

# USEFUL FICTION

## Past Speakers At Useful Fiction Events Include:

**Omar El Akkad** is an author and journalist. His work earned a National Newspaper Award for Investigative Journalism. His debut novel, *American War*, is an international bestseller, listed as one of the best books of the year by *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *GQ*, *NPR*, and *Esquire* and was selected by the *BBC* as one of 100 novels that changed our world.

**Dave Anthony** is a video game producer most known for his work leading the design and production of games in the *Call of Duty* series, the best-selling entertainment product in history.

**Madeline Ashby** is an acclaimed author and futurist specializing in scenario development and science fiction prototypes. Her books include *The First Machine Dynasty*, *Company Town*, and *How To Future: Leading and Sense-making in an Age of Hyperchange*. She is a member of the AI Policy Futures Group at the ASU Center for Science and the Imagination and the XPRIZE Sci-Fi Advisory Council.

**Joshua Baughman** currently serves as an Analyst at Air University's China Aerospace Studies Institute (CASI), where his research centers on China's activity in the cyber and information domains, as well as the PLA Rocket Force. He is also Chief Marketing Officer of the Military Cyber Professionals Association.

**David Benioff** is the co-creator, writer, and showrunner of the cultural phenomenon HBO's *Game of Thrones*, the most awarded TV show in Emmy history. He also wrote *25th Hour*, *Troy*, *City of Thieves*, and co-wrote *X-Men Origins: Wolverine*.

**Peter Blake** is an Emmy Award winning writer and producer, who has worked on shows like *House*, *Gotham*, *Billions*, *El Candidato*, and *The Good Doctor*.

**Leo Blanken** is an associate professor in the Defense Analysis Department at the Naval Postgraduate School, where he also serves as the deputy director of the Consortium for Robotics and Unmanned Systems Education and Research.

**Michael Brasseur**, US Navy retired Commander, is Chief Strategy Officer at SAAB. A 26 year Navy veteran, Brasseur commanded the *USS Fort Worth* littoral combat ship and the *USS Whirlwind*, was Director of NATO's Maritime Unmanned Systems Innovation & Coordination Cell, as well as founded

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and served as the first commodore of the Navy's Task Force 59, the Navy's test bed for unmanned and artificial intelligence technologies.

**Phillip Breedlove**, USAF retired General, served as Supreme Allied Commander of NATO and the Commander of U.S. European Command. During 39 years of service, he also served as Commander, U.S. Air Forces Europe and Africa, Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force, and Assistant Chief of Staff for Air Operations, Plans and Requirements—where he co-authored the original Air-Sea Battle Concept. He currently serves as a Distinguished Professor at the Nunn School of International Affairs at Georgia Tech.

**Emerson Brooking** is Senior Fellow at the Digital Forensic Research Lab (DFRLab) of the Atlantic Council, where he leads a team of researchers focused on the study of information conflicts around the world. He previously was Cyber Policy Advisor within the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, where he was an author of the 2023 DoD Cyber Strategy. Brooking is the coauthor of *LikeWar: The Weaponization of Social Media*.

**Gene Klein** is producer and creative executive who currently serves as an Executive Producer on Netflix's CIA dramedy *The Recruit*. He has over two decades of experience developing and producing television series and pilots, including USA Network's hit drama *Suits*, the sci-fi drama *Impulse*, and USA's Golden Globe-nominated spy drama *Covert Affairs*. Gene also previously worked at HBO in strategic planning and content acquisitions.

**Debora Cahn** is an Emmy-nominated writer and producer and showrunner of *The Diplomat*. She has worked on a wide variety of dramatic projects that ranged from *The West Wing* to *Grey's Anatomy* to serving as Executive Producer of *Homeland*.

**Tim Carter** is a Vancouver-based video game and movie creator with Contradiction. He has written or consulted on acclaimed games like Tom Clancy's *Splinter Cell*, *Need For Speed*, *Mod Nation Racer*, and *Sleeping Dogs*, as well as worked with publishers such as Square Enix, Sony, Ubisoft, and Amazon.

