



Press Release: Academy Art Museum & Shore Lit Present a Free Book Talk with Acclaimed Military Writer Elliot Ackerman

EASTON, MD, September 1, 2025—Shore Lit and the Academy Art Museum invite you to a free book talk with acclaimed author Elliot Ackerman, the country's preeminent military writer and author of the new novel *Sheepdogs*.

A decorated U.S. Marine Corps veteran, Ackerman has written two award-winning memoirs about his wartime experience. He has also penned several military novels, including the National Book Award finalist *Dark at the Crossing*. He has worked as a war reporter, covering the conflicts in Syria and Ukraine, and he regularly writes essays and reviews on military themes for outlets including the *New York Times*, *TIME*, and the *Atlantic*. His books have been nominated for the National Book Award, the Andrew Carnegie Medal in both fiction and nonfiction, and the Dayton Literary Peace Prize.

With its light-hearted tone and farcical shenanigans, *Sheepdogs* (Knopf, August 2025) is a departure from Ackerman's previous books, which employ a certain literary solemnity. But as he explains in [a recent New York Times](#) profile, he believes humor has a place in war stories:

"When I get together with guys I served with, we tell funny stories, even about serious stuff. War is too serious to take seriously all the time, and absurd because it flips norms – like 'Thou shalt not kill' – on their heads. Because I love heist books and buddy comedies, I wanted to tell a story in that register, about the economy that exists around war after it ends."

Apple Studios has optioned *Sheepdogs* for Playtone partners Tom Hanks and Gary Goetzman to develop as a series.

Both Ackerman's talk and our upcoming book talk with [novelist Lauren Francis-Sharma](#) are in conversation with the current AAM exhibition *Anita Groener: To the Edge of the World*. Both author engages in different ways with the aftermath of violent conflict and Groener's themes of loss, displacement, and resilience.

Ackerman will be in conversation with Shore Lit Founder-Director Kerry Folan at the Academy Art Museum at 6:00 pm on Friday, September 12. This event is free and open to the public. [Reservations are required](#). For questions about accessibility for this event, please email Kerry Folan at easternshorelit@gmail.com.

Please contact Kerry Folan kerryfolan@gmail.com with inquiries. Images and other press materials are available in our media kit.

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[Elliot Ackerman](#) is a writer, journalist, former White House Fellow, and decorated veteran. His books have been nominated for the National Book Award, the Andrew Carnegie Medal in both fiction and nonfiction, and the Dayton Literary Peace Prize. A former Marine, he served five tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, where he received the Silver Star, the Bronze Star for Valor, and the Purple Heart. As a prominent figure in the veteran community and a regular contributor to *TIME*, *CNN*, and *The Atlantic*, Ackerman uses his platform to speak about his time serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, his perspective on current international relations in the Middle East and in Ukraine/Russia, and how he turned to writing—both fiction and nonfiction—to chronicle America's struggles abroad.

[Shore Lit](#) is based in Easton, Maryland, and aims to enhance local cultural offerings with free literary events open to the public. Our programs are designed to explore relevant ideas, foster literary conversation, build inclusive community, and create experiences of wonder and joy around storytelling. For updates, sign up for our monthly newsletter at shorelit.org.

About the Academy Art Museum

Founded in 1958, the Academy Art Museum is the Eastern Shore's leading cultural institution, accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. It combines the dynamism of an ambitious contemporary art museum with the intimacy of a community space. With five working studios, a 24,000 sq. ft. facility, and innovative programs including a robust artist-in-residence initiative and major commissions for its soaring atrium, the Museum is a destination for artists, scholars, collectors, and families alike.