



The Future is Female

Conversations about Women and Gender at the Bay Area Book Festival

Saturday, April 28

10:00 - 11:15 Murder She Writes: Catherine Coulter Talks with Laurie R. King

Catherine Coulter interviewed by Laurie R. King

Catherine Coulter, No.1 New York Times best-selling suspense writer and author of 82 novels (almost all of them New York Times bestsellers!), is interviewed by Mystery Writers of America NorCal president Laurie R. King, herself a bestselling author of 25 novels. These two remarkable writers will talk about Coulter's journey from Regency romances to FBI thrillers, the research she does for her widely varied stories, and her craft, art, and life of writing.

10:00 - 11:15 Translating Trauma

Katherena Vermette, Winnie M. Li, moderated by Natasha Singh

Much great literature focuses on the darkest parts of being human, and writers need exceptional courage to write about trauma. Katherena Vermette, who comes from the Métis nation in Canada, writes about violence and power struggles between women in her harrowing novel "The Break," praised by Margaret Atwood as "universal." Of Winnie M. Li's debut novel "Dark Chapter," inspired by her own experience as a survivor of assault, Kirkus reviews said: "That Li was able to write this novel, as both personal catharsis and public service, speaks volumes about her inner strength. Li's novel is both a valuable social document and a riveting page-turner." This pair of acclaimed female writers will explore the question of how we process and communicate trauma with Natasha Singh.

10:30 - 11:45 The Art of Science Fiction: Interview with Sylvie Denis, France's Queen of Sci-Fi

Sylvie Denis interviewed by Marie Brennan

For this special event, one of France's leading science fiction writers, Sylvie Denis, travels to the Bay Area Book Festival to discuss her work and the genre of science fiction. A novelist, short story writer, critic, editor, and translator, Denis has often focused her writing on new technologies and their impact on societies. She also will explore themes of climate change and migration (her current focus) and will share her experience as a woman writing (French critical theory has had much to say, controversially,

about the female literary voice). Finally, how does translation affect the presentation of literary work and science fiction especially? She will be interviewed by fantasy writer Marie Brennan, whose work Denis has translated.

11:00 - 12:15 Geneen Roth's Messy Magnificent Life

Geneen Roth interviewed by Vanessa Hua

Geneen Roth (author of the massively popular memoir "Women Food and God") has simple advice for those trying to improve themselves: Do not try to fix your flaws. In fact, she takes issue with the idea of flaws at all. After years struggling with body issues, Geneen Roth made peace with herself and embarked on the journey to find meaning beyond self-image. Her new book, "This Messy Magnificent Life," does not aim to show readers how to correct their path—it aims to help them see the beauty of the path they are on.

12:15 - 1:30 Beyond Jane and Hermione: New Smart Women in Literature

Azareen Van der Vliet Oloomi, Jana Casale, Martha Batalha, Adrienne Sharp, moderated by Barbara Lane

Now is a time for brilliant women to be heard, seen, and read about. This panel of women has taken up the mantle, adding to the chorus of female voices through their strong characters—from whip-smart anarchist teen rebels to restless and explosive women seeking to defy expectations. Powerhouse authors Azareen Van der Vliet Oloomi, Jana Casale, Martha Batalha, and Adrienne Sharp make up this strong female panel.

12:45 - 2:00 Men and Boys 2018: Cultural and Personal Masculinities

Michael Kimmel, Dacher Keltner, moderated by Otis R. Taylor Jr.

As women across the world make their painful experiences visible, men have begun to grapple with how the masculine identity shapes the power imbalance. The cultural positioning of manhood starts early ("Boys don't cry!") and continues to influence these boys' identities as they grow ("Man up!"). Masculinity expert Michael Kimmel and psychology professor Dacher Keltner investigate.

1:30 - 2:45 Fierce Originality: Eimear McBride interviewed by Sylvia Brownrigg

Eimear McBride interviewed by Sylvia Brownrigg

With her first published novel, "A Girl Is a Half-Formed Thing," Eimear McBride was compared to a feminist James Joyce in how she broke language to capture fleeting consciousness itself, in this case in the mind of a young girl struggling to remain intact amidst trauma. The New York Times called it "a future classic." NPR said, "Shattering...Be prepared to be blown away by this raw, visceral, brutally intense neomodernist first novel." In her second, even more sophisticated novel, "The Lesser Bohemians," she also aimed "to write truthfully about female experience," this time about a consuming love affair with an older man. "Writing is painful," she told the Guardian, "but it's the closest you can get to joy." McBride comes to us from Ireland to talk about writing, life, feminism and more with novelist Sylvia Brownrigg.

