

PRE-FESTIVAL TASTERS

We have a range of pre-Festival taster sessions running from the 7th to the 9th available to book via our online programme.

CITY LIT GALLERY

To Whom it May Concern:
A Mental Wealth Festival Exhibition

8th October – 16th October

City Lit Gallery

As a focal point for the Mental Wealth Festival, the City Lit Gallery will feature a special exhibition of art from artists across the City Lit creative community on the themes of mental health, wellbeing, emotion, identity, and human connection.

THURSDAY 10 OCTOBER

Mosaics taster

10:00-12:30 402

Price £5 / Concession £5

Join us for this introduction to the world of mosaics. Working with mosaics can be a mindful activity for many of our learners. The repetitive sequences of shaping and placing the tiles to form the final composition can be a meditative process that can help to focus and calm the mind.

Breathe to the sense of oneness

10:00 – 11:00 Online

Price £5 / Concession £5

For those seeking a practice to draw on to change a state and expand perspective towards a sense of oneness.

Flower printing

10:00-12:30 304

Price £5 / Concession £5

Flower printing can be used in fabric or paper and it is also a very easy, fun and economical way to extract pigments from flowers, transfer shapes and make patterns and textures from natural dyestuff. It is great for those interested in exploring natural dyeing and printing techniques in a sustainable way.

Working parents: Simple coaching strategies for success at work and home

10:30 – 11:30 CPX

Price £5 / Concession £3

Business Coach Rachel Morris shares her expertise about the transition working people navigate when they become parents. She will be sharing her insight about the needs people have before a child arrives in their lives, after the arrival of a child and the phase when they re-enter to the workplace as a 'working parent'.



Meditation Demystified and Made Easy

11:00 – 12:30 Online

Price £5 / Concession £5

Meditation is simple, but the mind complicates it, and we've learned to listen to the mind. Find out how to make meditation easy with a couple of guided exercises and a mantra based meditation technique.

Celebrate in Song

11:00 – 12:15 212

Price £5 / Concession £5

Celebrate in song in this fun session, learning how to unleash your singing voice.

Community Yoga

12:00-13:00 109

Price £5 / Concession £5

Support your mental and physical health with mindful movement, asanas, breathing practices, meditation, and relaxation. We will also develop our connection with others through partner yoga. Expect a fun and accessible class, suitable for all. Come alone or with friends, all equipment is provided.

Join RED January & Decathlon: Introducing a Game-Changing Workplace Wellbeing Initiative

12:00 – 13:00 CPX Free

Join RED January, Decathlon and some exciting guests as they reveal and explore their new workplace wellbeing initiative. RED January has raised millions for mental health causes, and inspired communities to embrace regular physical activity, helping to decrease inactivity levels and boost people's mental health, wellbeing and quality of life.



Myra Hess Concert 2024: Alexandra Siloceca at the National Gallery

13:00 – 14:00

National Gallery – Room 34

Free, drop-in

Head to the National Gallery to see pianist Alexandra Siloceca's stunning debut performance to celebrate the very special legacy of the Myra Hess wartime recitals. She will be joined by special guest, Robin Hart, who will be reading some seminal excerpts from Myra Hess' letters in celebration of World Mental Health Day.



How to Thrive in the Menopause

13:30 – 14:30 CPX

Price £5 / Concession £3

Join Dr Olivia Hum and Dr Zoe Schaedel from Myla Health for an enlightening and empowering session where they delve into the intersection of menopause, sleep, and overall health. The session is designed not only for those experiencing menopause but also for anyone interested in understanding this significant life transition.

Painting with natural inks

14:00 – 16:30 304

Price £5 / Concession £5

In this workshop we will explore the beauty of natural inks on paper. We will playfully and mindfully submerge in fields of colour allowing time and natural chemical processes to do their magic. This workshop includes some breathwork, tapping and painting techniques as meditation.

Mosaics taster

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French 4: La joie comme choix

14:00 – 16:00 Online

Price £5 / Concession £5

Ce cours de 2 heures explorera le concept de choisir la joie comme antidote à l'inquiétude et à la négativité. Les participants apprendront des étapes pratiques pour déplacer leur attention de l'anxiété vers la positivité et des astuces et techniques pour intégrer la joie dans leur vie quotidienne.

