

# Press Clippings

# **INPRINT** **MARGARET** **ROOT** **BROWN** **READING** **SERIES**

22/23

**MOHSIN HAMID**  
*AUGUST 1, 2022*

**ERIKA L. SÁNCHEZ**  
*SEPTEMBER 12, 2022*

**ABDULRAZAK GURNAH**  
*SEPTEMBER 19, 2022*

**JAVIER ZAMORA**  
*OCTOBER 3, 2022*

**MAGGIE O'FARRELL**  
*OCTOBER 10, 2022*

**JOY HARJO**  
*NOVEMBER 14, 2022*

**YIYUN LI &  
MATTHEW SALESSES**  
*JANUARY 23, 2023*

**ADA LIMÓN**  
*MARCH 6, 2023*

**LEILA MOTTLEY**  
*APRIL 17, 2023*

**ABRAHAM VERGHESE**  
*MAY 8, 2023*

**READINGS BEGIN  
AT 7:30 PM**

**TICKETS, LOCATIONS,  
& DETAILS**

**[inprinthouston.org](http://inprinthouston.org)**

**inprint**



# ***INPRINT***

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**“INPRINT’S WORK IS  
TRANSFORMATIONAL,  
WHOLLY IMPORTANT,  
NECESSARY FOR  
THESE TIMES.”**

*— Sandra Cisneros*

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inprint

**40**  
YEARS

**THE BROWN  
FOUNDATION, INC.**

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ENDOWMENT for the **ARTS**  
arts.gov



HOUSTON  
ENDOWMENT



**BRAZOS**  
BOOKSTORE

UNIVERSITY of  
**HOUSTON**  
CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAM

Features editor: Melissa Aguilar, features@chron.com

## BOOKS

## Inprint series includes Nobel winner, two poets laureate

By Andrew Dansby

STAFF WRITER

Perhaps as exciting as the list for Inprint's Margaret Root Brown Reading Series is the fact that its 2022-23 season is a full return to in-person status for the much-loved book events after the pandemic forced programming into a streaming series for two years.

Events begin Aug. 1 with British-Pakistani novelist Mohsin Hamid, who will discuss his latest book, "The Last White Man."

Eight dates are set for the 42nd season, two of them featuring U.S. poets laureate. Joy Harjo served as poet laureate starting in 2019. This week, her successor, Ada Limón, was named. Inprint brings Harjo to town Nov. 14 and Limón on March 6, 2023.

Also announced for the season will be Abdulrazak Gurnah, a Tanzanian native living in Britain who won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2021. He will read and discuss his work on Sept. 19.

The season concludes May 8 with Abraham Verghese, whose 2008 novel, "Cutting for Stone," has sold more than 1 million copies.



Courtesy photo

**Mohsin Hamid's fifth novel, "The Last White Man," is being published in 2022.**

More information on the 2022-23 Margaret Root Brown Reading Series, including subscription and ticket sales, go to [inprintheouston.org](http://inprintheouston.org).

**Aug. 1:** Mohsin Hamid

**Sept. 19:** Abdulrazak Gurnah

**Oct. 10:** Maggie O'Farrell

**Nov. 14:** Joy Harjo

**Jan. 23, 2023:** Yiyun Li and Matthew Salesses

**March 6:** Ada Limón

**April 17:** Leila Mottley

**May 8:** Abraham Verghese

*andrew.dansby*  
*@houstonchronicle.com*



Courtesy photo

**Poet Joy Harjo**



Shawn Miller/AP/Library of Congress

**Ada Limón has been named the 24th U.S. poet laureate.**



| THINGS TO DO |

## Best Bets: *Peter Pan*, *Somi*, and *Crying in the Bathroom*

NATALIE DE LA GARZA | SEPTEMBER 8, 2022 | 4:30AM

It's not quite fall yet and it certainly doesn't feel like autumn, so all of this week's best bets will keep you out of the heat, though not necessarily indoors. Discovery Green and Miller Outdoor Theatre will offer some evenings of can't-miss dance and music for those courageous enough to brave the mosquitos, while others can find cool air-conditioning around town at places like the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Stages, and the Wortham Theater Center. Keep reading for our list of the coming week's best offerings.



Inprint is bringing Erika L. Sánchez to Houston to discuss and read from her new book *Crying in the Bathroom*. Photo by Adriana Diaz

# Upcoming Houston Book Events You Won't Want to Miss

Nobel Prize winners, local authors, and book conventions await you.

By [Alexia Partouche](#) • Updated August 11, 2022

**WITH [SCHOOL STARTING](#) AND FALL** just around the corner, we're putting on our thinking caps and hitting the books. If you're counting down the days until cooler weather so you can cozy up with a good story, [Bayou City bookworms will find lots](#) to love this season in Houston's literary scene. With a reading from a Nobel Prize winner, a romance book convention, and a visit from the London author dominating the psychological thriller shelves all on the near horizon, H-Town has what it takes to [quench your thirst for good literature](#).

Here's our guide to the best book events Houston has to offer over the next couple of months:

### **Erika L. Sanchez | Inprint | September 12**

The National Book Award finalist and author of *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter* is back with an exploration of self that is equal parts cutting and comedic in her new memoir, *Crying in the Bathroom*. Hear her read from the book and discuss it with Jasminne Mendez, winner of an International Latino Book Award.

### **Abdulrazak Gurnah | Inprint | September 19**

It's not every day that Houston gets a visit from a winner of the Nobel Prize in literature, so make sure you tune in for this reading from Abdulrazak Gurnah. Awarded the Nobel Prize for his writing on the effects of colonialism, the author will be reading from his newest book, *Afterlives*, which tells a multigenerational story set on the Swahili coast during German colonial rule.

### **Javier Zamora | Inprint | October 3**

The renowned poet continues his exploration of the Salvadoran Civil War's impact on his life through his new memoir, *Solito*, which chronicles his 3,000-mile solo migration from El Salvador to the US. The event will include a reading, an on-stage conversation with University of North Texas assistant professor of English Daniel Peña, and a book signing.

### **Maggie O'Farrell | Inprint | October 10**

Master of historical fiction Maggie O'Farrell will be reading from her new novel, *The Marriage Portrait*, which explores the courts of Renaissance Italy through the eyes of young duchess Lucrezia de' Medici as she is thrown suddenly into marriage. The reading will be followed by an on-stage conversation with Maggie Galehouse, the former book editor at the *Houston Chronicle*.



