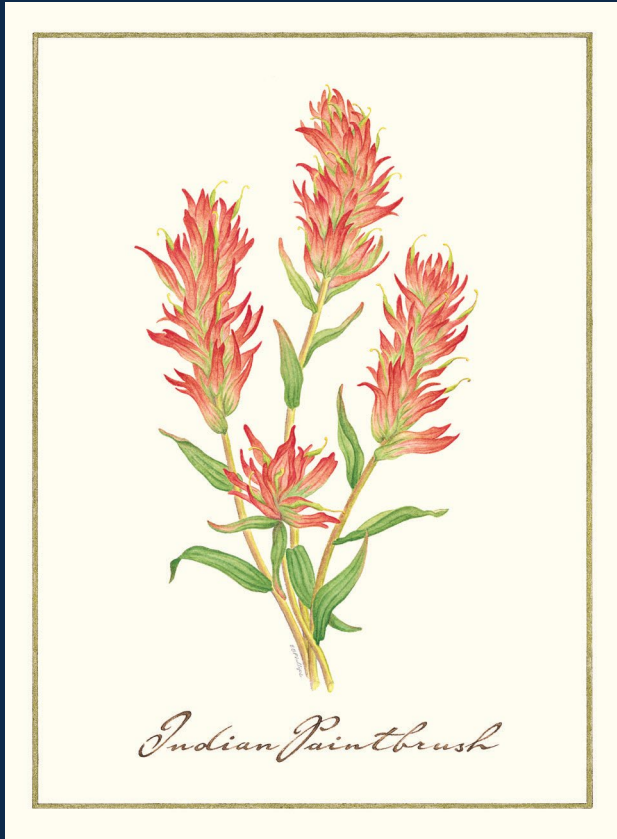


# What Matters Most?



## PROGRAM

Saturday, July 16 – Monday, July 18, 2022

## SATURDAY OVERVIEW

### ORIENTATION

11:30 AM

New Attendee Orientation

Tent C

### CONFERENCE OPENS

1:00 – 1:45 PM

Rita Dove

Pavilion

### BREAKOUT SESSIONS

2:15 – 3:15 PM

Rebecca Donner  
Kali Fajardo-Anstine, Sanaë Lemoine  
and Kalani Pickhart  
Judith Freeman  
Sebastian Mallaby  
Alan Pesky  
Ocean Vuong

Pavilion  
Pond Tent D  
  
Opera House  
Tent B  
Tent C  
Tent A

### COCKTAIL HOUR

3:30 – 5:30 PM

No-Host Bar

Beverage Tent

### PAVILION

3:45 – 5:00 PM

Anthony Doerr

Pavilion & Lawn

5:30 – 6:30 PM

Stephen Kotkin, Yascha Mounk,  
and Ben Rhodes  
with Judy Woodruff

Pavilion & Lawn

*For livestream information please visit our website:  
[svwc.com/media/livestream](http://svwc.com/media/livestream)*

# What Matters Most?

*Day One*

## New Attendee Orientation

**11:30 AM | Tent C**

## Rita Dove

A POETRY READING

**1:00 – 1:45 PM | Pavilion**

To set the tone for your days in Sun Valley, join the magical **RITA DOVE** for a poetry reading. A former U.S. Poet Laureate, National Medal of Arts recipient, and winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry, Dove has enchanted and enlightened readers and listeners with her blend of the serious and the playful, the personal and the political. She will share poems from her wonderful new collection, *Playlist for the Apocalypse*, in which she roams the world, from Black Lives Matter to the “insidious imperfection” of her right knee. Rita Dove is a poet’s poet and a poet for all.

# Rebecca Donner

THE TRUE STORY OF THE AMERICAN WOMAN AT THE HEART OF THE GERMAN RESISTANCE TO HITLER

**2:15 – 3:15 PM | Breakout Session | Pavilion**

Winner of the 2022 National Book Critics Circle Award for biography, **REBECCA DONNER's** brilliant book *All the Frequent Troubles of Our Days* reads like a mystery, a thriller, a biography, and a historical novel all in one. It is the story of Donner's great-great-aunt, Mildred Harnack, who moved to Berlin as a young Midwestern grad student and became one of the leaders of the largest underground resistance groups to Hitler in the 1930s and 40s. It is both an intimate portrait of a courageous young woman and an absorbing account of how a murderous demagogue masterminded Germany's progression from democracy to dictatorship. Donner will share Mildred's story and talk about the dogged scholarly research that helped her piece together her great-great-aunt's extraordinary life.

# Kali Fajardo-Anstine, Sanaë Lemoine, and Kalani Pickhart

SVWC 2022 NEW VOICES FELLOWS

**2:15 – 3:15 PM | Breakout Session | Pond Tent D**

SVWC is proud and excited to inaugurate the very first New Voices Fellows Panel, an ongoing new feature of the Writers' Conference. You will meet and listen to three of the country's finest young emerging novelists. Their highly acclaimed books include: *Woman of Light*, **KALI FAJARDO-ANSTINE's** magical story of five generations of an Indigenous Chicano family in the American West; *The Margot Affair*, **SANAË LEMOINE's** nuanced novel about a teenager who decides to expose the affair between her parents, a famous actress and a married French politician; and *I Will Die in a Foreign Land* by **KALANI PICKHART**, which braids together the vivid lives and longings of four people living through the 2014 Ukrainian Revolution, a book with painful resonance today. The authors will talk about their work, their ambitions, and their uncertainties, as well as their hopes for what lies ahead.

