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Contact: Holly Lange, Mississippi Book Festival
(601) 906-8698
holly@msbookfestival.com

MS Book Fest Announces Starting Lineup of Celebrated Authors

JACKSON, Miss. — Mississippi Book Festival Executive Director Holly Lange wants you to know that, “The Party is ON!” The 7th annual literary lawn party, celebrating authors and their books, will be live and in-person on Saturday, August 21, 2021, in and around the State Capitol Building.

“This year, we truly have something for every book lover in Mississippi and beyond!” beams Lange. “There will be compelling conversations among authors and moderators spanning every interest area, along with book signing opportunities, booksellers, children’s activities, and more!”

Our starting lineup of celebrated panelists includes a riveting discussion between American educator, historian and author **Lonnie Bunch** and former U.S. Representative **Gregg Harper**, on the author’s book, *A Fool’s Errand: Creating the National Museum of African American History and Culture in the Age of Bush, Obama, and Trump*. Bunch is the 14th Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution and the founding director of the new museum.

Join biographer and former *Time Magazine* editor **Walter Isaacson**, as he visits with his friend Jim Barksdale, in review of the author’s latest #1 *New York Times* Best seller, *The Codebreaker*. Hear from National Book Award finalist and 2021 PEN/Faulkner Award winner **Deesha Philyaw**, on her debut story collection, *The Secret Lives of Church Ladies*. Don’t miss Pulitzer Prize-winning poet **Jericho Brown** as he discusses his new collection, *The Tradition*, with former Mississippi Poet Laureate Beth Ann Fennelly. Sit down with biographer, true-crime writer and Pulitzer Prize winner **Kai Bird** as he discusses his new biography of President Jimmy Carter.

Look homeward with some of Mississippi’s own: *New York Times* bestselling and groundbreaking YA author **Angie Thomas** presents her latest, *Concrete Rose*; the inimitable **Kiese Laymon** shares his genre-bending novel, *Long Division*; and Mississippi’s new Poet Laureate **Catherine Pierce** talks about her newest collection, *Danger Days*.

Literary Director Ellen Rodgers Daniels reminds us that, “The prize-winning lineup of panelists for this year is just now taking shape, so stay tuned for more announcements to come.”

It is through the devotion and generosity of people and organizations that the Mississippi Book Festival is made possible. The festival is grateful to the Community Foundation for Mississippi for being the presenting sponsor again this year. Other major funders include the State of Mississippi, Visit Mississippi, the Selby and Richard McRae Foundation, the James and Madeleine McMullan Family Foundation, the Phil Hardin Foundation, Donna and Jim Barksdale, the Crooks Foundation and the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

Visit our website at www.msbookfestival.com to sign up for emails, to volunteer and keep up with exciting announcements. See you on August 21st at Mississippi’s Literary Lawn party!

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