



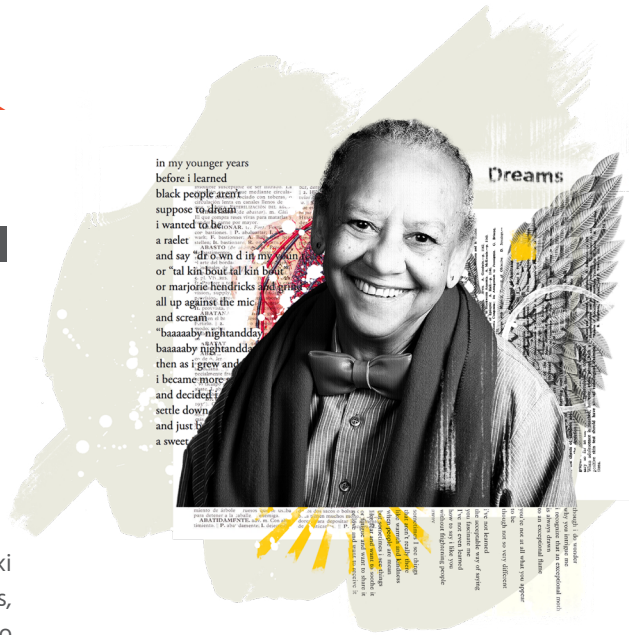
## NIKKI GIOVANNI

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

**“I wanted to be a writer who dreams or maybe a dreamer who writes...”**

One of the widely read American poets, Nikki Giovanni has spurred movements, turned hearts, and informed generations. “My dream was to discover something no one else had thought of,” she said. “I guess that’s why I’m a poet. We put things together in ways no one else does.” She’s been hailed as a firebrand, a radical, a healer, and a sage; a wise and courageous voice who has spoken out on the sensitive issues, including race and gender, that touch our national consciousness.

Giovanni has written more than two dozen books, including volumes of poetry, illustrated children’s books, and three collections of essays. With her new collection, *A Good Cry: What We Learn From Tears and Laughter*, Giovanni offers an intimate, affecting, and illuminating look at her personal history and the mysteries of her own heart. She takes us into her confidence, describing the joy and peril of aging and recalling the violence that permeated her parents’ marriage and her early life. Giovanni also celebrates her good friend Maya Angelou and the many years of friendship, poetry, and kitchen-table laughter they shared.



Giovanni has won numerous awards, including the Langston Hughes Medal and the NAACP Image Award, has been named as one of Oprah Winfrey’s 25 “Living Legends.” She has been a Distinguished Professor teaching writing and literature at Virginia Tech since 1987.

Giovanni remains as determined and committed as ever to the fight for civil rights and equality. Always insisting on presenting the truth as she sees it, her focus is on the individual—specifically, the power one has to make a difference in oneself and in the lives of others.

### KEYNOTE SPEAKER

**Monday, September 14, 2020**

The Healing Power of Tears

### MASTERCLASS

**Monday, September 14, 2020**

For Creative Catalyst Fellows, UNCSA Students, and students from other local Universities