Boost Your Brain Power: Improve focus, memory and take charge of your wild mind

15:00 – 16:15 CPX

Price £5 / Concession £3

In this workshop, delivered by Sonal Kapoor from Brain Abilitiez, you will review how your brain serves you, receive advice on how to boost your brain on a daily basis, and engage in some activities to help you fire up those neurons and learn how to "reset" your mind when you are stressed and under pressure.

Ballet for the mind and body

15:45 – 16:45 203

Price £5 / Concession £5

Besides the joy that comes with dance, the benefits of dancing to your mental health and wellbeing are well documented. Dance and movement can improve confidence, heart health, balance, strength, and memory, and serve as a healthy mode of emotional expression.

Drumming

16:00 – 17:15 212

Price £5 / Concession £5

A fun session in which you will explore different playing techniques and sounds on the various types of drums, exercising the body, mind and ears.

Reflecting and writing about musical memories

16:00 – 17:30 M03

Price £5 / Concession £5

Write a favourite musical memory in this workshop. Articulate the feeling of joy or happiness you get from a particular music track.

The Holistic Voice

17:30 – 18:30 109

Price £5 / Concession £5

An introduction to accessible and empowering mind-body techniques that can deepen your awareness and connection to your voice so that the message you give out is true to your intention.

Frazzled Café Online Meeting

17:00 – 18:00 Online Free

Join a supportive online community where you can come and talk in a safe, non-judgemental space about what's really going on for you.



French 4: La vie comme une fête

18:00 – 20:00 Online

Price £5 / Concession £5

Cet atelier de 2 heures guidera les participants à embrasser la vie comme une célébration en changeant leur perspective pour apprécier la beauté d'être en vie, se reconnecter avec la nature et comprendre notre place dans l'univers.

Through the Looking Glass

18:00 – 19:00 Student Centre

Free, drop-in

Your chance to discuss, explore or simply listen to a story which pushes the boundaries. The piece that will be read this month will be the opening chapter of Virginia Woolf's *The Waves*.

An Evening with Sir Grayson Perry

18:30 – 20:00 John Lyon's Theatre

Price £50

An exclusive evening with renowned artist and City Lit Fellow Sir Grayson Perry. Headlining this year's Mental Wealth Festival, he will discuss the fascinating intersection between art, creativity and mental health. This will be followed by a drinks reception and signing in the City Lit Gallery, which offers a unique opportunity to meet and interact with the artist personally. This event is a fundraiser, with all proceeds going towards the City Lit student bursary.



Portrait of Grayson Perry, 2024 © Grayson Perry
Courtesy the artist

FRIDAY 11 OCTOBER

Connect to your clothing, restore and repair

10:00 – 12:30 Online

Price £5 / Concession £3

Learn and practise the Japanese mending techniques of Boro and Sashiko to repair your clothes. Learning these skills encourages sustainability and allows us to consider the transformations possible with what we have.

Eating Disorders hidden in plain sight; encouraging a healthy relationship with food and our bodies

10:00 – 11:00 CPX

Price £5 / Concession £3

Award-winning campaigner Hope Virgo gives her advice on how to develop a healthy relationship with food and shares her story of living with an eating disorder.



Living and Dying – the search for meaning

10:00-11:00 John Lyon's Theatre

Price £5/ Concession £3

From birth to death, our lives are a quest for meaning, filled with moments of satisfaction, regret, and everything in between. Join City Lit Principal Mark Malcomson as he delves into the topic of 'living and dying' with palliative care doctor and best-selling author Dr Kathryn Mannix, and Books Beyond Words Chair, Baroness Sheila Hollins.



Photo credit: Darren Irwin

Mental Wealth in Later Life

11:30 – 12:30 John Lyon's Theatre

Price £5 / Concession £3

Join Paul Farmer, CEO of AgeUK, Dr. Tara Swart, Neuroscientist and Author, *The Source* and Dr Carole Easton, CEO, Centre for Ageing Better, as they discuss some of the risk factors for our mental health as we get older, including health, wealth and finance.



Humour through Adversity #2

11:30 – 12:30 CPX

Price £5 / Concession £3

Garth MacAnally shares his continued journey into understanding humour and the role it plays when things take unexpected turns in life.