1:30 - 2:45 **Women Plot the Crime**

Sara Blaedel, Anne Holt, and Yrsa Sigurdardóttir, moderated by Cara Black

The plot for the perfect crime may very well reside in the minds of these three cunning women. This panel of authors will discuss what it takes—and what it takes out of you—to write a complex, compelling, and believable (but un-guessable) crime story. Come plumb the minds of Sara Blaedel (Denmark's "queen of crime"), Anne Holt (Norway's best-selling female crime writer), and Icelandic best-selling author Yrsa Sigurdardóttir, as they talk with fellow crime writer Cara Black.

1:30 - 2:45 **Nina LaCour Up Close and Personal**

Nina LaCour's characters look a lot like her readers. The characters are easy for readers to relate to: living in worlds readers recognize, suffering the same kinds of uncertainties, experiencing the same sorts of tiny life-changing moments. LaCour has devoted her life to young adults: first as a teacher, then as a writer. Her new novel, "We Are Okay," follows a college-aged girl as she deals with trauma, isolation, coping, and change. It was called "a moving portrait of a girl struggling to rebound after everything she's known has been thrown into disarray" by Publisher's Weekly and was named the best book of the year written for teens, winning the Michael L. Printz Award from the American Library Association, a leading award for teen fiction.

3:15 - 4:30 **Melissa de la Cruz Writes It All: History, Fantasy, Modern Life**

Melissa de la Cruz never met a genre she didn't like. The versatile author (with a penchant for villains) has written more than 45 chart-topping books—from the historical love story of Alex and Eliza (Hamilton, that is) to the fantastical prequel to the Disney Channel movie "The Descendants." Her books have graced the charts of The New York Times, Publishers Weekly, USA Today, Wall Street Journal, and Los Angeles Times, and now she graces our stage. Come learn from this Jack of all Trades as she talks the challenges of risky writing and how she finds her groove.

5:00 - 6:00 **Joyce Maynard: The Power of Heartfelt Story**

Joyce Maynard has been prominent in the literary community since her teen years as a contributor to Seventeen magazine. Over the course of her career, she has written 16 books including the novels "To Die For" and "Labor Day" (both adapted for film) and the bestselling memoir "At Home in the World," translated into 17 languages. Maynard will discuss her newest memoir, "The Best of Us," which Booklist says is a "haunting story, penned by a master wordsmith...a reminder to savor every loved one and every day."

5:00 - 6:00 **Lidia Yuknavitch in Person: On Fearlessness, Truth, and Misfits**

Lidia Yuknavitch, interviewed by Daphne Gottlieb

There is no other literary voice like Lidia Yuknavitch's. She is a "bold and ecstatic writer" (NPR), a writer's writer, "a trailblazing literary voice that spans genres and dives deep" (Lenny Letter). The author of the award-winning speculative feminist novel "The Book of Joan" and the hypnotic memoir "The Chronology of Water" has experienced domestic violence, struggles with substance abuse, bouts of homelessness, and the loss of a child. In a raw, fearless voice she interrogates conformity, love, sex, the body, memory, and writing itself and inspires her readers with the courage to live (and write) fully. A protege of Ken Kesey and inspired by Kathy Acker, she is a self-proclaimed "misfit" and has penned a

book, enhanced by interviews, called "The Misfit's Manifesto." Come hear her calls for authenticity in life and literature.

Sunday, April 29

10:00 - 11:15 YES to Girls & Science!

Emily Calandrelli

The "SpaceGal" delivers a most welcome new series about Ada Lace, a third-grade girl who has a knack for science and technology, and a nose for trouble. Emily says, "When you were a kid, what did you picture when you thought of a scientist or engineer?" You can bet the answer was "a socially awkward white dude with glasses." Not anymore! Ada inspires young readers to ask questions and lean into their curiosity, showing them that scientists and engineers can look just like them! (Remember, anyone under age 18 is let in free—no wristbands necessary!)

