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***Mechanics' Institute Commemorates
The Great Earthquake and Fire Centennial
with Authors Dennis Smith and Simon Winchester,
and a Historic Photo Exhibit and Film Screening***

To commemorate the centennial of San Francisco's 1906 earthquake and fire, the Mechanics' Institute Library & Chess Room will host a celebration on Tuesday, April 18 from 10:30 am to 9:00 pm at the Mechanics' Institute, located at 57 Post Street (at Montgomery) in the heart of the Financial District.

The day begins with a viewing of a special exhibit of earthquake-related photography selected from the Institute's permanent exhibition, *After the Gold Rush: A 150 year Photographic History of San Francisco's Mechanics' Institute*. Docents will be available to answer questions from 10:30 -11:30am and from 2:00-3:00 pm. The exhibition is also open to the public for self-guided tours throughout the day.

A 12:00 noon "Ham and Eggs" brunch in the Mechanics' Saloon will precede a talk and slide show by New York firefighter and historian Dennis Smith, author ***San Francisco Is Burning: The Untold Story of the 1906 Earthquake and Fires***. Smith's book is chock full of local history, describing how local politicians, government officials, and military leaders either worked together, or didn't, to fight for the survival of the City. Dennis Smith is also the author of *Report from Ground Zero*, documenting the Twin Towers disaster.

At 3:00 pm CinemaLit Film Series will show the feature film **San Francisco (1936) (115 min)**, directed by W.S. Van Dyke, written by Robert E. Hopkins and Anita Loos, with an all-star cast including Clark Gable, Jeanette MacDonald and Spencer Tracy. This classic American film graphically portrays the earthquake and fire through the eyes of Hollywood.

The evening's events start with a reception at 6:00 pm in the Mechanics' Saloon. At 7:00 pm a program in the Library, features internationally-known writer, historian, and geologist Simon Winchester, author of ***A Crack in the Edge of the World: America and the Great California Earthquake of 1906***, in conversation with Mary Lou Zoback, Senior Research Scientist, USGS. The book explores what happened in northern California in 1906, and what we have learned since about the geological underpinnings that caused the earthquake. Winchester also provides a universal view of the impact of natural disasters on the earth's landscape and the larger social, political and cultural reverberations that take place after physical upheaval. Mr. Winchester is also the author of ***Krakatoa: The Day the World Exploded*** and ***The Professor and the Madman***.

Fees and admission:

Author programs--Members Free; Public \$10

Exhibit and film: FREE TO ALL.

For information and reservations: 415 393-0100; rsvp@milibrary.org

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