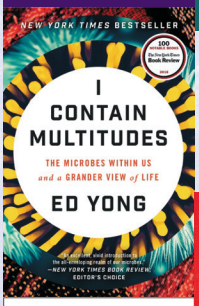
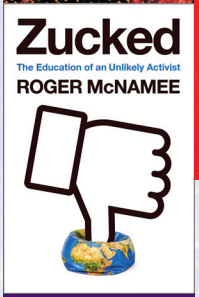
EST. 1844
175
UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY
State University of New York

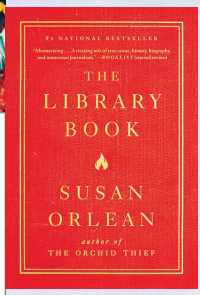
University at Albany 175th Anniversary Celebration

T.C. Boyle

Charlayne Woodard







VISITING WRITERS SERIES

Steven Pinker
Charlayne Woodard
Ibi Zoboi
Mike Reiss
Christopher Castellani
Lauren Wilkinson
Ed Yong
Samuel Delany
Sally Helgesen
Susan Orlean
Mark Nepo
Roger McNamee
Alexia Arthurs
Dan-El Padilla Peralta
Sarah Kessler
Richard Russo
T.C. Boyle
Pamela Paul
Khary Lazarre-White
Reif Larsen
Tom Junod

NEW YORK STATE WRITERS INSTITUTE
UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY State University of New York

SPECIAL EVENTS

The Lessons of Hurricane Maria
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration
The Creative Life Series
Authors Theatre
The Art of Songwriting

Events Calendar Spring 2019

GREETINGS FROM THE DIRECTOR

We are pleased to dedicate our spring 2019 events calendar to a celebration of the 175th anniversary of the founding of the University at Albany in 1844. We are proud to play a key role in a yearlong series of commemorative events on campus.

The New York State Writers Institute is grateful to UAlbany for providing a permanent home, supporting our diverse programming, and forging a collaborative spirit that has allowed the Writers Institute to flourish. Together, we have built a reputation as one of the nation's premier literary presenting organizations during 35 years of bringing the world's finest writers to campus – while keeping our events free and open to the public.

The remarkable milestone of UAlbany's 175th anniversary deserves our attention. After all, how often do you get to invoke the word *demisemiseptcentennial*? Tongue-twisting terminology aside, the 175th anniversary is worth observing across the Capital Region and beyond. UAlbany has developed into one of the nation's most diverse public research universities and it makes a global impact through award-winning research and scholarship. It offers students more than 1,000 study abroad opportunities in 60 countries (Antarctica to Tanzania). The achievements of its far-flung graduates – more than 180,500 living alumni across all 50 states and 138 countries – represent the promise and value of a UAlbany degree.

It is fitting that we chose to mark the 175th anniversary with a superlative lineup of writers, filmmakers, scholars and thought leaders. Two months after UAlbany's founding in 1844 as the State Normal School to train generations of future teachers, it spent its first donation of $300 to purchase books and open a library. In that spirit, we are bringing acclaimed author **Susan Orlean** on March 1 to talk about her new bestseller, *The Library Book*, an investigation into the 1986 fire that destroyed the Los Angeles Public Library and a meditation on the indispensable role that libraries play in our lives and communities.

We are bringing distinguished UAlbany alumni back to campus: **Mark Nepo** D.A. '80 (March 5-6); **Michael Eck** '86 (April 26); and **Tom Junod** '80 (May 3). We also are featuring UAlbany's nationally recognized disaster preparedness experts on a January 28 panel discussion, led by **UAlbany President Havidán Rodríguez**, discussing lessons learned from Hurricane Maria that devastated Puerto Rico in the fall of 2017.

Charlayne Woodard, Albany's own star of stage and screen, will present the 23rd Annual Burian Lecture on February 4. Leading civil rights activist and author **Rev. Dr. William Barber II** will highlight a Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. celebration with a lecture on February 13. We kick off our 175th anniversary celebration on January 24 with **Steven Pinker**, bestselling author, renowned cognitive neuroscientist and an influential public intellectual.

As we mark 175 years of growth at UAlbany, we remain committed to our founding goal of instilling knowledge in others in order to make a better world. We remain a place committed to diverse voices, where great minds are at work turning possibilities into promise. We invite all students to author their own success. We salute this great university and we are proud to be part of it.

Paul Grondahl

Events are free and open to the public and take place on the University at Albany's Uptown Campus, unless otherwise noted. Events are subject to change.
Refer to page 23 for information on free On-Campus parking for events.

For the latest information on event updates, video clips, and literary news, visit our website: **http://nyswritersinstitute.org/**

JANUARY

EST. 1844 175 UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY State University of New York

University at Albany 175th Anniversary Celebration

ENLIGHTENMENT NOW:
THE CASE FOR REASON, SCIENCE, HUMANISM AND PROGRESS

January 24 (Thursday)

Steven Pinker

Neuroscientist and bestselling author

175th Anniversary Keynote Presentation — 7:30 p.m., Page Hall, 135 Western Avenue, Downtown Campus

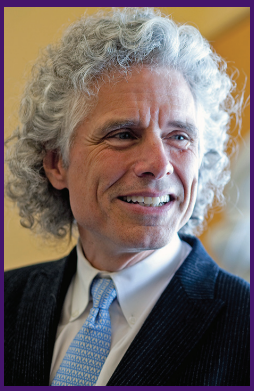


Photo: Rose Lincoln/Harvard University

Steven Pinker, cognitive neuroscientist, is one of the world's most influential thinkers on the subjects of language, mind, behavior, and what it means to be human. His new book is *Enlightenment Now* (2018), a passionate argument for the enduring values of reason and science in the face of resurgent anti-intellectualism, prejudice, and magical thinking. Bill Gates called it, "my new favorite book of all time," and Michael Shermer, writing for *Science*, called it, "the most uplifting work of science I've ever read." Pinker's previous books include *How the Mind Works* (1997), *The Better Angels of Our Nature* (2011) and *The Sense of Style: The Thinking Person's Guide to Writing in the 21st Century* (2014).

FILM

January 25 (Friday)

WATER

Screening — 7:30 p.m., Page Hall, 135 Western Avenue, Downtown Campus

(Canada/India, 2005, 117 minutes, color) Directed by Deepa Mehta. Starring Seema Biswas, Lisa Ray, John Abraham.

