

For immediate release: Tuesday September 25

## New Suns: A Feminist Literary Festival explores feminist futures at the Barbican

*New Suns: A Feminist Literary Festival*

3 November 11am-6pm

Barbican Centre, Silk Street, London EC2Y 8DS

<https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2018/series/new-suns-a-feminist-literary-festival>

The Barbican and Sarah Shin bring a day of talks, workshops, screenings and feminist discussion to the Barbican with *New Suns: A Feminist Literary Festival* on Saturday 3 November.

Writers, artists, academics and poets including **Preti Taneja, Marina Warner, Joanna Bourke, Kate Zambreno, Pat Cadigan, Akwugo Emejulu, Karen McCarthy Woolf, Victoria Sin, and Lola Olufemi** will explore contemporary feminism through the lens of mythology, discussing topics as varied as the #MeToo movement, occult poetry, bodies and sex work, and the fantastic worlds of the late feminist writer Ursula K. Le Guin. Individual events are listed below.

The #MeToo movement and global Women's March protests have created an explosion of energy, raising questions around power, justice and solidarity. This moment has also sparked a renewal of feminist enquiry through the possibilities of speculative thinking.

**Sarah Shin**, co-producer of the festival, said:

'Mythology underpins the narratives that structure contemporary society. While the myths that continue to dominate the world around us are overwhelmingly patriarchal, this festival aims to explore new stories and counter-narratives that are being invented to build feminist futures.'

*New Suns: A Feminist Literary Festival* opens a space for these explorations, bringing together writers, artists and audiences to imagine the possibilities of collective action and systemic change.

In the spirit of the 1980s International Feminist Bookfairs, more than thirty publishers including Penguin Random House, Hachette, Fitzcarraldo, And Other Stories, Verso, Serpent's Tail and Bookworks will host stalls and book signings in the free-to-access Level G spaces at the Barbican.

The title '*New Suns*' is inspired by African-American science fiction author Octavia Butler's epigraph to her last, unfinished novel: 'There is nothing new under the sun, but there are new suns.'

This festival is part of the Barbican's 2018 season, *The Art of Change*, which explores how the arts respond to, reflect and potentially effect change in the social and political landscape.

**Notes to editors:**

New Suns was conceived by Sarah Shin and produced in collaboration with the Barbican.

### **Sarah Shin**

Sarah Shin is a publisher and curator. She is a co-founder and director of the Silver Press and Ignota Books and works at Verso Books.

### **The Art of Change at the Barbican 2018**

*The Art of Change* presents bold artistic responses to vital global issues including feminism, climate change and human rights, while providing a platform for voices currently underrepresented in the arts. The season includes world-class music, theatre, dance, film, visual arts and learning and runs throughout 2018. [barbican.org.uk/whats-on/series/the-art-of-change](http://barbican.org.uk/whats-on/series/the-art-of-change)

Individual events below; further information can be found on the Barbican's website.

### **[Us vs. Them: Feminist Myth-making, Power and Disobedient Women](#)**

Panel discussion

**Sat 3 Nov 1pm, Cinema 2**

Authors **Maria Dahvana Headley** (*The Mere Wife*), **Sophie Mackintosh** (*The Water Cure*) and **Preti Taneja** (*We That Are Young*) discuss the many forms of feminist myth making – from subverting conventional gender roles in the stories handed down to us, to giving voice to the silenced and the building of entire new worlds through fiction.

### **Unruly Bodies**

Workshop

**Sat 3 Nov 1pm, Level G Studio**

**Bethany Rutter**, journalist, body activist and editor of *Plus+*, and **Tallulah Pomeroy**, illustrator and author of *A Girl's Guide to Personal Hygiene*, guide a workshop dismantling the myths surrounding bodies and how to reclaim all that is gleeful, gross, subversive, and beautiful about our bodies.

