Fall 2018 News and Calendar

See pages 4-5 for more information.
Quick Hits

Planning Your Year-End Giving
As we enter the last quarter of 2018, it’s a great time to think about making a year-end gift to the Library Foundation! Here are five easy ways to support your Library before the end of the year:

1. Give the gift of Membership
Your contribution is an investment toward protecting equal access to information, and funding thousands of life-changing programs and services to millions of Library patrons. You support the Library as you honor yourself and your loved ones through thoughtful, meaningful gifts.

2. Make a tax-free distribution from your IRA
If you are age 70½ or older, up to $100,000 can be distributed tax-free from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA) to support the Library.

3. Make a year-end donation in addition to your Membership dues
All donations made between November 1st - December 31st will be matched by a generous donor, doubling your impact!

4. Gift appreciated stock or mutual funds
Maximize your charitable contribution while achieving the most effective means of tax savings before the end of the year.

5. Planned Giving
You can support the Library anytime of the year by making a planned gift to the Library Foundation. Planned gifts include bequests, charitable trusts, IRAs, life insurance, and more.

Visualizing Language: Oaxaca in LA Crosses Borders
On Sunday, August 26, Angelenos came together one last time to experience Tlacolulokos’ mural on display in Central Library’s rotunda, on view since September of 2017 and in direct conversation with the Dean Cornwell murals from the 1930s. The temporary exhibition, organized in conjunction with the Getty for the Pacific Standard Time: LA/Art initiative, officially ended on August 31; however, the life of the portable mural series is far from over. The Los Angeles Public Library and Library Foundation are thrilled to announce that the murals will travel to Lille, France, as part of the recently created collection of the Museum of Latin American Art (MOLAA) in Long Beach.

As part of the project, the murals will be permanently incorporated into the collection of the Museum of Latin American Art (MOLAA) in Long Beach. Following the French exhibition, the murals will be permanently incorporated into the collection of the Museum of Latin American Art (MOLAA) in Long Beach.

Los Angeles Public Library News

An Entire World of Support for Families
As parents navigate the ups and downs of childhood, the Los Angeles Public Library’s free programs and services across the city are readily available to address the ever-changing needs of families at all stages of the journey.

We Read Together is the library’s most wide-reaching initiative that not only stimulates literacy in children as young as birth and up to age 11, but also empowers parents, caregivers, and educators in the learning process. One example of this initiative, Read, Baby, Read!, takes a hit-the-ground-running approach. This new collaboration between the Library and health clinics and hospitals provides materials and information on early literacy to expecting parents and offers every new baby in Los Angeles their free library card.

Another dynamic resource for the whole family includes the highly-interactive Storytime programs, a staple of all branch libraries. Children’s Librarian Laurie Reese at the Felipe de Neve Branch empowers parents, caregivers and educators in the learning process. She has witnessed families at all stages of the journey.

“Our family uses the library on a regular basis. This summer it had great activities for the kids, like a competition on decorating cupcakes and learning how to make slime. It’s an amazing way to bring the community together and into this fantastic space. We feel very fortunate to have this resource so close to home!”

—Alessandra Fraga

The longstanding Summer at the Library program also fosters learning for the whole family. Open to all ages of kids and teens, this summer’s slate of programs just wrapped up with over 30,000 participants. With the theme of “Reading Takes You Everywhere,” participants and their families were encouraged to explore the city—experiencing new places like Underwood Farm to pick fresh produce, or going to the California African American Museum to learn about history.

Summer at the Library also offers another critical service for families during the school break: volunteers secured nearly 11,800 free lunches to children and teens across 15 libraries. This program has become hugely successful in part to teen volunteers who can earn their California Food Handler Certificate and get training in proper food service protocols. As the teen volunteers gain valuable work experience, they also become role models for the younger kids.

“Our free lunch program has a large impact, for families and for the Library,” says Teri Markson, Senior Librarian for Children’s Services. “At baby and toddler programs, you’ll hear fears about topics like health, nutrition, and education.

“We are so thankful for everyone’s support and for the opportunity to work with such amazing partners,” she says. “We are so thankful for everyone’s support and for the opportunity to work with such amazing partners.”

