

5TH ANNIVERSARY
BAY AREA
BOOK
FESTIVAL

MAY 4 + 5, 2019
DOWNTOWN BERKELEY
225 AUTHORS • 100 SESSIONS
FREE OUTDOOR FAIR



FOR TICKETS + INFO:
BAYBOOKFEST.ORG

No Passport Necessary: Programs Featuring International Writers

Saturday, May 4

10:00 - 11:15

Writer to Writer: Joyce Carol Oates and André Alexis (Veteran's Memorial Building, Auditorium)

André Alexis and Joyce Carol Oates

In our Writer to Writer series, two authors who are fans of each other's work come together for conversation. Winner of the prestigious Windham-Campbell prize for his body of work, Trinidad-born and Ottawa-raised André Alexis sits down with National Book Award and National Humanities Medal winner, and author of over 40 novels, Joyce Carol Oates. The pair will discuss genre-bending, world-building, and their shared obsession with storytelling. With the support of the Consulate General of Canada, San Francisco/Silicon Valley.

10:00 - 11:15

Quest: Journeys Through Generations (The Brower Center, Tamalpais Room)

Michael Levitin, Katja Petrowskaja, Sarah Stone

What if. Maybe. It could be. Where does seeking the truth slide into imagination? These three writers conjure up compelling stories of Jewish generations past and present. Michael Levitin writes of a perpetually cuckolded man who seeks wholeness by resolving the mystery of a postcard sent from the Siberian gulag. In a creative nonfiction narrative, German writer Katja Petrowskaja searches not only for her ancestors but their meaning to her and each other. Sarah Stone depicts a loving, dysfunctional half-Jewish family of performers, scientists, and activists who long to wake up the world but must first rescue each other, with a little help (and sometimes hindrance) from the occasional ghost or god. With the support of the initiative "Wunderbar Together," initiated by the German Federal Foreign Office and the Goethe Institut, and supported by the Federation of German Industries (BDI); the Goethe-Institut San Francisco; and Goethe-Institut's translation support program "Books First."

11:45 - 1:00

What Women Want (Veteran's Memorial Building, Auditorium)

Aya de Leon, Laura Lindstedt, Lisa Locascio, and Tamsen Woolf

Join a lively roundtable of four writers with very different novels that address the question of "what women want" in provocative ways. In Aya de Leon's series of feminist heist novels (latest is "Side Chick Nation"), feisty, sexy women rob the rich and protect the exploited. Finnish author Laura Lindstedt ("Oneiron") depicts seven radically different women from around the world in a bardo after death, interacting by telling their stories. In "Open Me," debut author Lisa Locascio has penned a beautifully written coming-of-age novel about a young woman discovering her sexual power. Tamsen Woolf's "Juno's Swans" tells a shattering story of friendship, love, and heartbreak between two women; it has been compared with the work of Elena Ferrante. With the support of FILI - Finnish Literature Exchange.

1:30 - 2:45

Nordic Noir (Shattuck Plaza Hotel, Shattuck Ballroom)

Kjell Ola Dahl and Ragnar Jonasson, Stefan Ahnhem, moderated by Randal Brandt

Mystery lovers, buckle up for one of the Festival's most popular sessions. Praised for combining the darkness of Nordic Noir with classic mystery writing, Icelandic author Ragnar Jonasson's books are haunting, atmospheric, and complex. Kjell Ola Dahl's latest, "The Ice Swimmer," was called "a masterclass in plotting, atmosphere and character" by the Times Crime Club. The session is moderated by the curator of the Bancroft Library's California Detective Fiction Collection. With the support of Iceland Naturally, the Icelandic Literature Center, the Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation, the Norway House Foundation, and NORLA - Norwegian Literature Abroad.

1:30 - 2:45

Writing Irish (Brower Center, Tamalpais Room)

Catherine Ryan Howard, Mike McCormack, Emilie Pine, moderated by Rosemary Graham

Three celebrated Irish writers join the Festival this year. Mike McCormack has won wide acclaim for his moving and innovative third novel, "Solar Bones," which Booklist called "a work of bold risks and luminous creativity." Catherine Ryan Howard burst onto the Irish literary scene with her propulsive thriller "Distress Signals" and has quickly gained an international reputation for her "slick and stylish" and "psychologically acute" writing. The Irish Times proclaimed Emilie Pine's searching "Notes to Self" "the kind of book you want to give to everyone," though Anne Enright cautioned against reading it in public because "it will make you cry." With the support of Culture Ireland.

3:15 - 4:30

The Heart of A Child (Brower Center, Tamalpais Room)

Rene Denfeld, Hanne Ørstavik, Duanwad Pimwana, Mui Poopoksakul

Come hear three writers who, like children themselves, will break your heart then put it back together again. Rene Denfeld is a former chief investigator at a public defender's office and foster adoptive parent; her novel "The Child Finder" depicts an investigator using child-savvy skills to find a missing girl. Duanwad Pimwana, the first female Thai novelist translated into English, has written a poignant novel in stories, "Bright," about a boy abandoned in a village. Hanne Ørstavik won international acclaim for "Love," which tells of a mother and young son who each are locked in their loneliness; the tragedy is all the more keen when rendered in such gorgeous prose. With the support of the Norway House Foundation, and NORLA - Norwegian Literature Abroad.

