



For Immediate Release  
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## **HARTFORD'S L.I.T., HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY ANNOUNCE FOURTH ANNUAL HARTFORD BOOK FESTIVAL**

*Festival seeking vendors, participants and award nominations*

(Hartford, CT) – Hartford Public Library (HPL) is partnering with Hartford's L.I.T. (Literary Integrated Trailblazers) to host the fourth annual Hartford Book Festival as a three-day event from Friday, Sept. 23, 2022, to Sunday, Sept. 25, 2022, at the Downtown Library at 500 Main St., Hartford, and a second location to be announced.

Hartford's L.I.T. (H.L.I.T.), is a group of local authors, artists and entrepreneurs. Their mission is to establish presence and awareness of Greater Hartford's local authors, diverse artists and entrepreneurs to revitalize literary arts and communication. H.L.I.T. focuses on literacy, literary productions, entrepreneurial building and networking within Hartford communities, including the underserved and nontraditional communities.

H.L.I.T., along with local artists, business owners and Hartford residents, came together for the last three years to host the first, second and third Hartford Book Festival at Hartford Public Library with the themes "How are the Children?," "2020 Visions & Reflections" and "2020 One Love One Life." This year, the theme is "Double Up 2 Double Up," and this three-day event will be a celebration of reading and writing for children, teens and adults in the City of Hartford. The festival will feature local authors, bookstores, workshops, panels, youth activities, open mics, literary highlights, publishers, a vibrant cultural live stage and more.

### **Day One: Writers' Workshops Only**

Friday, Sept. 23, noon to 3:30 p.m.

Hartford Public Library, 500 Main Street, Hartford, CT

## **Day Two: The Fourth Annual Hartford Book Festival**

Saturday September 24th, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Hartford Public Library, 500 Main Street, Hartford, CT

## **Day Three: An Evening of Poetical Musings**

Sunday, Sept. 25

Time and location TBA

For Hartford Book Festival questions email: [hartfordslitfestival@gmail.com](mailto:hartfordslitfestival@gmail.com)

For general questions about Hartford's L.I.T. email: [hartfordslit@gmail.com](mailto:hartfordslit@gmail.com)

## **PLANNED PRESENTATIONS**

### **FRIDAY**

#### **Ekphrastic Poetry and Healing Words**

**with Nzima Sherylle Hutchings**

**12-12:45 p.m.**

Participants will receive an overview of ekphrastic poetry, write from inspired writing prompts and visual art, learn the power of healing and affirmative poetic writing. Ages 13+

#### **Descriptive Writing: Space as a character**

**with T'challa Williams**

**12:50-1:35 p.m.**

Workshop core objectives: To demonstrate how space, location and even a world can be a character within a work of fiction. Writers will learn ways to use their five senses in order to describe space as a character.

#### **Poetic Narratives in Choreopoems: Whole Body Dramatics, Music & Tongue Cadence**

**with Nzima Sherylle Hutchings**

**1:45-2:30 p.m.**

A choreopoem is a form of dramatic expression that combines poetry, dance, music and song, coined by Ntozake Shange in 1975. At this interactive workshop participants will write and share their drafts of choreopoems. Participants will learn the fundamentals of a choreopoem.

Moreover, they will learn how full-body expressions, dance movements sound and music recreate and maximize messages in a poem. Ages 16+

#### **One Voice: Art as Advocacy**

**with T'challa Williams**

**2:45-3:30 p.m.**

Workshop core objectives: Identifying three key elements to advocacy. Artists will determine if their art or administration will be their advocate as they give voice to the matters that concern them the most. Anything that we have passion about we can take a stand for, or shed light on.

The most important thing is to take the first step to be heard. Advocacy is vital in community building. Participants will also look at the ways collaboration is part of advocacy. For Ages 13+.

