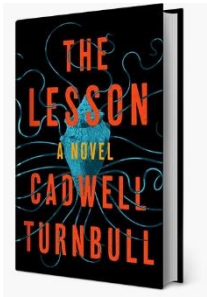


Great Reads from the U.S. Virgin Islands

2024 Adult Great Read



“The Lesson,” a novel by Cadwell Turnbull, tells the story of an alien ship resting over Water Island. For five years the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands have lived with the Ynaa, a race of super-advanced aliens on a research mission they will not fully disclose. They are benevolent in many ways but meet any act of aggression with disproportional wrath. This has led to a strained relationship between the Ynaa and the local Virgin Islanders and a peace that cannot last. A year after the death of a young boy at the hands of an Ynaa, three families find themselves at the center of the inevitable conflict, witness and victim to events that will touch everyone and teach a terrible lesson.



Turnbull, who grew up in St. Thomas, is an award-winning author. “The Lesson” won the 2020 Neukom Institute Literary Award in the debut category. The novel was also shortlisted for the VCU Cabell Award and longlisted for the Massachusetts Book Award.

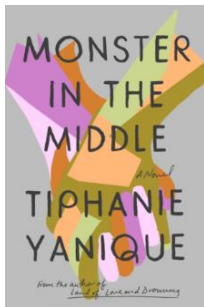
For more information, visit cadwellturnbull.com.

2024 Youth Great Read

TBD

Great Reads from the U.S. Virgin Islands

2023 Adult Great Read



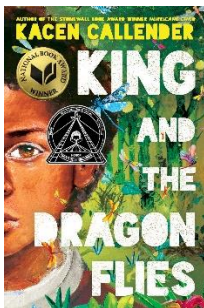
"Monster in the Middle," by Tiphonie Yanique, is a novel and short story collection explores intimacy through a generational, historical and societal lens. "It provides a rare look into colonialism in America, as well as the experience of being Black in America and the Caribbean over the past 50 years," said Yanique.

"Monster in the Middle," published in 2021, is featured on numerous best-of-the-year lists and was a finalist for the Lambda Literary Award and the Townsend Prize.

Born and raised in St. Thomas, Yanique, a professor of creative writing and literature at Emory University, now resides in Atlanta. Her writing has won the Boston Review Prize in fiction, a Rona Jaffe Foundation Writers Award, a Pushcart Prize, an Academy of American Poet's Prize and two Fulbright Scholarships.

For more information, visit tiphanieyanique.com.

2023 Youth Great Read



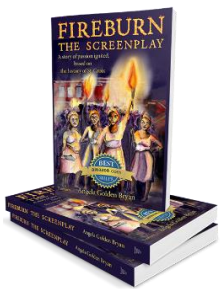
"King and the Dragonflies," by best-selling and award-winning author Kacen Callender, tells the story of 12-year-old Kingston James, who is sure his brother Khalid has turned into a dragonfly. When Khalid unexpectedly passed away, he shed what was his first skin for another to live down by the bayou in their small Louisiana town. Khalid still visits in dreams, and King must keep these secrets to himself as he watches grief transform his family. "King and the Dragonflies" won the National Book award, the Coretta Scott King Author Honor and the Lambda Literary Award.

A native Virgin Islander, Callender has written multiple books for children, teens and adults. They enjoy practicing their art and focusing on healing and growth in their free time.

For more information, visit kacencallender.com.

Great Reads from the U.S. Virgin Islands

2022 Adult Great Read



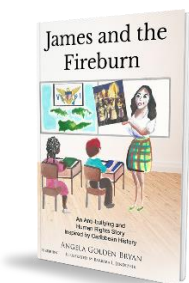
"Fireburn the Screenplay," written by Angela Golden Bryan, is based on the history of St. Croix and the U.S. Virgin Islands' bloody labor revolt of 1878. Bryan's historical fiction is a tribute to the three "queens" who rose to leadership by taking a fiery stance against the unfair labor conditions that existed for the emancipated laborers. Her book weaves a tale of passion, purpose, and revenge and delivers an electrifying and visceral experience to the reader. The vivid descriptions, historical references, and turbulent relationships create a myriad of emotions. "Fireburn the Screenplay" was well received and hit the #1 spot as an Amazon Bestseller in July of 2019.



Bryan, an award-winning author, actress, and producer grew up on St. Croix and is the founder and Executive Director of the nonprofit Fireburn Heritage, Inc. She holds a master's degree in Counseling Psychology from Chaminade University of Honolulu, a Master of Practical Theology from Wesley Seminary, is a chaplain, and holds numerous certifications in human behavior.

For more information, visit AngelaGoldenBryan.com and fireburnheritage.org.

2022 Youth Great Read



"James and the Fireburn," also written by Bryan, is an anti-bullying human rights story set against the backdrop of the Fireburn. The story focuses on the importance for children to learn right from wrong and to avoid destructive bullying behavior. The book provides lessons in making wise choices for children while educating readers about a piece of U.S. Caribbean history.

"James and the Fireburn' takes challenging subjects and presents them in a fun rhyme, making both the story and lesson easier to learn and remember," said Bryan. "In an age-appropriate manner, the book explores what happens when silence prevails and also encourages children to stand up for what is right."

"James and the Fireburn" provides for healing and advocacy as Bryan reads it to elementary school children and discusses the pain that bullying brought to her family. During her school appearances, she shows kids how to be a part of the solution.