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The Brooklyn Paper's essential guide to the Borough of Kings

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Sealing the deal

Marty Markowitz invites you to go between the covers

By Ben Muegg

The Brooklyn Paper

Books. Sure, you've heard of them, but when's the last time you actually read one?

In our increasingly digital world, books are struggling to retain their cultural relevance — but for at least one day this year, they'll be more important than Twitter, Facebook, and Adult Friend Finder combined (well, maybe not Adult Friend Finder, but you get the idea).

This Sunday's fourth annual Brooklyn Book Festival will honor the second best things printed on paper, as more than 200 literary luminaries will gather at Borough Hall to have their wares and discuss their trade.

And it couldn't come at a more crucial moment, according to Johnny Finger, publisher of *Akashic Books*.

"Books have such a hard time keeping up with more popular cultural forms — as a lot of people are complaining about how it's not as interesting and buying books goes to zero," said Temple, who heads up the Brooklyn Literary Council.

"The best way to [get people to read books] is to bring books to the public as opposed to expecting the public to come to books," he added. "We need to be proactive about it."

And that's just what the festival intends to do, with appearances by big-book-world names like Haitian novelist Edwidge Danticat ("The Farming of Bones," who will be honored with a "Best of Brooklyn" award; as well as 'New England world-worm' Russell Banks ("Affliction"), hipster scribe Tao Lin ("Shoplifting from American Apparel"), and Park Slope stalwart Paul Auster ("The Brooklyn Follies"), who will all read from their latest works.

In order to attract lovers of all kinds of books, the printed word party will feature specialized events for niche genres.

Fans of comic and graphic novels might enjoy a panel on the role of their art overseas with Guy Delisle ("The Burma Chronicles"), Peter Kuper ("Diario de Oaxaca: A Sketchbook Journal of Two Years in Mexico") and Sarah Glidden ("How To Understand Israel in 60 Days or Less") or a conversation titled "Hip Hop Loves Anime": while romance fans might enjoy an afternoon about steamy titles like Michelle Acker ("Man of Fantasy"), Anna DePalò ("The Billionaire in Penthouse B") and Donna Hill ("Wicked Ways").

Meanwhile, kids writers including Jodi Barrett ("Pickles to Pittsburgh") and Mo Williams ("Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale") will read, and young adult authors including Kate DeCamillo ("The Tale of Despereaux"); "Be-cause of Winn-Dixie"); and M.T. Anderson ("The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing") will share their work.

BOOKS

Brooklyn Book Festival at Borough Hall, 209 Joralemon St. between Court and Adams streets in Downtown, Sept. 13, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. For schedule and full list of authors and events, visit www.brooklynbookfestival.org.

The book festival will also play host to two new noteworthy revelations: the announcement of the members of a "screening committee" that will help Borough President Markowitz choose a successor for poet laureate Ken Siegelman, and the

Best of the fest

Not even the fastest speed-reader can attend all of the events at the Brooklyn Book Festival, so we've compiled this handy cheat sheet to highlight the really good stuff (though for a full schedule and complete list of authors, visit www.brooklynbookfestival.org). Events are free, but tickets must be picked up at least one hour in advance.

In memoriam

In the wake of the deaths of literary legends **John Updike** and **David Foster Wallace** (pictured), writers and book critics **Lev Grossman** and **David Lipsky** — author of a forthcoming book on Wallace — will discuss their similarities, differences, and lasting influence.

Borough Hall Courtyard (209 Joralemon St. between Court and Adams streets in Downtown), 10 a.m. Free.

Good teen lit queen **Libba Bray** (pictured), of "Going Bovine," and the Gemma Doyle trilogy will headline a reading called "High School and the Paranormal" featuring **Carolyn McCullough** ("Once a Witch") and **Audrea Gray** ("Evernight Series").

As **Ray's** new favorite book shows, high schoolers have more to worry about than acne and who to take to prom.

Youth Sloop in Borough Hall Plaza (see venue info above), 5 p.m. Free.

Written music

Sonic Youth rocker **Thurston Moore** will chat with rapper **Lupe Fiasco** (pictured above) and poets **Tracy Morris** and **Matthew Zapruder** about the ways that poetry and songwriting have transformed language — moderated by Brooklynly **Touré**.

St. Francis College Auditorium (180 Remsen St. between Court and Clinton streets), noon. Free.

selection of a winner in St. Francis College's \$50,000 writing contest honoring fourth-time scribe, one of whom might include Cobble Hill auteur Arthur Phillips.

As books continue to cede their popularity to newer media forms like the Internet version of The Brooklyn Paper, Markowitz's Book Festival will attempt to merge literary culture and pop culture with a discussion featuring rapper **Lupe Fiasco** and Sonic Youth rocker **Thurston Moore**.

Writers will even discuss the technological advances that are bringing about

Book books

Famed fictions including *New York Times* critic **Jennifer 8 Lee** (pictured above), **Mark Kurlansky** and **Liz Thorpe** will talk about all things edible in a discussion titled "American Food."

North Stage in Borough Hall Plaza (Court Street at Montague Street), 3 p.m. Free.

Edwidge Danticat

Haitian-born writer Danticat (pictured) — whose prose will be honored with a "Best of Brooklyn" award at the festival — will read and discuss how history and culture have influenced her short stories, novels, and memoir.

