Dear library community,

Even though our doors are closed right now, we want to take this time to honor the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities and their history and traditions that make the city of San Francisco so special.

The City has long been a destination for immigrants from Asia with world-renowned cultural heritage districts such as Chinatown, Japantown, Little Saigon and SOMA Filipinas. San Francisco is also made up of people from Burma, India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Korea, Laos, Malaysia the Pacific Islands, Singapore and Thailand, among others.

As the city’s first Asian American city librarian, I take great pride in the fact that the Library is a key partner for the citywide APA Heritage Foundation. Within these pages are library books, films and virtual online programs that I hope will inspire you to engage, honor and learn more about our city’s exceptionally rich heritage, this May and all year long.

Together, yet apart, let’s continue to celebrate our community.

Sincerely,
Michael Lambert
City Librarian

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### Take Part in Asian Pacific Islander American Heritage Month

We are honored to bring APIA Heritage Month online with virtual events, eResources, film and book recommendations and connections to our partners and their range of educational and fun online content.

On May 14, the Library hosts authors Joy Ma, Katya Cengel and Sieu Sean Do in a panel discussion about overcoming the loss of cultural identity and trauma. Sieu Sean Do’s work A Cloak of Good Fortune: A Cambodian Boy’s Journey From Paradise Through A Kingdom of Terror traces one Cambodian child’s coming of age from the idyllic, peaceful years of childhood in rural Cambodia through his family’s forced exile by the Khmer Rouge. Katya Cengel’s Exiled: From the Killing Fields of Cambodia to California and Back depicts the story of four families confronting deportation 40 years after the beginning of large-scale resettlement of Southeast Asian refugees in America following the fall of the genocidal Khmer Rouge. Lastly, check out Joy Ma’s The Deoldwallahs: The True Story of the 1962 Chinese-Indian Internment. The book is the untold account of the internment of 3,000 Chinese-Indians after the Sino-Indian War in 1962.

### Settle In with Sweet Stories

Storytimes are the cornerstone of our early literacy programming at SFPL. Every week, children, caregivers and librarians gather for storytimes—cherished moments to sing, read, dance and learn something new.

In that spirit, you can now press play on the Library’s storytime right in your home. Tune in to the Library’s Instagram account (@sfpubliclibrary) every Tuesday and Thursday at 2 p.m. and Saturday at 10 a.m. for “Sweet Stories with SFPL,” a short video of songs, rhymes and a story to enjoy with your young children. On Saturdays, we offer Sweet Stories en español, read by our very own librarians.

Don’t have Instagram? “Sweet Stories with SFPL” is also available on the Library’s YouTube channel. Simply search for “San Francisco Public Library” in YouTube and click on the “Sweet Stories” playlist to view all available videos.

Replay Sweet Stories at your convenience and easily access them on any device wherever you might be. We encourage you to repeat them, as repetition is a great way for children—and grownups!—to learn the songs.

In addition to our regular schedule, on Fridays, look out for bonus editions of Sweet Stories featuring a guest reader, such as local City officials and authors. Special thanks to Mayor Breed for reading one of our first Sweet Stories and our very own City Librarian for sharing readings and favorite songs.

We love supporting the early learning of your children and encourage families to talk, read, sing, play and write, every day.

### Pro tip:
While you are together, help your child learn their letters by singing alphabet songs. Point out special letters that correspond with their name or names of family members. Give them tools to practice writing as their interest grows. It all starts with spending time together, and we hope you will continue to watch and learn with us each week.

### Fostering Creative Play at Home

Searching for fun and easy playtime ideas for children that don’t require expensive toys or equipment? Fundamental to early learning, play is entertaining and has cognitive, emotional and linguistic benefits. In addition, play helps children to develop gross and fine motor skills.

Look around your home for inspiration. Cereal and pasta boxes can turn into blocks: just empty and tape off the ends. Find items that nest like measuring cups. A variety of dry beans in the pantry are great for sorting, counting and measuring. Use the egg wells to hold crayons—encourage art and writing.

Even the recycling bin can yield creative supplies. Even the recycling bin can yield creative supplies. Even the recycling bin can yield creative supplies. Even the recycling bin can yield creative supplies. Even the recycling bin can yield creative supplies. Even the recycling bin can yield creative supplies. Even the recycling bin can yield creative supplies. Even the recycling bin can yield creative supplies.

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Special thanks to Mayor Breed for reading one of our first Sweet Stories. Photo: Michael-Vincent D’Alessio-Mercanti

Kristian Kabuay

Pasifika Print-Making

SFPL.ORG
Learn and Relax at Home with eResources

While sheltering-in-place at home and armchair traveling, consider taking advantage of this time to build language skills. Mango Languages is an easy-to-use, interactive platform that offers more than 70 different languages. Popular choices include Japanese, German, Spanish (Latin America) and Mandarin. The immersive learning platform of Rosetta Stone offers 30 different languages, including Arabic, Filipino and Vietnamese. All of these eResources can be easily accessed via sfpl.org under the “Research and Learn” tab.

