

Press Release

25 CHICAGO
HUMANITIES
FESTIVAL

Winter 2015

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Chicago Humanities Festival Announces Winter 2015 Season

Featuring Performances of *Le Petit Cirque* and
Speakers Dinaw Mengestu, Scott McCloud, Kim Gordon, and Cristina Henríquez

CHICAGO, IL—Dec. 17, 2014—The Chicago Humanities Festival (CHF) announces its Winter 2015 Season, featuring performances of *Le Petit Cirque*, as well as presenters **Dinaw Mengestu, Scott McCloud, Kim Gordon, and Cristina Henríquez**. Kicking off the new year, CHF and Adventure Stage Chicago will present *Le Petit Cirque* by Laurent Bigot **January 17–18**, as part of the inaugural Chicago International Puppet Theater Festival. Later that month, CHF will host writer **Dinaw Mengestu** who will discuss his latest novel, *All Our Names*, on **Wednesday, Jan. 28 at 7 p.m.** at the **Old Town School of Folk Music**. The following month, cartoonist and author **Scott McCloud** will speak about his new graphic novel, *The Sculptor*, on **Friday, Feb. 13 at 6 p.m.** at the **Art Institute of Chicago**, and Sonic Youth founder and musician **Kim Gordon** will share her new memoir, *Girl in a Band*, on **Thursday, Feb. 26 at 7 p.m.** at **Music Box Theatre**. To conclude the winter season, CHF will welcome Chicago author **Cristina Henríquez** to talk about her recent work, *The Book of Unknown Americans*, on **Wednesday, March 18 at 6 p.m.** at the **Instituto Cervantes of Chicago**.

Tickets for *Le Petit Cirque* are \$20 and are on sale now at adventurestage.org. Tickets for all other winter programs range from \$5–18 and are currently on sale to CHF Members at chicagohumanities.org. Tickets will go on sale to the general public **Wednesday, Jan. 7 at 10 a.m.**

"Building on the great success of our 25th Anniversary Festival this fall, our winter season features creative individuals who have broken new ground in the areas of music, literature, and theater," said **Executive Director Phillip Bahar**. "We've organized a series of compelling conversations and presentations that bring us up close and into the lives and minds of some truly original thinkers. The Chicago Humanities Festival is committed to providing opportunities year-round that engage Chicagoans, and open our collective minds to new ways of thinking and imagining the world."

Winter 2014 Schedule: G=General Public, M=CHF Member, ST=Students & Teachers



[Le Petit Cirque](#) | By Laurent Bigot

Jan. 17–18, 2015 | 2 & 5 p.m.

Adventure Stage Chicago at the Vittum Theater (1012 N Noble St) | G \$20

Within a circus-like, tabletop installation, electroacoustic musician Laurent Bigot sets various objects in motion. A "circus of sound" and a theater of objects, *Le Petit Cirque* is made from odds and ends, salvaged material and cheap gadgets. Action nourishes sound and sound gives new meaning to action, via improvisation and the chance of mechanics. The piece explores two distinct and interacting concepts. The first is how stereotypical circus imagery alters one's perception of the performance's musical aspect. The second, and more abstract, is how sound allows the spectator to see these theatrical situations from a different perspective. The spectator skips from one point of view to another, engaging ears, eyes, skin, imagination, and thought associations. *Le Petit Cirque* is presented in partnership with Adventure Stage Chicago and the Chicago International Puppet Theater Festival, and supported by the Cultural Service at the Consulate General of France in Chicago.

[Continued]



[Dinaw Mengestu](#)

Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2015 | 7 p.m.

Old Town School of Folk Music, Szold Hall (4545 N Lincoln Ave) | G \$15, M \$10, ST \$5

Born in Ethiopia and raised in Illinois, global citizen **Dinaw Mengestu** is one of the bright young voices redefining contemporary fiction. Over the course of three novels he's developed a distinct exploration of identity and belonging, and earned comparisons to Chinua Achebe and V.S. Naipaul. He'll discuss his latest novel, *All Our Names*, a moving meditation on the personal and political dislocations wrought by

love and war.

Dinaw Mengestu is an Ethiopian-American writer who was raised in Peoria, IL and Forest Park. His debut novel, *The Beautiful Things That Heaven Bears*, was named *The New York Times* Notable Book of 2007 and awarded the *LA Times* Book Prize in 2008. He also received the "5 under 35" Award from the National Book Foundation. His second novel *How to Read the Air* was published in 2010, and helped garner him a "20 under 40" Award from *The New Yorker*. Mengestu's latest novel, *All Our Names*, will be released in paperback on Jan. 6, 2015.



[Scott McCloud](#)

Friday, Feb. 13, 2015 | 6 p.m.

