BALTIMORE’S 18TH ANNUAL CITYLIT PROJECT IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ENOCH PRATT FREE LIBRARY PRESENTS:

WORDS ON THE WINDS OF CHANGE
A MONTH-LONG VIRTUAL CELEBRATION FOR READERS AND WRITERS WITH A DAYLONG PROGRAM ON SATURDAY, MARCH 20, 2021

Who’s Missing? & Who’s Here Now? Children’s and Young Adult Literature
Three authors shed light on the many stories framed either around a historical context or referencing omission from the literary landscape. Join RANDI PINK (Angel in Greenwood), SAADIA FARUQI, LAURA SHOVAN (authors of A Place at the Table) in a discussion about writing as activism; the importance of representation; why it’s important to tell this story; and what other stories we need to see in the world. LaTrisha Milton, Young Adult Services Coordinator for the Enoch Pratt Free Library will moderate.

The Writer’s Room: Poet to Poet with Nikky Finney

The ‘State’ of Baltimore: Where We Stand
Panelists discuss critical issues in Baltimore with the intention of shedding light, along with a broader view of justice, equality, art, and dignity in today’s Baltimore. Expect a lively discussion with co-editor JOSHUA DAVIS (Baltimore Revisited, Stories of Inequality and Resistance in a U.S. City), reporter BRANDON SODERBERG (I Got A Monster: The Rise and Fall of America’s Most Corrupt Police Squad – co-written with Baynard Woods), author and cultural worker ALANAH NICHOLE DAVIS, with moderator NNEKA N’NAMDI, whose lived experience gave birth to Fight Blight Bmore, a social and environmental justice tool for residents to identify, report and track blight.

The Village
CityLit Project recognizes these organizations as part of its Village, local, regional and state-wide organizations that serve readers and writers. CityLit supports these organizations by displaying their information at signature events and on our website. We realize many individuals and organizations...bookstores, entrepreneurs, reading series, and more — do their level best to provide services, information, and opportunities to grow and enhance the lives of poets and writers. This is our way of supporting them and amplifying their work. https://www.citylitproject.org/about-us/the-village/

The CityLit Festival is supported by these partners and sponsors:

The Writer’s Room’
After the public program, which will be held as a Zoom Webinar, those attending who wish to engage further with the featured authors about craft should register for The Writer’s Room through Eventbrite. The Writer’s Room is a new Festival highlight designed to engage festival attendees, who are also writers, in an informal conversation with the featured guest authors. Participants are encouraged to come prepared with questions. They will receive a link to attend an informal Zoom Meeting through Eventbrite where featured authors will join attendees virtually face to face. Featured guest artists are open to discussing different aspects of writing including questions about craft, research, writing process, challenges, and questions about publication.

The Village Meeting link for The Writer’s Room will also be shared in the chat during the main talk.

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#citylitfest2021  |  @citylitproject  |  @citylitproject  |  CityLitProject
FEATURED SESSIONS

TUESDAY, MARCH 2
Tales of a Different World
In an exhilarating tale of colliding worlds, EMILY ST. JOHN’s The Glass Hotel paints a breathtaking portrait of greed and guilt, love and delusion, and the infinite ways we search for meaning in our lives. In JENNY OFFILL’s funny and urgent Weather, the foreboding sense of doom commands a family and presents a nation in crisis, and how we weather it. Both authors will be in a conversation moderated by Marin Winik, author of The Big Book of the Dead.
8:00 - 8:30 pm: Zoom Meeting: The Writer’s Room*

TUESDAY, MARCH 9
Terrance Hayes: A Poet of These Times – How We Breathe
7:00 - 8:00 pm: Zoom Meeting: The Writer’s Room*

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17
“A Little Romance: Reading Chekhov to Understand Love”
A Master Class with Lincoln in the Bard’s GEORGE SAUNDERS. In this class, we’ll first read, in advance, Chekhov’s masterpiece, “The Lady with the Pet Dog.” Then, in a virtual format, Booker-Prize winning author Saunders will offer us his take on the story, as he has done since 1997 in his class on the Russian short story in translation, offered to his MFA students – some of the best young writers in America. At the end, we’ll have a chance to dive even deeper into this story, through an open Q&A session. Paying attendees will receive a Zoom invitation days before the event goes live. Saunders rarely teaches a Master Class outside of the University but he joins us for this special Reimagined event.
7:30 - 8:30 pm ($10. Pay what you can. Donate for more events like this.)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, MARCH 31 & APRIL 7
The Joy of Grief: Finding Life in Death
A Grief Writing Workshop with Gayle Danley & Kimberley Lynne. JOIN novelists BRANDON HOBSON, National Book Award Finalist (Where the Dead Sit Talking) and KELLI JO FORD, debut novel-in-stories Crooked Hallelujah in a conversation about their accomplished works, and learn the stripe of stricken families and bonds that form between generations, mother and daughter, and the legacy of family. Brandon’s novel The Removed is steeped in Cherokee myth and history, a story of “calcified grief”, a fractured family reckoning with the tragedy of a son’s death from police violence. Kelli Jo’s debut novel-in-stories where a young Cherokee woman tries to break a generational cycle of broken families while finding strength in an enduring bond with her mother. The session title is based on an old Cherokee saying about the battle between two wolves that exists inside each of us. A grandson asks his grandfather which wolf wins. The elder gently replies, “The one you feed.” Tyrese Coleman, author of How We Sit will moderate.
10:00AM - 12:00PM by ZOOM

