UC SANTA BARBARA
THE Current

October 14, 2019
Shelly Leachman

“Rising”

Combining rigorous reporting and lyrical storytelling to depict the impact of sea level rise in the United States, the book “Rising: Dispatches from the New American Shore,” by journalist Elizabeth Rush, is UC Santa Barbara’s selection for the 2019–2020 season of UCSB Reads.

An annual event now in its 14th year, UCSB Reads engages the campus and the Santa Barbara community in conversations about a key topic while reading the same book. UCSB Reads is presented by the UCSB Library in partnership with the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor.

An advisory committee made up of faculty, staff, students and community representatives selected “Rising” for this year’s book, citing the power and relevance of the book’s stories about the people and communities most at risk from sea level rise. Rush, who will deliver a free public lecture in Campbell Hall May 4, 2020, demonstrates how race, class, national origin and income levels further exacerbate vulnerability to rising seas.

UCSB Reads 2020 will kick off in January when Chancellor Henry T. Yang, Executive Vice Chancellor David Marshall and University Librarian Kristin Antelman distribute free copies of the book to UC Santa Barbara students in the UCSB Library. During the winter and spring quarters, the library will sponsor faculty talks, book discussions, film screenings, exhibitions and other events related to the book.

Additionally, in a first for UCSB Reads, the library is soliciting campus contributions to a 2020 winter and spring quarter art exhibition that relates to the themes in “Rising.” Classes, individual students, faculty and staff members are encouraged to participate.

Rush’s book has been characterized as “the book on climate change and sea levels that was missing” and as “a revelation.” By visiting vanishing shorelines in New England, fishing communities that are suffering due to rising tides, retracting islands and neighborhoods devastated by floods, she “conveys what it means to lose a world in slow motion.”

In 2018, “Rising” was selected as a winner of the National Outdoor Book Award and was named a top ten book by the Chicago Tribune, as well as a Best Book by Guardian, NPR’s Science Friday, Publisher’s Weekly and Library Journal. It also was a finalist for the 2019 Pulitzer Prize in General Nonfiction.

Rush is the recipient of numerous honors, including the Metcalf Institute Climate Change Adaption Fellowship, the Science in Society Award, the Howard Foundation Fellowship, and a grant from the Society for Environmental Journalism. She teaches creative nonfiction at Brown University.

Since the program began in 2007, UCSB Reads has brought the campus and Santa Barbara communities together to read a common book that explores important issues of our time.

For more information about UCSB Reads, or to participate in campus or community programming or support the program, contact Alex Regan, events and exhibitions librarian, at (805) 893-3605 or write to ucsbreads@library.ucsb.edu.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.