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BAY AREA BOOK FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES AMBITIOUS LINEUP FOR ITS FIFTH ANNIVERSARY EVENT, MAY 4 AND 5 IN BERKELEY

One of America’s premier book festivals presents its boldest program ever, showcasing 250 acclaimed authors from the Bay Area, nation and world in 100 programs that take on some of the most pressing issues of our time

Festival also features vibrant Outdoor Fair with four stages, 200 literary exhibitors, and robust children’s and family area to “grow a reader”

Berkeley, CA, March 15, 2019 – The Bay Area Book Festival—one of the world’s premier celebrations of writers, readers and the written word—has announced its full complement of presenters, programs and activities. Nearly 500 speakers and exhibitors from across a spectrum of genres and topics will come together with tens of thousands of book enthusiasts for the fifth anniversary **Bay Area Book Festival, May 4 and 5 in downtown Berkeley, CA.** The Festival celebrates two days of interviews, panels, keynotes, performances, participatory activities, exhibits, and a lively Outdoor Fair.

Schedule and tickets are available at www.baybookfest.org. The festival expects 35,000 attendees over the two days, Saturday 10a.m.–9:30p.m. and Sunday 10a.m.–6:30p.m.

The program will satisfy fans across many interests, including literary fiction, non-fiction, speculative fiction, mysteries, memoir, poetry, food writing, children’s books, and more, with special emphases on women, Native writers, youth literature, and issues including race, incarceration, immigration, and the environment—all within an overall theme of the power of literature to create a better world. Literary sessions take place in a dozen venues throughout the downtown area and on outdoor stages.

Ticket Information

Outdoor venues, including the San Francisco Chronicle Stage, are free. Guaranteed seating in indoor programs can be accessed through Priority Tickets at \$10/session. A General Admission Wristband allows space-available access to all indoor sessions all weekend for only \$15. Easy advance purchase at www.baybookfest.org. Youth under 18 attend for free. A Friends program, at www.baybookfest.org/contribute-2/, allows attendees to receive wristbands and Priority Tickets while supporting the nonprofit festival.

About the 2019 Festival; Headliners

Since it burst onto the scene in 2015, the Festival has been widely recognized for the quality of its authors, its international scope, and its commitment to social justice. “This year more than ever, the festival presents a diverse array of authors, many of whom

are exploring some of today's most urgent, complex issues," says Festival founder and executive director **Cherilyn Parsons**. "The festival is smart fun, the kind of pleasure that comes from intellectual adventure, collective laughter, and the joy of sharing in ideas and imagination. Magic happens when people come together around books."

Headliners include Saturday night keynoters **Anand Giridharadas** ("Winners Take All") with **Robert Reich** ("The Common Good"), sponsored by **Beneficial State Bank**, and closing keynote **Albert Woodfox**, who had been wrongfully held in solitary confinement for four decades, interviewed for his memoir "Solitary" by **Shane Bauer** ("American Prison").

Other headliners are **Kwame Anthony Appiah** ("The Lies That Bind"), New York Times ethicist columnist, interviewed by Pulitzer finalist **Carlos Lozada** of The Washington Post; **Ann Beattie** ("A Wonderful Stroke of Luck") with her first novel in eight years; historian **David Blight** ("Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom"); journalist **Adam Hochschild** ("Daring to Dream of a More Just World"); Young Adult bestseller **Justina Ireland** ("Dread Nation"); the entire **Kellerman family** of bestselling mystery/crime writers (**Faye, Jesse, and Jonathan**); novelist **R.O. Kwon** ("The Incendiaries"); **Kiese Laymon** ("Heavy") on Black embodiment; venture capitalist **Roger McNamee** ("Zucked"); Top Chef **Kwame Onwuachi** ("Notes from a Young Black Chef"); **Nell Painter** ("Old for Art School"); **Eliot Pattison** ("Bones of the Earth," bestselling mystery series set in Tibet); queer Native poet **Tommy Pico** ("Junk"); film critic **David Thomson** ("Sleeping with Strangers: How the Movies Shaped Desire"); and **Jose Antonio Vargas** ("Dear America"), Pulitzer Prize winning journalist who revealed his undocumented status. **David Wallace-Wells** ("The Uninhabitable Earth") will be interviewed by a teenage Bay Area climate activist, in a nod to rising youth activism.

Additional headliners appear in the festival's new Writer to Writer series featuring two writers who are fans of each other's work; the series will be podcast. Authors include novelists **Esi Edugyan** ("Washington Black") with **Tayari Jones** ("An American Marriage"); **Joyce Carol Oates** ("Hazards of Time Travel") with **André Alexis** ("Days of Moonlight"); legendary **Ishmael Reed** with young poet **Morgan Parker** ("Magical Negro"); **Carmen Maria Machado** ("Her Body and Other Parties") with **Lacy Johnson** ("The Reckonings"); and **Linn Ullmann** ("Unquiet") with her editor and fellow novelist **Geir Gulliksen** ("Story of a Marriage").

Other special sessions include a tribute to **Lawrence Ferlinghetti** on his 100th birthday; a celebration of **The Paris Review**; a screening of **The Worlds of Ursula K. Le Guin**, followed by a discussion with the filmmaker and Le Guin colleagues; "The Browns of California" with **Miriam Pawel** and Brown family members **Kathleen Brown** and **Joseph Kelly**; the **Berkeley Symphony Orchestra** performing original compositions inspired by the work of Bay Area poets; and two **Literary Death Matches**, the first ever for young adults and for middle-graders.

