

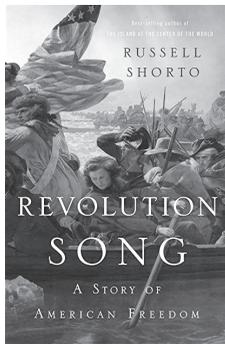
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"With the precision of a
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"[A] stunner ... McDermott's language is, as always,
precise and lyrical." *NPR Best Books of 2017*

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Stacy Schiff, Pulitzer Prize-winning author

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ALICE McDERMOTT

The Ninth Hour
(Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2017)



Epic Photography
Jamie Schoenberger

Alice McDermott is the acclaimed author of eight novels including *Charming Billy*, winner of the 1998 National Book Award and an American Book Award. Her books *At Weddings and Wakes*, *After This* and *That Night* were finalists for the Pulitzer Prize. Her stories, essays and reviews have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The New Yorker*, *Harpers, Commonweal* and elsewhere.

Her new novel, *The Ninth Hour*, was lauded as one of the Top 10 of 2017 by the *Wall Street Journal*, *Time Magazine*, NPR and *Library Journal*, and was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award for Fiction. In it, McDermott offers a powerfully affecting story spanning the twentieth century of a widow and her daughter and the nuns who serve their Irish-American community in Brooklyn. On a dim winter afternoon, a young Irish immigrant opens the gas taps in his tenement. His suicide reverberates through many lives over the decades, testing the limits and the demands of love and sacrifice, of forgiveness and forgetfulness.

McDermott earned her BA at SUNY Oswego and her MA from the University of New Hampshire. Currently she is the Richard A. Macksey Professor of the Humanities at Johns Hopkins University. She is the recipient of the Whiting Writers Award, the Carington Award for Literary Excellence, and the F. Scott Fitzgerald Award for American Literature.

In 2013 McDermott, who grew up on Long Island, was inducted into the New York State Writers Hall of Fame. She lives with her family outside Washington, D.C.

RUSSELL SHORTO

Revolution Song: A Story of American Freedom
(W.W. Norton & Company, 2017)



Russell Shorto is one of America's foremost authors of narrative history. He was a featured speaker at our 2005 luncheon discussing *The Island at the Center of the World*. The book, about Dutch Manhattan, was a national best-seller and is currently being developed as a television series.

In his new epic, *Revolution Song*, Shorto takes us back to the founding of the American nation, drawing on diaries, letters and autobiographies to flesh out six lives that cast the era in a fresh new light. Through these lives we understand that the revolution was fought over the meaning of individual freedom, a philosophical idea that became a force for violent change. A brilliant defense of American values, *Revolution Song* makes the compelling case that the revolution is still being fought today.

Shorto earned a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy from The George Washington University. He is currently Senior Scholar at the New Netherland Institute and a contributing writer at *The New York Times Magazine*. He is a fellow of the New York Academy of History and a member of the Advisory Board of the John Adams Institute in Amsterdam. In 2009 he received a knighthood from the Dutch government for advancing Dutch-American relations. His awards include the New York City Book Award, the Washington Irving Prize, and the New York Public Library Award. In 2018 he was named to the New York State Writers Hall of Fame.

He currently is writing a book about the post-WWII years in his hometown of Johnstown, Pa. He lives in Cumberland, Md., with his wife and family.

SUSAN ISAACS

Program Moderator



Susan Isaacs was dubbed "Jane Austen with a shmeat" by NPR's book critic. Among her thirteen bestselling novels are *Lily White*, *Shining Through* and *After All These Years*. She has written screenplays for two films: *Compromising Positions*, an adaptation of her novel, and *Hello Again*. She also has one nonfiction work to her credit, *Brave Dames and Wimpettes: What Women are Really Doing on Page and Screen*. Before she took to books, she was an editor at *Seventeen* magazine and a freelance political speechwriter.

An alumna of Queens College, Isaacs currently chairs the board of directors of the literary organization Poets & Writers. She is past president of Mystery Writers of America and belongs to the National Book Critics Circle, PEN, and the International Association of Crime Writers. Among her honors are the John Steinbeck Award, the Writers for Writers award, and the Marymount Manhattan Writing Center prize.

Her most recent works are the novella, *A Hint of Strangeness*, and the short story, "Getting Somewhere," included in the anthology *It Seems to Me That I Am America*. She has just finished her fourteenth novel (and first of a series), *Takes One to Know One*.

She lives with her husband, a criminal defense lawyer, in Port Washington.

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