



VERSE & VINO

PRESENTING SPONSOR



NOVEMBER 5, 2020

STREAMING LIVE TO
LIBRARY SUPPORTERS!



Megan Miranda



Alice Randall



India Hicks



Christopher Paolini



Christina Baker Kline

CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG LIBRARY

FOUNDATION

SPONSORS

The **Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Foundation** is grateful to the many corporations, foundations, individuals and book clubs whose generous support of *Verse & Vino* have made this evening possible.

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WELCOME

This is one of our favorite nights of the year.

The seventh annual *Verse & Vino* looks nothing like we could have imagined a year ago. Last year, over 1,300 Library supporters gathered at the Charlotte Convention Center to celebrate books, libraries, and to launch The CommonSpark campaign for a new Main Library and enhancements throughout our Library system.

We miss seeing you in person, but in some ways this year's *Verse & Vino* is better and more accessible than ever.

Authors and book lovers are joining us tonight from Charlotte and cities across the country. **Welcome, to everyone!**

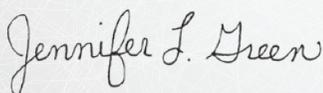
In a year defined by separation - physical and often ideological - libraries around the globe bring us together. You're joining us tonight because of your commitment to literacy, opportunity, free access to information, and your Library's mission to improve lives and build a stronger community.

Your Library has long been a champion of equitable access to information, education and resources. We are working closely with public, private and charter schools to support students, teachers and families in a virtual learning environment and leading several initiatives to bridge the ever-more-critical digital divide:

- In addition to lending laptops and Wi-Fi hotspots, your Library is distributing refurbished laptops with CARES Act funding from Mecklenburg County and in partnership with the County, Goodwill and others.
- Only weeks ago, we received a federal grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services to partner with the Charlotte Digital Inclusion Alliance (CDIA) to provide free internet access to hundreds of households over the next two years. In addition to connectivity, residents will receive digital literacy training and the opportunity to become support technicians.

Tonight's *Verse & Vino* is just one example of the many ways our Charlotte Mecklenburg Library continues to innovate and adapt. Your support provides the flexibility to respond to our community's changing needs in this extraordinary time, and we are thrilled to celebrate with you.

Thank you.



Jennifer Green

*Board Chair
Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Foundation*



Jenni Gaisbauer, CFRE

*Executive Director
Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Foundation*

LEADERSHIP

CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG LIBRARY FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Meredith Heimburger	Elizabeth Star Winer
Joe Helweg	Lauren Woodruff
Lee Keesler	

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Sally Robinson, *Honorary Chair*

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CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG LIBRARY FOUNDATION STAFF

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Karen Beach, *CFRE, Deputy Director*
Teleia White, *Director of Individual Giving*
Melanie Baron, *Marketing and Communications Specialist*
Lenny Tran, *Database Manager (Librarian on loan)*

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Caitlin Moen, *Chief Customer Officer/Library Director*
Angie Myers, *Chief Capacity Officer*
Jenni Gaisbauer, *Chief Community Officer*
Seth Ervin, *Chief Innovation Officer*

VERSE & VINO PLANNING COMMITTEE

Jessica Dienna	Caton Morris
Selena Giovannelli	Todd Murphy
Kara Hunt	Maddie Myers
Casey Kaufmann	Anne Schmitt
Corrie Manis	

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SCHEDULE

VERSE & VINO

7:00 PM

RED CARPET PRE-SHOW

Mike Collins, *Radio Personality*
Stacey Michelle, *Fashion Insider*

7:30 PM

WELCOME

Jenni Gaisbauer, CFRE, *Executive Director, Library Foundation*
Sheri Lynch, *Radio Personality, Author and Speaker*

SPONSOR WELCOME

PNC Bank

SPONSOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Lee Keesler, *Library CEO*
Teleia White, *Director of Individual Giving, Library Foundation*

AUTHOR PRESENTATIONS

Megan Miranda
Alice Randall
India Hicks
Christopher Paolini
Christina Baker Kline

REMARKS

Brandon Neal, *Library Trustee*

CLOSING REMARKS

Jenni Gaisbauer, CFRE, *Executive Director, Library Foundation*
Sheri Lynch, *Radio Personality, Author and Speaker*

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FEATURING

Sheri Lynch, Emcee

Sheri Lynch is the founder and CEO of NOW! Media, and host of the syndicated Bob & Sheri show, heard in 60-plus markets stateside and around the world on the Armed Forces Radio Network. Sheri has been recognized multiple times by the Alliance for Women in Media Foundation for her exemplary creativity in programming created by and for women. She has also been named one of the Most Influential Women in American Radio for the last 8 years.



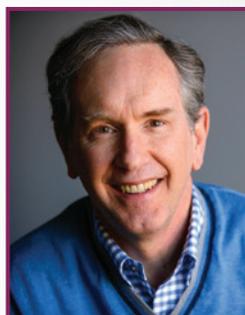
In addition to her broadcast career, Sheri is the author of two best-selling books and has a Master's degree in social work. She is a fierce advocate for literacy and education, and lends her support to numerous community organizations as a speaker and fundraiser, particularly on issues that impact children and families.

Sheri and her husband Kevin lay claim to a giant blended family, a pair of insane dogs, and an entire battalion of cats. Speaking of felines, her latest book, *Cooking With Cats*, is scheduled for release in December 2020.

Check out Sheri's radio show and podcasts: visit www.BobandSheri.com
Follow Sheri on Twitter @SheriLynch and on Instagram @sherilynch1

Mike Collins, Red Carpet Host

For 22 years, Mike Collins has been host of *Charlotte Talks*, a daily, award-winning hour-long talk show on 90.7 WFAE dealing with topics from news and politics to the arts, economics, business and pop culture.



He is also an actor, director and - with apologies - Executive Producer/Director and performer in *Charlotte Squawks*, the annual parody of all things Charlotte.

Follow Mike's radio show on Twitter @CharlotteTalks

Stacee Michelle, Red Carpet Correspondent

Stacee Michelle is a successful entrepreneur who cultivated a career as a brand consultant, wardrobe stylist and media personality. You can catch her producing and styling shoots for commercial and personal clients, helping companies develop and enhance their brand through design and content marketing, or hosting a variety of events including Super Bowl and New York Fashion Week.



Follow her adventures on Instagram @itsStaceeMichelle and read more at www.stacee-michelle.com

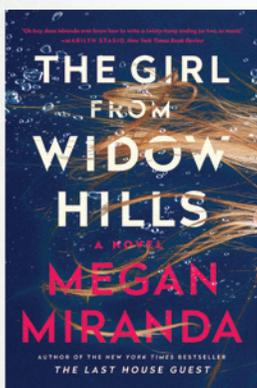
AUTHORS

Megan Miranda

Megan Miranda is the *New York Times* best-selling author of *The Last House Guest*, *The Perfect Stranger*, and *All the Missing Girls*. She has also written several books for young adults, including *The Safest Lies*, *Fragments of the Lost*, and *Come Find Me*. She grew up in New Jersey, graduated from MIT, and lives in North Carolina with her husband and two children.



Photo: Magen Marie Photography



The Girl from Widow Hills

Inspired by the story of Baby Jessica, Miranda tells us the story of the girl from Widow Hills. Arden Maynor was just six years old when she was swept away while sleepwalking during a terrifying rainstorm and went missing for days. Strangers and friends, neighbors and rescue workers set up search parties and held vigils, praying for her safe return. Against all odds she was found, alive, clinging to a storm drain. The girl from Widow Hills was a living miracle. Arden's mother wrote a book. Fame followed. Fans and fan letters, creeps, and stalkers. And every year, the anniversary. It all became too much. As soon as she was old enough, Arden changed her name and disappeared from the public eye.

Now a young woman living hundreds of miles away, Arden goes by Olivia. She's managed to stay off the radar for the last few years. But with the 20th anniversary of her rescue approaching, the media will inevitably renew its interest in Arden. Where is she now? Soon Olivia feels like she's being watched and begins sleepwalking again, like she did long ago, even waking outside her home. Until late one night she jolts awake in her yard with the corpse of a man she knows from her previous life at her feet. And now, the girl from Widow Hills is about to become the center of the story, once again.

Through Arden's rebirth into anonymity, a twisted female friendship, and a fraught mother-daughter relationship, Miranda continues to blur the borders of genre fiction and explore the foundations and complexities of female relationships.

Thank you to Simon and Schuster for supporting Megan Miranda's participation in *Verse & Vino*.