FESTIVAL FINALE: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31
Somewhere in the Reflection: A Visual Presentation curated by Nia June, APoetNamedNate & Kirby Griffin
In this session, film and poetry collide to explore the meaning of identity by holding a mirror to the maddening yet liberating process of self-discovery. Experience some of Baltimore’s most captivating poets as they share their stories about race, gender, childhood, love, and freedom. Curated by Baltimore creatives poets NIA JUNE, APOETNAMEDNATE and photographer KIRBY GRIFFIN. Featuring the works of Black Chakra, Sharayna Christmas, Gysi Mitchell & more!
7:30 - 8:00 pm

SATURDAY, MARCH 20: DAY-LONG PROGRAM
10:00 am – 5:30 pm EST through Zoom Webinar
(A singular link to be utilized the entire day except for The Writer’s Room with Nikky Finney. Visit Current Events at citylitproject.org.)

10:00AM - 12:00PM by ZOOM
One-on-One 30 Minute Critique Sessions with Rosalia Scalco, Karen Houppert, Bret McCabe, Rebekah Kirkman, Laura Ballou, and Chelsea Fetzer ($10)
https://clf2021-edit-critique.eventbrite.com

FICTION. Memoir. Creative Nonfiction. Poetry. Short Story
Guidelines: Five pages of poetry OR prose Double-spaced 12 pt. font 1 inch margin Numbered pages Name must be included
10:00AM - 11:00AM
FEATURED OPENING EVENT
The Wolf You Feed
Join novelists BRANDON HOBSON, National Book Award Finalist (Where the Dead Sit Talking) and KELLI JO FORD, debut novel-in-stories Crooked Hallelujah in a conversation about their accomplished works, and learn the stripe of stricken families and bonds that form between generations, mother and daughter, and the legacy of family. Brandon’s novel The Removed is steeped in Cherokee myth and history, a story of “calcified grief”, a fractured family reckoning with the tragedy of a son’s death from police violence. Kelli Jo’s debut novel-in-stories where a young Cherokee woman tries to break a generational cycle of broken families while finding strength in an enduring bond with her mother. The session title is based on an old Cherokee saying about the battle between two wolves that exists inside each of us. A grandson asks his grandfather which wolf wins. The elder gently replies, “The one you feed.” Tyrese Coleman, author of How We Sit will moderate.
11:00AM - 12:30PM
ReThinking How We Do Story: Real Talk About Craft and the Changing/Unchanging Landscape of Writing & Publishing
A 90-minute craft intensive about the changing dynamics of craft as we’ve been taught - from structure to plot to point of view. Learn from authors who dare you to revisit the elements of fiction; to unlearn and relearn how to reimagine the story you mean to tell. What does it mean to boldly examine your own work which may exist outside of the cultural norms, and who does that norm serve anyway? The year 2020 may have further exposed racial inequities and upended our sense of normalcy but it also cast a closer look at who gets to tell and own the story. Tune in to a conversation that will awaken and challenge you. This session includes the changing/unchanging landscape of the publishing industry, what it means for people not readily represented in the profession, and how to prepare a manuscript so it gets seen. Panels include JENNIFER BAKER (Everyday People: The Color of Life), MATTHEW SALESSES (Craft in the Real World), FELICIA ROSE HONOR (The Anti-Racist Writing Workshop), and COURTNEY MAUM (Before and After the Book Deal) with Susan Muaddi Darraj moderating.
1:00PM - 2:00PM
THE MATTERING OF WORDS: A Reading & Talk with Poet Nikky Finney
NIKKY FINNEY reflects on the past year, the necessity of poetry, and the importance of historical context in understanding the world we live in. Nikky won The Sewanee Review’s 2020 Aiken Taylor Award for Modern American Poetry and is the recipient of the 2020 Wallace Stevens Award, a $ 100,000-lifetime achievement honor presented by the Academy of American Poets. Academy judges praised Finney for her “fierce moral conviction” and as a bard “for the African diaspora.” Her latest collaboration of poems is Love Child’s Hotbed of Occasional Poetry, a twenty-first-century paean to the sterling love songs humming throughout four hundred years of Black American life. Poet Saida Agostini will moderate this session. A reading, commentary, and audience Q & A.

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1:00 - 7:30 pm

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Words on the Winds of Change
A Month-Long Virtual Celebration for Readers and Writers with a Daylong Program on Saturday, March 20, 2021

2:00PM - 3:00PM
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3:00PM - 4:15PM
The Writer’s Room*: Poet to Poet with Nikky Finney

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