The Library is committed to making sure all of the programs are interactive, participatory and meet the needs of L.A.’s diverse communities,” says Joanna Fakher, Senior Librarian for Children’s Services. “At baby and toddler programs, you’ll hear about the free early literacy skills talk, sing, read, write, play. Promoting those skills not just early, but always, makes a solid foundation for community engagement.”
21 Collections: Every Object Has a Story

At its core, the public library is an enthusiastic collector: a repository of books, a hoarder of history, a holder of a gathering of place for all. Libraries collect to advance and share knowledge, and to strengthen communities through a vast compilation of resources. For the first time in the long history of collecting, the Los Angeles Public Library, in partnership with the Library Foundation, presents a new exhibition that explores the inherent power of collections.

21 Collections: Every Object Has a Story will run from September 28 through January 27 at the Central Library’s Getty Gallery, showcasing a diverse range of historic, contemporary, and newly commissioned original collections. By bringing together vastly eclectic collections into a singular space and shining a light on the varying approaches and aesthetics of amassing objects, the exhibition reconsiderates the act—and art—of collecting. “We began by asking what unique and compelling stories might be revealed through a collection that wouldn’t be possible if someone hadn’t brought it together. In the context of related things, or through a repetition of like elements, objects begin to give form to narratives, revealing sometimes surprising connections,” says 21 Collections Curator Todd Lerew. “The best collections are the ones that help us understand something about ourselves and our world.”

Audiences will have the chance to take in collections of history, sociology, culture, and personal ephemera that represent untraditional perspectives on what warrants our attention. What might looking at a series of anonymous vintage photographs of men standing in rows say about the emotional undercurrent of 21st century masculinity? What does an obsession with paper airplane craftsmanship reveal about the communalities of strangers?

“The wonderfully diverse, eclectic group of stories presented in this exhibition—and the collectors responsible for them—add up to an inspiring and surprising portrait of the values of collecting,” says City Librarian John F. Briscoe. “Preserving the collections that tell the stories of our communities is at the core of the mission of the public library, where we have the unique responsibility of making those stories accessible to absolutely everyone.”

Listed below are a few highlights from 21 Collections. Visit lala.org/21collections to learn more about this upcoming exhibition and related public programming across the city.

21 Collections: Every Object Has a Story is generously supported by the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Debra and Norris Bishton, the California Walnut Board, Robert C. Dawson, Darren Jackson & David & Varda Schriger.

A Closer Look: Artist Karen Collins

Madam C. J. Walker, an African American entrepreneur and activist at the first female self-made millionaire in the United States. Elmira Castle, the slave trading post in Ghana that marked the beginning of the Middle Passage. Olympic gold medalist and “fastest woman of all time” Florence Griffith Joyner. Artist Karen Collins scanned her living room for these miniature scenes of rarely told history that she will be sharing in the 22 Collections exhibition at Central Library this fall.

As a hobby, Collins began making dollhouses when she was 40, and the miniature scale immediately captured her imagination. She was a preschool teacher living in Compton, but in 1991 her eldest son Eddie got involved in gang activity. Just weeks before his high school graduation he was sentenced to 167 years in prison for a third strike conviction for attempted murder. “When life threw me a curve I started thinking: what didn’t I do to help my son stay out of prison?” says Collins. She decided she needed to tell the world more about Eddie’s history.

She devoted her life to recreating tiny worlds of defining, but rarely seen moments of black history. These intricately crafted stories, collected in the form of shadow-box dioramas, grew into what she imagined as the American African Museum of Miniatures. “In making them it was a lot of pain,” says Collins. “I felt the pain of the dioramas that I was creating, and that was our life—African American life now and then.”

Although it was intensely emotional, Collins found it comforting when she began sharing these boxes with the public. Along with her husband, Eddie Lewis, the pair would take the collection of boxes to local museums, libraries, and schools. She soon felt the power of her work through the public’s overwhelming reactions. “When I showed at the library, adults would come and then go back and get their grandkids, and they’d bring children from the community to come and see it.” Later as she made the school circuit her audience grew even wider. “We’d set up in one room and I’d have 15 kids act as docents for the day, and then four or five kids would come through there, ” she recalls. “It was the best.”

This educational outreach has been one of the most rewarding aspects of her work. “Children have ancestors who have sacrificed a lot for them. They need to know—that’s where their stories come from,” says Collins. She is very excited to invite all of Los Angeles—and their children—to see her work in the 22 Collections exhibition. She appreciates how the platform of Central Library will engage new audiences with these important stories—including three new dioramas which the Library Foundation commissioned on Black Lives Matter, the homelessness crisis in L.A., and a profile of Compton rapper Kendrick Lamar.