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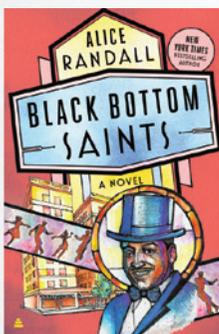
AUTHORS

Alice Randall

Alice Randall is the Harvard-educated author of novels including *The Wind Done Gone*, *Pushkin and the Queen of Spades*, *Rebel Yell* and *Ada's Rules*. An award-winning songwriter, she co-wrote the #1 hit *XXX's and OOO's* which celebrates Aretha Franklin. With her daughter, Caroline Randall Williams, she co-authored the acclaimed cookbook *Soul Food Love* which won the NAACP Image award and the young adult novel *The Diary of B. B. Bright, Possible Princess*, which received the Phillis Wheatley Award. A professor and writer-in-residence at Vanderbilt University, Randall teaches courses on soul food, African-American children's literature, and African-American film.



Photo: Alice Randall



Black Bottom Saints

An enthralling literary tour-de-force that pays tribute to Detroit's legendary neighborhood, a mecca for jazz, sports, and politics. *Black Bottom Saints* is a powerful blend of fact and imagination reminiscent of E.L. Doctorow's classic novel *Ragtime* and Marlon James' Man Booker Award-winning masterpiece, *A Brief History of Seven Killings*.

From the Great Depression through the post-World War II years, Joseph "Ziggy" Johnson, has been the pulse of Detroit's famous Black Bottom. A celebrated gossip columnist for the city's African-American newspaper, the *Michigan Chronicle*, he is also the emcee of one of the hottest night clubs, where he's rubbed elbows with the legendary black artists of the era, including Ethel Waters, Billy Eckstein, and Count Basie. Ziggy is also the founder and dean of the Ziggy Johnson School of Theater. But now the doyen of Black Bottom is ready to hang up his many dapper hats. As he lays dying in the black-owned-and-operated Kirkwood Hospital, Ziggy reflects on his life, the community that was the center of his world, and the remarkable people who helped shape it.

Inspired by the Catholic Saints Day books, Ziggy curates his own list of Black Bottom's venerable "52 Saints." Among them are a vulnerable Dinah Washington, a defiant Joe Louis, and a raucous Bricktop. Randall balances the stories of these larger-than-life "Saints" with local heroes who became household names, enthralling men and women whose unstoppable ambition, love of style, and faith in community made this black Midwestern neighborhood the rival of New York City's Harlem. Accompanying these "tributes" are thoughtfully paired cocktails—special drinks that capture the essence of each of Ziggy's saints—libations as strong and satisfying as Alice Randall's wholly original view of a place and time unlike any other.

Thank you to Amistad, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers for supporting Alice Randall's participation in *Verse & Vino*.

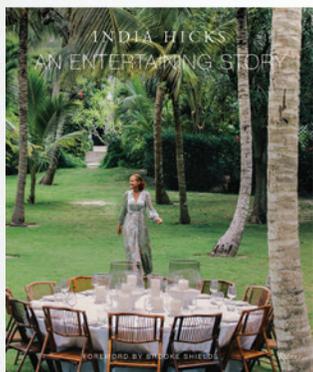
AUTHORS

India Hicks

India Hicks comes from both British and design royalty – she’s an author, model, entrepreneur, TV personality, and daughter of famed designer David Hicks. She and her work have been featured in numerous magazines including *Architectural Digest*, *Town & Country*, *House Beautiful*, *People*, *Forbes*, and many other publications. Hicks hosted the second season of the Bravo interior design competition *Top Design* and is the *New York Times* best-selling author of several books including *India Hicks: Island Style* and *India Hicks: A Slice of England*.



Photo: Brittan Goetz



An Entertaining Story

India Hicks is world-renowned for her irreverent take on style and interior design. In her latest book, *An Entertaining Story*, Hicks presents her own slightly madcap spin on entertaining. Organized by meal, the book begins with the most important meal of the day—cocktail hour—and ends with breakfast. In between, there are family suppers and big dinners, birthday cakes and Christmas crackers, great British breakfasts, quick teas, and long lunches. Like Hicks herself, these stories are full of personality, from the Panic Dinner (or what to do when you suddenly have a crowd descending) to Find a Theme (and buy a glue gun) and Hot and Cold Christmas (and our weird traditions) – as well as a parade of memorable guests from Mick Jagger to an uninvited snake.

