



Words & Wonder

Saturday, July 19 – Monday, July 21, 2025 Sun Valley Resort





Welcome

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h word flâner ("flah-nay") has captured our imaginations this loosely means to wander, to dawdle, to stroll and "hang around." pace at which all of our lives have accelerated and our challenges up with news of the world, we have come to believe that the ift we know how to offer is the gift of the Writers' Conference, three lovely days, we wander amongst words and ideas, dawdle estore, and stroll in the majestic beauty of these mountains, rivers,

uch respite will offer you a renewed dose of optimism and hope. 't be more grateful to the writers who will engage us and to you, alleled audience of readers, thinkers, and supporters. Thank you ating the written word, and for your continued love of learning, and laughter. Let us be transformed together.



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About Us

The Sun Valley Writers' Conference (SVWC), guided by a small board of directors, strives to bring together readers, writers, and artists of diverse ages, backgrounds, and experiences to be informed, enlightened, challenged, and inspired by a world-class literary program in the great outdoors.

We are deeply appreciative of all who support and attend our literary event. Forty percent of our costs are offset by pass sales, while 60% of our funding comes from the contributions of generous individuals and independent foundations whose gifts help us bring important literary voices to the SVWC stage.



Sustainability

We believe it's important to protect the natural beauty of the place we call home. By implementing thoughtful changes in our journey towards sustainability—reducing waste, sourcing responsibly, and lowering our footprint—we are ensuring that the pristine wilderness of Sun Valley remains a source of literary inspiration for future generations. As SVWC friend and alum Barry Lopez wrote, "Nature is not a place to visit. It is home."

For more information visit SVWC.COM/sustainability.

Information



During the event, books and SVWC gift items are available at the bookstore located in the large SVWC tent. Authors will be signing books after each talk. You can also visit the Info Desk in the Bookstore Tent with any questions.



Large presentations are given in the outdoor Sun Valley Pavilion and smaller sessions take place in open-air tents on the surrounding lawn and venues at the Sun Valley Resort. You can also stroll through the charming and easily walkable Sun Valley Resort village, with its own lodging, dining, retail stores, and coffee shops. Please note that per the Sun Valley Resort, only service animals are permitted inside the Pavilion. Please refer to the program schedule section for exact times and locations of all events.



Sunday and Monday mornings begin with breakfast on the Sun Valley Lodge Terrace, and barbeque buffet lunches take place each afternoon in the Lunch Village on the Lower Lawn. Attendees gather at the Beverage Tent near the Pavilion for a no-host cocktail reception in the early evenings.



Full passholders can also view the major Pavilion presentations simulcast with closed-captioning to the nearby Opera House.



Press Policy

PRESS POLICY

The tone of the Conference is lively, honest, and reflective. In today's society where mobile devices are ubiquitous, Conference sessions should be considered open to the press and on the record.

PLEASE NOTE: During the course of the Sun Valley Writers' Conference (SVWC) event, we will be filming, photographing, and recording the overall experience, including all sessions and any Q&As that take place. (This is primarily for our marketing and distribution of content.) Please be aware that by attending SVWC you consent to allow SVWC to use your likeness and voice in recordings, both video and audio, in our marketing materials and across all media, now and in the future, waive any rights with respect to such use, and release SVWC from any liability pertaining to such use. If you have any questions, please contact us at info@svwc.com.



Suggestions?

PLEASE LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK

We welcome your thoughts—please go to **SVWC.COM/FEEDBACK** or scan the QR code below to fill out an evaluation form online and share your ideas with us.



2025 Program Schedule

Saturday, July 19 – Monday, July 21

SATURDAY, JULY 19 OVERVIEW SUN VALLEY WRITERS' CONFERENCE

TIME	EVENT	LOCATION	EXTRAS
9:00 AM – 12:30 PM	Typewriter Rodeo	Pavilion Lawn	
11:45 AM – 12:15 PM	Art & Words Exhibition Tour	Pavilion West Terrace	
12:30 – 1:45 PM	Doris Kearns Goodwin	Pavilion	
2:15 – 3:15 PM 1 ST Breakout Sessions	Clara Bingham with Anne Taylor Fleming	Tent A	
	Sloane Crosley, Andre Dubus III & Griffin Dunne with John Burnham Schwartz	Opera House	D 8 .
	Rachel Eliza Griffiths & Safiya Sinclair	Tent C	
	Sonia Purnell	Limelight Room B/C	
	Dr. Theodore H. Schwartz with Willy Walker	Continental Room	
	Dr. Abraham Verghese with Alexandra Schwartz	Tent B	
3:45 – 4:45 PM 2 ND Breakout Sessions	Meenakshi Ahamed, Dr. Vivek H. Murthy & Dr. Abraham Verghese with Evan Osnos	Continental Room	
	Jonathan Blitzer & Paola Ramos with Andrea Elliott	Tent B	
	Dan Jones	Opera House	• ●
	Liz Moore with Jenny Emery Davidson	Limelight Room B/C	
	Todd S. Purdum	Tent D	
	Admiral James Stavridis with Scott Moyers	Tent A	
5:30 – 6:30 PM	2025 Writer in the World	Pavilion	• ●

LIVESTREAMING

For livestream info please visit: svwc.com/livestream

EXTRA WAYS TO WATCH

Special Series Pavilion Passes

Free Lawn Seating

Free Livestreaming

Argyros Live Watch Party



SATURDAY, JULY 19 PAVILION TALK SATURDAY, JULY 19 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION

Typewriter Rodeo

9:00 AM - 12:30 PM | PAVILION LAWN

Lunch

See pocket schedule for time and location.

Art & Words Exhibition Tour

11:45 AM - 12:15 PM | PAVILION WEST TERRACE

Doris Kearns Goodwin

AN UNFINISHED LOVE STORY: A PERSONAL HISTORY OF THE 1960s 12:30 – 1:45 PM | PAVILION

There is no finer voice to launch our 2025 festival than that of **DORIS KEARNS GOODWIN**, the revered and respected Pulitzer Prize-winning historian and biographer. Now she has written something thrilling and different: a moving memoir of her long marriage to Richard "Dick" Goodwin, a presidential speechwriter and close adviser to John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, the latter of whom he worked with to develop the Great Society. She will talk about the passion she and Dick shared for each other and for the country, and about the pivotal moments and central figures of the 1960s—the Kennedys, Johnsons, and Martin Luther King Jr.—and tell us what still fills her with hope. Love stories don't get richer or more meaningful than this.

Clara Bingham with Anne Taylor Fleming

THE MOVEMENT:

HOW WOMEN'S LIBERATION TRANSFORMED AMERICA 1963-1973 **2:15 – 3:15 PM | 1**ST **BREAKOUT SESSION | TENT A**

In her powerful and exhilarating oral history, *The Movement*, award-winning journalist **CLARA BINGHAM** brings to vivid life the years from 1963 to 1973 when a disparate group of amazing, visionary, frustrated, and feisty women helped knock down the barriers to equality that had existed throughout history. It is an extraordinary, sometimes overlooked story with deep resonance today. In conversation with **ANNE TAYLOR FLEMING**, Bingham will share the stories—and voices—of icons like Betty Friedan and Billie Jean King but also of the lesser-known heroes who were the heart and soul of the modern feminist movement that changed America forever.

Sloane Crosley, Andre Dubus III, and Griffin Dunne with John Burnham Schwartz

THE ART OF MEMOIR: AN ALL-STAR LINEUP
2:15 – 3:15 PM | 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION | OPERA HOUSE

Writing one's own life story well and artfully is a hard business. You must navigate the uncertain shoals of memory and the scar tissue of the past, and in doing so, you may well emerge with entirely new scars for your labor. You must consider deeply but not flinch in the face of discoveries, old and new. You must take the honest measure of yourself and others. SLOANE CROSLEY (Grief Is for People), ANDRE DUBUS III (Townie), and GRIFFIN DUNNE (The Friday Afternoon Club) have all written brilliant memoirs and come out the other side. In conversation with SVWC Literary Director JOHN BURNHAM SCHWARTZ, they will unpack their respective literary journeys, mapping for us some of the greatest obstacles confronted and deepest joys experienced along the way.

SATURDAY, JULY 19 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION SATURDAY, JULY 19 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION

Rachel Eliza Griffiths and Safiya Sinclair

A POETRY READING
2:15 - 3:15 PM | 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION | TENT C

Today, we are gifted with a reading by two luminous poets, **RACHEL ELIZA GRIFFITHS** and **SAFIYA SINCLAIR**, two women who happen to be great friends and are appearing together in what promises to be a memorable event. Griffiths is the author of five collections of poetry, including her most recent, *Seeing the Body*, poems both wrenching and beautiful, many about the life and death of her mother. The poems in Sinclair's *Cannibal* explore Jamaican childhood, race relations in America, history and exile in language that feels both utterly precise and wildly original. Think of this reading as a poetry concert performed by two exquisite lyricists.

Sonia Purnell

KINGMAKER: PAMELA HARRIMAN'S ASTONISHING LIFE OF POWER, SEDUCTION, AND INTRIGUE

2:15 - 3:15 PM | 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION | LIMELIGHT ROOM B/C

When Pamela Churchill Harriman died in 1997, she was often written off as a courtesan and social climber known for her glamorous life and many erotic adventures. But in her delicious and comprehensive new biography, prize-winning author **SONIA PURNELL** helps set the record straight in the captivating story of a woman who was at the center of power over five decades and two continents. Purnell will share the details of Harriman's glittery and strategic life: how at age 20, as Churchill's beloved daughter-in-law, she became a "secret weapon" during World War II, and how, later in the United States, she hand-picked Bill Clinton and helped propel him to the presidency.

Dr. Theodore H. Schwartz with Willy Walker

GRAY MATTERS: A BIOGRAPHY OF BRAIN SURGERY
2:15 – 3:15 PM | 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION | CONTINENTAL ROOM

Neurosurgery as a profession is a hundred years old, but few know how it works or how far it has come in saving lives through dazzlingly intricate operations. **DR. THEODORE H. SCHWARTZ** is a master brain surgeon whose new book, *Gray Matters*, shares the history of his profession and its pioneers, along with many of its most fascinating wonders. In conversation with **WILLY WALKER**, one of our favorite guest interviewers and host of the *Walker Webcast*, Dr. Schwartz will tell us exactly what it's like to apply the scalpel, wield the drill, or extract a tumor in the most delicate and precise surgeries known to man.

Dr. Abraham Verghese with Alexandra Schwartz

THE COVENANT OF WATER

2:15 – 3:15 PM | 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION | TENT B

Beloved author and physician **ABRAHAM VERGHESE**, whose novel *The Covenant of Water* Oprah Winfrey called "one of the best books I've ever read in my entire life," will sit down with *The New Yorker* staff writer **ALEXANDRA SCHWARTZ** for a conversation that will touch on many fascinating and important topics, from medicine to writing to India to family, love, healing, and wonder. As Verghese himself has said, "Though I am fascinated by knowledge, I am even more fascinated by wisdom." He will share his.

Cocktails

See pocket schedule for time and location.

