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LUMINATO 2010 LITERARY PROGRAMMING CELEBRATES CULTURAL DIVERSITY

TORONTO (March 2, 2010) – Luminato, Toronto Festival of Arts and Creativity, presents a celebration of world-renowned literary heavyweights with the unveiling of its 2010 literary program. From African novelists to Irish crime writers, the 2010 literary lineup features events that reflect on the relationship between an author's written style and their cultural identity. The 2010 events follow threads of East and West and the way rights and freedoms are expressed through literature. Luminato 2010 takes place **June 11-20, 2010**. Tickets go on sale April 15.

Featuring a cross-section of influential African writers, the ***African Literature*** event comments on the evolution of cultural storytelling and features esteemed Kenyan author Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, considered one of the fathers of African literature. ***Monday Night Fiction*** features two events showcasing famed authors Ben Okri and Roddy Doyle discussing how culturally-specific writing characterizes their work, while ***Azar Nafisi: Reading and Writing Iran*** explores how Nafisi's experiences living as a woman in secular Iran has influenced her writing. ***Scene of the Crime*** investigates the importance of setting in murder mysteries with celebrated authors Deon Meyer and John Brady, and ***Fiction in the Age of E-Books***, an event produced in partnership with *The Atlantic*, examines the impact digital readers may have on the methods of traditional storytelling. Luminato's literary events feature authors in readings or discussions followed by an audience question-and-answer session.

"We are extremely pleased to be working with the fantastic group of celebrated authors assembled by our literary curator Devyani Saltzman," says Luminato's Artistic Director Chris Lorway. "Each of Luminato's events gives our audience the opportunity to enhance their Festival experience by delving deeper into our thematic threads."

"Our commitment to programming the best in Canadian and international authors makes this year's literary lineup truly exciting," says Luminato's CEO Janice Price. "Luminato produces events that cross generations, borders, and cultures, bringing diverse voices in literature to life on our stages."

Complete 2010 Luminato literature programs:

African Literature

Luminato's ***African Literature*** authors represent the evolution of African writing. Featuring a panel of four esteemed authors, the event is highlighted by a reading from celebrated Kenyan novelist Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o. As a writer and professor, Thiong'o championed the development of an African-centric literature rather than European literary traditions. His commitment to a culturally-specific style of writing has made Thiong'o a role-model for countless authors in both Africa and around the world. Brian Chikwava and Binyavanga Wainaina, winners of the Caine Prize — considered the Booker Prize of African literature — join Thiong'o at Luminato along with Nigerian-Canadian author Carole Enahoro. Author and Toronto Poet Laureate Dionne Brand moderates ***African Literature***.

Saturday, June 12 at the Isabel Bader Theatre

\$15

Monday Night Fiction

Consisting of two separate readings, ***Monday Night Fiction*** features Ben Okri and Roddy Doyle, both Booker Prize-winning authors, discussing how diverse cultural influences helped to shape their narratives and settings. Okri's writing combines European literary traditions with African mythology creating a distinct style that merges the influence of two diverse cultures. Irish novelist Roddy Doyle is known around the world for his realistic examination of regional characteristics and history. Cultural disparities define his writing and characters as do his own observations and experiences. Doyle gives the first Toronto reading of his new book *The Dead Republic*, the final installment in The Last Roundup trilogy. Okri reads from his newest title *Tales of Freedom*. Ben Okri's appearance is supported by The British Council.

Ben Okri – Monday, June 14 at the Al Green Theatre \$25

Roddy Doyle – Monday, June 14 at the Jane Mallet Theatre \$25

Azar Nafisi: Reading and Writing Iran

New York Times best-selling author Azar Nafisi is hailed as a leading voice concerning women's rights and politics. Her struggle for artistic and personal freedoms has shaped her career as an author and activist. Nafisi discusses writing in the wake of the political turmoil that existed after Iran's 2009 presidential elections and its effect on artistic expression. Nafisi's memoirs, including the award-winning *Reading Lolita in Tehran*, continue to garner international attention for their personal and insightful messages.

Tuesday, June 15 at the Al Green Theatre

\$15

Fiction in the Age of E-Books

Digital books alter the physical reading experience and impact how authors and publishers interact with the written word. New technology prompts questions about the shifting direction of literature as authors in the post-print age consider writing for digital media. ***Fiction in the Age of E-Books*** is a timely discussion about technology's impact on literature. Presented by Luminato in association with *The Atlantic*, a distinguished panel converses about writing in the digital era. *The Atlantic's* Deputy Editor Scott Stossel moderates.

Saturday, June 19 at the Isabel Bader Theatre

\$15

Eleanor Catton and Michael Helm

Canadian-born New Zealander Eleanor Catton and Giller Prize finalist Michael Helm represent two of the freshest new voices in contemporary fiction. Catton's debut novel, *The Rehearsal*, won the Betty Trask Award and was shortlisted for the Guardian First Book Award. At Luminato she will be reading from *The Rehearsal* for the first time in Canada. Saskatchewan-born, Toronto-based Michael Helm has been hailed by the Literary Review of Canada as one of the country's best writers. He will be reading from his newest novel, *Cities of Refuge*.

Saturday, June 12 at the Isabel Bader Theatre

\$15

Scene of the Crime

Scene of the Crime explores the significance of setting within the crime thriller genre with two masters of suspense. South Africa's most famous murder mystery author, Deon Meyer writes in Afrikaans to create regionally specific murder mysteries. John Brady, who divides his time between Ireland and Canada, sets his thrillers amidst the politics and shifting economy of his native Ireland. He will read from *A Long Hard Look*, the newest title in his Matt Minogue series. Meyer will read from his best-selling novel *Thirteen Hours*.

Friday, June 11 at the Al Green Theatre

\$15

East/West in Canadian Fiction

Award-winning Canadian authors Anosh Irani, Lorna Crozier, Lynn Coady, and Michael Winter discuss how regional differences shape creative writing. ***East/West in Canadian Fiction*** examines how the Canadian narrative is informed by both local and regional influences. Vancouver-born Irani expresses the duality of his upbringing by setting his novel *Dahanu Road* in India, while Crozier draws from her childhood in Saskatchewan in her memoir *Small Beneath the Sky*. Edmonton's Lynn Coady and Newfoundland-raised Toronto-based Michael Winter read from their award-winning novels and discuss the use of regional characteristics in fiction. Produced in association with the Toronto Public Library, Noah Richler moderates ***East/West in Canadian Fiction***.

**Wednesday, June 16 at the Bram and Bluma Appel Salon, Toronto Reference Library
FREE**

Luminato's 2010 literary program is generously presented by Scotiabank Group.

ABOUT LUMINATO

For 10 extraordinary days in June, Toronto's stages, streets, and public spaces are illuminated with arts and creativity. Luminato is an annual multi-disciplinary celebration of theatre, literature, music, food, dance, celebrations, visual arts, fashion, film, and magic.

For more information, visit luminato.com. Tickets will be available at 10:00 AM, April 15 through all Ticketmaster outlets (call 416-872-1111 or visit www.ticketmaster.ca).

Luminato gratefully acknowledges the generous support and vision of its Luminaries, SuperNova donors, and Patron Circle Members; corporate partners; the presenting partner, L'Oréal; the dedicated government partners; and major media partners.

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This list represents commitments as of March 1, 2010.

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