

A close-up portrait of Viet Thanh Nguyen, a man with dark hair styled back, looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. He is wearing a blue and white patterned button-down shirt. The background is a soft-focus green.

MOSS
ARTS
CENTER

Thursday, March 16, 2023, 7:30 PM

An Evening with Viet Thanh Nguyen

Moss Arts Center
Street and Davis Performance Hall
Anne and Ellen Fife Theatre



VIRGINIA
TECH

Spring at a Glance

Friday, March 24, 7:30 PM

Book of Mountains and Seas

Composer and librettist: Huang Ruo

Director and production design: Basil Twist

Just Added: Guest Curated

Thursday, March 30-Friday, March 31, 8 PM

Rissi Palmer

Just Added: Guest Curated

Friday, April 7, 8 PM

Shirlette Ammons

Just Added: Guest Curated

Friday, April 14, 8 PM

Sonny Miles

Sunday, April 23, 4 PM

Opera Roanoke and Blacksburg Master Choral

Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem*

Saturday, April 29, 7:30 PM

Cécile McLorin Salvant

Tickets are available now at the box office and online. See the complete schedule of performances, exhibitions, and engagement activities at artscenter.vt.edu.

An Evening with Viet Thanh Nguyen

Co-sponsored by the Department of English Visiting Writers Series,
with additional support from the Asian Cultural Engagement Center and
Center for Refugee, Migrant, and Displacement Studies

This performance is supported in part by a gift from Ruth Waalkes and Jeffrey Cole.

Biography



Viet Thanh Nguyen's writing is bold, elegant, and fiercely honest. His remarkable debut novel, *The Sympathizer*, won the Pulitzer Prize, was a Dayton Literary Peace Prize winner, and made the finalist list for the PEN/Faulkner award.

Nguyen and his family came to the United States as refugees during the Vietnam War in 1975. As he grew up in America, he began to notice that most movies and books about the war focused on Americans, while the Vietnamese were silenced and erased. He was inspired by this lack of representation to write about the war from a Vietnamese perspective, globally reimagining what we thought we knew about the conflict. *The New York Times* says that his novel, *The Sympathizer*, "fills a void...giving voice to the previously voiceless while it compels the rest of us to look at the events of 40 years ago in a new light." His voice is refreshing and powerful as he urges readers to examine the legacy of that tumultuous time and its aftermath from a new perspective. The audacious novel has also been described by *The Guardian* as having a "Whitman-like multiplicity" as it "reads like the absolute opposite of Tim

Biography, continued

O'Brien's *The Things They Carried*." *The Committed*, the long-awaited follow-up to *The Sympathizer*, was published in 2021 and has been called "a masterwork" and "revelatory."

Viet's book, *Nothing Ever Dies: Vietnam and the Memory of War*, was a finalist for the National Book Award. Author Ari Kelman praises *Nothing Ever Dies*, saying it "provides the fullest and best explanation of how the Vietnam War has become so deeply inscribed into national memory." Nguyen's collection of short stories, *The Refugees*, explores questions of immigration, identity, love, and family. In 2018 he called on 17 fellow refugee writers from across the globe to shed light on their experiences, and the result is *The Displaced*, a powerful dispatch from the individual lives behind current headlines, with proceeds to support the International Rescue Committee.

Nguyen was the recipient of a MacArthur "Genius" Grant. The MacArthur foundation noted that his work "not only offers insight into the experiences of refugees past and present, but also poses profound questions about how we might more accurately and conscientiously portray victims and adversaries of other wars." Along with teaching at the University of Southern California, he works as a cultural critic-at-large for the *Los Angeles Times*. Nguyen lives in L.A. with his wife and two children.

This is Nguyen's first appearance at the Moss Arts Center.

Tell Us What You Think!

