



TEXAS BOOK FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES 2020 LINEUP FEATURING MORE THAN 125 AUTHORS FOR TWO-WEEK VIRTUAL EVENT

Lineup presents Matthew McConaughey, David Chang, Kevin Kwan, Sigrid Nunez, Isabel Wilkerson, Ibi Zoboi, Michael J. Sandel, and more

AUSTIN, TX (September 16, 2020) -- The Texas Book Festival is excited to announce the lineup for its annual Festival featuring nationally renowned authors, including **Matthew McConaughey, David Chang, Kevin Kwan, Sigrid Nunez, Isabel Wilkerson, Julia Alvarez, Michael J. Sandel, Ibi Zoboi**, and more.

One of the largest literary festivals in the country, Texas Book Festival is moving to a virtual format for the 25th anniversary of the Festival. The two-week online event will kick off on October 31 and run through November 15.

Among the award-winning authors scheduled to appear at the Festival this year, Academy Award-winning actor **Matthew McConaughey** will present *Greenlights*, a memoir filled with stories and life lessons from the beloved native Texan's life. McConaughey is also the founder of the just keep livin Foundation, which helps promote the health and well-being of high school students.

Acclaimed chef **David Chang** will present *Eat a Peach: A Memoir*, an intimate account of Chang's rise through the restaurant world. Chang is the chef and founder of Momofuku Noodle Bar in New York City and the host of Netflix's *Ugly Delicious* and *Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner* shows. He's a multiple James Beard award-winner, a *New York Times* bestseller, and a Time 100 honoree.

Kevin Kwan will present his new novel, *Sex and Vanity*, a modern retelling of E. M. Forster's *A Room with a View*, set on the island of Capri and starring Lucie Churchill, who has always ignored her Chinese-American mother's culture in favor of her white New Yorker father's — especially when she meets and falls for George Zao. Kwan's *Crazy Rich Asians* was a *New York Times* bestseller, a major motion picture, and has been translated into more than 30 languages.

National Book Award winner **Sigrid Nunez** will present her new novel, *What Are You Going Through*, in which a woman serves as a passive listener to the stories of the people she meets in her everyday life, from close friends to total strangers. Nunez's *The Friend* won the 2018 National Book Award, and Nunez has been the recipient of several awards, including a Whiting Award, the Rome Prize in Literature, and a Berlin Prize Fellowship.

Pulitzer Prize winner **Isabel Wilkerson** will present *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*, an analysis of caste systems across civilizations and how these systems impact our modern-day world. Wilkerson won a Pulitzer Prize for Feature Writing in 1994 at the *New York Times*, making her the first African American woman to win a Pulitzer Prize in journalism. Wilkerson is also the author of the award-winning *The Warmth of Other Suns* and a National Humanities Medal recipient.

National Medal of Arts winner **Julia Alvarez** will present her latest novel, *Afterlife*, the story of a retired college English teacher who finds a pregnant undocumented teenager on her doorstep. Alvarez left the Dominican Republic for the United States in 1960 at the age of ten. She is the author of six novels, three books of nonfiction, three collections of poetry, and eleven books for children and young adults. Her work has garnered wide recognition, including a Latina Leader Award in Literature from the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, the Hispanic Heritage Award in Literature, the Woman of the Year by *Latina* magazine, and inclusion in the New York Public Library's program "The Hand of the Poet: Original Manuscripts by 100 Masters, from John Donne to Julia Alvarez." *In the Time of the Butterflies*, with over one million copies in print, was selected by the National Endowment for the Arts for its national Big Read program.

World-renowned philosopher **Michael J. Sandel** will present his latest work, *The Tyranny of Merit: What's Become of the Common Good?*, in which he argues for a more attentive and ethical way of thinking about politics and success. Sandel teaches political philosophy at Harvard University, and his books *What Money Can't Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets* and *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?* were international bestsellers and have been translated into 27 languages. Sandel's legendary course "Justice" was the first Harvard course to be made freely available online and has been viewed by tens of millions. His BBC series, "The Public Philosopher," explores the philosophical ideas lying behind the headlines, with participants from around the world.

Bestselling author **Ibi Zoboi** will present *Punching the Air*, a young adult novel in verse about a boy who is wrongfully incarcerated, written with author Yusef Salaam, one of the "Central Park Five." Zoboi's novel *American Street* was a National Book Award finalist and a *New York Times* Notable Book. She is also the author of *Pride and My Life as an Ice Cream Sandwich*, a *New York Times* bestseller.

"The 25th Anniversary Texas Book Festival will be one for the record books, and not only because we will be all virtual," says Lois Kim, TBF Executive Director. "The authors we are hosting are so talented, and we can't wait to share dozens of unforgettable conversations with everyone, everywhere."

The 2020 Virtual Festival lineup features more than 125 authors, illustrators, poets, journalists, artists, and thought leaders across a diverse array of genres and topics. The Festival will also showcase previously announced authors **Michael Ian Black**, **Nick Hornby**, **Dean Koontz**, **Erin Brockovich**, **Robert Draper**, **Stephen Graham Jones**, **Kathy Valentine**, and more.

Elizabeth Acevedo and **Nic Stone** will be the keynote speakers for the 2020 Texas Teen Book Festival, taking place online on October 31 and November 1. The TTBF lineup also includes **Tiffany D. Jackson**, **Candace Bushnell**, **Natalia Sylvester**, **Lilliam Rivera**, **Yamile Saied Méndez**, **Rory Power**, **Francisco X. Stork**, and more.

Children's programming will run from November 2 to 6 and will include acclaimed children's authors and illustrators **Jon Scieszka** and **Steven Weinberg**, **Derrick Barnes**, **Raúl The Third**, **David Bowles**, **Jerome Pumphrey** and **Jarrett Pumphrey**, and more.

Adult author programming will run from November 6 to 15. The First Edition Literary Gala will also take place virtually this year on Friday, November 6 at 7:30 p.m. CST, featuring authors **Julia Alvarez**, **Nick Hornby**, and **Natasha Trethewey**, as well as emcee **Michael Ian Black**. Visit texasbookfestival.org/gala for sponsorship information.

“We’re so excited to share this year’s lineup, and we’re especially proud about how many Texas authors will join us at this year’s Festival,” says TBF Literary Director Matthew Patin. “In such an unconventional year, it’s more important than ever to support the local literary community, and we can’t wait to showcase their work.”

Texas authors featured at this year’s Festival include **José R. Ralat, Deb Olin Unferth, Natalia Sylvester, John Mackey, Julia Heaberlin, Lupe Mendez, H. W. Brands, Rebekah Manley, Rubén Degollado, Peniel E. Joseph, Tom Philpott, Robert Draper, Richard Z. Santos, James Wade, Amanda Eyre Ward**, and more.

The Festival continues to be free and open to the public thanks to generous sponsors and dedicated volunteers. The 2020 Virtual Texas Book Festival is co-presented by H-E-B and AT&T. Other major sponsors include Brigid Cockrum and Family, *Kirkus Reviews*, Tocker Foundation, Tapestry Foundation, *Texas Monthly*, Buena Vista Foundation, Still Water Foundation, C-SPAN 2/Book TV, Central Market, *Austin American-Statesman*, Pentagonam, Jordan Foster Construction, and Loewy Law Firm.

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, 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 2020 Virtual Texas Book Festival will take place from October 31 through November 15. Thanks to generous donors, sponsors, and 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.