



TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF AUTHORS INVITES BOOK LOVERS TO RESHAPE THE WORLD THROUGH STORIES WITH ITS VIRTUAL 42nd EDITION

Margaret Atwood, Paul Auster, David Baldacci, Cherie Dimaline, Anthony Doerr, Esi Edugyan, The Fan Brothers, Jon Klassen, Karl Ove Knausgaard, Shari Lapena, Eden Robinson, Lisa Taddeo, Ian Williams and more

TORONTO, September 23, 2021 – The Toronto International Festival of Authors (TIFA), Canada’s largest and longest-running literary festival, invites book lovers to join the authors and artists reshaping the world through stories. The 42nd edition, its second virtual Festival, will present authors from across Canada and across the world. The 11-day Festival, taking place **October 21 to 31**, will include more than 200 ways to connect with some of the world’s leading thinkers and storytellers, with conversations, readings, masterclasses, music and dance performances, podcasts and much more. Registration is now open at [FestivalofAuthors.ca](https://www.festivalofauthors.ca).

Festival-goers can enjoy the return of popular programmes created last year, including a vibrant TIFA Kids, multilingual conversations, original writing commissions, interactive audio tours, and a Critical Conversations series on the events affecting people most today. In continuing TIFA’s vision to inspire, empower and connect through the art of stories, TIFA will maximize the potential of a virtual festival by highlighting a vast array of international authors from across North and South America, Europe, the Nordic Region, South Asia, Russia and the UK, representing the best writers of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, graphic novels, science, history and more.

“This past year has emphasized our need for culture to offer connection, resilience, solace and entertainment; and books, in all their forms, play a fundamental role. For our second virtual Festival, and my second as Director, I’m excited to build on the digital potential to develop our programming vision, ensuring TIFA is accessible, diverse, inclusive, innovative and ambitious. I am looking forward to celebrating and sharing with our audiences the stories and people who are reshaping our world,” said **Roland Gulliver**, Toronto International Festival of Authors Director.

Conversations and Readings

The Festival offers an incredible lineup of authors to capture readers’ hearts and minds this fall. Participants include **Paul Auster** to launch *Burning Boy*, his immersive biography of the “first American modernist” Stephen Crane; iconic Canadian author **Douglas Coupland** to discuss *Binge*, his first new work of fiction since 2013; **Anthony Doerr**, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *All the Light We Cannot See*, to present his third novel, *Cloud Cuckoo Land*; **Lauren Groff** to discuss her empowering new novel *Matrix*, named among the most anticipated books of 2021; literary superstar



Karl Ove Knausgaard, making a rare digital appearance to launch his new novel, *The Morning Star*; **Richard Powers** to discuss his Booker Prize-shortlisted novel *Bewilderment*; **Alexander McCall Smith** with another delightful installment of *The No 1 Ladies Detective Agency*; **Colm Tóibín**, international bestselling author of *Brooklyn* and *The Master*, to discuss his epic new novel *The Magician*; **Lisa Taddeo**, who rose to literary stardom with her non-fiction work *Three Women*, to present her debut novel *Animal*.

It has been another incredible year for Canadian writing, with TIFA to present nine of the 12 writers longlisted for the 2021 Scotiabank Giller Prize, including **Cheluchi Onyemelukwe-Onuobia**, **Jordan Tannahill**, **Kim Thúy** and **Katherena Vermette**.

There will be sessions featuring literary heavyweights, such as **David Baldacci** in conversation with **Linwood Barclay** to dissect Baldacci's newest addition to the gripping Special Agent Atlee Pine series, *Daylight*; Linwood himself will be interviewed by crime legend **Ian Rankin**; former Chief Justice turned-writer **Beverley McLachlin** will discuss her new novel *Denial* with *New York Times* bestseller **Shari Lapena**; and the inimitable **Margaret Atwood** will interview writer and director of Theater of War Productions **Bryan Doerries** on the resonance of classic Greek tragedies to address contemporary times.

TIFA welcomes literary voices that reflect contemporary issues including racial justice, climate change and the devastation of Canada's residential school system. **Dr. Yusef Salaam**, a member of the Exonerated Five, will introduce his gripping memoir *Better, Not Bitter*, advocating for prison reform and racial justice; Scotiabank Giller Prize-winner **Ian Williams** will ask urgent questions from his essay collection *Disorientation: Being Black in the World*; **Esi Edugyan** will present the 2021 Massey lecture *Out of the Sun: on Race & Storytelling*; **Alexandra Morton**, known as "the Jane Goodall of Canada" for her 30-year fight to save British Columbia's wild salmon, will share her story *Not On My Watch*; and Anishnaabe writer, broadcaster and Chair of the Canada Council for the Arts **Jesse Went** will discuss the flawed concept of reconciliation penned in *Unreconciled*.

Alongside Went, the Festival will present Indigenous voices from across Turtle Island, with memoirs that uncover the painful past and the present fight for personal understanding, truth and change. This includes three shortlisted authors for the Hilary Weston Writers' Trust Prize for Non-fiction: Griffin Poetry Prize-winner **Jordan Abel**, iconic storyteller **Tomson Highway**, and **Darrel J. MacLeod**; plus politician **Wab Kinew** with his Indigenous take on *Ready Player One*.