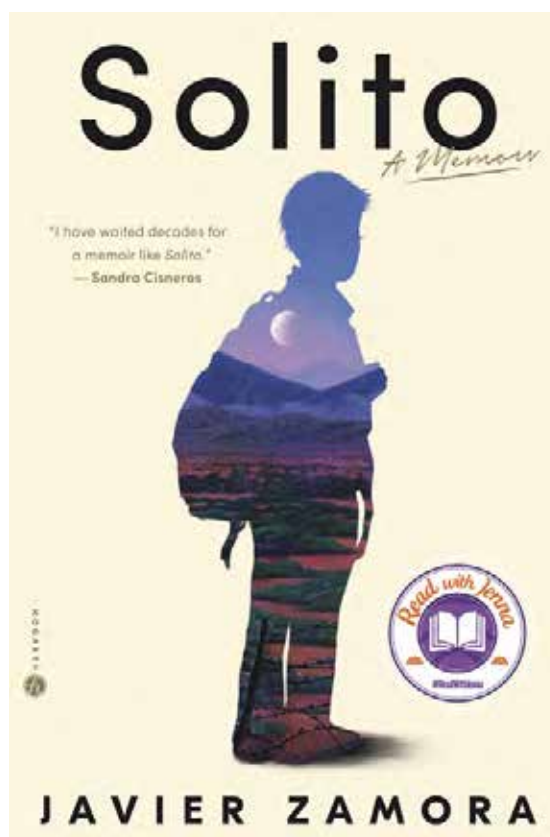
## BOOKS

## Javier Zamora among the authors at Houston book events this week

The renowned poet and activist will read from his new memoir, in a program presented by Inprint Margaret Root Brown Reading Series.



Ana Khan | October 3, 2022 Updated: October 4, 2022, 7:21 am



### MONDAY

**Javier Zamora:** Author will read from his new memoir "Solito," followed by an on-stage conversation with Daniel Peña, award-winning author of "Bang." The evening will conclude with a book sale and signing. 7:30 p.m., tickets \$5. Ballroom at Bayou Place, 500 Texas; [inprintheouston.org](http://inprintheouston.org)

# Gov. Abbott and Beto O'Rourke set to debate, and a controversial rail company merger (Sept. 30, 2022)

On Friday's show: We preview tonight's debate between Gov. Greg Abbott and his challenger, Beto O'Rourke, and discuss whether such events influence the outcome on Election Day. And we learn more about a proposed merger of rail companies and some people's concerns about it.

MICHAEL HAGERTY | SEPTEMBER 30, 2022, 7:00 AM

Share



Listen



On Friday's show: We preview [tonight's debate](#) between Gov. Greg Abbott and his challenger, Beto O'Rourke, and discuss whether such events influence the outcome on Election Day. The debate will air at 7 p.m. on Houston's [CW Ch. 39](#) and [here on News 88.7](#).

Also this hour: We discuss the controversial merger of Canadian Pacific Railway and Kansas City Southern Railway and how it might affect rail traffic here. Hearings on the matter have been taking place this week in Washington, D.C. Residents can submit [public comments](#) on the merger through Oct. 14.

Then, we break down [The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly](#) of the week.

And writer [Javier Zamora](#) discusses his memoir, [Solito](#), which chronicles his journey from El Salvador to the United States at the age of nine. Zamora will [speak Monday night](#) at an event from Inprint at the Ballroom at Bayou Place.



## BOOKS

REVIEW

## Renaissance page-turner

‘The Marriage Portrait’ brings a murdered duchess back to life

By Chris Vognar  
CORRESPONDENT

Robert Browning's 1842 poem "My Last Duchess" is a mini marvel of literature, a perfectly calibrated dramatic monologue with a dark undertone: The speaker is a duke who pulls back a curtain to reveal a portrait of his former wife, whom, we gradually realize, he has murdered. He explains all of this to an emissary from his potential next wife, suggesting his anxiety over the matter is nil.

Maggie O'Farrell, the Northern Irish novelist whose 2020 novel "Hamnet" won the National Book Critics Circle Award for Fiction, had always loved the poem. One day, just before the COVID-19 pandemic took hold, she decided to find out if it was based in reality. What she discovered would lead her to her new novel, "The Marriage Portrait," a Renaissance page-turner that brings the duchess back to life.

O'Farrell will read from and discuss the novel Oct. 10 at the University of Houston as part of the Inprint author series.

"She's dead, but also she's behind that curtain, and he controls who sees her in the poem," O'Farrell says from her home in Edinburgh. "I thought it was time to pull back that curtain and lead her out and say, 'OK, it's your turn to speak now. What's the story? What story do you have to tell us?'"

The real-life duchess was Lucrezia di Cosimo de' Medici of Florence, married to Alfonso II d'Este, Duke of Ferrara, at age 15 in 1560. The duchess died less than a year later; the cause given was "putrid fever," or typhus. But the rumors of murder began almost immediately.

We know little detail of Lucrezia's existence. What O'Farrell has done is give her an interior life: shy but strong-willed, compassionate but fiercely determined, a gifted painter and lover of animals and underdogs. She's the runt of the litter in her own family, chosen to marry Alfonso only when her older sister dies. As her husband imposes his will on the portrait painter, she makes friends with the artist's apprentices. She's also quite intuitive and certain that her death is close at hand, largely because her husband is unable to sire a child (a circumstance, which, naturally, he blames on his wife).

There is in fact no known marriage portrait; the painting of Lucrezia that survives was commissioned by her parents before her nuptials.



Murdo Macleod

Author Maggie O'Farrell says a Robert Browning poem inspired her to write "The Marriage Portrait."



## INPRINT AUTHOR SERIES

Inprint presents Maggie O'Farrell, reading from and discussing her novel "The Marriage Portrait" with Maggie Galehouse.

**When:** 7:30 p.m. Oct. 10

**Where:** University of Houston's Cullen Performance Hall, 4300 University

**Tickets:** \$30; [inprintheuston.org](http://inprintheuston.org)

That, along with Browning's poem, was enough to capture O'Farrell's imagination. She recalls the day she waited for the portrait to download on her "rubbish phone."

