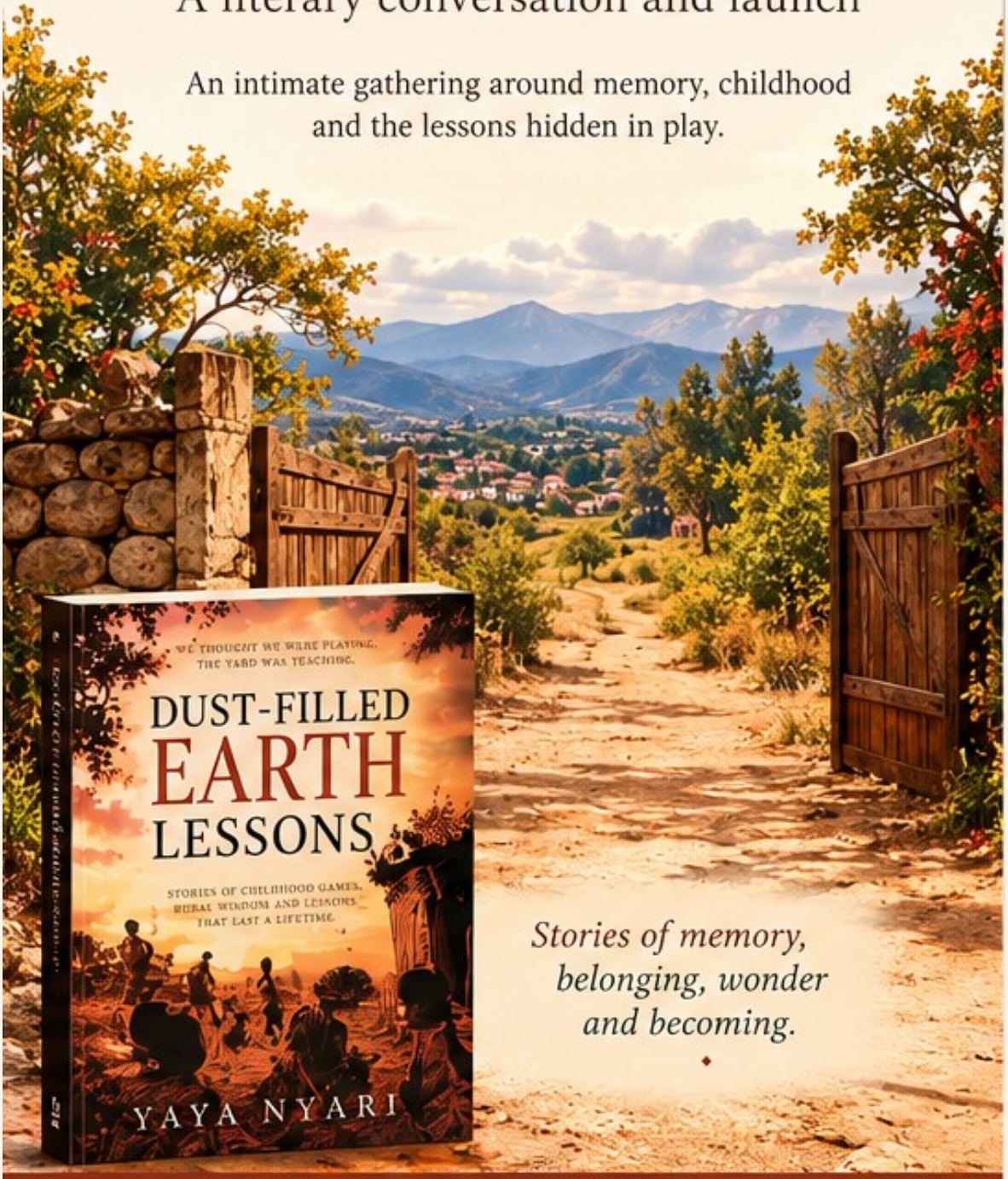
YAYA NYARI LITERARY ESTATE

AT THE GATE

The Lessons We Carried

A literary conversation and launch

An intimate gathering around memory, childhood and the lessons hidden in play.



Stories of memory, belonging, wonder and becoming.

SATURDAY
7 NOVEMBER 2026

THE LAST JUDGMENT
Chancery Lane, London

2:00 – 4:30 PM

WALK SLOWLY. STAY AWHILE.



PROGRAMME | 2:00–4:30 PM

2:00 PM Arrival and welcome

From the pages of Dust-Filled Earth Lessons
A reading by Yaya Nyari

In conversation with Yaya Nyari
Chaired by Pam Rowe

A walk through the Literary Estate
Discovering the world beyond the book

Audience reflections and questions
An open conversation

VISIT THE ESTATE
yayanyari.com

4:30 PM Close of the gathering

Refreshments, conversation and signed books woven into the afternoon



ABOUT YAYA NYARI

Yaya Nyari writes of memory, belonging, wonder and becoming. *Dust-Filled Earth Lessons* revisits childhood games and the quiet wisdom carried from the village into later life.

Pada

Pada began with charcoal.

Cold pieces rescued from the ash pit to the west of the homestead; the shallow hole that served as our makeshift bin. We reached in without hesitation; fingers blackened instantly, dust lifting in soft complaint.

If you wiped your hand against your dress, the mark remained like evidence of intention.

The ground had to be chosen carefully.

Not in the cattle path. Not too close to the cooking area. Not where goat droppings ruled the terrain.

…

Lines had to be straight.

“That’s not even.”
“It is.”
“No, it isn’t.”

A foot would redraw the line firmly. Crooked boundaries were invitations to dispute before the first stone landed.

…

The stone was thrown into the first square.

If it touched a line — immediate protest.

“You touched!”
“I didn’t!”
“You did!”

The group leaned in, self-appointed judges with sharp eyes.

Then the hopping began.

One foot only.

Arms stretched wide. Bare toes gripping red dust. Ankles making small, invisible corrections. Goat pellets required mid-air recalibration. A slight dip in the ground could tilt your centre of gravity without warning.

…

Balance was quiet work.

We were not just hopping.

We were negotiating gravity.

And like all our games, interruption lived inside it.

A name would travel from the kitchen hut once, measured.

If you did not respond immediately, the second call sharpened.

“Iwe!”

Just that.

It cut through the yard cleanly. No explanation required. The tone carried consequence.

Sometimes the summons was practical.

“Wanga wachera mvura here?”
Have you fetched the water as agreed?

Or worse — humour edged with warning:

“Tichadya Pada here nhasi?”
Are we eating Pada for dinner today?

Laughter might follow from the adults, but the meaning was clear. Charcoal grids did not cook sadza. If you had promised to sweep, check the goats, shell nyimo, or fetch firewood, you were expected to remember.

…

Because we understood something instinctively:

Play was privilege.
Responsibility was anchor.

Hop.
Pause.
Respond.
Return.

YAYA NYARI LITERARY ESTATE

The stories do not end *at the Gate.*



Thank you for being part of this gathering, and for the memories, conversations and connections we carry beyond it.

Walk slowly. Stay awhile.

Yaya Nyari Literary Estate

yayanyari.com