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## **Hartford's L.I.T. Announces 3rd Annual Hartford Book Festival**

**(HARTFORD, CT, September 13, 2021)** Hartford Public Library (HPL) is partnering with Hartford's L.I.T. (Literary Integrated Trailblazers) to co-host the 3rd Annual Hartford Book Festival as a three day event from Friday September 17th to Sunday September 19th 2021 at the Downtown Library at 500 Main Street, Hartford and FREE CNTR at 460 New Britain Avenue, Hartford.

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 non-traditional communities.

H.L.I.T., along with local artists, business owners and Hartford residents came together for the last two years to host the first and second Hartford Book Festival at Hartford Public Library with the theme "How are the Children?" and "2020 Visions & Reflections," respectively. This year, the theme is **2020One Love One Life**, 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 author vendors, live & virtual poetry performances, in person & virtual workshops, panel discussion, youth activities, readings, book giveaways & more.

**Writers' Workshops:** Friday, September 17th 10am-3pm  
Hartford Public Library - Downtown  
500 Main St. Hartford, CT

**Hartford Book Festival:** Saturday, September 18th 10am-4pm  
Hartford Public Library - Downtown  
500 Main St. Hartford, CT

**Night of Poetic Musings:** Sunday, September 19th 3-9pm

FREE CNTR  
460 New Britain Ave. Hartford, CT

To register go to: [bit.ly/HartfordBookFestival3](http://bit.ly/HartfordBookFestival3)

**Hartford's L.I.T.: The Team**

Nzima Sherylle Hutchings: H.L.I.T. visionary and CEO, Owner and founder of Every Kinda Lady Co., Literary Wellness and Expressive Writing Coach, Author, Poet, Custom Journal Designer, Community Advocate for the Greater Hartford Advocacy Center, and 100 Women of Color Honoree.

T'challa Williams: H.L.I.T Executive Co-Founder, Spokeswomen, Chief Adviser and CEO of Wright Ink Productions, Author, Actress, Poet. In addition, a Community Activist, Chairperson of the School Governance Council for HPHS.

Alphonso McGriff, III: H.L.I.T Executive Co-Founder, Spokesman, Liaison, as well as, Author, Public, Intellectual Speaker, Inventor and creator of Conscious Conversations and Alphonso Speaks and a Cosmetologist.

Lashawn Henderson: Middleton: Founding member and Commemorative Arts Award Official, as well as owner of Lashawn Bakes, Author and Poet.

Naomi Williams, HLIT Member and Collegiate Liaison, and Poetess.

For inquiry about Hartford's L.I.T.:

[Hartfordslit@gmail.com](mailto:Hartfordslit@gmail.com)

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram

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

For more information about Hartford Public Library, visit [hplct.org](http://hplct.org).

## -----SELECTION OF EVENTS-----

### FRIDAY-----

#### **You Are All that and More - Sankofa Journal Writing Workshop**

*Friday: 10:15-11:30am - In-person*

With Renay Intisar Jihad

Journaling increases mindfulness, and mindfulness is a keystone habit. Participants will gain an understanding of the benefits of life-long journaling as a keystone habit, practice journal writing using self-selected prompts inspired by famous Black Americans, share responses with attendees, and receive positive feedback from fellow participants.

Participants will be encouraged to use this journal book individually, as a group, or with their family because the truth is, "YOU ARE ALL THAT AND MORE." They will also receive sentence starters, top-ten lists, and online resources suitable for reluctant or inexperienced writers. This is a popular and interactive workshop. This workshop encourages love for self, and love for those other than your self. The power of Sankofa (The Sankofa symbol represents the value of learning from the past to move forward into the future. (San – to return; ko – to go; fa – to fetch, to seek and to take) helps build and sustain a healthy-minded community. Ages 16 through adults. Renay Intisar Jihad, B.A. M.Ed., C.A.G.S. is a retired teacher of English language arts, literacy coach, and Reading Specialist. She spent three exciting decades in the teaching profession and now shares what she has learned and practiced by authoring and publishing educational curriculum, juvenile fiction, short stories, poetry, and news articles. Renay regularly contributes to the Muslim Journal, AF AM Point of View newspaper, Medium.com, and PoetryVibe.com. She serves as a board member and volunteer for MetaStellar.com and PAHMUSA (Pan African Historical Museum). Renay currently works as a Test Administrator for Pearson Vue. Purchase her books on Amazon.com. Visit <https://www.renayspace.com> for more information.

