



PRESS RELEASE

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SUN VALLEY WRITERS' CONFERENCE ANNOUNCES INAUGURAL \$20,000 WRITER IN THE WORLD PRIZE, AWARDED TO BARRY LOPEZ

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: *December 7, 2020, Sun Valley, Idaho* ~ The Sun Valley Writers' Conference is pleased to announce that its inaugural WRITER IN THE WORLD PRIZE will be awarded to BARRY LOPEZ, the American author, essayist, and fiction writer, in recognition of his singular voice in the landscape of English literature. Established and funded anonymously by the board members of the Sun Valley Writers' Conference, the \$20,000 award acknowledges a writer whose work expresses that rare combination of literary talent and moral imagination, helping us to better understand the world and our place in it.

"On every level, Barry Lopez is the ideal recipient for our first Writer in the World Prize," says Robin Eidsmo, SVWC Executive Director. "A writer full of curiosity and compassion, he has gifted us with words of optimism and of alarm about our planet and our need to protect it and each other."

For the past half-century, Barry Lopez has traveled the globe – High Arctic to Antarctica, Oregon to Kenya – bringing us back stories, etched in luminous prose, that explore our profound connections to the diverse, fragile planet we inhabit. He is the author of the now-classic *Arctic Dreams* (1986), winner of the National Book Award and *Of Wolves and Men* (1978), a National Book Award finalist. *The New York Times* called his most recent book, *Horizon* (2019), "beautiful and brutal, uplifting and bleak, a story of the universal human condition set in some of the most distinctive places on earth."

As Lopez himself writes, "The role of the artist, in part, is to develop the conversations, the stories, the drawings, the films, the music—the expressions of awe and wonder and mystery—that remind us, especially in our worst times, of what is still possible, of what we haven't yet imagined. And it is by looking to one another, by attending to the responsibilities of maintaining good relations in whatever we do, that communities turn a gathering darkness into light."

The Writer in the World Prize will be officially presented to Lopez at the 2021 Sun Valley Writers' Conference in July at the Sun Valley Resort.

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Over its 27 years, the Sun Valley Writers' Conference has become one of the most unique literary festivals. For four days every July, some of the country's—and the world's—finest writers and thinkers

gather at the Sun Valley Resort in Sun Valley, Idaho, to talk about their work and the world and to mingle with a large, engaged audience of more than 1,000. Among its alumni are novelists Ian McEwan and Alice McDermott, Tommy Orange and David Grossman, biographers Andrew Morton and A. Scott Berg, poets Naomi Shihab Nye and Kay Ryan, and nonfiction writers including Bryan Stevenson, Associate Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer, and Doris Kearns Goodwin, among many others. The event's past presenters have included 50 Pulitzer Prize winners, 22 National Book Award winners, and 6 winners of the elite Mann Booker Prize given in Great Britain.

The Sun Valley Writers' Conference is a nonprofit organization that always includes scholarship students and admits Wood River Valley teachers, students, and librarians free of charge to all Pavilion talks. For more information, please visit www.svwc.com.

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