



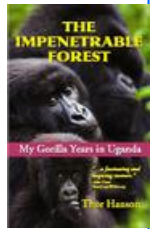
Sunriver Books & Music October 2011 Newsletter Sunriverbooks.com 541-593-2525



Thor Hanson will be with us to give a presentation on his latest book, **Feathers**, at 5:00 PM Saturday October 8th. Thor Hanson is a marvelous writer, he makes his passion for the natural world quite compelling. I found myself totally involved in the story of a fossilized wing being used in a debate on evolution. And he doesn't stop with the original owners of the feathers using them; he takes the book on to show how man has benefited from fly fishing to downy pillows. Just think of the abuse a feather must endure, sub zero temperatures and ferocious winds for the Penguin in Antarctica. Or the way a Pelican's feathers must let it dive into the frigid waters of the Pacific then erupt from the waves to rise into the sky. Feathers are pretty remarkable. And hearing about feathers from Thor is like sitting down for a lively chat with a particularly bright friend. This is a very entertaining and interesting book.



At Thor's event for his last book, **The Impenetrable Forest**, he filled the room and delivered a fascinating and exciting presentation. Most of us want to do good, but few of us drastically uproot our lives. Wanting a greater connection to the world he put his career on hold and joined the Peace Corps. Thor was sent to Uganda where he landed the plum assignment of working with the Mountain Gorillas. Uganda needs to balance between its desperately poor people and preserving animals. Part of that balance is finding a way to keep some of the land wild while benefiting the people too. Tourism is the golden hope of the environmental movement. Thor was charged with teaching the Mountain Gorillas to accept humans; his students didn't know they had enrolled in school. We all enjoyed his last presentation and look forward to hearing about the intricate and interesting world of **Feathers**.



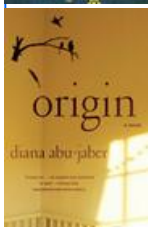
Diana Abu-Jaber is a lively, interesting speaker with a quick wit and friendly manner. She puts on a good presentation and is a lot of fun! She is one of my favorite authors, her range is incredible, her voice always true. We are very pleased she is returning to Sunriver Books & Music for a presentation on her latest book, **Birds of Paradise**, on October 29th at 5:00 PM.



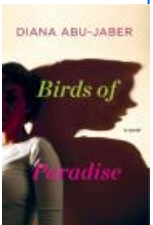
Birds of Paradise is a beautiful book. Miami heat, the pulsing neon lights color the night sky, and a young girl carries her secrets creating the drama of a family torn asunder. Felice is a beautiful child, with the face of Elizabeth Taylor. She overshadowed her less showy brother, Stanley. Avis adores her daughter. Life was going pretty well for Avis, she is married to Brian, a caring but distracted man, she has a thriving business creating amazing pastries that challenge her creatively, and children she loves. And then Felice leaves, running off into those hot Miami nights as a vulnerable thirteen year old child, taking all the magic away. Avis, Brian and Stanley are left in the wreckage of their lives to try coping with the absence of Felice. As her 18th birthday approaches Felice's presence seems to haunt her family while the young girl tries to grapple with the secrets she bears and the choices that set her adrift on the streets of Miami.



Diana's books highlight her tremendous range; each has its own distinct but lively voice. **The Language of Baklava** is a memoir about growing up in a Jordanian-American family. **Crescent** tells the tale of a chef, quite single and content, until she meets an Iraqi refugee professor. Their story is mixed with a very entertaining fable. Sensuous writing that unfolds the story slowly and with great care set this outstanding novel apart. **Arabian Jazz** has a Jordanian widower raising his two daughters in New York, they have reached marriageable age and it causes complications. **Origin** is a fast paced literary mystery taking place in Syracuse, New York in a cold, blustery winter. Diana is at her best with characters who build lives for themselves that are a bit outside the pack. Each of her books tells a completely different story filled with strong characters and spiced with humor. We are delighted to have this gifted author appearing at Sunriver Books & Music.



