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8TH ANNUAL BAY AREA BOOK FESTIVAL RETURNS IN-PERSON – WEEKEND OF MAY 7-8, 2022

In Partnership with *The San Francisco Chronicle*

The annual literary extravaganza returns to Downtown Berkeley. Prominent authors will appear on indoor and outdoor stages and via livestream. Literary exhibitors, gourmet food vendors, and a big children’s area will take over Civic Center Park.

Berkeley, CA, April 7, 2022: After two years of virtual programming, the 8th annual Bay Area Book Festival will bring back its literary magic and the signature community vibe that attendees have come to love. This year, the Festival will be offering 70 indoor programs and 27 programs on the outdoor stages in addition to activating more outdoor spaces in new and creative ways. Come meet some of the most perceptive, spellbinding, lauded authors and thinkers of today, writing in many genres representing a wide diversity of backgrounds. We’ll celebrate being together around literature: readers meeting writers, writers at last connecting in person with readers, and everyone taking their literary passions from the page into the public. The full schedule of virtual and in-person programs will go live Friday, April 8th on the Festival website: baybookfest.org. For Covid precautions, visit: <https://www.baybookfest.org/faq/#COVID22>.

For the programs aimed at adults, the \$15 Weekend Pass (Wristband) provides access to all indoor programs on both Saturday and Sunday. The \$12 Priority Admission Ticket guarantees a seat for a single event. Can’t make it to the Bay? Access the live virtual stream for \$5 per device from anywhere, or opt for a \$20 “Watch Later” Pass, which will grant access to re-watch programs for a month after the recordings are released. Discounts are available to students, and admission is free for ages under 18. Adult programs run from 11:00 am – 5:00 pm PT. More information on youth programs, all of which are free, can be found in the press release devoted to [youth programs](#).

Adult Program Highlights

KEYNOTE – SATURDAY MAY 7, 7:30 pm PT

Shaka Senghor, one of Oprah's Super Soul 100, is famous for telling truths like no one else can. After nineteen years of incarceration (seven in solitary), he salvaged not only his life, but his spirit. His debut "Writing My Wrongs," was a New York Times bestseller. His new book, *Letters to the Sons of Society*, explores fatherhood, redemption, and healing, addressed to the son who grew up while Senghor was imprisoned, and to the son he raised as a free man. A kickoff to set the tone for this year's fest: hope, transformation, connection.

Discovering Nature’s Wonders:

- Mega author Kim Stanley Robinson, praised by *The New Yorker* as “one of our greatest living science fiction writers,” will present his spectacular new book, *The High Sierra: A Love Story*, in a multimedia extravaganza with breathtaking photos and footage.
- In “Women in the Wild,” mountaineer Silvia Vasquez-Lavado (*The Shadow of the Mountain*), the first openly lesbian woman to complete the Seven Summits (the tallest peaks on each continent), avid climber Lauren DeLaunay Miller (*Valley of Giants: Stories from Women at the Heart of Yosemite Climbing*), and champion for inclusive hiking Diana Helmuth (*How to Suffer Outside*) will lift us up with their grit, courage, and vision of wild spaces that are open to all.

A Mother’s Day To Remember:

- As part of a comprehensive slate of Mother’s Day programming, Frances Moore Lappé (author of the three-million-copies-sold *Diet for a Small Planet*, just published in a 50th anniversary edition) will be sharing the stage with her daughter, sustainable food expert Anna Lappé, for a heartfelt conversation about lineage, legacies, and how we feed and nourish each other, body and soul.
- A multi-genre trio of outstanding writers—Chloé Cooper Jones, Jazmina Barrera, and International Booker winner Jokha Alharthi—will explore how the role of motherhood can transform us.
- In a candid and cathartic conversation presented by Collective Book Studio, MOMGUL podcast host Raquel Kelley, San Francisco school teacher and author Meredith Rose Essalat, mental health therapist Kaitlin Soulé and Josephine Wai Lin (*Whoever You Are: A Baby Book on Love & Gender*) will unravel the beautiful mess that is modern motherhood.