#### **Steam up The Pages: Sensual Scene Writing**

With Lyndell Williams

*Friday: 11:00am-12:00pm - Virtual Facebook live - ages 18+*

Romance allows writers to center the connections between the sensual and eros. Romance books focus on ways characters form and maintain emotional and intimate connections. Tantalizing sexual elements feed character development and the plot, showing the essence of sexual beings falling in love. Rampant derision of romance containing sensual and erotic scenes plagues the genre. Often, people uncomfortable with depictions of sex will lash out, failing to appreciate genre standards and reader expectations, using their hang ups to malign books and authors, lumping it as all "dirty," or trying to degenerate the writing.

Workshop core objectives: During the Steam up The Pages: Sensual Scene Writing presentation, I will address some misconceptions about sensual romance writing and

the significance of erotic content in books, how they can feed character arcs and plot development. I will also cover some essentials to writing steamy scenes. Participants will potentially foster a positive appreciation for sensual scene writing and become more comfortable with this important aspect of genre fiction writing. Layla Abdullah-Poulos holds a B.A. in Historical Studies and Literature, M.A. in Liberal Studies, and an AC in Women and Gender Studies. She is a homeschooling mother, adjunct instructor, anti-racism trainer, and gender equity advocate.

Layla is a cultural critic with a background in literary criticism specializing in romance. She is the founder and managing editor of the NbA Muslims blog on Patheos and a contributor to multiple peer-reviewed and popular online publications. An award-winning writer and bestselling author, her writing and social commentary highlight issues at intersections of faith, race, and gender.

### **Anti-Racist Creative Writing Workshop**

With Virginia Estelle

*Friday: 11:45am - In-Person - ages 13+*

Most creative writing workshops (and writing workshops in general) are designed by cisgender heterosexual white males to favor others like them. As a Trinity alum, I participated and wrote in many workshops that asked me to bend and twist my identity, reality, and existence into these unseasoned norms. I participated in these oppressive workshops but I also curated a reading list and curriculum for myself. Outside of school I continued to craft my own writing with Black and Brown often queer peers and colleagues. In my journey to find my voice, I have developed a workshop which I am excited to share. I have developed this workshop with the aid of many texts but primarily “The Anti-Racist Writing Workshop” by Felicia Rose Chavez. Participants are welcome to enjoy this text prior to the workshop but it is not required. Participants can bring writing utensils and notebooks and computers or tablets but notebooks and writing utensils will be provided as well. Workshop core objectives: writing creatively in an anti racist model.

### **Black Indigenous Women of Color Healing Literary Art Orientation with Multimedia**

With Nzima Sherylle Hutchings

*Friday: 12:45pm - In-person*

Emotional Equity Access and self care using writing as a healing tool. Participants will be given Writing prompts, exercises, and listen to empowering music.

### **Show, Don't Tell**

With T'challa Williams

*Friday: 3:30pm - Virtual Facebook Live*

Workshop core objectives: To introduce writers to the importance of showing in their writing. In order to make our writing as impactful as possible, we must expand our vocabulary and give character to everything in the room. Authors will engage in writing practice to see the importance of showing what is happening in your literary work.

### **Father & daughter Kizzy koo (Literary Legacy) and Superheroes**

With Evie Erin and The Erwin's

*Friday: 4:45pm - Virtual Facebook Live*

Evie Erin and The Erwin's is a supergroup of writers and the owners of Hurstonfifth, LLC, a family owned independent publishing company. Collectively they co-author several series including The Kizzy Kloo Mystery Series. You can learn all about the family via their website [www.hurstonfifth.com](http://www.hurstonfifth.com)

### **Pen Progression: Managing Writer's Block**

With Terrance Mack

*Friday: 6:00pm - Virtual Facebook Live*

*Saturday: 11:30am - In-person*

Workshop will engage the audience in several creative writing exercises designed to get the creative juices flowing and inspire their pen to get back into action.