Further Focus Areas

Find detailed summaries of each area on <https://www.baybookfest.org/press-room>

Women. Last year the festival launched its Women Lit program (www.womenlit.org), which presents female authors at the festival and year-round. This year's many sessions include a tribute to the late **Adrienne Rich** with her longtime editor, close

friends, colleagues, and writers influenced by her; a session on mothering and another on *not* mothering; an interview with **Cathy Guisewite**, the creator of the Cathy comic strip, by San Francisco Chronicle columnist **Leah Garchik**—and more, including several sessions with novelists on love, marriage, children, and family.

Race. In addition to the numerous writers mentioned above who look explicitly at race, the Festival presents further authors exploring slavery and capitalism, race in short fiction, transracial adoption, post-hurricane Puerto Rico, hate crimes, and the challenges of writing race and ethnicity.

Immigration. In addition to headliner Jose Antonio Vargas, “Us vs. Them: Refugees, Asylum, and the Politics of the Borderlands” presents immigration activists. Numerous immigrant writers will fill Festival stages with speculative fiction, memoir, and debuts.

Incarceration. In addition to interviewing Alfred Woodfox mentioned above, Shane Bauer will be interviewed by the San Francisco Chronicle’s **John Diaz**. A panel explores alternatives to incarceration with Woodfox and two experts.

Native identity. Thanks to a grant from the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, Native writers include **Greg Sarris**, Tommy Pico (as above), and **Rebecca Roanhorse**, among others. Graton youth appear in a **Word for Word** theatrical performance.

Nature/environment. In addition to David Wallace-Wells, the slate features nature/travel writer **Barry Lopez**; award-winning journalists on seeds and on sand; and sessions on climate literature, redwoods, bird-watching, and the national parks.

International literature. This year’s festival presents acclaimed authors flying in from Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, and the UK. Distinct sessions focus on literatures from Canada, Ireland, and Germany; festival favorites such as “Nordic Noir” return. The outdoor Wunderbar Together Pavilion celebrates German-American friendship.

Young adult literature. The Festival takes an activist stance with trailblazing writers exploring controversy in YA, “Fierce Femmes,” youth navigating war zones, and more, plus a performance by UC Berkeley’s **Poetry to the People** program.

Writing and publishing. In addition to the Paris Review celebration and session on writing race, the Festival presents a “Courage in Publishing” roundtable with industry leaders, and sessions on craft featuring faculty from the University of San Francisco and San Francisco State University writing programs; on translation in the trenches; on new publishing forms (hybrid and self-publishing); and on virtual reality storytelling.

Poetry, music, and more. An abundance of poetry spans the Ferlinghetti tribute, Berkeley Symphony performance, a queer poetics session, readings, and discussions. A conversation about Bob Dylan’s poetics includes **Timothy Hampton** and acclaimed critic **Greil Marcus**. Pop star **Moby** discusses his memoir. Sessions on the feminine divine, mindfulness, and astrology help open personal horizons for attendees.

Children’s literature. Dozens of children’s authors and illustrators include Fest favorite **Mac Barnett** (“The Impossible Crime”), **Annie Barrows** (“Ivy and Bean”), **Nidhi Chanani** (“I Will Be Fierce”), and **Innosanto Nagara** (“M is for Movement”).

Free Outdoor Fair

An eclectic, free Outdoor Fair showcases live literary presentations on four stages as well as independent booksellers and book artists, literary organizations and writing associations, educational institutions, libraries, publishers, and scores of authors from a range of genres, including popular middle grade and young adult authors. The ever-popular free book giveaway sponsored by **Half Price Books** will return. Two new special features are the **Wunderbar Together Pavilion**, an exhibition celebrating German-American Friendship through literature and culture, and a new food court in association with **La Cocina**, the acclaimed San Francisco-based food industry incubator supporting primarily women of color and women from immigrant communities.

An outdoor stage will host two performances of the internationally acclaimed **Literary Death Match**, a thrilling, humor-centric competition between established and emerging authors—the first ever LDMs for young adults and for middle-graders.

Children of all ages will flock to an outdoor stage and a storytelling circle, as well as an interactive Family Fun Zone fun for DIY book and journal making, arts & crafts with found objects, mind games, robot building, and more.

Two-time Grammy-nominee for “Best Children’s Album” **Alphabet Rockers** returns for another inspiring program of hip-hop, craft-making, and community action. The beloved Oakland-based group sparks an intergenerational conversation about the world, creating a soundtrack for social justice.

Festival Partners

The 2019 Bay Area Book Festival is made possible through generous support from the City of Berkeley and scores of sponsors, foundations, and individual donors. Major supporters include the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, Stephen M. Silberstein Foundation, Wunderbar Together and Goethe-Institut San Francisco, William Hearst III, Beneficial State Bank, Zoetic Press, Alibris, Chronicle Books, and the Bernard Osher Foundation. Among institutional session sponsors are North Berkeley Investment Partners, SACHI, Mother Jones, California Institute of Integral Studies, Center for the Art of Translation, University of San Francisco MFA in Writing Program, San Francisco State University Writing Program, and She Writes Press.

Numerous consulates and cultural institutes support the festival’s international programming, such as the San Francisco consulates of Canada, Ireland, Sweden, and Switzerland; Norway House Foundation; Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation; Culture Ireland; Finnish Literature Exchange; Norwegian Literature Abroad (NORLA), and Pro Helvetia, among others.

The Festival’s three major media sponsors are the San Francisco Chronicle, KQED, and Berkeleyside. Support also comes from KPFA, KALW, BART, Mother Jones, BOOKFORUM, and other local, regional, national and global media outlets.

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