



PRESS RELEASE

Contact:

Steve Scarpa

Manager, Communications and Public Relations

Cell: 860-559-4873

E-mail: sscarpa@hplct.org

Hartford Public Library To Hold Beyond Words Online December 3 at 7 pm

HARTFORD – Beyond Words, Hartford Public Library’s annual signature fundraising event, will move this year from downtown to the comfort of your home.

The virtual event premieres Thursday, December 3, 2020, 7:00 on the Library’s YouTube channel, a compendium of library videos, including our acclaimed Baby Grand Jazz series, children’s programming, classes for adults and more.

Click here to register for the event: <https://www.hplbeyondwords.com/register>

Click here to donate to the event: <https://www.hplbeyondwords.com/sponsor-donate>

Click here to subscribe to HPL’s YouTube Channel:

https://www.youtube.com/user/HPLCT?sub_confirmation=1

Beyond Words 2020 will be a virtual experience produced by MediaVision Creative, a part of Connecticut Public Media. The 20 to 30-minute video will delve deeply into the life of HPL, highlighting stories of the people it serves, those who devote their lives to the library, and authors who have drawn their inspiration from libraries.

Critically acclaimed and bestselling writers Wally Lamb (the honorary chair of Beyond Words), Julia Alvarez, Amity Gaige, Christina Baker Kline, and Jean Kwok will highlight the event.

“The spread of the virus has forced to rethink a lot of the ways we live our lives. Rethinking our annual Beyond Words event, which normally takes place in person in downtown Hartford, has been a joyful process. Listening to stories from such magnificent writers about what libraries have meant to them and laying it side by side with the work we do on a daily basis has been an inspiration. We are so excited to share this beautiful film. While we will miss celebrating in person with all of our friends, Beyond Words 2020 will let us to come together while we are apart,” Bridget Quinn-Carey, HPL’s president and CEO.

The event co-chairs are Cate D’Italia and Beth Papermaster.

The event supports a wide array of HPL's programming and initiatives. Here are some examples of how support can help:

- Funding for immigrants to file their paperwork for citizenship
- Preparing adults to earn a high school diploma or enter the job market
- Providing Digital Library Lab student stipends for introduction to historical photography and scanning
- Providing funding for BlueBots, a STEM children's toy that will teach coding to Hartford's youth
- Funding a poetry workshop
- Providing funding for permanent StoryWalks, an outdoor reading experience for families, in three city parks
- Providing YouMedia, a teen center, with digital photography equipment
- Supporting performances by Hartford musicians.

For more information about the event or to make a donation, visit hplbeyondwords.com.

AUTHOR BIOS

Honorary Chair: Wally Lamb

<http://www.wallylamb.net/>

Wally Lamb is the author of six *New York Times* best-selling novels: *I'll Take You There*, *We Are Water*, *Wishin' and Hopin'*, *The Hour I First Believed*, *I Know This Much is True*, and *She's Come Undone* and was twice selected for Oprah's Book Club.

Julia Alvarez

<https://www.juliaalvarez.com/>

Alvarez has written novels (*How the García Girls Lost Their Accents*, *In the Time of the Butterflies*, *¡Yo!*, *In the Name of Salomé*, *Saving the World*, *Afterlife*), collections of poems (*Homecoming*, *The Other Side/ El Otro Lado*, *The Woman I Kept to Myself*), nonfiction (*Something to Declare*, *Once Upon A Quinceañera*, and *A Wedding in Haiti*), and numerous books for young readers (including the *Tía Lola Stories* series, *Before We Were Free*, *finding miracles*, *Return to Sender* and *Where Do They Go?*). Alvarez's awards include the 2013 National Medal of Arts given by President Obama.

Amity Gaige

<https://www.amitygaige.com/>

Amity Gaige is the author of four novels, *O My Darling*, *The Folded World*, *Schroder*, and the forthcoming *Sea Wife* (Knopf, April 2020). Amity is the winner of a Fulbright Fellowship, and fellowships at the MacDowell and Yaddo colonies. In 2016, she was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship for Fiction. Her previous novel *Schroder* has been translated into eighteen languages, and was shortlisted for The Folio Prize in the UK in 2014 and for L'Express Reader's Prize in France. *Schroder* was named one of Best Books of 2013 by *The New York Times Book Review*, *The Huffington Post*, *Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Kirkus*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *Publisher's Weekly*, among many others. She currently lives with her family in West Hartford, Connecticut. She had to learn to sail in order to write *Sea Wife*. She learned that she is not a gifted sailor, so she will stick to writing about it.

Christina Baker Kline

<http://christinabakerkline.com/>

A #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of eight novels, including *The Exiles*, *Orphan Train*, and *A Piece of the World*, Christina Baker Kline is published in 40 countries. Her novels have received the New England Prize for Fiction, the Maine Literary Award, and a Barnes & Noble Discover Award, among other prizes, and have been chosen by hundreds of communities, universities and schools as “One Book, One Read” selections. Her essays, articles, and reviews have appeared in publications such as the *New York Times* and the *NYT Book Review*, *The Boston Globe*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *LitHub*, *Psychology Today*, and *Salon*.

Jean Kwok

<https://www.jeankwok.com/>

Jean Kwok is the award-winning, *New York Times* and international bestselling author of *Searching for Sylvie Lee*, *Girl in Translation* and *Mambo in Chinatown*. Her work has been published in twenty countries and taught in universities, colleges and high schools across the world. An instant *New York Times* bestseller, *Searching for Sylvie Lee* was selected for the Today Show Book Club and featured in *The New York Times*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *CNN*, *The New York Post*, *The Washington Post*, *O Magazine*, *People*, *Entertainment Weekly* and more. Jean has been chosen for numerous honors including the American Library Association Alex Award, the Chinese American Librarians Association Best Book Award and the *Sunday Times* EFG Short Story Award international shortlist.

About Hartford Public Library

Now celebrating its 126th year, Hartford Public Library remains at the forefront of redefining the urban library experience in the 21st Century. With seven locations throughout the city, the library provides education, intellectual enrichment and cultural development for thousands of children, youth and adults every year. Hartford Public Library has also gained local and national recognition for its wide range of new initiatives and partnerships designed to meet the needs of a diverse and dynamic city and region, including immigration services, employment assistance and youth leadership training. www.hplct.org.