M&T Bank and Wilmington Trust Announce Partnership with Schomburg Center for Black History Month

Authors Walter Mosely, Ibram X. Kendi and other Cultural Thinkers to Present New Works, Conversations, and Dynamic Content for Center's Black History Month Series

M&T Bank and Wilmington Trust announced today that they are partnering with The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, a research library that is part of The New York Public Library and located in Harlem, New York. The exclusive sponsorship will celebrate Black History Month and offer a series of four virtual events throughout the month of February, featuring recognized authors and cultural leaders representing different aspects of African American culture within the United States.

This will mark the third year that M&T Bank has supported individual events at the Schomburg Center during Black History Month, but it is the first time they have partnered to sponsor a series of experiences as part of the commemoration.

"This is a pivotal time in our nation's history to more deeply explore and understand issues of race, gender, and relationships. As a result, we're proud to support The Schomburg Center in its efforts to feature the nation's most dynamic Black cultural thinkers" said Troy Debroux, president of M&T Bank's Metro NYC/NJ African American Resource Group. "This series will provide an opportunity to participate in conversations on an exciting array of topics, including pulp fiction, epic historical journeys, and economic philosophy. We look forward to how the events will spark curiosity and healthy debate."

These free virtual events are open to the public and will feature live video and interactive Q&A sessions, each with a unique story, lesson, or performance.

"While every month is Black History month at the Schomburg Center, we are thrilled to have M&T Bank's support to produce this series of virtual programs that portrays the vastness of Black culture and identities." said Novella Ford, associate director of Public Programs and Exhibitions for the Schomburg Center. "Each program brings attention to our archival collections that help connect our past to this current moment."

For more information and to attend the events listed below, we invite you to visit the Black History Month Series page.

Tuesday, Feb. 9th at 7:00 pm: *Between the Lines: FOUR HUNDRED SOULS*

- Four Hundred Souls is a unique one-volume "community" history of African Americans. Ibram X. Kendi along with co-editor, award-winning historian Keisha N. Blain, assembled 90 writers to consider the 400-year journey of African Americans from 1619 to the present. Each member of the "community choir," as Kendi calls it—"women and men, cisgender and transgender, younger and older, straight and queer, dark-skinned and light-skinned"—takes on a five-year period, examining it from their unique point of view and set of experiences.
- Join the editors Drs. Kendi and Blain alongside contributors Robert Jones, Jr. , Bernice L. McFadden, Dr. Blair L.M. Kelley for readings from the collection and a discussion on what it takes to develop a community history, by a community.
- Produced in partnership with the LIVE from NYPL

Tuesday, Feb. 16th at 7:00 pm: *Between the Lines: Unsung: Unheralded Narratives of American Slavery & Abolition*

- A comprehensive collection "that should be required reading in history and literature courses," writes Kirkus about the upcoming book, Unsung: Unheralded Narratives of American Slavery & Abolition. Edited by Dr. Michelle Commander, curator and associate director of the Lapidus Center for the Historical Analysis of Transatlantic Slavery at the Schomburg Center, with a foreword by former Schomburg Center Director Kevin Young, the anthology weaves together well- and lesser-known documents by abolitionists and highlights materials from Arturo Schomburg's seed collection. Unsung is the first in a series of upcoming anthologies from the Schomburg Center published in partnership with Penguin Classics. The event will feature readings from the collection which includes essays, speeches, plays, and more. Dr. Michelle Commander will also be in conversation with Dr. Kellie Carter Jackson, Knafel Assistant Professor of the Humanities in the Department of Africana Studies at Wellesley College; Joy Bivins, Associate Director of Collections and Research Services, Schomburg Center, and Jonathan McCrory, Artistic Director at Dr. Barbara Ann Teer's National Black Theatre.
- Companion online exhibition available - Subversion & The Art of Slavery Abolition began in early 2020. This exhibition highlights several of the ways that abolitionists engaged with the arts to agitate for enslaved people's liberty in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Monday, Feb. 22nd at 6:30pm: *The Philosophy of Malcolm X*

- The Schomburg Centers celebrates the life of Malcolm X during Black History Month – coinciding with the anniversary of his assassination on February 21, 1965. The virtual program will feature a conversation and presentations by Anna

Malaika Tubbs, author of The Three Mothers: How the Mothers of Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X and James Baldwin Shaped a Nation and Dr. Michael Sawyer, author of Black Minded: The Political Philosophy of Malcolm X. Together, we will explore how Malcolm X's mother's language of liberation and resistance is foundational to his political growth, and examine his political philosophy of economic and social justice, strident opposition to white supremacy and Black internationalism. Dr. Imani Perry, will moderate the conversation and offer a passage from her recent work, Breathe: A Lesson to My Sons. Exploring themes of ontology, the body, geographic space and revolution, Black Minded provides a much-needed appraisal of Malcolm X's political philosophy.

Thursday, Feb. 25th at 6:30 pm: *30 Years of Easy Rawlins with Walter Mosley*

- A discussion with American Novelist, Walter Ellis Mosley, first Black male recipient of the 2020 National Book Foundation Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters. Most-widely recognized for his crime fiction, he has written a series of best-selling historical mysteries featuring the hard-boiled detective Easy Rawlins, a black private investigator living in the Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles, California. Walter Mosley introduced Easy Rawlins in 1990, in his debut novel Devil in a Blue Dress.

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About The Schomburg Center
Founded in 1925 and named a National Historic Landmark in 2017, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture is one of the world's leading cultural institutions devoted to the research, preservation, and exhibition of materials focused on African American, African Diaspora, and African experiences. As a research division of The New York Public Library, the Schomburg Center features diverse programming and collections spanning over 11 million items that illuminate the richness of global black history, arts, and culture.

Established with the collections of Arturo Alfonso Schomburg 95 years ago, the Schomburg has collected, preserved, and provided access to materials documenting black life in America and worldwide. It has also promoted the study and interpretation of the history and culture of people of African descent. In 2015, the Schomburg won the National Medal for Museum and Library Service and in January 2017, the Schomburg Center was named a National Historic Landmark by the National Park Service, recognizing its vast collection of materials that represent the history and culture of people of African descent through a global, transnational perspective. Today, the Schomburg continues to serve the community not just as a center and a library, but also as a space that encourages lifelong education and exploration.

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