SATURDAY, JULY 19 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION SATURDAY, JULY 19 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION

Meenakshi Ahamed, Dr. Vivek H. Murthy, and Dr. Abraham Verghese with Evan Osnos

INDIAN GENIUS: THE METEORIC RISE OF INDIANS IN AMERICA
3:45 – 4:45 PM | 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION | CONTINENTAL ROOM

In her captivating new book, journalist and author **MEENAKSHI AHAMED** asks and answers a fascinating question: What accounts for the success of Indian Americans in American culture? Through portraits of some of the major Indian American success stories in tech, medicine, and public policy, she reveals the unique and shared strengths behind their achievements. Ahamed, along with two of her book's subjects—former Surgeon General of the United States **VIVEK H. MURTHY, MD**, and physician and author **ABRAHAM VERGHESE, MD**—will talk with *The New Yorker* staff writer and author **EVAN OSNOS** about what has moved and motivated them through their productive and meaningful lives.

Jonathan Blitzer and Paola Ramos with Andrea Elliott

A CONVERSATION ABOUT IMMIGRATION
3:45 – 4:45 PM | 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION | TENT B

No question, the topic of immigration has dominated many recent conversations in this country and generated a lot of heat. To discuss the topic, we have brought together two stellar reporters, **JONATHAN BLITZER**, author of the recent book *Everyone Who Is Gone Is Here*, and writer and Emmy Award-winning journalist **PAOLA RAMOS**. Both have covered the story in depth in recent years, putting in time at the southern border and traveling in and out of Mexico and South and Central America. In conversation with Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist **ANDREA ELLIOTT**, they will offer a firsthand look at our immigration crisis—how we got here and what might lie ahead.

Dan Jones

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF HENRY V
3:45 – 4:45 PM | 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION | OPERA HOUSE

DAN JONES is not only an exceptional historian but also a riveting storyteller. In his new book, *Henry V*, he delivers a master class on the dramatic life and leadership of England's preeminent medieval monarch. Though Henry reigned over England for less than a decade and died at just 35, he looms over the landscape of the late Middle Ages and beyond. Shakespeare indelibly presented him as a study in youthful folly transformed into sober statesmanship. Jones considers Henry's reign "a case study in the art of leadership in a time of crisis." Join one of the most entertaining historians writing today for a deep—and deeply relevant—dive into the thrilling and unmissable life of England's greatest king.

Liz Moore with Jenny Emery Davidson

THE GOD OF THE WOODS

 $3:45-4:45\ PM\ |\ 2^{ND}\ BREAKOUT\ SESSION\ |\ LIMELIGHT\ ROOM\ B/C$

To read *The God of the Woods*, author **LIZ MOORE**'s stunning literary thriller and *The New York Times* best crime novel of 2024, is to marvel at her ability to weave a complicated plot while also creating riveting characters—and suspects. From the minute a teenager vanishes from her Adirondack summer camp on an early August morning in 1975 until the final resolution, we are in a propulsive, multi-layered whodunit that touches on issues of class and loss and survival. Moore will talk with **JENNY EMERY DAVIDSON**, Executive Director of The Community Library in Ketchum, about how she manages such a complex storyline and whether she knew the end of the novel before she began. (All spoilers to be carefully avoided.)

SATURDAY, JULY 19 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION SATURDAY, JULY 19 PAVILION TALK

Todd S. Purdum

DESI ARNAZ: THE MAN WHO INVENTED TELEVISION
3:45 – 4:45 PM | 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION | TENT D

Many generations have laughed at the classic episodes of *I Love Lucy* and the comedic genius of Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz, her husband on the show and in real life. There has been much focus on Lucy, but it turns out that Arnaz had a fascinating life of his own and made significant contributions to the entertainment industry, all of which we learn about in **TODD S. PURDUM**'s terrific new biography. Purdum, a veteran journalist and first-rate reporter, will talk about the book and trace Arnaz's journey from Cuban aristocracy to a world-class entertainer who helped spark the conga dance craze in America and revolutionized how sitcoms are filmed to this day.

Admiral James Stavridis with Scott Moyers

THE RESTLESS WAVE

3:45 – 4:45 PM | 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION | TENT A

A novel by **ADMIRAL JAMES STAVRIDIS** is both a nautical and psychological treat. In *The Restless Wave*, the former NATO Commander and four-star Admiral has given us a gripping and moving story of one young man's—and one great nation's—war at sea during the bloody first years of World War II. A great student of military history, Stavridis provides a deeply intimate look at wartime life in the Navy and how one young officer comes of age in the toughest of proving grounds. He will talk with his editor, **SCOTT MOYERS**, Vice President and Publisher of Penguin Press, about the pleasures and challenges of writing fiction and how he manages to write such intricate and pulse-raising battle scenes.

Salman Rushdie with Colum McCann

2025 WRITER IN THE WORLD 5:30 – 6:30 PM | PAVILION

We are thrilled to announce that the 2025 Sun Valley Writers' Conference Writer in the World Prize will be awarded, in person, to **SALMAN RUSHDIE**. The author of 23 fiction and nonfiction books, Rushdie's name has long been recognized around the world for his brilliant writing and his unfailing courage in defending freedom of speech, sometimes at the risk of his own safety. His latest book, *Knife: Meditations After an Attempted Murder*, is a deeply personal account of enduring and surviving an attempt on his life in August of 2022. It is a love story to his wife, Eliza, and all the doctors and physical therapists who helped him recover, along with his global community of readers and fellow writers. We honor Rushdie above all for his amazing body of work, his indelible works of fiction and nonfiction, and for continuing to write them in the face of immeasurable opposition and danger. As you will see today, when he is in conversation with his fellow novelist and great friend **COLUM McCANN**, Salman Rushdie is many remarkable things, but above all, and always, he is a writer and a teller of stories, and a master at that.

Save the Dates for SVWC 2026!

SATURDAY, JULY 18 - MONDAY, JULY 20

Please Note: The views, opinions, and positions expressed by SVWC speakers and attendees at the Conference are the speakers' and attendees' own and do not necessarily reflect those of SVWC, its founders, board members, staff, or volunteers.

SUNDAY, JULY 20 OVERVIEW SUN VALLEY WRITERS' CONFERENCE

TIME	EVENT	LOCATION	EXTRAS
9:30 – 10:30 AM 1 ST Breakout Sessions	Jonathan Blitzer	Limelight Room B/C	
	Oren Cass with Liaquat Ahamed	Tent B	
	Andre Dubus III	Tent D	
	Ruth Reichl with Aleksandra Crapanzano	Pavilion	• 8
	Nayantara Roy & Yael van der Wouden with Anne Taylor Fleming	Tent A	
	Wright Thompson	Opera House	
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM 2 ND Breakout Sessions	Carl Hiaasen with Dave Barry	Tent B	
	Dan Jones	Tent A	
	Erling Kagge with Willy Walker	Tent D	
	Claire Keegan with Jenny Emery Davidson	Opera House	
	Edward Luce & Admiral James Stavridis with Jonathan Blitzer	Pavilion	• ●
	Safiya Sinclair with Alexandra Schwartz	Limelight Room A	
12:00 – 1:30 PM	Lunch	Lunch Village	
12:00 – 1:30 PM	Typewriter Rodeo	Pavilion Lawn	
12:15 – 12:45 PM	Art & Words Exhibition Tour	Pavilion West Terrace	
1:30 – 2:30 PM	Ocean Vuong with John Burnham Schwartz	Pavilion & Lawn	
3:00 – 4:00 PM	The Improvised Shakespeare Company®	Pavilion & Lawn	
4:30 – 5:30 PM	Max Boot, Doris Kearns Goodwin & Evan Osnos	Pavilion & Lawn	

LIVESTREAMING

For livestream info please visit: svwc.com/livestream

Program schedule is subject to change.

EXTRA WAYS TO WATCH

Special Series Pavilion Passes

Y Free Lawn Seating

Free Livestreaming

Argyros Live Watch Party



SUNDAY, JULY 20 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION SUNDAY, JULY 20 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION

Breakfast

See pocket schedule for time and location.

Jonathan Blitzer

IMMIGRATION AND THE SOUTHERN BORDER

9:30 - 10:30 AM | 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION | LIMELIGHT ROOM B/C

What has often been missing in our national conversations about immigration is fair-minded and in-depth reporting from the front. Now we have that in **JONATHAN BLITZER**'s brilliant new book, *Everyone Who Is Gone Is Here: The United States*, *Central America*, *and The Making of a Crisis*, a moving and comprehensive look at the humanitarian crisis at the southern border told through portraits of some of the migrants who risk everything to come here and the policymakers who determine their fate. Blitzer, a staff writer at *The New Yorker*, will talk about our country's tragically convoluted immigration policy and about the deep reporting that informs his book.

Oren Cass with Liaquat Ahamed

WHAT HAPPENED TO AMERICA'S WORKING CLASS AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT 9:30 – 10:30 AM | 1st Breakout Session | Tent B

OREN CASS is a conservative economist and one of the most prominent advocates for policies aimed at improving the lives of the working class, those who have been hit hard in the last 30 years by globalization and free trade agreements. He is the founder and chief economist of the Washington-based nonprofit organization American Compass and the author of *The Once and Future Worker*. In conversation with Pulitzer Prize-winning author **LIAQUAT AHAMED**, Cass will explore the ideas and economic policies—from the efficacy of tariffs and industrial policy to a revitalized labor movement—intended to support the flourishing of America's working families.

Andre Dubus III

GHOST DOGS: ON KILLERS AND KIN

9:30 - 10:30 AM | 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION | TENT D

During childhood summers in Louisiana, **ANDRE DUBUS III**'s grandfather taught him that men's work is hard. As an adult, whether tracking down a drug lord in Mexico as a bounty hunter or grappling with privilege while living with a rich girlfriend in New York City, Dubus worked at being a better human being. As he does in his brilliant collection of personal essays, Dubus will share moments of personal revelation with emotional generosity and stylistic grace, speaking from the heart about his successes, failures, triumphs, and pain. He'll reflect on the empowerment and shame he felt in keeping a gun and his decision, ultimately, to give it up—his violent youth and the challenges of fatherhood, the omnipresent expectations and contradictions of masculinity, the things writers remember and those they forget.

Ruth Reichl with Aleksandra Crapanzano

THE PARIS NOVEL

9:30 - 10:30 AM | 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION | PAVILION

RUTH REICHL, one of our best-known and most well-loved food writers, is the author of five memoirs, including *Tender at the Bone* and *Save Me the Plums*. She is also a captivating novelist, and, as you might imagine, her fiction is full of many sensory pleasures. In her delightful new book, the protagonist Stella is left with an unusual inheritance: a one-way plane ticket and a note reading "Go to Paris." But Stella is hardly cut out for adventure; a traumatic childhood has confined her to the strict routines of her comfort zone. Reichl will talk to fellow food writer **ALEKSANDRA CRAPANZANO** about this novel that celebrates the city they both adore and the many reasons for living deliciously, taking chances, and finding your true home.

