

Fiction News

The Ridgefield Library's Fiction Newsletter

rl: ridgefield library
Enriching Minds.
Enhancing Community.

April 2017

AUTHOR IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Anita Shreve

Anita Shreve writes provocative stories of individuals, generally women, placed in extreme circumstances and challenged to recover their lives. Shreve's novels explore passion and betrayal, with past secrets frequently popping up. Characters are her highest priority, as she focuses on their emotions and motivations, as well as their

relationships with each other, while they work through challenging situations. Shreve's novels unfold at a leisurely pace, due to the elegant language, layered stories, and complex characters.



Partial list:

Stella Bain (2013)

Suffering from shell shock and memory loss from her time spent as a nurse's aide on a French battlefield during World War I, American Stella Bain is taken in by London surgeon August Bridge and his wife.

Rescue (2010)

A rookie paramedic pulls a young woman alive from her totaled car, a first rescue that begins a lifelong tangle of love and wreckage. Sheila Arsenault is a gorgeous enigma, streetwise and tough-talking. Peter Webster, as straight an arrow as they come, falls for her instantly and entirely. Soon Sheila and Peter are embroiled in an intense love affair, married, and parents to a baby daughter.

A Change in Altitude (2009)

Struggling to maintain her sense of self and her understanding of the world while spending the first year of her marriage in Kenya, Geraldine participates in a climbing expedition to Mt. Kenya and is challenged to come to terms with a devastating accident.

Testimony (2008)

A New England boarding school is rocked in the wake of a sex scandal in which participants were caught on videotape, a situation that derails the innocence and best intentions of students, parents, and others in life-shattering ways.

The Pilot's Wife (1998)

When her husband, a pilot, dies in an airplane crash off the Irish coast, Kathryn Lyons finds herself in the media spotlight as rumors abound of her husband's shocking secret past.

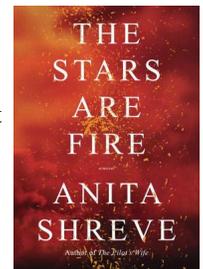
Save the Date

May 15th at 7 PM

Join the Conversation with Anita Shreve

WSHU Public Radio, The Ridgefield Library & Books on the Common present *Join the Conversation* with author **Anita Shreve**. The program takes place at the **Ridgefield Playhouse**, 80 East Ridge, Ridgefield, CT.

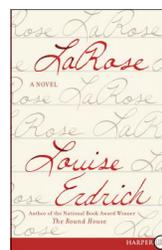
Anita Shreve's newest novel is about about an extraordinary young woman tested by a catastrophic event and its devastating aftermath – based on the true story of the largest fire in Maine's history.



TICKETS can be purchased at the Ridgefield Playhouse: \$40 includes book & reserved seating | \$15 open seating, book not included.

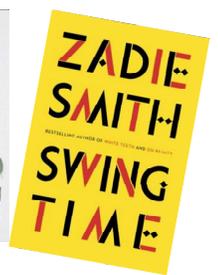
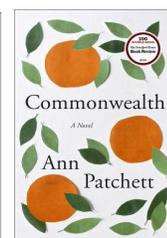
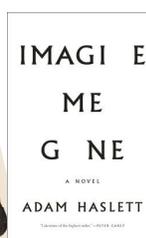
NATIONAL BOOK CRITICS CIRCLE AWARD

The National Book Critics Circle awards are given each March and honor the best literature published in the United States. Below are this year's fiction winner and finalists.



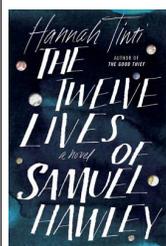
LaRose by Louise Erdrich.

Horrified when he accidentally kills his best friend's five-year-old son while hunting, Landreaux Iron gives away his own young son to his friend's family according to ancient tradition, a decision that helps both families reach a tenuous peace that is threatened by a vengeful adversary.



NEW FICTION

(Annotations from BookLetters and NoveList)

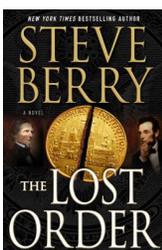


The Twelves Lives of Samuel Hawley by Hannah Tinti.

Meet Samuel Hawley, a man in a constant struggle with his violent past, doing the best he can to raise his daughter. Meet Loo, his daughter, a girl with an obscure past and an uncertain future, on the cusp of adulthood. And meet Lily, the dead woman who connects them both. In this finely woven novel, the past and the present gradually illuminate the story of a man's life through the bullet wounds he carries with him and makes readers consider what it is to be both good and evil.— Dawn Terrizzi for *Library Reads*

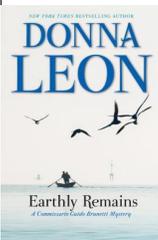
The Lost Order by Steve Berry.

