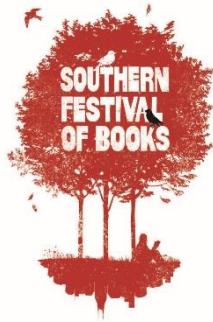


**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 13, 2015



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### **2015 Southern Festival of Books Lineup Announced**

*27th annual festival brings Pulitzer Prize winners, bestsellers, regional and local favorites to Nashville Oct. 9-11*

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** – Humanities Tennessee today announces a lineup of award-winning, bestselling authors headlining the 27<sup>th</sup> annual Southern Festival of Books in Nashville, Oct. 9-11. The roster includes renowned authors **Rick Bragg**, **Geraldine Brooks**, **Pat Conroy**, **David Maraniss**, **Paul Theroux**, **Rebecca Wells**, **Scott Westerfeld** and first-time author **David Gregory**, former NBC news reporter and *Meet the Press* host.

The Southern Festival of Books is a free, three-day celebration of the written word that annually attracts 25,000 attendees to meet their favorite authors and become familiar with talented new writers. The Festival has become one of the most popular literary events in the country, as guests travel to Nashville to experience an abundance of authors and their books, along with food, entertainment and culture. [Authors in the Round](#) provides patrons with an evening of dining and social conversation with the authors.

The Southern Festival of Books is held at Legislative Plaza in downtown Nashville and at the Nashville Public Library. It features a diverse collection of authors who discuss and sign their books. This group includes writers of adult, young adult and youth, fiction and nonfiction, Pulitzer Prize-winners, *New York Times* bestsellers and book-club favorites. Sixty publishers, booksellers and non-profit organizations will exhibit at the event, and [Parnassus Books](#) serves as the onsite bookseller.

Highlights of the 2015 Festival include:

- Acclaimed adult authors **Brooks** (*The Secret Chord*), **Conroy** (*The Death of Santini: The Story of a Father and His Son*), **Maraniss** (*Once in a Great City: A Detroit Story*), **Fiona Ritchie** (*Wayfaring Strangers: The Musical Voyage from Scotland and Ulster to Appalachia*), **Paul Theroux** (*Deep South: Travels in Four Seasons*) and **Wells** (*Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood*).
- More than 180 authors, including Pulitzer Prize winners **Bragg** (*Southern Journey: True Stories from the Heart of the South*), **Brooks**, **Maraniss** and **Alysia Burton Steele** (*Delta Jewels: In Search of My Grandmother's Wisdom*) and more than 25 *New York Times* bestselling authors.

- Celebrated children’s and young adult authors **Kwame Alexander** (*The Crossover*), **Cynthia Lord** (*Handful of Stars*), **Matthew McElligott** (*Mad Scientist Academy: The Dinosaur Disaster*), **Kenneth Oppel** (*The Nest*), **Stephan Pastis** (*Timmy Failure Book 4*), **Jennifer E. Smith** (*Hello, Goodbye, and Everything in Between*) and **Rick Yancey** (*The Infinite Sea: The Second Book of the 5th Wave*).
- Kitchen connoisseurs **Tammy Algood** (*Sunday Dinner in the South: Recipes to Keep them Coming Back for more*), **Johnathan Scott Barrett** (*Rise and Shine! A Southern Son's Treasury of Food, Family, and Friendships*), **Bridget Lancaster** (*America’s Test Kitchen*), **Ronni Lundy** (*Sorghum's Savor*), **April McKinney** (*The Outdoor Table: The Ultimate Cookbook for Your Next Backyard BBQ, Front-Porch Meal, Tailgate, or Picnic*) and **Nicki Pendleton Wood** (*Southern Cooking for Company: More than 200 Southern Hospitality Secrets and Show-Off Recipes*).
- Actor **Wendell Pierce**, best known for his work on *The Wire*, will be at the Festival with *The Wind in the Reeds: A Storm, a Play, and the City that Would Not be Broken*. His discussion is part of a special track to commemorate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Hurricane Katrina.
- Humanities Tennessee will partner with the [Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities at Vanderbilt University](#) to present a special literary track on “Understanding Islam,” featuring International Law Professor **Karima Bennoune** (*Your Fatwa Does Not Apply Here*) and Executive Director of Cultural Conversations at the Foreign Policy Institute of Johns Hopkins University Professor **Azar Nafisi** (*The Republic of Imagination*).
- New fiction from popular authors **Marlon James** (*A Brief History of Seven Killings*), **Tom Piazza** (*A Free State*), **Padgett Powell** (*Cries for Help, Various*), **Ron Rash** (*Above the Waterfall: A Novel*) and **Leah Stewart** (*The New Neighbor: A Novel*), along with readings from acclaimed debut novelists **Tom Cooper** (*The Marauders*), **Michael Crummey** (*Sweetland*), **Claire Vaye Watkins** (*Gold, Fame, Citrus*) and many others.
- A panel featuring Bee Gees drummer **Dennis Bryon** and Rock and Roll Hall of Fame member **Dennis Dunaway** of Alice Cooper, sharing their stories from the road with new memoirs.