SUNDAY, JULY 20 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION SUNDAY, JULY 20 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION

Nayantara Roy and Yael van der Wouden with Anne Taylor Fleming

NEW VOICES FELLOWS 2025 9:30 - 10:30 AM | 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION | TENT A

Both NAYANTARA ROY's The Magnificent Ruins and YAEL van der WOUDEN's The Safekeep are debut novels that were lauded around the globe last year, and both introduce us to complex, unforgettable young female protagonists who uncover dark secrets. In Roy's novel, an Indian American book editor in New York is summoned back to Kolkata to inherit her family's sprawling estate, leaving her to confront resentful family members who still live there, above all, her cold, mercurial mother. In The Safekeep, another house looms large, this one in the rural Dutch countryside in 1961, where Isabel is living in isolation, until her brother's girlfriend abruptly moves in, and the women tumble into a secret, obsessive affair, leading to a stunning plot twist that also manages to be a riveting exploration of the Holocaust. In conversation with ANNE TAYLOR FLEMING, Roy and van der Wouden will talk about the roads to their novels and about keeping faith with their literary ambitions.

Wright Thompson

THE BARN: THE SECRET HISTORY OF A MURDER IN MISSISSIPPI 9:30 – 10:30 AM | 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION | OPERA HOUSE

WRIGHT THOMPSON's family farm in Mississippi is 23 miles from the site of one of the most notorious and consequential killings in American history—the murder of Emmett Till—yet he had to leave the state for college before he learned the first thing about it. Thompson's unforgettable new book, *The Barn*, is a shocking and revelatory account of that crime and how the truth was erased for so long. It is a story about property, and money, and power, and white supremacy. Thompson will bring to life the small group of dedicated people who have been engaged in the hard, fearful business of putting the killing floor of the barn on the map of the Delta and America and, in so doing, mapping the road this country must travel if we are to heal our oldest, deepest wound.

Carl Hiaasen with Dave Barry

FLORIDA ON OUR MINDS

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION | TENT B

No two authors have done more to raise the profile and skewer the image of their home state than **CARL HIAASEN** and **DAVE BARRY**, residents of the great state of Florida, which has so often been the target of their sharp eyes and comedic gifts. Both men were columnists for the *Miami Herald* before becoming authors with their tales about the oddballs, hustlers, and politicians (or, more likely, all-in-one) who make up the citizenry of a place they both call home. The two old friends will share some of their favorite stories from their homeland and talk about how they love to make each other laugh.

Dan Jones

WHAT THE MIDDLE AGES HAS DONE FOR THE MODERN WORLD 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION | TENT A

Did you know that Edward III's last parliament invented impeachment? That cancel culture in universities actually began at Oxford and Paris in the 14th century? That Edward II's bacchanalian revels would have made Johnny Depp's worst nights look like kindergarten parties by comparison? And then there's the Magna Carta, which supposedly limited the power of the monarchy and established the principle that everyone, including the king, is subject to the law. The great fun and scintillating interest of having in our midst British historian **DAN JONES**, host of the podcast *This Is History* and a riveting storyteller, will bring us intimately into the weirdly prescient past of the Middle Ages.

SUNDAY, JULY 20 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION SUNDAY, JULY 20 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION

Erling Kagge with Willy Walker

AFTER THE NORTH POLE: THE HISTORY OF AN OBSESSION 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION | TENT D

ERLING KAGGE is a world-leading Norwegian explorer, philosopher, and author, the first in history to reach the North Pole, South Pole, and the summit of Mt. Everest on foot. His latest book, *After the North Pole*, is an epic adventure story of humanity's obsession with the North Pole. Blending memories from Kagge's expeditions, the book reckons with the pursuit of dreams and the challenging bonds between fathers and sons, while dramatically documenting the psychological toll of what it means to keep putting one foot in front of the other in the face of adversity. This is a story for anyone who's gazed out at the horizon and wondered what happens if you just keep walking. Kagge will talk with **WILLY WALKER**, All-American endurance athlete and host of the *Walker Webcast*, about his extraordinary journey across the North Pole and reflect on the beauty and fragility of our planet.

Claire Keegan with Jenny Emery Davidson

THE MAGIC AND THE MYSTERY OF THE SHORT STORY

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION | OPERA HOUSE

"Elegance is saying just enough." Those are the words of the Irish writer **CLAIRE KEEGAN**, a master of the short story. Her debut collection, *Antarctica*, won the Rooney Prize for Irish Literature and introduced the world to her uncanny ability in every story to reveal the longings of the human heart. Her stories are translated into 35 languages and have won numerous awards, including the Edge Hill Prize, the William Trevor Prize, and are published in *The New Yorker* and *Best American Stories*. In conversation with **JENNY EMERY DAVIDSON**, Executive Director of The Community Library in Ketchum, Keegan will talk about short stories, hers and those of other writers she admires, and why she is drawn to the form and what makes the short story unique and magical.

Edward Luce and Admiral James Stavridis with Jonathan Blitzer

AMERICA AND THE WORLD

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION | PAVILION

In tumultuous times like these, we need wise, deeply informed voices to help us understand the conflicts around the globe, and two of those voices belong to **ADMIRAL JAMES STAVRIDIS**, former NATO Supreme Allied Commander, and **EDWARD LUCE**, U.S. National Editor and columnist at the *Financial Times*. In conversation with *The New Yorker* staff writer **JONATHAN BLITZER**, they will analyze current global hot spots, like Ukraine, the Middle East, and China, and reflect on the isolationist turn in American foreign policy. What does that mean for our long-honored alliances in Europe and elsewhere, and what would some of our formidable and formative strategists such as Henry Kissinger or Zbigniew Brzezinski have made of this shift?

Safiya Sinclair with Alexandra Schwartz

HOW TO SAY BABYLON

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION | LIMELIGHT ROOM A

The best memoirs transport you fully into the head and heart of the writer and their experiences. So it is with *How to Say Babylon*, the lyrical and searing memoir by poet **SAFIYA SINCLAIR**. Winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award, the book recounts her Jamaican childhood and her efforts to escape the patriarchal control of her Rastafarian father who forbade make-up, jewelry, opinions, friends, and any sign of deemed immodesty. In conversation with *The New Yorker* staff writer **ALEXANDRA SCHWARTZ**, Sinclair will talk about the book and about how she found her power to resist and her own unique and beautiful voice.

SUNDAY, JULY 20 PAVILION TALK SUNDAY, JULY 20 PAVILION TALK

Lunch

12:00 - 1:30 PM | LUNCH VILLAGE

Typewriter Rodeo

12:00 - 1:30 PM | PAVILION LAWN

Art & Words Exhibition Tour

12:15 - 12:45 PM | PAVILION WEST TERRACE

Ocean Vuong with John Burnham Schwartz

THE EMPEROR OF GLADNESS

1:30 - 2:30 PM | PAVILION & LAWN

In works of piercing beauty and heartrending grace, in poetry and prose, **OCEAN VUONG** has become one of his generation's most necessary and unforgettable literary voices. Now, with *The Emperor of Gladness*, he returns with a bighearted second novel. One summer evening in post-industrial Connecticut, 19-year-old Hai stands on the edge of a bridge in pelting rain, ready to jump, when he hears someone shout across the river. The voice belongs to Grazina, an elderly widow succumbing to dementia, who convinces him to take another path. Bereft and out of options, he quickly becomes her caretaker. Over the course of the year, the unlikely pair develops a life-altering bond. With his singular ability to twin grit with grace through tenderness, Vuong will discuss the novel and his writing with SVWC Literary Director **JOHN BURNHAM SCHWARTZ**.

The Improvised Shakespeare Company®

YOU HAVE TO SEE IT TO BELIEVE IT 3:00 – 4:00 PM | PAVILION & LAWN

Now for some wit and joy and literary-inspired belly laughs. They come courtesy of the one-and-only **IMPROVISED SHAKESPEARE COMPANY®**, a performing troupe that will put on a never-before-seen and never-to-be-been-again fully improvised Shakespearean masterpiece. Based on an audience suggestion for a title of the show, founder **BLAINE SWEN** and his merry band, **ROSS BRYANT**, **BRENDAN DOWLING**, and **RANDALL HARR**, will create an actual play right before our eyes. Nothing has been planned, rehearsed, or written down. This is improvisational theater at its most dazzling and risky—something to make the Bard himself laugh out loud.

Cocktails

See pocket schedule for time and location.

Max Boot and Doris Kearns Goodwin with Evan Osnos

OUR TRANSFORMATIVE PRESIDENTS AND HOW THEY CHANGED THE OFFICE AND THE COUNTRY

4:30 – 5:30 PM | PAVILION & LAWN

A few of the occupants of the highest office in the land have changed the nature and reach of the presidency and therefore the country itself. We have asked two preeminent presidential historians, **DORIS KEARNS GOODWIN** and **MAX BOOT**, to reflect upon the impact of transformative presidents and what combination of drive, vision, and charisma informed their White House tenures. Boot is the author of the much-lauded recent biography of President Ronald Reagan, and Goodwin is a Pulitzer Prize-winning author and has written books on Presidents Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, and Lyndon Johnson. In conversation with award-winning journalist **EVAN OSNOS**, the author of a recent presidential biography on Joe Biden, they will offer wise, deeply-informed analyses of our transformative presidents and their lasting legacies.

MONDAY, JULY 21 OVERVIEW SUN VALLEY WRITERS' CONFERENCE

TIME	EVENT	LOCATION	EXTRAS
9:30 – 10:30 AM 1 ST Breakout Sessions	Oren Cass with Edward Luce	Limelight Room B/C	
	Sloane Crosley with Anne Taylor Fleming	Opera House	
	Rachel Eliza Griffiths with Martha Williams	Tent D	
	Claire Keegan with Andrea Elliott	Tent B	
	Dr. Theodore H. Schwartz with Ayad Akhtar	Pavilion	• ●
	Wright Thompson	Tent A	
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM 2 ND Breakout Sessions	Griffin Dunne with Todd S. Purdum	Pavilion	• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •
	Edward Luce	Tent B	
	Liz Moore with Alexandra Schwartz	Opera House	
	Evan Osnos	Limelight Room B/C	
	Paola Ramos	Tent D	
	Ocean Vuong with Rachel Eliza Griffiths	Tent A	
12:00 – 1:30 PM	Lunch	Lunch Village	
12:00 – 1:30 PM	Typewriter Rodeo	Pavilion Lawn	
12:45 – 1:15 PM	Art & Words Exhibition Tour	Pavilion West Terrace	
1:30 – 2:30 PM	Colum McCann with Jeffrey Brown	Pavilion & Lawn	
3:00 – 4:00 PM	Dr. Vivek H. Murthy with Andrea Elliott	Pavilion & Lawn	
4:30 – 5:30 PM	Carl Hiaasen	Pavilion & Lawn	
5:30 - 6:30 PM	Typewriter Rodeo	Pavilion Lawn	
5:30 - 6:30 PM	Closing Reception	Pavilion Lawn	

LIVESTREAMING

For livestream info please visit: svwc.com/livestream

Program schedule is subject to change.

EXTRA WAYS TO WATCH

Special Series Pavilion Passes

Y Free Lawn Seating

Free Livestreaming

Argyros Live Watch Party

Day Three

Monday, July 21

MONDAY, JULY 21 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION MONDAY, JULY 21 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION

Breakfast

See pocket schedule for time and location.

Oren Cass with Edward Luce

THE REORIENTATION OF OUR POLITICAL PARTIES OR HOW THE DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS SWITCHED PLACES

9:30 - 10:30 AM | 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION | LIMELIGHT ROOM B/C

How did the Republicans become the party of the working class in this country, and how did the Democrats cede that role? That is the fascinating question now informing our politics and public policy. For answers, we turn to conservative economist **OREN CASS**, founder and chief economist of American Compass, a Washington-based nonprofit "with a focus on realigning the GOP as the party of the American worker," and the author of the recently published book *The New Conservatives*. In conversation with author **EDWARD LUCE**, U.S. National Editor and columnist at the *Financial Times*, Cass will shed light on economic and ideological changes behind this shift and the emerging shape of the new Republican party and its conservative coalition.

Sloane Crosley with Anne Taylor Fleming

GRIEF IS FOR PEOPLE

9:30 - 10:30 AM | 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION | OPERA HOUSE

Here is your chance to listen to the captivating and witty **SLOANE CROSLEY**, one of our most treasured observers of contemporary behavior. In her latest work, *Grief Is for People*—named "the #1 best reviewed nonfiction book of 2024"—she explores the pain and confusion of losing her closest friend to suicide. A month before his death, her New York apartment was burglarized, which preceded the shutdown and sadness that fell over her beloved Manhattan during COVID. In conversation with **ANNE TAYLOR FLEMING**, Crosley will talk about the book, an irresistible tale of loss on many overlapping fronts, but also a trove of gallows humor, and a love letter to a friend, a city, and, in a way, to grief itself.

Rachel Eliza Griffiths with Martha Williams

PROMISE

9:30 - 10:30 AM | 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION | TENT D

The artistic gifts of celebrated poet and visual artist **RACHEL ELIZA GRIFFITHS** are deeply apparent in her evocative and beautiful debut novel *Promise*. The book tells the story of two young Black sisters growing up loved and happy in 1950s Maine. But when the Civil Rights Movement sweeps the nation and their small town turns against them, they must fight for their homes, their bodies, and their dreams. In a conversation with **MARTHA WILLIAMS** of The Community Library in Ketchum, Griffiths will talk about her fears and excitement at moving into fiction and how she was able to blend big national themes with the tender details of intimate lives.

Claire Keegan with Andrea Elliott

SMALL THINGS LIKE THESE

9:30 - 10:30 AM | 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION | TENT B

Some works of literature seem to astonish and devastate at the same time. So it is with Irish writer **CLAIRE KEEGAN**'s most recent novel, *Small Things Like These*, a *New York Times* and Oprah Book Club Choice 2024, which was shortlisted for the Booker Prize and voted by readers of *The Irish Times* this year as the best book of the 21st century. In restrained and luminous prose, Keegan tells the story of a coal merchant in a small Irish town who makes a discovery that forces him to face his past and the complicit silences of a town controlled by the church. In conversation with Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and author **ANDREA ELLIOTT**, Keegan will discuss the novel and her writing.

MONDAY, JULY 21 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION MONDAY, JULY 21 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION

Dr. Theodore H. Schwartz with Ayad Akhtar

IDENTITY AND THE BRAIN: THE STORY WE TELL OURSELVES 9:30 – 10:30 AM | 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION | PAVILION

One of America's preeminent neurosurgeons and the author of *Gray Matters: A Biography of Brain Surgery*, **DR. THEODORE H. SCHWARTZ** has spent his career investigating some of the most complex and perplexing questions about the three-and-a-half pounds of tissue that determines the very nature of ourselves and our lives. Perhaps no question in neuroscience—or, for that matter, in philosophy and psychology—is more mysterious than that of identity, how it is that we know and feel ourselves to be who we are. Perhaps the only thing that can be said for certain is that whatever identity is or isn't, it originates, somehow, in the brain. In conversation with Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright and novelist **AYAD AKHTAR**, Dr. Schwartz will shine a light for us into the darkness.

Wright Thompson

PAPPYLAND: A STORY OF FAMILY, FINE BOURBON, AND THE THINGS THAT LAST 9:30 – 10:30 AM | 1ST BREAKOUT SESSION | TENT A

This is the story of how Julian P. Van Winkle III, the caretaker of the most coveted cult Kentucky bourbon whiskey in the world, fought to protect his family's heritage and preserve the taste of his forebears. Following his father's death decades ago, Julian stepped in to try to save the bourbon business his grandfather had founded. Author **WRIGHT THOMPSON** was invited to ride along as Julian undertook the task. As he did in his book, Thompson will share what he learned from that journey, not only about great bourbon but about complicated legacies and the rewards of honoring your people and your craft—lessons that he couldn't help but apply to his own work and life.

Griffin Dunne with Todd S. Purdum

THE FRIDAY AFTERNOON CLUB

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION | PAVILION

At eight, Sean Connery saved him from drowning. At thirteen, he attended his Aunt Joan Didion and Uncle John Gregory Dunne's legendary LA launch party for Tom Wolfe's *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*. In his early twenties, he shared a Manhattan apartment with his best friend and soulmate Carrie Fisher. A few years later, he produced and starred in Scorsese's *After Hours*. Amidst it all, Griffin's sister Dominique, just 22 and a rising star in Hollywood, was brutally murdered by her exboyfriend, leading to one of the most infamous public trials of the 1980s, which also marked the beginning of their father Dominick Dunne's celebrated writing career. And yet—as **GRIFFIN DUNNE** will tell journalist and author **TODD S. PURDUM**—for all its boldface characters and jaw-dropping scenes, his extraordinary life has always been a story about family.

Edward Luce

ZBIG: THE LIFE OF ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION | TENT B

In his riveting new biography of the late national security advisor and one of the most important strategists of the 20th century, **EDWARD LUCE** shows how this brilliant Polish-American saw the coming decline of the Soviet Union and used every tool of American policy to hasten that outcome. The author of three books and US National Editor at the *Financial Times*, Luce will talk about the crucial Cold War period and one of its major players and how he brought them to vivid life in a book that could not be more timely given the resurgent threat from Russia.

MONDAY, JULY 21 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION MONDAY, JULY 21 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION

Liz Moore with Alexandra Schwartz

THE NOVELIST'S CRAFT

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION | OPERA HOUSE

LIZ MOORE, one of the most admired and successful authors of crime novels like The God of the Woods and Long Bright River, will tell us how she is able to combine gripping suspense with psychological insight and literary flair. She actually wrote the majority of what would be her debut novel when she was still enrolled in college. Moore, who also teaches creative writing at Temple University in Philadelphia, will converse with The New Yorker staff writer ALEXANDRA SCHWARTZ about where her ideas come from, how much research is involved, and what she tells her students about how to find their voice and hold on to it.

Evan Osnos

THE HAVES AND THE HAVE-YACHTS

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION | LIMELIGHT ROOM B/C

How much is too much—or rather, how much is never enough? Such is the question for the billionaires who now make up the country's ultrarich. Their giant yachts, luxury compounds—and, oh yes, tax schemes—are a source of endless, if alarming, fascination. It is the question tackled by *The New Yorker* staff writer **EVAN OSNOS** in his new, deliciously readable collection of essays. He will talk about the book and the acquisitive appetites and habits of our new "oligarchs" and how their outsized fortunes are allowing them to hold sway over the elections and the economy.

Paola Ramos

DEFECTORS: THE RISE OF THE LATINO FAR RIGHT AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR AMERICA

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION | TENT D

One of the more surprising turns in the electorate is the rise of far-right sentiments among Latinos, a story that author and Emmy Award-winning journalist **PAOLA RAMOS** tells in her fascinating and empathetic new book *Defectors*. The book takes us into the lives of a variety of Latinos across the country who support candidates with plans for mass deportation or efforts to stop diversity initiatives. Ramos will introduce us to many of these people and tell us what is motivating their rightward turn and how, like many of their white counterparts, they are fearful of losing their place in American society.

Ocean Vuong with Rachel Eliza Griffiths

POETRY

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | 2ND BREAKOUT SESSION | TENT A

The author of the poetry collections *Time Is a Mother* and *Night Sky with Exit Wounds*, **OCEAN VUONG** writes directly to our humanity without losing sight of the current moment, making poems that show how the themes we perennially live in and question are truly inexhaustible. Bold and prescient, and a testament to tenderness in the face of violence, his poetry is a return and a forging forth all at once. He will read and discuss his work with fellow poet **RACHEL ELIZA GRIFFITHS**.

Lunch

12:00 – 1:30 PM | LUNCH VILLAGE

Typewriter Rodeo

12:00 – 1:30 PM | PAVILION LAWN

Art & Words Exhibition Tour

12:45 - 1:15 PM | PAVILION WEST TERRACE

Colum McCann with Jeffrey Brown

TWIST

1:30 - 2:30 PM | PAVILION & LAWN

From 9/11 (Let the Great World Spin) to war and peace both in Ireland (TransAtlantic) and Israel/Palestine (Apeirogon), COLUM McCANN has sought ways to channel the biggest stories of our age into resonant, elliptical, poetic works of fiction. His latest novel tells the story of a journalist sent to report on the complex work of repairing underwater cables that carry the world's information. Dazzling on every level, human and technological, it is McCann at his best, finding beauty and mystery on the front lines of danger. Few novelists pay such close attention to the "stories of our times" as McCann, who will be in conversation with JEFFREY BROWN of the PBS NewsHour.

Dr. Vivek H. Murthy with Andrea Elliott

FROM THE HEART

3:00 – 4:00 PM | PAVILION & LAWN

During his tenure as the Surgeon General of the United States, **VIVEK H. MURTHY, MD** became, in effect, our national healer. In a soft but strong voice, he spoke about the country's maladies like addiction, depression, and violence, and he made the passionate case that loneliness was the contributor to many of those ills, including our over-dependence on social media. That message is at the heart of his book, *Together: The Healing Power of Human Connection*. In conversation with Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and author **ANDREA ELLIOTT**, Murthy will talk about the book, about his own bouts of loneliness, and how we can each learn to be a healer in our own lives.

Cocktails

See pocket schedule for time and location.

Carl Hiaasen

FEVER BEACH

4:30 - 5:30 PM | PAVILION & LAWN

We close the 2025 Sun Valley Writers' Conference on a note of high hilarity with one of our favorite and funniest authors, **CARL HIAASEN**, talking about his brand-new novel *Fever Beach*, another classic based—where else—in his home state of Florida. He will have you from the opening sentence, when a man named Dale Figgo picks up a hitchhiker on Gus Grissom Boulevard in Tangelo Shores, Florida. Their escapades will take them deep into Florida at its most Floridian: a sun-soaked bastion of rightwing extremism, white power, greed, and corruption. Hiaasen is the author of seven novels for young readers and fifteen previous novels for adults, including *Bad Monkey*, recently adapted into a hit Apple series starring Vince Vaughn, and which, if you haven't already seen it, you will certainly want to after hearing this talk.

Typewriter Rodeo

5:30 - 6:30 PM | PAVILION LAWN

Closing Reception

5:30 – 6:30 PM | PAVILION LAWN

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

Meet Our 2025 Presenters & Moderators



MEENAKSHI AHAMED is a freelance journalist and the author of A Matter of Trust: India—U.S. Relations from Truman to Trump. Her buoyant survey, Indian Genius, documents the rising number of high-profile Indian Americans in business, science, and politics over recent decades. Ahamed's writing has been published in The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Atlantic, CNN Opinion, The Wall Street Journal, Seminar, and Asian Age. She has worked at the World Bank in Washington, D.C., and for New Delhi Television, and has served on the boards of Doctors Without Borders, Drugs for Neglected Diseases, and Vellore Christian Medical College Foundation. Ahamed was born in Calcutta and received an M.A. from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. She divides her time between New York, Los Angeles, and New Delhi.