10:00 - 11:15 Timeless: Historical Fiction

Heather O'Neill, Linda Spalding, Adrienne Sharp, Rupert Thomson

Writing great historical fiction is an enormously challenging task for writers—so much research, woven seamlessly into a story—and rewards readers with entertainment and education at the same time. No wonder historical fiction is one of the most popular literary genres. Discover how it's done through this panel. Two orphans navigate desperation in Heather O'Neill's "virtually cinematic" Depression-era Montreal. With portraits of slave owners and abolitionists, Linda Spalding captures the instability of mid-19th-century America. Through the eyes of a vulnerable young woman, Adrienne Sharp takes us inside the glamour and darkness of Hollywood and Las Vegas in the mid-20th century. Rupert Thomson tells a love story of two women (disguised as men) in the Parisian art world whose troubled love lives are further complicated by war-torn Europe in the early 20th century.

10:00 - 11:45 Women Write the World: On Equality, Justice, and Freedom

Samina Ali, Belva Davis, Camille Hayes, Michelle Mush Lee, Sara Marchant, Deborah Santana

In our turbulent world where human rights and justice are being challenged, it's important to understand and have compassion for those whose paths we have not walked. "All the Women in My Family Sing," a collection of prose and poetry by 69 women of color, explores the realities, joys, and challenges of being a woman of color in the 21st century. Editor Deborah Santana is joined by authors Camille Hayes, Sara Marchant, Michelle "Mush" Lee, Samina Ali, and Belva Davis, all of whom share stories and insights that can help create bridges between worlds we know very well and those we may not.

10:00 - 11:15 JCC East Bay Presents: Thriving Past Trauma—Holocaust Survivor Dr. Edith Eger with The Choice

Dr. Edith Eger interviewed by Elizabeth Rosner

An absolute must-see: Dr. Edith Eger, 92-year-old Auschwitz survivor and trauma psychologist, comes to us to discuss one of the most compelling books we've read this year, "The Choice: Embrace the Possible," which Desmond Tutu called "a gift to humanity." She will be interviewed by Elizabeth Rosner, author of the award-winning "Survivor Cafe: The Legacy of Trauma and the Labyrinth of Memory."

10:30 - 11:45 Smart Women Everywhere: Women Calling the Shots in Global Fiction

Jasmin Darznik, Therese Bohman, Shobha Rao, Gunnhild Oyeaug, moderated by Rachael Myrow

Strong women are nothing new in literature, which has inspired centuries of women to speak up. And no woman is a victim when she's the one telling the story. From Iran to Sweden, these writers and their female characters show how it's done. Jasmin Darznik's debut novel, "Song of a Captive Bird," is an homage to Forugh Farrokhzad, the poet many say brought feminism to Iran. Therese Bohman tells a familiar story of a brilliant woman surrounded by male fragility in her novel "Eventide." Shobha Rao creates a transcendent story of female friendship in "Girls Burn Brighter," which Vogue called "incandescent... a searing portrait of what feminism looks like in much of the world." Norwegian writer Gunnhild Oyeaug, lauded by the New Yorker as a short story master, comes a sensual and contemplative collection of gorgeous, female-centric short stories.

11:15 - 12:30 Women Changing the World: How Phoebe Hearst, Jane Stanford, and Other Women Funded Feminism, Founded Universities, and Inspire Philanthropy Today

Joan Johnson, Catherine Pyke, Alexandra Nickliss, moderated by Julie Castro Abrams

For centuries, women have been powerful philanthropists, albeit less recognized than men. Women's strategic largesse has been essential to progressive advances including feminism. Women have been especially influential in founding the two leading universities in the Bay Area. Phoebe Hearst was the eclectic mother of the University of California at Berkeley, just as Jane Stanford co-founded her namesake university through hands-on activism. What lessons do the stories of these brilliant, empowered women hold today for any woman (or man) who wants to use financial resources to shape society? Do women give differently than men do? Where do the challenges and opportunities lie? Historian Joan Johnson writes on "Funding Feminism," former Hearst Foundation director Catherine Pyke delves into Jane Stanford's legacy, and Alexandra Nickliss reveals the fascinating persona of Phoebe Hearst, whose influence shapes this very book festival.

