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Contact: Susan Lendroth
slendroth@lapl.org

Los Angeles Public Library Celebrates Ray Bradbury Centennial

The Library Will Participate in First Annual Ray Bradbury Read-A-Thon on August 22 and will Host Online Programming



Ray Bradbury speaking at Palms-Rancho Park Branch of Los Angeles Public Library in 1972.

LOS ANGELES (Aug. 17, 2020)—Los Angeles Public Library joins public and university libraries nationwide to present the First Annual Ray Bradbury Read-A-Thon on the 100th anniversary of his birth. Partnering with the Library of Congress and the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers, library staff will participate in reading aloud Bradbury's landmark novel, "Fahrenheit 451," beginning at 1:30 p.m. PT on Saturday, August 22.

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Peter Persic, Public Relations & Marketing Director

The Read-A-Thon's on-camera readers will be as diverse as America itself. Some 40 people, selected by participating libraries and institutions, will pre-record a short segment of "Fahrenheit 451" along with celebrity guest readers to create one continuous four-hour reading of the entire book. City Librarian John F. Szabo will give an introduction to the reading, which in addition to librarians includes William Shatner, Neil Gaiman and Susan Orlean, among others.

Bradbury's family moved to Los Angeles during the Great Depression when he was still a boy. He lived the rest of his life in L.A., writing his world-renowned short stories and novels and making himself at home in libraries across the city. It was here that he wrote "Fahrenheit 451," a cautionary tale about the cost of apathy and the power of curiosity. It continues to be one of the most checked-out books across the United States.

Bradbury was a lifelong supporter of Los Angeles Public Library from the time he began using city libraries when he arrived in L.A. at age 12 until his death at 91 in 2012. He referred to the Central Library as his "alma mater" and was a patron of the Palms-Rancho Park Branch, where he gave readings, hosted programs and often met with his fans. The library has celebrated his many contributions to literature and libraries by dedicating the Palms-Rancho Park Branch in his honor, naming Ray Bradbury Square outside the Central Library, and selecting "Fahrenheit 451" for its first "One Book, One City" citywide reading initiative, a highlight of which was having Bradbury's "star" installed on the Hollywood Walk on Fame.

"For more than a half century, Ray Bradbury spoke at public libraries throughout southern California," said City Librarian John F. Szabo, "inspiring librarians and patrons to cherish and preserve these buildings and their reading treasures, now and forever."

The Palms-Rancho Park Branch Library has planned a celebration that includes a bookmark design contest, a call for patrons to submit stories using first/last line prompts and a discussion series with sessions about Bradbury's story "The Veldt" and "Black Leopard, Red Wolf" by Marlon James, winner of the inaugural Los Angeles Times Ray Bradbury Award.

After the initial broadcast on August 22, the Read-A-Thon will be available until September 5, 2020. Visit <http://lapl.org/bradbury> for more information about the Read-A-Thon and Palms-Rancho Park Branch Library programs.

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 25,000 programs a year provide everyone with free and easy access to information and the opportunity for lifelong learning.

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