

# Springtime and Literature Prevails at Blue Metropolis International Literary Festival, Sat. April 24 to Sun. May 2, 2021

*Blue Metropolis—pure eclectic joy for readers and thinkers around the world, with free contemporary literary conversations, panels, interviews and launches*

MONTREAL, CANADA, April 20, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Starting April 24 and running until May 2, the spring programming of the 23rd Blue Metropolis International Literary Festival will be in full swing, along with the TD-Blue Metropolis Children's Festival. Online with more than 50 eclectic events, 200 artists will delight eyes and minds around the theme, The Challenges of Our Times. Free multilingual events in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Arabic take the form of captivating panels, debates and interviews. Events are added daily and will remain online. This year's festival offers thought-provoking, unbridled events and authors from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, France, Ireland, Israel, Lebanon, Mauritius, Nicaragua, Palestine, Portugal, Senegal, Sweden, Spain, the USA and others. Here's a taste of what's in store, with full programming described at [bluemetropolis.org/2021festival/](http://bluemetropolis.org/2021festival/).



## FESTIVAL HEADLINERS



David Grossman  
(Israel)



Carl Honoré  
(Canada/UK)



Richard Van Camp  
(Canada)



Souleymane Bachir  
Diagne  
(Sénégal)



Hoda Barakat  
(Liban)



Hanan Al-Shaykh  
(Libanon)



Mattilda Bernstein  
Sycamore  
(United States)



Mathieu Lindon  
(France)



Gioconda Belli  
(Nicaragua)



Thomas Piketty  
(France)



Javier Cercas  
(Spain)



Caetano Veloso  
(Brazil)

Must-see authors from around the world

“This very special edition of the festival is presented during a pandemic which isn't letting up, but which has not got the better of our great energy and our endless will,” said William St-Hilaire,

Blue Metropolis Executive and Artistic Director.

### [Literary Prizes](#)

Seven lauded literary prizes and accompanying interviews, including those from last year's cancelled festival, will be awarded: Blue Metropolis Words to Change Prize to novelist Nathacha Appanah (France/Mauritius); Blue Metropolis First Peoples' Literary Prize to writer Richard Van Camp (Canada); Blue Metropolis Sciences and Literature Prize to economist Thomas Piketty (France); Blue Metropolis Violet Literary Prize to writer André Roy (Quebec); 2020 Premio Metropolis Azul to novelist Gioconda Belli (Nicaragua), 2021 Premio Metropolis Azul Prize to novelist Javier Cercas (Spain); and Blue Metropolis/Conseil des arts de Montréal Diversity Prize to writer Nicholas Dawson (Quebec/Chile).



### [Headline Events](#)

The exciting new Headline Events series brings together internationally-renowned authors from around the world to take on a wide variety of issues for 8 thought-provoking interview/discussions. David Bradford, associate programming coordinator is thrilled how the 2021 program thoughtfully engages the many crises people find themselves in. "We find ourselves at crossroads at this time—culturally, economically, environmentally and politically—and this year's perspectives and exchanges converge on the past, present and future of what can and must change." Not to be missed is African philosopher Souleymane Bachir Diagne (Senegal/France/US) on post-colonial memories; David Grossman, one of Israel's greatest living writers, on the added threat posed during the pandemic to democracies by racism, fundamentalism and other forces; journalist and essayist Carl Honoré (Canada) in praise of 'slow'; novelists Hanan Al-Shaykh and Hoda Barakat reflecting on their wounded Lebanon; author Mathieu Lindon (France) on Hervé Guibert, contemplating whether writers ever really die; Indigenous authors Kim Scott (Australia), Gregory Scofield (Canada) and Devon A. Mihesuah (US) on the intersection of art and activism; queer authors Mattilda Bernstein Sycamore and Randa Jarrar (US) delving into each other's work; and musician and icon Caetano Veloso (Brazil) evoking his Bahia roots, the Portuguese language, and the joys of composing.

For Ingrid Bejerman, curator of Azul, the festival's Spanish and Portuguese-language programming, this year is the best ever, "With two Azul Prize winners plus none other than the legendary Caetano Veloso in conversation with the great Portuguese journalist Alexandra Lucas Coelho, we've got our hispanophone and lusophone readers covered. Nothing replaces la calidez of being in the same room with fellow readers and our worshipped writers, but we have created digital content that is engaging and dynamic. Being a Brazilian otimista, I can't wait to be virtually joined by readers and fans from all over the world. ¡Maravilloso!"

Fresh points of view

Along with the Dreams and Peace Forum which showcases ten authors talking about tomorrow's emergencies and today's tranquillity, there are two more series of riveting events where readers and thinkers can expect a selection of poets, essayists, authors and, at every turn, fascinating dialogue.

[Converging Perspectives and Conversations](#) zones in on 'the challenges of our times' theme. The popular Jerusalem of the Mind roundtable will again break with engrained divisions of the Middle East to bring together Palestinian and Israeli writers. "Now in its fourth year, this April's event features authors Ayelet Gundar-Goshen, Ayelet Waldman and Ala Hlehel, and journalist Amjad Iraqi, with host Joseph Rosen, in a must-see highly challenging and stimulating discussion. In past years, this event drew a packed house. This year, since it's online, there won't be a seating problem!" said program curator Shelley Pomerance. Other compelling topics are: live theatre in Montreal post COVID-19; Buried in Time, a literary conversation between poets Judy Quinn and Anne Michaels about mourning and love; an intergenerational dialogue on literary experimentation with Gail Scott and Céleste Godin; and the art of reconnecting with nature with a focus on nature writing, ecology and voluntary simplicity, as part of the SLOW series.

Other Encounters is where a variety of 25 literary events await, ranging from panels, debates and interviews to book launches and literary performances. Worth checking out among many more is a theatrical and musical performance based on the works of the great Lebanese poet Kahlil Gibran; The Violet Hour LGBTQ reading series; Irish music and literature straight from Dublin; the Indigenous Voices Awards finalists unveiled; All People Share the Same Rights, on empowering marginalized communities in Montreal and the Middle East; and book launches including Linda Leith's new book *The Girl from Dream City*; Quebec Writers' Federation's *Chronicling the Days* about life under lockdown; new Latin American literature; and Linda Leith Publishing's 2021 titles.

For kids, parents and grandparents

Festive Weekends, April 24-25 and May 1-2, will be on offer as part of the TD-Blue Metropolis Children's Festival which now runs year-round. The weekends will feature Marie-Andrée Arsenault, winner of the 2020 Harry Black Award; Erin Bow, winner of the 2019 Governor General's Award; Jacques Goldstyn, winner of the 2020 TD Award; Amélie Dumoulin, finalist for the 2020 TD Award; and Geneviève Guilbault, Virginia Pesemapeo Bordeleau, and Jan Thornhill, whose renown precedes her. There will also be podcasts on lessening anxiety in teens.

Springtime and literature prevails at Blue Metropolis. To view the complete program:  
[bluemetropolis.org/2021festival/](http://bluemetropolis.org/2021festival/)

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