**ML (Matt) Cavanaugh**, PhD, is a retired US Army Lieutenant Colonel and Strategist and a co-founder of the Modern War Institute at West Point. Also a co-founder of the Military Writers Guild, he is the editor of two books on strategy lessons crossing fiction and history, has written for outlets like the *New York Times*, *the Washington Post*, and the *Wall Street Journal*, as well as runs the noted weekly newsletter service *Strategy Notes*, which shares insights for strategy and strategies for insight.

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**August Cole** is a best-selling author, futurist and co-founder of Useful Fiction LLC. A former *Wall Street Journal* and *Marketplace* reporter, he is the co-author of such noted books as *Ghost Fleet* and *Burn-In*.

**Emma De Angelis** is Director of Publications/Editor at *RUSI Journal*, one of the most historic and respected policy journals in the world, published since 1857.

**Keith Dear** is Director of Artificial Intelligence Innovation at Fujitsu Defence and Security. Keith has served as an Expert Advisor to the Prime Minister on Defence Modernisation & the Integrated Review, leading also on UK space strategy in No 10 Downing, and advising on national strategies on emerging technology.

**S.B. Divya** is an electrical engineer in pattern recognition, machine intelligence, high speed communications, digital music, and medical devices, who then shifted to writing, becoming the Hugo and Nebula Award nominated author of such books as *Runtime*, *Machinehood*, and *Contingency Plans For the Apocalypse and Other Possible Situations*. Divya is also the co-editor of the weekly science fiction podcast *Escape Pod*.

**Joseph Dyer**, US Navy retired Vice Admiral, served as Commander, Naval Air Systems Command, as the Navy's Chief Test Pilot, and manager of the F-18 fighter jet program. After retirement, he was Chief Operating Officer and Chief Strategy Officer at iRobot Corp.

**Sir Lawrence David Freedman** is a best-selling author of history and strategy and Emeritus Professor of War Studies at King's College London. He has been described as the "dean of British strategic studies."

**George Galdorisi** is a retired Navy Captain, who served as a Top Gun aviator. He has gone on to write fifteen books, including multiple New York Times bestsellers in the Tom Clancy OpCenter series. He also serves as Director of Strategic Assessments and Technical Futures at the Navy's Command and Control Center of Excellence.

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**Carrie Gillogly** is Director of Drama Series at Netflix. She previously was Co-Head of Scripted Programming at the AMC TV Network, as well as helped create such movie projects as *Gran Torino* and *A Star Is Born*.

**Jeremy Gold** is a Hollywood Television Executive. He has worked at Blumhouse and Fox, where he helped develop series such as *American Dad*, *The Bernie Mac Show*, *The Loudest Voice*, *Sharp Objects*, *Good Lord Bird*, and *Arrested Development*.

**Howard Gordon** is an Emmy and Golden Globe Award-winning writer and producer, who created such hit TV shows as *24* and *Homeland*.

**Sam Hargrave** is a Hollywood director, actor, stunt coordinator, and stuntman. He coordinated the acclaimed action sequences of the Marvel Cinematic Universe, from *Captain America: Civil War* to *Avengers Endgame*, as well as such movies as *Atomic Blonde* and *Deadpool 2*. He is also the director of *Extraction* and *Extraction 2*, as well as on season two of *The Mandalorian*.

**James Isenhower** is a US Army Major General and Commanding General of the 1st Armored Division and Fort Bliss. He previously served as the first Commander of the US Army's Multi-Domain Task Force.

**Nina Jacobsen** is a Hollywood producer, who has been named by *Forbes* magazine as one of "The World's 100 Most Powerful Women." Her projects include *The Sixth Sense*, *Remember the Titans*, *Pearl Harbor*, *The Princess Diaries*, and the *Pirates of the Caribbean*. Since 2007, she's run her own production company Colorforce, where she has produced such hits as the *Hunger Games*, *Crazy Rich Asians*, and *American Crime Story*.

