CITYLIT STAGE

Dates
September 23, 24 & 25, 2016
Friday & Saturday, 11am-7pm; Sunday, 11am-7pm

Location
Baltimore’s Inner Harbor, PROMENADE NEAR MD SCIENCE CENTER

Description
The CityLit Stage features authors from around the region reading from new books or participating in captivating panel discussions. The stage is presented by CityLit Project, Baltimore’s nonprofit literary arts organization, celebrating twelve years serving readers and writers across Maryland.

Schedule
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

Fri 12:00pm – 2:00pm Free Friday Feedback

Writers! Bring 2-3 short poems or 4-5 pages of prose (fiction or nonfiction) and receive on-the-spot feedback and suggestions on what to do next. Published authors and publishing professionals on hand will include:

Evan Balkan (nonfiction, novel) is the author of six books of nonfiction, including The Wrath of God: Lope de Aguirre, Revolutionary of the Americas. He teaches screenwriting and creative writing at the Community College of Baltimore County, where he serves as the English Department Coordinator. He holds degrees from Towson, George Mason, and Johns Hopkins Universities and has served as a guest
Lecturer at many institutions, including Bryn Mawr, Johns Hopkins, and Yale universities.

**Lalita Noronha (poetry, fiction)** is a widely published poet and writer. She is the author of an award winning short story collection, *Where Monsoons Cry*, and a chapbook of poetry, *Her Line Phyllo-thin*. She has won the Maryland Literary Short Story Award, a Maryland Individual Artist Award, and Maryland Writers Association Awards in fiction, creative nonfiction, and poetry.

**Amanda Fiore (fiction, nonfiction, poetry)** received her MFA in Creative Writing from San Diego State University in 2012. Her fiction and poetry have appeared in print and online in literary journals including *The Sentinel Quarterly, Prick of the Spindle, Unlikely2.0, The Haight Ashbury Literary Journal*, and *Guanxi*. Amanda currently teaches academic writing at the University of Maryland and is a resident at Creative Alliance in Baltimore.

**Steven Leyva (poetry)** is a CityLit Project board member and the co-creator of the poetry reading series, Kick Assonance, which was named a “critic’s pick” by Time Out New York in 2011. His poems have appeared in *Welter, The Light Ekphrastic*, and *The Cobalt Review*, and his first collection, *Low Parish*, was published earlier this year. His poem “Rare in the East” won the 2012 Cobalt Review Poetry Prize. He holds a MFA from the University of Baltimore, where he teaches in the undergraduate writing program.

*More critique staff TBD.*

**Fri 5:00pm – 7:00pm CityLit Salon**

**5:00pm – 6:00pm Larry Noto with Kevin Cowherd**

Maryland’s own **Larry Noto** tells stories from his performances in comedy clubs in New York and Las Vegas, opening for some of the biggest names in the business – Brad Garrett, Lewis Black, Richard Lewis, Brian Regan, Bob Saget, Paul Resier and many more. He’s recently authored the new book “The Opening Act: Comedy, Life and the Desperate Pursuit of Happiness” co-written with *New York Times* best-selling author and former *Baltimore Sun* features writer **Kevin Cowherd**, who joins him in conversation and Q&A.

**6:00pm – 7:00pm Smile, Hon, You’re In Baltimore**

Join a rambunctious cast of writers from the latest edition of *Smile, Hon, You’re In Baltimore*. Impresario and ringmaster **William P. Tandy** leads the way with contributing writers from the zine recently dubbed a “Best of Baltimore” by *Baltimore* magazine.

Musical guests: Emmy nominated singer/songwriter **ellen cherry** and **Cliff Murphy** (ethnomusicologist, folklorist, and author of *Yankee Twang: Country and Western Music in New England*).

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24**
Sat 11:30am – 12:30pm MSAC Individual Artist Award Winners: Fiction

Presented by the Maryland State Arts Council, these winners of the annual Individual Artist Awards showcase some of the smartest, sharpest fiction being created in the state today. **Hosted by Christine Stewart**, program director for literary arts with the Maryland State Arts Council. Readers include: **Christopher Doyle, Justin Sirois, Susan Muaddi-Darraj, Nate Brown, Elisabeth Dahl, Deborah Ager, Barrett Warner, Geoff Becker, Anne Dooley, and Luke Tennis**.