### **[Worlds of Ursula K. Le Guin: A Documentary by Arwen Curry \(2018\)](#)**

Screening and post-show talk

**Sat 3 Nov 2pm, Cinema 2**

Following a screening of this film – exploring the remarkable life and legacy of the late feminist author **Ursula K Le Guin** – cyberpunk science fiction author **Pat Cadigan** and writer and activist **So Mayer** will discuss the themes of language and power in Ursula K Le Guin's mythopoesis (myth-making).

*Canada / US 2018 Dir Arwen Curry 65 min Digital presentation*

### **Spells: 21st Century Occult Poetry: A Reading**

Poetry reading

**Sat 3 Nov 3.30pm, Level G Studio**

Readings by **Khairani Barokka**, **Karen McCarthy Woolf**, **Nisha Ramayya** and **Sophie Robinson**, contributors to *Spells: 21st Century Occult Poetry*, which brings

together over thirty contemporary voices exploring the territory where justice, selfhood and the imagination meet the animating power of the occult.

### [Play It As It Lays](#) <sup>18</sup>

Screening

**Sat 3 Nov 4pm, Cinema 2**

An ultra-rare screening of the 1972 adaptation of **Joan Didion**'s cult novel, starring Tuesday Weld and Anthony Perkins. Adapted by Didion herself, much of the voiceover narration and dialogue comes direct from the book; protagonist Maria's shattered sensibility is rendered for the screen as a jumbled mosaic of scenes.

*US 1972 Dir Frank Perry 99 min 35mm Presentation*

### [After #MeToo: Consent, Trauma and the Future](#)

Panel discussion

**Sat 3 Nov 4.30pm, Frobisher Auditorium 2**

Historian **Joanna Bourke**, writer and activist **So Mayer**, activist **Lola Olufemi** and journalist and critic **Josephine Livingstone** discuss the legacy of the #MeToo movement. What does solidarity look like when race, class, sexuality, disability and gender identity inflect the ability to speak out?

### [Dream Babes: Speculation and Fantasy as Resistance](#)

Roundtable discussion and reading

**Sat 3 Nov 5.30pm, Level G Studio**

A roundtable discussion with multidisciplinary performance artist **Victoria Sin**, **Daniel Brathwaite Shirley** and **Irene Tokini Fubara**, with readings exploring speculative fiction as a strategy for social change.

### [The Fight for Sex Workers' Rights](#)

Book launch with talk

**Sat 3 Nov 6pm, Frobisher Auditorium 2**

Authors **Juno Mac** and **Molly Smith** (*Revolting Prostitutes*, Verso, 2018) rethink sex, work and migration through a feminist lens, bringing a fresh perspective to questions that have long been contentious. In conversation with sociology professor **Akwugo Emejulu**.

### Press Information

For any further information, images or to arrange interviews, please contact:

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### About the Barbican

A world-class arts and learning organisation, the [Barbican](#) pushes the boundaries of all major art forms including dance, film, music, theatre and visual arts. Its creative learning programme further underpins everything it does. Over

1.1 million people attend events annually, hundreds of artists and performers are featured, and more than 300 [staff](#) work onsite. The architecturally renowned centre opened in 1982 and comprises the Barbican Hall, the Barbican Theatre, The Pit, Cinemas One, Two and Three, Barbican Art Gallery, a second gallery The Curve, foyers and public spaces, a library, Lakeside Terrace, [a glasshouse conservatory](#), conference facilities and three restaurants. The City of London Corporation is the founder and principal funder of the Barbican Centre.

The Barbican is home to Resident Orchestra, [London Symphony Orchestra](#); Associate Orchestra, [BBC Symphony Orchestra](#); Associate Ensembles the [Academy of Ancient Music](#) and [Britten Sinfonia](#), Associate Producer [Serious](#), and Artistic Partner [Create](#). Our Artistic Associates include [Boy Blue](#), [Cheek by Jowl](#), Deborah Warner, [Drum Works](#) and [Michael Clark Company](#). The [Los Angeles Philharmonic](#) are the Barbican's International Orchestral Partner, the [Australian Chamber Orchestra](#) are International Associate Ensemble at Milton Court and [Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra](#) are International Associate Ensemble.

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