



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **BAY AREA BOOK FESTIVAL WELCOMES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

*Visionary Publisher and Cultural Leader to Expand Festival's Legacy of Amplifying Essential Conversations, Inclusive Perspectives*

*Berkeley, CA* – The Bay Area Book Festival (BABF) is excited to announce the appointment of J. K. Fowler as its new Executive Director. Fowler, who previously served as the Founder and Executive Director of Nomadic Press, brings to his new role over a decade of experience in the literary and arts nonprofit sector and community organizing as well as large-scale event production. His leadership will enhance BABF's mission of celebrating literature and fostering community engagement.

"Hand in hand with our wonderful staff, board, and community of supporters, I am excited and honored to help usher in the Bay Area Book Festival's next chapter," Fowler said. "As a fervent believer in the democratic principles of free speech and rigorous, respectful debate, I look forward to utilizing our platform to further develop BABF's tradition of uplifting and celebrating literature as a powerful tool to address some of the most pressing and challenging issues that face us today."

Fowler's extensive background includes a strong commitment to representation and social justice in the literary world, which aligns closely with BABF's vision. Brooke Warner, BABF's Board Chairperson, said, "We feel like we've found a partner and a believer in J. K. His understanding of our goals and mission, coupled with his connections and ties to the community, make him a uniquely good fit for this role. We feel strong going into our eleventh year, and excited to see what J. K. brings to the table as we continue to evolve as an organization." According to Aya de León, BABF board member, Interim Program Director for the 2024 festival, and Berkeley's current Poet Laureate, "I'm so excited for J. K. to be coming on board. People sometimes mistakenly associate the festival with Berkeley, but it's for the entire Bay Area and particularly the East Bay. J. K. has such a strong track record of lifting up Oakland voices. I'm excited for us to break down the myth and expand our reach, both in perception and fact."

Fowler succeeds Cherilyn Parsons, who founded BABF in 2015 and shepherded the festival to become one of the premier literary events in the US and the largest annual literary weekend in Northern California. To date, the Festival has featured more than 1,600 notable authors, including winners of the Nobel Prize, Booker Prize, Pulitzer Prize, National Book Award, Prix Goncourt, Newbery and Caldecott Medal winners, as well as numerous emerging authors in more than 800 literary events that have attracted over 125,000 visitors to Berkeley. In his new role, Fowler aims to build on this legacy, introducing innovative programming and expanding outreach to a broader audience.

**(more)**

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“In the coming months, I look forward to reconnecting with our past supporters and building a strong base of new supporters composed of community members, for- and non-profit organizations, and foundations. We will intentionally expand our board and seek out new partnerships to strengthen community ties, deepen relationships, and fortify platforms for a variety of voices to be heard. Deeper organizational infrastructure, expansive community outreach, and more programming—2025 is going to be a year to remember.”

The Bay Area Book Festival looks forward to celebrating its 11th anniversary May 31–June 1, 2025. For festival information, please visit: [www.baybookfest.org](http://www.baybookfest.org).

For press inquiries, please contact [press@baybookfest.org](mailto:press@baybookfest.org).

Link to publicity photo for J.K. Fowler can be found [here](#):

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