

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE CHILDREN AND TEEN'S STAGES

Dav Pilkey has written and illustrated numerous popular, award-winning books for children, including the Captain Underpants and Dumb Bunnies series; *DOG BREATH*, winner of the California Young Reader Medal; and *THE PAPERBOY*, a Caldecott Honor Book. Growing up as a child in Elyria, Ohio, Pilkey was diagnosed with and suffers from dyslexia and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Pilkey is giving the Kidnote address and will launch *Dog Man*, a book about a crime-biting canine who is part dog, part man. With the head of a dog and the body of a human, this heroic hound has a real nose for justice. But can he resist the call of the wild to answer the call of duty?

New York Times bestselling Young Adult author **Victoria Schwab** is the product of a British mother, a Beverly Hills father and a Southern upbringing. Her new book, *This Savage Song*, tells the story of two teens in a broken world, where violent acts start breeding actual monsters. Some are shadows with teeth that feed on flesh and bone. Some are corpses that feed on blood. And some can pass for human. Those rare creatures feed on souls.

A native of small town Louisiana, YA author **John Corey Whaley** started writing stories about aliens and underwater civilizations when he was around 10 or 11 but now writes realistic fiction. His new book, *Highly Illogical Behavior*, is a hilarious and heartwarming coming-of-age story. It showcases the different ways in which we hide ourselves from the world — and the ways in which love, tragedy and the need for connection may be the only things to bring us back into the light.

Jason Reynolds is the author of critically acclaimed *When I Was the Greatest*, for which he was the recipient of the 2015 Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe Award for New Talent given by the American Library Association. At the AJC DBF, he will launch *Ghost*, about a boy who wants to be the fastest sprinter on his elite middle school track team but whose past is slowing him down. *Ghost* has been running for the wrong reasons. It all started with running away from his father, who, when *Ghost* was a little boy, chased him and his mother with a loaded gun, aiming to kill. Since then, *Ghost* has been the one causing problems — and running away from them — until he meets Coach, an ex-Olympic medalist who blew his own shot at success by using drugs, and who is determined to keep other kids from blowing their shots at life.

Sabaa Tahir grew up in California's Mojave Desert at her family's 18-room motel. There, she spent her time devouring fantasy novels, raiding her brother's comic book stash, and playing guitar badly. A former editor at *The Washington Post*, she writes Teen & YA Fantasy Fiction. Her latest book is *A Torch Against the Night*, a sequel to her *New York Times* bestseller, *An Ember in the Ashes*. In *A Torch*, Elias and Laia have to fight every step of the way if they're going to outsmart their enemies: the bloodthirsty Emperor Marcus, the merciless Commandant, the sadistic Warden of Kauf and, most heart-breaking of all, Helene, Elias's former friend and the Empire's newest Blood Shrike. Helene's mission is horrifying, unwanted, and clear: find the traitor Elias Veturius and the Scholar slave who helped him to escape... and kill them both.

A former high school English teacher in England and Switzerland, **Sharon Creech** first began writing novels for adults. She is also the author of Newbery Medal-winning *Walk Two Moons* and *The New York Times* bestseller, *A Fine, Fine School*. At the AJC DBF, she will launch *Moo*, a tween novel. This uplifting tale reminds us that if we're open to new experiences, life is full of surprises. Following one family's momentous move from the city to rural Maine, an unexpected bond develops between 12-year-old Reena and one very ornery cow.

Christian Robinson is an illustrator and animator who lives in San Francisco. He has worked with Pixar Animation Studios, The Sesame Street Workshop and has illustrated a number of award-winning picture books, including *Josephine* by Patricia Hruby Powell, which won a Coretta Scott King Illustrator Honor, a Robert F. Sibert Honor and a Boston Globe-Horn Book Nonfiction Honor. He brings *School's First Day of School*. It's the first day of school at Frederick Douglass Elementary and everyone is just a little bit nervous, especially the school itself. What will the children do once they come? Will they like the school? Will they be nice to him? The school has a rough start, but as the day goes on, he soon recovers when he sees that he's not the only one going through first-day jitters.

Kids|DBF

This year's Children's Area on Sycamore Street is bigger and better than ever with more family friendly programming including an outdoor stage with performances by local arts organizations, character meet-and-greets, and food! As always, top names in Children's lit will present on the Children's Stage inside the Decatur Recreation Center.

SATURDAY PARADE

Who is your favorite hero or heroine? **Brad Meltzer** and **Chris Eliopoulos**, co-creators of the popular picture book series, *Ordinary People Change the World*, kick the kids' events off on Saturday with a parade of historic proportions. Come as your favorite, most inspiring historical figure *OR* come as you are — after all, you are an ordinary person who can change the world! Parade lineup will begin at 9:30 a.m. at the community bandstand on the Decatur square and end at the Children's Stage presented by the Decatur Education Foundation.

SUNDAY PARADE

Calling all nerds, geeks, wonks and techies! Our Sunday parade will be led by **Andrea Beaty**, author of the beloved picture books *Iggly Peck, Architect*; *Rosie Revere, Engineer*; and the brand new, *Ada Twist, Scientist*. Atlanta Science Festival and Decatur Makers will join in the fun as we all put on our lab coats and our pocket protectors! Parade line up will begin at 11:30 a.m. at the community bandstand on the Decatur square and end at the Children's Stage presented by the Decatur Education Foundation.