# Judith Freeman

MACARTHUR PARK

**2:15 – 3:15 PM | Breakout Session | Opera House**

**JUDITH FREEMAN's** moving fifth novel takes place in the MacArthur Park section of Los Angeles—a scrappy, diverse section of the city she clearly knows and loves. It is the story of the lifelong friendship between two creative women whose relationship grows more intense when one marries the other's ex-husband. A gifted memoirist and nonfiction writer as well, Freeman will talk about her novel, about the different storytelling forms she chooses, and about the complex, emotional terrain of female friendships.

# Sebastian Mallaby

THE STORY OF VENTURE CAPITAL AND THE MAKING OF THE NEW FUTURE

**2:15 – 3:15 PM | Breakout Session | Tent B**

Join financial journalist **SEBASTIAN MALLABY** for the astonishingly frank and intimate story of Silicon Valley's dominant venture capital firms and how their strategies and fates have shaped the path of innovation and the global economy. Mallaby will recount in riveting detail some of the most iconic triumphs and infamous disasters in Silicon Valley history, from the birth of Apple to the avalanche of venture money that fostered hubris at WeWork and Uber. He will explain how venture capitalists perform the alchemy that turns fundamental science into products that change how we live, think, and work.

# Alan Pesky

MORE TO LIFE THAN MORE: A PERSONAL HISTORY OF MISUNDERSTANDING, LOSS, AND LEARNING

**2:15 – 3:15 PM | Breakout Session | Tent C**

At the heart of **ALAN PESKY**'s moving new memoir, *More to Life Than More* (co-authored with Claudia Aulum), is the story of how a hard-charging successful father changes his life and priorities after his 30-year-old son Lee dies of brain cancer. He writes in loving, painful detail about their complicated relationship, recounting how he had a hard time relating to a son who struggled with learning disabilities when there was not much understanding or many resources for kids who had them. He will talk about fatherhood, his mistakes of the heart, and how, in memory of his son, he has built a thriving nonprofit, the Lee Pesky Learning Center in Idaho, that has helped more than 100,000 children with learning disabilities.

# Ocean Vuong

TIME IS A MOTHER

**2:15 – 3:15 PM | Breakout Session | Tent A**

There are rare voices that somehow penetrate the noise of the world. They rise up and through it, carrying the rest of us with them. One of those voices belongs to the Vietnamese American novelist and poet **OCEAN VUONG**, whose new poetry collection *Time Is a Mother* is transfixing readers everywhere. Pick it up and be carried away by his memories of grief and ecstasy—his words floating across the page, beckoning you to follow. Join Vuong as he reads his work and talks about the power and precision of the poet's voice and how it can move the soul.

# No-Host Bar

**3:30 – 5:30 PM | Beverage Tent**

# Anthony Doerr

CLOUD CUCKOO LAND

**3:45 – 5:00 PM | Pavilion & Lawn**

Dreamed into being by the Greek playwright Aristophanes 2,436 years ago, *Cloud Cuckoo Land* was one of the first utopias in Western literature. In a lecture ranging from the introduction of gunpowder into medieval Europe to the fragility of old manuscripts, Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist **ANTHONY DOERR** will show images from his seven-year journey writing his latest novel—also called *Cloud Cuckoo Land*. And he will illuminate his attempt to write a work of fiction that mimics the vast and deeply fascinating interdependencies that ecologists recognize in nature. Can literature remind us that it is still worthwhile to chase our visions of a better place, even in moments that feel dystopian?

# Stephen Kotkin, Yascha Mounk, and Ben Rhodes with Judy Woodruff

THE MARCH OF THE AUTOCRATS

**5:30 – 6:30 PM | Panel Discussion | Pavilion & Lawn**

Democracy is under siege around the world in 2022, while authoritarianism is on the rise. To analyze this urgent reality, we have gathered three expert authors in the field: historian **STEPHEN KOTKIN**, one of our most profound and prodigious scholars of Russian history, whose masterwork is a biography of Joseph Stalin; **YASCHA MOUNK**, an Associate Professor at Johns Hopkins University, Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, and one of the world's leading experts on the crisis of liberal democracy and the rise of populism; and **BEN RHODES**, political commentator and Deputy National Security Advisor to President Obama for eight years. In a wide-ranging discussion moderated by **JUDY WOODRUFF**, anchor and managing editor of the PBS *NewsHour*, they will discuss everything from Ukraine and Putin to their other major causes of concern and their causes—if any—for optimism.

