



**Brooklyn Public Library Launches
Whispering Libraries
An Outdoor Audio Experience Across the Borough**

**Featuring Curated Neighborhood Playlists from Hidden Speakers at
10 Libraries Throughout the Borough,
Streaming Music, Literature, Oral History, and Poetry**

Brooklyn, New York – April 1, 2021 – **Brooklyn Public Library** (BPL) announced today the launch of *Whispering Libraries*, a curated audio experience now taking place outdoors at 10 library branches across Brooklyn. Broadcast from hidden speakers outside of select branches, patrons and passers-by can listen to curated playlists of music, poetry, oral histories, podcast excerpts, and spoken literature, starting as early as 7:30 a.m. and playing up to five times a day on weekdays and select Saturdays.

Selections range from the opening lines of “Journal of A Plague Year”; excerpts of speeches by the late congressman and civil rights activist **John Lewis**; passages from the writings of award-winning author **Edwidge Danticat**; classical music from BPL Creatives-in-Residence **ETHEL Quartet**; and highlights from BPL’s *Borrowed* podcast and historical audio from the Library’s archives. Additional voices include Brooklyn Poet Laureate **Tina Chang**; U.S. Poet Laureate **Joy Harjo**; poet **Saeed Jones**, shortlist nominee for the 2020 Brooklyn Public Library Literary Prize; writers **Naomi Klein** and **Fran Lebowitz**; novelist and poet **N. Scott Momaday**; the late poet and bookseller **Lawrence Ferlinghetti**; and writer and sociologist **Dr. Ruha Benjamin**, winner of the 2020 Brooklyn Public Library Literary Prize.

Each of the 10 branches participating in the *Whispering Libraries* experience will have customized playlists, reflecting, in part, the neighborhood they serve. In addition, volunteer cyclists partnering with BPL, will bike throughout the borough broadcasting the playlists and periodically stopping at high foot-traffic locations, offering passers-by instructions on how to access the full playlists as well as booklists, created by BPL librarians to further enhance the themes from the playlists. For more information, visit <https://www.bklynlibrary.org/podcasts/whispering-libraries>.

"A library is more than just a building, it is the repository of our accumulated knowledge and memory. Imagine walking by one of our branches before the building opens for service and you hear a poem or a segment of a historical speech—we hope that a whispering library will make you smile and inspire you," said **László Jakab Orsós, Vice President of Arts and Culture**. "As we engage the public safely outside, look for BPL cyclists carrying small speakers, myself included, riding throughout the borough, amplifying the *Whispering Libraries* experience for everyone."

The 10 Library branches participating in *Whispering Libraries* include Bay Ridge, Brownsville, Bushwick, Clarendon, Flatbush, Kensington, Kings Highway, New Utrecht, Park Slope, and Sheepshead Bay. A special edition is also planned at BPL’s Center for Brooklyn History, with more details available in the coming weeks.

BPL will offer additional opportunities outside including outdoor reading rooms at 22 branches; free outdoor Wi-Fi and laptop loans; the “Outdoor Living Room,” part seating area and part art installation

created by Brooklyn-based artist Heinrich Spillmann at BPL's Central Library; and a host of outdoor programs including the upcoming StoryWalk—pages of a book or verses of a song placed every few feet around the perimeter of the library so as families stroll around outside they can read or sing together.

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About Brooklyn Public Library

[Brooklyn Public Library](#) is one of the nation's largest library systems and among New York City's most democratic institutions. As a leader in developing modern 21st-century libraries, we provide resources to support personal advancement, foster civic literacy, and strengthen the fabric of community among the more than 2.7 million individuals who call Brooklyn home. We provide nearly 65,000 free programs a year with writers, thinkers, artists, and educators from around the corner and around the world. And we give patrons millions of opportunities to enjoy one of life's greatest satisfactions: the joy of a good book.

Media Contacts:

Fritzi Bodenheimer
Press Office
Brooklyn Public Library
929-276-4232
fbodenheimer@bklynlibrary.org

Folake Ologunja / Katrina Reynolds / Josh Balber
Resnicow and Associates
fologunja@resnicow.com / kreynolds@resnicow.com / ibalber@resnicow.com
212-671-5163 / 212-671-5184 / 212-671-5175