

Plot Twist: Hybrid Programming is Here to Stay

Date/Time: Saturday, March 26 from 1:45 PM–3:00 PM ET

Location: 126A, Pennsylvania Convention Center, 100 Level

Event Description: Love it or hate it, hybrid programming is the future of literary events, offering unbeatable accessibility and dynamic opportunities for programming not possible with limited budgets or in-person events. Panelists from a library, and suburban and urban book festivals, who have all capitalized on the power of technology, will talk strategies for leveraging online spaces in tandem with in-person events to build your buzz and brand in a way that will inspire even the most Zoom-fatigued of us.

Event Category: Panel Discussion

Participants

Moderator:

Kara Oakleaf directs the Fall for the Book festival and teaches English at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. Her work has appeared in *Best Small Fictions 2020*, *Wigleaf*, *Matchbook*, *SmokeLong Quarterly*, *Monkeybicycle*, *Nimrod*, and the Bloomsbury anthology *Short-Form Creative Writing*.

Panelists:

Suzy Rigdon manages the annual Fall for the Book festival in Fairfax, Virginia, where she teaches digital creative writing. She is the co-host of the *Fall for the Book* podcast.

Matthew Patin is the literary director at Texas Book Festival, and he coprograms Lit Crawl Austin. He is a board member at Austin Bat Cave, a creative community and writing center, and is also a book editor. He has contributed to *Kirkus Reviews* and the *Austin Chronicle*.

Conor Moran is the director of the Wisconsin Book Festival. He started in this role in 2013 after working in the events department and on the sales floor at an independent bookstore.

1. Introductions

- a. Watch a short trailer featuring each festival.
- b. Each panelist introduces themselves, including their size, location, and audience demographics
- c. Who is your virtual audience & how has that changed?

2. Tools of the Trade (What are you using & how are you using it?)

- a. The technology currently being used, and what has changed over the last two years.
- b. Staff required for virtual/ in-person / hybrid versus who is actually available
- c. Cost of Tech and Staff, and integrating that into the budget

3. Approach to Virtual Programming and How That's Changed (2020-2021)

- a. Structure of festival, including number of events & duration of festival, the type of events being produced, and general audience size
- b. Highlight 2 innovative or high-impact events from the last two years
- c. Audience engagement & overcoming challenges of virtual events
- d. What has been the biggest lesson you've learned about virtual/hybrid programming?

4. To the Hybrid Future (2022 and beyond)

- a. In 2022 what will you be doing virtually and how are you approaching it differently?
 - i. Structure and duration of festival
 - ii. Balance of virtual, in-person, and hybrid events
 - iii. Examples of innovative programming
 - iv. Staff, tech, and budgetary considerations
- b. What distinguishes an in-person event from a virtual one?
- c. What unique challenges do you anticipate for a hybrid festival and how are you working to overcome them?

5. Audience Q & A