## SUN VALLEY WRITERS' CONFERENCE

# SUNDAY OVERVIEW

### BREAKFAST

8:30 – 9:30 AM      Breakfast      Lodge Terrace

### BREAKOUT SESSIONS

9:30 – 10:30 AM      Barbara Lazear Ascher      Tent C  
A. Scott Berg and Erich Schwartzel      Pond Tent D  
Geoff Dyer      Opera House  
Imbolo Mbue      Tent A  
Yascha Mounk      Pavilion  
Admiral James Stavridis      Tent B

### PAVILION

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM      Heather McGhee      Pavilion & Lawn

### LUNCH

12:00 – 2:00 PM      Lunch      Lunch Village

### BREAKOUT SESSIONS

12:45 – 1:30 PM      Kathryn Schulz      Pavilion  
Ocean Vuong      Tent B

### BREAKOUT SESSIONS

2:00 – 3:00 PM      Rebecca Donner      Opera House  
Sebastian Mallaby      Tent A  
Evan Osnos      Pavilion  
Kathryn Schulz      Tent C  
Terry Tempest Williams      Tent B

### COCKTAIL HOUR

3:30 – 5:30 PM      No-Host Bar      Beverage Tent

### PAVILION

3:30 – 4:30 PM      Lauren Groff      Pavilion & Lawn  
5:00 – 5:15 PM      Tribute Film to Edward O. Wilson      Pavilion & Lawn  
5:15 – 6:15 PM      Elizabeth Kolbert      Pavilion & Lawn

*For livestream information please visit our website:  
[svwc.com/media/livestream](http://svwc.com/media/livestream)*



# What Matters Most?

*Day Two*

## Continental Breakfast

8:30 – 9:30 AM | Lodge Terrace

## Barbara Lazear Ascher

GHOSTING: A WIDOW'S VOYAGE OUT

9:30 – 10:30 AM | Breakout Session | Tent C

If you marry an older man, the chances are he will leave the planet before you. But that foreknowledge does not lessen the grief of widowhood when it comes. So writes **BARBARA LAZEAR ASCHER** in her poignant new memoir. The author of five nonfiction books, she will talk about her long, passionate marriage, her disabling grief at the loss of her husband, the strange occurrences that pierced the grief, and—spoiler alert—about finding love again.

# A. Scott Berg and Erich Schwartzel

INSIDE TODAY'S HOLLYWOOD

9:30 – 10:30 AM | Breakout Session | Pond Tent D

Join two consummate Hollywood observers—Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer **A. SCOTT BERG**, whose subjects have included Samuel Goldwyn and Katharine Hepburn, and **ERICH SCHWARTZEL**, entertainment industry reporter for *The Wall Street Journal* and author of *Red Carpet*, a book about Hollywood and China's battle for cultural supremacy—for a no-holds-barred, deeply entertaining discussion of the industry, the culture, the town, the players, and (yes, okay) some gossip too.

# Geoff Dyer

THE LAST DAYS OF ROGER FEDERER: AND OTHER ENDINGS

9:30 – 10:30 AM | Breakout Session | Opera House

When artists and athletes age, what happens to their work? Does it ripen or rot? As our bodies decay, how—and why—do we keep going? **GEOFF DYER** has long been regarded in the literary world as one of the most original, beguiling, and wittily ironic writers alive. He will discuss his encounter with late middle age against the backdrop of the last days and last works of writers, painters, footballers, musicians, and tennis stars who have mattered to him throughout his life. If you have never encountered Dyer or his work, do not miss his unique blend of playful, humorous charm and penetrating intelligence.

# Imbolo Mbue

HOW BEAUTIFUL WE WERE

**9:30 – 10:30 AM | Breakout Session | Tent A**

Many years before she published her award-winning debut novel, *Behold the Dreamers*, **IMBOLO MBUE** was working on another story, which she set aside. We now have that book—named “one of the best of 2021” by *The New York Times*—a stirring, heartbreaking story about a small African village engaged in a struggle with the American oil company that is poisoning its land and its children. Nuanced and character-driven, it has moments of eruptive violence and scenes of stunning beauty. Mbue will talk about how the story haunted her, how she came back to it, and why writing novels is her life’s work.

# Yascha Mounk

THE GREAT EXPERIMENT: WHY DIVERSE DEMOCRACIES FALL APART AND HOW THEY CAN ENDURE

**9:30 – 10:30 AM | Breakout Session | Pavilion**

One of our sharpest and most important political thinkers and authors, **YASCHA MOUNK** will deliver a brilliant big-picture vision of the greatest challenge of our time—how to bridge the bitter divides within diverse democracies enough for them to remain stable and functional. Drawing on history, social psychology, and comparative politics, he examines how diverse societies have long suffered from the ills of domination, fragmentation, or structured anarchy. However, Mounk shows us that the past can offer crucial insights into how to do better in the future. There is a real reason for hope.

# Admiral James Stavridis

NAVAL CONFLICT AND THE CRUCIBLE OF DECISION

**9:30 – 10:30 AM | Breakout Session | Tent B**

Join one of the great naval leaders of our time, **ADMIRAL JAMES STAVRIDIS**, for a master class in decision-making under pressure through the stories of famous acts of leadership in battle, drawn from the history of the United States Navy, with outcomes both glorious and notorious. Stavridis's wealth of knowledge and command experience will be on full display in a talk that merges military history, biography, and leadership advice.

