

## **Event Title**

Mapping the Future of the Literary Arts Field

## **Event Description**

The Smithsonian, in collaboration with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation, has embarked on a year-long project to examine the literary arts field, generate new ideas, encourage cross-sector communication, and offer approaches and solutions to nurture a more just and financially viable ecosystem. Panelists will provide an overview of this effort and its origins, and invite project advisors and participants into the conversation.

## **Event Category**

Artistic & Professional Development

## **Event Organizer**

National Endowment for the Arts

## **Event Moderator**

**Lawrence-Minh Bui Davis, PhD**, is founding director of the arts nonprofit The Asian American Literary Review and coeditor in chief of its critically acclaimed literary journal. He is also a curator for the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center.

## **Event Participants**

**Fred Sasaki** is the art director for Poetry magazine; a gallery curator for the Poetry Foundation; cohost of Homeroom's School Night info show; an organizer for Prison Neighborhood Arts Project (P+NAP), and writer of funny loving things.

**Amy Stolls** is the director of literary arts at the National Endowment for the Arts.

**Jenna Peng** is a reader for *Poetry Magazine*, associate editor of the *Asian American Literary Review*, and an organizer for the Smithsonian Asian American Literature Festival. The managing editor for the Maps

to the Next World initiative, she writes hybrid literary/arts criticism and has published work in *Harriet* and the *Asian American Literary Review*.

**Jessica Flynn** is a literary arts specialist at the National Endowment for the Arts.

## **Session Outline**

### Slide 1

- Slide description: A gold and black interlocking map graphic with the words “Maps to the Next World: A Literary Arts Initiative.”
- We will give an opening welcome and read the accessibility statement, and announce that the initiative is going public today.

### Slide 2

- Slide description: This slide shows the initiative’s mission and vision.
- We will provide an overview of the basic elements of the project, including the timeline, and how we’re thinking (broadly) about the Literary Arts.
- Vision: (1) To inspire wide-ranging reflections and dialogue about what has and hasn’t been working in the literary arts field. (2) To provide a forum for bold ideas and actionable steps towards a more sustainable and just future.
- Mission: (1) To commission essays in literary journals across the country. (2) To examine specific aspects of the literary arts field. (3) To offer ideas that individuals, organizations, and/or funders can act upon.

### Slide 3

- Slide description: This slide shows the origin story of the project, depicted by a yellow timeline.

- We will describe: the Ford Foundation’s Creative Futures project (September 2020), and the how and why of the partnership between the Smithsonian Institution, the NEA, and the Poetry Foundation.

#### Slide 4

- Slide description: An “At a Glance” map with multi-colored moving pieces representing facets of the Literary Arts field: Creation, Audience, Infrastructure, and Access.
- We will describe how the intent of the project is to go broad, and to capture the full breadth of the Literary Arts.

#### Slide 5

- Slide description: The slide shows the line “You must make your own map” from the Joy Harjo poem “A Map to the Next World.”
- We will speak to the title of the project, and how it was inspired by Joy Harjo and the poem.

#### Slide 6

- Slide description: The slide shows a series of circles with photos of the project’s advisors: Allison Hedge Coke, Ching-In Chen, Katie Freeman, Tope Folarin, Kelly Harris-DeBerry, Gerald Maa, Tyler Meier, Craig Santos Perez, Viniyanka Prasad, and Ruben Quesada.
- We will speak to the role of the advisors and how we selected them, and invite advisors in attendance to introduce themselves and share hopes for the project.

#### Slide 7

- Slide description: The slide shows potential topics for essays. Possible topics include: federal writing programs; publishing and

distribution; labor justice; community-centered creative writing education; cooperatives and collective creativity; lessons from other fields/sectors; literary translation; literary commons; literary criticism; organizational transition and transformation; youth engagement; and literary arts outside the U.S.

- We will highlight topics that have surfaced from conversations with advisors.

#### Slide 8

- Slide description: This “Contact Us” slide invites you to be in touch. Visit the NEA at booth 900; email Jenna Peng at [jenna.apac@gmail.com](mailto:jenna.apac@gmail.com).
- We will moderate a Q&A.