"This headress and then

she might tell if she was able to."

It's a marvel of a novel, propulsive in narrative and acutely attentive to minute detail. Lucrezia is blessed with the eye of a painter and, thanks to O'Farrell, a poet. Here she is on her long-dreaded wedding day: "A long triangle of light, an exact yellow replica of the window behind it, makes a sudden appearance at her feet, spreading itself out across the floor, as if reaching for her ankle. Lucrezia observes how it bends around objects in its path, drapes over a pair of shoes, a dropped cloth, a discarded shift."

Through her novel, O'Farrell grants Lucrezia a spirit that transcends her

fate in an arranged marriage, in a time and place when women of a certain social and political standing were but convenient tools to extend their families' dynastic power.

O'Farrell was determined to push beyond the exterior image and arrive at a greater truth.

"Those Renaissance portraits are so perfect," the author says. "Their surfaces are so flawless, and their expressions are often very neutral. I just always got the sense that behind the very polished veneer of these portraits are other lives and an immense psychological depth."

Chris Vognar is a Houston writer.

# Top 11 Book & Author Events in Houston: October 2022

By Holly Beretto - Sep 27, 2022

**Dig into virtual and live book events, the latest appearances by authors, and more with our roundup of book and literary events taking place in Houston in October 2022.**

- **Inprint presents Maggie O'Farrell at Cullen Performance Hall at University of Houston | Monday, October 10** – The author of the best-selling *Hamnet* is in town as part of Inprint's Margaret Root Brown Reading Series. She'll read selections from her latest best-seller, *The Marriage Portrait*, followed by a discussion with former Houston Chronicle book editor Maggie Galehouse. \$30; Includes a signed copy of the book. 7:30pm.

## 2022/2023 Inprint Margaret Root Brown Reading Series presents Abdulrazak Gurnah, Joy Harjo, Yiyun Li, Ada Limón, Maggie O'Farrell, Abraham Verghese, and others

Aug 18, 2022



Inprint, Houston's premier literary arts nonprofit organization, presents the 42nd season of the 2022/2023 Inprint Margaret Root Brown Reading Series, one of the nation's leading literary showcases. The 2022/2023 season features 10 readings with an inclusive array of award-winning authors, all with new books – including Abdulrazak Gurnah, Mohsin Hamid, Joy Harjo, Yiyun Li, Ada Limón, Leila Mottley, Maggie O'Farrell, Matthew Saleesses, Erika L. Sánchez, Abraham Verghese, and Javier Zamora – from August 2022 through May 2023. Each event includes a reading by the featured author(s) and an on-stage interview with a local writer, followed by a book sale and signing. In-person readings will take place on Monday evenings at 7:30 pm CT, with an online rebroadcast of each event available 3 days later. For tickets, the full schedule, and more information, visit [inprinthouston.org](http://inprinthouston.org) or call 713.521.2026.



Public enthusiasm to return to the theatre remains high, and 3 different season ticket levels are now available: a **premium subscription for \$450**, which includes signed books by all 11 of the season's featured authors, reserved section seating, free parking, and other benefits; a **premium + partner subscription for \$575**, which provides a household with two seats, one set of books, and other benefits; and a **classic subscription for \$225**, which includes a signed copy of *New York Times* bestselling author Maggie O'Farrell's new novel *The Marriage Portrait* and other benefits. **General admission tickets for individual readings are \$5** (unchanged since 1980), except for the Inprint Maggie O'Farrell Reading, which includes a book purchase as part of the ticket price. General admission tickets for in-person readings and online rebroadcasts will go on sale on the Inprint website a few weeks in advance of each event.

"What a thrill to be returning to the theatre for a full season of Inprint Brown Reading Series events, with a brilliant, diverse, international group of authors, whose work is stimulating, engaging, and fused to the *zeitgeist* of the current moment," says Inprint Executive Director Rich Levy. "With the online rebroadcast option as well, we are delighted to stay connected with fellow book lovers across the country and around the globe."<sup>2</sup>

The authors to be featured in the 2022/2023 Inprint Margaret Root Brown Reading Series include:

- **August 1, 2022 – Mohsin Hamid**, Booker Prize finalist and *New York Times* bestselling author of *Exit West*, with his new novel *The Last White Man*
- **September 12, 2022 – Erika L. Sánchez**, National Book Award finalist, with her new memoir

#### *Crying in the Bathroom*

- **September 19, 2022 – Abdulrazak Gurnah**, 2021 Nobel Prize winner, with his new novel

#### *Afterlives*

- **October 3, 2022 – Javier Zamora**, renowned poet and activist, with his new memoir *Solito*
- **October 10, 2022 – Maggie O'Farrell**, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Hamnet*, with her new novel *The Marriage Portrait*
- **November 14, 2022 – Joy Harjo**, three-term U.S. Poet Laureate, with her new collection

#### *Weaving Sundown in a Scarlet Light: 50 Poems for 50 Years*

- **January 23, 2023 – Yiyun Li**, MacArthur Fellow, with her new novel *The Book of Goose*, and **Matthew Salesses**, Inprint Fellow and Prize winner and PEN/Faulkner Award finalist, with his new novel *The Sense of Wonder*

- **March 6, 2023** – Ada Limón, 2022–2023 U.S. Poet Laureate, with her new collection ***The Hurting Kind***
  - **April 17, 2023** – Leila Mottley, breakout literary star, with her debut novel ***Nightcrawling***
  - **May 8, 2023** – Abraham Verghese, National Humanities Medal recipient and *New York Times* bestselling author of *Cutting for Stone*, with his new novel ***The Covenant of Water***
- The series is presented by Inprint, a Houston-based literary arts nonprofit organization dedicated to inspiring readers and writers. Since 1980, the Inprint Margaret Root Brown Reading Series has featured close to 400 of the world's greatest writers from 38 countries, including winners of 12 Nobel Prizes, 70 Pulitzer Prizes, 65 National Book Awards, 54 National Book Critics Circle Awards, and 17 Booker Prizes, as well as 21 U.S. Poet Laureates. The series and Inprint receive generous underwriting support from The Brown Foundation, Inc., the National Endowment for the Arts, The Jerry C. Dearing Family Foundation, the Houston Endowment, The City of Houston through the Houston Arts Alliance, and the Texas Commission on the Arts. The series is presented in association with Brazos Bookstore (which offers Inprint patrons a discount on books by the season's featured authors) and the University of Houston Creative Writing Program. Special thanks also to Winpark, and the Four Seasons Hotel Houston.