# Heather McGhee

THE SUM OF US:

WHAT RACISM COSTS EVERYONE AND HOW WE CAN PROSPER TOGETHER

*David Halberstam Memorial Lecture*

**11:00 AM – 12:00 PM | Pavilion & Lawn**

In the 1950s and 1960s, white officials in communities across America drained their public swimming pools rather than integrate them. Thus, everyone suffered. That is just one of the anchoring anecdotes in **HEATHER MCGHEE**'s revelatory and compassionate book, about how racism and the policies of exclusion have hurt everyone, distorting not just the soul of the country but also its economy. An expert in economic and social policy and now a best-selling author, she will talk about the book and about her comprehensive research. She will also tell us why, after traveling around the country and encountering so many good-hearted and hopeful people, she remains optimistic that we can come together to form a kinder, more generous, and healthier union.

# Lunch

12:00 – 2:00 PM | Lunch Village

## Kathryn Schulz

LOST AND FOUND: A TRUE STORY OF GRIEF AND LOVE

12:45 – 1:30 PM | Breakout Session | Pavilion

Only a writer of reach and wit could begin a captivating memoir about major life changes with a meditation on the everyday things we lose, like our car keys. That is what **KATHRYN SCHULZ** has done in her new book about losing her beloved father and almost simultaneously finding the love of her life. A Pulitzer Prize-winning staff writer for *The New Yorker*, she will talk about the memoir form, what it requires, and how it differs from her other work. And Schulz will share some lyrical passages about the ending of life and the beginning of love.

## Ocean Vuong

TIME IS A MOTHER

12:45 – 1:30 PM | Breakout Session | Tent B

In his beautiful and searing new poetry collection, **OCEAN VUONG** evokes many thoughts and feelings with a phrase, an image, or a flutter of words down the page. He writes as a son who has lost his mother, an entranced lover, and a sharp-eyed observer of America—the country to which he came as a child from Vietnam. He will read from his work and talk about language and beauty, loss and survival, and the poet's way of capturing so much without a wasted word or breath.

# Rebecca Donner

THE TRUE STORY OF THE AMERICAN WOMAN AT THE HEART OF THE  
GERMAN RESISTANCE TO HITLER

**2:00 – 3:00 PM | Breakout Session | Opera House**

Winner of the 2022 National Book Critics Circle Award for biography, **REBECCA DONNER**'s brilliant book *All the Frequent Troubles of Our Days* reads like a mystery, a thriller, a biography, and a historical novel all in one. It is the story of Donner's great-great-aunt, Mildred Harnack, who moved to Berlin as a young Midwestern grad student and became one of the leaders of the largest underground resistance groups to Hitler in the 1930s and 40s. It is both an intimate portrait of a courageous young woman and an absorbing account of how a murderous demagogue masterminded Germany's progression from democracy to dictatorship. Donner will share Mildred's story and talk about the dogged scholarly research that helped her piece together her great-great-aunt's extraordinary life.

# Sebastian Mallaby

ALAN GREENSPAN'S LEGACY

**2:00 – 3:00 PM | Breakout Session | Tent A**

As the most influential economic statesman of his age, Alan Greenspan spent a lifetime grappling with a momentous shift: the transformation of finance from the fixed and regulated system of the post-war era to the free-for-all of the past quarter century. The story of Greenspan is also the story of the making of modern finance, for good and for ill. Financial journalist **SEBASTIAN MALLABY**, author of *The Man Who Knew*, a biography of the former Fed chairman, will discuss Greenspan's legacy and help us to see the economic and political landscape—including today's resurgence of inflation—in a whole new light.

# Evan Osnos

THE FUTURE OF AMERICA'S CONTEST WITH CHINA

**2:00 – 3:00 PM | Breakout Session | Pavilion**

As the Beijing correspondent for *The New Yorker*, **EVAN OSNOS** was on the ground in China for eight years, witnessing profound political, economic, and cultural upheaval. He went on to write a seminal book about the country and its relationship with the United States that won the National Book Award and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. Since moving to Washington, D.C., Osnos has documented the turbulent turn in China's dealings with the United States. He will give his expert assessment of what lies ahead for this high-stakes geopolitical relationship that is more dangerously unstable than at any time since 1972, when Richard Nixon clasped Mao's hand in Beijing, setting the course for China's opening to the world.

# Kathryn Schulz

LOST AND FOUND: A TRUE STORY OF GRIEF AND LOVE

**2:00 – 3:00 PM | Breakout Session | Tent C**

Only a writer of reach and wit could begin a captivating memoir about major life changes with a meditation on the everyday things we lose, like our car keys. That is what **KATHRYN SCHULZ** has done in her new book about losing her beloved father and almost simultaneously finding the love of her life. A Pulitzer Prize-winning staff writer for *The New Yorker*, she will talk about the memoir form, what it requires, and how it differs from her other work. And Schulz will share some lyrical passages about the ending of life and the beginning of love.

