

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Virgin Islands Literary Festival and Book Fair Slated for Mid-April; Award-Winning Local, Regional, and Mainland Authors Set to Present

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The line-up for the territory's premier literary festival has been announced: the 9th VI Lit Fest will take place next month, featuring works from best-selling authors and academics from the U.S. mainland, the region, and right here in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Festival headliner Charmaine Wilkerson is the author of "Black Cake", a New York Times best seller that was listed among former President Barack Obama's favorite reads for 2022. According to VI Lit Fest organizers, the novel is a compelling story of children trying to understand the mother they have lost. The book was subject to a bidding war

over TV rights before it was even published, with Oprah Winfrey's Harpo Films winning the acquisition.

Celebrated Jamaican author Kei Miller's "August Town" and his countrymate Alecia McKenzie's "A Million Aunties" will be celebrated, as will Trinidadian-American Elizabeth Nunez's "Now Lila Knows", a gripping story that explores the obligation to act when confronted with the unfair treatment of fellow human beings, according to Lit Fest officials.

American philosopher Lewis Gordon's work, "Fear of Black Consciousness", will also be explored.

The four-day festival, being organized by The Caribbean Writer, a journal published annually by the University of the Virgin Islands together with the Virgin Islands Literary Festival and Book Fair, will feature several interactive events.

One workshop, titled "Using Virgin Islands History to Write Fiction", will be hosted by award-winning author Tiphonie Yanique, a professor at UVI. Other workshops for budding writers, targeting plot-writing, character-building, poetry writing, and other topics will also be held. A special segment dubbed Children's Corner for presentations by local and national children's book authors has also been curated.

This year's VI Lit Fest will honor three authors from the Virgin Islands - the first chair of Lit Fest Dr. Valerie Combie, Dr. Vincent Cooper, recently retired from UVI, and Joan Medlicott, a St. Thomian who has published more than 20 novels in the Ladies of Covington series as well as standalone works.

The 9th VI Lit Fest will run from April 13-16 this year. More information, including the full calendar of events, can be found at www.usvilitfest.com.