The Super Helper Syndrome: In Conversation with Jess Baker

13:00 – 14:00 CPX

Price £5 / Concession £3

Are you a compulsive helper? If you are, you may well suffer from 'Super-Helper Syndrome'. City Lit's Ian Tucknott sits down with psychologist and author Jess Baker to discuss the concept of super helpers and how it impacts their lives.



Haiku for wellbeing

13:00 -15:00 201

Price £5 / Concession £3

Writing Haiku poems can provide a peaceful distraction from life's challenges by focusing on creative writing. Composing Haiku can produce a feeling of achievement and help you to get in touch with the natural world and show us our place within it.

Live at Lunch at the Royal Ballet and Opera

13:00 – 13:45 Paul Hamlyn Hall

Free

Join us at the Royal Ballet and Opera for our annual 'Live at Lunch' performance. **Free and unticketed: Entry to a Live at Lunch is first-come, first served at the venue.**



Chinese Character, The Balance of Life

14:00 – 15:30 213

Price £5 / Concession £5

Get to know Chinese characters, beginning with the ancient 'oracle bone script', and understand their basics while exploring their roots in nature and tranquility.

Ready, Steady, Retire

14:00-16:00 114

Price £5 / Concession £5

Come along and find out how your peers are coping with their newfound freedom in retirement – or perhaps you are approaching retirement and are wondering how to create structure and meaning in your new weekly routine?

The session will explore the pros and cons of retirement and find out how to combat isolation through forging new contacts and finding mental stimulus in a variety of ways from volunteering to lifelong learning.

The Process of Authoring

14:30 – 15:30 CPX Free

Beyond Words is a charity co-creating word-free stories for people with learning disabilities. Founder and Chair Baroness Sheila Hollins and artist Mike Nicholson talk about creating picture stories with therapeutic value, while City Lit students will show us how to read 'Rose Gets in Shape'.



Ikigai – The Japanese secret to a long and happy life

14:30 – 16:30 Kean Street Wellbeing Centre

Price £5 / Concession £5

The people of Japan believe that everyone has an Ikigai or a reason for being. Finding it can lead to a happier, more fulfilled life. Explore your existing talents and future potential within a framework of purpose, vocation and passion.

In Conversation with Dr Tara Swart

14:30 – 15:30

John Lyon's Theatre

Price £5 / Concession £3

Join City Lit Principal Mark Malcomson as he sits down with Neuroscientist and Author of *The Source* Dr Tara Swart as she discusses her life, career and book, and shares pragmatic neuroscience-based messages all about our mental health.



Creative Workshop: Pictures on a Screen at the National Gallery

15:00 – 16:00

National Gallery – Room 41

Free, drop-in

In this creative session, inspired by our current exhibition "Hockney and Piero: a closer look" and Hockney's focus on the power of slow looking and rediscovering the immediate beauty of the world around us, work with Gallery Educators Bethan Durie and Emily Motto to experiment with mark making. Explore brushwork, colour and composition to create your own responses to the Gallery's paintings.



The Super Helper Syndrome Workshop with Jess Baker

15:30 – 17:00 201

Price £5 / Concession £3

Following on from her talk earlier in the day, join psychologist, coach and author of 'The Super-Helper Syndrome' Jess Baker for this intimate and interactive workshop, to explore the challenges of being a super-helper and how to develop more healthy ways of helping.

Cleaning Up The Mess Around Neurodiversity

16:00 – 17:00 CPX

Price £5 / Concession £3

Join 4X TEDx speaker, former model, consultant and emerging author Shaun Flores for a transformative exploration of neurodiversity that challenges the status quo and invites you to see beyond the surface. He'll dive deep into the complexities of neurodiversity, unravelling the misconceptions and societal biases that have long stigmatised those who think differently.

Mental Wealth Festival Spoken Word Showcase with Written Off 2024

18:30 – 20:30 CPX

Price £5 / Concession £3

Members of the City Lit community come together with guest poets from Written Off Publishing for an evening of spoken word, music and performance all based around mental health, wellbeing and more.

In Conversation with Lindsay Nicholson

18:30 – 19:30 John Lyon's Theatre

Price £5 / Concession £3

Having suffered the unimaginable loss of her first husband and child from leukaemia, Lindsay Nicholson rewrites her story to become Britain's most successful lifestyle magazine editor. But when a would-be suicide runs in front of her car, the pages of her picture-perfect life fall apart once more.



