FEATURED AUTHORS
Alice Green
William Patrick
James Ivory
Emily Bernard
Huma Abedin
José Rivera
Liara Roux
Colm Tóibín
Fabian Ferguson
Rachel Gross
Sharr White
Judith Heumann
Colson Whitehead
Tiffany Jewell
Gary Shteyngart

SPECIAL EVENTS
2022 ALBANY FILM FESTIVAL
UALBANY SPEAKER SERIES
• HUMA ABEDIN
BURIAN LECTURE
AUTHORS THEATRE
MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. CELEBRATION

EVENTS CALENDAR
SPRING 2022
GREETINGS FROM THE DIRECTOR

These are the times that try our souls.

We can take refuge in the timeless, uplifting qualities of great writing. In times of trouble, we turn for solace to poets and fiction writers, memoirists and essayists, filmmakers and historians. They are interpreters of maladies, truth-tellers of the human condition.

Since William Kennedy founded the Writers Institute in 1983, we have brought readers together in conversation with more than 2,000 of the world’s greatest writers. We have kept it free and open to the public. As our founder says, “Literary conversation is the best conversation in the world.”

We believe deeply in the transformative power of literature, now more than ever. We were grateful that we presented a robust slate of in-person literary events, carefully and safely, throughout the fall 2021 semester. We plan to present more extraordinary in-person programs this spring, cognizant that our plans may have to shift quickly. We are not strangers to the pivot and will go virtual again if necessary.

For now, delight in the nearly two dozen planned events in this Writers Institute calendar for spring 2022. We begin our season on Jan. 25 with the indomitable racial justice advocate and UAlbany alumna Alice Green, discussing her new memoir, *We Who Believe in Freedom*. She is part of a series-within-a-series we’re calling American HerStory, featuring a group of powerful women with remarkable autobiographies, including Emily Bernard (Feb. 15), Liara Roux (Feb. 24) and Judith Heumann (March 24). In that vein, Huma Abedin (Feb. 17) will discuss her memoir and career as the longtime powerful aide and advisor to Hillary Rodham Clinton.

There’s much more. We’ll host filmmaker James Ivory (Feb. 4) and screenwriters José Rivera (Feb. 21) and Sharr White (March 21) as a prelude of sorts to our 2nd Annual Albany Film Festival (April 2), with exciting details on the festival to come. We’re bringing acclaimed novelists Colm Tóibín (March 3) and Gary Shteyngart (April 21) and spellbinding stories performed by stars of TV, stage, and screen for Selected Shorts (April 30).

Together, let us be unstoppable.


Paul Grondahl
EVENT GUIDELINES
Events are free and open to the public and take place on the University at Albany’s Uptown Campus, unless otherwise noted. Refer to page 20 for information on free on-campus parking for events. All events are subject to change.

COVID PROTOCOL FOR ALL IN-PERSON EVENTS:
All individuals, regardless of vaccination status, must wear a mask or other face covering while inside any UAlbany owned, operated, or leased building. Unvaccinated individuals are also required to wear face coverings in all outdoor settings. This mask requirement will remain in place until the University removes the requirement upon the recommendations of the CDC or other public health officials. Individuals should not attend our in-person events if they—or anyone in their household—are displaying any symptoms of COVID-19.

For the most up-to-date event information, visit our website: www.nyswritersinstitute.org

DISCOVER MORE EVENTS . . .
still to be announced for both The Creative Life Series and other NYS Writers Institute authors and speakers.

To sign up for email updates and for additional information on events, visit: www.nyswritersinstitute.org
Alice Green is a champion of the marginalized and powerless in New York’s Capital Region. Since the 1960s, she has been a leading local activist and organizer addressing a variety of social issues, including racial justice, prison reform, voter equality, and community policing. The founder and executive director of Albany’s Center for Law and Justice, Dr. Green holds multiple degrees from UAlbany, including a Ph.D. in Criminal Justice. Her new autobiography is *We Who Believe in Freedom: Activism and the Struggle for Social Justice*. She will discuss her remarkable life with Paul Grondahl, author of the book’s foreword, and a journalist who has covered her singular career for more than three decades.

