



# FOX CITIES BOOK FESTIVAL 2018

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Visit our websites to learn more about the wealth of reading, lifelong learning, and cultural opportunities available in your community!

# FOX CITIES READS

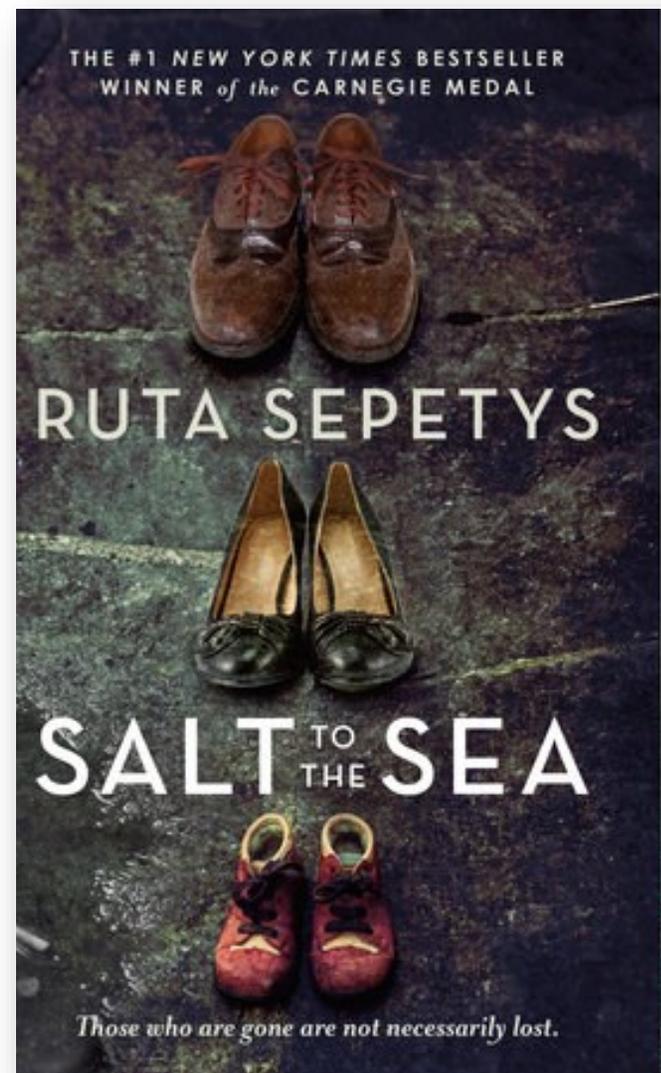


# FOX CITIES BOOK FESTIVAL 2018

# FOX CITIES READS

April 12-13

[www.foxcitiesbookfestival.org](http://www.foxcitiesbookfestival.org)



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## Make a donation to the Fox Cities Book Festival.

Your help is greatly appreciated and will ensure literacy education and a fun, culture-building experience for readers of all ages.

Lending your support will enable us to coordinate and organize activities, fund the expenses of hosting our headline authors and generate momentum for this exciting event.

The Fox Cities Book Festival is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Donations are tax deductible.

To learn how you or your organization can help, please contact:

Michelle Pitz

Email: [donations@foxcitiesbookfestival.org](mailto:donations@foxcitiesbookfestival.org)

OR send your contribution to:

Fox Cities Book Festival

P. O. Box 1014

Appleton, WI 54912

## Other Suggested Resources

### Author Interview

<https://www.npr.org/2016/02/17/466924137/more-died-on-this-wwii-ship-than-on-the-titanic-and-lusitania-combined>

### THE WILHELM GUSTLOFF MUSEUM

A tremendous online collection of information, documentation, and artifacts. The museum and curator provided indispensable assistance in my research for *Salt to the Sea*. <http://www.wilhelmgustloffmuseum.com/>

### No Home to Go To: The Story of Baltic Displaced Persons, 1944-1952

This virtual exhibition chronicles the history of WWII and its aftermath through the personal accounts and memorabilia of refugees from Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia.