Each celebration includes clever advice and inspiration for place settings, homemade flower arrangements, table design and more. These are parties that make use of what’s on hand, whether it’s beach towels and bed covers thrown down a long table, children’s candy piled in cups on a tray, mustard pots used as vases, or massing palm fronds collected from the garden. Beautifully photographed and embellished with a bit of Hicks family lore, *An Entertaining Story* is rounded out with a sprinkling of recipes from India’s beloved cook, Claire Williams, fondly known as Top Banana, and other family members.

Humorous, deeply personal, and thoroughly inviting, this is the book fans of this style icon have been waiting for.

Thank you to Rizzoli New York for supporting India Hicks’ participation in *Verse & Vino*.

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NEW YORK

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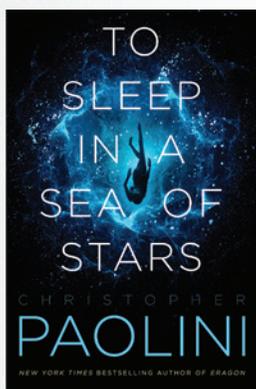
AUTHORS

Christopher Paolini

Christopher Paolini was born in Southern California and has lived most of his life in Paradise Valley, Montana. He published his first novel, *Eragon*, in 2003 at the age of 19, and quickly became a publishing phenomenon. His *Inheritance Cycle* - *Eragon* and its three sequels - have sold nearly 40 million copies worldwide. This is his first adult novel.



Photo: Lo Hunter



To Sleep in a Sea of Stars

Kira Navárez dreamed of life on new worlds.

Now she's awakened a nightmare.

During a routine survey mission on an uncolonized planet, Kira finds an alien relic. At first she's delighted, but elation turns to terror when the ancient dust around her begins to move.

As war erupts among the stars, Kira is launched into a galaxy-spanning odyssey of discovery and transformation. First contact isn't at all what she

imagined, and events push her to the very limits of what it means to be human.

While Kira faces her own horrors, Earth and its colonies stand upon the brink of annihilation. Now, Kira might be humanity's greatest and final hope.

To Sleep in a Sea of Stars is a story of enormous intergalactic weight and consequence, but also of deeply personal human strength, compassion and awe.

Thank you to Tor Books, an imprint of Macmillan for supporting Christopher Paolini's participation in *Verse & Vino*.



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AUTHORS

Christina Baker Kline

Christina Baker Kline is the #1 *New York Times* best-selling author of eight novels, including *The Exiles*, *Orphan Train*, and *A Piece of the World*, and has been published in 40 countries. Her novels have received the New England Prize for Fiction, the Maine Literary Award, and a Barnes & Noble Discover Award among other prizes, and have been chosen by hundreds of communities, universities and schools as “One Book, One Read” selections.



Photo: Beowulf Sheehan



The Exiles

Seduced by her employer’s son, Evangeline, a naïve young governess in early nineteenth-century London, is discharged when her pregnancy is discovered and sent to the notorious Newgate Prison. After months in the fetid, overcrowded jail, she learns she is sentenced to “the land beyond the seas,” Van Diemen’s Land, a penal colony in Australia. Though uncertain of what awaits, Evangeline knows one thing: the child she carries will be born on the months-long voyage to this distant land.

During the journey on a repurposed slave ship, the *Medea*, Evangeline strikes up a friendship with Hazel, a girl little older than her former pupils, who was sentenced to seven years transport for stealing a silver spoon. Canny where Evangeline is guileless, Hazel – a skilled midwife and herbalist – is soon offering home remedies to both prisoners and sailors in return for a variety of favors.

Though Australia has been home to Aboriginal people for more than 50,000 years, the British government in the 1840s considers its fledgling colony uninhabited and unsettled and views the natives as an unpleasant nuisance. By the time the *Medea* arrives, many of them have been forcibly relocated, their land seized by white colonists. One of these relocated people is Mathinna, the orphaned daughter of the Chief of the Lowreenne tribe, who has been adopted by the new governor of Van Diemen’s Land.

Christina Baker Kline brilliantly recreates the beginnings of a new society in a beautiful and challenging land, telling the story of Australia from a fresh perspective, through the experiences of Evangeline, Hazel, and Mathinna. While life in Australia is punishing and often brutally unfair, it is also, for some, an opportunity: for redemption, for a new way of life, for unimagined freedom. Told in exquisite detail and incisive prose, *The Exiles* is a story of grace born from hardship, the unbreakable bonds of female friendships, and the unfettering of legacy.

Thank you to Custom House, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers for supporting Christina Baker Kline’s participation in *Verse & Vino*.

