

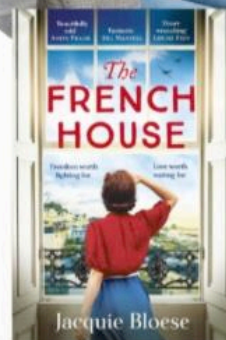
THE AUTHORS

Arts for **all**
PROGRAMME



Annabelle Thorpe has been a travel and features journalist for over twenty years, spending six years on The Times Travel desk, before becoming deputy travel editor for Express Newspapers, and then taking the same role at the Observer. She was named one of the top 50 travel writers in the UK. Her first novel, *The People We Were Before*, was set in the Croatian civil war of the 1990s, her second, *What Lies Within*, is set in Marrakech. She has also written two travel books. Home is rural Sussex, with her husband and cat.

"*The Moonlit Piazza*" is a celebration of the resilience of the human spirit in times of extreme adversity, based in Italy during World War 2. With hidden loves and dangerous secrets, suspicion and lies swirl around trattoria Casa Maria, as the Nazis tighten their grip on power.



Jacquie Bloese is a writer of immersive historical book club fiction, originally from the Channel Island of Guernsey. After teaching English in Turkey and Spain, she took up a career in English Language Teaching publishing, a job which combined her love of travel, languages, and different cultures. Her debut novel *The French House* was a Richard and Judy 2022 winter book club pick and a finalist in the Mslexia First Novel Award. Her second novel *The Secret Photographs/The Golden Hour* is set in the underground world of erotic photography in 1890's Brighton and is out now. Jacquie lives in Brighton, where she combines writing fiction with her work in educational and children's publishing.

"*The French House*" is set on the island of Guernsey during the German occupation in WWII and inspired by family history. A heart wrenching story, told with great empathy about how love is complicated and untidy; how life can be brutal, but how strength and courage are found through acts of kindness and compassion.