11:45 - 1:00 Aline Kominsky-Crumb: A Life in Comics

Aline Kominsky-Crumb interviewed by Peggy Orenstein

Aline Kominsky-Crumb is an icon of cartooning and a pioneer in feminist expression through this medium. Her subversive depictions of femininity, along with her collaborations with husband Robert Crumb, have been widely featured in the underground scene. Growing up enraptured by the counter-culture movement, Kominsky-Crumb has always sought new ways to defy and inspire, and she actively seeks to "deconstruct the myth or romanticism around being a woman." Journalist Peggy

Orenstein interviews the award-winning artist and storyteller, who comes to us from her home in France.

12:15 - 1:30 **Women & Speculative Fiction: Following the Footsteps of Atwood, Butler, and Le Guin**

Åsa Avdic, Maggie Shen King, Lidia Yuknavitch, Meg Elison

Margaret Atwood, Octavia Butler, and Ursula Le Guin are three titans of speculative fiction, having lit the way for a new generation of women who hold in their hands the future of the genre. Among this new generation is Asa Avdic, whose new book "The Dying Game" was called "an Orwellian debut novel that never lets up"; breakout novelist Maggie Shen King, author of "An Excess Male" (which was dubbed "'The Handmaid's Tale' of a new generation"; literary powerhouse and award-winning author of "Book of Joan" Lidia Yuknavitch; and influential feminist writer Meg Elison, who won the Philip K. Dick Award for her novel, "The Book of the Unnamed Midwife."

12:45 - 2:00 **Sally Kohn on Repairing Our Humanity**

Sally Kohn interviewed by Lauren Schiller, Inflection Point

Popular political commentator Sally Kohn, who has contributed regularly to both CNN and Fox News, has built a career on bridging political differences and has mastered the remarkable skill of civil conversation with people with whom she disagrees passionately. Learning how to do that is reason enough to attend this session, but Kohn goes a step further. For her new book "The Opposite of Hate: A Field Guide to Repairing Our Humanity," Kohn talked with leading researchers and traveled the world meeting with terrorists, white supremacists, and trolls (including those who malign her), all to untangle the roots of hate. How can we stop hate? Why does civility matter, and what else can help? Find out how you too can join this process of leaving hate behind. Session taped for later podcast by Inflection Point, <https://www.inflectionpointradio.org>.

1:00 - 2:15 **"Wonder Down Under": A Celebration (and Medical Explication) of the Female Anatomy**

Ellen Støkken Dahl, interviewed by Michelle Marzullo

The female body has been a political battleground for centuries, the source of life itself and thus the focus of control, indeed obsession. Meanwhile, the actual bodies themselves—the way they work, their own intrinsic beauty and physical essence—remain largely undiscussed. To demystify female sexual health for women and those who love them, medical student Ellen Støkken Dahl and Dr. Nina Brochmann from Norway began a blog that was so popular that it quickly became a book. "The Wonder Down Under: A User's Guide to the Vagina" sold out in Norway in only three days and has now been translated into more than 30 languages. In a special presentation, Dahl will answer all of the questions you didn't know you had about the female anatomy.

1:30 - 2:45 **#MeToo & Beyond: Continuing to Tell the Truth**

Winnie Li, T. Christian Miller, Bernice Yeung, moderated by Sandhya Dirks

Has #MeToo gone too far? (That very question will provoke strong reactions.) Not far enough? (That one too.) Who decides? What happens next? Together these writers, who have plumbed this topic deeply, will deconstruct the movement and explore its future. Winnie Li's thought-provoking novel "Dark Chapter" was inspired by her own experience of assault; she also founded and runs the consent-centered Clear Lines festival in the UK. Investigative journalist Bernice Yeung has reported on sexual assault in agricultural and janitorial work. T. Christian Miller's reporting on the story of a mishandled rape case won the Pulitzer Prize and has been developed into a book, just published.

1:30 - 2:45 **Writing the Truth: Fiction and Non-Fiction**

Dashka Slater, Anne Nesbet, Sara Saedi

Young readers have an intense curiosity about the world, and sophisticated books based on real-life events can help them navigate the complexities they find. The authors on this panel will discuss how they incorporate difficult real events into their books while keeping them enjoyable for young readers. Slater, who has written several children's books, has a new nonfiction book geared toward young adults that deals with the burning of a cross-dressed teenager on an Oakland bus. Nesbet's historical fiction follows an 11-year-old orphan in 1941 America. Saedi presents her true story of her family's undocumented history. (Remember, anyone under age 18 is let in free—no wristbands necessary!)

