Samina Ali is an award-winning author, activist and cultural commentator. Her debut novel, Madras on Rainy Days, won France’s prestigious Prix Premier Roman Etranger Award and was a finalist for the PEN/Hemingway Award in Fiction. Ali’s work is driven by her belief in personal narrative as a force for achieving women’s individual and political freedom and in harnessing the power of media for social transformation. She is the curator of the groundbreaking, critically acclaimed virtual exhibition, Muslima: Muslim Women’s Art & Voices.

Her current project, a memoir of her near-death experience delivering her firstborn, takes an unsparing look at gender bias and the crisis of preventable maternal deaths in the U.S.

A former cultural ambassador for the U.S. State Department and a regular contributor to The Huffington Post and Daily Beast, Ali has spoken extensively at universities and other institutions worldwide. Her work has been featured in The New York Times, The Economist, The Guardian, Vogue, National Public Radio (NPR) and elsewhere. She lives in California with her family.

Speaking Topics

- Muslim Women and Feminism: From Stereotypes to Diverse Realities
- What does the Quran really say about a Muslim woman’s hijab?
- Reclaiming What’s Mine: A Muslim Woman’s Journey
- Motivational: A Writer With No Words