5:00 - 6:15

Noir At The Bar (Freight & Salvage)

Cara Black, Kjell Ola Dahl, Catherine Ryan Howard, Ragnar Jonasson, Stefan Ahnhem, moderated by Laurie R. King

A Festival favorite is back! Grab a drink and settle in for an hour of gasp-inducing, nail-biting, scintillating stories from these virtuosos of crime fiction hailing from across Scandinavia, Ireland, and the United States. With the support of Iceland Naturally, the Icelandic Literature Center, the Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation, the Norway House Foundation, and NORLA - Norwegian Literature Abroad.

Sunday, May 5

11:45 - 1:00

From Germany into the World: Brave New Literature on Connection and Belonging (Shattuck Plaza Hotel, Boiler Room)

Dorothee Elmiger, Katja Petrowskaja, Takis Würger, moderated by Sabine Kieselbach

Where is my place in the world? Where do I belong? Three distinct voices from Germany and Switzerland explore these questions in their work, all bestsellers in Europe. In "Maybe Esther," Katja Petrowskaja creates a kind of literary family tree, in luminous prose delving into legends and history. Takis Würger's "The Club" is a smoldering story of class, privilege, love, and moral ambiguity, centered around an elite club at Cambridge University. In Dorothee Elmiger's "Shift Sleepers," refugees, workers, inspectors, artists, and ghosts meet in a forest and converse about the meaning of homeland, safety, happiness, and more. Come discover these new voices in translation, one of the most exciting areas in literature today. With the support of the initiative "Wunderbar Together," initiated by the German Federal Foreign Office and the Goethe Institut, and supported by the Federation of German Industries (BDI); the Goethe-Institut San Francisco; Goethe-Institut's translation support program "Books First"; also supported by the Consulate General of Switzerland in San Francisco and Pro Helvetia.

11:45 - 1:00

Love and Family: The Primal Longing (The Brower Center, Tamalpais Room)

Lydia Fitzpatrick, Rachel Howard, Hanne Ørstavik

The longing for family—for a core sense of love and belonging—drives the novels written by these highly empathetic writers. Lydia Fitzpatrick tells a spellbinding story of the fierce bond between two young brothers determined to find a way back to each other across continents. Rachel Howard tackles not only kinship but what can destroy it; a forty-something couple become foster parents to a girl so difficult that they have to decide whether to give her up. In beautiful prose that conveys unfulfilled longing, Hanne Ørstavik portrays a mother and son unable to connect on a snowy night in Norway. Come hear how these writers create such deep emotional experiences on the page. With the support of the Norway House Foundation and NORLA - Norwegian Literature Abroad.

1:30 - 2:45

The Cost Is Everything: Marriage, Sex, and Love in Fiction (Shattuck Plaza Hotel, Boiler Room)

Geir Gulliksen, Christopher Tilghman

For the sake of love, people stretch far beyond their usual boundaries—and sometimes snap. In Geir Gulliksen's "A Story of a Marriage," a man exerts extreme empathy to understand his wife's infidelity. In "Thomas and Beal in the Midi," third in the acclaimed Mason saga, Christopher Tilghman depicts an interracial marriage in the mid-1850s where each partner gives up nearly everything (one, an estate; the other, family) to be together. With the support of the Norway House Foundation and NORLA - Norwegian Literature Abroad.

3:15 - 4:30

Literary Bravery: Sleepwalkers, Ghosts, and Radical Storytelling from Three International Luminaries (Brower Center, Goldman Theater)

Dorothee Elmiger, Laura Lindstedt, Mike McCormack

Seven women meet in a white void immediately after death.... A man, not realizing he's dead, narrates his entire life in a single, riveting sentence.... Voices mingle in a shadowy forest, talking of borders, illegal crossings, and the market value of human beings. Take a liminal literary journey with three writers, who will describe how they created such brave, rule-breaking works of the imagination. Winners of the Finlandia Prize, the Goldsmiths Prize, and the Swiss Literature Award respectively, these international voices are taking the literary world by storm. With the support of FILI - Finnish Literature Exchange; Culture Ireland; the initiative "Wunderbar Together", initiated by the German Federal Foreign Office, the Goethe Institut, and supported by the Federation of German Industries (BDI); Goethe-Institut's translation support program "Books First"; the Consulate General of Switzerland in San Francisco; and Pro Helvetia.

3:15 - 4:30

Not So Polite After All: Canadian Writers Challenge the Status Quo (Shattuck Plaza Hotel, Shattuck Ballroom)

André Alexis, Esi Edugyan, Sheila Heti

Three award-winning Canadian writers converge on one stage to recount their adventures in literary risk-taking and rule-breaking. Esi Edugyan's richly spun historical epic "Washington Black" celebrates the genius of an escaped slave (not the white man who freed him). Sheila Heti's "Motherhood" is a searingly honest rumination on whether or not to have children. André Alexis's surreal and hallucinatory "Days By Moonlight" defies all conventions. Join these authors for a look at the leaps they took and the rewards they reaped. Sponsored by the Consulate General of Canada, San Francisco/Silicon Valley.