*Cosponsored by The Women’s Institute at Russell Sage College.*
February 1 (Tuesday)

William Patrick and Philip Morris

Conversation/Q&A – 7:00 p.m.,
Recital Hall, Performing Arts Center

William B. Patrick, author of the new book, Metrofix: The Combative Comeback of a Company Town, and Philip Morris, CEO of Proctors and Albany’s Capital Rep (TheREP), will talk about Schenectady’s ongoing revival, the role of the arts in re-energizing downtown neighborhoods in Albany and Schenectady, and how citizens, politicians, and business-owners can create new blueprints for the revitalization of 21st century American cities.

Bill Patrick, writer, poet, playwright, screenwriter, and educator, was the long-time director of the NYS Summer Young Writers Institute for high school students, which he founded in 1998. His books include The Call of Nursing: Voices from the Front Lines of Healthcare; Saving Troy: A Year with Firefighters and Paramedics in a Battered City; and We Didn’t Come Here for This: A Memoir in Poetry.

Philip Morris is the CEO of Proctors, a performing arts center that is central to Schenectady’s redevelopment, as well as a major regional venue for music, theater, dance, films, conventions, and community activities. Education programs at Proctors and TheREP, in partnership with local schools, enrich the lives of more than 75,000 students annually.

Cosponsored by Proctors Collaborative.
THE GLORIOUS HISTORY OF MERCHANT-IVORY FILMS

February 4 (Friday)

James Ivory

Conversation/Q&A with filmmaker Stephen Soucy
7:00 p.m., Page Hall, 135 Western Avenue, Downtown Campus

James Ivory, a towering figure of “arthouse” filmmaking during the past 50 years, is the co-founder of Merchant Ivory Productions. Together with his partner, producer Ismail Merchant, and screenwriter Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, Ivory received worldwide acclaim for nuanced adaptations of literary classics, including A ROOM WITH A VIEW (1986), HOWARD’S END (1992), and THE REMAINS OF THE DAY (1993). At age 89, he became the oldest-ever Oscar winner for his screenplay adaptation of CALL ME BY YOUR NAME (2017). He presents his new memoir, Solid Ivory (2021), an irreverent account of his remarkable life and career.

Emily Bernard is the author of a celebrated work of autobiography, *Black is the Body: Stories from My Grandmother’s Time, My Mother’s Time and Mine* (2019)—a collection she conceived while recovering in the hospital from a random stabbing by a white man at a New Haven coffee shop. An NPR “Best Book of the Year,” the book was also chosen by NPR correspondent Maureen Corrigan as one of her “10 Unputdownable Reads of the Year.” Bestselling author Elizabeth Gilbert called it, “one of the most beautiful, elegant memoirs I’ve ever read,” and novelist Ann Patchett called it “my very favorite book of the year.”

*Cosponsored by The Women’s Institute at Russell Sage College.*
February 17 (Thursday)

Huma Abedin
Conversation/Q&A — 7:00 p.m.,
Campus Center Ballroom

Huma Abedin, political strategist and vice chair of Hillary Clinton's 2016 presidential campaign, is the author of the new memoir Both/And: A Life in Many Worlds (2021). Abedin tells the remarkable story of her Indian and Pakistani family, her Muslim faith, her Saudi Arabian childhood, her 1996 White House internship with then-First Lady Hillary Clinton, and her subsequent career as personal aide, trusted advisor, Middle East expert, and chief of staff for the former New York Senator. Cheryl Strayed (Wild) called it, “an extraordinary memoir about the most private and public things,” and said, “the writing is just gorgeous.”

Sponsored by the UAlbany Student Association, Division of Student Affairs, Alumni Association, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Office of University Events, Rockefeller College of Public Affairs & Policy, and University Auxiliary Services, in partnership with the NYS Writers Institute.

