Attention all readers! Are you looking for a book discussion of thought-provoking and well written books? Then join us on Thursday evenings at the Briarcliff Manor Public Library for our in-person Contemporary Fiction by Award-Winning Authors discussion series. Skilled leaders will help participants explore and interpret novels by today's award-winning authors. Gain new insights into these books through lively conversations with other inquisitive readers.

Our Fall 2023 selections are described below. Library copies are available to pick up one month before each discussion – or you may purchase your own book. These titles can also be downloaded from one of the library’s free eBook services. It is recommended to have a copy of the book with you during the discussion.

Thursday, September 21: 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.
*Afterlives* by Abdulrazak Gurnah (2021 Nobel Prize in Literature)
"When he was just a boy, Ilyas was stolen from his parents on the coast of East Africa by German colonial troops. After years away, fighting against his own people, he returns home to find his parents gone and his sister, Afiya, little more than a slave to another family. Hamza also returns home from the war, scarred in body and soul and with nothing but the clothes on his back — until he meets the beautiful, undaunted Afiya. As these young people live and work and fall in love, their fates knotted ever more tightly together, the shadow of a new war on another continent fall over them, threatening once again to carry them away” (Excerpted from publisher).

Thursday, October 19: 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.
*Birnam Wood* by Eleanor Catton (2013 Booker Prize)
“Mira Bunting is a young Kiwi horticulturalist and founder of a New Zealander activist collective called Birnam Wood. Bunting has a habit of assuming false identities to look at listings of land she cannot afford to buy and plants crops without permission on overlooked patches of land. In essence, Birnam Wood is a guerrilla gardening group, a combination of environmental anarchists and direct-action protesters... Bunting herself turns trespassing into a type of performance art. But when she inadvertently meets an American billionaire, Robert Lemoine, her world and the future of the collective change in ways she could not imagine” (Excerpted from *Booklist*).

Thursday, November 16: 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.
*The Marriage Portrait* by Maggie O’Farrell (2020 National Book Critics Circle Award for Fiction) “‘My Last Duchess,’ Robert Browning’s poem about Lucrezia de’ Medici (1545–61), gave voice to the longstanding rumors that its subject was murdered by her husband, Alfonso, duke of Ferrara. Was she, and if so, why? A member of Florence’s large ruling family, Lucrezia, a restless dreamer who adores animals and creating art, is devastated to learn, at age 12, about plans for her to wed her late sister’s fiancé. While Alfonso appears charming, she later witnesses his cruel streak. O’Farrell shines at instilling elegantly described scenes with human feeling, such as Lucrezia’s wedding preparations and her sense of inner strength while viewing the sunrise transform the sky at Alfonso’s country villa. The author proves equally skilled at evoking suspense. This she accomplishes by alternating between Lucrezia’s earlier life and the time when Alfonso brings Lucrezia, his 16-year-old bride, to an isolated stone fortress—perhaps to kill her” (Excerpted from *Booklist*).

Registration is required by email to Lorraine Isaac at Lisaac@briarcliffmanorlibrary.org
For more information, please call the library at 914-941-7072 or visit our website.
Briarcliff Manor Public Library, 1 Library Road www.briarcliffmanorlibrary.org