The Knights of the Golden Circle, created in 1854, was the largest and most dangerous clandestine organization in American history. To finance their grand plans for a new southern empire, the knights amassed billions in stolen gold and silver, all buried in hidden caches across the United States. Treasure hunters have searched for decades, but only a fraction of that immense wealth has ever been found. Now, one hundred and sixty years later, two factions of what remains of the Knights of the Golden Circle want that lost treasure—one to spend it for their own ends, the other to preserve it.



Earthly Remains by Donna Leon.

In this newest series entry, Commissario Brunetti is on leave at a villa owned by a wealthy relative on Sant'Erasmo, one of the largest islands in the *laguna*. There he intends to pass his days rowing, and his nights reading Pliny's *Natural History*. Then, the caretaker of the house goes missing following a storm. Now, Brunetti feels compelled to investigate, to set aside his leave of absence and understand what happened to the man who had become his friend.



Girl in Disguise by Greer Macallister.

Going undercover to infiltrate the seedy side of mid-nineteenth-century Chicago, Kate Warne, the first female Pinkerton detective, assumes a range of sophisticated identities to track down evildoers and bring them to justice.



Before the War by Fay Weldon.

Vivien Ripple, 20 years old and an ungainly five foot-eleven, waits on the platform at Dilberne Halt. She is wealthy and well-bred, only daughter to the founder of Ripple & Co, the nation's top publisher, but plain, awkward, and, perhaps worst of all, intelligent. With one eye on the present and one on the past, Fay Weldon offers Vivien's fate, along with that of London between World Wars I and II: a city fizzing with change, full of flat-chested flappers, shell-shocked soldiers, and aristocrats clinging to history.



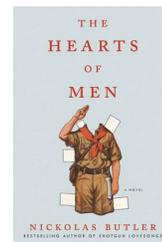
For a more extensive list of new fiction, mystery, and science fiction and fantasy titles, visit our website at www.ridgefieldlibrary.org

STAFF PICKS

Elise's Picks

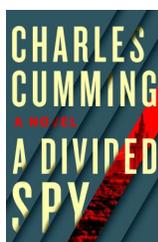
The Hearts of Men by Nickolas Butler.

Nickolas Butler's tenderhearted new novel unfolds over three generations at a Boy Scout camp in northern Wisconsin, where a lifelong friendship is formed between two very different campers: the small, earnest Nelson and Jonathan, an older, popular boy. Bullied by others and semi-protected by Jonathan, Nelson survives and surmounts a humiliating hazing, winning the respect of the camp's tough but kind scoutmaster, Wilbur Whiteside. Over the following decades, Jonathan's son and his grandson spend defining summers at the same camp where Nelson, after serving in Vietnam, has inherited both Wilbur's position and his commitment to a code of honor. *The Hearts of Men* is a moving coming-of-age story about the mysteries and challenges of friendship and the definition of what it means to be a truly good and honorable man.



A Divided Spy by Charles Cumming.

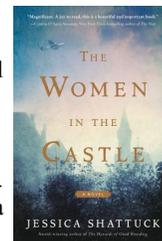
One year after a disastrous operation in Istanbul resulted in the assassination of his lover Rachel, British agent Thomas Kell finds himself adrift, sidelined by his superiors and disillusioned with living a treacherous, solitary life. Then a former colleague reaches out to him with damaging information about his Russian counterpart Minasian, the man Kell believes ordered Rachel's murder. Threatening to expose Minasian's secret life and skilled at "turning" fellow spies, Kell tries to manipulate Minasian into becoming a double agent, but the equally formidable Russian counters, offering to provide key information about an impending jihadi attack on the British seaside resort of Brighton. What ensues is both an intense psychological duel between two war weary master agents and a gripping race against time, and this sophisticated spy novel paints a vivid picture of the human costs of living such a shadowy, duplicitous life.



Dorothy's Picks

The Women in the Castle by Jessica Shattuck.

After the end World War II, three German women find themselves thrown together in a struggle to survive. All are widows of men who paid with their lives in a failed assassination attempt against Hitler. From diverse backgrounds, these women and their children have survived the war through their grit and survival instincts. While the commonality of their husbands' fates creates a powerful bond, their own war experiences have irrevocably changed them in ways that also generate conflict with each other. This is a worthy and compelling addition to fiction exploring the price of war and its aftermath.



Our Short History by Lauren Grodstein.

Karen Neulander is a single mother of 6 year-old Jacob, the product of a brief but failed love affair. A successful New York political consultant, she has reveled in both her work and in motherhood. Then, she is diagnosed with Stage IV ovarian cancer. To leave her son something to remember her by, she begins writing a record of both her own life and of their time together. Her struggles multiply when her son entreats her to contact his biological father, who walked out when she was pregnant. This poignant, but never maudlin, novel explores the powerful bond between a mother and her son and the difficult choices to be made when forced to face mortality in what one hoped would be the prime of life.