We'd love your feedback on this performance. If you complete the short survey, you can enter for a chance to win two tickets to Cécile McLorin Salvant on Saturday, April 29, 2023.



bit.ly/nguyen-feedback

Engagement Events

THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 2023

LEARNING LUNCH

As part of the Asian Cultural Engagement Center's ongoing series, Viet Thanh Nguyen enjoyed a meal with Virginia Tech students and spoke about his path to higher education.

CRAFT TALK

Students, faculty, and staff in the Department of English gained insight into Viet Thanh Nguyen's practice and career as a writer.

Special thanks to the Department of English Visiting Writers Series; Asian Cultural Engagement Center; Center for Refugee, Migrant, and Displacement Studies; Nina Ha; Iuliia Hoban; Katrina Powell; Matthew Vollmer; Mozaiko Living-Learning Community; and Ed Falco

Go Deeper

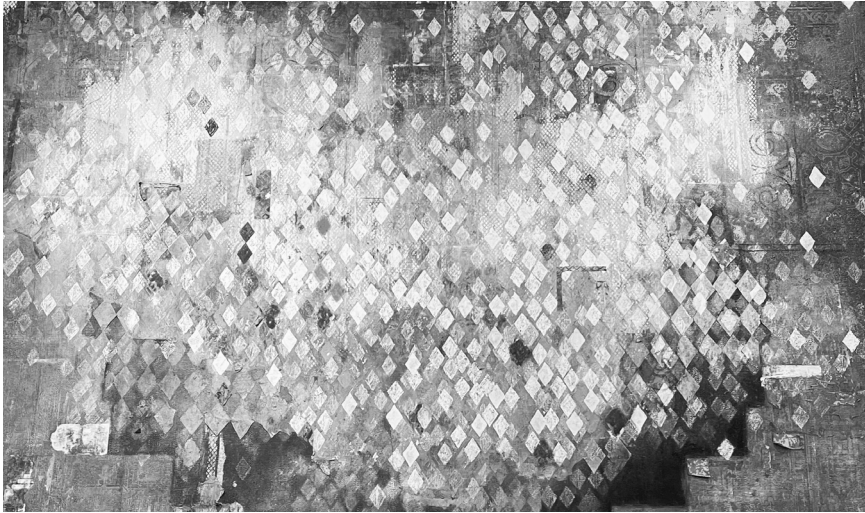
When asked by *The Guardian* about the "roots" of the global refugee crisis, Nguyen explained,

"Just call it colonization. That's the shorthand for so many problems today. Refugee crisis. Drug wars. Interracial violence. For me, the roots of them all go back to this half-millennium-old historical epic that we're living in — colonization — which is wrapped up with the development of capitalism and the rise of European modernity that extends to the United States."

How does colonization figure in to Nguyen's talk? How does his work as a writer, educator, and advocate combat the enduring impact of colonization?

In the Galleries

Through Saturday, April 22



Anne Samat

Follow Your Heart Wholeheartedly 2

Ruth C. Horton Gallery

In her fiber-based reliefs, Malaysian artist Anne Samat meticulously juxtaposes beadwork and traditional South Asian weaving techniques with common items, a project that questions the boundaries of craft and art.

Yanira Collado

Zafa/ A Spellworking of Temporal Geometry

Miles C. Horton Jr. Gallery and Sherwood Payne Quillen

'71 Reception Gallery

In the face of inevitable change and displacement, memories find a home in the relic. Yanira Collado explores the ideas of migration, reliquary, and memory through construction and ritual.

▲ Yanira Collado; *Areito*, 2022 (detail); oil pastels, paint, gel medium transfers, and textile on custom made frame; 120 x 132 x 4 inches; courtesy of the artist

K-12 Programs at the Moss



At the Moss Arts Center, we believe that arts experiences are a crucial part of a child's education. We've been dedicated to providing opportunities for children at no cost since we opened in 2013. A wide array of Moss programming and experiences to inspire, engage, and empower students of all ages and backgrounds. This season, we're offering five school-day matinee programs, in-school workshops and performances, and gallery tours with professional artists for learners of all ages. Learn more at bit.ly/moss-k12.