CLARA BINGHAM, a former Newsweek White House correspondent, is an award-winning journalist and author of four books. Her latest book is The Movement: How Women's Liberation Transformed America 1963-1973. Bingham's other books include Class Action: The Landmark Case That Changed Sexual Harassment Law (co-written with Laura Leedy Gansler), adapted into the film North Country, was a Los Angeles Times Best Book of the Year and won the AAUW Speaking Out for Justice Award. She is also the author of Women on the Hill and Witness to the Revolution: Radicals, Resisters, Vets, Hippies, and the Year America Lost Its Mind and Found Its Soul. After witnessing the effects of mountaintop-removal coal mining for a 2005 story, Bingham produced the feature documentary The Last Mountain, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 2011. She has written for many publications, including Vanity Fair, The Guardian, and The Daily Beast, among others. Bingham lives in Brooklyn, NY.



JONATHAN BLITZER, a staff writer at *The New Yorker*, is the author of *Everyone Who Is Gone Is Here: The United States, Central America*, and the Making of a Crisis. He won a 2017 National Award for Education Reporting for *American Studies*, a story about an underground school for undocumented immigrants. Blitzer is also the recipient of an Edward R. Murrow Award, the 2018 Immigration Journalism Prize from the French-American Foundation, and a 2021 Emerson Fellow at New America. His writing and reporting have also appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Atlantic*, *The Atavist*, *Oxford American*, and *The Nation*. He was a three-time finalist for a Livingston Award, a 2021 Emerson Fellow at New America, and received the 2025 Hillman Prize for Book Journalism. Blitzer lives with his family in New York City.



MAX BOOT is a historian, author, and foreign policy analyst. His biography of Ronald Reagan, Reagan: His Life and Legend, was named one of the Ten Best Books of 2024 by The New York Times and made best-of-the-year lists from The New Yorker, The Washington Post, and The Economist. Boot's previous biography, The Road Not Taken: Edward Lansdale and the American Tragedy in Vietnam, was a finalist for the 2019 Pulitzer Prize in Biography. He is the author of four other books, including The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power, which won the 2003 General Wallace M. Greene Jr. Award from the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation. Boot is the Jeane J. Kirkpatrick senior fellow for national security studies at the Council on Foreign Relations and a weekly columnist for The Washington Post. He was born in Moscow, grew up in Los Angeles, and now lives with his family in New York City.



ANDRE DUBUS III's nine books include House of Sand and Fog, The Garden of Last Days, and his memoir, Townie. His most recent novel, Such Kindness, was published in June 2023, and a collection of personal essays, Ghost Dogs: On Killers and Kin, was published in March 2024. He is also the editor of Reaching Inside: 50 Acclaimed Authors on 100 Unforgettable Short Stories. Make It Black, a novella and five stories, is forthcoming in 2026. Dubus has been a finalist for the National Book Award, and has been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship, The National Magazine Award for Fiction, three Pushcart Prizes, and is a recipient of an American Academy of Arts and Letters Award in Literature. His books are published in over 25 languages, and he teaches at the University of Massachusetts Lowell.



OREN CASS is the founder and chief economist of American Compass, editor of The New Conservatives: Restoring America's Commitment to Family, Community, and Industry (2025), and author of The Once and Future Worker: A Vision for the Renewal of Work in America (2018). He is also a contributing opinion writer for the Financial Times and The New York Times. From 2005 to 2015, Cass worked as a management consultant at Bain & Company's Boston and Delhi offices. During this period, he also earned his J.D. magna cum laude from Harvard Law School, where he was elected vice president and treasurer of the Harvard Law Review, and served as the Domestic Policy Director for Governor Mitt Romney's 2012 presidential campaign. From 2015 to 2019, he was a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute.



GRIFFIN DUNNE has been an actor, producer, and director since the late 1970s. He made his directorial debut in 1995 with the Oscarnominated short film Duke of Groove. Dunne produced and acted in After Hours, directed Practical Magic, and produced and directed the documentary The Center Will Not Hold about his aunt, Joan Didion. He starred in the 2023 film Ex-Husbands. Dunne is the author of The Friday Afternoon Club: A Family Memoir, a 2024 Amazon Editors' Pick for Best Biography and Memoir, nominee for Good Reads 2024 Favorite Memoir, and named the Best Book of the Year by TIME, NPR, People Magazine, Town & Country, and Air Mail. Dunne and his dog, Mary, live in the East Village of Manhattan.



SLOANE CROSLEY is the author of *Grief Is for People, How Did*You Get This Number, and I Was Told There'd Be Cake, a finalist for
the Thurber Prize for American Humor. Her other works include Look
Alive Out There, also a Thurber Prize finalist, as well as the novels Cult
Classic and The Clasp, both of which she has adapted for film. Crosley's
writing has appeared in notable anthologies, including The Library of
America's 50 Funniest American Writers and The Best American Travel
Writing. She was the inaugural columnist for The New York Times Op-Ed
"Townies" and has contributed to publications including Vanity Fair,
The Atlantic, The Guardian, and The New Yorker. Crosley has been an
adjunct professor in Columbia University's MFA program and has taught
at Dartmouth College and The Yale Writers' Workshop. In 2025 she was
awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in the Literary Arts.



DORIS KEARNS GOODWIN's work for President Johnson sparked her career as a presidential historian. Her first book, Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream, was followed by the Pulitzer Prize-winning No Ordinary Time: Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt: The Homefront in World War II. Goodwin won the Lincoln Prize for Team of Rivals, in part the basis for Steven Spielberg's film Lincoln, and the Carnegie Medal for The Bully Pulpit about Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft's friendship. Leadership: In Turbulent Times inspired a History Channel docuseries on Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, and Franklin Roosevelt, which she executive produced through Pastimes Productions. In 2024, she released two books: An Unfinished Love Story: A Personal History of the 1960s, and The Leadership Journey: How Four Kids Became President, her first work for young readers. Goodwin has produced an eight-part documentary miniseries with Kevin Costner. Kevin Costner's The West premiered in May 2025 on the History Channel.



RACHEL ELIZA GRIFFITHS is a poet, visual artist, and novelist. She is the author of several poetry collections, including Miracle Arrhythmia, The Requited Distance, and Mule & Pear, which won the 2012 Inaugural Poetry Award from the Black Caucus of the American Library Association. Her fourth collection of poetry, Lighting the Shadow, was selected as a finalist for the 2015 Balcones Poetry Prize and the 2016 Phillis Wheatley Book Award in Poetry. Her collection, Seeing the Body, won the 2021 Hurston/Wright Foundation Legacy Award and the Paterson Poetry Prize. Kirkus Reviews described Griffiths' debut novel Promise as "a stunning and evocative portrait of love, pride, and survival." She is widely known for her literary portraits, fine art photography, and lyric videos. Griffiths earned her MFA in Creative Writing from Sarah Lawrence College and has received numerous fellowships, including the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation and the Cave Canem Foundation.



DAN JONES is a historian, broadcaster, and award-winning journalist whose books have sold over two million copies worldwide. His notable works include *The Plantagenets*, *The Templars*, *Powers and Thrones*, and *Henry V.* Jones has authored books on the Peasants' Revolt and Magna Carta and co-authored several titles with Marina Amaral. His fiction includes the *Essex Dogs* trilogy, with the first book recognized as a BBC History 2022 Book of the Year. Jones has created numerous TV series, including *Secrets of Great British Castles*. He is the writer and host of the Sony Music podcast *This Is History*. For a decade he was a columnist at the London *Evening Standard*. Jones is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and a Trustee of Historic Royal Palaces.



CARL HIAASEN was born and raised in Florida and has published sixteen well-received novels, including Strip Tease, Sick Puppy, and Bad Monkey. His recent novel, Fever Beach, was released in May 2025. Hiaasen has also authored nonfiction books and popular novels for young readers, such as Hoot, which earned a Newbery Honor and was adapted into a feature film. Other film adaptations of his works include Strip Tease, starring Demi Moore, and the Apple TV+ series Bad Monkey, featuring Vince Vaughn. He wrote a regular column for the Miami Herald from 1985 to 2021, addressing local and national issues, including the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, the Trayvon Martin case, Bernie Madoff's trial, and Florida's presidential election challenges. Hiaasen's journalism has earned him numerous honors for his incisive journalism and commentary, including three Pulitzer Prize nominations, the Damon Runyon Award, and the Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Society of Newspaper Columnists.



ERLING KAGGE is a world-leading Norwegian explorer and author. He was the first in history to reach the North Pole, South Pole, and the summit of Mt. Everest on foot. In addition, Kagge crossed New York City from north to south, mainly through its sewage, water, train, and metro tunnels, sailed across the Atlantic, around Cape Horn, and to Antarctica, and was the first to walk alone to the South Pole. He has written nine books on exploration, philosophy, and art collecting. Kagge's book *Silence in the Age of Noise* has been translated into 42 languages. In 2025, after six years of research and writing, his book on the history of the North Pole—*AFTER THE NORTH POLE: A Story of Survival, Mythmaking, and Melting Ice*—was published.



The **IMPROVISED SHAKESPEARE COMPANY®** is one of the funniest and most acclaimed improv troupes in the world. It was founded in Chicago in 2005 where its hit show, Improvised Shakespeare Chicago™, still runs today. The ISC also performs regularly at The Largo at the Coronet in Los Angeles where the troupe draws fans described by the *Los Angeles Times* as "Beatlemaniacal." The troupe's touring company has sold out raucous shows at The Kennedy Center and The Just For Laughs festival in Montréal, among many others. It frequently performs in New York City where it has played at Symphony Space, the 92ND Street Y, Barrow St, and Theatre 80 St Marks. Celebrated for its brilliance, it has received numerous awards and accolades, with Time Out New York urging, "Don't Miss Them. Seriously."



CLAIRE KEEGAN's stories have been translated into 30 languages. Her collection Antarctica won the Rooney Prize for Irish Literature. Walk the Blue Fields received the Edge Hill Prize. Foster earned the Davy Byrnes Award. Small Things Like These was shortlisted for both the Booker Prize and the Rathbones Folio Prize, winning the Orwell Prize for Political Fiction and The Kerry Prize for Irish Novel of the Year, and is now part of the Irish school syllabus. So Late in the Day, first published in The New Yorker, was shortlisted for Book of the Year at the British Book Awards. Keegan was named Woman of the Year for Literature in Ireland in 2022, Author of the Year in 2023, and presented with the Markievicz Award from the Arts Council 2024. This year, The Irish Times readers chose Small Things Like These as their best book of the century.