BOOK

# Joy Harjo, US poet laureate, talks career and new poem collection

By Andrew Dansby  
STAFF WRITER

The entire notion of a volume of “collected poems” — a benchmark for any venerable and venerated poet — has been about volume. Typically, poetry anthologies are robust books, compared to the more slight collections that poets produce every few years.

Joy Harjo has always cut her own path. So the new “Weaving Sundown in a Scarlet Light” isn’t like other poetry retrospectives. At 127 pages — including a Sandra Cisneros foreword, notes on the poems and other pages without poems — the collection condenses a career, to date, with a curated conciseness.

The conceit for “Weaving Sundown” was that Harjo, the three-term U.S. poet laureate, would select 50 poems to represent 50 years of writing them. At 71, Harjo doesn’t view the anthology as a monolith or a tombstone, but rather as a different sort of benchmark.

She insists she has much more yet to say.

Nevertheless, “Weaving Sundown in a Scarlet Light” is a wonderful introduction to the Tulsa-based poet, a Mvskoke or Muscogee Nation member. Hers is a poetry untethered to Euro-centric notions of time and place. To read her work is to find a revelatory wonder in the Earth and to think about our space here differently. Inprint Houston brings Harjo to town Nov. 14. She discussed her career and her new collection.

**Q: Even if this collection didn’t cover 50 years, each poem made me think about time in a different way.**

**A:** I’m glad to hear that. There are may kinds of time. And I think about it a lot. There’s a poem called “For Calling the Spirit Back From the Wandering Earth in Its Human Feet.” Inside that poem there’s a discussion about time.

**Q: One of your previous books mentioned the concept of “overculture,” a creation of overbearing commercialization. And this volume made me think of that as well as Karen Armstrong’s new book about a reverence for finding a spiri-**



Shawn Miller / Blue Flower Arts

**U.S. Poet Laureate Joy Harjo’s new “Weaving Sundown in a Scarlet Light” contains a collection of poems that span a 50-year career.**

**tual sacredness in nature.**

**A:** I think there’s a world in which the Earth is a dead thing. A place to dig still or monetize resources. But then there’s a world in which the planet is a living being and we’re part of that living being. Those ideas proceed differently with very different values and relationships, and they also differ with time.

**Q: Sorry to get stuck on time, which really is an artificial construct but one we have made certain agreements regarding. Do you feel time differently now than you did when you first started writing poems? I think about songs I sing with my daughter in the car and have for more than a decade. Some stick around. Others change. Some we still love but differently than we used to.**

**A:** Yeah, I know something has changed. I don’t feel I’m older, of course. I don’t feel elderly. But your relationship with time shifts, too, the older you are. Somebody could probably work that out as an equation. But I think it has to do with a depth of perception. You could argue children have a deeper depth of perception. They haven’t learned to cut it

off yet. Hence your daughter singing in the car. Whatever is going on in the world, she’s singing. That’s what matters. It’s absolutely everything when you consider that kind of time versus things related to money.

**Q: I don’t want to get you in trouble with any sort of poetry clique because I know you’re not supposed to explain poems any more than you’re supposed to explain songs. But the notes at the end were revelatory, even just as context. Was there anxiety about offering too much information?**

**A:** That started with my book “The woman who fell from the sky,” where I was trying to make a statement about morality. When I perform with a band or without, but when it’s any kind of music, I tell stories. These stories are not exactly about the poems. It’s not my place to say what a poem means, what’s going on in it, what the contextual things are. So that’s where it started. My friend (author) Brenda Peterson helped arrange that book for me when I was having a hard time finding a shape for it. She suggested the notes. It’s important to experience the poem first. So it’s not seen as explaining. But I think it lets

people know, poetry doesn’t occur in a vacuum. Usually people are writing, speaking from a certain place.

**Q: I was intrigued by the contrast between these poems, which feel fixed, and lyrics written by Bob Dylan, whose museum and archive in Tulsa enlisted you as its artist-in-residence. The documentation in his archive suggested never-ending lyrical revisions. But poems don’t enjoy the same luxury. When completed, poems feel permanent.**

**A:** I don’t think about it too much. I never consider too much what people will think. I guess it does get to me sometimes. But I disregarded it through a lot of the years because my poetry for those years was disregarded. Which was frustrating. But I will say, I don’t always know what I’m up to, but I know I’m up to something. My poetry doesn’t really fit squarely in any of the poetry schools. But it’s also not like I have been deliberately trying to avoid those schools. I like to joke about allusions and references that they’re Creek not Greek. I noticed nearly every collection I’ve seen, there are heavy-duty classical references going on. I’ve felt more like,

## JOY HARJO

**When:** 7:30 p.m. Nov. 14

**Where:** Brockman Hall, Rice University, 6100 Main, entrance 18

**Details:** \$5; [inprinthouston.org](http://inprinthouston.org)

“Here I am, I know these stories, also. But I know other stories, too.”

**Q: You have these other outlets, including music. Was there an aha moment or a trailhead for you and poetry?**

**A:** You know, I didn’t know I’d end up working with poetry in school. I knew I was drawn to music. And in the junior high I went to, the teacher wouldn’t let girls play saxophone. My stepfather forbid me to sing. He didn’t want me singing in the house. It wasn’t that I was a bad singer. It was his way of exerting control over my joy, so to speak. So I walked away. Poetry helped me find a way back. I always heard poetry. I heard music, too, and wrote songs for a band. But those were different than when I was writing a poem. Sometimes poems would become songs. But not always.

**Q: The most recent and closing poem, “Without,” felt resonant, given how shrill things are now in this country and internationally and how insignificant humankind is in a timeline that preceded us by millions of years. I keep going back to your line, “The world will keep trudging through time without us.”**

**A:** “Without” was written during COVID times. And there was a political and racial reckoning, severe political manipulation of people’s fears. Anyway, that was one of my favorite poems I’ve written. It seemed like a good one to conclude the collection with because it’s a doorway toward where we’re going now.

