

## Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival 2017

*Conversations - Post-Truth: Impact of media on our reality today;*

*Commemoration: Mahasweta Devi*

*News: Announcement of shortlist of Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize. Finals in Jaipur Lit Fest*

*Book launch - Horse racing in India – A Royal Legacy*

*Theatre performance – with the Patrachitrakar community*

### Day 2 of AKLF 2017 – Jan 16<sup>th</sup> - Events & Venues

#### **@ PRESIDENCY UNIVERSITY:**

**Remembering Mahasweta Devi** Tribute to late writer and activist with leading author Nabaneeta Dev Sen, literary critic and academic Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, and publisher Naveen Kishore. Followed by screening of documentary **Talking Writing: Four Conversations with Mahasweta Devi** Directed by Pushan Kripalani.

#### **@ ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL GROUNDS:**

**The Lives of Others: Fiction and History** - Issues and challenges of fictionalizing the past. With Kiran Nagarkar, Nayantara Sahgal and Selina Sen; **Media Matters: Changing the Narrative** - How does the media shape today's world? With Rachel Dwyer, Anubha Bhosle, Sandip Roy, and Anshul Tewari; **Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize: Announcing the Shortlist** With a presentation by Aishee on the Bengali tradition of book cover design. Followed by a discussion on 'What Works' with Alka Pande (jury member), Aman Nath (jury member), Urvashi Butalia, Jon Lang and Marcos Giralt Torrent. **Other attractions: Poetry Café** with Italian poet Alessandro Lutman. Introduced by Ashoke Viswanathan and readings by City Poets, Anjana Basu, Avik Chanda, Ananya Chatterjee and Debashish Lahiri. **Plug in** with Underground Authority

#### **@ DAGA NIKUNJ:**

**Spoken Word, Written Word** - Exploring the oral and the scriptural narrative. With translator and writer Arshia Sattar and UK based storyteller Vayu Naidu

#### **@ OXFORD BOOKSTORE**

**Talking Texts and Performing Print;** . An interactive theatre performance based on **The Foolish Fly** from Sukumar Ray's Bengali poem 'Murkho Machhi.' By Culture Monks, with the Patrachitrakar community.

#### **@RCTC**

Book Launch of Lynn Deas's book **Horse racing in India** by Chief Guest Naresh Kumar followed discussion between veteran sports journalist Kishore Bhimani and well-known jockey Robin Corner

**Kolkata 16<sup>th</sup> January 2017:** Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival hosted conversations considered by it critical to take place in the era of Post Truth, where the reality globally is that facts are fast losing out to rhetoric and that the impact of different media on our 'reality' today is phenomenal. The conversations were held at St.Paul's grounds during the sessions - **The Lives of Others: Fiction and History** - Issues and challenges of fictionalizing the past. With Kiran Nagarkar, Nayantara Sahgal and

Selina Sen. **Media Matters: Changing the Narrative** - How does the media shape today's world? With Rachel Dwyer, Anubha Bhosle, Sandip Roy, and Anshul Tewari

As an ode to AKLF's Patrachitra, a design motif of Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival of a few editions ago depicting a day in the life of Kolkata, Oxford Bookstores hosted for the Patachitrakar community an interactive theatre performance based on **The Foolish Fly** from Sukumar Ray's Bengali poem 'Murkho Machhi.' by Culture Monks mesmerized the audience. **Cultural Monks** said, *"This performance is based on The Foolish Fly a book created by children from the Patachitrakar community of Medinipur, West Bengal & facilitated by Participatory Publishing Praxis. The book has been inspired by Sukumar Ray's poem 'Murkho Machhi'. The performance itself features the creators of the book apart from theatre artists and academic and the process has brought the old and the young generations from the Patrachitakar community together and started to address the issue of the fast erosion of traditional knowledge in this community."*