Did You Know?

The Moss Arts Center has 4,200 square feet of total visual art gallery space. The Ruth C. Horton Gallery, Miles C. Horton Jr. Gallery, Sherwood Payne Quillen '71 Reception Gallery, and Francis T. Eck Exhibition Corridor are capable of exhibiting a wide range of traditional and transmedia works and installations.

Land Acknowledgement and Labor Recognition

Virginia Tech acknowledges that we live and work on the Tutelo/Monacan People's homeland and we recognize their continued relationships with their lands and waterways. We further acknowledge that legislation and practices like the Morrill Act (1862) enabled the commonwealth of Virginia to finance and found Virginia Tech through the forced removal of Native Nations from their lands, both locally and in western territories.

We understand that honoring Native Peoples without explicit material commitments falls short of our institutional responsibilities. Through sustained, transparent, and meaningful engagement with the Tutelo/Monacan Peoples and other Native Nations, we commit to changing the trajectory of Virginia Tech's history by increasing Indigenous student, staff, and faculty recruitment and retention, diversifying course offerings, and meeting the growing needs of all Virginia tribes and supporting their sovereignty.

We must also recognize that enslaved Black people generated revenue and resources used to establish Virginia Tech and were prohibited from attending until 1953. Through InclusiveVT, the institutional and individual commitment to *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve) in the spirit of community, diversity, and excellence, we commit to advancing a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive community.

Health and Wellness

The Moss Arts Center adheres to the guidelines of the Virginia Department of Health and Virginia Tech in its operations, including protocols for distancing, face coverings, and cleaning and sanitation. Our status may change according to changes in university operating procedures. Find the most up to date information at artscenter.vt.edu/visit.

We ask patrons to do their part in keeping our community healthy. If you feel unwell, please stay home.

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Mrs. Jennifer L. Yancey (ICAT)
Ms. Lesley A. Yorke
Carter and Janet Younger
Ms. Megan C. Zalecki
Ms. Mary J. Zody

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Endowments

The Moss Arts Center extends its appreciation to those donors who have established endowments in support of the arts.

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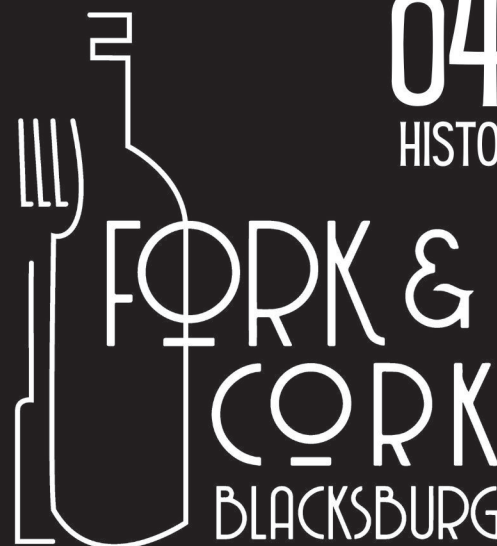
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Jenny



Tonia

We are delighted to introduce our new Y Pottery Studio staff-Jennifer Lawrence, lead teacher and studio coordinator & Tonia Moxley, studio technician and coordinator. For info about pottery classes visit www.vtymca.org

Y potters raise money for food programs

The VT YMCA pottery studio is proud to resurrect a partnership with the Thrift Store that will offer local, handmade ceramic art pieces for sale to benefit the Y's Meals on Main program.

Studio members and pottery students donate mugs, bowls, and other ceramic pieces they've made, and the Thrift Store staff offer them to shoppers on a special shelf near the checkout counter. Shoppers may take any piece they like for a \$10 donation.

Your donation not only supports local artists but ensures food security for children in our communities.

The Y pottery studio is one of the longest continuously operating nonprofit community arts centers in the New River Valley. The YMCA at Virginia Tech was established in 1873 and has provided a range of youth programs on and off campus since that time.



www.vtymca.org