Set in rural India under British colonial rule, this Oscar-nominated film explores the lives of women and girls who are compelled by tradition to live in poverty and renunciation following the deaths of their husbands. The film begins when 8-year-old child bride Chuyia is widowed and sent to live in a temple in the holy city of Varanasi.

January 28 (Monday)

THE LESSONS OF HURRICANE MARIA

"Puerto Rico: The Hurricane, the Response, and Preparing for Future Disasters"

Panel Discussion and Q&A — 7:30 p.m.,
Page Hall, 135 Western Avenue, Downtown Campus

According to the National Center for Atmospheric Research, Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico with the destructive force of a "50- to 60-mile-wide tornado." In its wake, the storm left a shattered infrastructure, a crippled economy and a variety of public health emergencies. A distinguished panel from diverse fields will address questions regarding the ongoing humanitarian crisis and its lessons for the future. The panel will include:

Michelle Centeno, President of the National Conference of Puerto Rican Women (NACOPRW), and Senior Labor Policy Advisor for the NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS).

Robert Griffin, Founding Dean of the College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security, and Cyber Security (CEHC) at the University at Albany, the first college of its kind in the nation.

David Holtgrave, Dean of the School of Public Health at the University at Albany and former Chair of the Department of Health, Behavior and Society at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

Shao Lin, Professor of Environmental Health Science, Epidemiology and Biostatistics at the UAlbany School of Public Health, where her specialties include the impacts of climate change, extreme weather, and natural disasters.

Edwin Meléndez, Professor of Urban Affairs and Planning at Hunter College and the Director of the Center for Puerto Rican Studies, a major research and educational institution focusing on the Commonwealth and its diaspora.

Irwin Redlener, Director of the National Center for Disaster Preparedness at the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University, and creator of public health initiatives in the U.S. Gulf region ravaged by Hurricane Katrina.

Havidán Rodríguez, President of the University at Albany, former Director of the University of Delaware's Disaster Research Center, and an expert on the socioeconomic impacts of natural disasters.

Cosponsored by the Journalism Program of the Dept. of Communication.

FEBRUARY

FILM

February 1 (Friday)

CITY OF LIFE AND DEATH

Screening — 7:30 p.m., Page Hall, 135 Western Avenue, Downtown Campus

(China, 2009, 133 minutes, b/w)
Directed by Lu Chuan. Starring Ye Liu, Wei Fan, Hideo Nakaizumi.

Shot in luminous black and white, this award-winning film dramatizes the 1937 Japanese invasion of the city of Nanking, and the atrocities committed against its population. The *L. A. Times* reviewer called it, "truly a masterpiece in black and white and pain."

BURIAN LECTURE SERIES ON LIFE IN THE PERFORMING ARTS

February 4 (Monday)

Charlayne Woodard

Albany's own star of stage and screen

Craft talk — 4:15 p.m., Studio Theatre, Performing Arts Center

The 23rd Annual Burian Lecture — 8:00 p.m., Studio Theatre, Performing Arts Center

Charlayne Woodard, graduate of Albany High School, is a multi-talented writer and performer. As an actress, she received two Obie Awards for her work in THE WITCH OF EDMONTON and Suzan-Lori Parks' IN THE BLOOD, and a Tony Award nomination for her work in AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'. As a playwright, she's won multiple awards for her solo plays, including PRETTY FIRE, NEAT, IN REAL LIFE and THE NIGHT WATCHER. Her film credits include M. Night Shyamalan's GLASS and UNBREAKABLE, and John Sayles' SUNSHINE STATE. She plays the character of Helena St. Rogers on the new FX series POSE, and has portrayed recurring characters on LAW & ORDER: SPECIAL VICTIMS UNIT, ER, CHICAGO HOPE, THE FRESH PRINCE OF BEL-AIR, ROSEANNE and DAYS OF OUR LIVES. She also starred in the title role of CINDY, an ABC-TV movie adaptation of "Cinderella," featuring an all-Black cast.

Presented by the UAlbany Theatre Program and the Jarka and Grayce Burian Endowment in association with the NYS Writers Institute.

Photo: Joseph Zoboi

STORIES OF BEING YOUNG AND BLACK IN AMERICA

February 5 (Tuesday)

Ibi Zoboi

New star of Young Adult fiction

Craft Talk — 4:15 p.m., Multi-Purpose Room, Campus Center West Addition

Presentation/Q&A — 7:30 p.m., Recital Hall, Performing Arts Center

Ibi Zoboi was a National Book Award finalist for her first novel, *American Street* (2017), the story of a Haitian girl's immigration experience, and her new life in an American city. Her widely-acclaimed new novel, *Pride* (2018), is an Afro-Latino retelling of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, set in the Bushwick neighborhood of modern-day Brooklyn. *School Library Journal* said, "This excellent coming-of-age take on a classic belongs on all YA shelves." Zoboi is also editor of *Black Enough* (2019), a new collection of stories about what it's like to be young and Black in America, featuring contributions by 17 bestselling Black YA authors, including Jason Reynolds, Nic Stone, Justina Ireland and Zoboi herself.

Cosponsored by the UAlbany Student Association.

Photo: Matt Groening

A LIFETIME OF WRITING FOR *THE SIMPSONS*

February 8 (Friday)

Mike Reiss

Writer, producer and show-runner of THE SIMPSONS

Presentation/Conversation — 7:30 p.m., Page Hall, 135 Western Avenue, Downtown Campus

Mike Reiss, legendary TV comedy writer, is the longest-serving writer and producer of THE SIMPSONS, the most enduring primetime series in TV history. Reiss joined the show to work on the very first episode in 1989, and continues to be involved 30 years later. His new fan guide, *Springfield Confidential: Jokes, Secrets, and Outright Lies from a Lifetime Writing for The Simpsons* (2018), provides an inside look at the production team's creative process, and features interviews with fellow writers, as well as animators, actors and celebrity guests. "Always entertaining and frequently laugh-out-loud-hilarious" (*Booklist*).

"When I first saw the movie IRONWEED, I thought, you know, this is for me. But now, well, I'm not so sure."

– Moe Syzlak on bartending, Episode 3, Season 13, November 18, 2001.

2019 DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. CELEBRATION

February 13 (Wednesday)

Rev. Dr. William Barber II

Leading American Civil Rights activist and author

Celebration — 7:00 p.m., Campus Center Ballroom
[REGISTRATION REQUIRED]
Visit ualbany.universitytickets.com to register.

