The Village Reads to Host 2024 Common Read Literary Event

On Saturday, April 6, The Village Reads will host its 2024 Common Read literary event. This year’s program will focus on Lisa See’s *Lady Tan’s Circle of Women,* an immersive historical novel inspired by the true story of a groundbreaking woman physician in 15th-century China.

Tan Yunxian is born into an elite family in an era when the Confucian maxim, “an educated woman is a worthless woman,” would normally govern her life and actions. However, her grandmother is one of the handful of female physicians in China and she teaches Yunxian the pillars of Chinese medicine, some radically different between men and women. From a young age, Yunxian learns about women’s illnesses, many of which relate to childbearing, alongside a young midwife-in-training, Meiling. The two girls maintain a supportive, lasting friendship even while living vastly different lives.

*The New York Times Book Review* calls Lisa See “one of those special writers capable of delivering both poetry and plot.” She is the bestselling author of ten novels as well as the critically acclaimed memoir *On Gold Mountain.* The program will include a pre-recorded interview with Ms. See conducted at the American Writers Museum.

Special guest lecturer for the program will be Hu Ying, Professor of East Asian Studies at University of California, Irvine. A PhD from Princeton University, the focus of her research is the literature and culture of late 19th to early 20th century China. As a feminist scholar, she pays special attention to feminism across cultures and traditions.

Guest lecturer and Laguna Woods Village resident Sandra Rosencrans will provide literary insights into the selection. She has specialized in lecturing on the contemporary novel for almost 50 years and has freelanced in diverse settings including New York, Florida and at UC Irvine’s OLLI program. She was also briefly on the English faculty of the University or Redlands.

Common Reads have become increasingly popular in cities and colleges across the country. Participants read a single book, then gather to discuss it. Common Reads differ from book groups in several ways. They are occasional, usually once a year. All community members are welcome. The hope is that the shared experience of reading, learning and talking about the same book will strengthen ties among participants.

For more information, please contact [thevillagereadslwv@gmail.com](mailto:thevillagereadslwv@gmail.com)

Submitted by Barbara Walden