Photo: Brigitte Lacombe
José Rivera, playwright and screenwriter, is the winner of Obie Awards for the plays Marisol and References to Salvador Dalí Make Me Hot. His 26 plays include Cloud Tectonics, Boleros for the Disenchanted, Sueño, School of the Americas, Brainpeople, The Kiss of the Spiderwoman (translation), and Each Day Dies with Sleep. He is the first Puerto Rican screenwriter to receive an Oscar nomination—for The Motorcycle Diaries (2004), based on the life of Che Guevara. Other screenplays include Jack Kerouac’s On the Road (2012) and The 33 (2015). A former student of Gabriel García Márquez, Rivera wrote 18 episodes of the forthcoming Netflix series based on One Hundred Years of Solitude.

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

Photo: Lela Edgar
Anthony Ray Hinton spent 30 years on death row in Alabama for a crime he did not commit. A passionate speaker for social justice, Hinton was freed in 1995 with the help of renowned legal advocate Bryan Stevenson. His story is told in Stevenson’s bestselling 2014 book Just Mercy, and in the 2019 major motion picture of the same name. Hinton’s own book, The Sun Does Shine:

How I Found Life, Freedom, and Justice, was an Oprah Book Club Summer 2018 selection, and recounts Hinton’s struggles to stay true to himself and prove his innocence. The late Archbishop Desmond Tutu said, “An amazing and heartwarming story, [the book] restores our faith in the inherent goodness of humanity.”

Sponsored by the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, and the Student Association, in collaboration with the NYS Writers Institute.
February 24 (Thursday)

Liara Roux

Craft Talk — 4:30 p.m.,
Boardroom (1st Floor), Campus Center West Addition

Conversation/Q&A — 7:30 p.m.,
Boardroom (1st Floor), Campus Center West Addition


Sponsored by UAlbany’s Gender and Sexuality Month, an annual spring series of the Middle Earth Peer Assistance Program of the Center for Behavioral Health Promotion and Applied Research. Cosponsors include the Division of Student Affairs, Student Association, UAS, and the NYS Writers Institute.

For the full schedule of Gender and Sexuality Month events, visit: albany.edu/behavioralhealth
Colm Tóibín is widely hailed as a giant of contemporary Irish literature. His new novel is *The Magician* (2021), about the life of major 20th century fiction writer and 1929 Nobel Prize winner Thomas Mann, author of *Death in Venice* (1912), and *The Magic Mountain* (1924). The novel follows Mann from his provincial German childhood, and his struggles to conceal his artistic aspirations and homosexuality from his conservative family, through the upheavals of World War I, the rise of Hitler, World War II, and the Cold War. Tóibín last visited UAlbany in 2016 in association with a screening of BROOKLYN, based on his novel of the same name, and widely acclaimed as a Top 10 film of that year.

UPLIFTING BLACK AUTHORS AND BLACK LEAD CHARACTERS

March 8 (Tuesday)

**Fabian Ferguson**

Pajama Storytime — 7:00 p.m.,
Christ's Church, 181 Western Ave.
(near Quail St.), Albany

**Fabian Ferguson**, who received his B.S. in Marketing and Management from the UAlbany School of Business in 2007, is an acclaimed children's book author, entrepreneur, and publisher. His company, F. Ferguson Books, is "devoted to uplifting Black authors and Black lead characters." His books include *In the Mirror* (2021), about children learning to appreciate the uniqueness of their own faces; *Jackie Wins Them All* (2020) about a gifted and competitive 6th grader; and *Daddy's Arms* (2018), which Kirkus Reviews called, “A sweet, uplifting celebration of fatherhood and a child's imagination.”

Major support and funding provided by the Carl E. Touhey Foundation.

SCIENCE WRITING AT ITS FINEST

March 10 (Thursday)

**Rachel Gross**

Craft Talk on Science Writing
4:30 p.m., D'Ambra Auditorium, Life Sciences Research Building, LSRB 2095

Presentation/Q&A — 7:30 p.m.,
D'Ambra Auditorium, Life Sciences Research Building, LSRB 2095

**Rachel Gross**, award-winning science journalist, is the author of *Vagina Obscura: An Anatomical Voyage* (2021), a brilliant account of recent discoveries by a new generation of women scientists regarding the wonders of the female body. Pulitzer Prize-winning science writer Ed Yong said, “Rachel Gross shows how long we have misunderstood the bodies of half the people who have ever lived.... Science writing at its finest—revelatory, wry, consequential, necessary, and incredibly hard to put down.” A former Knight Journalism Fellow at MIT, Gross served until recently as Digital Editor of *Smithsonian* magazine.