The Shortlist of the Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize was announced. Jury Member, **Alka Pande** said *"Continuing with the cover prize is an endorsement and commitment towards a much undervalued process of creativity. Over the next couple of years as the prize will become more and more popular and prestigious, the prize will over the years add to an enrichment of graphic design."* Also part of the Jury **Aman Nath** said *"More designers this year seem to understand the graphics of sparseness and thereby of better communication."*

The announcement was accompanied by a presentation by Aishee on the Bengali tradition of book cover design, followed by a discussion on 'What Works' with Jury members, **Alka Pande and Aman Nath** in the presence of **Urvashi Butalia, Jon Lang and Marcos Giralte Torrente**. The session was moderated by **Nandita Palchoudhuri**.

AKLF travelled to Royal Calcutta Turf Club chosen as the apt venue for the launch of Lynn Deas's book **Horse racing in India – A Royal Legacy** by Chief Guest Naresh Kumar, iconic sports personality followed by a discussion between veteran sports journalist Kishore Bhimani and well-known jockey Robin Corner.

While OJLF engaged children in the morning, Poetry Café regaled poetry lovers in the early evening and Plug in delighted youngsters till late at night, AKLF moved to Daga Nikunj for the last session of the day exploring the oral and scriptural narrative - **Spoken Word, Written Word** with translator and writer Arshia Sattar and UK based storyteller Vayu Naidu.

**Stay Connected with #AKLF2017 at AKLF.IN and @THEAKLF**

**Notes to Editor:**

#### **About AKLF**

Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival is India's first major literary initiative of the year, India's only literary festival created by a bookstore and Kolkata's first literary festival. AKLF's eighth edition from Jan 15–18 is woven around conversations to make the world a more inclusive place. Spotlighting Kolkata's unique cultural heritage of inclusiveness, the programme of AKLF 2017 was announced aboard a cruise on the banks of the Ganges. Created by the nearly 100 year old Oxford Bookstore, the Festival programming spans the entire spectrum of inclusion, from women and children to the underprivileged,

including a tribute to the late Mahasweta Devi who brought the most marginalized into the fold of literature. The era of Post Truth, where facts are fast losing out to rhetoric, the reality globally, will be discussed by experts; as will be the impact of different media on our reality today. Every evening for three days, AKLF will pay tribute to Nobel Laureate Bob Dylan through poetry and contemporary music at Poetry Café and Plug in, hosted at the festival's main venue – St. Paul's Cathedral grounds – chosen for its welcoming, accessible and inclusive nature. For the first time, Oxford Bookstores will host Oxford Junior Literary Festival (OJLF), a two-day festival to be held on 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Jan for young readers. Renowned children's authors, publishers of children's books, storytelling and creativity will form part of OJLF. This year, AKLF has tied up with UNICEF@70 to conduct its global short stories campaign titled "Tiny Stories" at OJLF. AKLF 2017 will be held at St Paul's Cathedral, established in 1847, and Oxford Bookstore, established in 1919. The festival's closing event will be hosted at St John's Church, built in 1787. The Festival conversations will also be hosted at Royal Calcutta Turf Club, Tollygunge Club, the campus of iLead & Presidency University, Daga Nikunj and the Harrington Street Arts Centre.

### **AKLF 2017 Partners and Associations:**

The AKLF 2017 edition has forged several new, prestigious associations, to add to its impressive repertoire of collaborations since the first edition in 2010. We are proud to have as our partners major national and international institutions and corporates such as the Australian Council for the Arts, Alliance Française, Australian High Commission, Instituto Cervantes, Consulate General of Italy, MAKAIAS, Presidency University, Future Hope, UNICEF, The Teacher's Centre, Jaipur Literary Festival, Sahitya Akademi, Prabha Khaitan Foundation, Development Corporation Limited (DCL), Vivada Cruises, FACES, Open Doors, The Creative Arts, Zoomcar, Art Rickshaw, Times Fibrefill, Aishee, Sienna and several others. A wide cross section of publishers like Niyogi Books, Future, Oxford University Press, Tulika, Duckbill, NBDS The Book Council are also partnering with us. Venue partners include Tollygunge Club, iLead, Harrington Street Art Centre, Alka Jalan Foundation and Royal Calcutta Turf Club. We welcome 93.5 Red FM as our radio partner, Vistara as aviation partner, Typhoo as beverage partner, Kenilworth as hospitality partner, Apollo Gleneagles Hospitals as wellness partner. AKLF is very proud of these associations and hopes to keep growing year on year.