The Rev. Dr. William Barber II, brilliant orator and prominent figure in the current fight for civil rights and economic justice, is widely regarded as the leading heir to Dr. Martin Luther King's church-based activism in the present generation. In 2016, he delivered an electrifying speech at the Democratic National Convention. In 2018, he received the MacArthur "Genius" Award for his success in "building broad-based fusion coalitions as part of a moral movement to confront racial and economic inequality." Barber achieved national attention as architect of the Forward Together Moral Movement, which organized regular "Moral Monday" protests at the North Carolina state capitol beginning in 2013. His 2016 "Moral Day of Action" calling for nationwide protests constituted the largest coordinated action on state capitals in U.S. history. He is the Founder and President of the national, progressive, faith-based group, Repairers of the Breach, and Co-Chair of the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call For Moral Revival. He continues to serve as Pastor of Greenleaf Christian Church, Disciples of Christ in Goldsboro, North Carolina. Barber is also the author of three acclaimed books, *Revive Us Again* (2018), *The Third Reconstruction* (2016), and *Forward Together* (2014).

Note: There will be a free reception in the Campus Center from 5:30 - 6:45 p.m. before the program begins.

Sponsored by the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, and the Student Association, in collaboration with the Writers Institute.

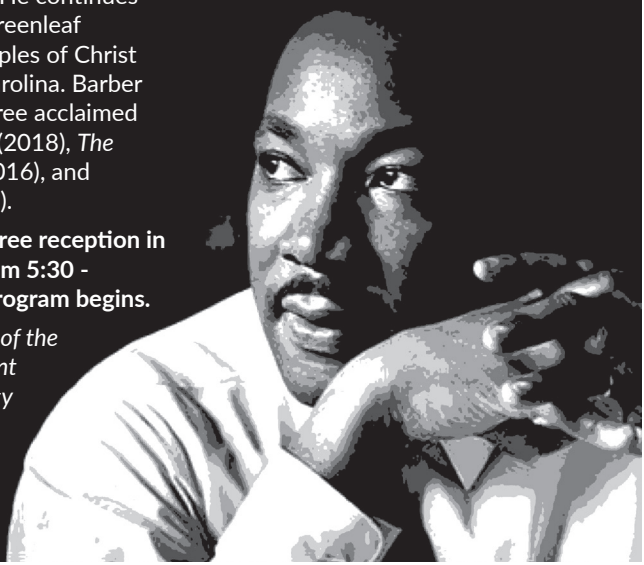


Photo: Michael Joseph

"WRITING LOVE" ON VALENTINE'S DAY

February 14 (Thursday)

Christopher Castellani and Lauren Wilkinson

Photo: Niqui Carter

Novelists

Craft Talk on Writing Love — 4:15 p.m., Multi-Purpose Room, Campus Center West Addition

Presentation/Conversation — 7:30 p.m., Campus Center Room 375

Lauren Wilkinson's first novel is *American Spy* (2019), a tale of espionage, love and betrayal set in West Africa and New York City during the Cold War in the 1980s. Her protagonist is FBI intelligence officer Marie Mitchell, a young black woman working in an old boys' club. Sara Nović (*Girl at War*) called it "suspenseful, tender, and funny, always smart and searingly honest."

Christopher Castellani's new novel, *Leading Men* (2019), is a reflection on the nature of fame, private life, and romantic entanglement set in the social world of Gay 20th century icons Tennessee Williams and Truman Capote in the 1950s. Novelist Lauren Groff called it, "a tender, psychologically devastating, and gorgeously precise novel. An extraordinary book." Castellani is the artistic director of Boston's GrubStreet, one of the country's leading creative writing centers.

Sponsored by the Writers Institute and English Department in association with UAlbany's Sexuality Month, a program of the Middle Earth Peer Assistance Program of the Center for Behavioral Health Promotion and Applied Research.

FILM

February 15 (Friday)

THE GOLDEN DREAM

Screening — 7:30 p.m., Page Hall, 135 Western Avenue, Downtown Campus

(Mexico/Spain/Guatemala, 2013, 108 minutes, color) Directed by Diego Quemada-Díez. Starring Brandon López, Rodolfo Domínguez, Karen Martínez.

Three teenagers attempt to escape poverty in Guatemala by embarking on a perilous journey to the United States. *The Wall Street Journal* reviewer said, "The filmmaking is fluid and electric; the acting, precise; the archetypal storytelling, seamless and brutal… there's no getting away without it leaving a mark."

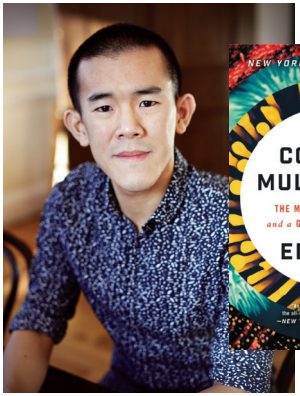


Photo: Urszula Soltys

"YOU ARE AN ENTIRE ECOSYSTEM!"

February 19 (Tuesday)

Ed Yong

Bestselling science writer

Craft Talk on Science Writing — 4:15 p.m., D'Ambra Auditorium, Life Sciences Research Building, LSRB 2095

Presentation/Conversation — 7:30 p.m., Page Hall, 135 Western Avenue, Downtown Campus

Ed Yong is the author of the international bestseller, *I Contain Multitudes: The Microbes Within Us and a Grander View of Life* (2017). Beautifully written and often funny, the book sheds new light on the microbes that shape us, defend us, partner with us, and call us home. Bill Gates said, "Yong synthesizes literally hundreds and hundreds of papers, but he never overwhelms you with the science. He just keeps imparting one surprising, fascinating insight after the next… [this is] science journalism at its best." A science writer for *The Atlantic*, Yong's writing has appeared in *National Geographic*, *The New Yorker* and *Scientific American*. His TED talk about mind-controlling parasites has been watched by over 1.75 million people.

Cosponsored by the "RNA Café" of UAlbany's RNA Institute and the University Libraries.