<https://balzekasmuseum.org/displacedpersons/>

### TED Ed Lesson: What Does it Mean to Be a Refugee?

Five minute video, discussion questions, and resources for further study of refugees and displacement. <https://ed.ted.com/lessons/what-does-it-mean-to-be-a-refugee-benedetta-berti-and-evelien-borgman>

### DOCUMENTARY FILM

“Sinking the Gustloff: A Tragedy Exiled from Memory”

A documentary film by Marcus Kolga for Realworld Pictures

Learn more about Ruta Sepetys and all of her books at her website, [www.rutasepetys.com](http://www.rutasepetys.com).



## Salt to the Sea Related Materials

### Teen Fiction & Nonfiction

#### **The Book Thief** Zusak, Markus

Both are compelling historical fiction books featuring individuals trying to survive the brutality of World War II. Readers will form strong connections with the characters and find the novels moving and even heartbreaking at times, leavened with glimpses of hope -- Julie Paladino

#### **Front Lines** Grant, Michael

Although Front Lines is an alternative history and Salt is historical fiction, both character-driven, moving books set in World War II are told in multiple perspectives and convey the horrors of wartime for the civilian, as well as the soldier. -- Lindsey Dunn

#### **Rose Under Fire** Wein, Elizabeth

Sympathetic characters trying to survive the atrocities of World War II in Europe are the focus of these compelling historical fiction titles. Strong first person narration (through a diary in Rose, multiple perspectives in Salt) invites readers to connect deeply. -- Julie Paladino

#### **The Watch That Ends the Night** Wolf, Allan

Told from multiple perspectives, both moving historical fiction novels feature characters sailing on ships headed for disaster: the Wilhelm Gustloff in Salt; the Titanic in Watch. Lyrical short chapters and distinctly voiced characters make for haunting reads. -- Julie Paladino

#### **Crossing Ebenezer Creek** Bolden, Tonya

Although these historical fiction novels told in multiple perspectives take on different subject matter, each paints a moving, compelling portrait of a tragic, yet little-known, event and is set during the end of a brutal war. -- Lindsey Dunn

## About Us

The purpose of the Fox Cities Reads is to select an author and title that encourages people in our community to read, think, talk, listen and grow together, organized by the Fox Cities Book Festival in partnership with Appleton Public Library, Kaukauna Public Library, Kimberly Public Library, Little Chute Public Library, Menasha Public Library and Neenah Public Library.

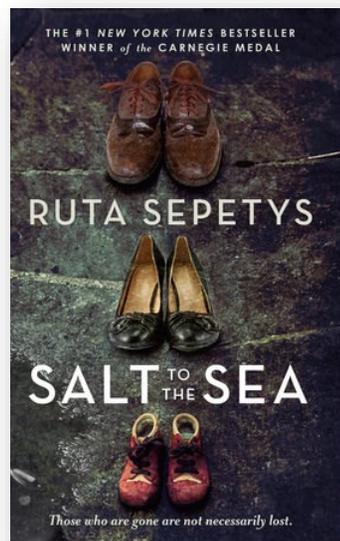


Salt to the Sea by Ruta Sepetys is the 12th selection for Fox Cities Reads. For a list of past selections & other info about the Reads, please visit:

[www.foxcitiesbookfestival.org](http://www.foxcitiesbookfestival.org)

The idea is that the city that opens the same book closes it in greater harmony.

~ Mary McGrory, *The Washington Post*, March 17, 2002



Visit your local public library to check out the book! Additional copies have been ordered and are waiting for you to take them home.

Purchase a copy of the book and have it signed by the author at one of our public presentations! Books are supplied by Thomas A. Lyons Fine Books and The Reader's Loft.

# Meet Ruta Sepetys

Ruta Sepetys (Rūta Šepetys) is an internationally acclaimed author of historical fiction published in over fifty countries and thirty-six languages. Sepetys is considered a “crossover” novelist as her books are read by both students and adults worldwide. Her novels, *Between Shades of Gray* and *Out of the Easy* are both New York Times bestsellers and international bestsellers. Her latest novel, *Salt to the Sea*, is a #1 New York



Times bestseller and winner of the Carnegie Medal. Her books have won or been shortlisted for over forty book prizes, are included on over twenty state reading lists, and are currently in development for film and television.

