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Kurt Vonnegut Museum and Library

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Kurt Vonnegut Museum and Library 'Forever Home' Opens to the Public November 9

Official Unveiling of KVML's new home coincides with the museum's annual VonnegutFest

Indianapolis, IN: The Grand Opening of the Kurt Vonnegut Museum and Library (KVML) will take place November 9 with an all-day VonnegutFest at the building the museum purchased earlier this year at 543 Indiana Avenue, Indianapolis. In its new home, KVML will be a community destination with a critical footprint as part of a cultural renaissance at this historic crossroads.

At the Flatiron-style building built in 1882, KVML will occupy 10,400 square feet over three floors with multiple exhibitions, program and event space, a book and retail store, and a 3,000-square-foot patio. On the museum's first floor, Bluebeard, the renowned Indianapolis restaurant whose name references a Kurt Vonnegut novel, will open a cafe to be called Mr. Rosewater (a reference to a recurring Vonnegut character) in the coming months.

A new Freedom to Read exhibition educates visitors on First Amendment rights and historic challenges while providing eye-catching visuals and Vonnegut quotes. A Vonnegut and Indianapolis exhibition includes information about Vonnegut's early years and influences on his writing. The Frank and Katrina Basile Community Room offers fan favorites within the world of Vonnegut's art and showcases the play-turned-opera, *Happy Birthday Wanda June*. The unveiling of the Unstuck in Time: *Slaughterhouse-Five* Then and Now exhibit — five years in the making — will also take place on this day. Vonnegut's personal artifacts will be on view to the public as well, following years in the archives.

The Grand Opening of a permanent KVML has been made possible thanks to the many like-minded partners and donors who contributed or pledged a total of \$1.5 million to the Kurt's "Forever Home" campaign. As fundraising reached the \$1 million mark, Lilly Endowment became the lead donor, contributing \$500,000. Additional support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Ball Brothers Foundation, and Allen Whitehill Clowes Charitable Foundation has made phase one of the Unstuck in Time *Slaughterhouse-Five* exhibition possible.

"We are moved and humbled by the continued outpouring of support from sources large and small, recognizing the uniqueness of the Vonnegut Museum and its mission as a champion of the legacy of Kurt Vonnegut and the principles of free expression and common decency," said KVML Founder and CEO Julia Whitehead. "The excitement surrounding our new home keeps the phone ringing. We've been fielding requests to visit the building even while under construction. It's exciting and we look forward to being permanently open to host our current and new friends as of November 9."

KVML is a cultural and educational resource unique to the nation, championing the literary and artistic contributions of the late writer, artist, teacher, and Indianapolis native Vonnegut. The library continues Vonnegut's fight against censorship and supports language and visual arts education as well as honors his military career by supporting veterans through programs and outreach activities. At the new museum you can:

- Sit hunched over the same model typewriter Kurt Vonnegut pecked away on, and we'll Tweet your musings to our fans and supporters or wander upstairs to see his actual typewriter.
- See Vonnegut's drawings and doodles, his Purple Heart, and other intimate belongings generously loaned by his family.
- Pour over an unparalleled resource of intimate artifacts including photos from family, friends, and fans that reveal Vonnegut as he lived: lounging, laughing, and languidly contemplating the universes inside his head.
- Ponder rejection letters Vonnegut received from editors. One even claimed that Vonnegut's Dresden firebombing account was "not quite compelling enough" for readers.
- Rest a spell and listen to what friends and colleagues have to say about Vonnegut and his work on our large touch screen.
- Browse items from the Kevin Scherr Collection: First editions of every Vonnegut novel, several signed editions, adapted films, and more.

The museum will be open every day except major holidays. Winter hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. from October 1st to April 1st. Summer hours are 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sunday to Wednesday and 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday to Saturday. With admission or

membership, tours will be available every hour on the hour starting at 10 a.m., with the last tour at 4 p.m. Admission is \$12 with the opportunity to receive discounts.

Grand Opening events include a ribbon-cutting ceremony, *Slaughterhouse-Five* panel discussion, musical performances, presentation of the Kurt Vonnegut Humor Award to Scott Long, and much more. Tickets to the Grand Opening and VonnegutFest are on sale for \$15 (as well as a \$75 VIP Package) at [Eventbrite](#) (all events will be at 543 Indiana Avenue):

November 9th, 2019

KVML | Noon

Grand Opening with Ribbon Cutting Join Kurt's daughter, Edith Vonnegut; Visit Indy President & CEO Leonard Hoops; historian Bill Selm; musicians David Sasso and Katie Burk; Free Speech Ambassador Sophie Maurer; and the Board of the Kurt Vonnegut Museum and Library for our ribbon-cutting ceremony, and then enter the doors of KVML for your first glimpse.

KVML | 1 p.m.

Happy Birthday Wanda June Help us blow out the candles at KVML's new *Wanda June* exhibition, in partnership with the Indianapolis Opera. Join Indianapolis Opera Executive Director David Starkey and KVML Board member KimAnn Schultz — and grab a slice of birthday cake.

KVML | 2 - 4 p.m.

So It Goes Literary Journal Release Party and Readings Don't miss this literary salon of contributors, including two former Indiana Poet Laureates, reading their amazing works from the eighth issue of KVML's *So It Goes* Literary Journal.

KVML | 5 p.m.

Unveiling of the Frank and Katrina Basile Community Room Raise a glass with Deputy Mayor Jeff Bennett in a champagne toast to Frank and Katrina Basile in the museum's Community Room, made possible by the Basiles.

KVML | 5:30 p.m.

Veterans Reclaim Armistice Day — Unveiling of the Slaughterhouse-Five Permanent Exhibition and a special Slaughterhouse-50 show of works by L.A. Artist Lance Miccio Dig deeper into the history that inspired *Slaughterhouse-Five* with a panel discussion featuring artist Lance Miccio, who will debut 50 pieces based on *Slaughterhouse-Five*; Brian Welke, author of a forthcoming book on Vonnegut's 423rd Infantry Regiment and an associate member of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge; and environmental artist Stuart Williams, whose public exhibition "Breath of Life/Dresden" at the Dresden Cathedral marked the 70th anniversary of the bombing of the city.

KVML | 7 p.m.

Grand Opening Concert Celebrate with the stylish sounds of Indy-based all-stars The Groove 4tet, featuring Clint Breeze (drums), Nick Tucker (bass), Steven Jones (keys), and Zachary Finnegan (trumpet) playing jazz standards and originals.

KVML | 8 p.m.

Prefer to Laugh Let us put a smile on your face with this year's Kurt Vonnegut Humor Award winner, Scott Long. Living locally in Indianapolis and touring nationally, Long is a career standup comedian who has appeared on NBC and FOX and written Emmy-nominated sketches during his 11 seasons at the NFL on FOX. Warming up the crowd will be CFO of Newfields Jerry Wise and Visit Indy President & CEO Leonard Hoops (a past award recipient). As Vonnegut once said, "I myself prefer to laugh, since there is less cleaning up to do afterward." It'll be a gas!

PRESS RESOURCES:

- To schedule a visit or an interview with CEO and Founder Julia Whitehead, contact lauren.ramsby@vonneutlibrary.org.
- For more information on the Kurt Vonnegut Museum and library, go [here](#).
- To help us sell tickets for the Grand Opening, they are on Eventbrite and you may use [this link](#).

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The Kurt Vonnegut Museum and Library champions the legacy of Hoosier author Kurt Vonnegut and the principles of free expression, common decency, and peaceful coexistence he advocated. www.vonnegutlibrary.org.