Native American Literature and Wisdom:

- With support from the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, the Festival will offer a wider range of Native American issues, stories and characters than ever before. The program will be kicked off by Obi Kaufmann and Greg Sarris, Chairman of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria and author of the forthcoming memoir *Becoming Story: A Journey Among Seasons, Places, Trees, and Ancestors*, with a conversation about the past, present, and future of California and indigenous practices for protecting its natural treasures.
- William Bauer (*We Are the Land: A History of Native California*) and acclaimed author and poet Deborah Miranda (with an expanded tenth anniversary edition of her bestselling classic memoir *Bad Indians*) will re-envision our preconceived notions of the Golden State with an exploration of ancestry, survival, and the indelible cultural memory of Native California. **NOTE: Please refer to the [youth program](#) press release for information on an extensive range of Native American voices and themed books.**

Today’s Top Literary Voices on the Human Experience:

- Booker Prize winner Douglas Stuart (*Young Mungo*), National Book Award finalist Susan Straight (*Mecca*), blockbuster Booker finalist Karen Joy Fowler (*The Jane Austen Book Club*, *We are All Completely Beside Ourselves*), nationally bestselling authors NoViolet Bulawayo and Carol Edgarian, and the award-winning Shruti Swamy are just some of today’s leading novelists featured at the Festival to share the creative craft secrets that

enable them to build worlds, explore themes such as migration and identity, and capture the nuances of universal truths that speak to our present moment.

- Renowned Norwegian author and philosophy professor Jan Grue, author of *I Live a Life Like Yours*, discusses “full personhood” within the context of disability; he’ll be joined by novelist, memoirist, and essayist Emily Rapp Black, whose latest book is *Sanctuary* (on the loss of her young son), with an earlier book titled *Frida Kahlo and My Left Leg*, Black’s personal examination of how the experiences, art, and disabilities of Kahlo shaped her life as an amputee.

Rekindling Your Inner Revolutionary:

- Famed cultural critic Rebecca Solnit will be in conversation with Geeta Anand, dean of the UC Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism, to illuminate her new book, *Orwell’s Roses*, showing how true justice and equity requires resources not only for the body, but for the mind and soul.
- David Talbot, best-selling historian and journalist, joins his sister, *New Yorker* staff writer Margaret Talbot, to discuss their new history *By the Light of Burning Dreams: The Triumphs and Tragedies of the Second American Revolution*, with Berkeley’s own revolutionary hell-raiser Judy Gumbo, author of *Yippie Girl: Exploits in Protest and Defeating the FBI*, giving a blueprint for making good trouble at a time when human rights, freedom of expression, and democracy are increasingly under siege.
- Speaking of homegrown revolution: Eliza Reid, Canadian author and First Lady of Iceland, will inspire readers with *The Secrets of the Sprakkar*, a fascinating account of the extraordinary women of her adopted country and how they’re transforming the world for the better.

Healing the World and Ourselves:

- At 93 years old, eco-philosopher Joanna Macy, PhD, is one of the world’s most influential and beloved teachers and activists for the environment, justice, and peace both outside and inside ourselves. In her bestselling, now updated classic *World as Lover, World as Self*, she draws on deep ecology, systems theory, and resonances between contemporary science and Buddhist thought to illuminate the concept of interconnectedness as a way to transform despair and apathy in the face of social and ecological crises.
- Three remarkable writers—Suzanne Roberts (*Animal Bodies*), Litt Woon Long (*The Way Through the Woods*) and horticulturist Marco Wilkinson (*Madder*)—remind us how close we really are to nature, and how wildness speaks a universal language of love, loss, grief, and change.
- In “Not All Is Lost: New Visions for Conservation” John W. Reid, Christina Conklin, and Jessica Hernandez bring their energy, compassion, and holistic vision to an inspiring call to action to conserve Earth’s irreplaceable wild woods, counteract climate change, and save the planet.
- From a homeless shelter for youth to the Inc. 5,000 list of fastest growing companies in America, Natasha Miller’s memoir *Relentless* traces one woman’s tenacity in breaking free from an abusive childhood to growing a multimillion-dollar corporation. Miller’s zest for music played a crucial role in her transformation. As a classical trained violinist, she’ll round out her riveting story with an equally riveting performance!
- Fentanyl and meth cut a devastating swath through our communities, claiming record numbers of lives and exacerbating our country’s worst humanitarian crises, from

