



MIN JIN LEE, WALTER ISAACSON, ATTICA LOCKE, AND KEVIN YOUNG TO BE FEATURED PRESENTERS AT FIRST EDITION LITERARY GALA ON NOVEMBER 3

AUSTIN, TEXAS (September 7, 2017) – The Texas Book Festival is excited to host an exciting lineup of presenters at the 2017 First Edition Literary Gala that includes national bestselling author **Min Jin Lee**; *New York Times* bestselling author and current president and CEO of the Aspen Institute, **Walter Isaacson**; **Attica Locke**, award-winning author, writer, and producer on the Fox drama *Empire*; and award-winning poet, critic, and as of this November, poetry editor of *The New Yorker*, **Kevin Young**. **Skip Hollandsworth**, award-winning journalist, screenwriter, and executive editor of *Texas Monthly* magazine, will emcee this year's gala, to be held on Friday, November 3 at the Four Seasons Hotel Austin.

"We are so excited for this year's First Edition Literary Gala and honored to host these bestselling and award-winning authors," says Karen Brimble, Texas Book Festival board chair. "We are looking forward to this special evening and are grateful to our supporters for helping us keep the Festival Weekend free and for supporting our year-round programming."

A popular and elegant prelude to the TBF Weekend, the First Edition Literary Gala draws literary luminaries, dignitaries, and cultural arts supporters to help keep the TBF Weekend free and support all the programs it offers throughout the year, including Reading Rock Stars Literary Program, Texas Public Library Grants, and Fresh Ink Fiction Contest for students. Janna Paulson, Ana Ruelas, and Heidi Marquez Smith are this year's gala co-chairs.

The year's featured presenters include:

Min Jin Lee: Award-winning author of *Pachinko*, a sweeping saga of an exceptional family in exile from its homeland and caught in the indifferent arc of history. The national bestseller is also a *New York Times* Editor's Choice and one of American Booksellers Association's Indie Next Great Reads. Lee's debut novel, *Free Food for Millionaires* (May 2007), was a No. 1 Book Sense Pick, a *New York Times* Editor's Choice, a *Wall Street Journal* Juggle Book Club selection, and a national bestseller. It was one of the Top 10 Novels of the Year for *The Times* of London and featured on NPR's *Fresh Air* and in *USA Today*.

Walter Isaacson: President and CEO of the Aspen Institute, a nonpartisan educational and policy studies institute based in Washington, D.C. He has been the chairman and CEO of CNN and the editor of *TIME* magazine. Isaacson is the acclaimed international bestselling author of *Steve Jobs*, *Einstein: His Life and Universe*, and *Benjamin Franklin: An American Life* (2003). His most recent biography, *Leonardo Da Vinci*, is based on thousands of pages from Leonardo's astonishing notebooks and new discoveries about his life and work. Isaacson weaves a narrative that connects his art to his science. He shows how Leonardo's genius was based on skills we can improve on in ourselves, such as passionate curiosity, careful observation, and an imagination so playful that it flirted with fantasy.

Attica Locke: Award-winning author and, most recently, writer and producer on the Fox drama *Empire*. Locke's novels include *Pleasantville*, 2016 winner of the Harper Lee Prize for Legal Fiction; *Black Water Rising*, nominated for an Edgar Award, an NAACP Image Award, and a *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize; *The Cutting Season*, a national bestseller and the winner of the Ernest Gaines Award for Literary Excellence; and her current novel, *Bluebird, Bluebird*, an exhilarating, timely novel about the collision of race and justice in America.

Kevin Young: Award-winning poet, critic, and, as of this November, poetry editor of *The New Yorker*. Young is the author of eleven books of poetry and prose, most recently *Blue Laws: Selected & Uncollected Poems 1995-2015*, longlisted for the National Book Award. His latest nonfiction book, *Bunk: The Rise of Hoaxes, Humbug, Plagiarists, Phonies, Post-Facts, and Fake News* follows his last nonfiction work, *The Grey Album: On the Blackness of Blackness*, which was a *New York Times* Notable Book, a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award for criticism, and the winner of the Graywolf Press Nonfiction Prize.

Skip Hollandsworth: Emcee for the evening, he is the author of *The Midnight Assassin*, a nonfiction narrative history of panic, scandal, and the hunt for America's first serial killer. Hollandsworth's work was included in the 2006 edition of *Best American Crime Writing* and he has won a National Magazine Award for feature writing. Hollandsworth co-wrote the acclaimed screenplay *Bernie* with director Richard Linklater.

Limited First Edition Literary Gala tables and seats are available via the TBF website or by calling 512-477-4055. Individual tickets cost \$500, with various sponsorship levels to purchase tables for 10 or 12 guests available as well.

For more information on the Texas Book Festival, please visit www.texasbookfestival.org and follow along on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram @texasbookfest.

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ABOUT TEXAS BOOK FESTIVAL

The Texas Book Festival connects authors and readers through experiences that celebrate the culture of literacy, ideas, and imagination. Founded in 1995 by former First Lady Laura Bush, Mary Margaret Farabee, and a group of volunteers, the nonprofit Texas Book Festival promotes

the joys of reading and writing through its annual Festival Weekend, the one-day Texas Teen Book Festival, the Reading Rock Stars program, grants to Texas libraries, Fresh Ink Fiction Contest, and year-round literary programming. The Festival is held on the grounds of the Texas Capitol each fall and features more than 275 renowned authors, panels, book signings, live music, cooking demonstrations, and children's activities. The 2017 Texas Book Festival Weekend will take place on November 4 and 5. Thanks to generous donors, sponsors, and 1,000 volunteers, the Festival remains free and open to the public. Visit www.texasbookfestival.org for more information, and join the conversation using the hashtag #txbookfest on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram @texasbookfest.