



# Advance Program Notes

Sherman Alexie, author

Wednesday, November 4, 2015, 7:30 PM

These Advance Program Notes are provided online for our patrons who like to read about performances ahead of time. Printed programs will be provided to patrons at the performances. Programs are subject to change.

**Sherman Alexie**  
*author*



*Presented in partnership with the Department of English Visiting Writer Series*

# *Biography*

**SHERMAN ALEXIE**, *author*

One of *The New Yorker's* 20 top writers for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, author, poet, and screenwriter Sherman Alexie grew up on the Spokane Indian Reservation in Washington, but it wasn't until a college professor recognized his "intensity of language, passion, and energy" that he fully committed to writing.

Shortly after, his first books of poetry were published, and he began developing into a gifted orator, telling tales of contemporary American Indian life with razor sharp humor, unsettling candor, and biting wit. His novels, such as *Reservation Blues*, *Indian Killer*, and *The Toughest Indian in the World*, have won numerous awards and accolades. The National Book Award-winning *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* was named *Time's* best Young Adult Book of all time.

In 1998, Alexie wrote and produced the film *Smoke Signals*, an adaptation of his book *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*. The movie went on to win the Audience Award and Filmmakers Trophy at the Sundance Film Festival.

He was recently awarded a 2014 Literature Award by the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Alexie is the guest editor of 2015's *Best American Poetry*.

# *Engagement Activities*

Wednesday, November 4, 2015

## **ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION**

*Moderated by Karenne Wood, director, Virginia Indian Program at the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities*  
Sherman Alexie participated in an informal dialogue with members of Native@VT and Native American faculty, staff, and alumni, as well as Virginia tribal youth.

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## **CRAFT TALK WITH SHERMAN ALEXIE**

*Cube*

*Presented in collaboration with the Virginia Tech Department of English Visiting Writers Series*

Join us for a brief talk by Sherman Alexie on his approach to writing, followed by a question and answer discussion with the author.

Wednesday, November 4, 2015, 5:30 PM

## **LOBBY DISPLAY: NATIVE AMERICANS IN VIRGINIA**

*Grand Lobby*

Preceding the performance by Sherman Alexie, visit the Grand Lobby to learn about the past, present, and future of Virginia tribes. Displays will include information on such campus organizations as Native@VT, the Society for the Advancement of Hispanics/Chicanos and Native Americans in Science at Virginia Tech, and the Department of Sociology's American Indian Studies program.

Wednesday, November 4, 2015, Following the performance

## **MEET THE ARTIST: SHERMAN ALEXIE**

*Grand Lobby*

Following the performance, join the author for this book-signing event. Alexie's books will be available for purchase.

*Special thanks to Creative Writing in the Department of English, Graduate School, Intercultural Engagement Center, Native@VT, Virginia Indian Programs at the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, Dannette Gomez Beane, Mary Grace Campos, Sam Cook, Miguel Martinez, Jessica McCauley, Bobbie Potter, Karen Eley Sanders, Joe Scallorns, Tricia Smith, Mikhelle Taylor, David Travis, Matthew Vollmer, Latanya Walker, and Karenne Wood*

# *In the Galleries*

## **BEYOND REAL: STILL LIFE IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

September 3–November 15, 2015

*Miles C. Horton Jr. Gallery, Sherwood Payne Quillen 71' Reception Gallery*

### **Artist Spotlight: Jennifer L. Hand**

Jennifer L. Hand explores the meaning and beauty of the present moment in these carefully constructed multimedia works that incorporate drawing, stop-motion video, and found objects. Titled after an Episcopal prayer, *This Transitory Life* presents an almost elegiac meditation on the past, the present, and the future, while gently portraying moments of the everyday. Across the ages, the still life tradition has grappled with life's exquisite beauty, while addressing its vulnerability in the face of time passing and life's inevitable end. With tenderness, Hand explores these same themes in this poetic 21<sup>st</sup>-century adaptation of the tradition.

Hear Jennifer L. Hand speak about her work Friday, November 6, 2015, at 6:30 p.m. in the Miles C. Horton Jr. Gallery. Artist talks are free and open to the public.

Also on view:

### **PHILIP TAAFFE**

September 3–November 15, 2015

*Ruth C. Horton Gallery*

### **GALLERY HOURS**

Tuesday-Friday, 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.; Saturday-Sunday, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.; closed for Virginia Tech home football games