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homelessness to severe mental illness. Journalist Sam Quinones, best known for his coverage of America's opioid epidemic in his National Book Critics Circle Award-winning *Dreamland*, turns his prescient gaze to the follow-up crisis he saw coming: the mass production of deeply dangerous synthetic drugs.

- Finally, on a lighter note, there's cannabis, which has transcended its outdated "wacky tobacco" reputation. In *The Joy of Cannabis*, Melanie Abrams and Larry Smith blend science and research to show us 75 ways recreational weed can enhance productivity, creativity, even memory; and Monica Lo, author of *The Weed Gummies Cookbook*, offers a delicious guide to creating your own edibles.

Humor, Provocation, and Poetry Power:

- The unfailingly hilarious and brilliant polymath Geoff Dyer presents one of his funniest and most profound books yet, *The Last Days of Roger Federer and Other Endings* in conversation with film critic David Thomson, author of the darkly comic *Disaster, Mon Amour*. They look at the ways cultural figures have approached "the end" and our collective fascination with catastrophe.
- Fiercely intelligent essayist Aminatta Forna unpacks *The Window Seat: Notes from a Life in Motion*, a haunting collection examining displacement, the meaning of home, and memory, deemed "the perfect post-pandemic read" for this uniquely displaced moment in time.
- National Book Award Finalists Hanif Abdurraqib and Douglas Kearney, called "a sonic genius" by the *New York Times* poetry editor Victoria Chang (also appearing at the Festival), will turn all preexisting notions of poetry upside down to uncover hidden meaning.

Music and Film!:

- Closing the festival on Sunday afternoon will be acclaimed Slate movie critic Dana Stevens on the world of silent-film icon/genius Buster Keaton, reminding us of the importance of play. She'll be in conversation with "national treasure" film critic David Thomson. With Keaton film clips!
- Erich Schwartzel, author of *Red Carpet: China, Hollywood, and the Global Battle for Cultural Supremacy*, talks with longtime China watcher and journalist Orville Schell of the Asia Society. Schwartzel is the *Wall Street Journal* film industry reporter. Two-time Pulitzer winner and critic Wesley Morris noted about the book, "Every couple of pages holds another jaw-dropper."
- The *San Francisco Chronicle*'s Senior A&E Editor Mariecar Mendoza and magazine editor Danyel Smith will shine light on Smith's intimate history of Black women's music as the foundational story of American pop (*Shine Bright: A Very Personal History of Black Women in Pop*).

Top International Authors Jetting In:

As in previous years, the Festival is proud to present a large contingent of some of the finest authors from around the world, including:

- International Booker Prize winner Jokha Alharthi on her latest work, *Bitter Orange Tree*, a profound exploration of social status, wealth, desire. Alharthi is the first Omani woman whose literary work has been translated into English.

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- In addition to Jan Grue (mentioned above), hailing from Norway is author Maja Lunde with her latest heart-wrenching dystopian tale, *The Last Wild Horses*, the third of her “Climate Quartet” about extinction and survival, family and hope.
- In the Nordic Noir program—always a festival favorite—authors Thomas Enger, Carin Gerhardsen, and Camilla Sten talk about their thrillers that probe the darkness of human psychology.
- Mesmerizing and often experimental new writing from Ireland includes authors Colin Barrett, Claire-Louise Bennett, and Sarah Moss.
- Finnish memoirist Mia Kankimäki traveled to Kenya, Japan, and Italy to trace the footsteps of unconventional female pioneers to discover her own inner adventurer.
- As mentioned, essayist Jazmina Berrera will join us from Mexico, with her renowned Chilean poet/novelist husband, Alejandro Zambra, also taking part in the festival.
- From further away will come Masatsugu Ono, one of the most decorated Japanese authors, with an atmospheric dystopian fever-dream of a novel, *At the Edge of the Woods*.