Collins, now 67, hopes to one day find a permanent home for her collection. It is growing more difficult for her and her husband to travel, but she remains committed to instilling hope in the community as we navigate the difficult terrain of our past and present. “People would cry when they came and saw some of the boxes. All I could do was just hug them and say, look, we made it out of that. We’re not there any more,” she says. “It’s like a mourning for what happened. I think that’s cathartic and that’s good. Every time I tell my story it’s cathartic.”

Birds Eggs and Nests

The Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology (WFVZ) is home to the world’s largest collection of bird eggs and nests. In the mid-20th Century, mainstream institutions like the LA County Natural History Museum were decollcting their egg collections, thinking they had been comprehensively studied and documented. When the DDT scare hit in the 1960s, the WFVZ was the only institution with enough specimens gathered prior to the pesticide’s invention to prove it was affecting the thickness of the eggshells and threatening key species.

Evidence from their collection was used in the court case that ultimately saw DDT banned by the EPA.

The Candy Wrapper Museum

Growing up in Southern California in the 1950s, Darlene Lacey wanted to start a collection and candy was an easy one that she could afford. She started with “Nice Mice,” because she liked the design and guessed it might be about forever. Her collection, now dubbed the Candy Wrapper Museum, has since grown into one of the most significant collections of its kind, providing a window into cultural trends and fads, the history of graphic design and advertising, as well as a powerful nostalgia trip for all but the very young.

Prison Landscapes

Flipping through a family photo album, artist Ayesha Embour discovered a photo of herself at age five in front of a tropical backdrop. Remembering the photo was from a trip to visit her brother in prison, she became interested in these scenic images that are often found in front of capturing “fascinating” worlds of freedom. She started writing to inmates across the country requesting information about these headdresses, their own photos, and stories from their incarcerated lives. This community-generated project grew into a collection of over 100 powerful images offering a glimpse of life from inside prison.

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On a recent Saturday evening in downtown Los Angeles, a crowd of people snaked around the block at the intersection of Broadway and Olympic. They were lining up to enter the Theatre at Ace Hotel, the historic movie palaces that has hosted everyone from Charlie Chaplin to Fran Lebowitz. This night, hosted by Pop-Up Magazine, would offer something entirely different.

Born out of an idea to bring multiple art forms together to produce a live magazine, Pop-Up Magazine is a unique dive into storytelling from a multi-media perspective.

“Some friends and I came together and came up with this idea of a live magazine, where writers, radio producers, photographers, filmmakers and other artists could come together and perform new stories in all different kinds of media mixed together,” says Douglas McGray, Co-Founder and Editor in Chief. “Now these shows tour the country and—today they’ve gotten over more theatrical, with original live scores by our house band, Magik/Magik Orchestra, and collaborations between nonfiction storytellers and dancers, chefs, shadow theater artists, animators, and more.”

The visual and oral experiences for the audience ranges from videos of drag queen bingo in Northern California to a diva singing an excerpt from Maria Callas’ rendition of “We’re big fans!” noted McGray. “And I think we share a similar mission. ALoud looks to bring people together around stories and ideas, and so do we.”

Recently, the Library Foundation has been a featured media sponsor of Pop-Up Magazine in Los Angeles. This collaboration has given the two cultural programs the ability to not only work together, but also to champion one another.

“Partnering with Pop-Up Magazine allows us to engage with new audiences and explore new areas of L.A. as a cultural landscape as we broaden the breadth and utility of ALoud,” said Ken Brecher, President of the Library Foundation.

This September, Pop-Up Magazine will embark on its Fall tour which includes dates in San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, Washington, D.C., Portland, Chicago, and Toronto. There will also be a host of amazing creators from across the country including two L.A.-based performers set to travel with the show — past ALoud interlocutor Ann Friedman, co-host of the podcast Call Your Driftwood, and Hirokoko Hirway, host of the Song Explorer podcast.

McGray also describes this tour as a multi-sensory experience. “Our stories in this show will engage four different senses. Which one, and how? You’ll just have to come see, and hear, and…”

Another project on the horizon for this team is Pop-Up Zine, which McGray describes as “a DIY opportunity that will invite people to create their own, more intimate multimedia storytelling events in their own communities.” With so many facets of this unique experience, be sure to check out Pop-Up Magazine on September 29 for their Los Angeles event.

For more information on Pop-Up Magazine or to find out about tour dates, please visit popupmagazine.com.

“The library is a gathering pool of narratives and of the people who come to find them. It is where we can glimpse immortality; in the library, we can live forever,” writes Susan Orlean in her newest work, The Library Book. The New Yorker staff writer and author of seven books, including Rin Tin Tin and The Orchid Thief, draws from the ashes of the catastrophic 1986 fire that burned down Los Angeles’ beloved Central Library, destroyed or damaged more than one million books, and shook our city to its core.

