



Best-selling rebel writers engage with Edinburgh communities for Book Week Scotland

Akala and Sam Coniffe Allende to take part in unique community events

Scottish Book Trust, the national charity changing lives through reading and writing, has announced details of events in Edinburgh featuring bestselling writers Akala and Sam Coniffe Allende as part of 'Pitch It', a new programme for Book Week Scotland 2018.

Book Week Scotland, now in its seventh year, is a national celebration of reading and writing. It runs from 19 November to 25 November, linked to the theme of 'Rebel.'

Award-winning rapper, writer and activist Akala will appear at an afternoon event hosted by Lighthouse Books at the Traverse Theatre, and also at an evening event at the Scottish Poetry Library hosted by the Edinburgh Caribbean Association, on Sunday 25 November.

Author of bestselling lifestyle book *Be More Pirate*, Sam Coniffe Allende will appear at Stockbridge Library on Wednesday 21 November. Sam's book 'harnesses the wisdom of rebels, pirates and world changers' and was voted *Financial Times* Book of the Month & *Shortlist's* Read of the Week. Sam will deliver an intimate workshop built around these themes at the library, which delivers popular business classes for the local community of Stockbridge, host to many independent ventures.

Akala's *Natives: Race and Class in the Ruins of Empire* speaks directly to British denial and squeamishness when it comes to confronting issues of race, class and the legacy of empire. Lighthouse Books will run workshops and a school competition exploring these issues in advance of Akala's visit. Two members from each workshop will then be invited to present a banner about a missing piece of history to Akala during a private discussion. This will be followed by an hour long public event and Q+A at the Traverse Theatre: **Akala: A real history of empire for the next generation.**

Akala will then appear at the Scottish Poetry Library for Edinburgh Caribbean Association's event, **Speak Up! An evening with Akala** featuring performances from local young people, a performance from Akala himself and a DJ set. It is hoped that the experience will encourage participants to claim space and develop the confidence to make their voices heard.

The three local hosts were chosen as part of 'Pitch It', a new programme for Book Week Scotland 2018, which invited libraries, community groups, organisations and individuals all over Scotland to pitch for one of four literary stars to pay them a visit. In addition to covering the authors' fees, Scottish Book Trust has provided each successful host with £500 to help deliver their event.

Initiated by the Scottish Government and supported by £200,000 from the National Lottery through Creative Scotland Targeted Funding and £26,000 from SLIC, Book Week Scotland 2018 will be delivered by Scottish Book Trust from 19 November – 25 November.



For more information about Book Week Scotland 2018 and how you can get involved, visit www.bookweekscotland.com where you can find information about all the events taking place in your local area.

Marc Lambert, CEO of Scottish Book Trust, said: “We’ve been so impressed by the standard of pitches we received to host these authors. The energy and enthusiasm demonstrated by all applicants throughout this process is a great reflection on the health of book-loving communities all over the country. I want to congratulate each organisation that has been selected to work with us on a Pitch It event: I’m sure that the opportunity to host one of our handpicked line up of celebrated rebel writers will entertain and inspire.”

Sam Coniffe Allende, said: “Books belong to people, as vehicles for sharing ideas, telling stories and starting movements. So ideas like Pitch It are more important than ever amidst an antiquated and risk-averse publishing industry too used to its own risk-averse agenda of selling units. I’m excited to take part in Pitch It, precisely because I know the library that won the pitch has spoken up, and I’m proud they want to work with me, so will be bringing all the energy and excitement as an Author that I can to Stockbridge to meet their enthusiasm with mine.”

Noor Hermani, Bookseller at Lighthouse Books, said: “This chance for Lighthouse to work with Akala is a dream come true. So many of our events and books focus on attempting to represent the histories and experiences of people who are sidelined and considered 'other', whether because of race, gender, or class. We fundamentally believe that our role is to educate and include as many voices as possible in that education, and so the chance to pitch our ideas to one of our heroes has us dancing on the table!”

Lisa Williams, Director of the Edinburgh Caribbean Association, said: “This is a huge and exciting opportunity to host a youth event with Akala. As a hip hop artist, educator and historian, Akala is ideally positioned to relate to young people, and link with the work we have been doing around Black History education. His voice has helped to centre an important perspective on the intersection of race and class; knowledge that is often excluded from mainstream education. His dynamic personality, down to earth manner and deep understanding of his field encourages a culture of critical thinking and collaborative empowerment. This rare chance for young, often marginalised people in Edinburgh to personally connect with him and respond to his work will inspire confidence in their creative abilities, encourage them to speak up for social change and foster a love for literature in the widest sense.”

Dates

[Sam Coniffe Allende: Be More Pirate](#), Stockbridge Library - Wednesday 21 November, 6.30pm – 7.30pm

[Akala: A real history of empire for the next generation](#), Traverse Theatre, Sunday 25 November, 3.30pm – 4.30pm

[Speak Up! An evening with Akala](#), Scottish Poetry Library, Sunday 25 November, 7.00pm – 10.00pm



Notes to Editors

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Scottish Book Trust is a national charity changing lives through reading and writing. We inspire and support the people of Scotland to read and write for pleasure through programmes and outreach work that include:

- Gifting books to every child in Scotland to ensure families of all backgrounds can share the joy of books at home.
- Working with teachers to inspire children to develop a love of reading, creating innovative classroom activities, book awards and author events.
- Supporting Scotland's diverse writing community with our training, awards and writing opportunities.
- Funding a range of author events for the public to enjoy and promoting Scottish writing to people worldwide.

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For more information about **Book Week Scotland**, visit www.bookweekscotland.com. Follow @Bookweekscot on Twitter, check out #bookweekscotland or like the Book Week Scotland Facebook page.

Akala is a BAFTA & Mobo Award winning musician, social entrepreneur and author of 'Natives: Race and Class in the Ruins of Empire', Akala educates and invigorates with personal, informative essays, poetry and music.

Sam Conniff Allende is a professional public speaker, marketing consultant and author of lifestyle book *Be More Pirate*, Sam Coniffe Allende harnesses the wisdom of rebels, pirates and world changers and teaches you how to take on the world and win.