Mystery and Romance:

- Oakland based novelist Jasmine Guillory, regular Today Show contributor and six-time climber to the top of the bestsellers’ lists, will make you a believer in smart romance.
- Thriller and mystery fans will rejoice at the extensive slate of top authors, spanning genres, from old-fashioned historic mystery to noir to true crime, including Laurie R. King, internationally best-selling Mystery Writers of America 2022 Grand Master; powerhouse Nordic noir superstars, including Thomas Enger and Carin Gerhardsen; and famous Francophile Cara Black.
- In a conversation moderated by *San Francisco Chronicle* crime reporter Megan Cassidy, legendary cold-case investigator Paul Holes (*Unmasked: My Life Solving America’s Cold Cases*), bestselling fiction writer Tod Goldberg, author of the popular *Burn Series* and the new collection *The Low Desert: Gangster Stories*, and *Los Angeles Times* journalist and brilliant investigative mind Jessica Garrison (*The Devil’s Harvest*) will show us how scratching the surface of a crime uncovers an engrossing—and often unforgettable and moving—story about humanity.

Books and Publishing:

- In a discussion moderated by Lise Quintana of Zoetic Press, Grant Faulkner, founder of NaNoWriMo, Janis Cooke Newman of Lit Camp and the Page Street co-working space in San Francisco, and Wattpad novelist and blogger Rebecca Phelps will present the provocative idea that writing doesn’t have to be a solitary endeavor, but that in fact, connecting with other writers and paying it forward will strengthen your own writing practice and reap writerly dividends.
- Who Calls the Shots in Publishing? Attorney and author Jayne Allen (*Black Girls Must Be Magic*), publisher and founder of The Collective Book Studio Angela Engel, John Freeman, Executive Editor at the publishing house Knopf, and Traci Thomas, host of the popular @thestackspod, will debate the answer in a panel moderated by Brooke Warner, publisher of She Writes Press.

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More Information on the Bay Area Book Festival

The Bay Area Book Festival is one of the leading literary events in the U.S., and one of the most international. It's the biggest literary weekend of the year in Northern California. To date, the Festival has featured more than 1,500 notable authors, including winners of the Nobel Prize, Booker Prize, Pulitzer Prize, National Book Award, Prix Goncourt, and many other awards, in 500+ distinct literary events over the past seven years that have attracted 125,000 in-person visitors, plus dozens of authors in Women Lit events in the Bay Area or virtually. In spring 2020, the Festival pivoted all programs to virtual formats, producing more than 80 virtual author conversations over the following 18 months.

Known for a focus on social justice, strong inclusion of BIPOC authors and women's voices, some of the Festival's most recent top featured authors include Kazuo Ishiguro, Tracy K. Smith, Viet Thanh Nguyen, Nnedi Okorafor, Richard Flanagan, and Ann Patchett.

The Bay Area Book Festival is presented in partnership with the *San Francisco Chronicle*; other major media sponsors are KQED and Cityside Publishing – Berkeleyside and The Oaklandside. Key general/program sponsors include: City of Berkeley, Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, Stephen M. Silberstein Foundation, Zoetic Press, Bernard Osher Foundation, CalHumanities, National Endowment for the Humanities, Norway House, Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation, NORLA, Culture Ireland, California Arts Council, Amazon Literary Partnership, The Collective Book Studio, San Francisco State University Department of Creative Writing, Visit Berkeley, and the Downtown Berkeley Association.