Author events are free, include refreshments, and drawings for door prizes. Sign up to attend by e-mailing sunriver-books@sunriverbooks.com, calling 541-593-2525, or stopping by Sunriver Books & Music.



Upcoming Author Appearances

Saturday November 12th at 5:00 PM **The Lakotas and the Black Hills** by Jeffrey Ostler
Saturday May 19th 2013 **7:00 PM Where Lilacs Still Bloom** by Jane Kirkpatrick

We hope you join us to enjoy these fabulous authors! Hearing an author speak clarifies and enriches the reading experience. Author readings are free unless otherwise noted with refreshments served and drawings for prizes. Call or e-mail Sunriver Books & Music to attend and be entered in the prize drawings. Space may be limited for some events. Check our web site, Sunriverbooks.com, for changes and additions.

A Month of Eastern Europe.

Literature can take us on journeys to distant lands and bridge the gap of cultural differences. Books allow us for a brief while to feel the experiences of living different lives, walking through alien landscapes, and perhaps appreciating other ways. Literature can let us see and understand our world a bit differently, rather than solely through our own perspectives. It expands our horizons. Each year at Sunriver Books & Music we concentrate for one month on books from another region or country. This year we are concentrating on Eastern Europe, a region that has undergone tumultuous change over the last few decades. All of the book club selections, the recommendations in our newsletter, and the store picks on our website for the month of October will be related to Eastern Europe. I hope you will join us in celebrating a Month of Eastern Europe. More books on Eastern Europe will be listed on our website at sunriverbooks.com.

In 2010 we experienced the joy of having on staff Svitlana Voylan. This brilliant, cheerful, kind young woman worked the summer with us before returning to the Ukraine to finish her studies in preparation for a teaching career. Svitlana majored in French and Russian literature. It is with great pleasure that we share 3 book reviews from Svitlana.



The Master & Margarita by Mikhail Bulgakov is a wild, throw the rule book out the door tale which manages to weave outrageous satire with eloquent speculation on morality. Bulgakov's novel confidently navigates between deft fantastic comedy and touching emotional drama without one disregarding the power of the other. I wouldn't hesitate to recommend this book to anyone who is looking for something fantastic and unpredictable to consume them. Its truly a book that can be read and re-read a number of times, with each pass being as thrilling as the next.



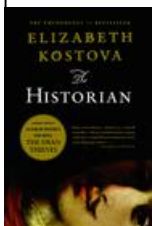
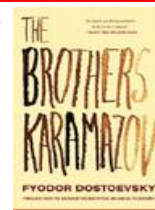
Crime and Punishment by Fyodor Dostoevsky focuses on the mental anguish and moral dilemmas of Rodion Raskolnikov, an impoverished St. Petersburg ex-student who formulates and executes a plan to kill an unscrupulous pawnbroker for her money. The murder is also committed to test Raskolnikov's hypothesis that some people are naturally able to have the right to murder. The main hero justifies his actions by relating himself to Napoleon believing that murder is permissible in pursuit of a higher purpose.



Doctor Zhivago by Boris Pasternak. The novel follows the romance between Yuri Zhivago and Larissa Antipova amid the social upheavals during and after the Russian Revolution. Complex and multi-faceted, Doctor Zhivago is more than a great, tragic, loves story or a panoramic social and political chronicle. It's a novel deeply imbued with human and poetic vision. It's quite remarkably a poet's novel. Each page is full of beautiful imagery, metaphors and word play.

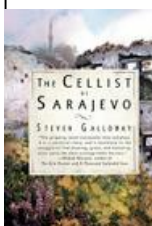


The Brothers Karamazov by Fyodor Dostoevsky seethes with passion, greed, and murder, this book is considered one of the greatest achievements of literature. A father and son vie for the same woman, two brothers eloquently debate the existence of God, and a proud man stands accused of patricide. Page 245 has one of the most eloquent passages on the existence of a diety or living a moral life I have read. The three brothers have very different natures; a monk, an intellectual, and a sensualist aristocrat. Epic in scope, this fascinating, moody, beautiful book looks into the heart of Mother Russia and the darkest secrets of man. Dostoevsky blends the story line through not only the upper classes but also those forced to survive in the margins. Betrayal, redemption, love, and hate all broil in the meaty stew Dostoevsky brews.



