

Press Note:

Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival 2015 – Day 4

Event: First Day First Show: New voices in Fiction
Conversations on 'On writing a first novel'

Kolkata, 17th January, 2015: Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival 2015 hosted a discussion on the topic 'On writing a first novel' with new voices in fiction namely **Saskya Jain, Pia Padukone, Sorabh Pant** and **Avik Chanda**.

The session was preceded by the book launches of 'Fire Under Ash', 'Where Earth Meets Water' and 'Anchor' by debut authors, Saskya Jain, Pia Padukone and Avik Chanda respectively. Sorabh Pant shared his experience and insights on his first novel 'The Wednesday Soul' launched in 2012. The session gave the young writers a common platform to discuss about how a first novel can be an exciting journey with new experiences.

About the Authors:

Saskya Jain

Saskya Jain was born in Ahmedabad and grew up in New Delhi. Educated at Berlin's Free University and at Columbia University, she holds an MFA in Fiction from Boston University, where she received the Florence Engel Randall Award and the Robert Pinsky Global Fellowship. Her writing has appeared in numerous journals and magazines, most recently in The Economist and The Caravan. She lives in New Delhi and Berlin. Fire Under Ash is her first novel, and she is currently working on her second.

Pia Padukone

Pia Padukone was born, raised and continues to live in New York City. A graduate of Stuyvesant High School and the London School of Economics, Pia has worked as a copywriter in healthcare advertising. In their spare time, Pia and her husband write 'Two Admirable Pleasures' a blog that combines their shared passions for books and the culinary dishes that are inspired by them. Pia debuts with Where Earth Meets Water and is working on her second novel.

Sorabh Pant

Sorabh Pant is an Indian stand-up comedian and writer. Having done over 250 shows in over 17 cities, he has been rated amongst India's top 10 stand-up comedians by The Times of India. The Bollywood actor Hrithik Roshan has dubbed him as "the funniest guy on stage". In a poll by IBN Live in March 2012, he was listed No. 1 in the 30 most interesting Twitter users in India. Pant released his debut novel 'The Wednesday Soul' in December 2011. His second novel will be released shortly.

Avik Chanda

Born in Calcutta, Avik Chanda graduated from Presidency College and completed his education at the Delhi School of Economics. Following a brief stint in media, he has pursued a career in management consulting over the last ten years, during which time he has also been moonlighting as a freelance journalist, painter and more recently, a poet, writing in both English and his native Bengali. His work has been published in a number of journals, and Footnotes is his first collection in English. His first novel Anchor is just out.

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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