# Terry Tempest Williams

THIS BURNING MOMENT: A TALK BY TERRY TEMPEST WILLIAMS

**2:00 – 3:00 PM | Breakout Session | Tent B**

Seven million acres were burned last year in the America West. We are in a drought. The climate crisis deepens. “How do we survive our grief in the midst of so many losses in the living world, from whitebark pines to grizzly bears to the decline of willow flycatchers along the Colorado River? . . . How do we find the strength to not look away from all that is breaking our hearts?” And yet, beauty surrounds us. In this talk, **TERRY TEMPEST WILLIAMS**, an important and beloved writer and conservationist, will size up the continuing assaults on America’s public lands and the erosion of our commitment to the open space of democracy. If Williams’s haunting, powerful, and brave ethos can be summed up in one line of advice it would be this: Try to stare down the grief of everyday life, speak out and find solace in the boundless beauty of nature.

# No-Host Bar

**3:30 – 5:30 PM | Beverage Tent**

# Lauren Groff

HISTORICAL FICTION’S RADICAL POSSIBILITIES

**3:30 – 4:30 PM | Pavilion & Lawn**

During a time when faith in objective truth would seem to be at an all-time low globally, how is it that the very best literary fiction—the historical novel, in particular—continues to offer such a transporting and effective take on both history and the present? **LAUREN GROFF** would know. Her luminous new novel *Matrix*, a feminist story set in the 12th century, is a defiant and timely exploration of female ambition, power, and creativity in a corrupted world. A world that provides Groff, like Hilary Mantel before her, a literary springboard into a past with features that offer a mirror to our own time. Join one of our most celebrated novelists as she paints a window into our world that is at once then *and* now.



# Tribute Film to Edward O. Wilson

A WINDOW INTO ETERNITY: A TRIBUTE TO EDWARD O. WILSON

**5:00 – 5:15 PM | Short Film | Pavilion & Lawn**

In keeping with our desire to honor esteemed writers who have given memorable talks at SVWC, we will screen a short tribute film to the American biologist and naturalist Edward O. Wilson, who was with us in 2012 and passed away in December 2021. Nicknamed the Ant Man for his lifelong study of ants, on which he was considered the world's expert, Wilson later turned to sociobiology, deciphering the genetic basis of animal behavior, including that of humans. A passionate role model and mentor for younger scientists and a passionate advocate for conservation and the protection of endangered wildlife, Wilson was revered for his work and his life. In a lively homage, we will hear from him and see him at work as he changed how we see ants, ourselves, and our world.

# Elizabeth Kolbert

ELIZABETH KOLBERT: THE NATURE OF THE FUTURE

**5:15 – 6:15 PM | Pavilion & Lawn**

In her Pulitzer Prize-winning work, **ELIZABETH KOLBERT** has investigated the ways in which our capacity for destruction has reshaped the natural world. Now she is looking ahead, asking: After doing so much damage, can we change nature—this time to save it? Join Kolbert in conversation with PBS *NewsHour*'s **JEFFREY BROWN** as she takes a hard look at the new world we are creating through science, technology, imagination, and environmental awareness. She will talk about biologists who are trying to preserve the world's rarest fish; engineers who are turning carbon emissions to stone in Iceland; Australian researchers who are trying to develop a "super coral" that can survive on a hotter globe; and physicists who are contemplating shooting tiny diamonds into the stratosphere to cool the earth.

## SUN VALLEY WRITERS' CONFERENCE

# MONDAY OVERVIEW

### BREAKFAST

8:30 – 9:30 AM      Breakfast      Lodge Terrace

### BREAKOUT SESSIONS

9:30 – 10:30 AM      A. Scott Berg  
Elizabeth Kolbert and  
Terry Tempest Williams  
Alexander Maksik  
Ben Rhodes  
Erich Schwartzel      Opera House  
Tent B  
Tent A  
Pavilion  
Pond Tent D

### PAVILION

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM      Arthur C. Brooks,  
Heather McGhee, and Evan Osnos  
with Judy Woodruff      Pavilion & Lawn

### LUNCH

12:00 – 2:00 PM      Lunch      Lunch Village

### PAVILION

12:45 PM – 1:30 PM      Natasha Trethewey      Pavilion & Lawn

### BREAKOUT SESSIONS

2:00 – 3:00 PM      Rita Dove  
Geoff Dyer  
Noah Feldman  
Al Hunt and Judy Woodruff  
Stephen Kotkin  
Sanaë Lemoine  
and Kalani Pickhart      Tent C  
Opera House  
Pavilion  
Tent B  
Tent A  
Pond Tent D

### COCKTAIL HOUR

3:30 – 5:30 PM      No-Host Bar      Beverage Tent

### PAVILION

3:30 – 4:30 PM      Freestyle Love Supreme+  
5:00 – 6:00 PM      Arthur C. Brooks      Pavilion & Lawn  
Pavilion & Lawn

### CONFERENCE CLOSES

6:00 – 7:00 PM      Closing Reception      Pavilion Upper Lawn

# What Matters Most?

*Day Three*

## Continental Breakfast

**8:30 – 9:30 AM | Lodge Terrace**

### A. Scott Berg

THE BIOGRAPHER'S AHA! MOMENT

**9:30 – 10:30 AM | Breakout Session | Opera House**

Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer **A. SCOTT BERG**, who has spent the last 50 years telling the stories of 20th-century America's most iconic cultural figures, shares some of his adventures in chronicling the lives of Charles Lindbergh, Katharine Hepburn, Woodrow Wilson, Samuel Goldwyn, book editor Max Perkins, and now Thurgood Marshall; and he divulges his "Aha! Moments," those unexpected epiphanies that occurred in his research when the essences of his subjects revealed themselves—in a long-lost letter or a sheet of stamps or a flower or even some old grocery bills. Aha!