Cosponsored by UAlbany's Women in Science and Health network (WISH).
DRAMATIZING ALBANY POLITICS:
POLLY NOONAN AND MAYOR ERASTUS CORNING 2ND

March 21 (Monday)

Sharr White on The True

Conversation/Q&A with Cap Rep’s Maggie Mancinelli-Cahill and Paul Grondahl
7:00 p.m., Capital Repertory Theatre, 251 N Pearl St, Albany
Free event, Tickets required – visit: https://capitalrep.org
All attendees will be required to wear a mask and be vaccinated (please bring proof of vaccination to event).

Sharr White is the author of The True, a new play that explores the bounds of love, loyalty, and female power in the male-dominated world of Albany “machine politics.” The play portrays political operative Polly Noonan and her relationship with Albany’s “mayor for life,” Erastus Corning 2nd, as they wage a battle for control of the city’s Democratic Party against upstarts and progressives in the 1970s. Directed by Scott Elliott, the 2018 off-Broadway premiere of The True starred Edie Falco as Polly Noonan. White’s Broadway plays include The Snow Geese (2013), starring Mary-Louise Parker, and The Other Place (2012), starring Laurie Metcalf and Daniel Stern.

Maggie Mancinelli-Cahill, Producing Artistic Director of Capital Rep since 1995, has worked on and off Broadway and in numerous regional theatres, directing more than 100 productions. She is the recipient of the Norman E. Rice Award for Excellence in Arts Education, Distinguished Leadership Award from the National Chamber of Commerce, and was named a Woman of Excellence by the Albany-Colonie Chamber of Commerce.

Presented in partnership with Capital Repertory Theatre.

Tickets for performances of The True at theREP are available for purchase at https://capitalrep.org
(Show Dates: Friday, Apr 1, 2022 – Sunday, Apr 24, 2022)
March 24 (Thursday)

Judith Heumann

Virtual Conversation with James Odato — 7:00 p.m.

Stay tuned to nyswritersinstitute.org for more info and to register for the virtual event.

Judith Heumann, star of the Oscar-nominated 2020 documentary CRIP CAMP: A DISABILITY REVOLUTION, is widely hailed as “The Mother” of the Disability Rights Movement. Heumann contracted polio at age 18 months and has used a wheelchair for most of her life. Over the course of half a century, she served as an organizer of various campaigns, protests, and sit-ins that culminated eventually in landmark legislation to protect the rights of the disabled. Assistant Secretary of Education in the Clinton Administration (1993-2001) and Special Advisor to President Barack Obama’s State Department (2010-17), Heumann is the author of two new memoirs Being Heumann (2020), and the YA autobiography, Rolling Warrior (2021).

James Odato, independent scholar and former reporter for the Times Union, is the author of the new biography, This Brain Had a Mouth: Lucy Gwin and the Voice of Disability Nation (2021). Gwin (1943-2014), a resident of Rochester, NY, suffered a traumatic brain injury at age 40 after a head-on collision with a drunk driver. In 1990, she founded Mouth magazine, one of the most radical and significant disability rights publications, producing more than 100 issues.

Cosponsored by UAlbany’s Disability Access and Inclusion Student Services (DAISSL) and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion.
AUTHORS THEATRE

April 4 (Monday)

KUDZU CALLING
by Donnetta Lavinia Grays

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

Playwright-actor-director Donnetta Lavinia Grays presents her play-in-progress, KUDZU CALLING, a celebration of Black Southern love that is at once familial, spiritual, and queer. Commissioned by Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Kudzu Calling seeks to “expand and complicate the Southern narrative for the American stage.” Grays, a native of South Carolina, describes it as “my love letter to the place that made me.” She has received the Whiting Award for Drama and the Helen Merrill Playwright Award, and her plays have been produced at the Denver Center Theatre Company and Baltimore Center Stage. The off-Broadway debut of her solo show Where We Stand received Lortel Award and Drama League Award nominations.