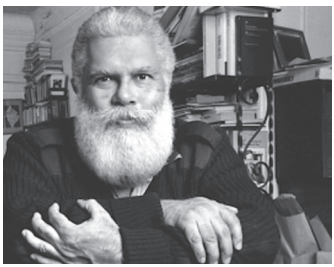


Photo: James Hamilton

A GIANT OF SCI-FI

February 21 (Thursday)

Samuel Delany

Eminent science fiction author

Craft Talk on Writing Science Fiction — 4:15 p.m., Opalka Gallery, 140 New Scotland Ave, Albany

Presentation/Conversation — 7:30 p.m., Page Hall, 135 Western Avenue, Downtown Campus

Samuel Delany is a one-of-a-kind giant of American literature, a disruptive practitioner of "outsider art," an explorer of African-American and Gay identities, and one of the most influential and innovative science fiction writers of the last half century. In *The Daily Beast*, Mark Dery called him, "the Grand Old Man of polymorphously perverse science fiction." Winner of four Nebulas and two Hugos, Delany is a "Grand Master" of the Science Fiction Writers of America. Since 1962, he has written dozens of books, including the sci-fi classics, *Babel-17* (1966), *Nova* (1968), *Dhalgren* (1975), and the *Return to Nevèrÿon* series (1979-1987). Recent books include *Through the Valley of the Nest of Spiders* (2012) and *The Atheist in the Attic* (2018). Delany served as Writer-in-Residence at the University at Albany in 1978.

Cosponsored by the Opalka Gallery at Sage College of Albany in conjunction with their exhibition, "In Place of Now," showcasing artists who offer new speculations regarding contemporary black identity.

FILM

February 22 (Friday)

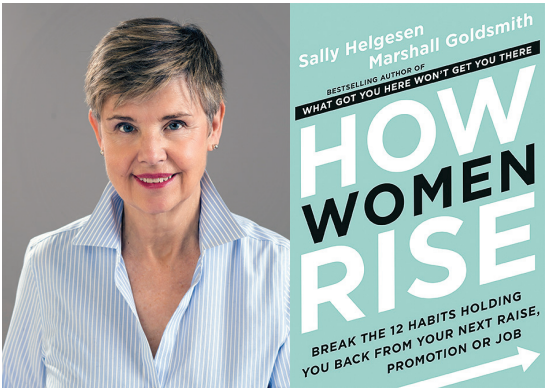
DARK MONEY

Screening — 7:30 p.m., Page Hall, 135 Western Avenue, Downtown Campus

(USA, 2018, 99 minutes, color)
Directed by Kimberly Reed.

Taking her home state of Montana as a case study, director Kimberly Reed examines the impact of the flood of untraceable corporate money that influences the American electoral system in the wake of the 2010 Supreme Court ruling on Citizens United. The film was nominated for the Grand Jury Prize at Sundance.

HOW WOMEN RISE: THE ART OF LEADERSHIP FOR WOMEN



February 25 (Monday)

Sally Helgesen

Expert on women and leadership

Conversation with Student Leaders — 4:15 p.m., Multi-Purpose Room, Campus Center West Addition

Presentation/Q&A [REGISTRATION REQUIRED] — 7:30 p.m., Hearst Media Center, 645 Albany Shaker Rd, Albany

Sally Helgesen has been called, "the world's premier expert on women's leadership" (*Forbes*). A bestselling author, speaker and leadership coach, she has spent the last thirty years advising women leaders, companies and organizations around the world. Her new book, coauthored with Marshall Goldsmith, is *How Women Rise: Break the 12 Habits Holding You Back from Your Next Raise, Promotion, or Job* (2018). Previous books include *The Female Advantage: Women's Ways of Leadership*, a classic in print continuously since 1990, and *The Web of Inclusion* (1995), named one of the best books on leadership of all time by *The Wall Street Journal*.

Cosponsored by the University at Albany Center for Leadership and Service, and the Times Union Women@Work network of business and professional women.

Visit https://nyswritersinstitute.eventbrite.com to register for the Hearst Media Center Event.

MARCH

the creative life

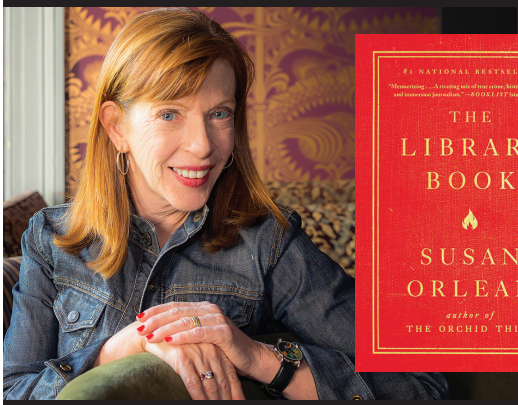
THE UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY FOUNDATION

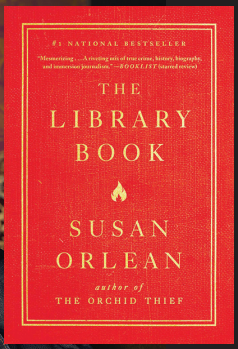
A Conversation Series at UAlbany

LOVE LETTER TO BOOKS AND LIBRARIES

Created and produced by the New York State Writers Institute, University Art Museum, and UAlbany Performing Arts Center in collaboration with WAMC Northeast Public Radio, this series features leading figures from a variety of artistic disciplines in conversation with WAMC's "Roundtable" host Joe Donahue about their creative inspiration, craft, and careers.

Photo: Noah Fecks





March 1 (Friday)

Susan Orlean

Journalist and nonfiction author

Conversation with WAMC's Joe Donahue — 8:00 p.m., Recital Hall, Performing Arts Center

Susan Orlean is the author of the current *New York Times* bestseller, *The Library Book*, a true crime investigation of the 1986 fire that destroyed the Los Angeles Public Library, and an account of the fire's aftermath that illustrates the crucial role that libraries play in individual lives and communities. The book is widely described by reviewers as "a love letter to libraries and books." A staff writer at *The New Yorker* for a quarter century, Orlean is the author of seven books, including *The Orchid Thief* (1998), an international bestseller that became the hit film, *Adaptation* (2002), starring Nicholas Cage and Meryl Streep (who portrays the author herself).

Major support for The Creative Life is provided by The University at Albany Foundation with additional support from the UAlbany Alumni Association, College of Arts and Sciences, Office of the Provost and University Auxiliary Services.