# Elizabeth Kolbert and Terry Tempest Williams

THE EARTH AND US

9:30 – 10:30 AM | Breakout Session | Tent B

It is hard to think of two more essential literary voices on the environment than **ELIZABETH KOLBERT** and **TERRY TEMPEST WILLIAMS**. Join these two writers and humanists for a deeply informed, provocative, urgent conversation about the state of our planet—past, present, and future—and the alarming implications of our actions upon it, both scientific and moral.

# Alexander Maksik

THE LONG CORNER: QUESTIONS OF LEGACY

9:30 – 10:30 AM | Breakout Session | Tent A

How do we decide what aspects of our family legacies should define us? What determines our heritage? Which traits do we proudly announce to the world? Which do we keep secret? Which do we choose to leave behind altogether? And is any of it, in fact, a choice? **ALEXANDER MAKSİK**'s new novel, *The Long Corner*, addresses many of these questions. In this talk, he will discuss the evolution of that novel, the development of his narrator, Sol Fields, and the ways in which questions of legacy have shaped Maksik's work and how, as a father, he wrestles with them in newly profound ways.

# Ben Rhodes

AFTER THE FALL: BEING AMERICAN IN THE WORLD WE'VE MADE

9:30 – 10:30 AM | Breakout Session | Pavilion

When **BEN RHODES** was Barack Obama's Deputy National Security Advisor, he saw the world from inside the administration and the power bubble. In the following years, on a searching journey, he traveled the world. He spoke with dissidents, protestors, and oppositionists—in Russia, Ukraine, Hungary, Mainland China, and Hong Kong—confronting the nationalism and authoritarianism that has now led to war in Europe while threatening American democracy at home. Now, as a respected author and commentator, Rhodes will paint a deeply informed picture of the world we are living in today, with the rise of authoritarian leaders and ethnonationalism and the flood of disinformation enabling them. In conversation with Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist and playwright **AYAD AKHTAR**, Rhodes will also share his personal story and introduce us to some of the courageous people fighting to defend their freedoms around the globe.

# Erich Schwartzel

HOLLYWOOD, CHINA, AND THE GLOBAL BATTLE FOR CULTURAL SUPREMACY

9:30 – 10:30 AM | Breakout Session | Pond Tent D

Competition between the United States and China dominates the foreign policy landscape, from trade to technology to military might. But this battle for global influence is also playing out in a strange and unexpected arena: the movies. **ERICH SCHWARTZEL**, author of *Red Carpet*, will explain how the film industry is the latest battleground in the tense and complex rivalry between these two world powers. In recent decades, China has become a crucial source of revenue for the American film industry; Hollywood studios are now bending over backward to make movies that will appeal to China's citizens and gain approval from severe Communist Party censors. At the same time, and with America's unwitting help, China has built its own film industry into an essential arm of its plan to export its national agenda to the rest of the world. The competition between these two movie businesses is a Cold War for this century, a clash that determines whether democratic or authoritarian values will be broadcast most powerfully worldwide.

# Arthur C. Brooks, Heather McGhee, and Evan Osnos with Judy Woodruff

WILL AMERICAN DEMOCRACY SURVIVE?

**11:00 AM – 12:00 PM | Panel Discussion | Pavilion & Lawn**

Can America hold on to its democracy? That is the big question facing a country that is riven by everything from gun rights to voting rights to reproductive rights—a country where many in the media thrive on exacerbating those divides and where economic inequality and racism are part of the national fabric. The deeply respected PBS *NewsHour* anchor **JUDY WOODRUFF** will discuss these issues with our diverse and thoughtful panel: **ARTHUR C. BROOKS**, former head of the American Enterprise Institute, Harvard professor, and author of 12 best-selling books; **HEATHER MCGHEE**, an expert in economic and social policy; and **EVAN OSNOS**, National Book Award winner and staff writer for *The New Yorker*. All have written about what separates Americans and what can—and must—bring us back together.

## Lunch

**12:00 – 2:00 PM | Lunch Village**

# Natasha Trethewey

MEMORIAL DRIVE: A DAUGHTER AND POET RECKONS WITH THE PAST

**12:45 PM – 1:30 PM | Pavilion & Lawn**

At age 19, **NATASHA TRETHERWEY**'s world was turned upside down when her former stepfather shot and killed her mother. Grieving and still new to adulthood, she confronted the twin pulls of life and death in the aftermath of unimaginable trauma and now explores how this experience lastingly shaped the artist she became. Join Trethewey, a Pulitzer Prize-winning poet and former U.S. Poet Laureate, as she shares her unforgettable story.

