

Press Note:

Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival 2015 – Day 4

Event: An enthralling conversation with Hanif Kureishi, ‘Having the Last Word’

Kolkata, 17th January, 2015: Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival 2015 hosted a riveting conversation ‘*Having the Last Word with Hanif Kureishi*’ at Western Quadrangle inside the heritage premises of Victoria Memorial which worked as a very scenic and evocative backdrop. The Kolkata literature enthusiasts interacted with Hanif Kureishi, eminent British playwright, screenwriter, filmmaker and novelist, after three decades hence it was a remarkable evening for the City of Booklovers. He was in conversation with the multi-faceted poet, novelist, librettist and musician, **Jeet Thayil** and **Sujata Sen**, Director, British Council, Eastern India. The session was presented in association with The Jaipur Literature Festival, British Council, Victoria Memorial & Oxford Bookstore.

About the Panelists:

Hanif Kureishi

Hanif Kureishi is the author of numerous novels, short story collections, screenplays and plays. Born and brought up in Kent, he read philosophy at King’s College, London. His screenplay of “My Beautiful Laundrette” won the New York Film Critics Best Screenplay Award and was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Screenplay. In 1991, he wrote and directed “London Kills Me.” His novels include “The Buddha of Suburbia,” which won the Whitbread Award and was adapted into a BBC television series; “The Black Album”; “Intimacy”; “Something to Tell You” and “The Last Word,” which was published in 2014. He has been awarded the Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, and his work has been translated into thirty-six languages.

Jeet Thayil

Jeet Thayil is an Indian poet, novelist, librettist and musician. He is best known as a poet and is the author of four collections: These Errors Are Correct, English, Apocalypso and Gemini. His first novel, Narcopolis, was shortlisted for the 2012 Man Booker Prize as well as the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature. He is the editor of the Bloodaxe Book of Contemporary Indian Poets, 60 Indian Poets and a collection of essays, Divided Time: India and the End of Diaspora. He is the author of the libretto for the opera Babur in London, commissioned by the UK-based Opera Group with music by the Zurich-based British composer Edward Rushton. Thayil is also known as a performance poet and musician. As a songwriter and guitarist, he is one half of the contemporary music project Sridhar/Thayil (Mumbai, New Delhi). In 2012, Thayil’s poetry collection These Errors are Correct was awarded the Sahitya Akademi Award for English. He was short-listed for the Man Booker Prize 2012 and The Hindu Literary Prize (2013) for his debut novel Narcopolis. In 2013, Jeet Thayil became the first Indian author to win the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature.

Sujata Sen

Sujata Sen is Director, British Council, East India. She also leads on Re-Imagine: India-UK Cultural Relations in the 21st Century, a research and dialogue initiative which attempts to understand what the relationship between the two countries will look like in the future and how it can be shaped for mutual benefit. She is a Director with British Council Management Services, NOIDA. Before joining the British Council she had been a journalist, columnist and a publishing editor. She holds honorary positions in various organisations and Trusts.

About Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF):

Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF) is Kolkata's pioneering literary festival. Instituted in 2010 by the Apeejay Surrendra Group and its heritage Oxford Bookstore on Park Street, AKLF grows out of the bookstore's year round involvement with books, writers & publishers. In the six years since Kolkata saw her first literary festival in AKLF, literary festivals have mushroomed across the country, but AKLF stands apart with its unique identity as the only one with a now 94-year-old bookstore as its nucleus. AKLF offers an atmosphere of warm, welcoming intimacy, favors depth over size, and includes a variety of subjects from history to the environment. AKLF also celebrates Kolkata's magnificent public monuments and heritage sites as settings for Festival events and eminent literati and cultural stalwarts from across India and overseas join the festival scheduled every year in the second week of January. In 2015 AKLF explores literature as part of our tangible and intangible heritage, a theme that runs through several sessions of the festival. AKLF focusses on younger writers, newer voices and fresh audiences in its ongoing attempt to build an audience for books and reading. Prominent personalities attending will be Hanif Kureishi, Naseeruddin Shah, Charles Allen, John Elliott, Mohammed Hanif, Leila Seth, Michael Buckley, Upamanyu Chatterjee, David Davidar, Shekhar Gupta, Shashi Tharoor, Asish Nandy, Ramachandra Guha, Kishwar Desai, Muzzafar and Meera Ali, Nabaneeta Dev Sen amongst several others. There are some firsts in AKLF 2015. A heritage literary walk, a literary 'adda', a Young Adult litfest for high school students, a bloggers' meet, a children's bookfest crammed with activities, even a standup comic for the college crowd and a leadership training session for young teens on importance of character, karma and individual social responsibility™. Add to that our signature heritage site evenings at The Indian Museum, National Library, Victoria Memorial, Lascar War Memorial, indepth discussions, top of the line authors, thinkers and performers, and you have a literary experience not to be missed. And all absolutely free for Kolkata and her culture-loving audience.

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