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Third Annual Bay Area Book Festival in Berkeley to Highlight the Power of Literature for Social Change June 3 & 4, 2017

Highlights include 200 authors, 100 literary events, a film and literature series,
and 200 exhibitors, including children's activities

Berkeley, Calif., March 28, 2017 — The Bay Area Book Festival returns to downtown Berkeley, Calif., over the weekend of June 3 and 4, 2017 with a focus on “literary activism.” The two-day, indoor/outdoor Festival will welcome 200 local, national, and international authors and speakers in 100 literary sessions (panels, interviews, keynotes and performances) in auditoriums and theaters throughout downtown, and will emphasize writers and books that promote social justice, sanctuary, inclusion, freedom of expression, and environmental sustainability. Organizers expect 50,000 attendees.

Among acclaimed authors confirmed so far are *New York Times* bestselling author **Roxane Gay**, interviewed by Rafia Zakaria in a session sponsored by *The New Republic*; legal thriller writer **Scott Turow**; **Micah White**, co-creator of Occupy Wall Street; celebrated activist **Cleve Jones**, profiled in the TV mini-series “When We Rise”; feminist and humorist **Lindy West**; Native American poet **Layli Long Soldier**; National Book Award finalist **Arlie Hochschild**; spiritual teacher **Jack Kornfield**; National Book Critics Circle Award winner **Geoff Dyer**; **Ayelet Waldman**, for her new memoir and also with Pulitzer Prize winner **Michael Chabon** and two-time National Book Award finalist **Rachel Kushner** for a forthcoming anthology on Palestine; commentator **Masha Gessen**; and Maker Faire founder **Dale Dougherty**.

Environmental activist **Paul Hawken** will discuss his new book *Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming*. *The Nation* will present a no-holds-barred discussion on “race and resistance” with **Rev. William Barber II**, **Alicia Garza**, **Walter Mosley**, and **Joan Walsh**, with **Mark Hertsgaard** moderating. A special event will feature contributors to the forthcoming *Radical Hope*, including **Jeff Chang**, **Francisco Goldman**, **Katie Kitamura**, and the book's editor **Carolina De Robertis**. The festival also debuts a partnership with **Youth Speaks** and will present stage performances and a workshop for young people.

The science fiction list includes superstars **Cory Doctorow**, **John Scalzi**, **Nisi Shawl**, and **Annalee Newitz**. Among authors scheduled to discuss mysteries are **Walter Mosley** with **Laurie King**, bestselling Dane **Jussi Adler-Olsen** with **Cara Black**, Sweden's **Erik Axl Sund** in a session with **Michael Montgomery** of the Center for Investigative Reporting, and Norway's **Thomas Rydahl**.

Exceptional children's programming includes the dynamite combo of **Gennifer**

Choldenko, Doreen Cronin, Adam Mansbach, and Judd Winick on keeping middle-graders reading. German writer **Cornelia Funke**, with sales of 20 million children's books worldwide (including the MirrorWorld series), will deliver a solo presentation on her new book, and an interview.

As in past years, the Festival expects to present more than 20 writers from a dozen countries outside the United States. In addition to the writers mentioned above are Uganda's **Jennifer Nansubuga Makumbi**, Korea's **Krys Lee**, Norway's **Per Petterson**, Ireland's **Colin Barrett**, and Iceland's **Oddny Eir**. The festival will present a special session with the Mexican Consulate of San Francisco and the State of Jalisco, Mexico on the legacy of Juan Rulfo, a father of magic realism, with **Guadalupe Nettel, Mauro Javier Cardenas, Cristina Rivera Garza**, and others.

In a statement on the Festival's website announcing the direction of the 2017 event, founder and executive director Cheryl Parsons notes, "There is no better place than Berkeley, renowned for its intellectual activism, for an event that highlights literature as a vehicle for social change. ... Great literature is not didactic, but it is inherently activist. ... Whether non-fiction, fiction, or poetry, literature allows remarkable access into the subtle lived experience and perspectives of other people and cultures."

Again the Festival will present a film and literature series, "Auteur, Author," in collaboration with the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA), May 31-June 4. Guest-curated by **Tom Luddy**, co-director of the Telluride Film Festival, the series screens ten films that relate to writers and writing and that are discussed by the filmmakers and authors. Presentations include **Phil Kaufman** with "Invasion of the Body Snatchers"; **Robert Scheer** on "Obscene," a biopic on Grove Press's **Barney Rosset**; "Stalker" with **Geoff Dyer** doing the introduction; and actor **Claude Jarman** in person with a screening of "Intruder in the Dust," based on the Faulkner novel.

The Festival also will include a street fair with 200 literary-themed exhibitors, a festive 350-seat outdoor tent and stage, and a family entertainment zone with a storytelling stage, magicians, hands-on art and activities, and a carnival. The fair will be clustered in Berkeley's Civic Center Park and adjacent blocks.

The *San Francisco Chronicle* has been the Festival's major media sponsor since the event's inception and continues this year. *Chronicle* editors, reporters, and columnists will take part as moderators and interviewers at the Festival. The newspaper also will print and distribute the Festival's program guide in its Sunday edition on May 28 (the weekend before the Festival) and will post the schedule and related information at sfgate.com/books. "We are delighted to partner with the Bay Area Book Festival, a regional event that is especially gratifying for us. Our collaboration extends the *Chronicle's* commitment to a diversity of voices in storytelling and to community discussion of issues," stated publisher Jeffrey Johnson.

Other major media sponsors include KQED, Berkeleyside Uncharted (berkeleyside.com), and KALW, all of whom also will provide moderators and

interviewers. Key partners include the City of Berkeley, UC Berkeley, independent bookstores, publishers, and venues in the City of Berkeley.

The event's full schedule of 200 speakers, 100 events, and 200 literary exhibitors will be released to the public on April 15, 2017. Please contact anna@baybookfest.org to be added to a list for updates in the meantime.

About the Festival

The Bay Area Book Festival is the main project of the Foundation for the Future of Literature and Literacy, a nonprofit charity with federal 501(c)(3) designation, created to produce the Festival. The Festival is supported by the City of Berkeley, individual donors, foundations, cultural institutes and consulates, and corporate sponsors. For more information, visit baybookfest.org or [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

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