Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Continuing the Revolution

Chiwan Choi · Tuesday, October 22nd, 2013

We are opening our first space. It's a bookstore within a bookstore. It's an alchemist's laboratory. It's a writers' hangout, a theater too small for an audience, the beginning of a transformation, the continuation of an evolution.
It's DT•LAB.
DT•LAB is a 150 square foot space inside The Last Bookstore, on the second floor within the Labyrinth of Books. We will be curating the shelves with books from local independent publishers and writers, in addition to work from local artists and musicians.
Our focus won't just be on selling things. We are going to focus on DT•LAB being a place for workshops, presentations, performance, installations, and somewhere we can get together and create, exchange, and develop new ideas.
I will be doing much reporting of the day to day developments at DT•LAB as the weeks go by, but for now –
LAB•FEST! Our grand opening celebration extravaganza!

LAB•FEST – SATURDAY, 9/7 – NOON – 11PM @ THE LAST BOOKSTORE
We started planning a little party for our grand opening…then it got out of hand. Pretty soon, our *party* became a *festival*, one that will be returning every year. We thought of all the people we love and respect and started reaching out to them, even if it seemed unrealistic that they'd want to participate in some new ridiculous event to celebrate the opening of a tiny ass space. I mean, there was no way Sesshu Foster and Luis J. Rodriguez would agree, even if they had the time, right?
Well, here's the line-up:

- Noon – Mike the Poet Sonksen
- 1pm – a conversation between Sesshu Foster and Luis J. Rodriguez
- 2pm – Wendy C. Ortiz, Anthony Miller, Kate Crash, The Six Shooters
- 3pm – a street art panel wtih CRYPTIK, Shark Toof, Andrew Hem, and Nathan Ota, moderated by Shana Nys Dambrot. There will be a group book signing.
- 5pm – Poesia Para La Gente (a group of poets who will be coming straight from their poetry on the Metro Gold Line event), Sam Dufelmeier, Steve Abee, and Ariana Evans.
- 6pm – a Writ Large Press authors showcase with Melora Walters, Khadija Anderson, Billy Burgos, Andrew Choate, Kim Calder, Traci Kato-Kiriyama, Chris Kerr, and myself.
- 8pm – Kima Jones, Lauren Marks, Azarin Sadegh, Reyna Grande, and Cara Chow, all current and former PEN USA Emerging Voices fellows. Hosted by Lilliam Rivera.
- 9pm – the incredible Grammy Award winning band from East LA, Quetzal.

In other parts of the store off the stage, there will be:

- a collaboration between Jen Hofer and Erik Shveima called Cache Bar, where they will deconstruct books and other printed material and transform them into new works of art. Doubly exciting because they will incorporate PUBLISH! into it.
- Poem Store and Typewriter Poetry. Two different poets who will set up shop during the course of the day, writing poetry on demand on their typewriters.
- one of my favorite illustrators, JT Steiny, will create a treasure hunt, hiding a handful of his artwork around the bookstore.

It's going to be a great event, no matter what time you arrive and what time you leave. There will be something amazing going on inside The Last Bookstore.
I hope you will all join us in a day celebrating not just a new creative space, but the thriving creative culture throughout our beautiful city.

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