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PRESS RELEASE

Downey City Library to Host 3rd Annual Beyond the Book Festival this Saturday!

Downey, CA, September 26, 2023:

Downey City Library is hosting its Third Annual Beyond the Book Festival this Saturday, September 30th from 12 p.m.- 6 p.m.

Beyond the Book is Downey City Library's celebration of local artists, writers, makers, crafters, musicians and the creative explorers who give rise to the community's DIY spirit.

The event begins at 12 p.m. with music provided by the local Los Angeles chapter of Chulita Vinyl Club (CVC), a group of DJs made up of women who strictly play off of vinyl records. CVC will play sets throughout the event, leading to a live performance by local jazz ensemble, The Neighborhood Orchestra, at 5 p.m. to close out the event. Catch both groups on the main stage just outside of the Library's main entrance. Also featured on the main stage will be the official opening ceremony for the event, starting at 1 p.m. hosted by Downey City Library Director, Benjamin Dickow. The opening ceremony also features special guest, Barry Hansen - better known as Dr. Demento. As a resident of Southeast LA for over 40 years, Dr. Demento has impacted the world-wide musical awareness of millions of people from our very own community.

The all-ages event will feature a number of activities for attendees to do, including origami demonstrations, a caricature artist, crafts in the Children's area and hands-on interactive activity sessions in the Library's makerspace - the Workshop. The Downey City Library also plays host to over two dozen local community organizations, makers and crafters showcasing their unique talents, selling their products and sharing resources. The Library will host four discussion panels that afternoon, curated around the idea of finding or creating community and identity through various mediums. The event will also feature a live performance by The Bob Baker Marionette Theatre of their special, seasonal show, the Halloween Spooktacular, at 4:30 p.m. in the Children's area of the Library. Food trucks will be on-hand throughout the event to provide lunch, or even dinner while you enjoy live tunes, learn about community resources and enjoy this FREE event with the family.

To learn more about Beyond the Book, please visit: downeylibrary.org/beyond-the-book. Please note: public parking will be available at the Downey High School parking lot, across the street from the Library. There will be no public parking in the Civic Center parking lot in front of the Library.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

See below for official event schedule:

Performances

Chulita Vinyl Club 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. (various sets)

Bob Baker Marionette Theatre 4:30 p.m.- 5:00 p.m.

The Neighborhood Orchestra 5:00pm-6:00pm

Panels

“Lil’ Libros presents: We are the new storytellers” 12:30 p.m.

A panel with Lil’ Libros authors and illustrators sharing about their Latino/Latinx identities and experiences and how they bring it to life.

Panelists:

- Melanie Romero, Lil’ Libros Editor and author of *Amor de Colores* and *J is for Janucá*
- J de la Vega, author of *WEPA*
- Eric Ramos, author and illustrator of *Super Torta!*

“The L.A. Project: Telling the Real Story of the Streets” 1:30 p.m.

Julia Dean, Alon Goldsmith and Daniel Sackheim will each present 20 photographs of their style of street photography in a slideshow presentation, followed by a panel discussion with the public afterwards. They will also discuss PROJECTING L.A. 2024; from the submission guidelines to attending the grand outdoor event where images— of L.A. and the people who live here — are projected 80 feet-wide and three stories tall in a DTLA Chinatown parking lot.

Panelists:

- Julia Dean (Project Director, The L.A. Project) - photographer, educator, writer, and founder and former executive director of the Los Angeles Center of Photography
- Daniel Sackheim (Producer, *PROJECTING LA*) - Emmy Award-winning, Film & Television director and producer best known for his work on such critically acclaimed series as HBO’s True Detective Season 3, Game of Thrones, Ozark, and The American
- Alon Goldsmith (Website Designer) - a seasoned ad-industry professional with more than 20 years of experience as a creative director and website designer. Dubbed “LA’s iPhoneography Wizard” by Forbes magazine, Alon Goldsmith is an award-winning photographer who has been featured extensively across media and exhibited in galleries around the globe.

“We Read What We Read: Indie Bookstores and Representation” 2:45 p.m.

Owners of local independent bookstores share their experiences opening their own bookstore, why indie bookstores continue to be relevant today and the importance of diverse representation in children’s books.

Panelists:

- Stephanie Reed - Owner, MiJa Books
- DongYoung Kim - Owner, IBookPark
- Naibe Reynoso - Founder, Con Todo Press

“Why We Write” 4 p.m.

In this loosely structured poetry reading session, two prominent local writers - Vickie Vértiz and Olga García Echeverría - lead discussions around what poetry does for us individually and in the world, the importance of creativity, what does it mean to write and the power that comes from the female-identified pen. They will be joined by local teen writers from the organization, WriteGirl.

Panelists:

- Vickie Vértiz - Vickie Vértiz is from an immigrant Mexican family, raised in Bell Gardens. Her poetry and essays are featured in the New York Times magazine, Huizache, the Los Angeles Review of Books, KCET Departures, and the San Francisco Chronicle, among many publications. Her second book *Auto/Body* won the 2023 Sandeen Poetry Prize from the University of Notre Dame. She is a recipient of fellowships from the Mellon Foundation, Bread Loaf Environmental Writers Conference, VONA, CantoMundo, and Macondo. Vértiz teaches writing at UC-Santa Barbara. She lives in Los Angeles.
- Olga García Echeverría - born and raised in East Los Angeles, is the author of *Falling Angels: Cuentos y Poemas*. Her work has been published in The Sun Magazine, Imaniman: Poets Writing on the Anzaldúan Borderlands, Lavandería: A Mixed Load of Women, Wash, and Words, U.S. Latino Literature Today, Telling Tongues: A Latin@ Anthology on Language, among others. Olga has been an educator in the literary arts for over 25 years and currently teaches literature in the Chicana Latinx Studies Department at California State University of Los Angeles.
- Teens from WriteGirl - WriteGirl is a creative writing and mentoring organization that promotes creativity, critical thinking and leadership skills to empower teen girls and youth.

Special Activities

- STEM Activities provided by the Discovery Cube 12:30 p.m. - 1:45 p.m.
- Origami Demonstrations provided by Downey City Library staff 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.
- Jewelry Making workshop taught by Reminders Creative Reuse 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.
- Caricature Artist 2:00pm-5:00pm
- Zine Making Workshop taught by WriteGirl 4:45 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Scheduled Food Trucks

Rice Balls of Fire Nacho Me Vegan LA Donut
Helping Hands Coffee

Makers and Vendor booths will be set-up the duration of the event, 12 p.m. – 6 p.m.

About Downey City Library

Downey City Library is a public library in Southeast Los Angeles County committed to bringing the community together in support of lifelong learning, and the development of creative and critical thinking.