EDWARD LUCE is the U.S. National Editor and columnist at the Financial Times. Before that, he was the FT's Washington bureau chief. Other roles have included South Asia bureau chief, Capital Markets editor, and correspondent for the Philippines. Luce was previously the speechwriter for the U.S. Treasury Secretary, Lawrence H. Summers, in the Clinton administration. He is the author of three books: The Retreat of Western Liberalism (2017), Time to Start Thinking: America in the Age of Descent (2012), and In Spite of the Gods: The Strange Rise of Modern India (2007). His latest book, Zbig: The Life of Zbigniew Brzezinski, America's Great Power Prophet, was published in May 2025. Luce appears regularly on CNN, NPR, MSNBC's Morning Joe, and the BBC. He is also the author, along with colleague Rana Foroohar, of the Swamp Notes newsletter, which covers the intersection of money, power, and politics in America.





DR. VIVEK H. MURTHY served as the 19th and 21st Surgeon General of the United States. As Vice Admiral of the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, he commanded a uniformed service of 6,000 public health officers. Dr. Murthy has drawn attention to critical, underappreciated health issues, including the epidemic of loneliness, the impact of social media on youth mental health, parental mental health and well-being, and health worker burnout. In 2020, he published Together: The Healing Power of Human Connection in a Sometimes Lonely World. Dr. Murthy's 2025 "Parting Prescription to America" laid out a vision for rebuilding community as the key to health, happiness, and fulfillment. Raised in Miami, Dr. Murthy graduated from Harvard College and received his MD from the Yale School of Medicine and his MBA from the Yale School of Management. He trained in internal medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School.



COLUM McCANN is a National Book Award-winning author of *Let* the *Great World Spin* and several other international works including *Apeirogon* and *TransAtlantic*. His newest novel *Twist* was published in March 2025. His work has been published in over 40 languages. He is the co-founder of the global nonprofit Narrative 4, which uses storytelling to help young people transform their communities. Originally from Ireland, Colum lives with his family in New York City.



EVAN OSNOS is a staff writer at *The New Yorker* and a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. His new book, *The Haves and Have-Yachts: Dispatches on the Ultrarich*, was published in June 2025. Based in Washington, D.C., he writes about politics and foreign affairs. Prior to *The New Yorker*, he was the Beijing bureau chief of the *Chicago Tribune*, where he shared two Pulitzer Prizes. Osnos's first book, *Age of Ambition: Chasing Fortune, Truth, and Faith in the New China*, won the 2014 National Book Award and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. In 2020, he published *Joe Biden: The Life, the Run, and What Matters Now.* The following year, he published *Wildland: The Making of America's Fury.*



LIZ MOORE's first novel, The Words of Every Song (2007), explores a fictional record company in New York City and was selected for Borders' Original Voices program. The New Yorker praised the original voice of her second novel, Heft (2012). Following her MFA from Hunter College and a residency at the University of Pennsylvania, Moore published The Unseen World (2016), which garnered accolades from The New York Times and was included in numerous "Best of 2016" lists. Her fourth novel, Long Bright River (2020), was a Good Morning America Book Club Pick and one of Barack Obama's favorite books of the year. The God of the Woods, Moore's literary thriller, was The New York Times best crime novel of 2024. A winner of the 2014 Rome Prize in Literature and an Edgar Award and L.A. Times Book Prize nominee, Moore lives in Philadelphia, where she directs the MFA program in Creative Writing at Temple University.



TODD S. PURDUM is a journalist and author with more than 40 years' experience writing about politics, history, popular culture, and national affairs. He is a former staff writer and California correspondent for *The Atlantic*. Purdum was a senior writer at *Politico*, and a contributing editor at *Vanity Fair*, and spent 23 years with *The New York Times*, where he covered politics from city hall to the White House. Purdum is the author of four books, including the latest, *Desi Arnaz: The Man Who Invented Television*, published in June 2025. He is also the author of *Something Wonderful: Rodgers and Hammerstein's Broadway Revolution*, and *An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents*, *Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964*. Purdum lives in Los Angeles with his wife, Dee Dee Myers.



SONIA PURNELL is a prize-winning author, broadcaster, and journalist. Her first book, the unauthorized biography of Boris Johnson called Just Boris: A Tale of Blond Ambition, was longlisted for the Orwell Prize in 2011. Her second book, First Lady: The Life and Wars of Clementine Churchill, sheds light on the vital role played in Winston Churchill's career, by his wife, Clementine. A Woman of No Importance, Purnell's third work, is the inspirational true-life tale of a female spy in WWII, Virginia Hall, a young American socialite who helped fan the flames of the French Resistance. Her latest book, Kingmaker: Pamela Harriman's Astonishing Life of Power, Seduction & Intrigue, is an electrifying reexamination of one of the 20th century's greatest unsung power players. Harriman helped shape great world events during and after WWII. Purnell has been elected as a fellow of the Royal Historical Society.



NAYANTARA ROY is the author of *The Magnificent Ruins*, which was a *New York Times* Editor's Choice Novel of 2024, a *Los Angeles Times* Editor's Pick, a *Washington Post* Best Book, a *People Magazine* Best Book, an *Apple Best Debut*, a Hachette Book Club pick, and a Gold House Book Club pick, among others. *The Magnificent Ruins* is being adapted for the screen. Her second novel, *Sisters of the Halved Heart*, is forthcoming in the spring of 2026. In 2018, Roy won the Rick DeMarinis Award for her short story *8C*. Her plays have been performed internationally, in the UK and India. By day, she is the Senior Vice President of Television at Sandbox Entertainment where she acquires and develops original scripted series. Roy lives in Silver Lake, Los Angeles.



PAOLA RAMOS is an author and Emmy Award-winning journalist, contributing to *Telemundo News* and MSNBC as the host of *Field Report*. She has served as a former Correspondent for Vice News, covering events from the southern border to the Darien Jungle, and has embedded with Mexican cartels and the Proud Boys. Previously, she was the Deputy Director of Hispanic Media for Hillary Clinton's 2016 Presidential Campaign and held roles during the Obama Administration, including in his 2012 re-election campaign. Ramos authored two books: *DEFECTORS*: The Rise of the Latino Far Right and What It Means for America and Finding Latin-X: In Search of the Voices Redefining Latino Identity. She earned her B.A. from Barnard College and a Master in Public Policy from Harvard Kennedy School, where she was a Hauser Leader. Ramos is Cuban, Mexican, and American and resides in Brooklyn, NY.



SALMAN RUSHDIE is the author of 22 books, including Midnight's Children (for which he won the Best of the Booker Prize), Shame, The Satanic Verses, and Quichotte, all of which have been shortlisted for the Booker Prize. His most recent book, Knife: Meditations After an Attempted Murder, was a finalist for the 2024 National Book Award for Nonfiction. Rushdie has received numerous accolades, such as the Whitbread Prize for Best Novel (awarded twice), the PEN/Allen Foundation Literary Service Award, and the French Prix du Meilleur Livre Étranger. In 2007, he was honored with a Knighthood and was made a Companion of Honour in 2022. Rushdie is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and a former president of PEN America. In 2023, Rushdie received the Friedenspreis des Deutschen Buchhandels and was named one of TIME's 100 Most Influential People of the Year.



RUTH REICHL began writing about food in 1972 with Mmmmm: A Feastiary. In 1973, she co-owned The Swallow Restaurant in Berkeley, California. By 1978, Reichl was a restaurant critic for New West and California magazines. She was the restaurant critic and later food editor of the Los Angeles Times and then the restaurant critic of The New York Times from 1993 to 1999. In 1999, Reichl became editor in chief of Gourmet Magazine for ten years. She has published five memoirs, including Tender at the Bone and Save Me the Plums, and authored the novel Delicious! and the cookbook My Kitchen Year. She also edited Best American Food Writing 2018 and produced Adventures with Ruth. Reichl has won seven James Beard Awards. Her latest projects include The Paris Novel and the documentary Food and Country. Reichl also produces a weekly newsletter, La Briffe, on Substack.



THEODORE H. SCHWARTZ, MD is a neurosurgeon/neuroscientist living in New York City. For the last 25 years, he was the David and Ursel Barnes Endowed Professor of Minimally Invasive Neurosurgery at Weill Cornell Medicine, one of the busiest and highest-ranked neurosurgery centers in the world. He has published over five hundred scientific articles and chapters on neurosurgery and has lectured around the world—from Bogotá to Vienna to Mumbai—on new, minimally invasive surgical techniques that he helped develop. He also ran a basic science laboratory devoted to epilepsy research and is now the CEO of a Med Tech start-up. He studied philosophy and literature at Harvard.



SAFIYA SINCLAIR was born and raised in Montego Bay, Jamaica. She is the author of the memoir How to Say Babylon, which won the National Book Critics Circle Award and the OCM Bocas Prize for Caribbean Literature. The memoir was a finalist for the Women's Prize for Nonfiction and included on over 17 Best Books of 2023 lists, such as The New York Times, Washington Post, and TIME Magazine. It was named one of President Barack Obama's Favorite Books of 2023. Sinclair is also known for her poetry collection Cannibal, which garnered several awards, including the Whiting Award and the OCM Bocas Prize for Caribbean Poetry. She received a Guggenheim Fellowship and a Pushcart Prize, among other honors from esteemed institutions. Sinclair's work has been featured in prominent publications, including The New Yorker and Harper's Bazaar. She is currently a Professor of Creative Writing at Arizona State University.



YAEL VAN DER WOUDEN is a writer and teacher based in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. Her debut novel, *The Safekeep*, won the 2025 Goldberg Prize for Debut Fiction and the 2025 Women's Prize for Fiction. It was a finalist for the 2024 Booker Prize and 2025 Aspen Words Literary Prize. *The Safekeep* is shortlisted for the Walter Scott Prize, and the Dylan Thomas Prize and has been sold in 22 languages.



ADMIRAL JAMES STAVRIDIS is Partner and Vice Chair, Global Affairs of The Carlyle Group and Chair of the Rockefeller Foundation Board of Trustees, and the 12th Dean of The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. A retired four-star officer in the U.S. Navy, from 2009 to 2013, he led the NATO Alliance as Supreme Allied Commander overseeing operations in Afghanistan, Libya, and Syria. Admiral Stavridis also served as Commander of U.S. Southern Command from 2006-2009 for all military operations in Latin America. During his 37-year military career, he earned more than 50 medals, including 28 from foreign nations. He has published fifteen books, including 2034: A Novel of the Next World War and To Risk It All: Nine Conflicts and the Crucible of Decision. His recent books are The Restless Wave: A Novel of the United States Navy (2024) and The Admiral's Bookshelf (2025). Admiral Stavridis is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist and Senior Military Analyst for CNN.



Physician-writer **ABRAHAM VERGHESE** is the Linda Meir and Joan Lane Professor in the Department of Medicine at Stanford University and director of PRESENCE, a research center exploring the art and science of human connection. He is the author of the nonfiction books *My Own Country* and *The Tennis Partner*. Verghese's debut novel *Cutting for Stone* was named as one of Amazon's "100 Books to Read in a Lifetime." His most recent novel, *The Covenant of Water*, was a *Kirkus Reviews* Best Book of 2023 and one of Audible's 2023 Best Audiobooks (read by Verghese). Oprah selected *The Covenant of Water* for her Book Club and optioned the movie rights; it is in production with Netflix. Verghese is an elected member of the National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medicine and the American Academy of Arts & Letters. In 2016, President Obama honored him with a National Humanities Medal.



