

UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26 AT 8:00 A.M. CST



THE TEXAS BOOK FESTIVAL REVEALS FIRST 15 AUTHORS AND OFFICIAL POSTER FOR THE 2019 FESTIVAL WEEKEND LINEUP

*Annual Festival to Showcase Acclaimed Authors **John Hodgman**, **Kristen Arnett**, **Hafsah Faizal**, **Attica Locke**, **Saeed Jones**, and **Kwame Alexander**, Among Others*

AUSTIN, TX (June 26, 2019) – The Texas Book Festival is thrilled to announce today fifteen authors who will appear at the highly anticipated 2019 Texas Book Festival on October 26 and 27, including **John Hodgman**, bestselling author, actor, and humorist; award-winning writer and producer on the hit shows *When They See Us* and *Empire* **Attica Locke**; Newbery Medalist, poet, and New York Times bestselling author of 21 books **Kwame Alexander**; **Hafsah Faizal**, bestselling Young Adult author; award-winning essayist and novelist **Kristen Arnett**; and **Saeed Jones**, award-winning writer and poet. In addition, TBF is excited to reveal the official poster for this year's festival created by Austin-based artist Dave McClinton titled *Burgeoning*.

"We're kicking off our 2019 Festival season with a list of exciting names that represent the breadth and diversity of what people will find at our annual Festival," says Lois Kim, executive director of the Texas Book Festival. "We are also thrilled to announce the Texas artist whose innovative work will be featured on our official poster, Dave McClinton."

With a mission to connect authors and readers through unique experiences that celebrate literacy, ideas, and imagination, the first round of 2019 Festival authors features a diverse variety of topics, genres, and writers, including celebrated poets, illustrators, and bestselling authors of both fiction and nonfiction. The lineup includes the following:

Highly acclaimed writer, actor, and comedian **John Hodgman** will present his latest book, *Medallion Status: True Stories from Secret Room*. Described as both unflinchingly funny and deeply heartfelt, *Medallion Status* is a thoughtful examination of status, fame, and identity. Book Tickets for Hodgman's festival session are now available and include a signed copy of the book and priority seating for the session. Tickets are available via the TBF website. Seating for non-ticket holders may be limited and will be available day-of on a first-come, first-served basis.

Saeed Jones will present his new memoir, *How We Fight for Our Lives*, a coming-of-age story

blended with poetry and prose exploring themes of sex, race, and power. *How We Fight for Our Lives* tells the story of a young black gay man from the South as he fights to carve out a place for himself — within his family, within his country, and within his own hopes and fears. **Hafsah Faizal** will present the instant New York Times bestselling Young Adult novel, *We Hunt the Flame*, a gripping story of discovery, conquering fear, and taking identity into your own hands. Inspired by ancient Arabia, the debut series incorporates what *Kirkus Reviews* describes as “an appealing spin on traditional fantasy elements.”

The New York Times bestselling author of children’s fiction **Kwame Alexander** will present his latest picture book, *The Undefeated*, a book for young readers celebrating Black culture, featuring illustrations by two-time Caldecott Honoree Kadir Nelson. *The Undefeated* is described as a love letter to Black life in the United States, highlighting the faith and fire of the civil rights movement and the grit, passion, and perseverance of some of the world’s greatest heroes. Celebrated writer **Kristen Arnett** will present her bestselling debut novel, *Mostly Dead Things*, listed as a “Most Anticipated Book of 2019” in *NYLON*, *HuffPost*, *Literary Hub*, and others. *Mostly Dead Things* is described as a darkly funny, heart-wrenching, and eccentric look at loss and love. Writer and television producer of the Netflix miniseries *When They See Us* and the Fox drama *Empire*, **Attica Locke**, will present *Heaven, My Home*, the follow-up to her award-winning thriller *Bluebird, Bluebird*. In her latest mystery, Texas Ranger Darren Matthews is back and on the hunt for a boy who has gone missing — but this time the target becomes the child’s family.

“We can’t wait to introduce these wonderful writers to Texas readers in October,” says Julie Wernersbach, Texas Book Festival literary director. “Their stories have moved us, made us laugh, dazzled us with enchanted worlds, and broadened our understanding of global history and current events. They represent the dynamic literary landscape we celebrate here in Texas and beyond.”

The full list of fifteen authors, along with the works they will present during the Festival Weekend, includes the following:

- Aarti Namdev Shahani – *Here We Are: American Dreams, American Nightmares*
- Alexander McCall-Smith – *The Land of Long Lost Friends*
- Attica Locke – *Heaven, My Home*
- Ben Mezrich – *Bitcoin Billionaires*
- Hafsah Faizal – *We Hunt the Flame*
- Jericho Brown – *The Tradition*
- John Hodgman – *Medallion Status: True Stories from Secret Room*
- Kristen Arnett – *Mostly Dead Things*
- Kwame Alexander – *The Undefeated*
- Marie Arana – *Silver, Sword, and Stone: Three Crucibles in the Latin American History*
- Oscar Cásares – *Where We Come From*
- Saeed Jones – *How We Fight for Our Lives*
- Cassy Joy Garcia – *Cook Once, Eat All Week*
- Susan Choi – *Trust Exercise*
- William McRaven – *Sea Stories: My Life in Special Operations*

The Texas Book Festival is also proud to unveil the official 2019 Festival Poster by Austin-based artist and graphic designer **Dave McClinton**. McClinton, who has worked as a professional graphic designer for twenty-five years, is known for combining photography and digital design in his work. The art for this year's poster, *Burgeoning*, is a collage made from wrinkled paper, photographed and rendered as a mountain landscape. The idea for McClinton's crumpled paper series was sparked when he noticed the discarded gift wrapping on his kitchen table looked like a miniature mountain sculpture.

In addition to the above authors, the 2019 TBF lineup will feature more than 250 celebrated and emerging writers, including journalists, artists, scientists, and more. The Festival Weekend includes acclaimed authors at readings, panel discussions, and signings; exhibitor booths and food vendors; tents and venues, including cooking, C-SPAN, children's entertainment, and the return of the Latinx Lit Tent. Spread throughout the grounds of the State Capitol and along Austin's iconic Congress Avenue, the 2019 Texas Book Festival Weekend will take place on October 26 and 27, 2019.

The 2019 Texas Book Festival is co-presented by H-E-B and AT&T. Other major sponsors include Central Market, Brigid Cockrum and Family, Kirkus Reviews, Tocker Foundation, Buena Vista Foundation, C-SPAN 2/Book TV, St. David's HealthCare, Texas Monthly, Austin American-Statesman, and Pentagram. 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

With a vision to inspire Texans of all ages to love reading, 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 Texas Teen Book Festival, the Reading Rock Stars Title I elementary school program, the Real Reads Title I middle and high school program, grants to Texas libraries, 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, cooking demonstrations, and children's activities. The 2019 Texas Book Festival Weekend will take place October 26 - 27. 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.