### **Poetry Globally**

*Friday: 7:00-9:00pm - Virtual Facebook Live*

Hosted by Ameerah Shabazz

Featuring: Kiara Marie, Nicki Davis, Paradise Crysti, Stacey Lawrence, Dr. Santosh, Nimat Muhammad, Jawariah Raheem, Megha Sood, Leloni Lopez, Meenakshi Mohan, Omayma Khayat, Nettie Long, Miriam Kramer, Stephanie Conley, Rae Simone

## **SATURDAY-----**

### **I AM HPL - Youth & Family Workshop**

With Candace Donaldson

*Saturday: 11:00am & 11:45am (Two sessions) - In-person*

Participants will engage in a hands-on creative experience. Participants will boost their self confidence through painting and a writing activity. Participants will create a masterpiece that they will keep forever.

### **Pen Progression: Managing Writer's Block**

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*Friday: 6:00pm - Virtual Facebook Live*

*Saturday: 11:30am - In-person*

Workshop will engage the audience in several creative writing exercises designed to get the creative juices flowing and inspire their pen to get back into action.

### **My Body Belongs To Me!**

With Larissa Rhone

*Saturday: 11:30am-12:15pm - In-person - Youth ages 5-8 and families*

Talking to children about body safety, boundaries, safe and unsafe touch can be tedious and uncomfortable. Workshop is geared towards normalizing the conversation about child sexual abuse prevention/awareness between children and adults. Larissa H. Rhone is an award-winning advocate, speaker, third-generation sexual abuse survivor, a sickle cell warrior and author of the book *My Body Belongs To Me!* She founded of Journey 2 Free, a survivor-led international movement focused on empowering survivors to reassign the shame by speaking and using their voices and stories (individually and collectively) as a tool in preventing, interrupting, and healing from child sexual abuse. Larissa's book can be purchased on Amazon. Visit [Journey2Free.com](http://Journey2Free.com) for more information. Her 10-year-old son Jhayden Morrison will be her co-lead.

### **A Gallery of Treasures (Literary Dramatized Runway)**

With Rosa Bailey

*Saturday: 1:00-1:45pm - In-person*

A Gallery of Treasures will be a re-enactment of influential Literary people in a sketch format. The characters will be introduced and showcased at a Marketplace. There will be conversations through poetry, affirmations and quotes. The event will be for 45 minutes with 8 youths ages 9-18 years old. Some of the characters will be; Maya Angelou, Langston Hughes & Harriet Tubman...

Performers for Gallery of Treasures:

Trunaii Gomes, age 14 - MLC High School Rosa Parks Dialogue "Not Tired"

Messiah Price, age 12 - Grace Academy - Maya Angelou's Poem "I'll Rise"

Vincent Gil, Johnson age 11 - Sage Park Middle - Langston Hughes "Dream Variations"

Jamar Bailey, age 23 - Announcer

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

With T'challa Williams

*Saturday: 1:15pm - In-person - ages 13+*

1) Finding your voice; 2) Elevating your voice; Giving your voice teeth

Anything that we have passion about we can take a stand for, or shed light on. There are many ways to advocate for the things that you love. The most important thing is to take the first step to be heard. Advocacy is vital in community building. We speak our

truth to band with others so we can change the circumstances not only for ourselves, but for others.

### **The Value of Vulnerability Workshop**

With Frederick-Douglass Knowles II, Hartford Poet Laureate

*Saturday: 1:30-2:30pm - In -person*

Vulnerability expressed through poetry can provide the opportunity to disclose distinct feelings, attitudes, concerns or beliefs with a person (place or thing) through use of the page that you may not otherwise be able to share in person.

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* by Yale University Press; *Lefoko* magazine, and *Fingernails Across the Chalkboard: Poetry and Prose on HIV/AIDS from the Black Diaspora* by Third World Press. 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.

