

Rising with Elizabeth Rush: Celebrating Rhode Island's one-state, one-book selection

Since growing up in Beverly, Massachusetts, Elizabeth Rush's journeys have carried her far and wide — college in Oregon, a solo cycling trek to Alaska, a book project in Myanmar, an art gallery in Vietnam, a teaching fellowship in Maine, a research expedition to Antarctica and uncounted environmental reporting trips in between. Now a resident of Providence and a visiting lecturer in creative nonfiction at Brown University, Rush has the distinction of her book *Rising: Dispatches from the New American Shore* (Milkweed Editions, 2018) receiving a Pulitzer Prize nomination in general nonfiction. Rush's layered narrative of the risks of rising sea levels carries readers from one coastal community to another in the United States, including Rhode Island.

"If it's happening there, it's definitely happening here," she said. "But we don't talk about it like it is."

With *Rising* selected by the Rhode Island Center for the Book as its 2020 Reading Across Rhode Island book pick, Rush and her readers will have more opportunities to discuss these issues and their impacts, including the importance of protecting low-income communities while advancing renewable energy aims. "The climate crisis is already transforming the world of which we are a part," wrote Rush in a recent *Newport Daily News* op-ed. "Now it's our job to make sure the shape of those changes bends us collectively towards justice."

Visit *Motif's* website to read an extensive profile of Elizabeth Rush's journey as a writer (motifri.com/elizabethrushrising) and a Q&A with Kate Lentz of the Rhode Island Center for the Book to learn the story behind the Reading Across Rhode Island one-state, one-book program (motifri.com/readingacrossri). And stop by the circulation desk of your local library to learn about additional *Rising* events and resources available for patrons, including:

Tue, Mar 10, 6pm, free: Middle school English teacher and Reading Across Rhode Island committee member Maureen Nagle will welcome any interested educators to the Walter Jones Library at Moses Brown School in Providence to learn about *Rising* and the teaching curricula and other resources developed for the 2020 Reading Across Rhode Island program.

Thu, Mar 12, 6:30pm, free: Barrington Public Library will host Elizabeth Rush for a reading and discussion of her work. Although tickets are free, registration is required through an Eventbrite link found through barringtonlibrary.org. Ink Fish Books, an independent bookshop in Warren, will sell books on site. While the timing is yet to be determined, the Barrington Land Conservation Trust has been in touch with its neighbors, the Warren Land Conservation Trust, about organizing a walk in Jacob's Point, the nature reserve in the opening chapter of *Rising*.

Thu, Apr 2, 1:30pm: A former recipient of the Metcalf Institute's Climate Change Adaptation Fellowship, Rush will return to University of Rhode Island for a talk at the College of the Environment and Life Sciences program to support marine and environmental reporting.

Thu, Apr 2, 6:30pm: Rounding out a doubleheader, Rush will join Jim Ludes, executive director of the Pell Center for International Relations and Public Policy, for a discussion at the Ochre Court mansion at Salve Regina University in Newport.

Acting out: Exploring *Rising* through theatrical performance, Living Literature will bring the book's themes to life while provoking conversations across the state all year. Upcoming events include: Thu, Mar 26 at Rogers Free Library (525 Hope St, Bristol); Mon, Mar 30 at Tiverton Public Library (34 Roosevelt Ave, Tiverton); Tue, Mar 31 at Barrington Public Library (281 County Rd, Barrington); April events at Weaver Library in East Providence, Cranston Public Library, and East Greenwich Leisure Learning at St. Luke's Episcopal Church; and May events at Jamestown Philomenian Library and Woonsocket Harris Public Library.