



9TH ANNUAL BAY AREA BOOK FESTIVAL YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

In Partnership with *The San Francisco Chronicle*

MAY 6-7, 2023

The annual literary extravaganza returns to Downtown Berkeley. Award-winning YA, middle-grade, and picture book authors & illustrators will appear on indoor and outdoor stages. A big children's area and youth expo will take over Civic Center Park on Sunday, May 7th.

Berkeley, CA, March 24, 2023: The 9th annual Bay Area Book Festival's young adult and children's programming is certain to delight all ages with an abundant and diverse array of events and activities for families and young readers to unite around a shared celebration of books and reading. Award-winning YA, middle-grade, and picture book authors & illustrators from the Bay and around the world will appear on indoor and outdoor stages. **On Sunday, May 7th (one day only)**, Downtown Berkeley's Martin Luther King, Jr. Civic Center Park will be home to a magical youth expo and Family Fun Zone brimming with author booths, games, arts & crafts, scavenger hunts, and other interactive fun. **All youth programs are free.** The full schedule of virtual and in-person programs will go live Friday, March 24th on the Festival website: baybookfest.org.

Program Highlights – Children

Story time with Authors from Around the World [Ages 3-8]

Enjoy a cozy picture book story time centered around family relationships and self-discovery! Bay Area-based illustrator Minnie Phan presents [*The Yellow Áo Dài*](#), a heartwarming generational story celebrating Vietnamese culture and identity. From author and illustrator Meena Sriram and Sandya Prabhat, [*A Garden in My Hands*](#) honors the tradition of applying henna through a mother and daughter's shared family history of love, lineage, and lore. In writer-illustrator Liza Ferneyhough's transcontinental tale [*Nana, Nenek, and Nina*](#), San Francisco resident Nina trots the globe to visit her grandmothers, one living in England and the other in Malaysia. Finally, in the moving picture book [*Forever Cousins*](#), author Laurel Goodluck tells the

story of two Native American cousins reconnecting—at last—at a family reunion. Bring your whole family to meet the creators of these touching tales!

In the Neighborhood [Ages 3-8]

Who are the people in your neighborhood? In Rocio Bonilla's [In the Neighborhood](#), they might not be people at all! From Camila the chicken to Pepe the ogre, everyone in this neighborhood has something to complain about—until a crisis forces them to depend on one another to find solutions. Author, artist, and educator Rocio Bonilla joins us all the way from Catalonia, in Spain. She'll first read to us from *In the Neighborhood* in the Storytime Circle and then lead kids and families in Creativity (on) Center through a fun art activity related to her book.

Keepunumuk: A New Thanksgiving Story [Ages 3-7]

Alexis Bunten's [Keepunumuk: Weeâchumun's Thanksgiving Story](#) (cowritten with Danielle Greendeer and Anthony Perry) is the inclusive Thanksgiving story today's parents, teachers, and children have been waiting for. This story is narrated by a Wampanoag grandmother, who explains to her grandchildren about their people's long history with the land, their special relationship with the Three Sisters (corn, beans, and squash), and why Keepunumuk (Thanksgiving) has become known among their people as a day of mourning. Join Bunten for a reading of Keepunumuk, followed by a hands-on project that will reinforce the story's powerful themes of history and connection.

The Magic of Story [Ages 8-12]

From breathtaking magic to adrenaline-pumped action, this is a riveting session that celebrates the epic power of storytelling! Award-winning author Brian Young returns with [Heroes of the Water Monster](#), in which water monster guardians Nathan and Edward are tasked with facing an Enemy of epic proportions—as well as their own histories. In National Book Award finalist Brandon Hobson's [The Storyteller](#), Ziggy is determined to find out the truth behind his mother's disappearance by traversing the storytelling traditions and lore of his Cherokee community. Finally, acclaimed novelist Misa Suguira delves into the divine in *Momo Arashima Steals the Sword of the Wind*, where half-goddess Momo is tasked with sealing the gateway to Yomi, the underworldly domain of the earth's evil spirits.

Program Highlights – Teens

Haunts and Horrors [Ages 12+]

If screams of fear and lurking monsters are right up your (dark and spooky) alley, you're in luck—this session is all about the heebie-jeebies and goosebumps! In her debut collection [Man Made Monsters](#), winner of the prestigious Walter Award, author Andrea L. Rogers spins tales of terror, exploring how a Cherokee family navigates the frightening and the familiar across time.

Meanwhile, award-winning author Sara Farizan returns with [Dead Flip](#), which tracks a trio of best friends throughout a hair-raising mystery as they grapple with their own untold secrets. And in short story collection [Our Shadows Have Claws](#), author and editor Yamile Saied Méndez assembles a pantheon of YA writers to weave vivid monster stories drawn from Latin mythology.