### **Puppetry and Poetry with Iyabo Mandingo**

*Puppet Show/ Performance - Saturday: 1:30-2:15pm - In-person*

*Poet presentation - Saturday: 2:45pm*

Iyaba Ibo Mandingo is a painter; sculptor; poet; playwright; actor; singer; 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 in 2017, after touring South Africa and Nigera. His newest performance piece *AFRIKA360*, which made its debut in November 2017, began touring in the Fall of 2018.

### **Women Write their stories to Heal, Create, Own & Bloom in this One Life**

With Nzima Sherylle Hutchings

*Saturday: 2:00pm - 2:45pm - In-person - ages 16+*

Participants will receive an overview of the Kintsugi philosophy, write from inspired writing prompts, and learn the power of healing words and expressive writing from the, *Every kinda Lady Expressive writing Prompts and Journal* book written by Nzima Hutchings.



## **When Women Speak - Poet**

*Saturday: 3:00pm - In-person*

Hosted by Ameerah Shabazz

Featuring: Kiara Marie, Stephanie Conley, Mariah Ayscue, Jai Simone, Leloni Lopez, Dayana Poulard

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' (issue 2) 2021 and '*Womb of Violet*', *Volume II: Blackness, Resistance, and Being* 2021. She has facilitated poetry programs for middle school students and has published over 300 student authors and illustrators in that capacity.

## **SUNDAY-----**

### **Evening of Poetical Musings Sunday at the Free CNTR**

Sunday: 3:00-9:00pm - In Person

Hosted by Noel A. Figueroa

Noel A. Figueroa is a Poet, Author, Blogger, Workshop Facilitator & Event Host from Brooklyn, NY who has been reading & writing poetry for over 10 years. He self-published his first book of Poems, "One Man's Journey" back in 2007 and has been actively Blogging since 2012 through his site, "The Anointed Pen Scrolls" on WordPress.com. He has shared his poetry at various venues such as Medgar Evers College, The Harlem Tea Room & The Nuyorican Cafe. He has also shared his work at various Church events hosted by Bible Faith Tabernacle, Beulah Church of The Nazarine, and his home Church, Nazareth Christian Fellowship to name a few. In 2018, he began a workshop called "Poets With Purpose" to provide a forum for all who love Poetry and those who desire to learn more about Poetry. In 2021, he launched "The P.W.P. Sessions", a Podcast that interviews new or established Poets and gives them space to perform along with an audience Q & A session.

**Featured Poet Tarishi M. Shuler A.K.A: M.I.D.N.I.G.H.T.**



Tarishi has performed all across the country. He performed at Hot 97Fm New York, Yale University, Nuyorican Cafe and DaPoetry Lounge in CA. He has won many prestigious poetry slam competitions; and opened for many notable individuals such as Saul Williams, President Clinton and many more. [www.13thmidnight.com](http://www.13thmidnight.com)

**The Jamilah T. Muhammad ‘Honeywata’ Award 2021** Recipient is, NBS Malay. She is an author of several books, a few including poetry. She is a spoken word artist, a songstress, guitarist, and actress. NBS Malay voice and song could be heard on the radio as well as annually to sing the National Anthem as invited by Mayor Sarno. NBS Malay performs on diverse platforms for social change, justice and Black Lives Matter events. Moreover, is a motivational speaker in middle schools and support the youths between Connecticut and Massachusetts. Confidently she states her name Nbs Malay, meaning “naturally beautiful and sophisticated”. She has been performing and writing since her days in diapers. She says her main job is to push the community’s talents at her open mics that she host every other Monday (Speak N Eat). She has a humble heart and deserves this award.

**Jamilah T. Muhammad**, known on the stage as “HoneyWata”, was a devoted poet and performer for over 30 years, developing her ear for simile from poets like her father Abdul Rahmaan 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, 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., (Literary Integrated Trailblazers). In addition, she was a staple and volunteer at the Annual Indie Soul Festival in Massachusetts.

