

Black History Month 2023

Celebrating Our Sisters

October marks **Black History Month**, which is a time when people around the world reflect on and celebrate the lives, histories, and cultures of the black community.

This year's theme for **Black History Month** in the UK is 'Celebrating our sisters'.

In October 2023 we will be featuring trailblazing Black women who have made incredible contributions to literature, music, fashion, sport, business, politics, academia, social and health care, and more.

Additionally, there will be a focus on themes such as resilience, self-care, and well-being, underscoring the strength and determination of Black women throughout history.



This year's celebrations also mark the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the Empire Windrush.

This year we will be celebrating ten inspirational Black female Londoners.





Chioma Nnadi

Fashion journalist and podcaster Chioma Nnadi is set to become the first black female head of editorial content at British Vogue. The Londoner said she was 'beyond excited and honoured' to be taking over from editor-in-chief Edward Enninful.

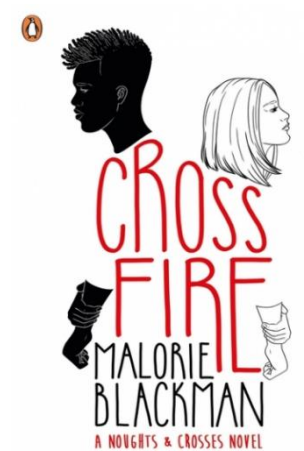
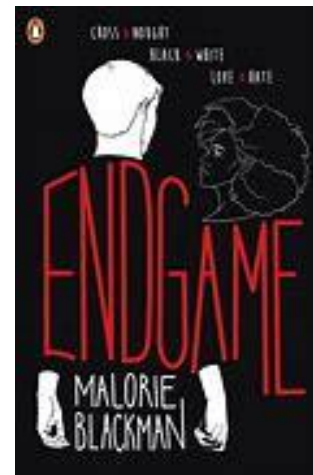
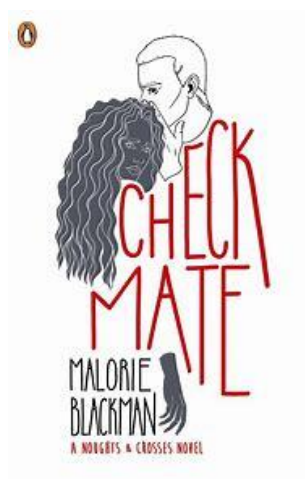
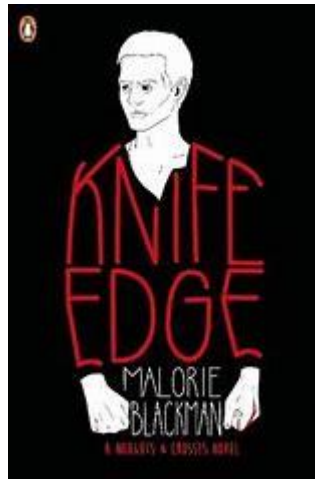
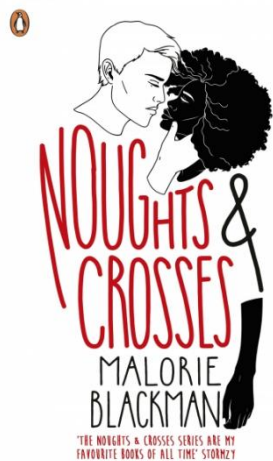
'As someone who was born and raised in London, the energy of the city - its boundary-pushing style and creative scene - has shaped the way I look at the world,' Nnadi said in a statement. 'Now, more than ever, it feels like a moment to look beyond borders while also celebrating the broad scope of what it means to be British,' she added of her return to her hometown.





Malorie Blackman

Malorie Blackman was born in Clapham and is a writer specialising in children's literature and science fiction. Her critically and popularly acclaimed 'Noughts and Crosses' series uses the setting of a fictional dystopia to explore racism. The trilogy has recently been adapted into a BBC television series. In 2013, Blackman became the first black Children's Laureate, succeeding Julia Donaldson. Blackman has been the recipient of many honours for her work including, most recently, the 2022 PEN Pinter Prize.