### **About Oxford Bookstores:**

Established in 1919, Oxford Bookstore is the best equipped 'base-camp' for journeys of the mind offering its customers the widest range of outstanding titles and consistently courteous and informed service for close to a century. Today, with stores in major metros, India's first dedicated Children's bookstore, Oxford Junior, India's first of its kind tea boutique, Cha Bar, India's only literary festival created by a bookstore, Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival, Oxford Bookstore offers booklovers access to the very best in publishing enhanced by a variety of events which salute books, visual & performing arts and celebrate the word. Oxford Bookstore measures its success by the smiles on millions of happy customers that the brand has served over the last nearly 100 years. There are a few treats as sumptuous as a visit to Oxford Bookstore in India. Each time you walk into our iconic store in Kolkata where the brand started in 1919, its charm leaves you wanting for more. Our fleet of happy to help expert booksellers and informed hosts work day and night to bring to customers world class reading experience be it through our books or our fine teas and live by the brand's motto - Much more than a bookstore – at every Bookstore. For more information, please also log on to: [www.oxfordbookstore.com](http://www.oxfordbookstore.com)

## **Author Bios:**

**Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak:** Scholar and professor at the Columbia University, she is the founding member of Institute for Comparative Literature and Society. In 2012, Spivak was awarded the Kyoto Prize in Arts and Philosophy and in 2013 she was awarded the Padma Bhushan. She is best known for her path-breaking essay, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' and her translation of Derrida's *Of Grammatology*. She has been hailed as one of the founders of postcolonial theory. Her other works are: *In Other World, Outside in the Teaching Machine*, *Death of a Discipline*, *Other Asias* and *An Aesthetic Education in the Age of Globalization*.

**Naveen Kishore:** Theatre practitioner, he is also the founder of Seagull books which began primarily as a response to the growing need for an Indian publishing house for theatre and the other arts. Bringing back titles into circulations which are usually not taken up by bigger publishing houses, Seagull has now several projects which work towards bringing relevant literature to the public.

**Nabaneeta Dev Sen:** An award-winning poet, author and academic. She is noted for her poetry and prose in Bengali. Her prominent works include *Bama-bodhini*; *Nati Nabanita*; *Srestha kabita*; and *Sita theke suru*. She is also a well-loved children's writer and has been felicitated with numerous prestigious awards like Bharatiya Bhasha Parishad Award, Padmashree, Sahitya Akademi Award and many more.

**Nayantara Sahgal:** Indian writer in English whose fiction deals with India's elite responding to the crises engendered by political change. She is a member of the Nehru–Gandhi family and is the second of the three daughters born to Jawaharlal Nehru's sister, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit. She was awarded the 1986 Sahitya Akademi Award for English, for her novel, *Rich Like Us* (1985). She is revered for her take on political ideas.

**Sandip Roy:** Former Senior Editor at the popular news portal Firstpost.com and blogs for the Huffington Post. He is also an editor with New America Media. Roy has won several awards for journalism and contributed to various anthologies including *Storywallah!*, *Contours of the Heart*, *Because I Have a Voice: Queer Politics in India*, *Out! Stories from the New Queer India*, *New California Writing 2011* and *The Phobic and the Erotic: The Politics of Sexualities in Contemporary India*. His debut novel *Don't Let Him Know* brings together the two forms of the short story and the novel, narrating the story of secrets and sagas of a middle class Indian family, traversing between India and US. The novel was included in the long-list for the DSC Literature Prize 2016.

**Selina Sen:** Author, whose work has been compared to Jhumpa Lahiri's writings. Her first novel titled *A Mirror Greens in Spring* is based on the author's mother's memories of her ancestral home that is now in present-day Bangladesh. For over a decade she has worked as the North Indian correspondent for a Hong Kong-based publication which brings out magazines on Asian economic affairs. She has charmed European audiences and her work has been translated into French, Italian, and Spanish.

**Nandita Palchoudhuri:** Social entrepreneur Curating and Consulting internationally, in the field of Indian Folk Art Craft and Performance Practices. Her work creates cutting edge artistic and functional applications using traditional skills that often address a current social need. This explores the possibility of Art to re-examine the old and create new relationships between social engagement and aesthetic gesture. She serves as trustee and member on various prestigious boards like Ford Foundation - International Initiative for Social Philanthropy, Academy of Fine Arts, Calcutta School of Music and others.

**Anshul Tiwari:** An Ashoka Fellow and the Founder and Editor-in-Chief of YouthKiAwaaz.com (YKA), which is India's largest online platform for young people to express themselves on issues of importance. He also serves as a Director on the Board of Collectively, a World Economic Forum and Unilever collaborative non-profit, to

help make the future better. He was recently invited to speak at the United Nations Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law.

**Anubha Bhosle:** A journalist, she is the Executive Editor at CNN-News18 and author of the critically acclaimed *Mother, Where's My Country?* She edits the Citizen Journalist Show and reports from Kashmir and the North East regularly. As part of her fellowship for the People's Archive of Rural India (PARI), Anubha along with journalist and film maker Sunzu Bachaspatimayum have produced three short films and reportage on the lives and traditions of the Meitei community of Manipur. She won Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Awards in 2009 and Chameli Devi Award for outstanding woman media person.

**Kiran Nagarkar:** Novelist, playwright, film and drama critic and screenwriter both in Marathi and English, and is one of the most significant writers of postcolonial India. His works include, *Saat Sakkam Trechalis* (tr. Seven Sixes Are Forty Three) (1974), *Ravan and Eddie* (1994), and the epic novel, *Cuckold* (1997) for which he was awarded the 2001 Sahitya Akademi Award. Nagarkar was awarded the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany, described as the 'highest tribute Germany can pay to individuals'.

**Alka Pande:** An art critic, curator, teacher, cultural theorist and an author, she currently holds the position of the Consultant Arts Advisor and Curator of the Visual Arts Gallery at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. She is the recipient of the Charles Wallace Award (1999-2000), Australian Asia Council Special Award. She is also a distinguished receiver of the Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters) award in 2006. She has curated the latest international exhibition at the Pinacothèque de Paris titled *The Kama-Sutra: Spirituality and Eroticism in Indian Art*. Her publications include *Leela, The New Age of Kamasutra for Women, Ardhanarishvara the androgyne, Indian Erotica Art, & Shringara: The Many Faces of Indian Beauty*, which is her most recent work.

**Aman Nath:** Writer, hotelier, and architectural restorer. He is the co-founder and co-chairman of Neemrana Hotels the chain along with Francis Wacziarg, which have won awards from UNESCO and the Indian travel trade industry. He has co-written/authored 14 illustrated books on art, history, architecture, corporate biography and photography, two of which have won National Awards. These are also used as the official gifts of the President and the Prime Minister of India. His book Jaipur was the first Indian book to be marketed internationally by Christie's. He has also been the curator at *Art Today*.

**Arshia Sattar:** A translator, writer and teacher, her note-worthy translations include *Tales from the Kathasaritsagara* (1993) in Sanskrit and *Valmiki's Ramayana* (1996). She also published her essays on the Valmiki Ramayana, *Lost Loves: Exploring Rama's Anguish* (2011) which was short-listed for the Crossword Vodafone Non-Fiction Award. Her recent work is Valmiki's *Uttara*. Along with DW Gibson, Sattar founded the Sangam House International Residency Program which has hosted nearly one hundred writers from across India and all over the world.