The Historian by Elizabeth Kostova won both the 2006 Booksense Book of the Year and the 2005 Quill Award. A young woman exploring her father's library finds a sinister book with a dragon at the center. When she mentions the book to her father a chain of events begin that will alter her sheltered life. Imagine that Vlad Dracula still walks the earth. Although the subject matter does include the ever popular vampire, this book is so much more! History of the real Vlad Dracula is blended with the story of a family and the political and societal conditions in Eastern Europe. Kostova takes us all over Eastern Europe, Istanbul, France, Amsterdam and Britain. The spectacular settings are beautifully described. **The Historian** is a moody, dark, suspenseful wonderful book that kept me enthralled.

The Invisible Bridge by Julie Orringer spends much of the first half of the book in Paris where Andras is studying to become an Architect and falling in love with Karla. His brother, Tibor, makes his way to Italy and medical school. Their younger brother, Matyas, is still at home in Hungary. Starting in 1937, the story celebrates these young men as they work hard studying to prepare for a bright future. But a dark cloud has been gathering on the horizon. As the Third Reich begins to spread the storm across Europe, even everyday situations become more difficult for Jews. Circumstances force Andras and Tibor back to Hungary where their world is taken apart piece by piece. Orringer lets the reader get acquainted with her characters by introducing them during their school years and building the horrors to come slowly. This is a powerful family drama set amid the chaos of WWII. The book covers a lot of territory: Paris, Hungary, Ukraine.

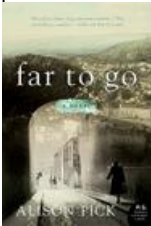
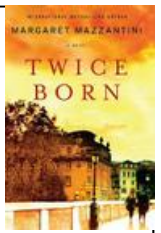


The Cellist of Sarajevo by Steven Galloway is set in the 1990's during the siege of Sarajevo and inspired by a real event. Vedran Smailovic is a gifted musician and a former cellist in the Sarajevo String Quartet. He inspired the world when he played in abandoned buildings and the streets to honor the fallen. Yo Yo Ma played a moving tribute composed by David Wilde and also titled **The Cellist of Sarajevo**. Smailovic escaped in 1993 and continues to be a creative force in the world of music. He did not approve of Steven Galloway's fictional book, feeling his privacy had been disturbed. In Galloway's work of fiction, the story follows four individuals during the siege. After 22 people are killed in a mortar attack, the cellist starts a ritual of playing at the site of their destruction for 22 days. A woman sniper picks off soldiers. A man must cross dangerous territory to bring water to his family. And another man tries to keep out of danger and survive after sending his family to safety. The story is very powerful. We recommend it highly.

The Fifth Servant by Kenneth Wishnia visits sixteenth century Prague, when the Inquisition was a powerful force and religious differences were not welcomed, especially not Jews. On the eve of Passover Greta is found murdered inside Fedran's store. A blond gentile child murdered in the store of a Jew creates a volatile atmosphere best remedied soon by finding the killer. Benyamin Ben-Akiva, the Jewish Sexton and Rabbi Loew have a limited time to find a solution. Rich with historical detail, the story visits the religious and political climate of the sixteenth century, a time of much change.