Margaret Yvonne Busby

Margaret Yvonne Busby, CBE, was Britain's youngest and first black female book publisher when she and Clive Allison (1944–2011) co-founded the London-based publishing house Allison and Busby (A & B) in the 1960s. She is a recipient of the Benson Medal from the Royal Society of Literature. In 2020 she was voted one of the '100 Great Black Britons'. In 2021, she was honoured with the London Book Fair Lifetime Achievement Award. In 2023, Busby was named as president of English PEN, one of the world's oldest human rights organisations.





Jessikah Inaba

Jessikah Inaba became the UK's first blind and Black female barrister last November. The 23-year-old, from Camden completed her entire course using Braille and credits her friends and tutors for helping to fill in the gaps.

‘There’s a triple-glazed glass ceiling. I’m not the most common gender or colour, and I have a disability, but by pushing through, I’m easing the burden on the next person like me,’ she said.





Little Simz

Simbiatu 'Simbi' Abisola Abiola Ajikawo, better known by her stage name Little Simz, is a British-Nigerian rapper, singer, and actress. Her fourth album, *Sometimes I Might Be Introvert* (2021) received widespread critical acclaim, with several publications deeming it the best album of 2021. It went on to win the 2022 Mercury Prize. It also earned her the 2022 Brit Award for Best New Artist and the Libera Award for Best Hip-Hop/Rap Record. The Islington born star also stars as Shelley in the Netflix revival drama series 'Top Boy'.





Dianne Abbot

Dianne Abbot is both the first black woman elected to parliament and the longest-serving black MP in the UK. Though she is a member of the Labour Party, she sits in the House of Commons as an independent, having had the whip suspended in April 2023. She has served as MP for Hackney and Stoke Newington since 1987.





Linett Kamala

Notting Hill Carnival pioneer Linett Kamala was one of the first female DJs at the August festival at the age of 15. Now a board director at Carnival she has launched a campaign to bring more women into the festival's sound system scene with a new grassroots mentoring programme. Last year she piloted her Lin Kam Art Sound System Futures Programme, which helps educate and empower young talent to further develop UK sound system culture.





Bernadine Evaristo

Bernadine Evaristo was born in Woolwich and is a writer and academic. Her eighth novel 'Girl, Woman, Other' won the Booker Prize in 2019, making her the first black woman and first black Brit to ever win the prestigious award. 'Girl, Woman, Other' was listed as one of Barack Obama's 19 Favourite Books of 2019.

Evaristo, 64, is professor of creative writing at Brunel University, London and is one of fewer than 30 black female professors in the UK, out of around 20,000 professors overall.





Adwoa Aboah

Adwoa Aboah is a British fashion model, activist and actress and is one of the key faces in today's modelling industry. The 31-year-old has appeared on the cover of British Vogue and has modelled for some of fashion's biggest names including Calvin Klein, Marc Jacobs and Alexander Wang. Along with her modelling career, Aboah is the founder of Gurls Talk, a community-led non-profit organisation dedicated to promoting the mental health well-being of adolescent girls and young women. Aboah often speaks openly about her battle with addiction and depression, making her one of the most influential women in the fashion industry. She stars as Becks in the Netflix revival drama series Top Boy.





Yvette Williams

Yvette Williams MBE is a lead campaigner on the Justice 4 Grenfell campaign. Williams and her daughter witnessed the fire at Grenfell Tower after being alerted by a family friend who was evacuated from one of the walkways. She has played an important role in the campaign for accountability and justice for Grenfell victims ever since. She is also a founding member of operation black vote – a national campaign encouraging BME communities to engage in the democratic process to get their voices heard and has



worked with a number of campaigns including those for Stephen Lawrence and Frank Crichlow. Williams was featured in British Vogue's 20 Remarkable Activists Ready to Change the World, September 2020 issue.