



24 / 02 / 24  
**READING  
FOR ODESA**

UNESCO Cities of Literature  
**Milano** Edinburgh, Exeter, Iași City,  
Krakow, Kuhmo, Lillehammer,  
Ljubljana, Manchester, Melbourne,  
Nottingham, Quebec City, Reykjavik,  
Wrocław.

#ReadingForOdesa

**19 February 2024**  
**Media Release (for immediate circulation)**

### ***READING FOR ODESA***

#### **An international cultural event in solidarity with the Odesa Literary Museum**

The invasion of Ukraine began on 24 February 2022. Two years on, the damage to cities, populations and cultural sites is profound. Odesa City of Literature has experienced missile and drone attacks, and as well as injuries and fatalities several of its UNESCO World Heritage Fund museums have been damaged, including the Archaeological Museum, the Maritime Museum, and the Literary Museum. The [Fondazione Arnoldo e Alberto Mondadori / Laboratorio Formentini per l'editoria](#), together with [Milan City of Literature](#) and [Comune di Milano - Area Biblioteche](#), invited other cities in the Literature network to organise a day of solidarity with Odesa.

*Reading for Odesa*, led by Milan City of Literature, will take place on 24 February 2024 in fourteen Creative Cities of Literature simultaneously: Milan, Edinburgh, Exeter, Iași City, Kraków, Kuhmo, Lillehammer, Ljubljana, Manchester, Melbourne, Nottingham, Quebec City, Reykjavík, and Wrocław. Each city will represent, in a symbolic way, a branch of the Odesa Museum of Literature, carrying out events which will be live streamed and reading texts by Ukrainian authors aloud, in the belief that literature can always be an instrument of collective memory and consciousness.

All the international reading events can be followed live on social media using the hashtag: **#ReadingForOdesa**

Find out what the Cities of Literature have planned for 24 February 2024:

**Milan (Italy)**

The programme of events in Milan includes readings and stories by Daria Bignardi, Francesco Cataluccio, and Gianluigi Ricuperati, hosted by Giacomo Papi. It will be an opportunity for everyone to deepen their knowledge of Ukrainian literature and reaffirm the importance of literature as a tool for dialogue and understanding between individuals and peoples.

More details [here](#)

**Edinburgh (Scotland)**

Edinburgh will release a film featuring a collective poem curated by Scotland's Makar (National Poet), Kathleen Jamie, presented in both English and Ukrainian. Joining Kathleen will be Ivan Babuscak from the Ukrainian Community Centre in Edinburgh. The Scottish Poetry Library has commissioned translations of the poem into Ukrainian by Ostap Slyvynsky and Nataliia Drapak.

More details [here](#)

**Exeter (UK)**

Exeter will be holding a vigil at Bedford Square at 14:00, and then moving into St Stephen's Church for a short prayer and readings of several poems and pieces of literature including "Mary" to "Golgotha", written by poet and soldier Maksym Kryvtsov, who was killed in the war very recently. The readings will be also accompanied by children's drawings to be sent to Ukrainian soldiers on the frontlines.

More details [here](#)

**Iasi City (Romania)**

Iasi City, through the National Museum of Romanian Literature Iasi, will host a public reading at the Vasile Pogor Museum - Casa Junimii. The event will start with a choreographic moment, coordinated by Andrada Costin, after which Georgiana Condurache and Bianca Ciubotariu, actors and students at the National University of Arte George Enescu Iași, will read from the works of some well-known Ukrainian writers translated into the Romanian language: Iuri Andruhovici, Oksana Zabuško, Ilya Kaminsky, and Serhii Jadan. The event will end with the last poem of Maxim Krivtsov, who was killed on the front at the beginning of January 2024 (as translated by Alexandru Vakulovski). The event, organised in partnership with the Faculty of Theater of the National University of Arts George Enescu Iași and the Association Patrimoniul Pentru Comunitati Iași, will be broadcast live online, on the YouTube channel and Facebook page of the National Museum of Romanian Literature Iași.

**Kraków (Poland)**

Led by the writer Zhanna Sloniowska, Ukrainian poets Natalia Belchenko, Marianna Kijanowska, and Olesia Mamchych will discuss how the ongoing war influences culture, especially literature: what books are written, how they are published, and what impact it has on the future of Ukraine. Poems by Odesa-born Ilya Kaminsky will also be read, among others.

