

Tuesday 23 June 2009

BOOK FESTIVAL TICKET SALES UP BY 40%

The Edinburgh International Book Festival has today reported a 40% increase in ticket sales in the first 24 hours against the same period in 2008. The fastest selling events, the launch of Margaret Atwood's new book, *The Year of the Flood*, in St John's Church, Princes Street and an event celebrating the 40th anniversary of Eric Carle's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, sold out in the first two hours and were closely followed by Henning Menkell, Antony Beevor, Gerald Scarfe and David Simon. In total 112 events sold out in the first day (14% of the programme).

Roland Gulliver, Programme Manager, said "Events across every genre have proved extremely popular, from the well known names in the RBS Main Theatre to debut authors and new international writers in the smaller venues. From graphic novels to storytelling, poetry to debates, Bear Hunts to Peter Rabbit, ticket sales are reflecting the strength of the programme. There are still tickets available for over 600 events in Charlotte Square this August including Sebastian Coe, Richard Price, Cornelia Funke, Giles Foden, David Peace, George Dawes Green, Jacqueline Wilson and Tracy Chevalier or you can come and discover something new – Bahaa Taher, winner of the first Arabic Booker Prize, Michael Holroyd in conversation with Per Wästberg, one of a dozen Swedish writers visiting Edinburgh for the first time, or some of the most exciting new voices coming out of Scotland's creative writing schools."

The Guest Director Series of evening debates in the Spiegel tent, created and curated by Richard Holloway, have also proved popular with over half of the series selling out on the first day.

The 2009 Book Festival runs from 15 to 31 August and will welcome 750 authors from 45 countries to Charlotte Square Gardens, in the heart of Edinburgh, the world's first UNESCO City of Literature.

The Box Office is now open Monday to Saturday from 10.00am to 5.00pm at The Hub on Castlehill until Thursday 13 August. Tickets may also be booked online – www.edbookfest.co.uk or by phone 0845 373 5888. Phone lines are open Monday to Saturday, 10.00am to 5.00pm.

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