



Media Contact: Amelia Peacock
Community Engagement Coordinator
apeacock@lectures.org
206.621.2230 ext. 12

SEATTLE ARTS & LECTURES ANNOUNCES 30TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON TO FEATURE RON CHERNOW, ISABEL ALLENDE, COLSON WHITEHEAD, & MORE

Seattle, WA— April 25, 2017: This evening, Seattle Arts & Lectures (SAL) announced the headliners of the 2017/18 Season at the closing event for this year’s Literary Arts Series with author Helen Oyeyemi. The upcoming season is the 30th Anniversary for the organization, and the programming will feature some familiar faces from the first 30 years, as well as a look-ahead to the literary luminaries of the coming decades. 2017/18 Literary Arts Series and Poetry Series subscriptions are now on sale. Create-Your-Own-Subscriptions will go on sale June 12, and single tickets will go on sale July 24. Sherman Alexie Loves and Women You Need to Know (WYNK) subscriptions will go on sale in the coming weeks.

SAL’s Associate Director, Rebecca Hoogs, who curates these programs, said, “I am thrilled about this 30th Anniversary Season. It brings back several luminaries from our past—authors whose books and events have shaped us—while also featuring some of the brightest lights of today. This season is the most diverse we’ve ever presented, and we’re proud to present on our stages authors who represent the many unique perspectives and stories of Seattle. As we head into our 30th year, we’ve been reflecting on the ways that books mark us, the way that our lives are, in fact, *bookmarked*. So, whether you’ve been with us since the beginning, or you’re joining us mid-story, don’t worry, we’ll save your place.”

The **Literary Arts Series** presents original talks with the leading fiction and non-fiction writers of our time. The coming season SAL will feature three returning “legacy” authors, as well as three authors that will lead the way to the literature of our future.

- **Weds, Oct 18, 2017 - Ron Chernow.** Chernow last appeared in SAL’s 1999/2000 Season. Since then, he’s won the 2011 Pulitzer Prize for Biography and his biography of Alexander Hamilton inspired Lin-Manuel Miranda’s smash hit musical. Chernow will come to the SAL stage with a new biography on Ulysses S. Grant.
- **Tues, Nov 28, 2017 – Isabel Allende.** Allende last appeared at SAL in 1988—their very first season. The Chilean-American writer has a new book in the fall, *In the Midst of Winter*, which is a love story set in Brooklyn and South America about a human rights scholar and an immigrant from Guatemala. The book begins with a snowstorm and a chance meeting in Brooklyn, and flashes back to Chile and Brazil in the 1970s.
- **Weds, Jan 17, 2018 – Jesmyn Ward.** Ward is the rising-star author of the novel *Salvage the Bones*, for which she won the National Book Award; and the memoir, *Men We Reaped*, which explores the lives of her brother and four other

young black men who lost their lives in her hometown. Last year she edited *The Fire This Time*, an anthology which takes as its starting point James Baldwin's famous 1963 meditation on race by the same name. Her much-anticipated third novel, *Sing Unburied Sing* will be released in September.

- **Thurs, Feb 15, 2018 – Colson Whitehead.** SAL's third legacy author, Whitehead last appeared in the 2007/2008 season. He recently won the 2017 Pulitzer Prize for *The Underground Railroad*, a haunting, thought-provoking journey through space and time and some of the darkest moments of American history. Whitehead is also the author of five previous novels.
- **Friday, March 30, 2018 – Laura Lippman & David Simon.** SAL is proud to host a couple in conversation: **Laura Lippman**, a former reporter turned novelist who writes detective fiction including the Tess Monaghan series, and **David Simon**, the creator of *The Wire* and *Treme*.
- On **Mon, May 7, 2017**, SAL will end the Literary Arts Series with **Viet Thanh Nguyen**. He won last year's Pulitzer Prize for his debut novel, *The Sympathizer*. This year he's published two books: a book of short stories, *The Refugees*, and a work of nonfiction called *Nothing Ever Dies: Vietnam and the Memory of War* which was a finalist this year for the National Book Award in Non-fiction.

