

# Lockdown LitFest.

## PRESS RELEASE

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For immediate release

### PUBLISHING INDUSTRY RESPONDS WITH OVERWHELMING SUPPORT FOR NEWLY-LAUNCHED LOCKDOWN LITFEST

“This is a great initiative. And these are strange days. Strange days for readers, strange days for writers.” **Ian Rankin**

“Thanks that was great. Allllmost as if I was front row at a Lit Fest 🙌🙌🙌”

**Tweet from @soozworld, an audience member**

“..it’s a thrill to be on this. I think it’s a great initiative, this virtual festival.” **Peter James**

A mere week since launching their website, and just three since the inception of the Lockdown LitFest idea, the online literature festival, with its aim of creating as close to a real-world festival experience as possible, has already released its first five events with lifestyle journalist **Kate Spicer**, international bestselling author **Peter James**, Emirati poet and spoken word artist **Afra Atiq**, highly-acclaimed Scottish crime writer **Ian Rankin**, and the man behind the children’s TV hit *Bob The Builder* **Curtis Jobling**,

Peter James, participating from his home in the Channel Islands, was so supportive he even gave a world exclusive reading from his new novel *Find Them Dead*, not due for publication by Macmillan until 9<sup>th</sup> July.

With forthcoming events featuring, amongst others, renowned novelist **Kate Mosse**, respected historian **Tom Holland**, author of the award-winning novel *Chocolat* **Joanne Harris**, and celebrated actress **Miriam Margolyes**, the small team - all of whom are working 100+ hour weeks - are buoyed by the extraordinary support from authors, publishers and agents, and are astonished at the rapidly growing audiences.

Co-Founder Paul Blezard commented, “It’s truly amazing. Seven days ago, we were a handful of exhausted people with laptops and a dream. Now we’ve got a big enough audience to fill the very largest tent in any of the most prestigious literary festivals AND have a pretty lengthy queue outside!”

With authors and audiences coming in from almost every continent, the original idea for an online global culture hub is well underway and is being supported by all aspects of the

publishing industry, and across the many different social media platforms. Blezard said, “We’re trying to do the near impossible, we know. It’s like building a new turbine on the wing of a Jumbo Jet, at 36,000 feet while travelling at 580 mph, both exhilarating and terrifying in equal measure. It’s only because we believe in this wholeheartedly, and are buoyed by the reaction from everyone, that we haven’t actually fallen off.”

Lockdown Litfest has been exploring ways to ensure that event viewers can purchase the books discussed, and even receive signed copies, and are hoping to be able to make an announcement about this very soon, once plans are finalised. “It’s part of the DNA of Lockdown Litfest that we support authors and readers,” explained Blezard, “but we also want to back independent bookshops that are the heart of so many high streets and communities, and whose knowledge and passion are so vital to authors and publishers alike.”

Currently free to view, and with the whole team working pro bono, Lockdown LitFest would be delighted to hear from culturally minded angels and benefactors who might aid them in their ambition to pay and assist writers, many of whom are struggling financially with the loss of their live event incomes during the COVID-19 crisis. There is also a *Patreon* page for audience donations in lieu of a ticket price for events which can be found at <https://www.patreon.com/lockdownlitfest>

Further details at the newly updated website [LockdownLitFest.com](http://LockdownLitFest.com) and follow lockdownlitfest on all social media channels.

### **About Lockdown LitFest**

Amid Covid-19, social distancing and self-isolation, many cultural events have had to cancel or postpone. Literary festivals, theatres, music gigs, book groups, school visits by authors and more are in disarray, leaving audiences disappointed and authors without incomes. In response, the Lockdown LitFest, a new online literary festival initiative, has been launched to offer live author interviews and a wide selection of other cultural content to keep everyone reading, entertained and inspired in these troubling times and beyond. With a schedule of world-beating, multi-million selling household names, debutantes and firm favourites from the UK and abroad, the festival will bring to your screen authors, poets, writers, thinkers, illustrators and slowly build a feast for your eye and food for your soul.

**For further information, please contact [info@lockdownlitfest.com](mailto:info@lockdownlitfest.com) or call Alex Hippisley-Cox on 07921 127077.**