



MEDIA ALERT
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media Contact: **Will Caperton y Montoya**
DCA Director of Marketing and Development
213.202.5538
will.caperton@lacity.org

**DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS
ANNOUNCES
APRIL 2014
AS
LITERACY MONTH
CELEBRATING THE
*BIG READ PROGRAM IN LA***

Los Angeles – The City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) marks its sixth year of producing the 2014 *Big Read Program in LA* with **Jhumpa Lahiri's** novel, *The Namesake*. As part of this arts education initiative, April 2014 will be dedicated as: *Literacy Month ~ Celebrating the Big Read Program in Los Angeles* during a proclamation ceremony at Los Angeles City Hall in Council Chambers on April 2, 2014, at 10:00 a.m.

The 2014 *Big Read Program in LA* will be officially introduced along with the featured book, *The Namesake*, a story about an American-born young man of Bengali parentage who is questioning his name, identity, and place in his family and in his country. Students, schools, participating organizations, and cultural and community partners will be recognized during the event at City Hall.

The Big Read is an initiative of the **National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)** designed to restore reading to the center of American culture. The NEA presents The Big Read in partnership with the Arts Midwest. The Big Read brings together partners across the county to encourage reading for pleasure and enlightenment.

Since 2008/09, the NEA has awarded grants to the **Department of Cultural Affairs** each year to produce the *Big Read Program in LA*. The program consists of a series of activities presented by DCA in conjunction with several community and cultural organizations that include: the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts) Community Arts Partnership (CAP), the Craft and Folk Art Museum, ICEF Public Schools, the Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles, the LA Harbor International Film Festival, Libros Schimbros, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Los Angeles Public Library, the Los Angeles Unified School District, the Museum of the San Fernando Valley, Secret City, the Sony Pictures Media Arts Program, and many more.



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Nearly 3,000 students from local high schools in culturally diverse areas of Los Angeles will join community members in reading *The Namesake*, with activities offered for all ages and interests. The public is invited to participate in the 2014 **Big Read Program in LA** and enjoy the many activities offered by the community partners including art exhibitions, live performances, art exhibitions, film screenings, discussion panels, a book festival, and visits to cultural landmarks.

For a full list of events for DCA's 2014 **Big Read Program in LA**, please visit: **BigReadLA.org**.

A brochure detailing all **Big Read Program in LA** events is also attached for easy reference.

All local programs are free unless otherwise indicated.

Please call **213.202.5567** for additional information.

To learn more about **The Big Read** and other NEA sponsored initiatives around the country, please visit: **neabigread.org**.

About the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs

The **Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA)** generates and supports high quality arts and cultural experiences for Los Angeles' 4 million residents and 40 million annual overnight and day visitors. DCA advances the social and economic impact of the arts and ensures access to diverse and enriching cultural activities through: grantmaking, marketing, development, public art, community arts programming, arts education, and building partnerships with artists and arts and cultural organizations in neighborhoods throughout the City of Los Angeles.

DCA's projected operating budget and managed portfolio totals \$52 million in fiscal year 2013/14. It consists of: \$13.4 million in City related and indirect cost allocations; \$10.5 million in Transient Occupancy Tax funds; \$9 million in one-time City funding; \$9 million in funds from the Public Works Improvements Arts Program (PWIAP); \$7.5 million from the Private Arts Development Fee Program (ADF); and \$2.4 million raised to date this fiscal year in private and public funds from foundation, corporate, government, and individual donors.

DCA significantly supports artists and cultural projects through its Public Art Division by administering a portfolio totaling \$16.5 million in PWIAP and ADF funds in FY13/14. Of this amount, typically 15% to 20%, or between \$2.5 and \$3.3 million, is attributable to artists' fees.



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DCA's Marketing and Development Division has raised \$26 million over the last 12 fiscal years to re-grant to LA-based artists and arts and cultural organizations, and to support DCA's special programming and facilities. DCA also grants approximately \$2.3 million annually to 268 artists and nonprofit arts and cultural organizations through its long-established Grants Administration Division. Additional special project support of more than \$1.5 million is also awarded annually for a total of approximately \$3.8 million invested each year in LA's creative community.

DCA provides arts and cultural programming through its Community Arts Division, managing numerous neighborhood arts and cultural centers, theaters, historic sites, and educational initiatives. DCA's Marketing and Development Division also markets the City's arts and cultural events through development and collaboration with strategic partners, design and production of creative catalogs, publications, and promotional materials, and management of the culturela.org website visited by over 3 million people annually.

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