Need to take a break from studying? Perhaps you'd like to peruse an eMagazine or eBook. We offer them on your digital device with a few easy steps. Try Flipster, RB Digital or Kono for magazines, or Overdrive, SimplyE or Axis 360 for the latest absorbing, escapist reads. Want to watch a movie or listen to music instead? We have Hoopla and Kanopy for that! Simply visit sfpl.org and click on “Books & Media.” Select “24/7 Virtual Library” to find all that we offer right from your device.

APIA Month Reads

Enjoy book recommendations in recognition of Asian Pacific Islander American Heritage Month. We’ve created booklists for Kid Picks, Teens Picks, Adult Fiction, Adult Nonfiction and Adult Graphic Novels.

Highlights:

Children sfpl.org/APIA-children
A Different Pond
by Bao Phi

Cilla Lee-Jenkins: Future Author Extraordinaire

Teen/Young Adult sfpl.org/APIA-teen
The House That Lou Built
by Mae Respicio

Outrun the Moon
by Stacy Lee

San Francisco, 1906. Fifteen-year-old Mercy Wong is determined to break from the poverty in Chinatown, and an education at St. Clare’s is her best hope—except it’s off-limits to all but the wealthiest white girls.

Adult sfpl.org/APIA-fiction
A River of Stars
by Vanessa Hua

Cook Korean!
by Robin Ha

Pregnant by her boss/lover, a Korean adoptee grows up with a white family in Oregon discusses her journey to find her identity as an Asian American woman and a writer after becoming curious about her true origins.

Featured Book for APIA Month: The Mountains Sing

The Mountains Sing tells an enveloping, multigenerational tale of the Tran family, set against the backdrop of the Vietnam War. Tran Dieu Lan, who was born in 1920, was forced to flee her family farm with her six children during the Land Reform as the Communist government rose in the North. Years later in Hanoi, her young granddaughter, Huong, comes of age as her parents and uncles head off down the Ho Chi Minh Trail to fight in a conflict that tore not just her beloved country, but also her family apart.

Vivid, gripping and steeped in the language and traditions of Vietnam, The Mountains Sing brings to life the human costs of this conflict from the point of view of the Vietnamese people themselves, while showing us the true power of kindness and hope.

Nguyen Phan Que Mai is a Vietnamese poet and author of eight books. This is her first novel in English. Que Mai is one of a relatively few authors now bringing Vietnamese literature to a wider English-speaking audience, her work offering a rare glimpse into this world.

This book is available for immediate check-out as an ebook or audiobook on Hoopla. For more staff recommendations on what to read during APIA Heritage Month, visit sfpl.org APIA pacific islander american heritage month.

Join the Library for an exciting book club discussion of The Mountains Sing. Thursday, May 21, 7 p.m. Reservations required: https://bit.ly/MntSingReg

Films to Download and Stream for APIA Heritage Month

We've selected a wide variety of films for APIA Heritage Month, all available on Kanopy or Hoopla sfpl.org/APIA-films-for-adults

Police Story – This early Jackie Chan film (and Hong Kong action cinema classic) sees him framed for murder, forcing him to go on the run and prove his innocence.

Mother and The Host – You may recognize Bong Joon-ho as the director of Oscar winner Parasite; these are two of his previous films, Mother and The Host.

Himalaya – This breathtaking, Academy Award-nominated film tells the story of a generational struggle for the future of a tiny mountain village between its proud old chief and a headstrong young caravanner.

Election – Every two years the senior members of the oldest gang in Hong Kong elect an up-and-coming younger boss as their chairman. When the voting does not go how some people would have liked, lines are divided and a gang war begins to form. And if you like this film, its sequel, Triad Election, is also available.

Hero – A visually stunning epic, in which a fearless warrior seeking justice takes on the empire’s most ruthless assassins.

The Royal Tailor – Amid the Joseon era of South Korea, two tailors square off over clothes for royalty. Scandal, tragedy and a secret history begin to unfold amid the rivalry.

Soul of a Banquet – In this mouthwatering documentary, director Wayne Wang (The Joy Luck Club) profiles Cecilia Chiang as she relates her fascinating history and cooks up a sumptuous, once-in-a-lifetime banquet.

CAAM – We’ve also created a separate list of films presented by our partner, the Center for Asian American Media (CAAM). sfpl.org/APIA-CAAM-films

The Slanted Screen – From filmmaker and late San Francisco public defender Jeff Adachi, The Slanted Screen explores the portrayals of Asian men in American cinema, chronicling the experiences of actors who have had to struggle against ethnic stereotyping and limiting roles.

Both Hoopla and Kanopy offer many films that feature Asian, Asian-American or Pacific Islander Americans, as well as films from Asian and Pacific Island countries. These can be searched by language, film title, actors or directors. We hope you enjoy our selections and we encourage you to explore.
Profile:
From Busy Librarian to the Front Lines of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Alan Wong, a librarian at the busy Excelsior Branch, is currently mobilized as a Disaster Service Worker during the COVID-19 public health emergency. We spoke with Alan (via mobile phone) to learn about how librarians are helping the City of San Francisco during this turbulent time.