Photo: Brian Bankston

THE POWER OF COMMUNITY

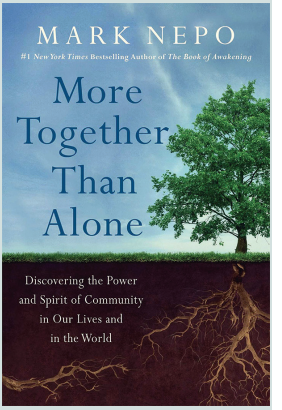
March 5 (Tuesday)

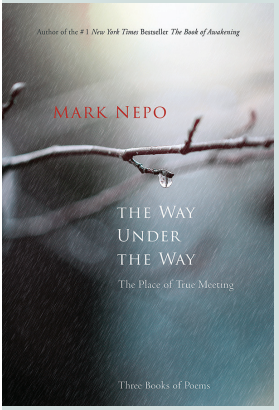
Mark Nepo

Spiritual writer, poet and healing arts teacher

Presentation/Q&A — 7:30 p.m., Page Hall, 135 Western Avenue, Downtown Campus

Mark Nepo, bestselling author of 20 books, graduated from UAlbany with a Doctor of Arts in English in 1980, and taught in the English Department for 18 years. While at UAlbany and still in his 30s, Nepo was diagnosed with a rare form of lymphoma that spread to his brain. His struggles with cancer helped him to form a philosophy of experiencing life fully while facing an unknowable future. In 2010, Oprah chose Nepo's book, *The Book of Awakening: Having the Life You Want by Being Present to the Life You Have* (2000), as one of her "Ultimate Favorite Things." The book went on to become a #1 *New York Times* Bestseller. His newest book is *More Together Than Alone: Discovering the Power and Spirit of Community in Our Lives and in the World* (2018).





THE MEDICINE OF POETRY

March 6 (Wednesday)

Craft Talk on Poetry — 4:15 p.m., Multi-Purpose Room, Campus Center West Addition

Mark Nepo remains in Albany another day to discuss his approach to poetry, and his recent collection, *The Way Under the Way: The Place of True Meeting* (2016). He writes, "This is the medicine of poetry: that through raw and honest reflection, we deepen our conversation with life. The purpose of poetry and expression is to make life real, to remove everything that gets in the way, and to help us live." The collection received the Nautilus Book Award ("Better Books for a Better World"), and *Spirituality & Practice* named it one of the "Best Spirituality Books of 2016."

Cosponsored by the University at Albany Foundation and Alumni Association.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

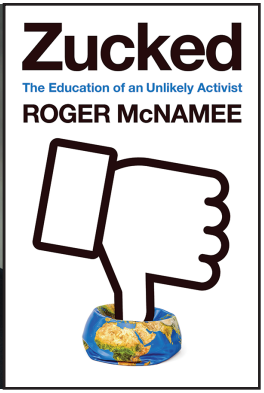


Photo: Court Mast

March 7 (Thursday)

Roger McNamee

Tech investor, activist and author

Craft Talk — 4:15 p.m., Multi-Purpose Room, Campus Center West Addition

Presentation/Conversation — 7:30 p.m., Page Hall, 135 Western Avenue, Downtown Campus

Roger McNamee, early mentor to Mark Zuckerberg and early investor in Facebook, has been a Silicon Valley venture capitalist for over 35 years. A significant shareholder in Facebook, he is also an outspoken critic of the company. His new book is *Zucked: The Education of an Unlikely Activist* (2019), about his efforts to awaken the public to social media's threats to American democracy. A child of Albany, NY, McNamee is also a musician and leader of the bands, Moonalice and Doobie Decibel System. He served as technical advisor to the HBO series, *Silicon Valley*, and is a board member and special advisor to the nonprofit Wikimedia Foundation, parent of Wikipedia, and an organization whose mission is to bring free educational content to the world.

Cosponsored by the University at Albany School of Business.

FILM

March 8 (Friday)

SHE'S BEAUTIFUL WHEN SHE'S ANGRY

Screening — 7:30 p.m., Page Hall, 135 Western Avenue, Downtown Campus

(USA, 2014, 92 minutes, color)
Directed by Mary Dore.

This timely documentary resurrects the buried history of the outrageous and often brilliant women who founded the modern women's movement from 1966 to 1971. *The Village Voice* called it "One of the year's best films.... an urgent, illuminating dive into the headwaters of second-wave feminism."

NEW FEMINIST FICTION

March 12 (Tuesday)

Alexia Arthurs and Rosalie Morales Kearns

Fiction writers

Craft Talk — 4:15 p.m., Multi-Purpose Room, Campus Center West Addition

Presentation/Conversation — 7:30 p.m., Huxley Theatre, NYS Museum, Cultural Education Center, Albany

Alexia Arthurs, fiction writer, explores life in the Jamaican diaspora, the challenges faced by women, and the legacies of slavery. Her first collection is *How to Love a Jamaican* (2018) — named a Best Summer Read by *Entertainment Weekly* and *Buzzfeed*. Novelist Zadie Smith said, "All of [the stories] convince and sing. All of them shine. In this thrilling debut collection Alexia Arthurs is all too easy to love."

Rosalie Morales Kearns is a writer of Puerto Rican and Pennsylvania Dutch heritage. Her first novel is *Kingdom of Women* (2016), "a feminist alternative history novel [that] explores the morality of violence" (*Kirkus*). Rigoberto Gonzalez called it, "provocative" and "fascinating" (NBCNews.com). A former UAlbany English Dept. lecturer, Kearns is founder of the feminist publishing house, Shade Mountain Press, based in Albany.

Cosponsored by the State Education Department's Office of Cultural Education, Friends of the New York State Library, and the Latin American and Caribbean Studies Dept. (LACS).

GROWING UP HOMELESS AND UNDOCUMENTED

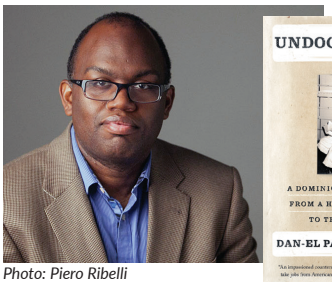
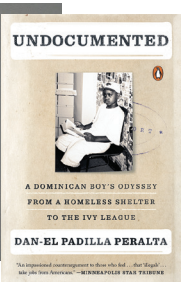


Photo: Piero Ribelli



March 14 (Thursday)

Dan-El Padilla Peralta

Scholar and memoirist

Craft Talk — 4:15 p.m., Standish Room, Science Library

Presentation/Conversation — 7:30 p.m., Huxley Theatre, NYS Museum, Cultural Education Center, Albany

Dan-El Padilla Peralta recounts his remarkable life story in the bestselling memoir, *Undocumented: A Dominican Boy's Odyssey from a Homeless Shelter to the Ivy League* (2015). The child of a Dominican mother who overstayed an emergency medical visa, Padilla arrived in the U.S. at the age of four, and grew up in homeless shelters in New York City while his mother struggled to earn a living as a cleaning lady. Now a Professor of Classics at Princeton, he is regarded as "one of the best classicists to emerge in his generation" (*Wall St. Journal*).

