

Sept 18 — 6:30 PM, Skylight Room: William Dalrymple & Anita Anand: *Koh-I-Noor: The Biography of a Diamond* — moderated by Kai Bird Dalrymple and Anand tell the compelling story of the Koh-i Noor, arguably the most celebrated and mythologized jewel in the world. On 29 March 1849, the ten-year-old Maharajah of the Punjab was ushered into the magnificent Mirrored Hall at the center of the great Fort in Lahore. There, in a public ceremony, the frightened but dignified child handed over to the British East India Company the Koh-I-Noor diamond. It is an epic tale of submission to the British Raj. Dalrymple is an award-winning British biographer and Anita Anand is a celebrated BBC host and author.

Sept 27 — 6:30 PM, Proshansky Auditorium: Leon Levy Lecture by Taylor Branch Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer Taylor Branch is best known for his landmark trilogy chronicling the life of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the history of the American Civil Rights Movement. The third and final volume of the 2,912-page trilogy—collectively called *America in the King Years*—was released in January 2006, and a selected summary of the trilogy, *The King Years: Historic Moments in the Civil Rights Movement*, was published in 2013. His 2009 memoir, *The Clinton Tapes: Wrestling History with the President*, chronicles an unprecedented eight-year project to gather a sitting president's comprehensive oral history secretly on tape. His cover story for the October 2011 issue of *The Atlantic*, "The Shame of College Sports," touched off continuing national debate.

October 16th — 6:30 PM, Skylight Room: Richard Aldous, biographer of Arthur Schlesinger Jr. in conversation with David Nasaw. Aldous's book is the first major biography of this preeminent historian and intellectual. Arthur Schlesinger Jr. (1917–2007), redefined the art of presidential biography. His best-selling biography, *A Thousand Days*, remains immensely influential. In this vivid account of Schlesinger's life and career, biographer Richard Aldous draws on oral history, rarely seen archival documents, and the official Schlesinger papers to craft an invaluable portrait of a brilliant and controversial historian who framed America's rise to global empire.

October 23 — 6:30 PM, Skylight Room: James Atlas in conversation with Kai Bird about his memoir, *The Shadow in the Garden: A Biographer's Tale* James Atlas, the celebrated chronicler of Saul Bellow and Delmore Schwartz, takes us back to his own childhood in suburban Chicago, where he fell in love with literature and, early on, found in himself the impulse to study writers' lives. We meet Richard Ellmann, the great biographer of James Joyce and Atlas's professor during a transformative year at Oxford. We get to know Atlas's first subject, the "self-doomed" poet Delmore Schwartz. And we are introduced to a bygone cast of intellectuals such as Edmund Wilson and Dwight Macdonald (the "tall pines," as Mary McCarthy once called them, cut down now, according to Atlas, by the "merciless pruning of mortality") and, of course, the elusive Bellow, "a metaphysician of the ordinary." Atlas revisits the lives and works of the classical biographers, the Renaissance writers of what were then called "lives," Samuel Johnson and the obsessive Boswell, and the Victorian masters Mrs. Gaskell and Thomas Carlyle. And in what amounts to a pocket history of his own literary generation, Atlas celebrates the biographers who hoped to glimpse an image of them—"as fleeting as a familiar face swallowed up in a crowd."

November 1 — 6:30 PM, Skylight Room: Mary Dearborn, first woman biographer of Hemingway, in conversation with Amanda Vaill about *Hemingway: A Biography*

Dearborn has produced the first full biography of Ernest Hemingway in more than fifteen years. Dearborn's new biography gives the richest and most nuanced portrait to date of this complex, enigmatic artist, whose seven novels and six-short story collections remain hallmarks of American literature.