Likely arson, but never fully solved, Orlean explores the mysterious case to investigate if someone purposefully set fire to the Library. Through meticulous research, Orlean’s story grows into a rich cultural history of Central Library—and libraries across the world. We spoke with Orlean before she brings this story of persistence home to the Central Library for a special conversation and launch of her book at ALoud on October 16.

Your own personal story of trips to the Shaker Heights Public Library in Ohio with your mother is one of the entrances into this story and what Orlean wanted to write about, and how did this influence the overall story of your book?

Orlean: Those memories were longing, but I hadn’t realized how powerful they were and how much I wanted to describe them until I visited the Studio City Branch Library with my son in that moment. I was so overwhelmed by memories of visiting the library with my mother that I felt compelled to write about it. The motif of those scenes colored the entire book. The transmission of stories—passing them from one person to the next, and making sure they are preserved—is at the heart of what a library does, and I realized, it’s at the heart of the relationship between parent and child.

You really immersed yourself into the history of Los Angeles and its library system in order to investigate the mystery of the fire. As an “outsider” journalist, how were you able to gain access into this story and what were some of the biggest discoveries or surprises along the way?

Orlean: I approached the story as an explorer, a student eager to learn everything I could. I spent many, many days just roaming around the Library, taking it in, and many more days in each department, sitting with some of the staff and trying to learn what they do and how they do it. I had trouble imagining how someone could be his or her own worst enemy, walking straight into self-incrimination. The astonishing range of human behavior is always the most surprising part of any story.”

— Susan Orlean

Then I dug through a score of boxes of archival material about the Library’s history; those were an incredible resource, and made me feel like I was able to piece together the story of how the place had developed…What surprised me the most was the story of Harry Peak (the main suspect) and his fumbling, contradictory, maddening inconsistencies. I had trouble imagining how someone could be his or her own worst enemy, walking straight into self-incrimination. The astonishing range of human behavior is always the most surprising part of any story.

The book includes such an interesting cast of characters—including Mary Foy, an 18-year-old woman who was named as the head of the Los Angeles Public Library in the male-dominated era of the late 1800’s. How do you think having such progressive leadership early on changed the fate of our Library?

Orlean: L.A.LF has always been among the most progressive, public-minded libraries in the country. That emerged from its early leadership as its structure as a city department. The Los Angeles City Librarians have been exceptionally strong, independent individuals—you couldn’t get stronger and more independent than, say, Mary Jones, who ran the Library at the turn of the century and led the way to modernize the place, or Charles Lummis, the explore/ scholar/write/historian/ecotourist who took over in 1905 and led an indelible mark (including using cattle brands on books to discourage petty theft)! And unlike some older libraries that were dominated by their early, wealthy, conservative founders, the library in Los Angeles had egalitarian roots, and that spirit has continued to this day.

The book turns from the past to consider the modern era of libraries. Since writing this book, what has changed about your perspective of the role that libraries have in our society today?

Orlean: I came to see libraries as much more than the repositories of printed material. In this era, they are centers of knowledge and information—a broader definition that includes the various means of sharing information (digital, streaming as well as physical manuscript), but also the sharing of information one-to-one, such as literary programming and voter registration. Playgrounds and parks are the community spaces for our physical parks; libraries are the community spaces for our intellectual needs. Libraries will continue to adapt to provide what these needs are and the forms they take, and that’s what will keep libraries relevant and essential, and why they will endure.

— Susan Orlean

The Library Book
Susan Orlean
In conversation with author Attica Locke
Reservations: lfla.org/aloud

TUES, OCT 16, 7:30 PM
The Library Book
Susan Orlean
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Fall 2018  213.228.7500   lfla.org  7
The Library Foundation Calendar  Fall 2018

ALOUD is the Library Foundation of Los Angeles’ celebrated literary series of conversations, readings and performances at the downtown Central Library. For more information, to make reservations, and purchase tickets, visit lfla.org/aloud

MON, SEP 17, 7:30 PM
The Browns of California: The Family Dynasty that Transformed a State and Shaped a Nation
Miriam Panis and Kathleen Brown
In conversation with author and professor Natalie Miller
A Pulitzer Prize–winning journalist sits down with a member of the Brown family for an inside look at a family dynasty and its indelible mark on California history and politics

