

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Paula MacKinnon



paula@califa.org

SAN FRANCISCO, CA. August 15, 2024 — Califa, Lyris and Blackstone Publishing are excited to announce the addition of always-available, unlimited simultaneous use audiobooks from **Blackstone Unlimited Audio** to the [California eBooks-for-All Palace Project](#). Lyris and Blackstone entered into this strategic partnership in January 2024 to deliver top-tier audiobooks to library patrons. Blackstone Unlimited Audio boasts the **Largest Always-Available Collection** of Adult and Children’s downloadable audiobooks, offering over 6,600 titles by acclaimed authors such as Karin Slaughter, M.C. Beaton, Jeneva Rose, Neil DeGrasse Tyson, Marshall Karp, and James Clavell.

A subset of this unlimited-use collection, **including more than 3,300 Romance, Fantasy, Mystery, Thriller and Urban fiction titles**, will be made available for free to California libraries and library patrons for 12 months beginning **August 15, 2024** on The Palace Project app, the library-driven eBook platform and eReader that supports the library’s role as an anchor institution in their community. Look for the “Always Available Audiobooks” coming August 15th in your Palace app! And [register now](#) for a webinar on the new collection on August 15th at noon PDT.

With audiobook usage and pricing outpacing many public library budgets, this partnership between Lyris and Blackstone Publishing is helping to make more audiobooks available to public library patrons at an affordable cost.

Some key features of the collection include:

- **Instant Access, No Restrictions:** No more holds, wait lists, or restrictions. Library patrons can now enjoy the audiobook they want when they want it, ensuring a seamless and gratifying listening experience. Each Blackstone Unlimited Audio title is available to as many library patrons who wish to listen, simultaneously, when they want to listen.

- **Diverse and Growing Catalog:** With an ever-expanding collection, Blackstone Unlimited Audio offers a diverse array of genres and authors, ensuring that libraries can cater to the varied tastes of their patrons.
- **Renowned Authors at Your Fingertips:** Blackstone Unlimited Audio brings the works of literary giants directly to library digital shelves.
- **Affordable Fixed Flat Rate:** Blackstone Unlimited Audio provides an affordable fixed flat rate for each genre collection, eliminating additional fees and making premium audiobooks accessible without straining library budgets.

“The Lyrasis team is delighted to collaborate with Blackstone Publishing and the California State Library to bring a collection of Blackstone Unlimited audiobooks to users of The Palace Project across the state of California”, says **Michael Atwood, Senior Director at Lyrasis**. “This collaborative partnership underscores our shared commitment to increasing equitable and affordable access to digital content for libraries and their patrons through innovative licensing arrangements and facilitating connections between libraries and publishers.”

“Blackstone Unlimited represents a groundbreaking advancement for libraries and their patrons,” says **Anne Fonteneau, Chief Sales Officer at Blackstone Publishing**. “This strategic collaboration with Lyrasis underscores our dedication to delivering unparalleled access to top-tier audiobooks. We are committed to breaking down barriers, enabling diverse communities to delve into the expansive world of literature without constraints.”

“This is what we’ve been waiting for – unlimited access to popular audiobooks”, says **Paula MacKinnon, Executive Director of Califa**, the California State Library’s partner on the eBooks-for-All project. “While this licensing model lasts for just 12 months, in that year California library readers, who are more than 20 million strong, will have unfettered, no-holds access to thousands of great audiobooks. And future state funding and library participants in the Palace Project can continue to purchase new titles in this format”.

eBooks-for-All is supported in whole or in part by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the State Librarian. Libraries interested in learning more about Blackstone Unlimited or the eBooks-for-All project can contact eBooksforall@library.ca.gov.

About Lyrisis

Lyrisis is a community-focused, mission-driven nonprofit that partners with archives, libraries, museums and research communities to ensure enduring access to our shared academic, scientific and cultural heritage. Home to The Palace Project, BiblioBoard, the Indie Author Project, DSpace, ArchivesSpace and other community-supported programs, Lyrisis offers technologies and services to help knowledge professionals and collections-holding organizations worldwide foster collaboration, solve problems and build solutions to benefit the wider community. To learn more, visit <http://www.lyrisis.org/>.

About The Palace Project

The Palace Project is supported by Lyrisis in strategic partnership with the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA). The Palace Project's vision is to strengthen the public library's vital role as the digital center of the community with unique programs and software solutions. To learn more, visit thepalaceproject.org. The California State Library, in partnership with [Califa](#), supports an ongoing, multi-year LSTA funded Palace Project shared collection grant called [eBooks-for-All](#).

About Blackstone Publishing

Blackstone has firmly positioned itself as one of America's fastest-growing and respected publishing houses with multiple New York Times bestsellers, Grammy Award-winning audio productions, and books placed on the New York Times Best Books of the Year list. A truly independent, privately owned

publisher, established in 1987 Blackstone is home to a vibrant and eclectic community of storytellers and story lovers, adding hundreds of new titles each month to its catalog of tens of thousands of books.

About Califa

[Califa Group](#) is a San Francisco-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit library membership consortium with the mission to unlock the inherent value, impact, and influence of libraries. Founded in 2004, Califa is the largest library network in California, facilitating the procurement of discounted library products; is a partner to the California State Library in administering statewide grant projects supported by federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA); administers national grant projects (IMLS, Mellon, Packard); and offers continuing education and professional development training through [Infopeople™](#).