**Q: The poem and the book — they don’t feel like a farewell.**

**A:** I keep working. I haven’t retired. I don’t think I ever will.

*andrew.dansby  
@houstonchronicle.com*

DINING

# The legend of Texas barbecue is alive and well

In the movie “The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance,” a U.S. senator (played by Jimmy Stewart) regales a group of reporters with stories of both actual and embellished accomplishments. When he asks what they plan to write about him, one of the reporters famously quips, “This is the West, sir. When the legend becomes fact, print the legend.”



**J.C. Reid**  
BBQ STATE OF MIND

Though misquoted and misattributed over the years, the comment still applies today: Every story has components of fact and fiction, and the fiction is usually more interesting than the fact.

Except when it comes to Texas barbecue. I am often asked why Texas barbecue is so popular. From my experience, it comes down to authenticity.

The alignment of fact and legend in Texas barbecue is in full force in Lockhart.

The popularity and influence of Lockhart, known as the “Barbecue Capital of Texas,” has waxed and waned over the years. Recently, the influence of Austin has become predominant, where barbecue destinations with retro-cool dining rooms, sleek barrel smokers and highly marbled brisket are the media darlings of celebrities and influencers.

To be sure, the best joints



Photos by J.C. Reid / Contributor

**Stepping up to the cutting block at Smitty’s Market in Lockhart transports diners to an earlier time.**



**The smell of post oak smoke wafts through the dining room.**

## SMITTY’S MARKET

208 S. Commerce, Lockhart  
512-398-9344

provide an outstanding product and experience. But they have garnered some criticism for the homogenization of Texas barbecue. In other words, they are the real deal, though lacking in the unique and sometimes messy myths and truths that only time can bestow.

Lockhart, on the other hand, is awash in myths and legends. From the family feuds of the Schmidts and the Blacks, to the time-capsule atmosphere of Smitty’s Market, Texas barbecue history can be tasted and experienced.

Walking into Smitty’s is like stepping into the 1920s, when the building was constructed. Passing through the vestibule into a low-lit pit room, you first brush up against a fire pit openly burning next to the order counter; if you’re wearing shorts and get a little close, you can feel the hair singe on your legs.

The smell of rendering fat and post oak smoke create a Pavlovian response, conveniently as you approach the cutting block to place your order. You may find the darkly painted brick walls unusual (why black?) until you realize that’s a patina of smoke from decades of cooking.

There are literal stalactites of creosote hanging from the ceil-

ing above the pits.

Place your order meat-market-style (by the pound) and the order-taker barks the details to the meat-cutters standing at the well-worn chopping block behind. Meat is pulled off the pit, sliced to order, wrapped in butcher paper and handed over after you pay (cash only).

Move into the brighter dining room and stock up on the accoutrements of classic Central Texas-style barbecue — bread, pickles, onions and cheese. You can have a knife, but don’t ask for a fork — they don’t provide them here in classic meat-market barbecue tradition.

Off to one corner, the owner, Nina Schmidt Sells, watches the comings and goings of both locals and tourists. We chat briefly, and she laments the difficulty of upholding the myths and traditions of Texas barbecue as Lockhart is quickly becoming a suburb of Austin, bringing rising property values and gentrification.

She’s still committed to the traditions, though.

We often see something on TV or social media that hypes a place (restaurants in particular), inspiring us to make a visit, only to be disappointed when it turns out the fiction was greater than reality. Fortunately, when you print the legend of Texas barbecue, you are also printing the facts, and vice-versa.

*jcreid@jcreidtx.com  
twitter.com/jcreidtx*



**CULTURE**

# Inprint Hosts a Pair of Beloved Poet Laureates at Rice



Chris Becker / Nov. 11, 2022



Mendez and Harjo (Harjo photo by Shawn Miller)

Now in its 42nd season, the [Inprint Margarett Root Brown Reading Series](#) is still going strong, bringing award-winning writers from around the world to Houston to read from their work and engage in a lively, onstage discussion with Texas-based authors, journalists, and poets.

On Monday, Nov. 14, at Rice University's Brockman Hall for Opera, the series brings U.S. Poet Laureate [Joy Harjo](#) to the stage for a reading and discussion with Texas Poet Laureate Lupe Mendez, who was born in Jalisco, Mexico, in 1976, grew up in

Galveston, and is one of the Houston's best known poets and activists. (Mendez is one of several poets featured in our [2017 article about Houston's thriving poetry scene](#).) Harjo, who lives in Tulsa, is a member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and is the first Native American to hold the position of U.S. Poet Laureate.

It's a logical and inspired pairing, as Texas culture is so strongly rooted in that of indigenous tribes who have lived on the land going back thousands of years ago and on up to the present day. Harjo's writing connects back to the legacies of her ancestors and displacement, drawing inspiration from Navajo horse songs and the rhythms of jazz, and is described by author Sandra Cisneros as "light and elixir, the very best prescription for us in wounded times." She is the author of nine books of poetry, several plays and children's books, and two memoirs. And if that weren't enough, Harjo is also a talented performer, who also plays saxophone and has released seven albums of original music. Her new book, titled *Weaving Sundown in a Scarlet Light*, is an annotated compilation of poems written over the past 50 years, addressing such profound life events everyone can identify with, such as losing a parent, becoming a mother, and falling in love.






# the Rice Thresher

RICE UNIVERSITY'S STUDENT NEWSPAPER — SINCE 1916

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2022 — HOUSTON, TX



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## Celebrate Indigenous heritage in HTX



Vivian Lang / Thresher

By [Sara Davidson](#) 11/8/22 11:55pm

This November is Native American Heritage Month, and places both near and far from campus in the greater Houston area are hosting several events. Ranging from intimate readings to lively performances, this list includes representation from many of the tribes, not only regionally, but also from across the United States. Learn about several of the many things coming to Houston for this heritage month and be sure to check out your favorites.

**Native American Championship Pow Wow**



Traders Village, as mentioned in the Thresher’s local markets article, not only has great steals on the market scene, but is also hosting the 32nd Annual Native American Championship Pow Wow. This is a two day event happening Nov. 12 and 13 that will have tribal dance contests, an arts and crafts show, music and more. Hundreds of Native Americans from across the country will be there to represent their heritage with authentic food and other offerings. Authentic tipis will also be on display with more information about various tribal histories. This event has something for everyone, whether you want to learn about the history, see and taste authentic traditions or stroll among the many shops selling goods from the represented tribes.