WEDS, SEP 19, 7:30 PM
There There: A Novel
Tommy Orange
In conversation with author Nathan Zuckerman
A fresh, urgent, and extraordinary
The Family Dynasty that
Shaped a Nation

THURS, SEP 20, 7:30 PM
In conversation with author
Tommy Orange
A Pulitzer Prize–winning journalist
sits down with a member of the Brown
family for an inside look at a family dynasty and its indelible mark on California history and politics

SAT, OCT 13, 7:30 PM
TUES, OCT 16, 7:30 PM
In conversation with novelist
Nancy Jo Sales
In conversation with writer
Laurie Winer
In her first collection in over 12 years, one of the great American masters of short fiction hilariously confronts our most disturbing truths as citizens on a violent and beautiful planet

THURS, OCT 18, 7:30 PM
Stories From a Life Lived
Across the Border
Reyna Grande, Jean Guerrero, Octavio Solis
A unique evening of nonfiction storytelling about life at the border, three fierce artists share from their works of street art to permanent and tableaux vivants

SAT, OCT 20, 7:30 PM
VENICE ABOUT-SIDNEY MEMORIAL BRANCH LIBRARY
Writers Seminar
Irving Burgan
Author, teacher and journalist Burgan will lead an interactive, generative workshop for patrons of all skill levels. Open to Library Foundation Members and their guests

TUES, OCT 23, 7:30 PM
Lost & Found at the Movies: The Art of the Documentary Portrait
Morgan Neville
In conversation with John Neu, Senior Programmer, Sundance Film Festival Academy Award–winner Morgan Neville (20 Feet From Stardom, Won’t Shot, Freeheld) explores the art of biographical documentaries and his lifelong fascination with Los Angeles culture

SUN, OCT 21, 11:00 AM
PALMS-RANCHO PARK BRANCH LIBRARY
Young Literati Family Day
Featuring a special storyline, snacks, crafts, and the chance for our Youngest Literati to make as much noise as they want in the library. Open to YL Members and their guests
Contact rebeccamiller@lfla.org to RSVP

SUN, NOV 4, 2:00 PM
CENTRAL LIBRARY
Urban Voices Project/ Street Symphony Concert
Composer of artists and performers from the Skid Row neighborhood of Downtown Los Angeles, Urban Voices Project brings music, health, well-being, and community to one of the highest homicide neighborhoods in the United States. Collaboration with Street Symphony

Programs are subject to change. Programs are free unless otherwise indicated on the web site. It is our policy to work over for free programs, so reservations are recommended.

Additional support provided by
The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation

Library Foundation of Los Angeles
Membership
Young Literati

Other programs at the Los Angeles Public Library
LA Made is a cultural series offered by the Los Angeles Public Library featuring free music, dance, theater, and conversations with local entertainers at libraries throughout the City. Listed below are just a few events offered this season

SUN, Sep 30, 11:00 AM
Central Library
Member Reception
21 Collections: Every Object Has a Story
Library Foundation Members are invited to an exclusive reception to celebrate this exciting new exhibition

THURS, OCT 25, 7:30 PM
The Lies That Bind: Rethinking Identity
Kwame Anthony Appiah and Njideka Akunyili Crosby
In conversation with Eryn Christodoulou, Assistant Curator, Hammer Museum
The New York Times Eric-Louis column and a MacArthur-winning visual artist consider how our collective identities shape—and can bring together—our diverse world

THURS, NOV 1, 7:30 PM
Of Love & War
Lynsey Addario
In conversation
The Pulitzer Prize–winning photographer and New York Times bestselling author illuminates a profound sense of humanity in conflicts across the Middle East, South Asia, and Africa

SAT, OCT 27, 10:00 AM
VENICE ABOUT-SIDNEY MEMORIAL BRANCH LIBRARY
Writers Seminar
Jill Soloway
In conversation with author
Miriam Pawel
Transformed a State and
The Family Dynasty that
Shaped a Nation

SUN, OCT 14, 7:00 PM
Central Library
Leadership Circle Reception
Library Foundation Leadership Circle Members are invited to attend this reception prior to the ALOUD program with Susan Orlean

SUN, OCT 21, 5:00 PM
Central Library
Object Has a Story
An interactive lecture delving into Frida Kahlo’s life through a chronological look into the life of Mexican artist Frida Kahlo, through music, images, and tableaux vivants

MON, OCT 29, 7:00 PM
Central Library
Graffiti Artist Panel with Man One
Guests will discuss how contemporary L.A. graffiti artists have gone from creating temporary works of street art to permanent and important “murals” on society