## **SATURDAY**

### **Ngoma Hill (featured poet)**

Ngoma Hill is a performance poet, multi-instrumentalist, singer/songwriter and paradigm shifter who for over 40 years has used culture as a tool to raise sociopolitical and spiritual consciousness through work that encourages critical thought. A former member of the Spirit House Movers and Players with Amiri Baraka and the Contemporary Freedom Song Duo, Serious Bizness, Ngoma weaves poetry and song that raises contradictions and searches for a solution for a just and peaceful world. Ngoma was the Prop Slam winner of the 1997 National Poetry Slam Competition in Middletown and was published in African Voices Magazine, Long Shot Anthology, The Underwood Review, Signifyin' Harlem Review, Bum Rush The Page: A Def Poetry Jam Anthology, Poems On The Road To Peace (Volumes 1-3). Let Loose On The World: Celebrating Amiri Baraka at 75 and The Understanding Between Foxes and Light He was featured in the PBS spoken word documentary, "The Apro-Poets," with Allen Ginsberg, and was recently initiated as a Priest of Ifa in Ibadan, Nigeria. He is also a Level 2 Reiki practitioner trained at Yale University School of Nursing. His newest CD, "Lessons from the Book of Osayemi," is available on CDBaby.com, iTunes, Amazon and Bandcamp. He is a member of the Canvas of Words Poetry Tour. More information is available at:

<https://www.wendyanguloproductions.com/featured-artists/ngoma-hill/>

### **Hartford Poet Laureate Frederick-Douglass Knowles II**

Frederick-Douglass Knowles II is a poet, educator and activist involved in community education. He is the inaugural poet laureate for the City of Hartford. His collection of poetry, BlackRoseCity, was featured at the 2018 Association of Writers & Writing Programs (AWP). His works have been featured in the Connecticut River Review, Sinkhole Magazine, Poems on the Road to Peace: A Collective Tribute to Dr. King Volume 2, Lefoko magazine and Fingernails Across the Chalkboard: Poetry and Prose on HIV/AIDS from the Black Diaspora. His poem "Mason Freeman Cuts Jenkins Down" has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize. His sonnet "Sunday School in the 90's (the way I understood it)" won the 2019 Nutmeg Poetry Award. Frederick-Douglass is an associate professor of English at Three Rivers Community College in Norwich.

### **Puppet Show & Performance with Iyaba Mandingo**

Iyaba Ibo Mandingo is a painter, sculptor, poet, playwright, actor, singer and work in progress. He has performed in venues in the U.S. and abroad. His recently released collection of poetry titled "Fu You Tongue Heavy Lakka '56" is available on Amazon and is currently on a Northeast American tour. Iyaba's one-man play "unFRAMED" enjoyed a sold-out, six-week off-Broadway run in 2017, after touring South Africa and Nigeria. His newest performance piece AFRIKA360, which made its debut in November 2017, began touring in the fall of 2018.

### **When Women Speak with Ameerah Shabazz-Bilal and other poets**

Ameerah Shabazz-Bilal has written, produced and directed many student-based productions in the area of spoken word and has also served as hostess to local poetry venues in the Jersey area. Ameerah is the host, founder and facilitator of “When Women Speak,” a cultural venue featuring women artists, poets and entertainers. She is also the founder, facilitator and co-host of “When People Speak.” She is the author and illustrator of the book Breathing Through Concrete (an anthology of poems), a published illustrator and a photographer specializing in capturing life’s moments digitally, through art and the power of spoken word. She is a featured poet and author in published works such as Every Kinda Lady and Her Sisters’ Pages, the revolutionary anthology of poems Black Lives Matter 2020, Soup Can Magazine and A Womb of Violet, Volume II: Blackness, Resistance and Being. She has facilitated poetry programs for middle school students and has published more than 300 student authors and illustrators in that capacity.

### **Hartford’s Proud Drill Drum and Dance under the leadership of Duffy and Terry Starks**

Hartford’s Proud aims to integrate sound, movement and artistry in the overall development of youth and expose youth to bigger and greater opportunities so that they excel academically, socially, and artistically throughout life. We have been supporting hundreds of youth per year in Hartford through our after-school music programming. HPDDD has won numerous competitions and perform at many events nationwide including: March for Our Lives, Climate Change March, Hartford Athletic soccer games, Yard Goats baseball games and more.

