

MEDIA ALERT

Date: March 15, 2022

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA ALERT: Black Literature vs. The Climate Emergency, New Conference via UC Berkeley

WHAT: A one-day, virtual conference celebrating the power of Afro-Diasporic fiction, non-fiction and poetry at the forefront of addressing the climate emergency by featuring contemporary Black authors from the US, Africa and throughout the African Diaspora whose work directly addresses these issues. Free and open to all.

WHO: The following featured authors will be available for interviews:

- **Aya de Leon**, conference creative director, UC Berkeley faculty, climate organizer with the Movement for Black Lives' Black Hive, and author of award-winning climate novels including the "Justice Hustlers" series
- **Emily Raboteau**, one of the nation's leading African American literary voices on the climate crisis and author of the upcoming book *Caution: Lessons for Survival*
- **Vanessa Nakate**, Ugandan climate justice activist and author of *A Bigger Picture*. She fought back after the Associated Press erased her and all African activism in their international climate reporting.
- **Maya Lilly**, film & tv producer (*The Big Fix*, *Generation Wealth*, *The Fifth Sacred Thing*) climate activist
- **Bernard Ferguson**, Bahamian poet, essayist, and author of upcoming book *The Climate Sirens*
- **Valencia Gunder**, National Organizing lead of the Black Hive at the Movement for Black Lives
- **Tory Stephens**, Creative Manager of *Imagine 2200*, the climate-fiction initiative from Grist Magazine's *Fix Solution Labs* website
- **Coco Peila**, Hip Hop & Alt-R&B/Soul performing and recording artist and Cultural Organizer
- **Kweku Abimbola**, poet and author of upcoming book *Birth Elegies*
- **Ashia Ajani**, environmental justice educator and co-poetry editor of *The Hopper Literary Magazine*
- **Kevin Aipopo**, community advocate, storyteller, and student leader
- **Aniya Butler**, 15-year-old poet with the Bay Area's *Youth Vs. Apocalypse* climate activism group
- **Conrad Loyer**, author of short-stories about magic on the margins and queer, Black adventure

WHY: The event invites an escalation of literary efforts to document and imagine a successful movement for climate justice, as well as encouraging the engagement of Black communities.

WHEN: Tuesday, April 5th, 2022 @ 12PM-6PM Pacific Time (3PM-9PM Eastern Time)

12PM PT/3PM ET – Welcome

Aya de Leon – "Afro-Futurism includes Black People joining the climate movement to save the future!"
Plus homage to Octavia Butler featuring UC Berkeley student poet Conrad Loyer

12:30PM PT/3:30PM ET Non-fiction

Emily Raboteau in conversation with Vanessa Nakate. Moderated by Valencia Gunder (M4BL)

2PM PT/5PM ET – Fiction

Telling Stories of Our Movements Winning Climate Justice: Tory Stephens (Grist/Fix) in conversation with Aya de Leon. Moderated by Maya Lilly

3:30PM PT/6:30PM ET – Poetry

Bernard Ferguson, Ashia Ajani, Kevin Aipopo, Kweku John, and Aniya Butler. Hosted by guest emcee Coco Peila

5PM PT/8PM ET – Livestream

Panels have been pre-recorded, but attendees are invited to join a live zoom afterparty, featuring guest speakers and Q&A with attending panelists.

WHERE: Streamed via YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvb25Kp-YVyCGsdiyfpQaw/live>

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