Sat 1:00pm – 2:00pm Writers in Baltimore Schools: Student Response to Claudia Rankine’s *CITIZEN*.

*CITIZEN: An American Lyric*, by Claudia Rankine has been called “an especially vital book for this moment in time” (*New Yorker*). Rankine headlined the CityLit Festival this past April to commemorate the anniversary of the Uprising in 2015, with a reading and conversation with the community at the Pennsylvania Branch of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, the epicenter of the protests. The conversation continues with readings by young writers from **Writers in Baltimore Schools** who read and wrote responses to *CITIZEN* in WBS’ Summer Writers’ Studio. **Hosted by Drew Matthews**, WBS participant and mentor.

Sat 2:00pm – 3:00pm Open Circle Read & Response

Open Circle is a new reading series created by **host Amanda Fiore** (writer-in-residence, Creative Alliance) that gathers the too-often segmented community spheres – academic, grassroots, performing and visual arts, and literary arts – and create one “open circle.” The reading will feature different combinations of readers and artistic responses from **Amanda Fiore** (fiction), Morgan State University adjunct professor **Nia Johnson** (fiction), Soprano **Anaïs Naharro-Murphy**, jazz guitarist **Ethan Reinking**, poet **Christine Stewart**, and CityLit Founder **Gregg Wilhelm** (fiction).

Sat 3:30pm – 4:30pm Sirius Business: Afro-Speculative Literature


Sat 4:30pm – 5:30pm New Releases
The first of two sessions celebrating the recent books of local literati on both Saturday and Sunday, this hour features Matt Norman (We’re All Damaged), James Magruder (Love Slaves of Helen Hadley Hall), and Ron Tanner (Missile Paradise). From the love lives of Yale graduate students narrated by a ghost, Americans trying to realize their dream in paradise, and an unemployed divorced man looking for a second chance in life in Omaha, this hour of new releases will have you rushing for the book table to buy!

Sat 5:30pm – 7:00pm Charles Bock and Leslie Jamison

Celebrated writers and spouses Leslie Jamison (The Empathy Exams, 2012 Graywolf Press Nonfiction Prize) and Charles Bock (Alice & Oliver, Beautiful Children, 2009 Sue Kaufman Prize for First Fiction) and are featured in this session hosted by CityPaper’s Karen Houppert. Jamison’s collection of essays ask essential questions about our basic understanding of others: How should we care about one another? How can we feel another’s pain, especially when pain can be assumed, distorted, or performed? Is empathy a tool by which to test or even grade each other? Bock’s novel, based on the author’s experience, creates an unflinching yet deeply humane portrait of a young family’s journey through a medical crisis, laying bare a couple’s love and fears as they fight for everything that’s important to them.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

Sun 12:00pm – 1:00pm Autobiography through Performance and Poetry

Kenneth Morrison’s Blood, Bricks, and Dandelions is a collection of Kenneth’s journals, poems and thoughts from the age of 13 to 18, an authentic look in the teenage life of the many young "Kenneths" struggling to grow up young, black and gay in America. Ron Kipling Williams’ Black Freak Mosh Heaven is a poetic autobiography about a black youth who rocks and rolls to his own beat and is forced to battle racism, stereotypes and ignorance. Morrison (2016 Baltimore Grand Slam Champion, 2016 Washington DC Pride Grand Slam Champion, and president and founder of Dew More Baltimore), and Williams (a recent graduate of the MFA program in Creative Writing & Publishing Arts from the University of Baltimore and an MSAC Individual Artist Award Winner) will perform from their works and join in conversation about finding authenticity through the intersection of performance and poetry.

Sun 1:00pm – 2:00pm Ink Press Productions Presents

Ink Press Productions presents a reading featuring authors from the Ink Press catalog: Megan McShea, Stephanie Barber, Joseph Young, and Amanda McCormick. Hosted by Barrett Warner. Ink Press Productions is a collaborative project devoted to the community of art. They believe there are an infinite number of ways to be a book and strive to open this dialogue with as many people as possible through publishing handmade chapbooks and a journal to highlight new and emerging artists, hosting a writing group, and organizing readings and events to inspire people to use their hands and create together.
Sun 2:00pm – 3:00pm Lit & Art

Started in 2007, the Lit & Art Reading Series takes place five times a year at the Watermark Gallery, 100 South Charles Street on the second floor of the Bank of America building across from Baltimore’s Inner Harbor. The program features artists who represent various literary genres combined with visual art. Each event includes literary readings, live music, original art, along with wine and refreshments. Learn more at www.facebook.com/groups/LitAndArt. Featured at the Baltimore Book Festival’s CityLit Stage Edition of Lit & Art: Barbara DeCesare, Eric D. Goodman, Aaron Henkin, Nitin Jagdish, Jennifer Miller, Manzar Rassouli, Charles Rammelkamp, and Sally Whitney.

