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**Contact:**

Alscess Lewis-Brown, VI Lit Fest Program Chair

340-692-4152

[abrown@uvi.edu](mailto:abrown@uvi.edu)

or

Richard Dorsey, VI Lit Fest marketing and public relations coordinator

[richard.dorsey@students.uvi.edu](mailto:richard.dorsey@students.uvi.edu)

**VIRGIN ISLANDS LITERARY FESTIVAL AND BOOK FAIR April 19 – 22, 2017**

**“New Vistas: An Emerging Caribbean, 100 Years of the Virgin Islands” #VILitFest 2017**

ST. CROIX, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS — The 2017 Virgin Islands Literary Festival and Book Fair themed **New Vistas: An Emerging Caribbean, 100 Years of the Virgin Islands** kicks off with its Pre Lit Fest activity at 9:a.m on April 19 in the Great Hall on the St. Croix Campus of the University of the Virgin Islands. A school soirée sponsored by the Virgin Islands Department of Education, Division of Cultural Education will include a featured author of young adult literature, New York Times, bestselling author Bernice McFadden who will speak to students from both public and private schools in an engaging presentation about storytelling and

writing. Students will also participate in writing and editing workshops with publisher Mario Picayo and a calypso writing workshop facilitated by King Derby with famed Calypsonian Dr. Hollis Liverpool, known in the calypso world as The Mighty Chalkdust .

In observance of the Virgin Islands Centennial, Tiphonie Yanique and Tobias Buckell, two Virgin Islands authors who are now New York Times bestselling authors, will make presentations in various schools on teaching Virgin Islands literature to students.

Thursday evening, the annual Meet and Greet reception with various authors and presenters will be held at Government House. Entertainment will include performances by the Caribbean Dance Company and steel pan virtuoso, Kevin Williams.

On Friday morning, April 21, at 9:00, the festival's keynote address will be delivered by the internationally famous, prize-winning author Kwame Dawes. This year's theme, "New Vistas: An Emerging Caribbean, 100 Years of the U.S. Virgin Islands" will resonate throughout the fair, with several featured speakers discussing the emerging Caribbean through the literary world. Workshops that day will feature other prize-winning authors to include: Cuban author, Achy Obejas, Earl Lovelace and Sir Keithlyn Smith, author of the famed Caribbean book *To Shoot Hard Labor* and his latest release which he will launch at the festival.

On Friday evening, the now-famous Book Bacchanal held in partnership with Caribbean Museum Center for the Arts will fire up the Frederiksted waterfront with vendors, Cariso, Moko Jumbi, Quadrille and open mic poetry.

Saturday, April 22, the Bush Tea Morning Social will begin at 8:00 a.m. with an appetizing Caribbean breakfast and fresh pressed, local talent—featured guests still a secret..

This is an opportunity for folks to mingle just before the 10: a.m. plenary session which will include a panel discussion on Caribbean Literature with famed authors: Kwame Dawes, Achy Obejas, Earl Lovelace, Tiphonie Yanique and Bernice McFadden.

Saturday evening, the festival offers a taster's treat at Balter's restaurant in Christiansted town, an event dedicated to spices and their stories. Spices like garlic, ginger, cocoa, cinnamon and turmeric have their own social and historical stories and these legends are featured in the hors d'oeuvres, discussions and music.

Sunday the VI Lit Fest will wind down with a tea party sponsored by the Education Committee of Faith Moravian Church. It will highlight old Caribbean stories and quotations as well as present a resource for writers via a lecture on the history of Moravians in the Virgin islands. Two authors, Earl Lovelace and Sir Keithlyn Smith, will also be featured there.

In recognition of the 100 years anniversary of the USVI, a section of each day's VI Lit Fest program is dedicated to Virgin Islands authors, including a Virgin Islands Writers' forum.

Workshops are 20.00 per person. Full admission to the fair is \$150, including the opening reception and meet and greet with the writers, the Book Bacchanal in Frederiksted, admission to all workshops and presentations on Friday and Saturday, as well as complimentary gifts. Exhibition booths for the book fair are \$50. Persons or groups interested in attending can register and pay online, see details below. Discounts available to teachers and senior citizens.

This Virgin Islands Literary Festival and Book Fair is made possible because of community sponsors and partners including: Virgin Islands Department of Tourism, **UVI RT Park, The University of the Virgin Islands College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, The Buccaneer Hotel, Caravelle Hotel and Casino, , Tropical Shipping, Faith Moravian Church,**

**UVI Extension Services, Virgin Islands Caribbean Cultural Center (VICCC) and The Caribbean Writer.**