

BANNED TOGETHER: Canada's finest read the censors' favourites

Celebrating the 25th anniversary of **Freedom to Read Week** (www.freedomtoread.ca), acclaimed Canadian authors, editors, and publishers are gathering in Toronto to read outrageously entertaining, informative, and thought-provoking books for young readers.

Books that tell the truth! Books that make kids think! Books that make adults squirm!

Recognizing that today's young readers are their future readers and storytellers, our country's top creators of books for grownups are joining their kidlit counterparts to send censors a powerful message: **no one should stand between a growing reader and a good book.**

* Renowned author Michael Winter reads *Hold Fast*, by fellow Newfoundlander Kevin Major. Canada's first novel for young adults and a multiple award winner, *Hold Fast* was banned by Canadian schools for containing foul language, sexual content and -- yikes! -- bad grammar.

* 2009 Canada Reads nominee Brian Francis and writer-provocateur Derek McCormack read from dog-eared copies of Judy Blume's touching and uncompromisingly honest coming-of-age novels. Five of Blume's books are among the 100 most challenged of all time.

* International writers Benjamin Santamaria and Andrea Hila, from PEN Canada's Writers in Exile program, read contemporary stories challenged abroad for their social and political messages.

Other illustrious readers and MCs include authors Tim Wynne-Jones, Russell Smith, Paul Quarrington, Kenneth Oppel, Michael Helm, and Darren Wershler, as well as Alana Wilcox, Senior Editor at Coach House Books, Ellen Seligman, Senior Vice-President and Publisher of Fiction at McClelland & Stewart, Peter Carver, Children's Book Editor at Red Deer Press, Susan Shipton, Sales & Rights Manager at Annick Press, and Iris Tupholme, Publisher and Editor-in-Chief at HarperCollins Canada.

The program is divided into two sets: **7:30pm** and **8:45pm**.

Tickets are tax deductible. Proceeds to support **PEN Canada** (www.pencanada.ca) an association of writers and supporters formed in 1926 to defend freedom of expression and raise awareness of that right, and **IBBY Canada** (www.ibby-canada.org), the Canadian national section of the International Board on Books for Young People, which promotes cultural understanding through access to and the exchange of children's literature.

\$15

Doors open 7pm

Tuesday, February 24

Revival Bar

783 College Street, Toronto

www.revivalbar.com

Tickets available at the door

Advance tickets available for purchase at:

PEN Canada, 24 Ryerson Ave., Ste. 301, Toronto, 416-703-8448

Canadian Children's Book Centre, 40 Orchard View Blvd., Ste. 101 (lower level), 416-975-0010

Canadian Society of Authors, Illustrators, and Performers for Children, 40 Orchard View Blvd., Ste. 104 (lower level), 416-515-1559

To receive tickets by mail or for additional information, including media queries, please contact Hadley Dyer of IBBY Canada (hadleydyer@yahoo.ca).