



The second year of our award-winning *Unsilencing the Library* project sees 6 new guest curators select book choices for our rare Women's Library, created by Georgiana Verney, Lady Willoughby de Broke in 1860.

The project, a collaboration with Dr Sophie Ratcliffe of Oxford University, breathed new life into the library, juxtaposing the real books picked by guest curators next to the purely decorative book spines in the original shelves. Last year, this exciting collaboration included choices from actress, Emma Watson, a prison reading group and Kineton school. It won the 2017 Oxford Chancellor's Public Engagement with Research Award. *Unsilencing the Library* offers our visitors new insights into why books mattered in the past, and why they still do.

This year's guest curators - Susan Stockwell, Sophie Grigson, Compton Verney's Dementia Café, the Servicewomen of the British Army, Prof Fiona Sampson and Dr Osak Esu - have each selected up to 20 book choices that range from children's books to political biography; all of which have inspired them in their lives and careers.

They have explained why they have selected each title. For example, amongst Sophie Grigson's choices is Judith Kerr's *The Tiger Who Came to Tea*: 'Who wouldn't love a visit from a smiling benign tiger, who just wants to eat cake and drink tea and a gallon or ten of water?' she asks.

Prof Fiona Sampson includes *Under Milk Wood* by Dylan Thomas: 'The radio play that became a classic, this poetic, affectionately mocking portrait of village life in West Wales is the book that made me a writer, and always reminds me of growing up in just such a community.'

Susan Stockwell's list includes *The Trial*, by Franz Kafka: 'A chilling nightmarish tale about Joseph K, a man living in a bureaucratic, totalitarian hell, a book I'm sometimes reminded of when I work with some institutions today, over 100 years after it was written.'

Selecting *A God In Ruins* by Kate Atkinson, one female servicewoman says, 'This is the best book I have ever read about how people are during and despite of war. Yet, it is about so much more than war, it is human life, fate, relationships and everything in between.'

Dr Osak Esu includes *Women who Launched the Computer Age* by Laurie Calkhoven among her selection: 'I only found out about these brilliant women when I was in my 20s, I wished I knew them earlier.'

To see all the curators' selections see <https://www.unsilencingthelibrary.com/>



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Our new guest curators

Dr Osak Esu, winner of the Institution of Engineering and Technology's Young Woman Engineer of the Year 2017.



Author, poet & former concert violinist, **Prof Fiona Sampson**, who has just published a major new biography, *In Search of Mary Shelley: The Girl Who Wrote Frankenstein*.

The Servicewomen of the British Army

have selected titles that have inspired them growing up and in their careers.



Compton Verney's Dementia Café. Over recent months our Dementia Café participants have been selecting books that mean the most to them.

Cookery writer and celebrity chef, **Sophie Grigson**; a keen supporter of organic and local food suppliers, and an advocate of healthy children's food.



Artist and sculptor, **Susan Stockwell**, who contributed to our recent *Created in Conflict* exhibition. Her art addresses political, social and feminist issues.