Cosponsored by the State Education Department's Office of Cultural Education and Friends of the New York State Library.

AUTHORS THEATRE

Staged reading of
Talkin' to This Chick Sippin' Magic Potion
by professional actors, followed by Q&A with playwright James Tyler and director Laura Savia

March 25 (Monday)

Staged reading — 7:30 p.m.,
Arena Theatre, Performing Arts Center

James Anthony Tyler, young playwright, presents a staged reading of his work-in-progress, *Talkin' to This Chick Sippin' Magic Potion*, a funny and provocative play set in a Harlem penthouse, where an African American lesbian couple must navigate the complexities of modern romance amidst an angry teenage daughter, a confused ex-husband, the pressures of academia, and the unconventional career challenges of a "professional cuddler." The play also features a deaf character, and the reading will incorporate sign language.

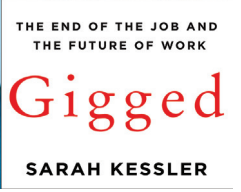
The event is part of the Writers Institute's "Authors Theatre" series, which features staged readings of original plays-in-progress, and gives audiences an opportunity to share reactions and participate in the creative process.

James Anthony Tyler, a recent graduate of Julliard's playwriting program, is the recipient of the 3rd Annual Horton Foote Playwriting Award, and an inaugural winner of a grant from Audible's Emerging Playwrights Fund.

Laura Savia is the Associate Artistic Director of the Williamstown Theatre Festival, where she has directed world premieres of James Tyler's *Artney Jackson*, and Lucy Thurber's *Once Upon a Time in the Berkshires*.

Presented by the UAlbany Theatre Program and the Jarka and Grayce Burian Endowment in association with the NYS Writers Institute.

Photo: Daniel Rader



THE FUTURE OF WORK

March 27 (Wednesday)

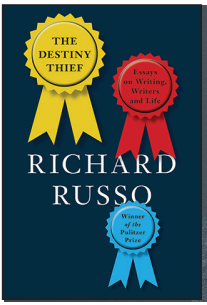
"The Gig Economy" Sarah Kessler, Journalist

Presentation/Q&A — 7:30 p.m., Tech Valley Center of Gravity, 30 3rd St, Troy

Sarah Kessler is the author of *Gigged: The End of the Job and the Future of Work* (2018), a groundbreaking analysis of the new American freelance economy. She addresses the questions: What does the future of work look like? Will millennials do as well their parents? Where can we find meaningful, well-paid work? Bestselling author Daniel H. Pink said, "With deep reporting and graceful storytelling, Sarah Kessler reveals the ground truth of a key part of the American workforce." The deputy editor of *Quartz At Work*, Kessler has written for *Fast Company*, *The Atlantic* and *Wired*.

Cosponsored by the Upstate Alliance for the Creative Economy.

APRIL



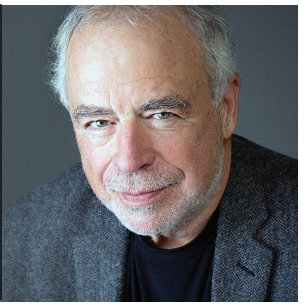


Photo: Elena Seibert

ADVICE FOR ASPIRING WRITERS

April 3 (Wednesday)

Richard Russo

Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist

Reading and McKinney Writing Contest Awards — 8:00 p.m., CBIS (Biotech) Auditorium, Biotechnology and Interdisciplinary Studies Building, Rensselaer (RPI), Troy

Richard Russo is the nation's most celebrated novelist of crumbling Rust Belt towns and the lives of their blue-collar inhabitants. A son of Gloversville, he frequently sets his fiction in Upstate New York. Russo received the Pulitzer Prize for his novel *Empire Falls* (2001), which was adapted as an HBO miniseries starring Ed Harris and Helen Hunt. His most recent novel, *Everybody's Fool* (2016), is a sequel to his 1993 novel *Nobody's Fool*, which became an Oscar-nominated movie starring Paul Newman. Russo's new book is *The Destiny Thief: Essays on Writing, Writers and Life* (2018). *Booklist* said, "For aspiring writers, Russo's musings on the art and craft of the novel are a trove of knowledge and guidance."

Sponsored by Rensselaer's 78th Annual McKinney Writing Contest and Reading; Vollmer W. Fries Lecture; Department of Communication and Media; School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences; Rensselaer Union; Friends of the Folsom Library; Poets & Writers; and the NYS Writers Institute. ***For directions see: http://www.rpi.edu/tour/index.html***

MAKING SENSE OF THE SIXTIES

April 5 (Friday)

Major American novelist

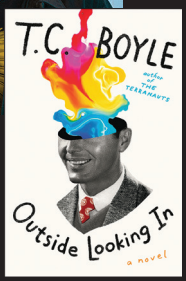
T.C. Boyle

and Memoirist

Mark Berger

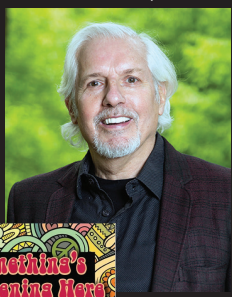
Presentation/Conversation — 7:30 p.m.
Page Hall, 135 Western Avenue, Downtown Campus

Photo: Jamieson Fry

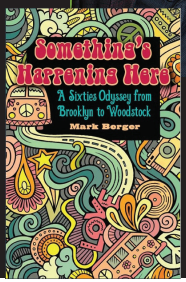


T. C. Boyle is the great chronicler in fiction of the social upheavals and cultural revolutions of the 20th century. Set in the 1960s, his new novel is *Outside Looking In* (2019), a tale of Harvard Ph.D. students whose lives veer out of control after they are drawn into the orbit of renowned psychologist and LSD enthusiast Timothy Leary. Born and raised in Peekskill, New York, Boyle is the author of 17 novels and more than 100 short stories. He received the PEN/Faulkner Award for *World's End* (1987), which recounts 300 years in the history of a single family in Upstate New York. *Drop City* (2003), the tale of a California hippie commune that relocates to the wilds of Alaska, was a National Book Award finalist.

