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CityLit Project would also like to thank - with deepest gratitude - our Festival volunteers, UB’s Marion Winik, Dean Chris Spence, Mike Zemarel, Monica Queen, Chris Hart, and Mark Wadley; with a very special thank you to friend of CityLit Project Anne West and to Insight180 Brand Consulting & Design’s Wendy Baird and Bethany Howell, and the all too fabulous CityLit Gladiators Elizabeth (Liz) Dunlap and Sylvia Fox.

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Founded in 2004, CityLit Project is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization that nurtures the culture of literature in Baltimore, around the region, and across Maryland. CityLit creates enthusiasm for literary arts, connects a community of avid readers and writers, and opens opportunities for diverse audiences to embrace the literary arts.

www.citylitproject.org

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10:00AM - 12:00PM
One-on-One 30 Minute Critique Sessions with editors: Karen Houppert (101), Bret McLeod (102), Tafsha Edwards (103), Lauren Labrocco (103), and Brian Price (129)
Fiction, Memoir, Creative Nonfiction, Poetry, Screenplay.
10:30AM - 11:30AM - BC135
History’s Mysteries: Shaping the Past into a Literary Now
How do writers use history to create contemporary literature? What research is required? How do they transform the past into stories, poems, novels and essays for today? What fidelity do they show to the historical record? Eugenia Kim, Shelley Puhak, Richard Sloatkin, and Michael Downes respond to these questions and more, including history’s ongoing role as a compelling and necessary subject for writers.
11:00AM - 12:00PM - BC205
Truth & Trauma: How We Write Authentic Stories of Pain
Four writers across genres, Kristanna Gaddly, Elizabeth Evitts Dickinson, Cija Jefferson, Wallace Lane and Neda Sanami, write global and local stories of war, loss, death, illness, abuse, crime, and discuss researching and writing trauma, as well as the effect working with difficult subjects can have on a writer.
11:00AM - 12:00PM - BC207
Possible & Impossible Futures
Jason Harris, Sarah Pinanker, Erin Roberts, and K.M. Szpara explore classic, recent, and upcoming near-future fictions and discuss the responsibilities and challenges of looking forward: utopias, dystopias, apocalypses, and hope.
11:00AM - 12:30PM - BC135
Your Classics Aren’t My Classics: Decolonizing the Literary Canon for Asian Americans
What do Asian-Americans consider classics? How is it that the lack of media representation of Asians and Asian Americans has made it so that only white writers are considered as the classics? Del Rosario, Chris Jesu Lee, Lekita Rivas, Marissa Rodriguez, Eliza Romero and Sharon Tran deconstruct the concept of a must-read as it applies to Asian Americans.
11:00AM - 12:00PM - BC123
You Can’t Live Off Air: Money’s in the Room
An open dialogue with funders, representing from the National Endowment for the Arts, Maryland State Arts Council, Robert W. Deutsch Foundation, Maryland Citizens for the Arts, Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance, and Creative Capital and grantee Ashlie Kauffman discuss the promise of receiving a grant.
12:00PM - 1:00PM - BC135
Identity in Artistry: Exploring the Queer Perspective
Writers Jamie Grace Alexander, Mark King, and Clarence Oliver integrate their identities in a way that provides insight into their lived experiences as members of the LGBTQA+ community. They have used their artistic medium to share their experiences and explore sexual identity, creating works that showcase an unrepresented perspective.
12:00PM - 2:00PM - BC107
No One Leaves Home Unless He is the Mouth of a Shark: The Immigrant’s Journey
Wiiarคน Shire’s poem “No one leaves home” shares the truths of many immigrants, migrants, and refugees in the United States. Why do they leave? Why can’t they return? Ana Portoy Brimmer, Daria-Anne Martinieu, Girum Sile Mulat, Senait Mulugueta, Lark Omura and Tatiana Figueroa Ramirez, poets originating from different parts of the world, including Ethiopia, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and Trinidad & Tobago, share their work and a piece of their story as someone “not from here,” and how their home still speaks in their poetry.
12:00PM - 2:00PM - BC135
Breaking Down Barriers: Stories that Challenge Mass Incarceration
Dr. Tara Betts, Tony Saari, and Chris Womack share excerpts from their books and discuss the flaws and biases in mass incarceration. These writers discuss how prisons cripple communities of color and poor people, extend the power of policing, and create economic dependence on the corporatized prisons. Their books, and other writings expose the inefficacy of the prison system, challenge the perspectives people have about mass incarceration and offer a bit of hope.
12:30PM - 1:30PM - BC205
Novelists at Work: How to Structure a Novel & Walk Away Like a Boss
Featuring Jun Yang, Susan Muddadi Darraj, Katia Ulysse, Lauren Francis Sharma and Yezzi Yezzi, this panel will provide attendees with useful observations, tips and real-life challenges of creating flow on the page, making sense of the characters’ lives they create and the whole mess of narrative, all told through the eyes and experiences of authors committed to the craft of fiction.
2:00PM - 3:30PM - BC135
What Are We: Speck, Good Hair, Cinnamon & Pearl
When Words Make You Real
The anthology The Being of America, Being Mixed Race in the 21st Century takes on “race matters” and considers them through the first-hand accounts of mixed-race people in the United States, including Chelsea Lemon Fetzer, Jackson Bliss, Francis Frost, Naomi Raquel Enright, and Herbert Harris, who unite with contributing editor Tara Betts in a reading and frank discussion “with unparalleled candor and unmatched honesty.”
2:00PM - 3:30PM - BC143
Poet This!
Based on Lucille Clifton’s enduring phrase “Why don’t you poet that.” Aliash Hopper directs a panel of poets including Thea Brown, Sarah Browning, Tafsha Edwards, Tatiana Figueroa Ramirez, David Yezzi, Wimshiel X (Little Fatou), and Enoch Pratt Free Library / Little Patuxent Review’s poetry contest winner Janyll Harris, all at varying stages in their careers as poets.
3:00PM - 4:00PM - BC207
When It All Falls Down: Real Talk About Journalism in the Age of Trump
What it takes to be a journalist right now. Baltimore Beat founders Lisa Snowden-McCray and Brandon Soderberg talk about what it means to be a journalist in 2019. Learn about journalism basics, pitching, storytelling with compassion, using social media, and more.
3:00PM - 4:00PM - BC205
It Takes a Village: Supporting the Local Literary Scene
Gwen Van Velsor of Yellow Arrow Publishing, Maria Goodson of Writers & Words and Victoria Kennedy of Zora’s Den emphasize how Baltimore’s thriving writing and literary community depends on its inclusivity. Small presses, reading series, and writing community builders work together to weave a web of support for local writers with collaboration serving the ends of these presses. The panel takes an in-depth look at the Baltimore independent literary scene and how to boost these efforts.
3:30PM - 5:00PM - BC143
We Need Diverse Books: Children’s & Young Adult Literature
Seasoned and debut authors discuss the importance of new voices and share information about the publishing industry as they know it. Seasoned and debut authors discuss the importance of new voices and share information about the publishing industry as they know it. Victoria Kennedy, who directs a panel of poets including Thea Brown, Sarah Browning, Tafsha Edwards, Tatiana Figueroa Ramirez, David Yezzi, Wimshiel X (Little Fatou), and Enoch Pratt Free Library / Little Patuxent Review’s poetry contest winner Janyll Harris, all at varying stages in their careers as poets.
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