All Grand Patron, Patron, Founders Tier, and General Subscriptions include signed copies of the new books by Ron Chernow and Isabel Allende.

The **Poetry Series** presents established and emerging poets for readings and lectures.

- **Mon, Oct 9, 2017 - Stephen Burt**, who also goes by Stephanie and Steph, is a gender fluid poet/critic who teaches at Harvard. The *New York Times* has called them "one of the most influential poetry critics of their generation." Their new book from Graywolf press, *Advice from the Lights*, will be out the week before their reading.
- **Mon, Nov 13, 2017 - A.E. Stallings.** This will be a rare opportunity to hear from A.E. Stallings who lives in Greece where she is a translator and poet of three collections of poems including *Olives*. She won a MacArthur "Genius" Grant in 2011.
- **Weds, Feb 7, 2018 - Gregory Orr.** Orr is the author of more than 10 collections of poetry and several volumes of essays, criticism, and memoir, including *Poetry as Survival*.
- **Sun, Mar 4, 2018 - Tyehimba Jess.** Tyehimba Jess recently won the 2017 Pulitzer Prize for Poetry. Jess is published by Seattle's own Wave Books and this event is in collaboration with the Bagley Wright Lecture Series on Poetry. He will give a reading and talk on his award-winning book, *Olio*.
- **Fri, Apr 27, 2018 - "Of an Impossible Country: An Evening with Rachel McKibbens, Benjamin Alire Saenz, and Javier Zamora."** SAL and Copper Canyon Press will host an event with three Copper Canyon Poets whose work challenges and illuminates the notion of border-crossing. Rachel McKibbens' new collection, *Blud*, expands the boundaries around family, heritage, and the self. Acclaimed novelist and poet Benjamin Alire Saenz's work meditates on a life lived on the border between the U.S. and Mexico. Javier Zamora's debut collection, *Unaccompanied*, draws from his own story of migrating from El Salvador at the age of nine. The event title draws from these chilling lines in

McKibbens' poem "drought (California)": once they've rid their bodies / of an impossible country, / become flatbed livestock / in migration / you coin them not of this earth. / Beings of neither flesh / nor light." This will be an evening of reckoning and hope.

- **Mon, May 21, 2018. Aimee Nezhukumatathil.** Nezhukumatathil is the author of three previous volumes of poetry and a collaborative book of nature poems with poet Ross Gay. In 2018, she will publish a book of illustrated nature essays and, next spring, her fourth book of poems will be released by local publisher Copper Canyon Press.

SAL Presents includes authors, artists and prominent thinkers discussing their latest works, and other exciting literary surprises.

- **Tues, Nov 14, 2017 - Reza Aslan.** Aslan is the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *Zealot* and host of the new CNN TV show *Believer* which explores and examines different faiths each week. He has written three books on religion: *No god but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam*; *Beyond Fundamentalism: Confronting Religious Extremism in the Age of Globalization*; and *Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth*. He will speak about a new book, *God*. Tickets include a copy of the new book.
- **Weds, May 23, 2018 - The Moth Mainstage.** Each Moth Mainstage features simple, old-fashioned storytelling by five wildly divergent raconteurs who develop and shape their stories with The Moth's directors. Theme and storytellers to be announced in the spring of 2018.
- **More events will be added throughout the year.**

The **Sherman Alexie Loves Series**, in partnership with Seattle-favorite novelist, poet, playwright, and children's author Sherman Alexie, will feature three events curated and hosted by Alexie highlighting authors he loves and champions. The second year of this series will present a dynamic line-up including:

- **Friday, Feb 2, 2018. "A Tiny Sense of Accomplishment."** Everyone's favorite podcast, hosted by Sherman Alexie and Spokane author Jess Walter, will feature emerging Native authors Terese Mailhot and Tommy Orange. Terese Mailhot's first book, *Heartberries*, is a collection of essays and will be published by Counterpoint Press. Tommy Orange's first novel, *There There*, will be published by Alfred A. Knopf. More authors and musicians to be added to the line-up.
- **Fri, May 4, 2018. First Loves: YA Edition.** This event will feature three of Sherman Alexie's favorite Young Adult authors including Matt de la Peña. Matt de la Peña is the *New York Times* bestselling, Newbery Medal-winning author of six young adult novels (including *Mexican WhiteBoy*, *The Living*, and *The Hunted*) and two picture books (*A Nations Hope* and *Last Stop on Market Street*). Two more authors to be announced.
- A third event will be announced soon.

Writers in the Schools (WITS) serves 25 local public schools in Seattle, Highline, Shoreline, and Port Townsend as well as Seattle Children's Hospital. WITS honors the

writing created through this program with three annual “book-end” events, which are free and open to the public.

- **Sun, Sept 24, 2017 – WITS Anthology Launch.** WITS will celebrate the publication of its program-wide anthology, featuring 140 pieces of creative writing by students in last year’s WITS program. 50 young writers will read their work and celebrate their publication. Held at Benaroya’s Recital Hall. Free and open to the public!
- **Weds, May 30 & Thurs, May 31, 2018 – WITS Year-End Readings & Celebrations.** WITS will celebrate the 2017/18 program by featuring two student writers from each WITS school, introduced by their Writer-in-Residence. May 30th will feature students from WITS elementary and middle school programs; May 31st will feature students from WITS middle and high school programs.

And still to come:

- **Women You Need to Know (WYNK) Series:** presenting three fierce female voices at the top of their respective industries.
- **Hinge:** featuring low-cost tickets for evenings with timely artists, authors, and thinkers.
- **Local Voices:** three free events featuring the Writers-in-Residence from SAL’s Writers in the School (WITS) program reading their own works-in-progress.

Subscription Information:

- 2017/18 Literary Arts Series and Poetry Series subscriptions are now on sale. WYNK and Sherman Alexie Loves subscriptions will go on sale in the coming weeks. Create-Your-Own-Subscriptions will go on sale June 12, and single tickets will go on sale July 24.
- An All SAL Pass entitles the subscriber to attend all events in every series, including added events and associated books. All SAL Pass: \$1,000.
- Literary Arts Series subscriptions are available at Grand Patron, Patron, Founders Tier, General, Balcony, and Student levels. The new books by Ron Chernow and Isabel Allende are included in the Grand Patron, Patron, Founders’ Tier, and General levels. Grand Patron: \$429. Patron: \$329. Founders Tier: \$259. General: \$199. Balcony: \$109. Student: \$59.
- Poetry Series subscriptions are available at the Grand Patron, Patron, General, and Student levels. Grand Patron: \$359. Patron: \$249. General: \$89. Student: \$35.
- Patron and Grand Patron tickets include priority seating and admission to special event receptions with the speakers.
- All subscriptions include benefits such as dining deals, bookstore discounts, no handling fees, and priority presale opportunities. In honor of SAL’s 30th Anniversary, all subscribers will receive a special SAL notebook to record your favorite quotes, notes, and musings from the events.
- Subscriptions and tickets available online at lectures.org or by phone at 206.621.2230 x10.

Seattle Arts & Lectures’ 2017/18 Season is presented by the *Seattle Times*.

About Seattle Arts & Lectures: Founded in 1987, Seattle Arts & Lectures champions the literary arts by engaging and inspiring readers and writers of all generations in the Puget Sound region. SAL's programs include the Literary Arts Series, Poetry Series, Women You Need to Know (WYNK), Sherman Alexie Loves, SAL Presents, Hinge, Local Voices, Summer Book Bingo, the Youth Poet Laureate (YPL) program, and Writers in the Schools (WITS), an award-winning reading and writing program that places professional writers in public elementary, middle, and high schools, as well as at Seattle Children's Hospital. For more information about SAL, visit lectures.org.

Speaker photos available upon request.

* * * *