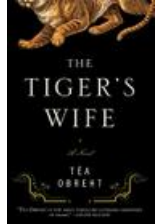


Twice Born by Margaret Mazzantini is set amidst the devastation of Sarajevo, a poignant, moving story. Gemma met Diego and Gojko in Sarajevo during the Olympics, a time of bright dreams for the future. Sometimes a chance meeting can change a life; it was so for Gemma and Diego. Years later they return to war torn Sarajevo and their friend Gojko in a desperate attempt to have a child, but their plans go tragically awry as those dreams for a bright future turn into nightmares. Years later Gojko calls Gemma and her son Pietro back to a Sarajevo filled with memories of war. It is a haunting, complex story of war, friendship, and love. Mazzantini writes with a strong, confident voice.



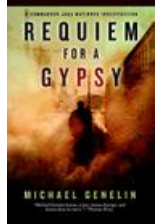
Far to Go by Alison Pick gives a unique view of WWII. Marta was nanny to the Bauer's son Pepik, she loved the child fiercely. The Bauer family owns a local factory and they are generous employers. But where should Marta's loyalties lie when Czechoslovakia is taken by the Germans? She is not Jewish and could be safe if she chooses sides wisely. Or does she side with the Bauer family? The full horror of the final solution planned by the Third Reich for the Bauers and the rest of the Jewish community cannot be comprehended at first. Of course they expect some inconvenience, some adjustments to what life will be like in future, but they do not understand their peril until it is far too late. Inconvenience and adjustments are not the issue; basic survival will be beyond reach for millions.

The Tiger's Wife by Tea Obreht is a stunning debut novel by an incredibly talented young woman. Natalia's beloved Grandfather took her often to the zoo, to visit the tiger and hear the story of the Tiger's Wife. He carried with him a well worn copy of The Jungle Book by Kipling. Natalia followed in her Grandfather's footsteps, becoming a doctor. She is on her way to inoculate the children of a poverty stricken Balkan village when she learns her Grandfather has died miles from home in a remote village. Natalia knew her Grandfather had been hiding a serious illness, but why did he go off and die in some remote settlement? As she searches for the reason her Grandfather left his home and family to journey to a rundown outpost, she is drawn into stories of folk lore and discovers a secret from the past. Obreht has written one of the best books of 2011!



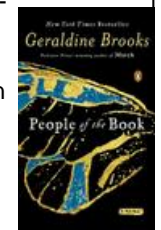
The Free World by David Bezmozgis moves between the Soviet Union and Italy. In the 1970's a small crack opened in the Iron Curtin surrounding Brezhnev's Soviet Union. Jewish families headed through the breach into new lives in the west. The Krasnansky family brings 3 generations to new lives in a strange new land. Samuil, the patriarch, was a respected communist with a chest full of decorations for his service to his country. He is not at all eager to leave, but his sons are determined and he knows he would not be viewed the same once they are gone. Karl, the eldest, is ready to do what it takes to make a good life for his sons and wife. Alec has charm to burn and a fun loving spirit, but he sees life as a game not realizing how high the stakes are in this wager. Polina is a gentile from a good family who may have risked too much marrying Alec, those bright eyes of his stray so easily. As the family tries to navigate the bureaucracy of emigration, they face challenges they could never have anticipated. Bezmozgis captures the emigrant experience perfectly while telling a moving story.

Requiem for a Gypsy by Michael Genelin is the latest in a series set in Eastern Europe with a female protagonist. Oto Brogan stands at the top of his game, making bucket-loads of money and moving into politics. He is throwing a party; all the right people will be there to cheer him on, all the right people and a killer with a prime target. Before the night his over his wife will lie dead under the spotlight, felled by an assassin's bullet. Clearly Brogan was the target, a rising star in Slovakian politics. Commander Jana Matinova isn't so certain. Her investigation will take her to Berlin, Paris, and back into the evil of the past. Jana is a strong female lead, with an interesting mystery to solve.



Shards by Ismet Prsic is gritty and bold, two young men try to survive in war torn Bosnia. Ismet is part of an acting troupe that escapes through Scotland on into the US. Mustafa is drafted into the military. What I found most compelling, is the way the everyday lives of the people were blown apart. Families living normal lives, visiting the country on the weekend, browsing the shops, going to dinner, never expecting that violence and hatred were going to destroy their lives. They are just like us, then one day they are not. How do you feed the family pet when you are starving? This is a unique, disturbing, insightful novel.