Lindsay sits down with City Lit Principal Mark Malcomson to discuss her extraordinary life, as detailed in her new memoir *'Perfect Bound'*. This will be followed by a book signing.

SATURDAY 12 OCTOBER

Feldenkrais: mind-body connection through gentle movement

10:00 – 11:30 Online

Price £5 / Concession £5

Let's sing in French with a smile! Combine your love of singing with the French language in this fun workshop based on simple songs that French speakers learn as children. You do not need to speak French.

French: Sing for happiness

10:30 – 12:30 503

Price £5 / Concession £5

Let's sing in French with a smile! Combine your love of singing with the French language in this fun workshop based on simple songs that French speakers learn as children. You do not need to speak French.

Film Screening and In Conversation: Matt Ottley and The Tree of Ecstasy & Unbearable Sadness

11:00 – 13:00 CPX

Price £5 / Concession £3

Join us for a film screening of *'The Tree of Ecstasy and Unbearable Sadness'* by internationally acclaimed artist/author/composer Matt Ottley. A groundbreaking project weaving together the worlds of art, music and literature in the poignant story of one boy's journey into mental illness. Following the screening, Matt Ottley will be in conversation with festival curator Ian Tucknott to explore further Matt's intermodal creativity and the themes that inform his incredible art.



Messages of Hope

11:00 -16:00 City Lit Café

Free, drop-in

Messages of Hope is a campaign that encourages anyone and everyone to write anonymous messages of hope for people that are going through a difficult time, and/or struggling with their mental health.

Clay workshop with ceramic artist Pedro Kalache

11:00 – 16:00 City Lit Café

Free, drop-in

Join ceramic artist and community educator Pedro Kalache to explore the wellbeing benefits of working with clay and contribute your creativity to a collaborative ceramic installation.

Autism Pop-Up with the Centre for Research in Autism and Education

11:00 – 16:00 City Lit Café

Free, drop-in

Folk from CRAE (UCL's Centre for Research in Autism and Education) will be on hand with experiments about the superior perceptual capacity in autism.

Complementary Kindness with Sharon Wilson

11:00 – 16:00 City Lit Café

Free, drop-in

Take time to give someone the Complimentary gift of Kindness and make their day! Join Best Self Coach and creator of Complementary Kindness Sharon Wilson at the Complementary Kindness stall to share your kindness and complements, and experience the power of gratitude.

Rolina Blok + PASCH.NET = PRINT:

11:00-16:00 City Lit Café

Free, drop-in

This drop in workshop introduces and engages visitors to accessible printmaking techniques. Participants will collaborate and connect with the other contributors in the project across the course of the day, in the creation of one physical art piece and individual, take-home creations.

Reenchantment: Turn Over a Leaf in Lincoln's Inn Fields

12:30 – 14:00 110

Price £5 / Concession £3

Join Reenchantment in Lincoln's Inn Fields for some fun and therapeutic nature writing. We'll guide you through a nature meditation, explore nature in the heart of the city, then gather our thoughts to create a word poem together. We'll guide you through some creative writing ecotherapy as a way to express your feelings, nurture a dialogue with yourself, the plants, trees and wildlife.

The Human Library

12:30 – 16:00 Student Centre

Free, drop-in

The Human Library is a library of people and their experiences with prejudice. But instead of paperback books, actual people are on loan for conversations. Come by to borrow an open Book for a conversation about prejudices and diversity.



Beyond Words: Afternoon Book Club

13:00 - 15:00 Free

Student Centre

Join Beyond Words' Afternoon Book Club from 1-3pm in the Learning Centre to read books from their word-free picture series. Beyond Words staff and self-advocates will lead a series of small book clubs developing visual literacy, empathy and understanding as we tell the stories we see in the Beyond Words' books.

Finding Our Way: Singing Workshop with Vivien Ellis and The Dragon Café

13:00 -13:45 City Lit Café

Free, drop-in

A singing workshop for everyone - led by Vivien Ellis with members of The Dragon Cafe Singers. After some fun vocal warm-ups we will learn a selection of uplifting and original songs written by the Dragon Cafe group, with lively beats, irresistible melodies and catchy choruses, exploring aspects of our mental health.