**Amanda Johnson-Zetterstrom** is currently Co-Executive Producer on the award-winning Netflix series *YOU*. She has also written for several hit television shows including *The Diplomat*, *Purity*, and original pilots for Netflix and Warner Brothers. She was a founding member of the New York-based production company Animal Kingdom, and has been awarded the SXSW Grand Jury & Audience Award.

**Sir Richard Knighton** is Air Chief Marshal and Chief of the Air Staff of the Royal Air Force, as well as Aide-de-Camp to His Majesty King Charles.

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**Lindsey Liberatore** is Executive Vice President-Television at Rideback Entertainment and prior to that Vice President for Sony Pictures Television's TriStar label. She has worked on projects ranging from TV shows like *Walker and Avatar: The Last Airbender* to movies like *Man on Fire*.

**Ken Liu** is the author of multiple best-selling science fiction and fantasy books, a winner of the Nebula, Hugo, and World Fantasy awards the inventor of the “silkpunk” genre bringing together traditions of engineering and East Asia’s classical antiquity and aesthetics., as well as translator of the acclaimed *Three Body Problem* series.

**Caryn Mandabach** is an Emmy and BAFTA award-winning producer of such shows as *The Cosby Show*, *Roseanne*, *3rd Rock from the Sun*, *That '70s Show*, *Nurse Jackie*, and most recently, *Peaky Blinders*.

**Chloe Sophia Maxmin** is an environmental activist currently serving as the Maine State Senator for District 13. Her surprising win in a rural district led her to be profiled in national media as a new model for politics and named a “Green Hero” by *Rolling Stone*.

**David McCloskey** is a former CIA analyst and the critically acclaimed author of *Moscow X* and *Damascus Station*. While at the CIA, David wrote regularly for the President’s Daily Brief, delivered classified testimony as well as worked in CIA field stations across the Middle East.

**Kathleen McInnis**, PhD, is senior fellow and director of the Smart Women, Smart Power Initiative at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and former CRS senior expert to Congress on strategy and irregular warfare. She is also the author of the novel *The Heart of War*.

**Bruce Mehlman** is a partner at Mehlman Castagnetti, one of Washington’s leading policy advisory firms. Bruce previously served as Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Technology Policy under President George W. Bush. He also worked as a senior leadership aide in the House of Representatives, general counsel to a national political party committee, and policy counsel to Cisco Systems.

**General Austin “Scott” Miller**, US Army retired, is Executive Chairman at PrairieFire and served as the final commander of US Forces in Afghanistan. As likely the most deployed leader in the Global War on Terror, General Miller has led Joint Special Operations Command, the US Army Maneuver Center of Excellence, Combined Forces Special Operations Component Command in Afghanistan, and the Task Force Ranger assault force in Mogadishu.

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**Chunka Mui** is a futurist and innovation advisor for Fortune 500 firms. He created The Exchange conference series of business leaders and is the author of *A Brief History of a Perfect Future*, *Unleashing the Killer App: Digital Strategies for Market Dominance*, and *Billion-Dollar Lessons: What You Can Learn from the Most Inexcusable Business Failures of the Last 25 Years*.

**Jeffrey Nachmanoff** is a movie and TV director and writer. He has written such blockbuster movies as *Day After Tomorrow*, as well as directed for shows like *Detroit 187* (ABC), *Chicago Fire* (NBC), *Hostages* (CBS), *Homeland* (Showtime), *Lovecraft Country* (HBO), and *Chicago PD* (NBC)

**Robert B. Neller** is a retired USMC General, who served as the 37th Commandant of the United States Marine Corps.

**Annalee Newitz** is the science writer for the *New York Times*, monthly columnist in *New Scientist*, author of the books *Four Lost Cities: A Secret History of the Urban Age*, *The Future of Another Timeline*, and *Autonomous*, as well as co-host of the Hugo Award-winning podcast *Our Opinions Are Correct*.