More details [here](#)

**Kuhmo (Finland)**

Kuhmo is organising an event that will be held in the Juminkeo Cultural Centre from 1 to 3 p.m. The programme contains book talk and the library's reading recommendations on Ukrainian books, an open discussion and a sharing of fond literary memories about Ukrainian literature, and readings of excerpts from books recommended by the Odesa Literary Museum, read in their original language. Tea will be served during the event.

More details [here](#)

### **Manchester (UK)**

Manchester will be holding a reading amongst the new Threads exhibition in the Histories Hub of Manchester Central Library which contains unique items sent specially to Manchester from Odesa. Readings will be in English and Ukrainian from historic and contemporary authors. The readings will happen in advance of the rally in Piccadilly Gardens in support of Ukraine that starts at 2pm.

More details [here](#)

### **Nottingham (UK)**

Nottingham will have readings of a range of classic and contemporary Ukrainian literature handpicked by Odesa Literary Museum and Nottingham's Ukrainian community, including works by Serhiy Zhadan read in both Ukrainian and English.

More details [here](#)

### **Quebec City (Canada)**

Quebec, UNESCO City of Literature, home to a strong Ukrainian community and host to many refugees since the start of the Russian invasion, will present a short video, *Lectures pour Odesa: des mots pour résister*, by Marco Dubé in collaboration with the Quebec City of Literature team and literary magazine *Nuit Blanche*. Two local authors, one born in Quebec and one born in the Ukraine, will read from Ukrainian works of literature. Jean-Paul Beaumier will read an excerpt from *Diary of an Invasion* by Andreï Kourkov in French. Myroslava Marymonchuk will read an excerpt from *On the Shore of the Eternal Rive* by Lina Kostenko in Ukrainian.

### **Reykjavík (Iceland)**

Reykjavík City of Literature is proud to announce a special gathering at Mengi, a renowned venue for artistic expression located in the heart of Reykjavík. The event will feature readings by twelve distinguished Icelandic writers and poets, presenting their works alongside selected pieces from the rich Ukrainian literary canon. Reykjavík City of Literature is honoured to have the participation of the following Icelandic authors, who will be donating their fees to Odesa City of Literature in an act of solidarity: Anastasiia Chernoise; Anton Helgi Jónsson; Hallgrímur Helgason; María Elísabet Bragadóttir; Bergþóra Snæbjörnsdóttir; Jakub Stachowiak; Auður Ava Ólafssdóttir; Kristín Ómarsdóttir; Brynja Hjálmsdóttir; Pedro Gunnlaugur Garcia; and Fríða Ísberg.

More details [here](#)

### **NOTES FOR EDITORS**

**About the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN):** Established in 2004, the UCCN aims to foster collaboration among cities that recognise creativity as a crucial element in achieving sustainable urban development. Nearly 300 cities worldwide are part of this network, united in their pursuit of a shared goal: integrating creativity and cultural industries into their local development strategies while actively cooperating on the global stage. The Network encompasses seven creative fields: Crafts and Folk Art, Design, Film, Gastronomy, Literature, Media Arts, and Music.

Fifty-three UNESCO Creative Cities of Literature from 39 countries are currently members of the Network, diligently working together to harness the transformative power of literature in fostering sustainable and inclusive societies.

**For more information on the UCCN, please visit:**

<https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities/home>

**To learn more about the UNESCO Creative Cities of Literature Network:**

<https://www.citiesoflit.com/>

**Enquiries to:**

Press Office Fondazione Arnoldo e Alberto Mondadori  
Chiara Bortoloni  
<mailto:comunicazione@fondazionemondadori.it>  
phone: +39 02 39273061

Press Office Comune di Milano  
Elena Conenna  
<mailto:elenamaria.conenna@comune.milano.it>  
phone: +39 0288453314

**Hannah Trevarthen**, Director Nottingham City of Literature & Cities of Literature Network Lead:  
[hannah@nottmcityoflit.org](mailto:hannah@nottmcityoflit.org)

***Follow the social media hashtag: #ReadingForOdesa***