



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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THE LIBRARY FOUNDATION OF LOS ANGELES ANNOUNCES THE 2024 FALL SEASON OF ALOUD

Bestselling Author **André Aciman**; Emmy-Winning Actress **Uzo Aduba**; American Book Award Winner **Edwidge Danticat**; Actor, Author, and Comedian **Jenny Slate**; National Book Award Winner **Jesmyn Ward**; and many more special guests take the ALOUD stage for an unforgettable fall season.



(L-R) André Aciman, Uzo Aduba, Edwidge Danticat, Susan Minot, Luis Rodriguez, Yuval Sharon, Jenny Slate, Jesmyn Ward

LOS ANGELES – The **Library Foundation of Los Angeles** (LFLA) is proud to announce the 2024 fall season of **ALOUD**, LFLA’s celebrated literary series of conversations and readings at the Los Angeles Public Library. This season’s offerings bring together acclaimed authors, poets, actors, and visionaries for thought-provoking discussions and captivating performances.

“We’re thrilled to produce this ambitious season of ALOUD and continue our longstanding tradition of connecting brilliant thinkers with the public for inspiring discussions and engaging performances,” said **Jessica Strand**, Senior Director of Programming and Strategic Engagement. “The Library Foundation of Los Angeles presents ALOUD as a way to expand the library experience for Angelenos beyond the stacks with curated programming that features some of the best writers, poets, artists, and thinkers of our time.”

The series starts on September 4 with two-time National Book Award Winner **Jesmyn Ward** in conversation with *The Stacks* podcast host **Traci Thomas**. Ward takes the stage to discuss her latest novel, *Let Us Descend*, which has received critical acclaim and has been named one of the best books of 2023 by *The New Yorker*, *Washington Post*, and *Vanity Fair*. **Edwidge Danticat**, the American Book Award and National Book Critic Circle Award winner will join celebrated poet **Robin Coste Lewis** on September 9 to delve into her new collection of essays, *We’re Alone*, which explores themes such as environmental catastrophe, the traumas of colonialism, and resilience. In honor of National Banned Books Week, ALOUD is partnering with

WordTheatre on September 22. The event will feature actors performing selections from banned books, shedding light on the importance of our freedom to seek and express ideas.

The fall lineup continues with *New York Times* and worldwide bestselling author of *Call Me by Your Name*, **André Aciman**, discussing his new memoir; a conversation with visionary opera director **Yuval Sharon**; three-time Emmy-winning actress **Uzo Aduba** speaking about her powerful memoir; a dynamic program of Latin American poetry and music for **Downtown Día de los Muertos**; and an evening with actor, comedian, and author **Jenny Slate**. A special post-election **ALoud on Ideas** program will bring together political journalists for an important panel discussion around the pressing question of "Where is our Democracy Now?"

All programs are free and take place at the Mark Taper Auditorium of the Los Angeles Central Library unless otherwise noted.

For more information or to make reservations, please visit lfla.org/aloud.

ALoud Fall 2024 Schedule

* Denotes ticketed event

Let Us Descend: A Novel

Jesmyn Ward

In conversation with **Traci Thomas**

Wednesday, September 4 at 7:00 p.m.

Join us for a special evening with two-time National Book Award Winner **Jesmyn Ward** in conversation with **Traci Thomas**, creator and host of the critically acclaimed literary podcast *The Stacks*. Ward returns to the ALoud stage to discuss her raw, transcendent novel *Let Us Descend*. Her work has garnered considerable attention both with critics and audiences alike and *Let us Descend* is no exception—instantly a *New York Times* bestseller, chosen as an Oprah Winfrey Book Club book, and named one of the best books of 2023 by *The New Yorker*, *Washington Post*, and *Vanity Fair*, among others.