Critical Conversations

TIFA's Critical Conversations series creates a platform for authors, academics and activists to discuss the topics that matter most during this unprecedented time. On the eve of the UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26), just weeks after Canada's federal election, and a year working



through the pandemic, these conversations will explore how we sustain ourselves and the world we live in. Each day, speakers will address topics from environmental sustainability to mental health, homelessness to space travel, and vaccine ethics to the urgent issue of truth and reconciliation in Canada, while addressing audience questions and concerns.

Writing Commission: Can You Hear Me Now?

TIFA will introduce **Can You Hear Me Now?**, a new collection of writing commissions from some of the world's most diverse voices. For these commissions, TIFA invited eleven writers to respond to this phrase – familiar in this age of digital meetings, while also speaking to global movements for change to empower marginalized and disenfranchised voices to be represented, celebrated and heard. Each day, audiences can hear from authors reading their newly commissioned work, including award-winning *These Ghosts are Family* author **Maisy Card**, bestselling Cree writer and activist **Clayton Thomas-Muller**, and original artwork from **Ashley Spires**. A special e-book will make the stories available to readers, published in partnership with Rakuten Kobo.

Daily Performances and Special Events

Each evening will feature a special performance with spoken word, dub poetry, music, theatre, burlesque, film and dance. Including one of the most compelling Indigenous voices of a generation, **Leanne Betsamosake Simpson in Concert**; **Soundtracks and Stanzas**, hosted by Toronto's **Britta B.**, celebrating the impact of dub poetry; **Begin by Telling**, a presentation of music, readings and conversation by Juno- and Polaris Prize-nominated **Meg Remy**; **In the Moment**, a spectacular programme of music and spoken word from the **Black Speculative Arts Movement (BSAM)**; plus the launch of **The New Embassy**, a series of specially curated events inspired by Toronto's iconic Bohemian Embassy.

Also this year, audiences can experience **Literary Death Matches** – available in two versions, one for adults and one for children. This *American Idol* of the written word presents authors competing with performances of their most electric writing to reach a comic finale.

TIFA Kids

TIFA Kids returns for an enhanced and vibrant programme featuring over 40 Canadian and international authors, illustrators and performers exploring everything from sad potatoes to superheroes, Caribbean Carnival to the beauty of butterflies. Families, children and young adults will be able to come together in a virtual space to experience interactive readings, draw-alongs, live discussions, spoken word poetry, and discover a space to share and connect.



Highlights include award-winning creator of *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*, **Brian Selznick**, and his editor, David Levithan, to talk about *Kaleidoscope*, a book inspired by the early months of the pandemic; YA super-couple **David and Nicola Yoon** to celebrate the uplifting power of romantic writing and share why they don't just write it but now publish it; **Nadia L. Hohn** to join Grade One kids from across Canada to launch this year's TD Bank Grade One Book Giveaway, *Malaika's Costume*, with stories, costumes and dancing; award-winning Canadian author-illustrator of *That's Not My Hat*, **Jon Klassen** to give a reading of his new picture book, *The Rock From the Sky*; and a unique live conversation between **Patrick Ness** and **Cherie Dimaline** to explore how to use fantasy writing to understand the worst of human behaviour.

Superheroes will also appear in all guises, with **Justin A. Reynolds'** tingling spidey-senses with his new Miles Morales graphic novel, and British author-illustrator **Sophy Henn** unmasking her reluctant superhero character, Pizazz. Toronto drag artists **Fay and Fluffy** will join for a Halloween spooky lineup with their trademark Drag Storytime; as well as a virtual ceremony celebrating the **2021 Canadian Children's Book Centre Book Awards**.

The World in Other Words: Multilingual Events

TIFA will celebrate the languages of the city and connect with new international audiences through a series of events in authors' own languages – Bengali, French, Greek, Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish and Tamil, with English translations provided. Audiences will hear from authors who have gained international recognition for their bestselling works, including Neustadt Prize-winning Mozambican author **Mia Couto** in conversation with José Eduardo Agualusa; esteemed Greek author and literary critic **Michel Fais**; and international sensation, Japanese author **Mieko Kawakami**.

New to the Festival is Daniel Hahn's internationally acclaimed **Translation Duels**, celebrating the creative art of translation, and exploring commissioned translations of short texts from **Lina Meruane** (Spanish) and **Laurent Binet** (French).

Visit [Festivalofauthors.ca](https://festivalofauthors.ca) to view the full programme lineup and to sign up for events.

ABOUT TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF AUTHORS

The Toronto International Festival of Authors (TIFA) inspires, empowers and connects through the art of stories, offering book lovers a breadth of bold, ambitious and accessible literary experiences. As Canada's largest literary festival, the charitable organization provides engaging opportunities to meet, hear and learn from the world's best contemporary writers and thinkers, and to celebrate the power of stories. Since 1974, TIFA has presented thousands of authors, including 22 Nobel Laureates, who represent diverse perspectives and a range of literary genres for all ages. TIFA's creative programmes continue to adapt to changing times, capturing the most innovative and enlightening forms of storytelling, on stage and online. Alongside the flagship Festival, TIFA delivers a year-round



programme of events and activities that reflect Toronto to its residents, its literature to the nation and its creative ambition to the world. TIFA will celebrate the 42nd edition of the Festival from October 21–31, 2021.

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