People of the Book by Geraldine Brooks is a moving and inventive story. During intense fighting in Sarajevo a Moslem librarian risks his life to save a rare Jewish book, this true incident inspired a fabulous story. Hanna restores rare volumes. She is over the moon with delight to be invited to work on the Sarajevo Haggadah. From clues as tenuous as a wine stain or insect's wing pressed between the pages, Hanna tracks the book back to its very beginnings. The story of the book is told from its creation. Capable of inspiring great sacrifice, the Haggadah has been very adventurous! I was fascinated!

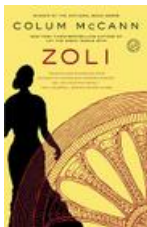
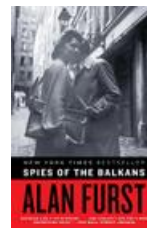


Marc Fitten author of the deviously delicious **Valeria's Last Stand**, lived in Hungary developing a camaraderie with the people and appreciation for the place. Valeria is the curmudgeonly conscience of her small Hungarian village. She goes to the farmer's market and squeezes the produce, loudly denouncing anything less than perfect, keeping the stall holders on their toes. At sixty eight, she is settled in her ways, or thinks she is settled until her sexuality is awakened. Gazing across the market, her eyes find the potter, a sunbeam shines upon him lighting a fire in Valeria. That poor potter is never going to know what hit him! And Valeria is not his only challenge; he has been seeing the town's bartender, Ibolya, a woman of passionate temperament. Ibolya will not cede defeat without a good fight. Add in a cheerfully corrupt mayor, his trophy wife, and a nefarious chimney sweep for bit of seasoning. This is a humorous lively love story with the flavor of a fable. Remember, it is never too late for cupid's arrow.

October 2011 Book Clubs

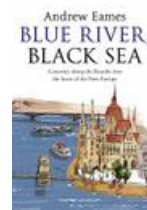
Each year at Sunriver Books & Music we concentrate for one month on books from another region or country. Eastern Europe is our focus for this October. Literature can take us on journeys to distant lands and bridge the gap of cultural differences. Books allow us to live in other cultures, walk through vastly different landscapes, and experience other lands through their pages. Literature can help us understand our world. Sink into a comfy chair with a good book and concentrate on Eastern Europe. Our newsletter and website, sunriverbooks.com, will have suggestions for more books relating to Eastern Europe.

Spies of the Balkans by Alan Furst kicks off our Month of Eastern Europe in the Mystery Book Club on October 3rd. Set in 1940, the action goes all over the place, from Paris to the Balkan states. Costa Zannis is a Greek detective charged with keeping his town, Salonika, running smoothly. A fix it man if you will. He has a life that suits him, a faithful dog, and family nearby. WWII turns his world, and most of the continent, upside down. When the Nazis invade Greece, Costa is off with the Army where he befriends Marko Pavlic, a cop from over the border in Zagreb. Soon enough that friendship becomes useful as Hitler implements his final solution. Furst keeps the action lively, the story moving, and has some interesting female characters too.

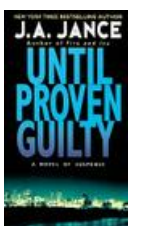
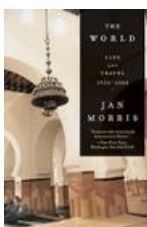
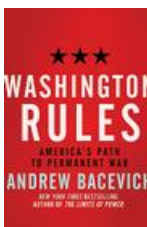


October 10th the Fiction Book Club discusses **Zoli** by Colum McCann. Set in Slovakia after WWII, this ambitious novel chronicles the life of a Gypsy songstress and poet. Resistant to communist plans to assimilate them into the general population, the Romani cling to their tribal traditions with a vengeance. Zoli falls in love with a poet and breaks a taboo, her punishment is to be banished from her tribe. McCann tells the story from several perspectives, covering the time from Zoli's youth until her old age. Gypsies are a maligned group, targeted by Hitler for extermination, looked down on by other European's they cling to a traditional way of life that is at odds with modern society. McCann gives us a look inside their very private culture and tells the story of a fascinating woman.