# Rita Dove

THE POET'S CALLING

**2:00 – 3:00 PM | Breakout Session | Tent C**

All of **RITA DOVE**'s uncanny gifts are evident in her celebrated new collection of poems, *Playlist for the Apocalypse*. They are literary music, asking to be read aloud, be they about a serious subject like Trayvon Martin or about a lighter topic like the “corroding crazed cartilage” of her right knee. She will read from her work and talk about the calling and craft of the poet, her lifelong love of words, their power, their sound, and the way they look on the page.

# Geoff Dyer

THE LAST DAYS OF ROGER FEDERER: AND OTHER ENDINGS

**2:00 – 3:00 PM | Breakout Session | Opera House**

When artists and athletes age, what happens to their work? Does it ripen or rot? As our bodies decay, how—and why—do we keep going? **GEOFF DYER** has long been regarded in the literary world as one of the most original, beguiling, and wittily ironic writers alive. He will discuss his encounter with late middle age against the backdrop of the last days and last works of writers, painters, footballers, musicians, and tennis stars who have mattered to him throughout his life. If you have never encountered Dyer or his work, do not miss his unique blend of playful, humorous charm and penetrating intelligence.

# Noah Feldman

THE SUPREME COURT: NOW WHAT?

**2:00 – 3:00 PM | Breakout Session | Pavilion**

This year's nomination hearing of Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson—the first Black woman ever to be nominated to sit on the Supreme Court—only underscored the political and ideological divisions within and around SCOTUS, even as the Court continues to deliberate on some of the most consequential issues of the last half-century, from abortion to guns to climate change. Join **NOAH FELDMAN**, Harvard Law Professor, the author of ten books, and one of America's foremost experts on the Constitution, for a spirited discussion about the current state of SCOTUS, its future, and what this means for us as citizens.

# Al Hunt and Judy Woodruff

THE TIME OF OUR LIVES IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL

**2:00 – 3:00 PM | Breakout Session | Tent B**

Join husband and wife **AL HUNT** and **JUDY WOODRUFF** in a fun, funny, and smart conversation about their lives as deeply respected journalists (no, that is not an oxymoron) covering the ups and downs and the ins and outs of Washington, D.C. Woodruff, the anchor and managing editor of the PBS *NewsHour*, and Hunt, a former columnist for *Bloomberg News* and panelist on CNN's *Capital Gang*, have been at the center of it all, starting with the days of Nixon. They will reminisce about Washington then and now, about what it has been like to live and work there, and about how the city has changed along with the profession they have loved.



# Stephen Kotkin

STALIN'S SHADOW AND RUSSIAN HISTORY

2:00 – 3:00 PM | Breakout Session | Tent A

**STEPHEN KOTKIN** is one of our most eminent scholars of Russian history, whose masterwork is a definitive multi-volume biography of Joseph Stalin. In this talk, he will take us not only into the world of Stalin, but into that of the most powerful and autocratic Russian leader since Stalin—Vladimir Putin. To quote Kotkin: “What we have today in Russia is not some kind of surprise. It's not some kind of deviation from a historical pattern. Way before NATO existed—in the 19th century, Russia looked like this: it had an autocrat. It had repression. It had militarism. It had suspicion of foreigners and the West. This is a Russia that we know, and it's not a Russia that arrived yesterday or in the 1990s. It's not a response to the actions of the West. There are internal processes in Russia that account for where we are today.”

# Sanaë Lemoine and Kalani Pickhart

SVWC NEW VOICES FELLOWS

2:00 – 3:00 PM | Breakout Session | Pond Tent D

SVWC is proud and excited to inaugurate the very first New Voices Fellows Panel, an ongoing new feature of the Writers' Conference. You will meet and listen to two of the country's finest young emerging novelists. Their highly acclaimed books include: *The Margot Affair*, **SANAË LEMOINE's** nuanced novel about a teenager who decides to expose the affair between her parents, a famous actress and a married French politician; and *I Will Die in a Foreign Land* by **KALANI PICKHART**, which braids together the vivid lives and longings of four people living through the 2014 Ukrainian Revolution, a book with painful resonance today. The authors will talk about their work, their ambitions, and their uncertainties, as well as their hopes for what lies ahead.

# Freestyle Love Supreme+

3:30 – 4:30 PM | Pavilion & Lawn

They have given sold-out performances on Broadway, won a special Tony Award, and wowed audiences all over the country. Now **FREESTYLE LOVE SUPREME+**, an improvisational hip-hop comedy musical group started by Lin-Manuel Miranda and Anthony Veneziale, will entertain and dazzle us with their on-the-spot takes on what we have all experienced at the Conference. With active participation and prompts from the audience, they will provide a spontaneous, unique, witty, and deep down funny commentary on SVWC 2022. Be there to participate. Be there to laugh. Be there to see something wholly original. Let joy reign.