1:30 - 2:45 **We Can Do It: Opinionated Women**

Michelle Dean

What makes for a powerful woman? Is there a special trait, a spark that allows her to overcome institutional biases and barriers? Michelle Dean's new book, "Sharp: the Women Who Made an Art of Having an Opinion," is in equal part a polyphonic biography, a cultural criticism, and a historical analysis. Following the lives of ten women—Dorothy Parker, Rebecca West, Hannah Arendt, Mary McCarthy, Susan Sontag, Pauline Kael, Joan Didion, Nora Ephron, Renata Adler, and Janet Malcolm—Dean explores how they positioned themselves as powerful voices in a male-dominated world. Hear Dean expertly discuss how these women took power when it was not offered to them (and how each of us is capable of doing the same).

1:30 - 2:45 **Barbara Ehrenreich on Wellness, the Certainty of Dying, and Killing Ourselves to Live Longer**

Barbara Ehrenreich interviewed by Clara Jeffery

As an author and activist, Barbara Ehrenreich has taken on the minimum wage, abortion rights, women's lives, marijuana laws, and now, in her new book, death itself. In "Natural Causes: An Epidemic of Wellness, the Certainty of Dying, and Killing Ourselves to Live Longer," Ehrenreich deconstructs the mindset of living to keep living. She examines diet culture, disease screenings, and all of the other practices humans engage in to ensure a long life—but at what expense, and with what quality and meaning? She will be interviewed by Mother Jones Editor-in-Chief Clara Jeffery.

2:30 - 3:45 **Smart Activism: History and Hope, with L.A. Kauffman and Rebecca Solnit**

L.A. Kauffman, Rebecca Solnit

How can activism be most effective today? Let's look to history. Come hear one of the Bay Area's most famous activists and writers—Rebecca Solnit—in conversation with longtime friend and movement insider L.A. Kauffman on the history and future of activism. Solnit, whose writing spans numerous books, articles, and social media, is perhaps most well-known for "Hope in the Dark," a veritable holy book for activists, as well as her more recent books on feminism and three highly creative atlases, plus many works on community, the environment, and the arts. In "Direct Action: Protest and the Reinvention of American Radicalism"—a masterwork 25 years in the making—L.A. Kauffman expertly deconstructs the origins of today's protest movements as a means of making activism more powerful today. How have past movements used disruptive tactics to catalyze change? Is there, indeed, still hope in the dark, and how do we act on it?

3:15 - 4:30 Viv Albertine, formerly of The Slits, Sits Down with Greil Marcus

Viv Albertine interviewed by Greil Marcus

Post punk rocker Viv Albertine (of the feminist cult band The Slits) played at the heart of the British counterculture before pursuing TV and film directing and a solo music career. Her newly released second memoir, "To Throw Away Unopened," begins where her last left off. She confronts questions of feminism, family, and inevitable death with the raw, intimate, vulnerable style that's her trademark. Once a reader connects with this powerful voice it's impossible to stop reading or stay untouched. Albertine comes to us from the U.K. for this conversation with legendary rock critic Greil Marcus.

3:30 - 4:45 The Empire and the Resistance of Sabaa Tahir

Sabaa Tahir

Here's one reason why young adults today are so outspoken: They've been exposed to powerful political heroes since a young age—via their fiction. Pakistani-American young adult fiction writer Sabaa Tahir's characters, no older than their teen readers, face despotism, oppression, and daily threats to their lives. In the face of the ruthless Martial Empire, our heroes risk everything to resist. These young heroes show us what's right, what's possible, and what sorts of governance need not be tolerated.

4:15 - 5:15 Power Up: How Smart Women Win in the New Economy

Magdalena Yesil, interviewed by Laura D'Andrea Tyson

Magdalena Yesil knows what it takes to get ahead. She arrived in this country as a near-penniless immigrant student. Not only did she become one of the founding board members of Salesforce, but she was among the first to note the commercial potential of the internet, founding the first Internet payment company, CyberCash. Now she's a memoirist too, having penned "Power Up: How Smart Women Win in the New Economy," weaving her own story with trenchant advice on persisting amidst setbacks, combatting gender discrimination, and generally being fearless in approaching challenges. Hear this smart, compassionate woman as she gives other smart women the tools they need to win.