Ruta is the daughter of a Lithuanian refugee. Born in Michigan, she was raised in a family of artists, readers, and music lovers. Ruta attended college to study opera but instead

graduated with a degree in International Finance. Prior to publishing her first novel, she spent twenty years in the music industry helping artists and songwriters distill story through song.

Sepetys is the first American crossover novelist to address both European Parliament and Library of Congress. She was awarded The Rockefeller Foundation’s prestigious Bellagio Resident Fellowship for *Salt to the Sea*.

Ruta was recently bestowed the Cross of the Knight of the Order by the President of Lithuania for her contributions to education and memory preservation. She is intensely proud to be Lithuanian, even if that means she has a name no one can pronounce.

Ruta lives in a treehouse in the hills of Tennessee.

7. Considering each of the main characters’ perspectives, in what ways is *Salt to the Sea* a story about things that have been lost? What does each character find along the way?
8. Before and During World War II, the Nazis looted and plundered art from across Europe. Consider the systematic theft, deliberate destruction and miraculous survival of Europe’s art treasures. Why does art such as the Amber Room have such power over individuals? What does it say about mankind that we make tremendous effort to preserve and protect it? How does Florian view his theft of the swan to be his revenge against Hitler?
9. What would you identify or describe as being part of “survival mode”—what kinds of struggles bring out in people the ability to endure extreme hardships (like World War II or the Holocaust), and to overcome them?
10. Explain the significance of the title, *Salt to the Sea*. Given the magnitude of the tragedy of the Wilhelm Gustloff, does it accurately describe the events and relationships portrayed in the novel?

Discussion Questions created by Dr. Rose Brock, an assistant professor in the Library Science Department in the College of Education at Sam Houston State University. Dr. Brock holds a Ph.D. in Library Science, specializing in children’s and young adult literature.



1. For what reasons do you think Florian begins to feel connected to Joana? How would you characterize their relationship, and how does it change over the course of the novel?
2. *Salt to the Sea* is told in multiple first-person narratives; how would the story be different if only a single character were telling it? Do you think changing the point of view would improve the story? Why or why not?
3. As they travel toward the shore in hopes of a spot aboard the *Wilhelm Gustloff*, Florian tells Joana that Emilia is without identity papers, and Joana thinks to herself, “Emilia had no papers. No papers, no future.” Why does her lack of documentation subject her to a likely death sentence?
4. Throughout *Salt to the Sea*, many characters exhibit acts of bravery. Consider the individual actions of these characters. Who do you believe to be the most courageous, and why?
5. Emilia and Joana are both Polish. Of the two, Joana is welcome in Germany and considered “Germanizable.” While discussing the inequality of Hitler’s position on Poles, Eva says, “Life’s not fair. You’re lucky. Do you think you have time to be moral?” Consider Eva’s statement. Do you agree? In a moral crisis, in what ways do the actions and reactions of an individual define them?
6. World War II was the first war in which civilians were as affected as soldiers. Considering what you learned from *Salt to the Sea*, what were some of the ways in which civilians were most greatly affected?

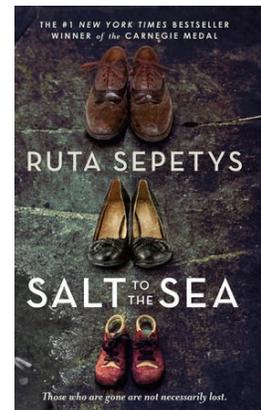
## About the Book: *Salt to the Sea*

In 1945, World War II is drawing to a close in East Prussia, and thousands of refugees are on a desperate trek toward freedom, almost all of them with something to hide. Among them are Joana, Emilia, Florian, and Alfred, whose paths converge en route to the ship that promises salvation, the *Wilhelm Gustloff*. Forced by circumstance to unite, the four find their strength, courage, and trust in one another tested with each step closer toward safety.

