



# LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

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## 2022 Carole Weinstein Author Series Adds Renowned Poet Rita Dove

April and July talks explore the inspiring true story of an enslaved woman who liberated an infamous slave jail and a collection of revelatory poems for our times.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RICHMOND, VIRGINIA – The Library of Virginia’s **2022 Carole Weinstein Author Series** ([www.lva.virginia.gov/public/weinstein](http://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/weinstein)) continues with talks by a Pulitzer Prize–winning poet and a *New York Times* best-selling author and journalist and on their fascinating recent books:

- April 14, 2022 (in person & livestreamed) – **Kristen Green | *The Devil’s Half Acre: The Untold Story of How One Woman Liberated the South’s Most Notorious Slave Jail***
- July 28, 2022 (in person & livestreamed) – **Rita Dove | *Playlist for the Apocalypse: Poems***

The Carole Weinstein Author Series supports the literary arts by bringing both new and well-known authors to the Library of Virginia. **Free and open to the public**, the series focuses on Virginia authors and Virginia subjects across all genres. Authors answer questions from the audience and sign copies of their books. April and July’s in-person talks will also be livestreamed on the Library’s Facebook ([www.facebook.com/LibraryofVA](https://www.facebook.com/LibraryofVA)) and YouTube pages ([www.youtube.com/user/LibraryofVa](https://www.youtube.com/user/LibraryofVa)).

For more information about attending events, contact Dawn Greggs at 804.692.3813 or [dawn.greggs@lva.virginia.gov](mailto:dawn.greggs@lva.virginia.gov).

The Carole Weinstein Author Series is made possible through support from the Carole Weinstein Endowment for Virginia Authors.

**SCHEDULE | To Register:** [www.lva.virginia.gov/public/weinstein](http://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/weinstein)

**Thursday, April 14, 2022 | 6:00–7:30 PM | Library of Virginia Lecture Hall**

### KRISTEN GREEN

#### ***The Devil’s Half Acre: The Untold Story of How One Woman Liberated the South’s Most Notorious Slave Jail***

Kristen Green is the author of *Something Must Be Done About Prince Edward County*, a *New York Times* best seller and winner of the 2016 Library of Virginia Literary Award for Nonfiction. She has worked for two decades as a reporter for

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newspapers including the *Boston Globe* and the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, and she holds a master's in public administration from the Harvard Kennedy School. Green is a fellow with Virginia Humanities and a former writer-in-residence at the Library of Virginia. She lives in Richmond with her husband and two daughters. Her website: <https://kristengreen.net>

**About *The Devil's Half Acre: The Untold Story of How One Woman Liberated the South's Most Notorious Slave Jail***

In *The Devil's Half Acre*, *New York Times* best-selling author and journalist Kristen Green draws on years of research to tell the extraordinary and little-known story of young Mary Lumpkin, an enslaved woman who blazed a path of liberation for thousands. She was forced to have the children of a brutal slave trader and live on the premises of his slave jail, known as the "Devil's Half Acre." When she inherited the jail after the death of her slaveholder, she transformed it into "God's Half Acre," a school where Black men could fulfill their dreams. It still exists today as Virginia Union University, one of America's first Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

A sweeping narrative of a life in the margins of the American slave trade, *The Devil's Half Acre* brings Mary Lumpkin into the light. This is the story of the resilience of a woman on the path to freedom, her historic contributions, and her enduring legacy.

**Thursday, July 28, 2022 | 6:00–7:30 PM | Library of Virginia Lecture Hall**

**RITA DOVE**

***Playlist for the Apocalypse: Poems***

Pulitzer Prize winner and former U.S. Poet Laureate and Virginia Poet Laureate Rita Dove is the only poet honored with both the National Humanities Medal and the National Medal of Arts. She is the author of essays, a novel, a book of short stories, and works for theater, in addition to numerous volumes of poetry. Dove's recent works include *Playlist for the Apocalypse*, *Sonata Mulattica*, and *Collected Poems: 1974–2004*, which was shortlisted for the National Book Award. Her long list of honors includes the 2021 Gold Medal for Poetry from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the Library of Virginia's Literary Award for Poetry (2017) and Literary Lifetime Achievement Award (2008). Dove lives in Charlottesville, where she is the Henry Hoyns Professor of Creative Writing at the University of Virginia.

**About *Playlist for the Apocalypse: Poems***

In her first volume of new poems in 12 years, Dove investigates the vacillating moral compass guiding America's, and the world's, experiments in democracy. Whether depicting the first Jewish ghetto in 16th-century Venice or the contemporary efforts of Black Lives Matter, a girls' night clubbing in the shadow of World War II or the doomed nobility of Muhammad Ali's conscious objector stance, this extraordinary poet never fails to connect history's grand exploits to the triumphs and tragedies of individual lives.

At turns audaciously playful and grave, alternating poignant meditations on mortality and acerbic observations of injustice, *Playlist for the Apocalypse* takes us from the smallest moments of redemption to catastrophic failures of the human soul. Listen up, the poet says, speaking truth to power; what you'll hear in return is "a lifetime of song." The *Boston Globe* calls it "a piercing, unflinching new volume that offers necessary music for our tumultuous present, from perhaps the best public poet we have."

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### **About the Library of Virginia**

The Library of Virginia is one of the oldest agencies of Virginia government, founded in 1823 to preserve and provide access to the state's incomparable printed and manuscript holdings. Its collection, which has grown steadily through the years, is the most comprehensive resource in the world for the study of Virginia history, culture, and government with over 130 million items in the collections. The Library also engages the public through in-person and virtual events, education programs, and online resources that reach nearly 4 million individuals each year throughout the commonwealth and beyond.

**March 30, 2022**