GENEROSITY IN ACTION

CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG LIBRARY

FOUNDATION

The **Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Foundation** exists to help the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library improve lives and build a stronger community.

The Foundation supports Library services, expands the Library's collection of print and digital materials, enhances programming for all ages, invests in technology and innovative initiatives and strives to grow its endowment for future generations.



The CommonSpark is a multi-year, public-private partnership to infuse **\$135 million** into improving lives and building a stronger community in Mecklenburg County.

The campaign addresses an integrated set of needs: a new Main Library uptown; a Support Services Center for non-public facing operations; systemwide technology, innovation and programming; an endowment for the future and annual operating support.



PROGRESS IS AS OF OCTOBER 1, 2020

Areas of Impact

In Fiscal Year 2020, your Library Foundation raised **\$8,681,094** from **1,546** donors toward the comprehensive CommonSpark campaign. Your generosity moved the campaign forward and made all the following - and more - possible in FY 2020:

- Print and digital resources
- Laptops for loan
- Digital literacy classes and devices for seniors
- Early childhood programming and Active Reading resources
- *EpicFest* family literary festival
- Historian-in-Residence program
- Partnership with Report for America, WFAE and Digital Public Library of America
- Reopening celebrations at North County Regional and South Boulevard Libraries
- Makerspace for North County Regional
- Library Foundation operating expenses

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FACTS & IMPACT

CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG

LIBRARY

OUR MISSION: *What we do*

Improve lives and build a stronger community

OUR VISION: *What we aspire to be*

The essential connector of a thriving community of readers, leaders and learners

BRAND PROMISE

Accessible and welcoming to all, our public library celebrates and supports the joy of reading and learning, fosters exploration and personal growth, and connects individuals to each other, the community and the world. In short, we help people think, **"I can."**



FY 2020 By the Numbers

- **358,878** active Library cardholders have used their accounts in the last two years
- **5,689,259** total items borrowed – **2,088,948** of them digital
- **1,241** volunteers gave **38,496** hours of library service – nearly **4,812** work days!
- **390,330** children and caregivers participated in early literacy programs, both virtually and in person



Partnership in Action

In partnership with the Digital Public Library of America, **Engage 2020** invites the community to "Look Back and Move Forward" to learn from the past to create a better future.

Programs presented with Queens University, UNC Charlotte, Johnson C. Smith University and others highlight Black women's stories in the suffrage, civil rights, and voting rights movements, and these stories will be digitally archived in a shared collection. Mayor Vi Lyles chairs an honorary committee that includes generations of female political leaders and activists. Since its start in June, **programs have engaged over 7,500 participants**. Engage 2020 continues through November 30.

Learn more at digitalbranch.cmlibrary.org/engage-2020

WAYS TO GIVE

3

Simple ways to
**SUPPORT
YOUR
LIBRARY
FOUNDATION**

1

Give Online

One-time or monthly
foundation.cmlibrary.org/securegiving

.....

2

Text to Give

Text "Give" to 704-343-8828
Charity code: #lovelibrary
Choose gift amount
Click link to enter payment information

.....

3

Give by Mail

Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Foundation
310 North Tryon St
Charlotte, NC 28202

PROGRAMS



OPEN BOOKS. OPEN MINDS.

Each year, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library hosts a big, exciting, community-wide book club known as Community Read. Everyone in the community is invited to participate: read a book, share perspectives, attend a program, engage on social media and build a stronger community together.

Join us in March, 2021 for Community Read.

Learn more and watch for author announcements at cmlibrary.org/community-read

BLACK LIVES MATTER

Charlotte Mecklenburg Library's **Black Lives Matter** programs provide a safe space for our community to discuss important issues related to racism, racial equity and racial justice. These programs explore Black lives and experiences on a greater spectrum, providing access to quality resources and exposure to new perspectives, giving our community the educational tools to **move toward racial equity** and justice in Mecklenburg County.

Learn more at digitalbranch.cmlibrary.org/black+lives+matter

To learn more about the **Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Foundation** and upcoming events, join our mailing list at foundation.cmlibrary.org and follow us on social media:



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We'd love to see and share your posts!
Please tag us and use the hashtag

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VERSE & VINO

The views expressed by the authors and guest presenters do not necessarily represent the views of, and should not be attributed to, the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library, Library Foundation or sponsors.

Verse & Vino 2020

The Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Foundation

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CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG LIBRARY

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