SUN, NOV 4, 2:00 PM
CENTRAL LIBRARY
Urban Voices Project/ Street Symphony Concert
Composer of artists and performers from the Skid Row neighborhood of Downtown Los Angeles, Urban Voices Project brings music, health, well-being, and community to one of the highest homicide neighborhoods in the United States. Collaboration with Street Symphony

Unless otherwise indicated, programs take place at:
Robert J. Stefanos Central Library
Mark Taper Auditorium, 510 W. Fifth St., Los Angeles, CA 90071

Every other year, the Library Foundation brings together a community of supporters to celebrate the legacy of the Los Angeles Public Library. On September 15, this year’s Literary Awards Celebration will commemorate the Library Foundation’s 26th anniversary and pay tribute to two special award recipients.

Recognizing an outstanding contribution to literature, the Los Angeles Public Library Literary Award will be presented to award-winning author Gaëtan Souvignier. The author of twelve books, including the New York Times bestseller The Unravelling, by the way, Tenth of December, and his most recent work, the critically-acclaimed novel Lucide in the Bords, Souvignier joins the ranks of past Literary Award recipients Anna Quindlen, Salman Rushdie, and Walter Mosley, among other notable writers.

Philanthropist Betty Applebaum will receive the Foundation’s Light of Learning Award for her long-time dedication to the Beverly Hills Unified School District. Working with students and witnessing firsthand how reading opens up new worlds for kids has had such an enormous impact on my work both professionally and with the Library Foundation. You’ve taught me so much—what has teaching taught you about the importance of books in students’ lives?

Saunders: I guess the main thing is simply the notion that a human being is not fixed in her relation to the world and that reading is something we have available to us that can make our relation to the world more generous and vast. I’ve seen people (and I’d include myself in this group) who started out limited by their “natural” personality and/or circumstances who, exposed to the truth and to the larger world through reading, literally become bigger people—more curious and fearless, better-informed, more open to other personhood far beyond what we can do through the “mere” experience—since we only have so much time to experience other realities directly, reading can serve as a sort of neurological prosthetic through which we (almost) become other people.

Applebaum: I began my career as an educator overseeing a special education program for the Beverly Hills Unified School District. Working with students and witnessing firsthand how reading opens up new worlds for kids has had such an enormous impact on my work both professionally and with the Library Foundation. You’ve taught me so much—what has teaching taught you about the importance of books in students’ lives?

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Applebaum: One of my favorite things about working with The Council of the Library Foundation is creating a community around books and curating events where our members can engage with authors. For the Literary Feasts—our largest fundraiser for the Los Angeles Public Library—we bring together a diverse group of authors from varied genres so that there is something to pique every literary interest. As a beloved writer, you have a loyal following of readers—how has this community impacted you?

Saunders: When you get to know your readers, it has the effect of making you a more courageous writer, I think. Maybe the natural stance for a writer is to be a little afraid of all of these unknown, probably highly critical people—but in fact, I’ve found my readers to be open, generous, hungry for truth, and very willing to follow me into whatever issues my books are raising. We’re in it together. So then, when I return to the page, I feel emboldened to take bigger chances. In other words, having met them, I feel I owe them my very best and that their while reading, will give their very best to me.

Applebaum: Following up on the idea of community, the Los Angeles Public Library is the cornerstone of our city—it’s truly the only civic institution that offers free services and programs to any and all people. What do you think is the most important role that public libraries play in communities today? And looking ahead, what do you hope for the future of libraries?

Saunders: We are finding out, at this moment in our history, how fragile a commodity truth is. This has to do, I think, with the pace and intensity of the digital revolution. Different people are getting different “truths” shot at them with unprecedented velocity, laced with hidden agendas, and thoroughly monetized. Which is, you know, the idea of the very opposite of a library, which is full of vetted factuality (and vetted oppositional factuality), available to all, at no cost, and where the only agenda is that, in a democracy, every person, regardless of income or social station, should have equal access to the accumulated product of human thought. Altered only by that person’s interest and energy. So I predict that the library will become increasingly important in the years ahead—but it’s vital that those of us who believe in the mission fight for it with radical soul.

For more information about this event, please contact Jennifer West at 213.392.6240 or jenniferwest@lfla.org.
The Library Foundation of Los Angeles provides critical support to the Los Angeles Public Library resulting in free programs, resources and services available to thousands of adults, children and youth in Los Angeles. We accomplish this mission through fundraising, advocacy and innovative programs that strengthen the Library and promote greater awareness of its valuable resources.

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