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Edendale Branch Launches Community Conversation about Incarceration and Reentry

Library will host a series of events inspired by the book, “The Mars Room” by Rachel Kushner

Los Angeles (March 4, 2019) – The Edendale Branch of the Los Angeles Public Library, at 2011 Sunset Blvd., has launched a series of Book to Action (BTA) programs through June 2019 to help the community understand the challenges of incarceration and reentry, especially in Los Angeles, home to the nation’s largest jail system.

Supported by the California Center for the Book, BTA brings literature to life by inviting the community to read “The Mars Room,” by Rachel Kushner and uncover its meaning, purpose and relevance through a series of events at the library. The novel focuses on a woman serving two life sentences in a California prison.

Program highlights include a Testif-i Living Library on April 27 where participants can ask formerly incarcerated women and their children about their lives and an Author Talk with Kushner on June 3.

Edendale’s BTA events draw attention to incarceration statistics nationally and locally, said Angi Brzycki, Adult Librarian, Edendale Branch. The United States has the highest incarceration rate in the world, with nearly 2.2 million people held in prisons and jails, according to a 2018 report from the Bureau of Justice Statistics. Of that figure, more than 16,600 inmates are locked up in the Los Angeles County Jail, the largest jail system in America.

“I wanted to organize a series of programs that address mass incarceration and the challenges of reentry, so that we could humanize the issue, educate ourselves and dig deeper, instead of being overwhelmed by the staggering statistics,” Brzycki said.

(more)

Peter Persic, Public Relations & Marketing Director

Featured Book to Action events present an opportunity to discuss the book, meet the author and participate in the following community events at Edendale:

- Discussion
An Afternoon with Romarilyn Ralston, Program Coordinator, Project Rebound, California State University, Fullerton
Saturday, March 9, Noon
- Book Discussion
Becoming Ms. Burton by Susan Burton
Saturday, March 30, 4 p.m.
- Panel Discussion
Prison Yoga + Meditation
Saturday, April 13, 1 p.m.
- Luncheon Event
Testif-i Living Library
Saturday, April 27, Noon
- Book Discussion
The New Jim Crow by Michelle Alexander
Saturday, April 27, 4 p.m.
- Panel Discussion
Mass Incarceration and the Challenges with Reentry
Saturday, May 4, Noon
- Film Screening
Act Two
Saturday, May 11, 2 p.m.
- Meet the Author
Author Talk with Rachel Kushner
Monday, June 3, 6 p.m.
- Meet the Author
An Evening with Father Greg Boyle, founder of Homeboy Industries
Monday, June 10, 6 p.m.

- Community Service Project
Create Welcome Home Kits for the women of reentry program, A New Way of Life
Monday, June 15, 1-2:30 p.m.
- Daylong Workshop
Your Justice Story – In association with StoryCenter, Berkeley, CA
Monday, June 29, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Registration is free, but required tickets are available on a first come, first served basis at www.eventbrite.com.

Edendale Branch will provide one free copy of the book “The Mars Room” to patrons that attend two programs and participate in the community service project. For more information, please contact Edendale Branch Library at (213) 207-3000.

The Edendale Branch of the Los Angeles Public Library is one of 25 California libraries chosen for Book to Action 2019, funded by the California Center for the Book. California Center for the Book is a program of the California Library Association, supported in whole or in part by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the State Librarian.

A recipient of the nation’s highest honor for library service—the National Medal from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Los Angeles Public Library serves the largest and most diverse urban population of any library in the nation. Its Central Library, 72 branch libraries, collection of more than 6 million books, state-of-the-art technology accessible at lapl.org, and more than 18,000 public programs a year provide everyone with free and easy access to information and the opportunity for lifelong learning.

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