## LOCAL AUTHOR VENDOR HIGHLIGHTS-----

**Miosotys Santiago:** *God's Diamond "Memoir"* - Exemplify2edify.org

**Nadia N. Sims:** *A Soft Place to Land* (Poetry)

<https://www.amazon.com/Soft-Place-Land-Nadia-Sims>

**Noel A. Figueroa:** *One Man's Journey* (Poetry)

<https://theanointedpenscrolls.wordpress.com/2020/05/13/now-available-one-mans-journey/>

**Mix Race Love Magazine:** <https://mixracelovemagazin.wixsite.com/website>

**T'challa Williams:** *The Lover & The Revolutionary* (Poetry), *Papers on My Floor* (Poetry), *The Power in the Valley* (Non-Fiction), *Promises' Keeper 31 Day Devotional* (Non-Fiction), *Vehemence* (Poetry & short stories)

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

**Nzima Hutchings:**

Books - *Every Kinda Lady Expressive Writing Prompts and Journal*, *Every Kinda Lady" Monologues in Poetry*, *Poetry Café Spiels an Eclectic Blend*, *We Be Two Word Poetry*, *Aishah and Nia Share Words* (Arabic to English children's book), *Every Kinda Lady and Her Sisters' Pages 2020 Poetic Anthology* (Edited & Authored), *Unmasking to Authenticity*

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

Published Journals (Nzima's Journal Designs) - *I Am Knia*, *She Wrote It...Then Spoken Worded it*, *My Red Book* (red book/pages), *Making the Importing Meetings with Myself*, *Beyond Queen-able in My Journey*, *Beyond Struggle*, *Writing More Than Hijab Stories*, *Every Kinda Young Lady*, *She Wrote it...Then Spoken Worded It!*, *Free Brown Lady*, *100 Day of Power Moves*, *My Black Nasty Kinky Twisted Poetry*, *She Writes*, *\*Café Journals* (launch February 2021), *Every Kinda Lady Morning Page*; *Of Breath and Page*

**Renay Intisar Jihad**

[https://www.amazon.com/s?k=RENAY+INTISAR+JIHAD&ref=nb\\_sb\\_noss](https://www.amazon.com/s?k=RENAY+INTISAR+JIHAD&ref=nb_sb_noss)

<https://www.renayspace.com>

**The Key Bookstore**

[Keybookstore.com](http://Keybookstore.com)

**Savanda Latrece:** *"Virtuous Women Single, But Not Alone"* *"Mental Money Motivation, Keys To Success"* *"We Bow Down In Prayer 30 Days of Prayer & Meditation"* *"Changing Your Attitude, Changes Your Altitude 30 Day Journal"* and *"The Fornicating Preacher, The Naked Truth"* Books are NonFiction and can be purchased on Amazon.com

**Larissa H. Rhone**

*My Body Belongs To Me!: A book about body ownership, healthy boundaries and communication*

[https://www.amazon.com/dp/1954553005/ref=cm\\_sw\\_r\\_cp\\_api\\_glt\\_fabc\\_KEG0GBXJNV68W4J5NJ18](https://www.amazon.com/dp/1954553005/ref=cm_sw_r_cp_api_glt_fabc_KEG0GBXJNV68W4J5NJ18)

**My Body Belongs To Me!: A Coloring and Activity Book**

[https://www.amazon.com/dp/1954553013/ref=cm\\_sw\\_r\\_cp\\_api\\_glt\\_fabc\\_YE97E4BNHDTNECF0Y0MM](https://www.amazon.com/dp/1954553013/ref=cm_sw_r_cp_api_glt_fabc_YE97E4BNHDTNECF0Y0MM)

**Purposeful Brokenness**

[www.leiandpoetry.org](http://www.leiandpoetry.org)

**Lyndell Williams:** My Way to You; Sweet Love, Bitter Fruit; Building on Broken Dreams; Open to Love; Trapped in Sin; The Groom; A Stroke at Midnight

<https://www.amazon.com/Lyndell-Williams/e/B07FQTMRCG/>