

Media Release

April 15, 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STARFest Presents Kate Black and David Berry on Malls and Nostalgia

ST. ALBERT—STARFest Readers Festival is excited to present a special after-hours event with Kate Black, author of *Big Mall*, in conversation with David Berry, author of *On Nostalgia*, on Saturday, May 25 at 7 p.m. at the Downtown Library. This powerhouse author pairing will cover the questions you didn't know you had about the impact of West Edmonton Mall – a mall on steroids, a place people love to hate and hate to love – and the potent force of nostalgia on our era.

The event will also be an opportunity for audience to meet the new STARFest Director and Programs Librarian, Julie Ruel. "I'm excited to take on the STARFest role and bring exciting authors to St. Albert readers," says Ruel. "Kate and David have both created smart, contemporary examinations of current cultural phenomena, and their conversation is sure to be thought-provoking and entertaining."

Blending a history of shopping with a story of coming of age in North America's largest and strangest mall, *Big Mall* investigates how these structures have become the ultimate symbol of late-capitalist dread – and, surprisingly, a subversive site of hope. The Washington Post says, "An examination of adolescence and death and consumption and spectacle, *Big Mall* ponders why the mall makes us feel good, and bad."

On Nostalgia is a panoramic cultural history of nostalgia that draws on everything from the modern science of memory to the romantic ideals of advertising, and traverses cultural movements from futurism to fascism to Facebook. The Toronto Star calls it "a powerful, thought-provoking work of philosophy and closely-argued systemic analysis ... leavened with a sly wit."

Kate Black's essays have been published in *The Globe and Mail*, *The Walrus*, and *Maisonneuve*. In 2020, she was selected as one of Canada's top emerging voices in nonfiction by the RBC Taylor Prize and the National Magazine Awards. She grew up in St. Albert, and lives in Vancouver.

David Berry is a writer, editor and critic in Edmonton. He has been a columnist in the arts section for Canada's *National Post*, his work has appeared in *The Globe and Mail*, *Hazlitt*, *The Walrus*, *Toronto Life*, the CBC and elsewhere.

Admission is free and registration is required to see Kate Black in conversation with David Berry on May 25. The event begins at 7 p.m. in Forsyth Hall at the Downtown Library and is followed with audience conversation and book signings. Register at sapl.ca.

For more information contact:

Leslie Greentree, Marketing & Communications Specialist

St. Albert Public Library

T: 780-459-1750

lgreentree@sapl.ca

or

Julie Ruel, Festival Director

St. Albert Public Library

T: 780-418-6623

jruel@sapl.ca