Let Us Descend describes a journey from the rice fields of the Carolinas to the slave markets of New Orleans and into the fearsome heart of a Louisiana sugar plantation. A journey that is as beautifully rendered as it is heart wrenching, the novel is “[t]he literary equivalent of an open wound from which poetry pours.”—*National Public Radio*

We're Alone

Edwidge Danticat

In conversation with **Robin Coste Lewis**

Monday, September 9 at 7:00 p.m.

ALoud welcomes American Book Award and National Book Critics Circle Award winner **Edwidge Danticat** with her new collection of essays *We're Alone*. Danticat will discuss her beautiful, varied, and complex collection with celebrated poet, writer, and former Poet Laureate of Los Angeles, **Robin Coste Lewis**.

We're Alone includes personal narrative and reportage, and explores several abiding themes: environmental catastrophe, the traumas of colonialism, motherhood, and the complexities of resilience. “Powerful. . . . [Danticat] offers an elegant commentary on injustice and the mixed feelings one’s home can engender.”
—*Kirkus Reviews*

Banned Books/WordTheatre

Sunday, September 22 at 3:00 p.m.

Kick off national **Banned Books Week** with a very special afternoon featuring actors performing selections from a few of the more than 4,000 books that have been banned in our country from public and school libraries. Special guests include **Sharon Stone** (*Basic Instinct*), **Spencer Garrett** (*Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*), **Lou Romano** (*Ratatouille*), **Jason George** (*Station 19*), **Stephen Tobolowsky** (*Groundhog Day*), **Jason Butler Harner** (*Ozark*), and more.

***The Road Is Good: How a Mother's Strength Became a Daughter's Purpose** Uzo Aduba**

In conversation with special guest

Tuesday, October 1 at 7:00 p.m. @ Zipper Hall at the Colburn School

Enjoy a unique evening with three-time Emmy-winning actress **Uzo Aduba** (*Orange Is the New Black*) as she talks about her powerful memoir, *The Road is Good: How a Mother's Strength Became a Daughter's Purpose*.

The Road Is Good is a timely memoir of Black immigrant identity, the story of an unforgettable matriarch, and a unique coming-of-age story. "With wit, insight, and heart, Aduba constructs a captivating self-portrait that doubles as an ode to her remarkable mother. In this powerful autobiography, even readers unfamiliar with Aduba's acting work will be spellbound." —Starred Review, *Publishers Weekly*

A New Philosophy of Opera*

Yuval Sharon

In conversation with **Alex Ross**

Sunday, October 6 at 3:00 p.m. @ UCLA Nimoy Theater

Don't miss this lively conversation with the visionary opera director **Yuval Sharon** and *The New Yorker's* classical music critic **Alex Ross** as they discuss Sharon's engaging new book *A New Philosophy of Opera*.

One of the world's most innovative opera impresarios, Yuval Sharon disrupts conventions by urging the performance of opera in "non-spaces" like parking lots; amplifying voices; and even performing classic works in reverse order. Surveying the role of opera in America and drawing on his experiences from Berlin to Los Angeles, Sharon lays out his vision for an "anti-elite opera," which celebrates the imagination and challenges the status quo. This book gives everyone—including those not familiar with opera—a passionate, accessible take on the world of opera.

Latino Poetry: Places We Call Home

Gloria Molina Grand Park/Latin American Anthology Poetry and Music

Saturday, October 19 at 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. @ Gloria Molina Grand Park

This jubilant program of Latin American poetry and performance will kick off the annual ***Downtown Día de los Muertos***. Celebrating the publication of *Latino Poetry: Places We Call Home*—a groundbreaking new Library of America anthology edited by **Rigoberto González**—poets **Luis Rodriguez**, **féi hernandez**, **Cynthia Guardado**, and others will share their work alongside musical performances curated by **Ceci Bastida**.

This program is presented as part of [Latino Poetry: Places We Call Home](#), a public humanities initiative taking place across the nation in 2024 and 2025, directed by Library of America and funded with generous support from the National Endowment for the Humanities and Emerson Collective.