What did your typical routine look like before COVID-19?
At the library, my day starts when the branch opens. We have our quiet time—that’s when our regular patrons come in. I usually interact with our Chinese seniors, who come in to read our Chinese newspapers, or patrons who use the computer every day. Then, around 11 a.m., we have our groups who come in for storytime. We see nannies with strollers and young schoolchildren holding the little rope coming in. That’s how you know it’s almost lunchtime. Around 3 p.m., when schools let out, all the kids come pouring into our library. There are about ten schools around us, a mix of public and private, elementary, middle and a high school, so we get a large gathering of kids after school of all ages.

What does your day look like now after COVID-19?
Before the mayor announced Shelter-in-Place, some Disaster Service Workers (DSWs) were already activated, and right now, I’m serving as a DSW. I go to the San Francisco Marin Food Bank, on 101, by Cesar Chavez. I’m with about 20 other Librarians, Techs, Pages, and we work together to pack bags of produce and food for those in need. We create an assembly line of products, like 50 pounds of potatoes and onions, boxes of apples and oranges, and bags of rice; then we go down the line and pack bags of produce for the public.

How many other librarians are on the front lines with you?
We have a good amount of librarians serving as DSWs. At the food bank, I have coworkers from the West Portal, North Beach and Richmond Branches.

Do you miss your patrons?
Yes, definitely. I haven’t seen any of them, which worries me—not only my older patrons, but also my younger visitors whom I see every day after school. I miss them. Even though they’re always sneaking chips and candy, it’s normal for them to see me and then pretend not to see me as they sneak food, but that’s all part of the fun.

We hope the library can come back soon at its full capacity.
I’m very happy that everyone’s using our online resources now, but once COVID-19 and the Shelter in Place order are over, I hope to see you all come into the branch.

For more of our interview with Alan Wong, as well as other Library workers, visit FriendsSFPL.org/Voices.
May 2020

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The San Francisco Public Library system is dedicated to free and equal access to information, knowledge, independent learning and the joys of reading for our diverse community.

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phone hours: Monday - Friday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
(415) 557-4433
(415) 557-4400
TTY
(415) 557-4433 (TTY)
Public Affairs email: publicaffairs@sfpl.org
Website: sfpl.org

During the library closure, staff are available to assist by email or phone (TIP Line) Monday - Friday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. Online: Ask for eBook assistance or email info@sfpl.org

VIRTUAL LIBRARY EVENT CALENDAR

SPECIAL EVENTS
Introduction to Baybayin Calligraphy with Kristian Kabuay
Wednesday, May 13, 7 p.m. on Zoom
In a unique presentation, Kristian Kabuay will discuss pre-Philippine scripts in the diaspora and introduce Baybayin calligraphy, covering its history, basic characters, stroke technique and translation methods.

APIA Author Panel: Overcoming Loss of Identity and Trauma
Thursday, May 14, 6 p.m.
Authors, Joy Ma, Katya Cengel, Sieu Sean Do will discuss their books, and the common thread which unites them, loss of identity and trauma through cultural violence. The meeting link will be sent the day of the event.

Reservations required:

On the Same Page: The Mountains Sing
Thursday, May 21, 7 p.m.
We partner with hoopla Digital to bring you a special APIA/Shelter in Place edition of our On the Same Page city-wide read.
The meeting link will be sent the day of the event.
Reservations required:
https://bit.ly/TheBoxMan

BOOK CLUBS
World Literature: The Box Man by Kobo Abe
Thursday, May 7, 6 p.m.
The Box Man is also available using the Internet Archives’, National Emergency Library. The title may be checked out for 14 days.
The World Literature Book Club will be an online event until further notice, using the Zoom platform.
The meeting link will be sent the day of the event.

Reservations required:
https://bit.ly/TheBoxMan

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JOBS AND CAREERS
Career Coaching
Tuesdays in May and June 5:30–7:30 p.m.
Thursdays in May and June 3–5 p.m.
Work with a career coach who can help you identify goals, find your passion and guide you through job search, interview, resumes and career change.
Each session is 30 minutes. This will be an online event, using the Zoom platform. The link for the event will be sent the day of your appointment. To make an appointment, please go to https://bstjobsandcareers.youcanbook.me

EARLY CHILDHOOD, FAMILY
Sweet Storytimes with SFPL
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2–2:15 p.m.
Watch on IGTV@sfpubliclibrary

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Please check our event calendar for additional programs: sfpl.org/events

San Francisco Public Library

San Francisco Public Library
710 VAN NESS AVE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-4418

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Asian Pacific Islander American HERITAGE MONTH

“When we know ourselves and our history, and other people and their history, there really is no way that we can really have positive kind of interaction where there is real understanding.”
- Yuri Kochiyama