WRIGHT THOMPSON is a senior writer for ESPN and an Emmy Award-winning reporter. He is the author of Pappyland: A Story of Family, Fine Bourbon, and the Things That Last, The Cost of These Dreams: Sports Stories and Other Serious Business, and his latest book, The Barn: The Secret History of a Murder in Mississippi. He lives in Oxford, Mississippi, with his family.



OCEAN VUONG is a writer, professor, and photographer known for his novels *The Emperor of Gladness* and *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*, which won the American Book Award and The Mark Twain Award. He has been nominated for the National Book Award and received a MacArthur "Genius" Grant. Vuong is also the author of poetry collections, including *Time Is a Mother*, a finalist for the Griffin Prize, and *Night Sky with Exit Wounds*, a *New York Times* Top 10 Book that won the T.S. Eliot Prize. His numerous honors include fellowships from the Lannan Foundation and the Poetry Foundation. Born in Saigon, Vietnam and raised in Hartford, Connecticut in a working class family of nail salon and factory laborers, he currently serves as a Professor in Modern Poetry and Poetics in the MFA Program at NYU.

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2025 MODERATORS 2025 MODERATORS



LIAQUAT AHAMED is the author of the 2010 Pulitzer Prize-winning Lords of Finance: The Bankers Who Broke the World, which explores the events leading up to the Great Depression of 1929-1932. Also awarded the Council on Foreign Relations Arthur Ross Gold Medal and the Financial Times Best Business Book of the Year Award in 2009. Ahamed is currently writing a book about the 1873 crisis. He is the Board Chair of the Sun Valley Writers' Conference and resides in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. with his wife, Meena, who is also a writer.



JEFFREY BROWN is an award-winning senior correspondent and chief arts correspondent for the PBS *NewsHour*, public television's national nightly newscast. For more than 30 years with the program, he has served as co-anchor, studio moderator, and field reporter on a wide range of national and international issues. Brown's work has taken him around the country and to numerous parts of the globe. He has profiled many of the world's leading writers, musicians, actors, and other artists. A poet, Brown is the author of the collection, *The News*.



AYAD AKHTAR is a novelist and playwright, author of McNeal, Disgraced, Junk, Homeland Elegies, among other works. Winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Drama, the Edith Wharton Citation of Merit for Fiction, and an Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, his work has been published and performed in more than two dozen languages. He serves on the boards of the American Academy in Rome, PEN America, Yaddo, and most recently, the Sun Valley Writers' Conference.



ALEKSANDRA CRAPANZANO is a cookbook writer, screenwriter, and The Wall Street Journal food columnist. Recipient of the M.F.K. Fisher Award for Distinguished Writing from the James Beard Foundation and the Best in World Gourmand Cookbook Awards, she is the author of The London Cookbook, Eat. Cook. L.A., Gâteau: The Surprising Simplicity of French Cakes, and the forthcoming Chocolat. Crapanzano's work has been widely anthologized, most notably in Best American Food Writing, and her essays may be found in most of the major magazines, including The New York Times Magazine, The Atlantic, and Bon Appetit. She serves on the board of Naturally New York and consults in the food space. Crapanzano is married to the writer John Burnham Schwartz, and they live in New York City with their son, Garrick.



DAVE BARRY is a Pulitzer Prize-winning humorist. For many years, he wrote a newspaper column that appeared in more than 500 newspapers. Barry has written many popular books, including Lessons from Lucy and the novels Swamp Story, Big Trouble, Lunatics, Tricky Business, and Insane City. Two of his books were the basis for the CBS sitcom Dave's World. With co-author Ridley Pearson, Barry wrote the young-adult series of Starcatchers novels. Rick Elice adapted the first book as a Broadway play, Peter and the Starcatcher, which won five Tony Awards. Barry's memoir, Class Clown: The Memoirs of a Professional Wiseass: How I Went 77 Years Without Growing Up, was published in May. He plays guitar in the Rock Bottom Remainders, a barely competent rock band made up of authors, sometimes including Stephen King. These days Barry writes columns on Substack, creatively named Dave Barry's Substack. He lives in Florida and likes it there despite what everybody says.



JENNY EMERY DAVIDSON grew up in Twin Falls, Idaho. She earned a bachelor's degree at Carleton College in Minnesota while working on a wildland fire crew back home in Idaho each summer. Davidson then ventured into journalism before pursuing a doctorate degree in American Studies at the University of Utah. She taught and worked in administrative roles at the College of Southern Idaho for a dozen years, during which time she also served a Fulbright Fellowship in Mexico. Since 2014, she has served as the executive director of The Community Library in Ketchum. This privately funded public library includes the Wood River Museum of History and Culture and the historic Ernest and Mary Hemingway House and Preserve.

2025 MODERATORS 2025 MODERATORS



ANDREA ELLIOTT is a two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative reporter for *The New York Times* and the author of *Invisible Child:*Poverty, Survival & Hope in an American City, which won the 2022

Pulitzer Prize in General Nonfiction and was chosen by President Barack

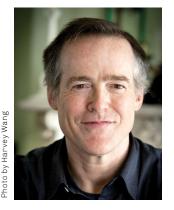
Obama as a favorite book of the year. Elliott is also the recipient of a 2007

Pulitzer Prize for feature writing, a George Polk Award, the J. Anthony

Lukas Book Prize, and an Overseas Press Club award. In 2023 and 2024, she was a writer in residence at Princeton University, where she taught creative nonfiction. She lives in New York City with her daughters, Ava and Clara, and their dog, Charlie.



WILLY WALKER is chairman and chief executive officer of Walker & Dunlop. Under his leadership, the company has grown from a small, family-owned business to become one of the largest commercial real estate finance and advisory service firms in the United States and internationally. Walker received the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year award in 2011, was named "Financier of the Year" in 2017 and 2020 by Commercial Property Executive, and was selected as a Most Admired CEO by the Denver Business Journal in 2024. He is a graduate of St. Lawrence University and holds an MBA from Harvard. Walker serves on the board of the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Foundation. He created and hosts the Walker Webcast, that has over 16M views and 200 episodes. The weekly webcast brings brilliant minds from broad and varied backgrounds to share "Insights for Life."



SCOTT MOYERS is President and Publisher of Penguin Press, an imprint of Penguin Random House USA. He began his career in book publishing as an editorial assistant at Doubleday in 1991, and has also worked at Scribner, Random House and the Wylie Agency. He lives in Brooklyn, NY, with his family.



MARTHA WILLIAMS is the director of programs and education at The Community Library in Ketchum. Raised in Fayetteville, Arkansas, she has called the Wood River Valley home since 2009. Williams holds a B.A. in English from Vanderbilt University and a Master of Liberal Arts from Johns Hopkins University. She also writes essays and short fiction, leads writing workshops through the library, and enjoys connecting readers and writers.



ALEXANDRA SCHWARTZ is a staff writer at *The New Yorker*, where she writes frequently on books and the arts, and is a host of the magazine's flagship culture podcast, *Critics at Large*. She is a winner of the Nona Balakian Citation for Excellence in Reviewing, awarded by the National Book Critics Circle.



It is deeply refreshing to be at an event like SVWC that has gender parity in the speakers, and where a third are people of color. It does not go unnoticed, and it makes your conference stronger.

— Ed Yong, Past SVWC Presenter

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS SVWC NEW VOICES FELLOWSHIP



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2025 Writer in the World Prize



SALMAN RUSHDIE is this year's recipient of the Sun Valley Writers' Conference Writer in the World Prize.

The Prize is given in recognition of a writer's contributions to world literature. In keeping with the founding goal of the Conference, we celebrate the importance and lasting beauty of words in all forms.

With this unique feature of our program, we gather around the Pavilion stage to personally honor some of the greatest writers of our time and their vast gifts to society and we pay tribute to the value of free expression.

By charter, the Prize "recognizes a writer whose life's work embodies a rare combination of literary talent and moral imagination, helping us to better understand the world and our place in it." Past recipients include Barry Lopez in 2021, Abraham Verghese in 2023, and Margaret Atwood in 2024.

SVWC New Voices Fellowship

Our New Voices Fellowship program provides a rich literary experience for some of our country's finest emerging talent. We are pleased to announce the 2025 New Voices who are joining us as presenters: NAYANTARA ROY and YAEL VAN DER WOUDEN. Their ambitious, piercingly smart debut novels, *The Magnificent Ruins* and *Safekeep*, are intellectually and emotionally captivating and have generated unanimous praise and excitement.

The New Voices Fellowship program is generously supported by the Grossman Family Foundation in honor of Peggy Grossman.



Your team truly pulls off magic, and I'm grateful to have been a small part of experiencing it.

— Alejandra Campoverdi, SVWC 2024 Presenter

SVWC FELLOWS SVWC FELLOWS



SVWC Writing Fellows

SVWC is committed to bringing diverse and aspiring writers to the Conference and providing them with inspiration and direction as they embark on their own creative paths. Our 2025 program welcomes eight Writing Fellows from programs that include Boise State University, Iowa Writers' Workshop, and the Institute of American Indian Arts.

TRACY ABEYTA is a third-grade dropout who didn't get a GED but did snag an MFA from the Institute for American Indian Arts. She's published short stories in *Hobart Pulp*, *The Brooklyn Review*, *Diagram*, *Boston Review*, *Epoch*, and *Prairie Schooner*. Abeyta has received support to attend Breadloaf, Kenyon Review, the Fine Arts Work Center, and Tin House. An excerpt from her book, *Calavera*, was a top ten finalist for *The Sewanee Review*'s Nonfiction Contest. Abeyta teaches literature and lives in Oakland with a free-roaming lionhead rabbit, Betty, who is two pounds but can eat a tunnel through a couch.

DEESOUL CARSON is a poet and educator from San Diego, CA, currently residing in Brooklyn, NY. His work is featured in *Muzzle Magazine*, *AGNI*, *The Offing*, and elsewhere. His chapbook, *Running From Streetlights* (2020), is a meditation on Blackness in America during the "Summer of Racial Reckoning." A Stanford University alum, Carson has received fellowships from the NYU MFA program, the Watering Hole, and the National Endowment for the Arts. His debut full-length poetry collection, *The Laughing Barrel*, is forthcoming from Alice James Books in spring 2027. Find more of his work at deesoulpoetry.com

YOHANCA DELGADO's recent fiction appears in The Best American Short Stories 2022, The O. Henry Prize Stories 2022, The Best American Science Fiction and Fantasy 2021, The Paris Review, One Story, A Public Space, McSweeney's, Zyzzyva, and elsewhere. Her recent essays appear in TIME, The Believer, and The New York Times Magazine. Delgado holds an MFA in Creative Writing from American University and is a graduate of the Clarion workshop and the National Book Critics Circle Emerging Fellows program. She is a recent Wallace Stegner fiction fellow at Stanford University and a 2022 National Endowment for the Arts fellow.

JUNGIN ANGIE LEE is a recent graduate of the Iowa Writers' Workshop, where she earned an MFA in fiction. Her writing has been supported by the University of Iowa, Vermont Studio Center, Ragdale Foundation, Tin House Summer Workshop, Napa Valley Writers' Conference, and elsewhere.