Lifeform*

Jenny Slate

In conversation with **George Saunders**

Friday, October 25 at 7:30 p.m. @ Palace Theatre

The actor, comedian, co-creator of *Marcel the Shell*, and *New York Times* bestselling author **Jenny Slate** will host an evening complete with a live reading, a moderated conversation with celebrated *New York Times* bestselling writer **George Saunders**, and an audience Q&A.

Spend an evening of strangeness, whimsy, and hilarity with Jenny Slate, as she reads pieces from her brand-new book of essays. Journey with Slate through all of the relatable phases of life—from heartbreak to true love to pregnancy, parenthood, and all the tiny, odd details that make up a life. Tickets will also include a signed copy of *Lifeform*.

Roman Year: A Memoir

André Aciman

In conversation with **David Ulin**

Wednesday, October 30 at 7:00 p.m.

New York Times and worldwide bestselling author of *Call Me by Your Name*, **André Aciman** comes to the ALOUD stage for the first time. Aciman will discuss his new book *Roman Year* with editor, book critic, and novelist **David Ulin**.

Roman Year is a deeply romantic coming-of-age memoir of Aciman's time in Rome while on the cusp of adulthood, after his family is expelled from Egypt.

ALoud on Ideas: Democracy

Where is Our Democracy Now?

Thursday, November 14 at 7:00 p.m.

A panel discussion moderated by veteran journalist and *Vanity Fair*'s National Editor and Political Correspondent **Todd Purdum**, with guests **Elaina Plott Calabro** (*The Atlantic*), **Adam Nagourney** (*The New York Times*), and others.

We've been questioning the state of our democracy for years and though we have heard numerous voices speak to the countless issues facing our country, it is rare to hear from all sides in a thoughtful, measured conversation where we, the people, are encouraged to participate. This important post-election discussion is a must for those concerned and invested in learning and understanding our country at this moment in time. This timely conversation brings together seasoned political strategists, journalists, and academics to discuss the pressing question — "Where is our Democracy Now?"

Don't Be a Stranger

Susan Minot

In conversation with **Griffin Dunne**

Wednesday, November 20 at 7:00 p.m.

Enjoy an intimate conversation between the award-winning novelist, poet, playwright, and screenwriter **Susan Minot** and actor, director, and producer **Griffin Dunne**. These two close friends will discuss Minot's engrossing new book, *Don't Be a Stranger*.

Don't Be a Stranger is the story of a woman swept into a love affair at mid-life. With spellbinding prose, Minot has crafted a luminous novel about erotic obsession, and the hunger for intimacy, communication, oblivion. *Don't Be a Stranger* is a gripping, sensual, and provocative work from one of the most remarkable voices in contemporary fiction.

Special Thanks to Our Sponsors

ALoud is a series of conversations, readings, and performances presented by the Library Foundation of Los Angeles. ALoud is made possible thanks to support from:



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About ALoud

ALoud is the Library Foundation of Los Angeles's series of bold, powerful programs that has presented over 1,200 public programs featuring a range of authors, scientists, thinkers, artists, and more. The critically acclaimed ALoud series engages Angelenos in critical civic and cultural discourse, inspiring lifelong learning and exploring. Free and open to the public, programs will continue to evolve as we experiment, take risks, and try new ideas that are informed by the changing world and the audience we serve.

About the Library Foundation of Los Angeles

For more than 30 years, the Library Foundation of Los Angeles has partnered with the Los Angeles Public Library in its effort to provide all 3.8 million Angelenos with equitable access to thousands of free programs, resources, and services. Through fundraising, advocacy, and programming, the Library Foundation strengthens the library's commitment to educate and empower every individual in our city's diverse communities. At the Foundation, we are committed to keeping the library thriving for generations to come and to providing all Angelenos with the tools to enrich and improve their lives. For more information, please visit lfla.org.

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