

PROGRAMME

**Theakstons Old Peculier Crime Writing Festival
21 – 24 July 2011, Old Swan Hotel, Harrogate**

2011 Programme

Harrogate: restorative spas, tranquil gardens, quaint teashops. Believe us, you'll need them. Brace yourselves. Cordon off the flowerbeds, lock your valuables in the hotel safe, and steady the old nerves with a pint of Theakston's finest ale. The **Theakstons Old Peculier Crime Writing Festival** is back in town.

On this year's programme you'll see more of the biggest names in the business than ever before with Special Guests including **David Baldacci, Linwood Barclay, Lee Child, Martina Cole, Lisa Gardner, Tess Gerritsen, Dennis Lehane** and **Howard Marks**. In addition to all this blockbusting talent this year's Programme Chair **Dreda Say Mitchell** has injected some true grit into the line-up as we invite you to take a walk on the wrong side of the tracks.

We're placing you under the protective custody of the Theakstons Old Peculier Crime Writing Festival for one long, criminally good weekend. You'll be put under house arrest in Harrogate's (quite lovely) famous Old Swan Hotel. Don't worry, rehabilitation awaits thanks to the world's finest crime writers at Europe's most arresting literary event.

Thursday 21st July

8.00pm

Theakstons Old Peculier Crime Novel of the Year & Festival Opening Party

Welcome to the crime-writing world's answer to the Oscars with host, **Mark Lawson**. It's easy to let the glamour and the glitz go to your head but a pint of Yorkshire's finest ale, Theakstons Old Peculier, will help you keep your feet firmly on the glorious northern ground. The anticipation is worthy of the best nail-biting thriller – which of the line-up of likely suspects will be taking home crime fiction's most hotly-contended award? Watch the winner kill off the competition, and then continue the celebrations and commiserations at the Festival opening party.

Shortlisted authors confirmed June 2011

Friday 22nd July

9.00am

SPECIAL GUEST EVENT: **Martina Cole**

Martina Cole stands accused of having the most electrifying criminal record in the publishing world. She is the most successful British female novelist of the past decade with 18 titles to her name and books sales in excess of ten million. Cole writes about the world she knows and tells it like it is. Her novels, set in the murky underworld of London's East End and her native Essex, are amongst the most requested in prison libraries: A testament to the truth of Cole's writing and her eye for detail. Cole is renowned for her tough gutsy female characters, qualities shared by the author herself. An uncompromising Essex blonde with a talent for writing which compares to the hardest-boiled of American writers, Cole is a Brit with true grit.

The contemporary queen of the British crime novel will be cross-examined by 2011 Programming Chair, **Dreda Say Mitchell**. The verdict? Guilty as charged.

10.30am

PANEL DISCUSSION: **Penned In**

Breaking new ground for the Festival, this panel, chaired by investigative journalist and crime author **Duncan Campbell**, explores the rehabilitative power of the written word. Campbell talks to former prison inmates who have built new lives through writing; **Erwin James**, who served a life sentence for murder before becoming a Guardian columnist; ex-football hooligan-turned-writer and publisher **Cass Pennant** who experienced "more violence than most people will experience in a hundred lifetimes", **Noel 'Razor' Smith**, a lifelong criminal with 58 convictions, who turned to writing after the death of his son, and **Jonathan Aitken**, author, former Cabinet Minister, ex-prisoner and campaigner for prison reforms.

12.00pm

PANEL DISCUSSION: **Wrong 'Uns**

Take a walk on the wrong side of the tracks with a panel of authors whose depictions of dark underworlds and complex anti-heroes make compelling reading. **Mandasue Heller**, **Denise Mina** and **Alex Wheatle** confront the darkest impulses of our criminal societies to find the human truth at their hearts. Chair, thriller writer **James Twining**, guides us through the dark alleyways of the writers' imaginations.

2.00pm

PANEL DISCUSSION: **Old Blood**

The Festival's *New Blood* panel is now renowned for showcasing the great talents of tomorrow. It's the crime fiction equivalent of *Vanity Fair's* Young Hollywood edition. **Nick Stone, Allan Guthrie, Cathi Unsworth** and **Mark Mills** were all past graduates of the panel as debut novelists. Where are they now? At the top of their game. Chair **Martyn Waites** finds out about their experiences on the road to success.

3.30pm

PANEL DISCUSSION: **What Lies Beneath**

NJ Cooper steers us on a journey through deep and disturbing waters as she delves beneath the surface to get to grips with the fascination of the psychological thriller. **Sophie Hannah, Tana French, Camilla Lackberg** and **Steve Mosby**, all writers whose work success can be measured in reader's sleepless nights, wade into the depths as they explain why writers and readers alike find this genre so gripping.