Art Institute of Chicago, Rubloff Auditorium (230 S Columbus Dr) | G \$15, M \$10, ST \$5

In *Understanding Comics* **Scott McCloud** made it cool to take comics seriously. Now the man hailed by graphic icons from Neil Gaiman to Alan Moore is back with a brand new graphic novel, five years in the making! *The Sculptor* reworks the classic tale of an artist willing to do anything to succeed, including making a deal with Death. Join Scott McCloud as he takes to the CHF stage to discuss life in and

outside of comics.

A leading theorist on comics, Scott McCloud is a three-time Harvey Award winner and a Will Eisner Comic Industry Award recipient. McCloud is the inventor of the "24-Hour Comic," an artistic challenge that has been replicated internationally since its inception in 1990. He is also the author of *Understanding Comics*, *Reinventing Comics*, and *Making Comics*. McCloud will debut a new graphic novel, a Faustian tale called *The Sculptor*, on Feb. 5, 2015.



[Kim Gordon](#)

Thursday, Feb. 26, 2015 | 7 p.m.

Music Box Theatre (3733 N Southport Ave) | G \$18, M \$14, ST \$8

Book and ticket package: G \$38, M \$33, ST \$33

Is there anyone cooler than **Kim Gordon**? The founding member of the seminal band Sonic Youth is also a talented musician, artist, writer, and, oh yeah, role model to a generation of women. Now she's written a memoir recounting her life as a musician and artist, including her partnership and eventual professional and personal breakup with Thurston Moore. *Girl in a Band* takes us back to the post-punk scene of New York in the 1980s and '90s, when Sonic Youth helped create a musical revolution. Come spend the evening with Gordon, a trailblazing lady of rock and roll, with a special opening performance by Girls Rock! Chicago. *This program is presented in partnership with the Music Box Theatre.*

Kim Gordon is a musician, artist, writer, and music producer. She formed the band Sonic Youth with Thurston Moore, her future husband, and Lee Ranaldo in 1981. In 1985 *The New York Times* credited them with "making the most startlingly original guitar-based music since Jimi Hendrix." Sonic Youth went on to record 16 studio albums until their breakup. Gordon's latest band is Body/Head, founded in 2013 with Bill Nace. Gordon's forthcoming memoir, *Girl in a Band*, will be published on Feb. 24, 2015.



[Cristina Henríquez](#)

Wednesday, March 18, 2015 | 6 p.m.

Instituto Cervantes of Chicago, Auditorium (31 W Ohio St) | G \$15, M \$10, ST \$5

Cristina Henríquez's *The Book of Unknown Americans* follows the journeys of two families—one Panamanian, one Mexican—from Latin America to their adopted homeland of the United States. At its heart, though, this is a love story, one by turns suspenseful and wry. Henríquez returns to the CHF stage with a story that offers a resonant new definition of what it means to be American.

Chicago author Cristina Henríquez has written the story collection *Come Together, Fall Apart* (a *New York Times* Editors' Choice selection) and another novel, *The World in Half*. Her nonfiction work has appeared in *The New Yorker* and *The Atlantic*. She is a recipient of the Alfredo Cisneros Del Moral Foundation Award and was recently named to *Crain's* "40 under 40" list. Her critically-acclaimed novel, *The Book of Unknown Americans*, was named one of *The New York Times'* 100 Notable Books as well as a Top 10 Book of 2014 by Amazon.

TICKETS:

Tickets for *Le Petit Cirque* are \$20 and are on sale now at adventurestage.org or by calling Adventure Stage Chicago's box office at **(773) 342-4141**. Tickets for all other CHF Winter programs are **\$5–18** and are now on sale to **CHF Members** online at chicagohumanities.org. Tickets go on sale to the general public on **Wednesday, Jan. 7** and will be available online or by calling the **CHF Box Office** at **(312) 494-9509 Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.** Discounted tickets are available for CHF members and students/teachers. To become a member, visit supportchf.org.

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About the Chicago Humanities Festival

For 25 years, the Chicago Humanities Festival has celebrated the questions that shape and define us as individuals, communities, and cultures. For the intellectually curious, CHF's vibrant **year-round programming** and robust **Fall Festival** offer the opportunity to engage with some of the world's most brilliant minds. Collaborating with leading arts, cultural, and educational organizations, it presents scholars, artists and architects, thinkers, theologians, and policy makers that change how we see the world, where we're from, and where we're going. CHF also presents the spring **Stages, Sights & Sounds** international children's theater festival.

The Chicago Humanities Festival has grown from **eight programs in one day at a single venue in 1990**, to **160 programs year-round at more than 25 venues** in and around Chicago. Over the past 25 years, CHF has put on more than 2,600 programs and performances, and presented more than 3,300 speakers and artists, including: 10 Nobel Prize winners, 70 Pulitzer Prize winners, 52 MacArthur Award recipients, 16 Tony Award winners, 10 Grammy Award winners, and seven Academy Award winners. Visit chicagohumanities.org for more information.