[Click here for the full Festival lineup](#) and more information about each author. This is a sample of writers who will be showcased in Nashville:

**Lauren Groff** is the *New York Times* bestselling author of two novels, *The Monsters of Templeton* and *Arcadia*, as well as the celebrated short-story collection *Delicate Edible Birds*. She graduated from Amherst College and holds an MFA in fiction from the University of Wisconsin Madison. Her work has appeared in a number of magazines, including *The New Yorker*, *Harper's* and *The Atlantic*, and in several of the annual *The Best American Short Stories* anthologies. Groff's fiction has won the Paul Bowles Prize for Fiction, the Medici Book Club Prize, the PEN/O. Henry Award and the Pushcart Prize, and has been shortlisted for the Orange Prize for New Writers and a finalist for the *L.A. Times* Book Prize. She will be at the Festival with her new book, *Fates and Furies: A Novel*.

**John and Sherry Petersik** famously chronicled their home improvement adventures on the hit DIY blog *Young House Love*, which spawned a *New York Times*-bestselling book of the same

name, as well as product lines sold by Target, Home Depot and other retailers. They live in Richmond, Va., with their two young children and a feisty Chihuahua named Burger. The Petersiks will be at the festival with their book, *Loveable, Livable Home: How to Add Beauty, Get Organized, and Make Your House Work for You*.

**M.O. Walsh's** fiction and essays have appeared in *New York Times*, *Oxford American*, *The Southern Review*, *American Short Fiction*, *Epoch* and *Best New American Voices*, among other publications. He is a graduate of the MFA English program at the University of Mississippi and is currently the director of the Creative Writing Workshop at the University of New Orleans. *Kirkus Reviews* recently wrote of Walsh, "Celebrate, fiction lovers: The gods of Southern Gothic storytelling have inducted a junior member." He will be at the Festival with his stunning debut novel, *My Sunshine Away*.

**Scott Westerfeld** is the author of the *Leviathan* series, the first book of which was the winner of the 2010 Locus Award for Best Young Adult Fiction. His other young adult novels include the *New York Times* bestseller *Afterworlds*, the worldwide bestselling *Uglies* series, *The Last Days*, *Peeps*, *So Yesterday* and the *Midnighters* trilogy. He will be at the Festival with his new novel, *Zeroes*.

Reporters and bloggers can arrange author interviews and access photographs and promotional materials by sending a request to [lauren@hallstrategies.com](mailto:lauren@hallstrategies.com) or by calling (615) 242-8856.

The Southern Festival of Books is presented by [Humanities Tennessee](#), a non-profit organization that promotes humanities education across Tennessee. The Festival is proudly sponsored by the National Endowment for Humanities, National Endowment for the Arts, Metro Nashville Arts Commission, Tennessee Arts Commission, Nashville Public Library, Ingram Content Group, The Memorial Foundation, Dollar General Literacy Foundation, Parnassus Books, and the *Nashville Scene*.

Humanities Tennessee and The Southern Festival of Books are online at [www.humanitiestennessee.org](http://www.humanitiestennessee.org). Join the Festival on Facebook and follow it on Twitter and Instagram @SoFestBooks.

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