The reading of this new work will feature UAlbany students, working alongside professional actors, and include a conversation with the artists following the staged reading.

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

Photo: Beowulf Sheehan
April 6 (Wednesday)

Colson Whitehead

Virtual Reading and McKinney Writing Contest Awards
7:00 p.m.

Register for the livestreamed event.

Colson Whitehead, one of the leading fiction writers of his generation, is the #1 New York Times bestselling author of *The Underground Railroad* (an Oprah’s Book Club selection and winner of the National Book Award and Pulitzer Prize), *The Nickel Boys* (winner of the Pulitzer Prize), *The Noble Hustle, Zone One, Sag Harbor, The Intuitionist, John Henry Days, Apex Hides the Hurt*, and one collection of essays, *The Colossus of New York*. His newest novel, *Harlem Shuffle*, was published in 2021. He is the only author to win the Pulitzer Prize in Fiction for two consecutive works. He was named New York’s State Author (2018-2021) by proclamation of the Governor, under the auspices of the New York State Writers Institute.

Sponsored by Rensselaer’s Union; Annual McKinney Writing Contest and Reading; and School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences; UAlbany’s Department of English; English Graduate Student Organization; Barzakh; and the NYS Writers Institute.
Tiffany Jewell is the author of the #1 New York Times Young Adult bestseller, This Book Is Anti-Racist: 20 Lessons on How to Wake Up, Take Action, and Do the Work (paperback, 2020), a how-to manual and guided journal featuring more than 50 educational activities. TIME magazine said the book, “equips young people with the tools they need to be actively antiracist,” and USA Today said that it “…helps young people learn in a gentle, thoughtful way.” Jewell is a Black biracial writer and Montessori educator, as well as a founding board member and former president of the national organization, Montessori for Social Justice. This is her first book for children and young adults.

Gary Shteyngart, major American novelist, is the author most recently of Our Country Friends: A Novel (2021), a story of various relationships and romances that unfold over the course of six months among a group of friends who take refuge in the rolling hills of Upstate New York during the pandemic. Writing for the New York Times, Molly Young called it, “A perfect novel for these times and all times, the single textual artifact from the pandemic era I would place in a time capsule as a representation of all that is good and true and beautiful about literature.” The book was named a “Best Book of the Year” by the New York Times, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, Good Housekeeping and TIME. Earlier bestselling novels include Lake Success, Super Sad True Love Story, Absurdistan and The Russian Debutante’s Handbook.
Back by Popular Demand!

LITERATURE IN PERFORMANCE

April 30, 2022 (Saturday)

Performance — 7:30 p.m.,
Main Theatre, 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.

The hit public radio and podcast series returns to Albany with a program of dazzling and original short fiction performed by actors of stage and screen! In honor of their 35th anniversary, Selected Shorts commissioned 35 brand-new stories by literary luminaries, and they’re bringing a special selection to the University at Albany in celebration of this unique and delightful series.

Our greatest actors transport us through the magic of fiction — one short story at a time.

Stay tuned to nyswritersinstitute.org for updates on the featured stories and cast.

Presented in collaboration with the UAlbany Performing Arts Center with support from the University at Albany Foundation, University Auxiliary Services, and the Office of Intercultural Student Engagement.
To sign up for email updates and for additional information on events, video clips, and literary news, visit our website at: www.nyswritersinstitute.org and follow us on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, and YouTube.

**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 $5 per vehicle, though parking spaces are very limited.

For Downtown Campus events, courtesy parking will be available in the **Thurlow Student Parking lot** on Western Avenue. **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: www.albany.edu/map

With special thanks to our primary sponsors,

**The University at Albany Foundation, The John D. Picotte Family Foundation, The New York State Writers Institute Classic Film Series Endowment, The Maguire Family Endowment at the NYSWI, and The Opalka Family Endowment.**

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**William Kennedy, Executive Director**

**Paul Grondahl, Director**

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