**John Orloff** is a Hollywood screenwriter. He has written projects that range from the acclaimed World War II drama, HBO's *Band of Brothers* to *A Mighty Heart*, the biography of Marianne Pearl and *Legends of the Guardians*, a 3D animated movie. His most recent project is *Masters of the Air*, a war drama miniseries based on the actions of the Eighth Air Force of the United States Army Air Forces during World War II.

**Niloofer Razi Howe** has been an investor, executive and entrepreneur in the tech industry for over 25 years. She has served as Chief Strategy Officer at RSA, a global cybersecurity company, a Sr. Operating Partner at Energy Impact Partners and is on the boards of Morgan Stanley Bank, NA, Recorded Future, Tenable and the National Security Agency.

**John M. Richardson** is a retired United States Navy Admiral, who served as the 31st Chief of Naval Operations (CNO). He previously commanded the submarine *USS Honolulu*, as well as lead the Navy's Director of the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program.

**General Lori Robinson** is a retired United States Air Force General, who served as Commander, United States Northern Command and North American Aerospace Defense Command. She was the

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first female officer in the history of the United States Armed Forces to command a major Unified Combatant Command.

**James Roddis** is a Major General in the British Army and the Director of Strategy for the UK military's Strategic Command.

**Mick Ryan** is a retired Australian Army Major General, who commanded at the Troop, Squadron, Regiment, Task Force, and Brigade levels during his three-decade career. He served as Director General Training and Doctrine for the Australian Army and Commander of the Australian Defense College, where he founded the "Perry Group" project to foster a forward-thinking and creative mindset.

**Mark Sable** is the creator and writer of game-changing graphic novels exploring human (and supernatural) conflict such as *Graveyard of Empires*.

**Matthew Sand** is a Hollywood screenwriter. His projects include *Deepwater Horizon* and the upcoming sequel to the 2012 action film *Act of Valor*, *Captains Courageous*, and *The Man Who Robbed Al Qaeda*.

**Ted Schlein** is a leading investor in cybersecurity and enterprise technology at the venture capital firm, Kleiner Perkins. He serves on the advisory boards of the NSA, IQT, and Homeland Security.

**Hope Seck** is an award-winning reporter and editor. The former managing editor for Military.com, she is also a member of the board of directors at the Military Reporters and Editors Association.

**Brad Shelton** is the Vice President of Creative and Story at BRC Imagination Arts, as well as a narrative consultant and storytelling thought leader. Previously, Brad served as a storytelling and narrative consultant for companies such as Caterpillar and Chick-fil-A, as well as worked with MITRE and DoD on projects around rebuilding the American Narrative for the 21st Century.

**Peter W. Singer** is a New York Times Bestselling author of both non-fiction and fiction, strategist at New America, and co-founder of Useful Fiction. No author, living or dead, has more books on the military professional reading lists.

**Jonathan Lloyd Walker** is an actor, producer, and screenwriter. He has appeared in such films as *Red*, *Shooter*, *Along Came a Spider*, *The Thing*, and *Land of the Dead*, television series like *The West*

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*Wing, Men in Trees, The Outer Limits and Smallville. As a writer and producer, his credits include Continuum, Wu Assassins, The Murders, Private Eyes, and Van Helsing.*

**Tom Weis** is a renowned industrial designer and faculty member at Rhode Island School of Design (RISD).

**Dan Weiss** is the co-creator, writer, and showrunner of the cultural phenomenon HBO *Game of Thrones*, the most awarded TV show in Emmy history,

**Daniel Wilson** is a PHD Roboticist and New York Times Best Selling Author. Among his books are *Robopocalypse* and *The Andromeda Evolution*.

**Marci Wiseman** is a Hollywood executive and producer. She served at Blumhouse Television and AMC, where she launched shows like *The Walking Dead, Halt and Catch Fire, The Loudest Voice, Sharp Objects*, and *Good Lord Bird*.