5.00pm

PANEL DISCUSSION: **Chasing The Story**

Hold the front page! It's not uncommon for journalists to make headlines for turning their careers to crime writing. Here, they go on the record about how their names went from bylines to gracing book spines. True Crime editor of Ireland's the *Sunday World* **Niamh O'Connor** became a bestseller; **Stav Sherez** spent five years as a music journalist before becoming a CWA Dagger-shortlisted author, and former crime correspondent for the *Observer* **Tony Thompson** is regarded as one of the top true-crime writers at work in Britain today. Chairing the event is **Henry Sutton**, author and books editor of the *Mirror*.

8.30pm

SPECIAL GUEST EVENT: **In Conversation: Linwood Barclay & Lisa Gardner**

The first of the Festival's North American double-bills: Canadian writer **Linwood Barclay** enjoyed great popularity as humour columnist for the *Toronto Star* before his talents as a novelist propelled him on to the world's stage. His first standalone thriller, *No Time for Goodbye*, was published in 2007 to critical acclaim and great international success. It was the single best-selling novel in the UK in 2008, selling more than 600,000 copies. Barclay's following books have enjoyed similar levels of success with no lesser writer than Stephen King saying of the 2010 novel *Never Look Away*, "His is the best thriller I've read in 5 years."

Barclay will be talking with *New York Times* best-selling novelist **Lisa Gardner**. Gardner blames a childhood with too much normality to explain why such a

nice girl turned to writing such dark books. Employment as a management consultant was the unlikely trigger to her writing career; she started writing suspense novels for the chance to kill off characters who bore striking resemblances to her bosses. Gardner is now the acclaimed author of several thrillers, including *The Killing Hour* and *Live To Tell*.

10.00pm

X-Rated: Special Guest **Howard Marks**

Prepare to trip out as Radio 4's **Mark Lawson** meets a man whose own life story proves reality is always stranger than fiction. During the mid-1980s, Howard Marks had 43 aliases, 89 phone lines, and 25 companies trading throughout the world. Bars, recording studios, offshore banks: all were money-laundering vehicles serving the core activity: dope dealing.

During his criminal career Marks had contacts with organisations as diverse as the Mafia, the IRA, MI6 and the CIA, leading the *Daily Mail* to dub him as 'the most sophisticated drugs baron of all time.'

A world-wide operation by the Drug Enforcement Agency saw him busted and sentenced to 25 years in prison at the United States Federal Penitentiary. He was released on parole in 1995. His autobiography *Mr Nice* was recently adapted for film and the book remains an international best-seller and all-time cult classic. 2011 sees the release of Marks' first novel *Sympathy For The Devil*.

Saturday 23rd July

9.00am

SPECIAL GUEST EVENT: **Tess Gerritsen**

The internationally acclaimed bestselling author **Tess Gerritsen** grew up dreaming of writing her own Nancy Drew mysteries. But her mother, an immigrant from China, worried writing would get her nowhere. She studied medicine and practised for five years in Honolulu, Hawaii, but knew medicine was always a detour. Her first nine books were romantic thrillers before *Harvest*, her first medical thriller, shot her into the *New York Times* bestseller list in 1996. Dubbed the 'medical suspense queen', Gerritsen's novel *The Killing Place* effortlessly sailed to the top of the Official UK Top 50 in January this year. A phenomenal success when she appeared at the Festival three years ago, in 2011 Gerritsen will be interviewed by broadcaster **Jenni Murray**.

10.30am

PANEL DISCUSSION: **The Outer Limits**

This could be a case for Mulder and Scully. **Andrew Taylor** delves into strange new worlds as he investigates the growing popularity of novels which combine the use of paranormal elements with crime fiction. **Sarah Pinborough, SJ Bolton, Patricia Duncker** and **Phil Rickman** are the authors whose books go bump in the night.

12.00pm

PANEL DISCUSSION: **New Blood**

Vampires may still have them feeling faint at the cinema, but at the Festival we're thirsty for a different kind of fresh blood. Check out the new kids on the block whose heart-stopping talents threaten to stake the old guard. **Val McDermid** introduces four hot new things on the edge of stellar success, including **SJ Watson**, one of the first pupils on the Faber Academy Creative Writing Course who has penned the sensational *Before I Go To Sleep*, **Julia Crouch**, whose crime debut *Cuckoo* delivers a gripping psychological thrill, **Gordon Ferris**, who swapped a successful career in banking after writing his debut, *Truth Dare Kill* and **Melanie McGrath**, who with her first crime novel *White Heat* has revealed an hypnotic new voice.

2.00pm

PANEL DISCUSSION: **Legal Eagles**

The Bar is a natural habitat for crime authors (we're talking about the legal kind, of course, but we understand the other kind is quite popular too!). Let's examine the evidence, M'Lud. The panel stands accused of being guilty of bringing their professional careers in the legal world to bear on the scintillating drama of the fictional courtroom. In the dock are legal eagles, **MR Hall, Frances Fyfield, Martin Edwards** and **Helen Black**, while nationally-renowned lawyer **Peter McCormick**, Senior Partner of McCormick's Solicitors, takes the judge's bench.