YA Thrillers [Ages 14+]

This gathering of YA authors is nothing less than an *event*. Debut novelist Nick Brooks' *Promise Boys* explores system racism—and murder—at a DC prep school and has been called "breathtakingly complex and intriguing" (*Kirkus*). Brooks joins bestselling authors Melissa de la Cruz, whose *Going Dark* uses inventive storytelling techniques in a mystery about a social media influencer who's gone missing and Marie Lu, whose *Stars and Smoke* launches a new series combining espionage and pop music. Finally, Angeline Boulley, whose *Firekeeper's Daughter* won the Printz and Morris Awards and was a Reese's Book Club pick, returns with the hotly anticipated companion novel *Warrior Girl Unearthed*. This star-studded session will be hosted by young moderators from Cinnamongirl, Inc. If you're already looking ahead to summer (reading), don't miss this chance to hear from some of YA's hottest superstars and stock up on their scorching new thrillers.

Native Voices: Essayists from the 2023 Graton Student Writing Program [Ages 12+]

The Graton Writing Project is a series of writing workshops open to middle- and high-school Native students from Sonoma, California, that culminates in a published youth anthology. This year, students were asked to write on the theme of imagining a hopeful vision of the future, led by today's tribal youth. Come hear the students read powerful, sometimes surprising excerpts from their pieces and share their insights.

What's New in Native American Literature for Kids [All Ages]

The publishing industry is finally starting to catch up to the dazzling talents of Native American creators of books for children. In this session, we'll hear from six award-winning authors writing picture books, middle-grade novels, and YA fiction, in a lively discussion led by Melissa Stoner, Native American Studies librarian at UC Berkeley. Laurel Goodluck ([Forever Cousins](#)), Alexis Buntun ([Keepunumuk: Weeâchumun's Thanksgiving Story](#)), Brandon Hobson ([The Storyteller](#)), Brian Young ([Heroes of the Water Monster](#)), Angeline Boulley ([Warrior Girl Unearthed](#)), and Andrea L. Rogers ([Man Made Monsters](#)) will discuss their own journeys toward publication, the state of publishing for Native American creators, and the audiences they hope to reach.

Outdoor Fair – Fun for All Ages! (Sunday, May 7th - ONE DAY ONLY)

The festival's free Outdoor Fair is a lively, immersive experience jam-packed with fun and exploration for festival goers of all ages and interests. The heart of Northern California's largest weekend literary event beckons book lovers to meet favorite authors spanning myriad genres, discover new reads, catch live performances on four outdoor stages, relax and unwind in our outdoor reading lounge, and enjoy delectably fresh food sourced locally and priced reasonably to satisfy the foodie in all of us!

Nearly **150 exhibitors** including acclaimed and emerging authors – including a plethora of authors of books for children, middle grade, teens, and young adults – from all over the region, nation, and the world will be joined by an eclectic array of independent booksellers, local publishers, writing groups and programs, literary clubs and organizations, book artists, libraries, reading resources, and more.

Three outdoor stages geared largely toward young readers add to the excitement: **Young Readers Stage** for middle grade and teens; **Word Power Stage** for all ages with special programming for teens and young adults; and **Story Time Circle** for youngsters. In addition, the **Creativity (on) Center Tent will be the hub for hands-on activities**, led by picture book creators and inspired by the books they write. Activities will include visual art projects, science experiments, historical investigations, and more.

Children and families can create their own books, create bookmarks with natural materials, make original art with found objects, join in a scavenger hunt, participate in story readings, pick up free children's books, and many more hands-on activities in our robust **Family Fun Zone** – a great place for families to learn and have fun TOGETHER. Don't miss the **Lawrence Hall of Science** "color chemistry" activity in Creativity (on Center) as part of a Sunday morning session with cartoonist Jon Chad, or stop by their booth anytime for fun STEM-focused activities. Keep your eyes open for that elusive **Waldo**—he'll be doing what he does best (hiding) at the Berkeley Public Library on Saturday and in Martin Luther King, Jr. Civic Center Park on Sunday.

Also, attendees can visit **The Collective Book Studio** booth to check out the Oakland-based publisher's latest and greatest books, buy discounted books from their warehouse sale, and meet some of their local-to-the-bay area authors. They'll have Bay Area authors in-booth for meet and greets, book signings, activities for kids, and a very special story time with the Drag Queen Story Hour!

At its booth, the **African Library Project** will help children make bookmarks to include in boxes of books it sends to schools in partner countries in Anglophone Africa. They will also be

accepting gently used children's books to send to South Africa, Kenya, and Lesotho. Kids who visit the booth can help pack the boxes!

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, Newbery and Caldecott Medal winners, 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 feminist-first 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, the Festival's most recent top featured children's and youth authors include Ellen Oh, Kelly Starling Lyons, Misa Sugiura, Rachel Sarah, Meg Medina, Shawn Harris, Annie Barrows, and Innosanto Nagara.

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, Saul Zaentz Company, Visit Berkeley, Norway House Foundation, Society for Art & Cultural Heritage of India, University of San Francisco MFA in Writing Program, San Jose State University Department of English and Comparative Literature, Mystery Writers of America, , HarperOne, Center for the Art of Translation, She Writes Press, The Collective Book Studio, California College of the Arts, and the Downtown Berkeley Association.

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