

Virginia Festival of the Book Announces New Headliner Programs

Tickets Are Now Available for Four Programs Featuring Acclaimed Speakers at 25th Anniversary Festival

January 10, 2019—Charlottesville, Va.—**The Virginia Festival of the Book**—a program of Virginia Humanities celebrating its 25th year of bringing writers and readers together to promote and celebrate books, reading, literacy, and literary culture—today announced **four new headlining programs**—featuring some of the most acclaimed authors working in fiction, nonfiction, and poetry today, including a National Book Award finalist and other award-winners as well as bestselling Festival favorites from the past twenty-five years—for the **2019 Festival**, which will take place March 20-24, 2019, in Charlottesville and Albemarle County:

History Embodied: Public Monuments & Power

Wednesday, March 20, 6:00 PM at the Jefferson School African American Heritage Center

Charlottesville City Councilor **Wes Bellamy** (*Monumental: It Was Never About a Statue*) and former Mayor of New Orleans **Mitch Landrieu** (*In the Shadow of Statues: A White Southerner Confronts History*) discuss their experiences working as elected representatives and examining the history behind and presented by public monuments in their cities. How does remembering history differ from revering it? How might more complete histories affect what a community commemorates? How can community members have a voice when public monuments cease to represent community interests? Moderated by **Gregg Kimball**, co-chair of Richmond's Monument Avenue Commission. Hosted by Charlottesville Tomorrow. **Tickets are FREE but required; available at VaBook.org.**

An Evening with Festival All-Stars: Lee Smith, Adriana Trigiani, and Douglas Brinkley

Wednesday, March 20, 8:00 PM at The Paramount Theater

In honor of its twenty-fifth anniversary this year, three of the Virginia Festival of the Book's most popular recurring authors—**Lee Smith** (*Dimestore: A Writer's Life*), **Adriana Trigiani** (*Tony's Wife*), and **Douglas Brinkley** (*American Moonshot: John F. Kennedy and the Great Space Race*)—take the stage to share memories and swap stories, reflect on the evolution of all things literary in the past quarter-century, and discuss their own work, past, present, and future. Hosted by **Margot Lee Shetterly** (*Hidden Figures*). **Tickets are \$22.00 (\$11.50 students) and available at VaBook.org or the Paramount Theater.**

All of Our Rights: America's Legacy of Inequality

Thursday, March 21, 8:00 PM at The Paramount Theater

Carol Anderson (*One Person, No Vote: How Voter Suppression Is Destroying Our Democracy*), **Michael Eric Dyson** (*What Truth Sounds Like: Robert F. Kennedy, James Baldwin, and Our Unfinished Conversation About Race in America*), and **Martha S. Jones** (*Birthright Citizens: A History of Race and Rights in Antebellum America*) discuss their award-winning works focused on American rights, racism, and resistance. From Dyson's examination of the Civil Rights movement to Anderson's startling and timely look at voter suppression and Jones' deeply-researched study of birthright citizenship, this conversation will explore the opportunities as well as the conflicts between people and policies. Moderated by **Jamelle Bouie**, columnist for the *New York Times* Opinion pages and a political analyst for CBS News. **Tickets are \$22.00 (\$11.50 students) and available at VaBook.org or the Paramount Theater.**

Future Tense: Writers You'll be Reading for the Next 25 Years

Saturday, March 23, 8:00 PM at The Paramount Theater

As three of the most exciting young writers today, **Mitchell S. Jackson** (*Survival Math: Notes on an All-American Family*), **José Olivarez** (*Citizen Illegal*), and **Sarah Smarsh** (*Heartland: A Memoir of Working Hard and Being Broke in the Richest Country on Earth*) share and discuss their deeply personal works of nonfiction and poetry, each representing an eye-opening look into larger social and political issues in America. Moderated by **Carlos Lozada**, nonfiction book critic for *The Washington Post*. **Tickets are \$22.00 (\$11.50 students) and available at [VaBook.org](https://www.vabook.org) or the Paramount Theater.**

More information about each of these newly-announced Festival headlining speakers is included below. **Tickets and additional details for each of these four programs are available on [VaBook.org](https://www.vabook.org).**

New Headlining Speakers:

- **Carol Anderson**, author of *One Person, No Vote*, is the Charles Howard Candler Professor and Chair of African American Studies at Emory University. She was a Guggenheim Fellow for Constitutional Studies and is the author of *White Rage*, which won the National Book Critics Circle Award.
- **Wes Bellamy**, author of *Monumental*, is the youngest individual ever elected to the Charlottesville City Council. He came into the national spotlight after co-leading the effort to remove statues of Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson from city parks.
- **Douglas Brinkley**, author of *American Moonshot*, is a professor of history at Rice University, the CNN Presidential Historian, and a contributing editor at *Vanity Fair* and *Audubon*. Seven of his books have been selected as *New York Times* Notable Books of the Year. *Cronkite* won the Sperber Prize for Best Book in Journalism, and *The Great Deluge* won the Robert F. Kennedy Book Award.
- **Michael Eric Dyson**, author of *What Truth Sounds Like*, is a university professor of sociology at Georgetown University, a contributing opinion writer for *The New York Times*, and a contributing editor of *The New Republic* and ESPN's *The Undefeated*. *Ebony* named him one of the 100 most influential African Americans and one of the 150 most powerful blacks in the nation.
- **Mitchell S. Jackson**, author of *Survival Math*, won a Whiting Award and the Ernest J. Gaines Prize for Literary Excellence for his debut novel, *The Residue Years*. His honors also include fellowships from TED, the Lannan Foundation, and the Ford Foundation.
- **Martha S. Jones**, author of *Birthright Citizens*, is the Society of Black Alumni Presidential Professor and Professor of History at Johns Hopkins University. She was formerly a Presidential Bicentennial Professor at the University of Michigan, and was a founding director of the Michigan Law School Program in Race, Law and History.
- **Mitch Landrieu**, author of *In the Shadow of Statues*, was the 61st mayor of New Orleans, 2010–2018. He served as lieutenant governor of Louisiana from 2004 to 2010, and was president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. His father, Moon Landrieu, was mayor of New Orleans, 1970–1978.
- **José Olivarez**, author of *Citizen Illegal*, is the son of Mexican immigrants and a poet. His work has been featured in *The New York Times*, *The Paris Review*, *Chicago Magazine*, and elsewhere. In 2018, he was awarded the first annual Author and Artist in Justice Award from the Phillips Brooks House Association and named a Debut Poet of 2018 by *Poets & Writers*.
- **Sarah Smarsh**, author of *Heartland*, is a speaker and journalist who focuses on socioeconomic class and rural America. Her book was a 2018 National Book Award finalist and examines historic economic inequality through the story of her upbringing among the working poor on a Kansas farm.
- **Lee Smith**, author of *Dimestore*, was born in the small coal-mining town of Grundy, Va., and began writing stories at the age of nine. She has written seventeen works of fiction and received many awards, including the North Carolina Award for Literature, an Academy Award in Fiction, and the Southern Book Critics Circle Award.

- **Adriana Trigiani**, author of *Tony's Wife*, is a playwright, television writer/producer, and filmmaker. She is the author of seventeen books and directed the film version of her novel, *Big Stone Gap*, which was shot entirely on location in her Virginia hometown. Trigiani is co-founder of the Origin Project, an in-school writing program that serves more than one thousand students in Appalachia.

The full list of 2019 speakers is available at VaBook.org and searchable by genre (fiction, nonfiction, poetry, children/youth, and crime fiction). The 2019 Festival schedule will be announced on Monday, January 14.

The Virginia Festival of the Book is proud of its record of accessibility, affordability, and inclusivity. However, while nearly all Festival programs are free and open to the public without reservations, some will require tickets. Tickets for the Read & Lead Lunch with Barbara Ehrenreich and the Crime Wave Brunch with Don Winslow are also currently available at VaBook.org.

About the Virginia Festival of the Book: A signature program of Virginia Humanities and the Virginia Center for the Book, the Virginia Festival of the Book brings readers and writers together for a five-day program of mostly free events including author readings, book signings, panel discussions, programs for children, and more. **The 25th annual Festival will be held March 20-24, 2019**, in Charlottesville and Albemarle County, Virginia. The Festival consistently attracts audiences of more than 20,000 from more than forty states each year, with an estimated local economic impact of about \$4 million annually. To learn more, visit VaBook.org.

About Virginia Humanities: Virginia Humanities connects people and ideas to explore the human experience and inspire cultural engagement. As the state humanities council, Virginia Humanities reaches millions in its estimated annual audience through festivals, grants, fellowships, digital initiatives, teacher institutes, radio programs, podcasts, apprenticeships, and school programs. Headquartered at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, Virginia Humanities endeavors to serve Virginians in every corner of the Commonwealth. To learn more, visit VirginiaHumanities.org.

###