3.30pm

PANEL DISCUSSION: **Vice Society**

Immoral? Depraved? Degrading? The depiction of sex and vice in crime fiction is always a loaded topic. Do writers who explore the subject exploit the already exploited? Or do they serve an important purpose in illuminating areas too murky for the delicate sensibilities of the mainstream? Authors **James McCreet, Val McDermid** and **Adam Creed** are joined by former senior police officer **Jackie Malton**, the real-life inspiration for *Prime Suspect's*, Jane Tennison. Author and journalist **Stephanie Merritt** chairs.

5.00pm

SPECIAL GUEST EVENT: In Conversation: **David Baldacci & Joseph Finder**

Our second match of American heavyweights: In the blue corner, former attorney turned blockbuster novelist, **David Baldacci**. Baldacci holds the publishing world to ransom dominating the bookshelves of more than 80 countries and selling over 100 million books. Film adaptations of his work include *Absolute Power* with Clint Eastwood and Gene Hackman. A regular on the *New York Times* bestseller list, his books even bridge the political divide with both George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton cited as fans.

In the red corner, **Joseph Finder**. His plan was to become a spy. Instead he became a bestselling thriller writer winning a few awards along the way, including the International Thriller Writers Award for Best Novel for *Killer Instinct* and the Barry and Gumshoe Awards for Best Thriller for *Company Man*.

His first novel *The Moscow Club* was named by *Publishers Weekly* as one of the ten best spy thrillers of all time and was published in 30 countries. The acclaimed *High Crimes* became a film starring Ashley Judd and Morgan Freeman. His novels have seen him hailed as "the CEO of suspense". His latest is the second in the Nick Heller series, *Buried Secrets*.

6.15pm

Come Dine With Me: **Criminal Consequences Dinner**

Join the Festival's Reader-in-Residence **Martyn Waites** for a delightfully devious dining experience. With the help of the crime author at your table you'll join forces with your fellow diners to murder the main, deduce over dessert, and conclude over coffee. Guest authors hosting tables this year include: **MC Beaton, Elena Forbes, CJ Box, Anne Zouroudi, Elly Griffiths, Christa Faust** and **Patricia Duncker**.

8.30pm

SPECIAL GUEST EVENT: **Lee Child's 'Room 101'**

He sells a book somewhere in the world every second. He's as rakishly charismatic as his action hero Jack Reacher. And he's known as the nicest man in crime. We've begun to wonder if **Lee Child** might just be too good to be true, and so we've invited him to reveal his darker side by asking Child to select his crime writing pet hates and make the case for consigning them to Room 101.

You can find out a lot about a person when you know what really gets on their nerves. Get closer to the internationally bestselling author than ever before with the help of Independent columnist **Christina Patterson**, who will be the gatekeeper Child will need to convince of his choices.

10.00pm

CABARET EVENT: **Late Night Quiz**

We're not saying it gets deadly serious, but there are quizzes and then there's the Theakstons Old Peculiar Crime Writing Festival quiz. The crème de la crème of crime fiction fans, authors and publishers show no mercy as they battle it out to prove who the real criminal masterminds are. This is your chance to test your team's knowledge against some of the best brains in the crime business. Quizmasters **Dreda Say Mitchell** and **Mark Billingham** ask the questions to determine who will be waving aloft the coveted cup.

Sunday 24th July

10.00am

PANEL DISCUSSION: **No Place Like Home**

Creating a sense of place so convincing the location becomes almost another character is a trick many authors attempt but few truly master. Four authors who have successfully staked their claim and taken 'ownership' of particular locations through their work share the secrets behind capturing a location and rendering it real in words. **Laura Wilson** (London) will be your tour guide as **Anne Zouroudi** (Greece), **CJ Box** (Wyoming), **Urban Waite** (Seattle), and **Elly Griffiths** (Norfolk) journey through the backdrops that bring their fictional worlds to startling life.

11.30am

SPECIAL GUEST EVENT: **Dennis Lehane**

Before becoming a full-time writer, Dennis Lehane worked as a counsellor with children with special needs and histories of abuse, waited tables, parked cars, drove limos, worked in bookstores, and loaded tractor-trailers. Now, he can barely write a shopping list without Hollywood optioning it. His *New York Times* bestsellers include *Gone, Baby, Gone*; *Mystic River*; *Shutter Island*; and *The Given Day*. *Mystic River* prompted Elmore Leonard to declare: "Boy, does he know how to write". The movie of the book, directed by Clint Eastwood won Academy Awards for Sean Penn as Best Actor and Tim Robbins for Best Supporting Actor. *Gone Baby Gone* starred Morgan Freeman and Ben Affleck and *Shutter Island* featured Leonardo DiCaprio. To add to his too-cool-for-school status, he also penned three episodes of the acclaimed HBO series, *The Wire*.

Lehane is interviewed by the acclaimed British author **Mark Billingham**, whose *Thorne* series was recently adapted by Sky, starring David Morrissey.