**Urvashi Butalia:** Author. She co-founded Kali for Women in 1984 and Zubaan in 2013. She also has a long involvement in the women's movement in India. She has several works to her credit, key among which is her path-breaking study of Partition, *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India* which won the Oral History Book Association Award and the Nikkei Asia Award for Culture. She has also taught publishing for over 20 years and is on the advisory boards of a number of national and international organisations. She has received many awards, among which are the Pandora award for women's publishing, the French Chevalier des Artes et des Lettres, the Nikkei Asia Award for Culture and the Padma Shree, the highest civilian honour awarded by the Indian government.

**Jon Lang:** An Emeritus professor at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia where he served as the Head of the School of Architecture during the 1990s. Professor Lang was born in Calcutta and educated

there, as well as in South Africa and the United States. He has served as a UNESCO consultant in Turkey and a NATO Fellow in Belgium. As a Ford Foundation Fellow he has taught at The Indian Institute of Technology in Kharagpur. He has co-authored with Madhavi Desai and Miki Desai *Architecture and Independence: The Search for Identity* (1997). He is also the author of *Creating Architectural Theory* (1987) and *Urban Design: the American Experience* (1994).

**Shrabani Basu:** Journalist and historian, she is the author of *For King and Another Country: Indian Soldiers on the Western Front 1914-18*, *Victoria & Abdul: The Story of the Queen's Closest Confidant*, *Spy Princess: The Life of Noor Inayat Khan* and *Curry: The Story of Britain's Favourite Dish*. She is also the founder and chair of the Noor Inayat Khan Memorial Trust. She has been the London correspondent of Ananda Bazar Patrika group since 1988--writing for Sunday, Ananda Bazar Patrika, and The Telegraph.

**Marcos Giralt Torrente:** Spanish writer and literary critic, graduated in philosophy from the Universidad Autónoma in Madrid. His first work was the collection of short stories titled *Entiéndame* (1995). He has published three novels and three short story collections. He won the National Prize for Fiction for his novel titled *Lifetime*, which is his most recent novel. His work has been translated into English, German, French, Italian and Portuguese.

**Lynn Deas:** Writer, horse-owner, businesswoman, and mother of two, started her publishing career much before her 21st birthday. She has been the proud owner and has been associated with some of the finest Thoroughbred horses over the past 25 years, including Derby and Classic winners. She is also the publisher of Racing World, India's only equestrian racing magazine, launched in 2003. Her latest book, *Horse-Racing in India: A Royal Legacy* will be launched at the festival.

**Robin Corner:** Famous jockey in the mid-nineties who represented India at various locations like Perth, Istanbul, Turkey. Although he has retired two decades ago, his passion for the sport hasn't faded down a bit. His minor back ailments restrict him from riding horses but he continues being a part of it by officiating races. Currently, he works as a Stipendary Steward with Bangalore Turf Club.

**Vayu Naidu:** novelist and storyteller. She has created a unique voice in Intercultural Storytelling via concert performance, oral tradition and street text. As the Founder and Artistic Director of the Vayu Naidu Company, funded by the Arts Council England from 2002-2012, she collaborated with a range of agencies and worked with people in prisons, victims of domestic and abused children across Britain and Ireland. She was the AHRC post-doctoral Fellow at University of Kent. Her plays have been broadcast by BBC Radio 4 while her novel *Sita's Ascent*, launched at the Jaipur Literature Festival and LSE, was nominated for the Commonwealth Book Award. Her forthcoming novel is titled *The Subaltern Sari* and looks at the tensions between the authority of written histories and evolving oral traditions across borders.

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**For more information, please contact:**