

## Beyond Words Festival



5 - 17 May 2025, at the Institut français in London

The Institut français in London is pleased to announce the **9<sup>th</sup> edition of the Beyond Words Festival of literature** featuring acclaimed authors and new voices, and the latest publications from both sides of the Channel and beyond. Over 10 days, the festival will feature **talks, readings, debates, book signing sessions, films and post-screening discussions**.

The acclaimed author of *The Postcard*, **Anne Berest** will return to the Beyond Words Festival on 10 May with **Gabriële**, she co-wrote with her sister Claire Berest. Based on the life of their great grandmother, the novel tells the story of Gabriële Buffet, a pioneering French woman and her relationships with artists Francis Picabia and Marcel Duchamp.

Franco-British lawyer and author **Philippe Sands** and journalist and CEO of Arte France, **Bruno Patino** will revisit Chilean history in a special event centred on their respective books: **38 Londres Street: On Impunity, Pinochet in England and a Nazi in Patagonia** a compelling blend of memoir, detective story, and courtroom drama, and **Rire avec le diable**, based on Patino's own encounter with Pinochet (10 May).

On the occasion of the publication of his book in English, **Palestinian author Karim Kattan** will be in conversation with **Will Forrester**, Head of Literature Programmes at English PEN, on 8 May. Originally published in French, **The Palace on the Higher Hill** follows Faysal's return to his family's abandoned home in Palestine, where he confronts the ghosts of both personal and political pasts. Karim Kattan will also launch his book in several venues across the UK (Birmingham, Bristol, Newcastle upon Tyne and Oxford).

As part of **Stage on Screen**, acclaimed director **Sophie Fiennes** is given special focus with two of her films shown at Ciné Lumière. **Acting** is an immersive documentary in the world of international theatre company Cheek by Jowl, looking in depth at the acting process. The **screening on 7 May will be followed by a Q&A with Sophie Fiennes, Cheek by Jowl directors Declan Donnellan and Nick Ormerod and chaired by and chaired by critic and broadcaster Sarah Crompton**.

Ralph Fiennes's performance of T. S. Eliot's poetic masterpiece *Four Quartets* was translated from stage to screen by Sophie Fiennes. During the early days of COVID, the actor set himself the challenge of committing it to memory, and in 2021 he brought it to the London stage followed by a tour of theatres across the UK. **The screening of T.S. Eliot's Four Quartets on 12 May will be**

**followed by a Q&A with Ralph Fiennes and Sophie Fiennes, and chaired by poet, playwright, and novelist Glyn Maxwell.**

On the occasion of the exhibition ***Astonishing Things: The Drawings of Victor Hugo*** held at the Royal Academy of Arts, curator **Sarah Lea, Gérard Audinet**, Director of the Maisons Victor Hugo (Paris and Guernsey) and **Bradley Stephens**, Professor of French Literature at the University of Bristol will discuss Hugo's imaginary worlds on 12 May.

The film programme features Serebrennikov's latest film, ***Limonov: The Ballad of Eddie***, based on the novel *Limonov* by acclaimed French writer Emmanuel Carrère and ***Hot Milk***, Rebecca Lenkiewicz's adaptation of Deborah Levy's Booker Prize-nominated novel. Other titles include ***Blue Road: The Edna O'Brien Story***, Sinéad O'Shea's documentary about the Irish novelist, French romantic comedy ***Jane Austen Wrecked my Life*** by Laura Piani, and ***Ethel and Ernest***, adapted from Raymond Briggs's graphic novel.

The library of the French Institute will present the exhibition ***Postcards for Perec*** from 14 May until 25 July. In 1978, **Georges Perec** wrote 243 unillustrated postcard messages dedicated to his Oulipo friend **Italo Calvino**. Years later, British book artist and writer **Linda Parr** set up a project for artists around the world to respond to the messages by producing the missing images: actual postcards were sent from twenty-three countries.

The Beyond Words Festival has been supported by Florence and Vincent Gombault and by the Friends of the French Institute Trust.

[Beyond Words Full Programme](#)

Info & booking: [www.institut-francais.org.uk](http://www.institut-francais.org.uk)

Venue: Institut français, 17 Queensberry Place, London SW7 2DT

[More about Stage on Screen Film Season](#) (4 – 29 May at the French institute)

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