Admiralty, but Julia Jones recently published the un-redacted version, giving unexpected new insight into WW2 operations.

After the film there will be a discussion between Julia Jones and Nick Cottam about *We Fought Them in Gunboats* and Julia's book *Uncommon Courage: The Yachtsmen Volunteers of World War II*.

Julia is a writer and runs the publishing company Golden Duck. She has written *Strong Winds*, a successful series of children's books.

Nick Cottam lives in Suffolk and has been a freelance journalist and writer for more than thirty years, writing for and editing a range of newspapers and magazines. He has written two books about Suffolk, *Life on the Deben* and *Walking the Deben*.

Event 13: 11.45 am Con Coughlin in conversation with David Chater.
Assad: The Triumph of Tyranny

Until the Arab Spring of 2011, the world's view of Bashar al-Assad was largely benign. He and his wife, a former British banker, were viewed as philanthropic individuals doing their best to keep their country at peace. So much so that a profile of Mrs. Assad in American *Vogue* was headlined 'The Rose in the Desert'. Shortly after it appeared, Syria descended into the horrific civil war that has seen its cities reduced to rubble and thousands murdered or displaced, a civil war that is still raging over a decade later.

Coughlin draws together all the strands of Assad's remarkable story and will reflect the wider implications of the Syrian conflict for the world.

Con Coughlin is *The Daily Telegraph's* Executive Foreign Editor and an expert on the Middle East and Islamic terrorism. He regularly broadcasts on television and radio on both sides of the Atlantic, and has written several critically-acclaimed books, including *Saddam: The Secret Life* (a *New York Times* bestseller) and *American Ally: Tony Blair and the War on Terror*.

David Chater is a British broadcast journalist with more than 35 years' experience in international television news, having worked for ITN Sky News and Al Jazeera. In 2010 he set up a television station in Georgia FSU where he worked until 2013.

Event 14: 2.30 pm Laura Cumming on *Thunderclap: A Memoir of Art and Life & Sudden Death*

On the morning of 12 October 1654, a gunpowder explosion devastated the Dutch city of Delft: the thunderclap was heard over seventy miles away. Among the fatalities was the painter Carel Fabritius, dead at thirty-two, leaving only his haunting masterpiece *The Goldfinch* and barely a dozen known paintings. The explosion that killed him also buried his reputation, along with answers to the mysteries of his life and career.

What happened to Fabritius before and after this disaster is just one of the discoveries in a book that explores the relationship between art and life, interweaving the lives of Laura Cumming, her Scottish painter father, who also died too young, and the great artists of the Dutch Golden Age.

Laura Cumming has been chief art critic of the *Observer* since 1999. Her books include

A Face to the World: on Self-Portraits (2009) and *The Vanishing Man: in Pursuit of Velázquez* (2016) which won the James Tait Black Biography Prize. Her family memoir *On Chapel Sands: My Mother and other Missing Persons* (2019) was a *Sunday Times* best-seller was shortlisted for the Baillie Gifford, Costa and Rathbone's Folio prizes.

Event 15: 4.00 pm Craig Brown and Friends

Craig Brown has been writing his parodic diary in *Private Eye* for the past 35 years. In this all-new One-Stop Literary Festival, he will be talking about the nature of humour and, with a little help from his friends, performing excerpts from many of his creations, including *Downton Abbey*, *Mary Berry*, *Robert Macfarlane*, *You & Yours* and *Melvyn Bragg's In Our Time*.

Craig's most recent books are *Haywire: The Best of Craig Brown*, *Ma'am Darling: 99 Glimpses of Princess Margaret* and the number one bestseller *One Two Three Four: The Beatles in Time* which won the 2020 Baillie Gifford Prize for Non-Fiction.

The Aldeburgh Literary Festival would like to thank

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The Aldeburgh Literary Festival Exhibition
at The Aldeburgh Gallery, 143 High Street

From Thursday 29th February to Monday 4th March
Open 10am - 5pm

Exhibition Party on Friday 1st March from 6.30 pm

This exhibition presents work by artists who generously contributed to *A New Suffolk Garland*, the anthology of Suffolk writing and art published in 2022 for the Festival of Suffolk. The book was published in aid of charity and has now raised over £15,000 for Suffolk charities. Profits from the sale of the works in this exhibition will also be donated to Suffolk charities.

The works include oil paintings, drawings, linocuts, engravings, photographs and a sculpture. The paintings and artworks on sale are not necessarily the same ones as reproduced in the book. Artists displaying works include:

Derek Chambers
Emma Chichester Clark
Frances Crickmore
Alex Curry
James Dodds
Laurence Edwards
Jeff Fisher
Annabel Gault
Kate Giles
Maggi Hambling

Paul Hamlyn
David Hughes
Bill Jackson
Ffiona Lewis
Eamonn McCabe
Caroline McAdam Clark
Helen Napper
Tessa Newcomb
Sarah Muir Poland
Matt Pritchett
Janet Watson



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