Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

The 2nd Annual Grand Park Downtown BookFest

Chiwan Choi · Wednesday, March 19th, 2014

We are a little over a week away from one of our biggest (if not *the* biggest) project of the year: the Grand Park Downtown BookFest.

It is on **Saturday, March 29th, noon–5PM**. Come out. It will be a blast and so much unlike that *other* book festival.

This is our second year putting together the GPDTBF. With our partner, Grand Park, our aim has been to create a communal day for the people of Los Angeles, where we can come out for a relaxing day at the park and discover the great literature that is being written and published in our beautiful city. It was fascinating to see how surprised people were last year when we told them *all* the books in our pop-up shop were from either LA based publishers or LA based writers. A common reaction was: *Really? We have publishers in LA?*

We had an ongoing cycle of readers throughout the day and sold many books. The weather was perfect and the park was filled with ease and happiness.

Well this year promises to be even bigger and better (twice the attendance), but without losing the intimate and local focus of the event.

Our theme is the past, present, and future of literature in Los Angeles. We are looking at how literature has not only flourished in this city, but at the way in which literature has contributed into making the city what it is. The "Lit Heart" of LA.

This is what we wrote for ourselves to stay focused as we planned the event:

> **LA ?'s LIT: The Lit Heart of LA's Past, Present and Future**
>
> Celebrating the literary tradition in Los Angeles.
> Celebrating Los Angeles's art, culture, neighborhoods and people in words.
>
> Inviting us all, especially the next generation, to become a part of LA's literary tradition, expanding it beyond pages bound in a book to include the multiplicity of voices that will shape LA's future.
>
> Grand Park is an unexpected oasis in the center of an often chaotic city, a place that

> embraces the traditional role of a park while at the same time rethinking how it can be a connecting place for a modern community. With the BookFest, Grand Park becomes, not only a place to find shade or a moment of peace, but a place where we can gather to share our stories, to listen and be heard, to experiment, and to participate collectively in creating our own future.
>
> Below we have laid out a plan that explores the intersection between literature and the music, art, technology, architecture and history of LA, in order to increase the number of opportunities to actively engage with literature and empower the public to read, write and create across medias.

To accomplish this, over 30 local publishers have joined us to showcase their beautiful books in our pop-up shop, the official rebirth of DT•LAB. (I will have full final list of publishers next week!)

We will have a tent set up for PUBLISH!: You Can Too, our ongoing underground publishing project. There will be multiple typewriters, prompts, bookmaking (with help from LA Zine Fest!), and book launch celebrations.

On stage, we will have children friendly presentations; a YA authors line-up curated and presented by Cecil Castellucci *sharing* the stage with young adult writers from Get Lit!, 826LA, and Shakespeare Center LA; *Lament in the Night*, a roster of mystery/pulp writers of color curated by Naomi Hirahara and inspired by the unique book published by Kaya Press; and Read/Beats, where writers read to improvised music.

There will be Poesia Para La Gente invading the park to create poetry on demand.

And additional booths from other partners presenting activities and literature, such as Red Hen Press, CAAM, LA Public Library, Story Pirates, Ryman Arts, and MORE!

I will post the full line up and all the details next week so it will be fresh on your minds as the bookfest weekend arrives. For now I wanted to remind you all that THIS IS HAPPENING.

Grand Park Downtown BookFest. Saturday. March 29th. Noon to 5.

BE THERE!

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