LEWIS MILLHOLLAND is a writer, former journalist, and maker of bad video games. His fiction and essays have appeared in journals including *Passages North*, *DIAGRAM*, and *The Garlic Press*. Currently, he is an MFA candidate at Boise State University, where he lives with a stolen (rescued) jade plant. His work can be read online at lewismillholland.com

CHARLES PINEDA was born and raised near New Orleans, LA. After achieving his first master's degree for Film & Theatre in the UK, he worked for much of the last decade in entertainment and tech. Since turning to writing, his fiction, nonfiction, and poetry can be seen from such varied outlets as *The Hooghly Review*, *IdaHome Magazine*, *Shotgun Honey*, and several others, with work currently nominated for the 2025 Best Small Fictions anthology. An MFA candidate at Boise State University, he lives in Idaho with his dog, Luna.

KATE SOULLIERE is an MFA candidate in Fiction at the Iowa Writers' Workshop, where she teaches undergraduate creative writing and is a recipient of the James Patterson Scholarship.

KAREN VARGAS is a writer and a weaver from the Upper Rio Grande in Taos, New Mexico, and an MFA fiction candidate at the Institute of American Indian Arts. Her poetry and short fiction have been published in *Epoch*, *Terrain*, *BorderLore Journal*, *Pleiades Magazine* (forthcoming), and others. She is the recipient of an Elizabeth George Foundation Grant, a Truman Capote Award, and a Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics Summer Exchange Fellowship. Vargas lives six miles east of the Rio Grande Gorge and is working on a first book of fiction.



SPECIAL ATTRACTIONS SPECIAL ATTRACTIONS



Typewriter Rodeo

Saturday: 9:00 AM – 12:30 PM Sunday: 12:00 – 1:30 PM

Monday: 12:00 – 1:30 PM & 5:30 – 6:30 PM

We are fortunate to have the poets from Typewriter Rodeo return this year. They have written poems from Maine to Mexico, festivals to fancy corporate galas, kid-friendly ones to adult feisty ones. The poets are based in Austin, Texas, but they travel extensively. **REBECCA BENDHEIM**, **LACOLE FOOTS**, and **SEAN PETRIE** will be creating custom, on-the-spot poems in a special tent on the Pavilion lawn at the times noted above throughout the weekend. And they will be doing it on vintage typewriters. Each poem is a moment of authentic, individual connection that often results in laughter, high-fives, even hugs and tears.





Art & Words Exhibition

Saturday: 11:45 AM - 12:15 PM Sunday: 12:15 - 12:45 PM Monday: 12:45 - 1:15 PM

Back by popular demand, *Art & Words* returns to the Sun Valley Pavilion West Terrace—a celebration of the book as a work of art. This exhibition features handmade artists' books, altered books, and other creative works that explore our deep connection to the book as a cherished object.

"A book is a self-contained unit of expression that instructs, communicates, enlightens, and entertains," says curator **DONNA SEAGER**. "In both material and content, books remain a rich source of inspiration for artists everywhere." Seager, who has curated bookrelated art exhibitions for over 20 years, brings together works that resonate with the themes and passions of many of our conference presenters.

The Sun Valley Writers' Conference has long embraced the book as a medium for artistic expression. This tradition was inspired by **CAROLEE CAMPBELL**—custom bookmaker, founder of Ninja Press, and a dear friend and longtime supporter of SVWC. Over the years, Carolee has created exquisite broadsides as gifts for benefactors, featuring texts from some of the remarkable writers who have taken our stage, including W.S. Merwin, Billy Collins, Michael Ondaatje, Naomi Shihab Nye, Kay Ryan, Roy Blount Jr., and Tom Cahill.

This year, we are proud to honor Carolee by showcasing a selection of these rare and beautiful works.

SVWC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH SCHOLARSHIPS



SVWC SPARK

Thanks to the generous support of donors, we have expanded and enhanced our free outreach programming in Blaine County and the Wood River Valley. The goal of our new **SPARK** initiatives, listed below, is to ignite a love of words and a sense of wonder, sharing the experiences, inspiration, and learning offered by SVWC with a broader community, especially in the schools. We hope that more young people and educators will be inspired to dive into literature and share it with others, weaving the knowledge, interactions, and experiences they gain from these programs into their daily lives.



SCHOOL SPEAKER

In April, **ALEJANDRA CAMPOVERDI** returned to the Wood River Valley (WRV) to visit with students and teachers from five local schools. She also spoke at the Hailey Public Library.

COMMUNITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Providing four scholarship passes to Blaine County students and educators to attend the full Conference via an application process.

LOCAL LIBRARIANS

Full Conference passes are given to the three Wood River Valley libraries.

STUDENTS & EDUCATORS

All WRV students and educators are invited to attend any Pavilion talk for free (as space is available).

STUDENT & PRESENTER PRIVATE LUNCH

WRV high school students receive copies of a presenter's book and are invited to attend the presentation and private luncheon with the author. This year's presenter is **ERLING KAGGE** with his book, *After the North Pole*.



Memorial Scholarship Passes

The **BARBARA AND JIM CIMINO SCHOLARSHIP** annually provides a full Conference pass to the Executive Director of The Community Library, **JENNY EMERY DAVIDSON**.

In memory of SVWC's good friend and longtime bookseller, the **GARY ALLEN HUNT SCHOLARSHIP** has provided a full 2025 Conference pass to **KAREN OSWALT**.



Boise State University Scholarship Fund

The **BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY BOOKSTORE** has managed the bookstore at the Conference for several years. All profits from book sales during SVWC are donated back to the school's scholarship fund. Since the partnership began in 2016, that amount has grown to total over \$120,000. Scholarship funds are used to underwrite expenses for the two **BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY WRITING FELLOWS** who attend SVWC each year.

SVWC FREE SVWC ONLINE



SVWC Free

At SVWC, we are proud to call the Sun Valley area home. We work closely with other members of the community, collaborating with the area's schools, libraries, and nonprofit organizations. Thanks to continued donor support, we are able to provide free access to much of the SVWC content.



In partnership with The Community Library in Ketchum, SVWC hosts an annual series of free lectures for the local community. Speakers this year include **SONIA PURNELL** and **RUTH REICHL**.



The local community is invited to join us for free **LAWN TALKS** throughout the weekend, when major Pavilion presentations are broadcast live to the big screen at no charge.



Most Pavilion talks are available for **FREE LIVESTREAMING** from anywhere via **SVWC.COM**.





SVWC Live Watch Party

Back by popular demand, we are simulcasting a selection of Pavilion presentations live to the Argyros Performing Arts Center in Ketchum for the community with the purchase of a \$25/day pass. (SVWC passholders can attend for free if open seats are available.) Please view the program or **SVWC.COM** for the exact schedule of talks.



SVWC Online



Enjoy free episodes of our **BEYOND THE PAGE PODCAST**, offering the best of the Sun Valley Writers' Conference, hosted throughout the year by our Literary Director John Burnham Schwartz.



Our website media library includes **VIDEO RECORDINGS** of Pavilion presentations as well as **ORIGINAL FILMS**, all available to view for free.



Tune into the website for free **AUDIO RECORDINGS** of Pavilion presentations and breakout sessions.

PLEASE NOTE: All recordings from 2025 presentations will be posted on the website soon after the Conference. SVWC only posts content approved by the presenters.

SVWC TEAM SVWC TEAM



SVWC Program Team



LITERARY DIRECTOR

JOHN BURNHAM SCHWARTZ is the author of six novels, including The Red Daughter, The Commoner, and Reservation Road, which was made into a film based on his screenplay. A recipient of a Lyndhurst Prize for mastery in the art of fiction, his books have been translated into 20 languages. Schwartz's extensive screen and television writing includes screenwriter for HBO Films' The Wizard of Lies, nominee for the 2018 Writers Guild of America Award for Outstanding Writing. He is the longtime Literary Director of the Sun Valley Writers' Conference, editor at large at Penguin Press, and host and co-producer of the literary podcast Beyond the Page: The Best of the Sun Valley Writers' Conference.



ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

ANNE TAYLOR FLEMING, a longtime essayist for The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer, is a commentator and writer whose work has appeared in The New York Times, The New Yorker, and Vogue. She is the author of the memoir Motherhood Deferred: A Woman's Journey and two works of fiction, the novellas Marriage: A Duet and the novel As If Love Were Enough. Fleming's 1978 profile of the gifted and controversial writer Truman Capote for The New York Times Magazine, "The Private World of Truman Capote," is one of the literary profiles in the new collection What Makes Sammy Jr. Run?: Classic Celebrity Journalism Volume 1 (1960s and 1970s) by Alex Belth (Editor).



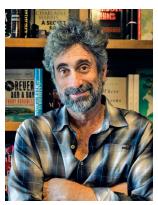
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In her roles as SVWC Executive Director and board member, **ROBIN R. EIDSMO** oversees all operations and donor relations and has been with the Conference since its very early years. Prior to joining SVWC, she was in public relations and television marketing in Boston and New York City. Robin holds a master's degree in education from Harvard University and lives in Monterey, California, with her husband Erik. They have one son, Bentley.



BOARD MEMBER & PROGRAM ADVISOR

Active in literary circles in Los Angeles for many years, **KELLY ANDERSON** has served on the Advisory Board and author selection committee of the Beverly Hills Literary Society and the UCLA English Department's Board of Visitors. She has also served as President of the Council of the Library Foundation and, since 2017, as Author Chair for the Council's biennial Literary Feasts, which support the 72 Los Angeles Public Libraries.



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MITCHELL KAPLAN is the recipient of the Literarian Award for Outstanding Service to the American Literary Community from the National Book Foundation for his work as founder and president of Books & Books in Miami, Florida, one of America's most important series of bookstores. He is also the co-founder of the Miami Book Fair.

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2025 Conference Advisors

Each year we invite a small group of people who add value to the Conference in myriad ways. Many have literary connections, others give us strategic advice about how to shape the Conference experience, increase our reach, or attract a wider and/or younger audience. Each serve for a renewable one-year term, offering their guidance and counsel.

AYAD AKHTAR is a novelist and Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright. He serves on the boards of the American Academy in Rome, PEN America, Yaddo, and most recently the Sun Valley Writers' Conference.

JEFFREY BROWN is an award-winning senior correspondent at the PBS *NewsHour*. He has profiled many of the world's leading writers, musicians, actors, and other artists.

LOUISE DENNYS began her own publishing house at the age of 25, founded Knopf and Vintage in Canada, and today is Publisher Emerita, Penguin Random House Canada.

JEN LEE KOSS is a Founding Partner of Springbank, an early stage venture fund, and an advisor to and board member of public and private companies in the consumer, retail, and real estate industries throughout North America and Europe.

SCOTT MOYERS is the vice president and publisher of Penguin Press, a division of Penguin Random House.

EVAN OSNOS is a staff writer at *The New Yorker* and a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, who writes about politics and foreign affairs.

TODD S. PURDUM is a journalist and author with more than 40 years' experience writing about politics, history, popular culture, and national affairs.

ABRAHAM VERGHESE, is an author and an infectious disease physician at Stanford University. He is the founder and director of PRESENCE, a research center exploring the art and science of human connection.

RIC YOUNG is one of Canada's leading practitioners and thinkers in the field of paradigm-shifting social change, working on such issues as Social Trust. He is also co-founder of the United Nations award-winning Nashulai Maasai Conservancy in Kenya.

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