



RENOWNED AUTHOR ROXANE GAY ADDS EXETER TO HER FIRST UK TOUR

“When you can’t find someone to follow, you have to find a way to lead by example.” – Roxane Gay

WHAT: Roxane Gay: With One ‘N’

WHEN: Tuesday 14th March at 7.30PM

WHERE: Forum Alumni Auditorium, University of Exeter

WHO: Exeter UNESCO City of Literature and the University of Exeter

Exeter UNESCO City of Literature and the University of Exeter are thrilled to announce that internationally acclaimed author Roxane Gay has added Exeter to her first ever live UK tour. Roxane Gay will be in conversation with Sharifa Hashem on Tuesday 14th March at the Forum Alumni Auditorium at the University of Exeter.

This exhilarating evening with Roxane Gay will be a reflective, no-holds-barred exploration of feminism and social criticism. Widely considered the leading feminist voice of our time, Roxane will explore topics ranging from politics, patriarchy, Beyoncé, and reality television all in one sitting. With a deft eye on modern culture, she brilliantly critiques its ebb and flow with both wit and ferocity.

“I am so excited to visit Scotland for the first time and return to England visiting Liverpool, London, Bath, and Exeter. The past several years have been turbulent here in the United States and abroad in the U.K. (Trump! January 6th! Brexit! BoJo! Harry and Meghan!). We have a lot to talk about and I can’t wait to start that conversation with you.” – Roxane Gay

Roxane Gay’s work is commended globally and her collection of essays, *Bad Feminist*, has become a touchstone of modern feminism. In 2017, Roxane released her bestselling memoir, *Hunger: A Memoir of (My) Body*, which was called “*Luminous...intellectually rigorous and deeply moving*” by the New York Times. Roxane was the first black woman to lead a Marvel title, writing a comic series in the *Black Panther* universe called *World of Wakanda*.

She also pens the “work friend” advice column for the *New York Times*, and in 2021 she began her own publishing imprint with Grove Atlantic, “Roxane Gay Books.” She has several books forthcoming including *How to Be Heard*, on writing advice and how to use your voice as well as *The Year I Learned Everything*, a YA novel. She is also at work on television and film projects including a film adaptation of *Hunger* and a television adaptation of her comic book *The Banks*.

Anna Cohn Orchard, Executive Director of Exeter City of Literature, says: “I’ve been lucky enough to see Dr. Roxane Gay speak at two events in the US and each time I have been blown away by the way she weaves together cultural and social commentary with heart, humour, and deep thought. She is one of the great writers and thinkers of our generation and I’m incredibly honoured to be bringing her to Exeter, a UNESCO City of Literature.”

Professor Adam Watt, Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor for the Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Exeter, says: “We are thrilled to welcome Roxane Gay. Right across our University, academics and students engage with questions of gender, class, race, and society, often through the lens of literature and culture. The opportunity to hear Roxane Gay’s incomparable take on these matters in person is a terrific prospect for our whole community.”

FULL DETAILS

In Person Event Link: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/560461434237>

Virtual Event Link: TBA

Cost: Pay what you can afford

Accessibility: This event will be BSL interpreted. The venue is wheelchair accessible and guide dog friendly.

Additional: Bookbag bookshop, Exeter’s only independent bookshop, will be selling books, including Roxane Gay’s, before the event begins.

For more information, please contact:

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University of Exeter - Lotte Keetch, Senior Administrator for the Faculty of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences | HASS@exeter.ac.uk

Notes to Editors

Exeter City of Literature is a charity established to steward the UNESCO Creative City designation that Exeter received in 2019. Our vision is for everyone to love stories and storytelling and our mission is to celebrate diverse stories by working with our local and global communities. With 41 other UNESCO Cities of Literature, we provide opportunities for Devon residents to collaborate internationally and to use stories to better understand each other and the world we live in.

The University of Exeter combines world-class research with excellent student satisfaction, from our campuses in the South West of England, in Exeter and Cornwall. We are one of the very few universities to be both a member of the Russell Group and have a Gold award from the Teaching Excellence Framework, evidence of our established international reputation for excellence in both teaching and research. Our success is built on a strong partnership with our students and a clear focus on high performance.

Roxane Gay is an author and cultural critic whose writing is unmatched and widely revered. Her work garners international acclaim for its reflective, no-holds-barred exploration of feminism and social criticism. With a deft eye on modern culture, she brilliantly critiques its ebb and flow with both wit and ferocity.

Words like “courage,” “humor,” and “smart” are frequently deployed when describing Roxane. Her collection of essays, *Bad Feminist*, is universally considered the quintessential exploration of modern feminism. NPR named it one of the best books of the year and *Salon* declared the book “trailblazing.” Her powerful debut novel, *An Untamed State*, was long listed for the Flaherty-Dunnan First Novel Prize. In 2017, Roxane released her bestselling memoir, *Hunger: A Memoir of (My) Body*, which was called “Luminous...intellectually rigorous and deeply moving” by the New York Times. She also released her collection of short stories, *Difficult Women*. The *Los Angeles Times* says of the collection, “There’s a distinct echo of Angela Carter or Helen Oyeyemi at play; dark fables and twisted morality tales sit alongside the contemporary and the realistic...”

In 2018, she released *Not That Bad: Dispatches from Rape Culture*, a valuable and searing anthology that has been described as “essential reading” and a “call to arms” by its readers. In 2020, Roxane released the short story *Graceful Burdens*, as an Amazon Single, as well as a graphic novel called *The Sacrifice of Darkness*. Roxane was the first black woman to lead a Marvel title, writing a comic series in the *Black Panther* universe called *World of Wakanda*.

Roxane hosts the Webby Award-winning podcast *The Roxane Gay Agenda* where she has interesting conversations with interesting people. She also pens the “work friend” advice column for the *New York Times*, and in 2021 she began her own publishing imprint with Grove Atlantic, “Roxane Gay Books.” She has several books forthcoming including *How to Be Heard*, on writing advice and how to use your voice as well as *The Year I Learned Everything*, a YA novel. She is also at work on television and film projects including a film adaptation of *Hunger* and a television adaptation of her comic book *The Banks*.

Roxane fronts a small army of avid fans on social media and when she finds the time, she dominates the occasional Scrabble tournament.

Sharifa Milford-Al Hashemy is an inclusion and equity specialist, holding a leadership role in the NHS with a particular interest in culture change and organisational development. Sharifa holds an MPhil in Social Policy from The University of Bristol, a Masters in Gender and Identity from The University of Exeter, and a BSc in Psychology from Brunel University. Her academic research is focused on gender equity, social policy, and law in the Middle East, with a thesis specialism looking at personal status law with an intersectional analysis.

Having left her home country amidst political upheaval, Sharifa’s interest in equity began when she was young and developed through her work in the human rights field, having given guest speeches at institutions such as the United Nations. This passion was applied to her work on patient engagement in the NHS followed by staff equity.

She has been instrumental in several national projects including supporting the creation of the first inclusive set of ambulance service uniforms and changing the JRCALC ambulance clinical guidelines to include recognition of symptoms on Black and Brown skin. Her recent work includes

equity in birthing services with The Positive Birth Company and she is a regular panellist in regional and national conferences.