### **The Transcribers Collective, Poetry**

## **SATURDAY/SUNDAY**

### **Every Kinda Lady and Her Sisters’ Pages Anthology Contributors Reading**

### **Hartford’s L.I.T. Anthology Contributors Reading**

## **‘HONEYWATA’ AWARD**

### **Annual Award in Honor of Jamilah T. Muhammad, known on the stage as “HoneyWata”**

Jamilah T. Muhammad was a devoted poet and performer for more than 30 years, developing her ear for simile from poets like her father Abdul Rahman Muhammad, Maya Angelou, Nikki Giovanni and Saul Williams. Raised in a family with 10 children in White Plains, New York, Jamilah drew from her past to place it into your present. She performed in her “sensu-serious” style in venues along the East Coast and served as the MC/featured artist during her time in Mississippi hosting a weekly open mic called, Expressyosoul. As a resident of Connecticut, this mother of two shared her talents in various local venues, allowing them a swig of her HoneyWata words, one sip at a time. She was a multifaceted artist, author, poet, spoken word

performer, singer, actress, visual artist and jewelry maker — and she was confident and competent in all that she did. As an open mic host, she knew how to take charge of the audience with her presence, poise and speech. Honeywata was an active executive founding member of Hartford's L.I.T. In addition, she was a staple and volunteer at the Annual Indie Soul Festival in Massachusetts. Jamilah was the epitome of a modern-day Renaissance woman with deep roots in her community. Her presence is one that you will never forget, and her energy irreplaceable. Through our grief and with much love, we are able to celebrate and acknowledge all the beauty of Honeywata and honor her memory with The Jamilah T. Muhammad 'Honeywata' Award. This award will be given to an artist within the New England Region that most potently exemplifies Honeywata's confident poetic energy, spiciness and drive as a multitalented creative artist.

Application information and instructions are available at: <https://forms.gle/ZzArg2NubwcRn8Qt9>.

The deadline to submit is Aug. 15. Applications must include a profile picture, a brief bio and an essay of no more than 500 words explaining why you are the best artist for this award. To qualify you must be between 17-65 years old, a resident of the New England Region (Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Rhode Island) and a published poet.

## **ABOUT HARTFORD'S LIT**

### **Hartford's L.I.T. (Literary Integrated Trailblazers) Team:**

Nzima Sherylle Hutchings, visionary/founder and CEO  
T'challa Williams, executive co-founder  
Lashawn Henderson Middleton, founding member  
Alphonso McGriff, founding member

### **T'challa Williams**

[www.tchallawilliams.com](http://www.tchallawilliams.com)

The Lover & The Revolutionary (poetry)  
Papers on My Floor (poetry)  
The Power in the Valley (nonfiction)  
I am my Story (nonfiction)  
Promises' Keeper 31 Day Devotional (nonfiction)  
Blessed Not Broken Vol. 4 The Power of Letting Go (nonfiction)  
Vehemence (poetry and short stories)

### **Nzima Hutchings**

[www.nzimahse.com](http://www.nzimahse.com)

Every Kinda Lady Expressive Writing Prompts and Journal  
Every Kinda Lady Monologues in Poetr  
Poetry Café Spiels an Eclectic Blend  
We Be Two Word Poetry  
Aishah and Nia Share Words: Arabic & English

Every Kinda Lady and Her Sisters' Pages 2020 Poetic Anthology  
Unmasking to Authenticity

**Published Journals (Nzima's Journal Designs)**

I Am Knia, She Wrote It...Then Spoken Worded it  
My Red Book  
Making the Importing Meetings with Myself  
Beyond Queen-able in My Journey  
Beyond Struggle  
Writing More Than Hijab Stories  
Every Kinda Young Lady  
Free Brown Lady  
100 Day of Power Moves  
My Black Nasty Kinky Twisted Poetry  
She Writes  
Café Journals  
Every Kinda Lady Morning Page  
Of Breath and Page