**Inprint at Brockman Hall**

Within the hedges of campus, Brockman Hall will host Inprint, a literacy arts nonprofit, on Nov 14. Guest speaker and three-term U.S. Poet Laureate Joy Harjo will be reading her new poetry collection “Weaving Sundown in a Scarlet Light: 50 Poems for 50 Years.” She was the first Native American to hold the U.S. Poet Laureate position, and is part of the nonprofit Margaret Root Brown Reading Series. Rice students can receive free tickets upon request, otherwise tickets are \$5.

**American Indian Center of Houston**

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This cultural center is “devoted to enhancing the Native American community in the Greater Houston area through personal, social, health and cultural development.” They have been open since early 2020 and seek to serve the over 60,000 Native Americans that call Houston home. While they have no upcoming events hosted by them listed on their website, they do have great resources about Native American culture.

**Book of the Month Club**

This virtual book club hosted by Bel Canto Books has monthly Zoom meetings to discuss the latest book on their list. To honor Native American Heritage Month, the club will be reading “Calling for a Blanket Dance” by Oscar Hokeah, with the following meeting set for Dec. 13. The book is about a young Native American man learning more about finding strength in his familial identity, and the author is a regional Native American fiction writer. If you’re looking for a great book to read and then get to discuss once the dust of finals season settles, this is a great club to try out.

MORE FROM THE RICE THRESHER



**Review: ‘The Banshees of Inisherin’ perfectly balances comedy and drama**

By [Jay Collura](#)  
As “The Banshees of Inisherin” begins, the audience is introduced to Inisherin, an island off the coast of Ireland divided into corners for farming by cobblestone walls. For Pádraic Súilleabháin (Colin Farrell), the repetitive cycle of working and then going to the pub is sufficient, as his happy-go-lucky attitude and welcoming demeanor immediately establish. This cycle is interrupted, however, when Colm Doherty (Brendan Gleeson) announces that he will no longer talk to Pádraic, despite the fact



**Review: ‘Her Loss’ is a solid, if lopsided, collaborative album**

By [Jacob Pellegrino](#)  
For his past two albums, Drake’s best tracks have featured 21 Savage, and for good reason: the duo displays strong chemistry and elicits some of Drake’s best bars in years. “Her Loss,” a collaborative album between Drake and 21 Savage, promised a continuation of what we’d heard in “Knife Talk” and “Jimmy Cooks.” However, it is largely a Drake album that regularly features 21 Savage. While still a solid listen with some really enjoyable moments, the album falls flat in delivering the kinetic collaborations we have seen in the past.



**Review: Rec Room’s apocalyptic romantic comedy thriller ‘Put Your House in Order’ is a promising show for the spooky season**

By [Gina Matos](#)  
Upon walking through its doors, Rec Room quickly distinguishes itself from other local theatre spaces in Houston: its cozy lighting, exposed brick walls and dynamic background music lend themselves to an intimate, homely environment before the show even begins. As the audience trickles into the venue for the night’s show, the stage’s intricate set design, furnished with a full-thrust front porch and yard



# Top 8 Book & Author Events in Houston: January 2023

By **Holly Beretto** - Dec 28, 2022



*Inprint hosts live author discussions in January 2023 | Courtesy of Inprint*

- **Inprint presents Yiyun Li & Matthew Salesses Reading at Congregation Emanu El | Monday, January 23** – The authors will read from their new novels, *The Book of Goose* and *The Sense of Wonder*. Following the reading, the pair will discuss their works and approaches to writing with Brenda Paynado. \$5. 7:30pm.

| THINGS TO DO |

## Best Bets: *Descendant*, Films from Iran, and *Blues in My Coffee*

NATALIE DE LA GARZA | JANUARY 19, 2023 | 4:30AM



Matthew Salesses joins Yiyun Li as part of Inprint's 2022/2023 Inprint Margaret Root Brown Reading Series. Photo by Grace Salesses

On Monday, January 23, at 7:30 p.m. **Inprint** will welcome authors **Yiyun Li and Matthew Salesses** to **Congregation Emanu El** as part of the **2022/2023 Inprint Margaret Root Brown Reading Series**. Li most recently authored *The Book of Goose*, named by *Time* as one of the **must-read books of 2022**, about the “**obsessive friendship**” between two teens “**in rural 1950s France in the grim**



aftermath of World War II.” Salesses, a University of Houston Creative Writing Program grad recently released the Linsanity-inspired *The Sense of Wonder*, which has been described as “**a remarkable feat of artistic prowess that somehow blends the themes of K-drama with the spectacle of sports drama in a way that resets our frame of reference for the Korean American experience.**” Both will read from their new books, and then engage in a conversation with **Brenda Peynado** before ending the evening with a book sale and signing. Tickets can be purchased [here](#) for \$5.



# Julia Cameron among the authors at Houston book events this week



Ana Khan | January 23, 2023 Updated: January 24, 2023, 12:52 pm



Inprint Margarett Root Brown Reading Series present Yiyun Li and Matthew Salesses.

Photo: Courtesy of Inprint



## MONDAY

Inprint Margarett Root Brown Reading Series: MacArthur Fellow Yiyun Li and Inprint fellowship and prize recipient Matthew Salesses will read from their new novels "The Book of Goose" and "The Sense of Wonder," followed by an

on-stage conversation with Brenda Peynado, author of "The Rock Eaters" and UH Creative Writing Program faculty member. The evening will conclude with a book sale and signing. 7:30 p.m., tickets \$5. Congregation Emanu El, 1500 Sunset; [inprinthouston.org](http://inprinthouston.org)

# Houston Arts Journal

Arts News & Commentary from Houston, Texas

## Inprint adds newly-named U.S. Poet Laureate Ada Limón to its 2022-23 season



Catherine Lu

July 22, 2022

Arts and Culture, Arts  
Education, Blog,  
Literary arts, Poetry



*Ada Limón will be the 24th U.S. Poet Laureate / Courtesy of Inprint*

As organizers at [Inprint](#) were finalizing the details of its upcoming 42<sup>nd</sup> season of its Margaret Root Brown Reading Series, one slot in the line-up was still open.