Sun 3:00pm – 3:30pm Lalita Noronha: Poetry as Collage

A scientist, poet, and writer, Lalita Noronha reads and discusses her new work Mustard Seed: A Collage of Science and Art Poetry. Hosted by CityLit Executive Director Carla Du Pree.

Sun 3:30pm – 4:00pm Dr. Bob Hieronimus: The Secret Life of Lady Liberty

Robert Hieronimus, Ph.D. is an internationally known historian, visual artist, and radio host and has appeared on History, Discovery, BBC, and National Geographic. In his book, The Secret Life of Lady Liberty: Goddess in the New World, Hieronimus explores the goddess origins of the Statue of Liberty and her connections with the founding and the future of America, examining Lady Liberty’s ties to Native American spiritual traditions, the Earth Mother, Roman goddesses, Black Madonnas, and Mary Magdalene and revealing the sharp contrast between depicting “liberty” as a female and the reality of women and other suppressed classes even today. Hosted by CityLit Executive Director Carla Du Pree.

Sun 4:00pm – 4:30pm Gary Vikan: Sacred and Stolen

Gary Vikan’s Sacred and Stolen: Confessions of a Museum Director, is a memoir of an art museum director with the courage to reveal what goes on behind the scenes and lay bare the messy part of museums: looted antiquities, crooked dealers, deluded collectors, duplicitous public officials, fakes, inside thefts, bribery, and failed exhibitions. These back stories, at once shocking and comical, reveal a man with a taste for adventure, an eagerness to fan the flames of excitement, and comfort with the chaos that often ensued. Hosted by CityLit Executive Director Carla Du Pree.

Sun 4:30pm – 5:30pm: More New Releases

The second of two sessions celebrating the recent publications of local literati on both Saturday and Sunday. Though a battle between the sexes was not intended, this hour features Susan Coll (The Stager), Courtney Sender (The Kenyon Review, Glimmer Train, American Short Fiction), and Leslie Pietrzyk (This Angel on My Chest, Pitt Drue Heinz Lit Prize). Not to be outdone by the male writers in session one, this hour promises to be just as engaging, with linked stories each about a different young woman whose husband dies suddenly and unexpectedly, a novel that is a dark comedy of real estate and rabbits, and stories that range from a fictional
second uprising in Baltimore, one year after the first, to a tale of a girl with a hundred-pound heart.

Sun 5:30pm – 7:00pm Nonfiction Presented by the New Mercury Series

The festival edition of The New Mercury, the area’s only nonfiction reading series hosted by series curators Deborah Rudacille and John Barry, includes:

Elizabeth Evitts Dickinson’s articles, essays, and short stories have appeared in The New York Times, TriQuarterly, PANK, Post Road, The Little Patuxent Review and The Southern Review, among many others. She is the recipient of an Individual Artist Award from the Maryland State Arts Council and grants from the Maryland Humanities Council and the Sustainable Arts Foundation. She’s received fellowships from The Vermont Studio Center and The Virginia Center for the Creative Arts and was a finalist for this year’s Baker Artist Awards. She won the Hrushka Memorial Nonfiction Prize in 2015 for her essay writing. Dickinson served as editor in chief of Urbanite magazine from 2004-2007.

Rashod Ollison is an award-winning music and culture critic and native of Little Rock, Arkansas. He has been a staff pop music and culture critic at The Dallas Morning News, The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Journal News in Westchester, NY, The Baltimore Sun, and The Virginian-Pilot. He is a 2000 graduate of The University of Arkansas, where he earned a BA in creative writing and journalism with a minor in African American studies. Ollison’s literary debut, Soul Serenade: Rhythm, Blues & Coming of Age Through Vinyl, is a memoir published in Jan. 2016 by Beacon Press.

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