

theLIST

Eight Authors to Dive Into in 2023

Up your reading arsenal this year, says **DOROTHY KOOMSON**



1 SARA JAFARI

As well as single-handedly running *TOKEN*, a literary and arts print magazine featuring work by under-represented writers and artists, Sara Jafari is a writer, essayist and children's book publisher. Sara's heart-warming and insightful debut romance novel was published in 2021. Funny and well-observed, her second novel, **People Change**, about two young people trying to rekindle their relationship when they meet again after being separated for several years, will be published this year. *Penguin, £8.99*



2 JENDELLA BENSON

The paperback for Jendella Benson's debut novel **Hope & Glory**, which has been optioned for the screen, will be published this year. The story of a woman who returns to London from LA after her father dies is funny, sad and touching. Jendella is head of editorial at Black Ballad, the award-winning digital platform for Black women. Her visual work has been exhibited at the House of Commons, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery and the International Center of Photography in New York. *Hachette, £9.99*



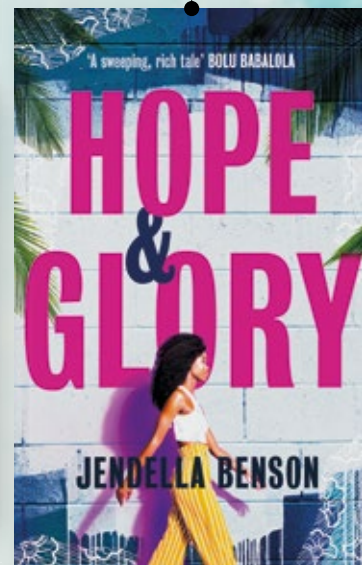
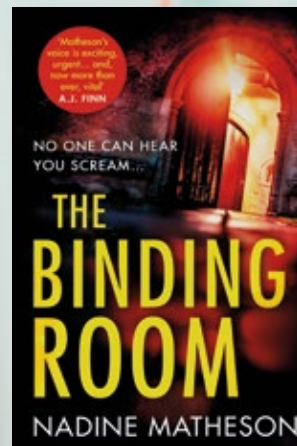
5 LOLA JAYE

Published in 2022, **The Attic Child** is Lola Jaye's sixth novel. The sweeping historical tale, inspired by an Edwardian picture she found of an African child, has received great acclaim and become an ebook number one bestseller. Lola is a registered psychotherapist as well as author and inspirational speaker. She has written for CNN, HuffPost and the BBC, and regularly speaks on issues of mental health, racism and mental wellbeing. *Pan Macmillan, £14.99*



6 ONYI NWABINE

After growing up in Glasgow, the Isle of Man and Newcastle, Onyi Nwabine now lives in London. As well as co-founding Surviving Out Loud, a fund that provides support for survivors of sexual assault, Onyi started Black Pens, a writing retreat for Black women. Her debut novel, **Someday, Maybe**, a breathtaking tale of grief, love and learning to find yourself after your world is shattered, was published last year. The paperback will be published this year and Onyi is working on her next book. *Oneworld, £16.99*



3 NADINE MATHESON

Londoner Nadine Matheson began at the BBC and is now a practising criminal defence lawyer. In 2016, she won the City University Crime Writing Competition, the prize for which was completing the Creative Writing MA at City, University of London. As a result of the course, Nadine wrote her bestselling debut crime novel, *The Jigsaw Man*, which was published in 2021 and has been optioned for TV. **The Binding Room**, the heart-stopping sequel, will be published in paperback later this year. *HQ, £14.99*



4 KIA ABDULLAH

Kia Abdullah left her job to become a writer and has since written for various publications including *The Guardian*, *The New York Times*, *Asian Woman* and the BBC. Kia is also the founder of Asian Booklist, a non-profit organisation that advocates for diversity in publishing. Her first book, *Take It Back*, was published in 2019. Her fourth novel, out this year, is **Those People Next Door**, a tense, clever tale about the seething underbelly of a picture-perfect suburban town. *HQ, £14.99*



7 FRANCES MENSAH WILLIAMS

Frances Mensah Williams, from London, writes romantic comedy fiction set in England or Ghana, which often revolves around humorous culture clashes. As well as being an author, Frances is an award-winning entrepreneur and executive coach who has written two nonfiction careers books. Her book **Strictly Friends**, the story of a woman caught between two men when she decides to track down her son's absent father, will be published this year. *Lake Union, £8.99*



8 CHRISTIE J NEWPORT

Born in Preston, Christie J Newport now lives in Northumberland. She developed a rare illness as a child and found reading and creating stories an escape. Over the years Christie honed her writing skills through various courses until she finally realised her dream of setting a psychological thriller in her home city when she won the Joffe Books Prize for Crime Writers of Colour. Her first novel, a twisty thriller called **The Raven's Mark**, was published in 2022. Her second book will be published this year. *Joffe Books, £8.99*

PHOTOS: UNSPLASH