Then [Ada Limón](#) was awarded the country's highest honor in the field of poetry – the position of U.S. Poet Laureate – as announced on July 12 by the Library of Congress.





Library of Congress   
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NEWS: Ada Limón (@adalimon) is the next U.S. Poet Laureate & will take up her duties in the fall, opening the Library's annual literary season on Sept. 29 with a reading of her work in the Coolidge Auditorium.



[newsroom.loc.gov](https://newsroom.loc.gov)

Librarian of Congress Names Ada Limón the Nation's 24th U.S. Poet L...  
Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden announced the appointment of Ada Limón as the nation's 24th U.S. Poet Laureate for 2022-2023.

6:58 AM · Jul 12, 2022



[Read the full conversation on Twitter](#)



1.1K



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Acting quickly, Inprint reached out to Limón to invite her to come to Houston next season, adding her to the [2022-23 roster](#), which also includes six award-winning novelists and current U.S. Poet Laureate [Joy Harjo](#).

“We were thinking of including Ada in the upcoming season since her fantastic new collection [The Hurting Kind](#) was released in May – and I was just about to invite her, when we received the news,” said Rich Levy, Inprint’s Executive Director.

“All the joy in the community about her appointment sealed the deal! We were lucky she was available. A brief email exchange, and we were set,” he said.





**Inprint**

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You asked, we answered — Ada Limón, the newly appointed 2022-2023 U.S. Poet Laureate, is now part of next year's lineup! Get the details here: [inprinthouston.org/for-readers/in...](https://inprinthouston.org/for-readers/in...) ... 🙌🙌🙌🙌🙌



3:31 PM · Jul 15, 2022



21



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Days later, Inprint announced its 2022-23 season – its first full, in person season since the pandemic – with Limón scheduled to appear in a poetry reading and on-stage interview on March 6, 2023, the venue still to be determined at this time.

Levy says he is “thrilled and delighted” at Limón’s new national role.

“Personally, I am a great admirer of Ada’s work – “The Raincoat,” from *The Carrying*, is I think one of the most moving and concise tributes to the unselfish energy and love of mothers that I have ever read,” said Levy.



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My god,  
I thought, my whole life I've been under her  
raincoat thinking it was somehow a marvel  
that I never got wet.

—Ada Limón

[poets.org/poem/raincoat](https://poets.org/poem/raincoat)

#MothersDay



poets.org

The Raincoat

When the doctor suggested surgery

6:30 AM · May 9, 2021



506



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Limón begins her term as U.S. Poet Laureate on September 29, succeeding Harjo, who will appear on Inprint's upcoming season on November 14, 2022 at Rice University's Brockman Hall for Opera.

"I really truly believe with my whole body in the power of poetry and in the power of poetry to heal and bring together communities and celebrate the interconnectedness that we all have with each other," said Limón in an



[interview with the Library of Congress](#). “And I think this is a huge opportunity to really honor those beliefs.”



Organizers at Inprint say that they loved the idea of presenting both the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> U.S. Poet Laureates in the same season, as part of their mission of championing poetry and nurturing writers everywhere – but also at this moment when [poetry may be on the rise](#).

“It seems in the U.S. and elsewhere that more and more people are reading poetry, and feel empowered to write poetry. And if the pandemic has introduced some folks to the joys of poetry, then I am grateful for that salubrious effect,” said Levy.

“For too long, poetry was an elitist enterprise. I think both Joy and Ada are part of the trend among our Poet Laureates and in general to enlarge and enrich the canon and the field,” he said.



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Complete information about Inprint’s season, which includes [virtual options](#), is available [here](#).

Since 1980, the Inprint Brown Reading Series has featured more than 400 award-winning writers of fiction, creative nonfiction, and poetry from 37 countries, including 19 U.S. Poet Laureates. Limón [previously appeared in a joint reading](#) with Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Gregory Pardlo in 2017.

## Public defender costs and caseloads (Feb. 27, 2023)

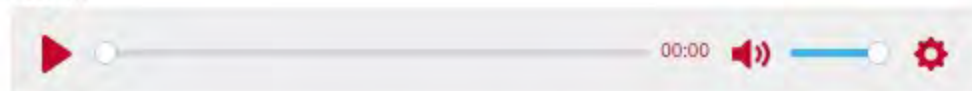
On Monday's show: We discuss the money Harris County spends for court-appointed defense attorneys and the caseloads of those public defenders. And U.S. Poet Laureate Ada Limón talks about how nature plays a role in her work and her love of Houston's grackles.

MICHAEL HAGERTY | FEBRUARY 27, 2023, 7:00 AM

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On Monday's show: Harris County taxpayers are [spent more than \\$60 million](#) last year for court-appointed private attorneys to represent low-income defendants. And some of those lawyers are taking on far too many cases. We learn more from Harris County Chief Public Defender Alex Bunin and Houston Chronicle investigative reporter Neena Satija, who's been looking into this.

Also this hour: U.S. Poet Laureate [Ada Limón](#) talks about the role nature plays in her work and her love of Houston's grackles. She's coming to Houston for an [event with Inprint](#) on March 6.

Then, columnist [Dwight Silverman](#) discusses some of the latest developments in consumer technology

And we get an update on Houston sports from [Jeff Balke](#), who writes for Houston Press and co-hosts the [Bleav in Astros podcast](#).

