



Wednesday, March 1, 2017, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

Berkeley Talks

Co-presented by Cal Performances and UC Berkeley



Marlon James
Novelist and Educator

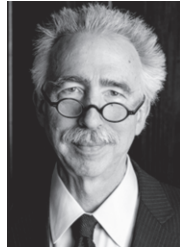
In Conversation with Chancellor Nicholas B. Dirks

BERKELEY TALKS brings international thought leaders, public intellectuals, creators, and innovators to the Berkeley campus to engage in dialogues with campus scholars on distinctive and timely issues, exploring forward-thinking concepts that impact our global community and intersect with the university's core mission of teaching, research, and public service.

Marlon James won the 2015 Man Booker Prize for Fiction for his most recent novel, *A Brief History of Seven Killings*, making him the first Jamaican author to take home the UK's most prestigious literary award. In the work, James explores Jamaican history through the perspectives of multiple narrators and genres: the political thriller, the oral biography, and the classic whodunit confront the untold history of Jamaica in the 1970s, with excursions to the assassination attempt on reggae musician Bob Marley, as well as the country's own clandestine battles during the Cold War. Writing for *The New York Times*, Michiko Kakutani said of *A Brief History of Seven Killings*, "It's epic in every sense of that word: sweeping, mythic, over-the-top, colossal and dizzyingly complex. It's also raw, dense, violent, scalding, darkly comic, exhilarating and exhausting—a testament to Mr. James's vaulting ambition and prodigious talent." James is in the process of adapting the work into an HBO television series.

James' first novel, 2005's *John Crow's Devil*, tells the story of a biblical struggle in a remote Jamaican village in the 1950s. His second novel, 2009's *The Book of Night Women*, is about a slave women's revolt on a Jamaican plantation in the early 19th century. James' short fiction and non-fiction have appeared in *Esquire*, *Granta*, *Harper's*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *The Caribbean Review of Books*, and other publications.

James was born in Kingston, Jamaica in 1970, and graduated from the University of the West Indies in 1991 with a degree in language and literature, and from Wilkes University in Pennsylvania in 2006 with a master's in creative writing. He currently lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota and teaches English and creative writing at Macalester College.



Nicholas B. Dirks became the 10th chancellor of the University of California, Berkeley, on June 1, 2013. An internationally renowned historian and anthropologist, he is a leader in higher education and is well-known

for his commitment to and advocacy for accessible, high-quality undergraduate education in the liberal arts and sciences, to the globalization of the university, and to innovation across the disciplines as well as in applied and basic fields.

Before coming to Berkeley, he was the executive vice president for the arts and sciences and dean of the faculty at Columbia University, where, in addition to his work on behalf of undergraduate programs, he improved and diversified the faculty, putting special emphasis on interdisciplinary and international initiatives. The Franz Boas Professor of Anthropology and History, Chancellor Dirks joined Columbia in 1997 as chair of the anthropology department. Prior to his appointment at Columbia, he was a professor of history and anthropology at the University of Michigan for 10 years, before which he taught Asian history and civilization at the California Institute of Technology.

Chancellor Dirks has held numerous fellowships and scholarships and received several scholarly honors, including a MacArthur Foundation residential fellowship at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, a Guggenheim fellowship, and the Lionel Trilling Award for his book *Castes of Mind*. He serves on numerous national and international bodies, as adviser or member of the board, and is a fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations.