

Benjamin Zephaniah describes his idea of happiness

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Acclaimed novelist and playwright Benjamin Zephaniah will give the University of Birmingham's Baggs Memorial Lecture on Monday 5th July 2010 at 6.30pm.

Benjamin Zephaniah was born in Birmingham and started writing poetry at an early age. He gained a reputation in Handsworth as a young poet who spoke about local and international issues. He moved to London at 22 and his first book of poetry was published. He now spends much of his time in China, but travels extensively speaking about politics and reciting poetry.

The Baggs Memorial Lecture began in 1976. Thomas Baggs was an alumnus of the University of Birmingham who went on to become a teacher, journalist and a war correspondent for the Daily Mail before pursuing a successful career in advertising and publicity for the USA automobile industry. When he died in 1973 Thomas bequeathed a substantial sum to the University to provide for an annual public lecture on the theme of 'Happiness - what it is and how it may be achieved by individuals as well as nations.'

This lecture series has seen many distinguished speakers tackle the topic of happiness from their personal viewpoint including Yehudi Menuhin, David Attenborough, Peter Ustinov, Maureen Lipman, David Lodge, Adam Hart Davies, Robert Winston and Sue Lawley.

The lecture takes place at the University of Birmingham's Great Hall in the Aston Webb building.