October 17th the Travel Essay Book Club discusses **Blue River, Black Sea** by Andrew Eames. Starting in Germany, Eames bikes, hikes, rides, and boats his way through hill and dale all the way to the Black Sea. The Danube is the longest river in Europe, 2840 kilometers, a lot of territory to cover. He spends time with a Transylvanian Count. (Hmm, now that brings to mind some odd happenings in a tome by Bram Stoker). He rides a puddle challenged horse in Hungary (whoever heard of a horse afraid of puddles?). The length of the Danube provides plenty opportunity for adventure. Eames is an engaging author, he writes a bit like having a conversation with a well read, chatty, but intelligent friend. As he travels through the countries with his river, he gives us a look at their history and how they are faring today. We discussed Andrew Eames earlier book, **The 8:55 to Baghdad**, in book club a few years ago and thoroughly enjoyed it.



Our Month of Eastern Europe concludes on October 24th with the Classics Book Club's discussion of **The Shooting Party** by Anton Chekov. A beautiful young girl marries an elderly farm manager, not realizing until it is too late that her charms could have taken her much higher. The local investigating magistrate and the Count, a wealthy but debauched aristocrat, engage in an edgy friendship of sorts based on strong drink and loose women. Someone dies during a shooting party at the Count's palatial estate. Now suspicion focuses everywhere.



Upcoming Book Club Dates for Monday Evenings at 6:30 PM

November 7th 2011 **Secrets of Eden** by Chris Bohjalian [Mystery Book Club](#)

November 14th 2011 **The Postmistress** by Sarah Blake [Fiction Book Club](#)

November 21st 2011 **Washington Rules** by Andrew Bacevich [Non Fiction Book Club](#)

November 28th 2011 **The World** by Jan Morris [Travel Essay Book Club](#)

December 5th 2011 **The Wild Girl** by Jim Fergus [Fiction Book Club](#)

December 12th 2011 **Until Proven Guilty** by J.A. Jance [Mystery Book Club](#)

December 19th 2011 **Holy Cow** by Sarah MacDonald [Travel Essay Book Club](#)

2012

January 2nd 2012 **At Home** by Bill Bryson [Non Fiction Book Club](#)

January 9th 2012 **Crooked Letter, Crooked Letter** by Tom Franklin [Mystery Book Club](#)

January 16th 2012 **Time Was Soft There** by Jeremy Mercer [Travel Essay Book Club](#)

January 23rd 2012 **Remarkable Creatures** by Tracy Chevalier [Fiction Book Club](#)

January 30th 2012 **The Virgin & The Gypsy** by DH Lawrence [Classics Book Club](#)

2012 February 6th 2012 **City of Fallen Angels** by John Berendt [Travel Essay Book Club](#)

February 13th 2012 **Faithful Place** by Tana French [Mystery Book Club](#)

February 20th 2012 **Massacred for Gold** by Gregory Nokes [Non Fiction Book Club](#), [Author Leading](#)

June 2nd 2012 **The Emperor of Ocean Park** by Stephan Carter [Mystery Book Club](#) [A Month of New England](#)

June 11th 2012 **Empire Falls** by Richard Russo [Fiction Book Club](#) [A Month of New England](#)

June 16th 2012 **Mayflower** by Nathaniel Philbrick [Travel Essay Book Club](#) [A Month of New England](#)

June 25th 2012 **The Human Stain** by Phillip Roth [Classics Book Club](#) [A Month of New England](#)

Comment on book clubs, look up future book clubs, or find more information at Sunriverbooks.com