# Arthur C. Brooks

FINDING SUCCESS, HAPPINESS, AND DEEP PURPOSE IN THE SECOND HALF OF LIFE

5:00 – 6:00 PM | Pavilion & Lawn

At the height of his career at the age of 50, author, Harvard professor, and *The Atlantic's* happiness columnist **ARTHUR C. BROOKS** embarked on a seven-year exploration to discover how to transform his future from one of disappointment over waning abilities into an opportunity for progress. This inspiring talk is the fruit of that extraordinary quest. Drawing on social science, philosophy, biography, theology, Eastern wisdom, and dozens of interviews with everyday men and women, Brooks will show us that true life success is well within our reach. By refocusing on certain priorities and habits that anyone can learn, we can set ourselves up for increased happiness.

# Closing Reception

6:00 – 7:00 PM | Pavilion Upper Lawn

PLEASE JOIN US . . .

# SVWC 2022 Closing Reception

**Monday, July 18 | 6:00 – 7:00 PM**

We invite all Conference guests and writers to join us on the Pavilion Lawn for a complimentary glass of wine immediately following the last presentation.

Let's celebrate the written word and  
*What Matters Most.*





# Save the Dates for SVWC 2023!

Saturday, July 22 – Monday, July 24



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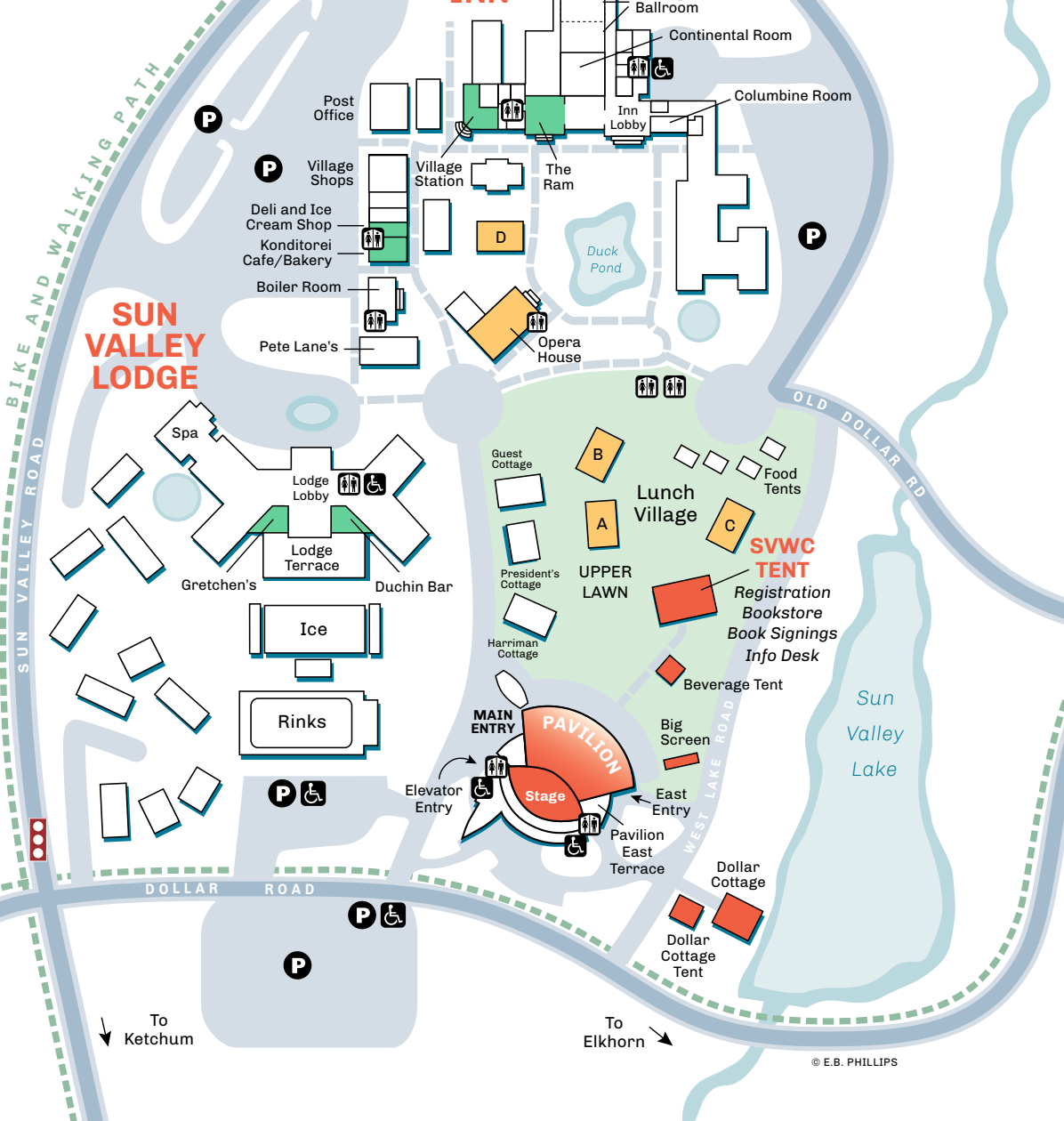
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351 Leadville Avenue North  
Galleria Building, 2nd Floor, Ketchum  
Post Office Box 957, Ketchum, ID 83340  
208.726.5454 • [info@svwc.com](mailto:info@svwc.com) • [svwc.com](http://svwc.com)

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