St. Francis College Auditorium (see venue info above), 2 p.m. Free.

Three's company

Fiction phenoms **Paul Auster**, **Russell Banks**, and **Francine Prose** (pictured above) will read from their works in an event aptly titled "Literature in a Digital Age."

St. Francis College Auditorium (see venue info above), 3 p.m. Free.

biggest revolution to the book world since Gutenberg invented the printing press in a lecture titled "Literature in a Digital Age."

Some traditionalists, like Markowitz, say that the book will always beat the computer screen.

"Nothing to me will ever replace the book, the smell of a book, the feel of a book, the excitement of turning pages of a book," proclaimed Markowitz, who told The Brooklyn Paper he was in the midst of Evans. "The Third Reich at War" by Richard J. Evans.

"I don't own a computer, a Kindle, or a Sony reader will ever replace the excitement of having a book in one's hand," he said.

But publishers, including Temple, ac-

knowlege that the printed word is in quite a predicament — a thought that isn't necessarily a bad thing.

"It's silly to lament the changes in culture and the way people will consume their culture," he said. "Culture is constantly evolving, and that's a good thing. For those like myself, who run businesses based on printed books, there are some major challenges, but these are challenges that we have to embrace."

No matter what happens to books as a medium, the stories that fill them won't go away, added Temple.

"People are not going to stop telling stories — and people are not going to stop buying stories," he said.

Of course, on Sunday, they're all free.

composers, use laptops and knobs of digital music to create classical pieces in real time.

"This is the perfect venue for this," said Lyeccum booker Deb Klein. "We've experimented, and they are definitely experimental."

Unlike most classical ensembles, which come to perform in a space with their music ready to go, this group makes up the music on the spot. Here's how it works: A composer stands before the ensemble with the master computer. The master machine is connected to computers in front of each musician. Each laptop displays the music that the composer wants the musician to play.

"The master" is no mere conductor — he is actually composing the piece on the spot. "The master composer" is most importantly, said Jakub Ciupinski, one of the creators of Blind Eye, is telling the musician how quickly or slowly to play the music.

"I think people will feel the timing of the piece in a much deeper sense because of the immediate feedback the composer gets," said Ciupinski.

Blind Eye, Brooklyn Lyeccum 1227 Fourth Ave. at Union Street in Park Slope, (718) 857-4281, Sept. 18, 8 p.m. Tickets \$10, \$15, \$20, \$25, \$30, \$35, \$40, \$45, \$50, \$55, \$60, \$65, \$70, \$75, \$80, \$85, \$90, \$95, \$100. — Shannon Geis

MUSIC

Yarn tootin'

The Knit has hit the big. Music fans, that is. After a two-decade run in Manhattan, the legendary Leonard Street rock club the Knitting Factory opened this week in Williamsburg — bringing another renowned venue to night-laden North Brooklyn.

Before moving into the Metropolitan Avenue space that once housed the Luna Lounge, workers built a saloon dubbed the Knit Bar, which will provide space for local bands and intimate performances.

Bigger acts will play in a rear concert hall decked out with top-of-the-line sound equipment, lighting rigs, and even high-definition video cameras.

"Our goal is to provide a great-sounding room and a great staff," said Shay Vistavada, vice president of east coast operations for the club's parent company, which operates venues in Hollywood, Boise, and Spokane. "Hopefully, people will feel comfortable coming in day in and day out, regardless of what music we're putting on."

Upcoming events including sets by the quirky cello choir Rasputina (Sept. 13), the Brooklyn Fashion Festival (Sept. 14), and a Brooklyn Rappers League Under the Stairs (Sept. 22). **Knitting Factory** (261 Metropolitan Ave. at Havemeyer Street in Williamsburg 11211-6696).

— Ben Muegg

DANCE

Yo, Juliette!

Stunning French film star Juliette Binoche is already famous for slinking across the silver screen — but this week, she'll begin captivating audiences by dancing in a Brooklyn stage.

The actress, beloved by audiences thanks to films like "Chocolat" and "The English Patient," will perform in the 17-minute dance piece that she co-directed, at the Brooklyn Academy of Music from Sept. 13 to Sept. 26.

Though the Oscar-winning actress isn't a trained dancer, she'll perform alongside her co-director and co-star Akram Khan, who plays her lover in a tumultuous affair of choice (his dance).

BAM's Rose Cinema will also showcase her work in her other medium, the movies. Over the next two weeks, moviegoers can catch screenings of more than dozen Binoche films, including "Damage" on Sept. 19, "Flight of the Red Balloon" on Sept. 20, and "Caché" on Sept. 26. **Yo!** at the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Harvey Theater (651 Fulton St. at Rockwell Place in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4100), Sept. 15, 17-19, 22-26, 7:30 p.m., Sept. 16, 7 p.m. Tickets \$25-\$70. — Ben Muegg

MUSIC

MacSymphony

Computers aren't usually part of a classical music concert. But on Sept. 18 at the Brooklyn Lyeccum, the highest-tech show is all about the electronics.

Blind Eye, a Juilliard-trained ensemble of composers, use laptops and knobs of digital music to create classical pieces in real time.

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