Photo: Anthony Tassarotti



Mark Berger found his voice in a memoir writing class in 2012. He is the author of the forthcoming memoir from SUNY Press, *Something's Happening Here: A Sixties Odyssey from Brooklyn to Woodstock* (May 2019).



In association with the English Graduate Student Association annual conference.

AMERICA'S "READER-IN-CHIEF"

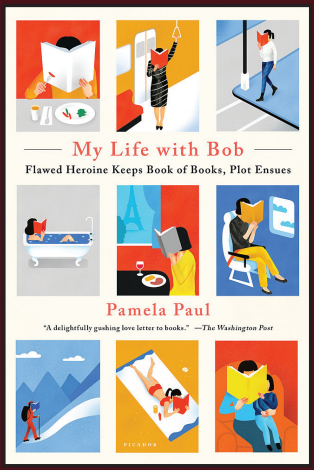
April 9 (Tuesday)

Pamela Paul

Editor of *The New York Times Book Review* and memoirist

Presentation/Conversation — 4:15 p.m. [NOTE AFTERNOON EVENT ONLY], Multi-Purpose Room, Campus Center West Addition

Photo: Earl Wilson, The New York Times



Pamela Paul became editor of *The New York Times Book Review* in 2013, and — as of 2016 — oversees all book coverage for the paper. She also hosts the weekly podcast, "Inside *The New York Times Book Review*." Her new memoir is *My Life with Bob: Flawed Heroine Keeps Book of Books, Plot Ensues* (2018), "an engaging and funny memoir.... a delightfully gushing love letter to books" *(Washington Post)*. *My Life with Bob* her nickname for her personal reading journal, the "Book of Books" was named a best book in Oprah's *O Magazine*, *People*, *Vanity Fair*, *Glamour*, *The Economist*, and *The Atlantic*.

Cosponsored by the University at Albany Foundation and the English Department.

FILM

April 12 (Friday)

RESTREPO

Screening — 7:30 p.m., Page Hall, 135 Western Avenue, Downtown Campus

Photo: Emmanuel Andre

Photo: Mark Vessey

"WRITING BOYHOOD"

April 11 (Thursday)

Khary Lazarre-White and Reif Larsen, Novelists

Craft Talk — 4:15 p.m., Standish Room, Science Library

Presentation/Q&A — 7:30 p.m., Huxley Theatre, NYS Museum, Cultural Education Center, Albany

Khary Lazarre-White, author, activist and attorney, is the cofounder of The Brotherhood /Sister Sol (Bro/Sis), a nationally renowned, Harlem-based youth services organization. His first novel is *Passage* (2018), the story of Warrior, a young man navigating the snowy winter streets of Harlem and Brooklyn in 1993. Susan Taylor, editor-in-chief of *Essence*, called it, "a gripping, relentless dive into the inner life of a young, African American male." Oprah Winfrey said, "Khary is using his passion to uplift and inspire a next generation...," and presented him with the Oprah Winfrey Angels' Network "Use Your Life" Award.

Reif Larsen's first novel was *The Selected Works of T. S. Spivet* (2009), a *New York Times* bestseller that has been translated into 27 languages. The story of a 12-year-old boy genius and his train trip across America, the book was a finalist for the IndieBound Award, and was shortlisted for *The Guardian* First Book Award and James Tait Black Memorial Prize. French director Jean-Pierre Jeunet (*Amelie*) adapted it as a prize-winning film in 2013. Larsen's second novel, *I Am Radar* (2016), tells the tale of a black-skinned boy with magical powers born to stunned white parents in New Jersey in the 1970s. The *L. A. Times* called it, "Big, beautiful, ambitious... addictive and enchanting."

Cosponsored by the State Education Department's Office of Cultural Education and Friends of the New York State Library.

(USA, 2010, 93 minutes, color) Directed by Sebastian Junger, Tim Hetherington.

Acclaimed by many critics as one of the best war films ever made, RESTREPO follows a year in the life of a platoon of U.S. soldiers on the front lines in Afghanistan. Nominated for a "Best Documentary" Oscar, the film received the Grand Jury Prize at the 2010 Sundance Film Festival.

Galapagos Islands

EARTH DAY PROGRAM

Photo: Weber State University

April 22 (Monday)

THE RIGHTS OF NATURE

Film screening, with filmmaker and English professor Hal Crimmel

Discussion — 4:15 p.m., Multi-Purpose Room, Campus Center West Addition

Film screening/Q&A with Hal Crimmel — 7:30 p.m., Page Hall, 135 Western Avenue, Downtown Campus

(United States, 2018, 52 minutes, color)
Directed by Isaac Goeckeritz, María Valeria Berro and Hal Crimmel.

Is Nature entitled to legal rights? On journeys to Ecuador, New Zealand and California, this new film documents a rising, worldwide movement among scientists, philosophers and activists to establish the idea of inalienable and enforceable rights for Nature.

Hal Crimmel, co-director, co-producer and screenwriter, earned his M.A. (1993) and Ph.D. (1997) in English at the University at Albany. A former graduate intern at the NYS Writers Institute, he serves currently as Chair of the English Department at Weber State University in Ogden, Utah. A specialist in the intersections of literature and environmental issues, Crimmel co-edited the book, *Conversations with W. S. Merwin* (2015), a collection of interviews with the former US Poet Laureate and environmental conservationist.

Cosponsored by the UAlbany Office of Sustainability and the English Department.

New Zealand Forest

Great Salt Lake

PANEL DISCUSSION WITH SINGER-SONGWRITERS

THE ART OF SONGWRITING

featuring: Taina Asili, Michael Eck, Greg Haymes and Bryan Thomas ("Dr. Buggy Jive")

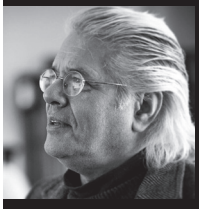
April 26 (Friday)
Discussion — 7:00 p.m.,
Page Hall, 135 Western Avenue, Downtown Campus

Four of the Capital Region's most acclaimed singer songwriters will talk about the challenges and pleasures of their work.