Just when it seems freedom is within their grasp, tragedy strikes. Not country, nor culture, nor status matter as all ten thousand people aboard must fight for the same thing: survival.

Told in alternating points of view, and perfect for fans of Anthony Doerr’s Pulitzer Prize–winning *All the Light We Cannot See*, Erik Larson’s critically acclaimed #1 *New York Times* bestseller *Dead Wake*, and Elizabeth Wein’s Printz Honor Book *Code Name Verity*, this masterful work of historical fiction is inspired by the real-life tragedy that was the sinking of the *Wilhelm Gustloff*—the greatest maritime disaster in history. As she did in *Between Shades of Gray*, Ruta Sepetys unearths a shockingly little-known casualty of a gruesome war, and proves that humanity can prevail, even in the darkest of hours.

### Reviews and Praise...



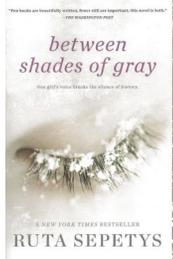
“Sepetys excels in shining light on lost chapters of history.” —Publishers Weekly, starred review

“Sepetys’s exploration of this little-known piece of history will leave readers weeping.” —School Library Journal, starred review

“This haunting gem of a novel begs to be remembered.” —Booklist, starred review

“Heartbreaking, historical, and a little bit hopeful.” —Kirkus Review

## Other books by Ruta Sepetys



### ***Between Shades of Gray***

**1941 – Fifteen-year-old Lina Vilkas is arrested by the Soviet secret police and deported to Siberia with her mother and younger brother.** Lina fights for her life, vowing that if she survives she will honor her family, and the thousands like hers, by burying her complete story in a jar on Lithuanian soil. Lina's writings and drawings chronicle her fight for survival, her difficulty accepting help from a Soviet guard she's supposed to hate, and her struggle to retain faith in mankind amidst the terror.

\*A New York Times & International Bestseller

\*Carnegie Medal Finalist & recipient of over fifty literary honors worldwide.

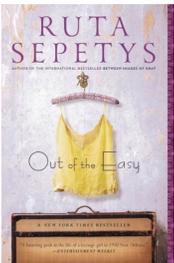
### ***Out of the Easy***

**It's 1950 and the French Quarter of New Orleans simmers with secrets.** Seventeen-year-old Josie Moraine wants more out of life than the Big Easy has to offer. She devises a plan get out, but a mysterious death in the Quarter leaves Josie tangled in an investigation that will challenge her conscience, her loyalties, and her darkest fears. Caught between the dream of an elite college and a clandestine underworld, Josie must choose—between who she is now and who she longs to become, between when to hold on and how to let go.

With characters and atmosphere reminiscent of the great Southern novels, Ruta Sepetys creates a rich story of secrets, lies, and the haunting reminder that our decisions shape our destiny.

\* A New York Times Bestseller

\* A Carnegie Medal Nominee



## Fox Cities Reads Events

For a full list of events visit <http://foxcitiesbookfestival.org/event-reads/>

### **Author Presentations—Open to the public**

Thursday, April 12, 12:45PM

Kaukauna High School

Thursday, April 12, 6:30PM

Appleton North High School

Friday, April 13, 10:00AM

Appleton Public Library

### **School Visits—Students and staff only**

Sepetys will visit students at Neenah High School.

### **Discussions of *Salt to the Sea***

Thursday, February 15, 1:00PM

Kimberly Public Library—Afternoon Book Club

Monday, March 12, 6:00PM

Little Chute Public Library—Teen Book Club

Monday, March 19 6:30PM

Little Chute Public Library—Evening Book Club

Tuesday, March 20 2:00PM

Menasha Public Library— Book Club

Wednesday, March 21, 12:00PM

Appleton Public Library—Downtown Book Club

Monday, March 26 10:00AM

Neenah Public Library—Monday Morning Book Klatch

Thursday, April 5, 6:30PM

Kaukauna Public Library— Facts Behind the Fiction: The Sinking of the Wilhelm Gustloff

Tuesday, April 10, 10:00AM

Kaukauna Public Library—Daytime Book Group

