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Read an Excerpt from *Vampires in the Lemon Grove* [here](#).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Chicago Humanities Festival Presents

Karen Russell

Pulitzer Prize Finalist for *Swamplandia!* and Author of

Vampires in the Lemon Grove

New in Paperback

In Conversation with *Time Out Chicago's* Laura Pearson

Thursday, Feb. 13, 2014 at First United Methodist Church

Chicago, IL—Feb. 3, 2014—The Chicago Humanities Festival (CHF) hosts award-winning author **Karen Russell** on Thursday, February 13, at 6 p.m. at First United Methodist Church at The Chicago Temple (77 W Washington St). The author of *St. Lucy's Home for Girls* and the Pulitzer Prize Award finalist *Swamplandia!*, Russell comes to Chicago to discuss her latest work, *Vampires in the Lemon Grove*, with *Time Out Chicago's* **Laura Pearson**. **Tickets are on sale now for \$10–15** and can be purchased online at chicagohumanities.org or at 312-494-9509.

A 2013 MacArthur Award recipient and one of *New Yorker Magazine's* "20 under 40" best fiction writers, **Karen Russell** is described by *The New York Times* as "...a tough, enveloping, exhilarating voice that cannot be equaled." Russell's latest work, *Vampires in the Lemon Grove*, was released this January in paperback and is a collection of eight short stories, ranging from young girls leading a revolution inside a silk factory, to the ironic tale of vampires living in a sunny lemon grove. *Vampires in the Lemon Grove* was named a Best Book of the Year by *The Boston Globe*, *O, The Oprah Magazine*, *The Huffington Post*, and *The A.V. Club*. Russell received a Bachelor of Arts from Northwestern University and graduated from the MFA program at Columbia University.

Joining Russell is *Time Out Chicago's* arts and culture editor **Laura Pearson**. Pearson has contributed articles and criticism to the *Chicago Tribune*, *Chicago Reader*, *Gapers Block* and many other publications. Active in many aspects of the city's literary scene, she helped plan the first Chicago Book Expo; edited Chicago Artists Resource, launching the website's literary section in 2010; and worked to grow the publishing arm of local record label, Drag City.

"Karen Russell is a writer of prodigious talents—one of the most exciting and inventive storytellers working today," said Pearson. "Her believable characters and fantastical, richly imagined worlds render the familiar strange and make the strange affectingly familiar."

For more information about the **Karen Russell** program, visit chicagohumanities.org. Tickets are on sale now at chicagohumanities.org or through the CHF Box Office at 312-494-9509, Monday–Friday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. **Tickets range from \$10–15, with a limited number of reduced-price tickets available for students and teachers (with valid ID).** A \$6 per order processing fee is applied to all pre-event sales. Tickets are \$5 more per ticket at the door.

[Continued]

CHF Winter 2014 Schedule:

G=General Admission, M=CHF Member, ST=Students



[Vampires in the Lemon Grove: A Conversation with Karen Russell](#)

Thursday, Feb. 13, 2014 | 6 p.m.

First United Methodist Church at The Chicago Temple | G \$15, M \$10, ST \$5

The worlds of writer **Karen Russell** are wild and weird. Her latest, *Vampires in the Lemon Grove*, is no exception. Who else would morph Japanese women into silkworms, expose the surprising antidote to a vampire couple's bloodthirsty inclinations, and rewrite the Iraq war by entering the tattooed back of a veteran? *Time Out Chicago's* **Laura Pearson** will join this sublime storyteller, newly minted MacArthur Fellow, and one of the *New Yorker's* "20 Under 40," as she reinvents magical realism for our generation.



[James Franco and Frank Bidart, Off the Shelf](#)

Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2014 | 8 p.m.

Thorne Auditorium, Northwestern University School of Law | **SOLD OUT**

Presented in partnership with the Poetry Foundation and The Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities

James Franco: actor, scholar, performance artist, novelist, director—and yes—poet! Second City no more, Mr. Franco debuts his latest poetry collection, *Directing Herbert White*, right here in Chicago.

Franco shares the stage: joining him are his hero, legendary poet **Frank Bidart** (*Metaphysical Dog*); and Poetry Foundation president **Robert Polito**. Grab a glimpse of our era's Renaissance man and nab a signed copy before it hits the shelves. *Graywolf Press and Unabridged Bookstore are partnering to make exclusive, early copies of Directing Herbert White available for purchase to event attendees.*



[Mohsin Hamid: How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia](#)

Anita and Prabha Sinha Program | Tuesday, March 11, 2014 | 6 p.m.

First United Methodist Church at The Chicago Temple | G \$15, M \$10, ST \$5

Who doesn't love a get-rich-quick scheme? That's the conceit of **Mohsin Hamid's** witty and wicked novel *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia*, which cleverly mimics the self-help genre to tell the story of one man's rise from rural poverty to massive wealth. Hamid, a Booker Prize finalist and *The New York Times* bestselling author, gives voice to the relentless churning of our global moment.

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About the Chicago Humanities Festival

The Chicago Humanities Festival began in 1989 as a dream shared by a determined group of Chicago's cultural leaders eager to extend the riches of the humanities to everyone. Since that first year, some of the world's most exciting thinkers, artists, and performers have come to Chicago each fall for a festival that celebrates ideas in the context of civic life. Past Festival themes include Laughter, The Body, tech knowledge, America, and last year's **Animal: What Makes Us Human**. Under the leadership of **Executive Director Phillip Bahar** and **Artistic Director Matti Bunzl**, CHF partners with Chicago's premier cultural institutions and the festival has become an annual highlight for thousands of people from Chicago and beyond. In addition to the annual fall festival, CHF also presents the spring **Stages, Sights & Sounds**, a global performance festival for families, students, and theatergoers of any age, and programs throughout the year that encourage the study and enjoyment of the humanities. Visit chicagohumanities.org for more information.