Taina Asili, musician and activist, is the leader of local Afro-Latin fusion group, La Banda Rebelde. *Billboard* featured her in a list of "11 Songs of Protest & Resistance by Latino Artists," and *The Huffington Post* named her #2 on a list of "12 Freedom Fighting Bands To Get You Through the Trump Years." Her songs are frequently featured on *Democracy Now!*

Photo: Sarah Pezdek

Michael Eck, writer, musician and host of WAMC's American Roots Series, has produced four solo albums and is a member of several local bands. *The Village Voice* said, "Somewhere between lovelorn cowpoke and sardonic folkster is nose-pierced Albany NY dad Michael Eck, whose sharp lyrics and quick-witted guitar reflect all over like a broken mirror and shine with liberation like a tossed-aside wedding ring."



Greg Haymes, writer, music critic, and creator of the Albany arts and music blog, *Nippertown*, cofounded the legendary Albany "post-Hippie" jugband, Blotto, whose video "I Wanna Be a Lifeguard," was played during MTV's very first day on the air, and kept in frequent rotation for many years thereafter.

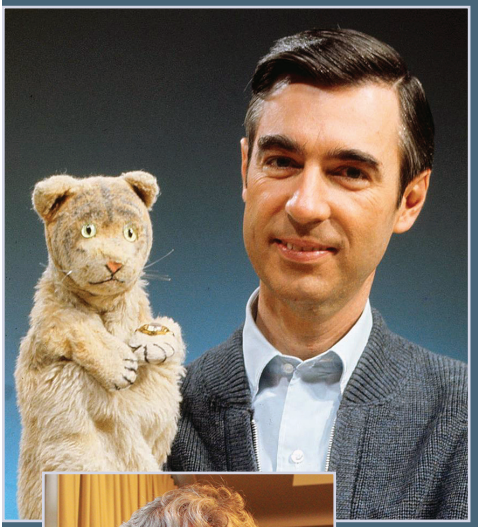
Bryan Thomas ("Dr. Buggy Jive") evokes Prince and Lenny Kravitz, but with a strong literary hook. The *Times Union* named him "Best Male Singer-Songwriter" for his 1999 acoustic hip-hop debut, *Radio Plastic Jennifer*, and his soul rock epic *Ones and Zeros* was *Metroland*'s 2002 "Album of the Year." His new music video, "Stole My Stealing from Eliot," a quirky homage to T. S. Eliot shot in London, Paris and Albany, is available on YouTube.

REMEMBERING "MR. ROGERS"

May 3 (Friday)

WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR

with Tom Junod, award-winning journalist



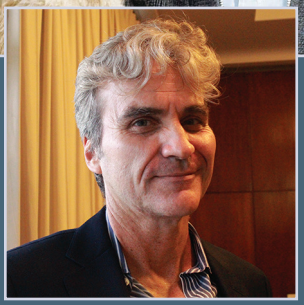


Photo: Hannah Brigida Infantado

Craft talk with Tom Junod — 4:15 p.m., Standish Room, Science Library

Film screening and Q&A 7:30 p.m., Page Hall, 135 Western Avenue, Downtown Campus

(USA, 2018, 94 minutes, b/w and color)

Tom Junod will provide commentary and answer questions following a screening of the award-winning 2018 documentary, WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR, about the life and legacy of his friend Fred Rogers, the beloved star of MR. ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD. An ordained Presbyterian minister, Rogers frequently endured ridicule to champion the values of unconditional love and acceptance. Junod, who is featured in the film, is the author of a widely-circulated 1998 *Esquire* profile of Rogers, "Can You Say… Hero?" That piece of journalism provides the basis of a feature film about Rogers starring Tom Hanks, tentatively titled YOU ARE MY FRIEND and due for release in October 2019.

Tom Junod, UAlbany graduate and Senior Writer for *ESPN* magazine, is the author of some of the most celebrated pieces in American magazine writing. He has been a finalist for the National Magazine Award a record ten times, winning twice. Many of his articles are widely republished and frequently assigned in college journalism classes.

LITERATURE IN PERFORMANCE

May 4 (Saturday)

selectedSHORTS®

Let us tell you a story.

Performance — 7:30 p.m.,
Recital Hall, Performing Arts Center

Advance tickets: $15 general public • $10 students, seniors & UAlbany faculty-staff. Day of show tickets: $20 general public • $15 students, seniors & UAlbany faculty-staff. For more information, contact the PAC Box Office: (518) 442-3997.

It's story time... for adults

The Writers Institute is pleased to collaborate with the Performing Arts Center to present "Selected Shorts," Public Radio International's wildly popular series and podcast. Spellbinding short stories by established and emerging writers take on new life when they are performed by stars of stage, screen and television. "Selected Shorts" is produced by Symphony Space in New York City and broadcast on more than 150 stations around the country. The "Selected Shorts" podcast consistently ranks as one of the most popular podcasts on iTunes, with over 100,000 downloads every week. This performance will have a "Readers and Writers" theme — stay tuned to nyswritersinstitute.org for more updates on the featured cast.

Presented by the UAlbany Performing Arts Center in collaboration with the NYS Writers Institute. Support provided by the University at Albany Foundation, University Auxiliary Services, and Residence Inn by Marriott.

NYS Writers Institute & UAlbany

ALBANY bookFESTIVAL

PHOTOS FROM 2018

SEE YOU NEXT FALL 2019!

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For additional information on events, schedule changes and updates. video clips, and literary news visit our website at:
http://nyswritersinstitute.org
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On Campus Parking:
Courtesy parking for Writers Institute events on the Uptown Campus will be available in the **State Quad Student Parking Lot** one hour prior to and one hour after events.

Visitor Parking lots are also available for $3 per vehicle after 4 p.m., though parking spaces are very limited.

For Downtown Campus events, courtesy parking will be available in the **Thurlow Student Parking lot**.
Handicapped entrances available: Milne Hall (from Washington Avenue) and Richardson Hall (Page Courtyard, Western Avenue).

For a map of the campus including parking lots go to:
https://www.albany.edu/map/index.php

With special thanks to our primary sponsor,
the **University at Albany Foundation**.

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William Kennedy, Executive Director
Paul Grondahl, Director

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SPRING 2019
Visiting Writers Series and Classic Film Series Schedule of Events