



**16 – 24 March 2026 at the Institut français in London**

*"I was lucky enough to be involved in our festival right from the start. I have seen this celebration of writing and reading and drawing grow – it becomes more and more amazing!"* Sir Quentin Blake

*"It's a marvellous example of international collaboration"* Axel Scheffler

**Organised by the French Institute in London**, the South Ken Kids Festival is back for its 28<sup>th</sup> edition from 16 to 24 March 2026. **Under the patronage of Quentin Blake**, the Festival **promotes the best of children's literature** from both sides of the Channel.

The festival will welcome **Axel Scheffler, Michael Rosen, Guillaume Gallienne, Charlotte Gastaut, Olivier Tallec, Lucie Brunellière, Luke Pearson, Bethan Woollwin, Grace Easton, Joe Todd-Stanton, Yuval Zommer, Joséphine Seblon, Robert Sae-Heng, Clémentine Beauvais, Lucie Arnoux** and more.

They will take part in a great range of **activities** with **schools** and in **public events held at the French Institute**, from **workshops, talks, live drawing and storytelling**, to **films, performances and book signings**.

**Public events highlights** include a **live drawing session** with **Axel Scheffler** and **Grace Easton**, an exclusive performance mixing **poetry** and **hip hop** with **Michael Rosen** and **Michael Vidon**, and **Impro!**, a giant multi-handed live drawing session with the guest-illustrators accompanied by trumpeter Olivia Cuttill.

This year's festival puts **comics** centre stage. **Cartoonist Luke Pearson**, creator of the beloved Netflix and comic-book heroine **Hilda!**, will guide children through the process of inventing their own magical creature, while **Sarah Ardizzone**, award-winning translator of **Joann Sfar**'s comics art version of Saint-Exupéry's classic fable **The Little Prince** will embark readers of all ages. **Alex Barrow** and the team behind **Kurio Magazine** will also give a brilliant comic-creating workshop.

The film programme features the sensational **Arco**, produced by Natalie Portman, which is shortlisted for the BAFTA (Best Children's Family Film), the Academy Awards (Best Animated Feature) and the Cesars (Best Animation Film), alongside the UK premiere of **My Life in Versailles** and the all-time classic **The King and the Mockingbird**. Fans of Asterix will be treated with a special screening of **Asterix & Obelix: God Save Britannia** which will be followed by a **Q&A** with **actor Guillaume Gallienne** aka Jolitorax.

Last but not least, ahead of the Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration opening next May, the French Institute presents **Quentin Blake's Fantastic Journeys and Clown** in a colourful **exhibition** of prints specially curated for the festival, from 25 Feb to 31 March.

*The South Ken Kids Festival benefits from the generous support of the Bressler Foundation*

**Ages:** from 3+, for the whole family

**Venue:** Institut français, 17 Queensberry Place, London, SW7 2DT | 020 7871 3515

**Info, programme & booking:** [www.institut-francais.org.uk/south-ken-kids-festival](http://www.institut-francais.org.uk/south-ken-kids-festival)

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