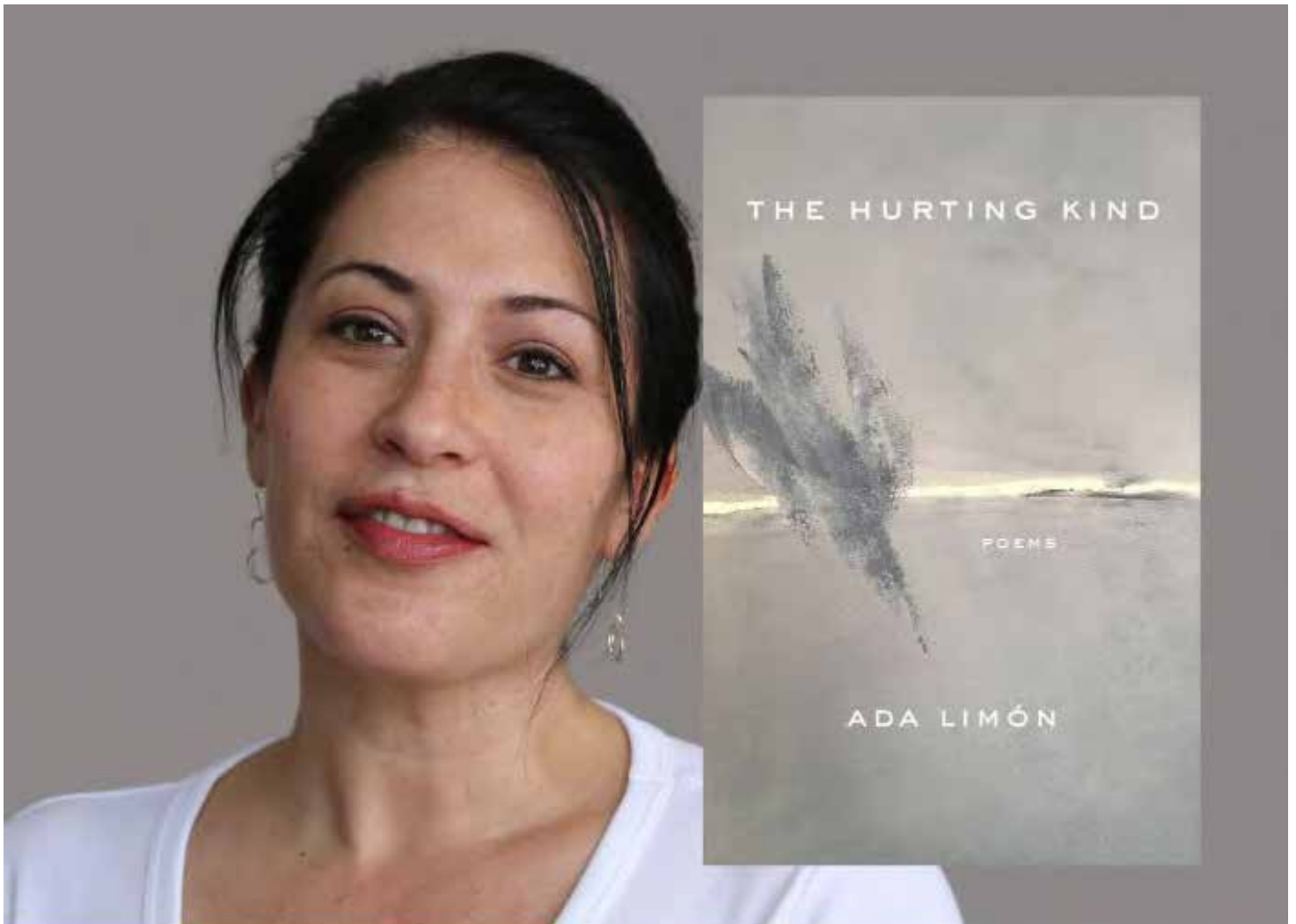
BOOKS

## Shana Ross, Laura Murillo among the authors at Houston book events this week

By the Book celebrates women's stories with a special event at Discovery Green, featuring Laura Murillo, Shana Ross and Houston Chronicle's Culture Columnist Joy Sewing.



Ana Khan | March 5, 2023 | Updated: March 6, 2023, 9:04 am



U.S. Poet Laureate Ada Limón.

Photo: Photo by Lucas Marquardt



## MONDAY

Ada Limón: The U.S. Poet Laureate will read from her new collection, "The Hurting Kind," followed by an onstage conversation with Roberto Tejada, author of the poetry collection "Why the Assembly Disbanded." The evening will conclude with a book sale and signing. 7:30-9 p.m., tickets \$5, the Ballroom at Bayou Place, 500 Texas; [inprinthouston.org](http://inprinthouston.org)

# Top 12 Book & Author Events in Houston: April 2023

By **Holly Beretto** - Mar 30, 2023

- **Inprint Houston presents Leila Mottley at Alley Theatre | Monday, April 17** – The Booker Prize finalist will read selections from her new debut novel, *Nightcrawling*. A conversation with ABC-13's Melanie Lawson follows. Books will be available for purchase at the event. \$5. 7:30pm.

## Best Bets: Dorothy Fields, *Joyland* and Japan Festival Houston

NATALIE DE LA GARZA | MAY 4, 2023 | 6:30AM

Abraham Verghese will join Houston writer-physician Ricardo Nuila to close the 2022/2023 Inprint Margaret Root Brown Reading Series on Monday, May 8, at 7:30 p.m. when the bestseller swings by the Alley Theatre to read from his latest novel, *The Covenant of Water*. NPR has said “the literary feats” of the novel, “about the ebbs and flows of lives across three generations,” “deserve to be lauded as much as those of such canonical authors” as Anton Chekhov, Charles Dickens and George Eliot. The novel also features “reflective musings about what genetic inheritance means beyond the body, the necessary place of art in our lives, how social hierarchies determine far-reaching life trajectories, and how we must understand the past to live in the present.” Tickets for the reading can be purchased [here](#) for \$5. If you can’t make the event, you can instead buy access to the online rebroadcast [here](#) for \$5.



# Top 20 Festivals & Events This Week in Houston: May 8 to 14, 2023

By **Justin Jerkins** - May 7, 2023

- **Inprint Houston presents Abraham Verghese at Alley Theatre | Monday, May 8** – The best-selling author will read from and discuss his latest work, *The Covenant of Water*, as part of the organization's Margaret Root Brown Reading Series. Following the program, books will be available for purchase and the author will sign them. \$5. 7:30pm.

ENTERTAINMENT // BOOKS

# Abraham Verghese among the authors at Houston book events this week



Ana Khan, Staff writer

May 8, 2023

Gift this article



**Abraham Verghese:** The [New York Times](#) bestselling author will read from his new novel "The Covenant of Water," followed by an on-stage conversation with Houston author and physician Ricardo Nuila. The evening will conclude with a book sale and signing. 7:30 p.m., tickets \$5, Alley Theatre, 615 Texas; [inprinthouston.org](http://inprinthouston.org)