



LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

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Library of Virginia Announces Featured Speaker, Special Guests, and Virtual Programming Schedule for 2020 Literary Awards

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(RICHMOND, VIRGINIA) – The Library of Virginia Literary Awards will be celebrated virtually this year with a week of author conversations and special events beginning Tuesday, October 13, 2020. Anchoring the week is the Library of Virginia Literary Awards Celebration on Saturday, October 17, with our author finalists, presenters, special guests, and featured speaker **Douglas Brinkley**, a U.S. presidential historian and best-selling author. This annual event, sponsored by **Dominion Energy**, is an excellent opportunity for anyone who loves the written word to interact with amazing Virginia authors through a lively and informative online format. Each virtual event begins at 6:00 PM and is accessible to the public, free of charge, through the Library of Virginia’s Facebook (Facebook.com/LibraryofVA) and YouTube (Youtube.com/LibraryofVA) pages.

This year’s week of events also provides a way for those who believe in the Library’s work to support its programs and offerings through financial contributions. Multiple donors to the Library (through the Library of Virginia Foundation) have pledged over \$15K in challenge support to be matched throughout the week. Gifts to the Foundation help support programs, special projects, and exhibitions that fall outside the Library’s budget as a state agency. Those who wish to help the Foundation meet its challenge can go to <https://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/litawards/contribute.htm> to contribute.

VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING SCHEDULE

Fiction Panel – Tuesday, October 13, 6:00 PM

Bethanne Patrick, writer, editor, and freelance book reviewer for the *Washington Post* and *Los Angeles Times*, will moderate a panel with the Fiction Award finalists **Angie Kim, Tara Laskowski, and Christopher Tilghman**.

Poetry Panel – Wednesday, October 14, 6:00 PM

Poet Laureate of Virginia **Luisa A. Igloria** will moderate a conversation with Poetry Award finalists **Lauren A. Alleyne, David Huddle, and Benjamin Naka-Hasebe Kingsley**.

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Nonfiction Panel – Thursday, October 15, 6:00 PM

Traci Thomas, host of the podcast *The Stacks*, will round out the author conversations with Nonfiction Award finalists **Tressie McMillan Cottom**, **Andrea Dennis**, **Mary M. Lane**, and **Erik Nielson**.

Art in Literature: The Mary Lynn Kotz Award – Friday, October 16, 6:00 PM

This unique award, established in 2013, is named in honor of Mary Lynn Kotz, author of the award-winning biography *Rauschenberg: A Life*. The award recognizes an outstanding book published in the previous year that is written primarily in response to a work (or works) of art while also showing the highest literary quality as a creative or scholarly work. The judges selected **Philip J. Deloria**'s book *Becoming Mary Sully: Toward an American Indian Abstract* as this year's winner. Deloria will be recognized on Friday, October 16, 2020, during the Art in Literature: Mary Lynn Kotz Award virtual event in partnership with the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. The author will also be recognized on Saturday, October 17, 2020, during the Library's annual Virginia Literary Awards Celebration.

Literary Awards Celebration – Saturday, October 17, 6:00 PM

Award-winning Virginia author **Adriana Trigiani** returns as host for the virtual **Literary Awards Celebration** on Saturday, October 17, 2020, where the winners will be announced, including the annual People's Choice Awards.

Douglas Brinkley, U.S. presidential historian and best-selling author, will be the featured speaker on Saturday, October 17, 2020. Brinkley is the Katherine Tsanoff Brown Chair in Humanities and professor of history at Rice University, a CNN presidential historian, and a contributing editor at *Vanity Fair*. He works in many capacities in the world of public history, including on boards, museums, colleges, and historical societies. The *Chicago Tribune* dubbed him "America's New Past Master." The New-York Historical Society has chosen Brinkley as its official U.S. presidential historian. His most recent book, *American Moonshot: John F. Kennedy and the Great Space Race*, is an homage to scientific ingenuity, human curiosity, and the boundless American spirit. His book *Cronkite* won the Sperber Prize, while *The Great Deluge: Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans, and the Mississippi Gulf Coast* received the Robert F. Kennedy Book Award. He has received a Grammy Award as co-producer for the album *Presidential Suite* and seven honorary doctorates in American studies. His two-volume annotated work *The Nixon Tapes* won the Arthur S. Link – Warren F. Kuehl Prize. He is a member of the Century Association, the Council of Foreign Relations, and the James Madison Council of the Library of Congress.

Each winner will receive an engraved crystal book award and a monetary prize of \$2,500. For awards information and a list of past winners and finalists, please visit www.lva.virginia.gov/public/litawards/.

Support for the event has been provided by Dominion Energy, Weinstein Properties, Carole and Marcus Weinstein, MercerTrigiani, Steve and Kathy Rogers, Anna Moser and Peter Schwartz, and Christian & Barton.

For sponsorship information or more information about the virtual events for the 23rd Annual Library of Virginia Awards Celebration honoring Virginia authors and friends, please call 804.692.3813.

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September 17, 2020