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# ASAA NEWSLETTER

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**Association for the Study of Australasia in Asia**

Website: [www.asaa.net.au](http://www.asaa.net.au)

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## **Inaugural International Writing Program Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou, China**



**Jeanine Leane with students of Sun Yat-sen University**

Last year, it was a great privilege to be selected as a participant in the inaugural International Writing Program of Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou, China. Professor Dai Fan, Director of the Sun Yat-sen University Center for English-language Creative Writing and Chair of Department of English, School of Foreign Languages, Sun Yat-sen University, hosted the residency.

I was one of fourteen international writers who were invited to participate from October 19 to

November 14, 2015. The residency showcased authors, poets, playwrights and screen-writers from; Egypt, the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Mexico, the Philippines, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Australia along with many local Chinese writers and translators.

In the capacity of Visiting Writing Fellow, I undertook a range of literary and cultural activities in Guangzhou, Yangshuo and Jiangmen. I also completed and published new work and have

included the links below for your interest: “Sunrise-Sunset in Yangshou” <  
<http://peril.com.au/back-editions/edition22/sunrise-sunset-in-yangshou/>> <  
<https://www.australianbookreview.com.au/component/k2/content/171-states-of-poetry-act/>>.

The activities were too varied to expand on here but may be read about in some detail in the references cited above.

This prestigious programme was the first of its kind in China and offered more opportunities for further collaborations between Australian and Chinese writers, translators and literary scholars.

I acknowledge Sun Yat-sen University’s valuable initiative with thanks.

### **Projects for 2016**

In April this year I will attend the American Association for Australian Literary Studies (AAALS) conference in Seattle Washington. I will be participating in a panel to discuss the forthcoming *A Companion to the Works of Kim Scott* (ed. Belinda Wheeler, Boydell & Brewer, NYC) for which I wrote the forward. As well as featuring essays on Scott’s well-known novels, *Benang* (1999) and *That Deadman Dance* (2010) this exciting new volume looks more broadly at Scott’s poetry, short fiction and academic publications.

I will also present a paper on my latest research and writing

exploring the cultural continuation of the traditional role of Aboriginal women as gatherers in contemporary Aboriginal women’s writing.

**Jeanine Leane**  
 Canberra

### **Hyderabad Literary Festival**



**Cultural event by Singapore artistes**

“Hyderabad Literary Festival” is a prestigious, international event organized every year in the month of January. The sixth edition of the festival was held from 7-10 Jan 2016. Esther David, Flavia Agnes, Harsh Mander, Kalpana Sharma, Kiran Nagarkar, Mahesh Rangarajan, Meena Alexander, Mohan Agashe, Nayantara Sahgal, Pervez Hoodbhoy, Sharankumar Limbale, Sonali Kulkarni, Sudhir Kakar, Tabish Khair, Urmila Pawar, Zoran Anchevski ... were among the nearly 120 writers and artistes from India and 10 foreign countries who participated in the four-day festival.

The programme comprised conversations, readings, panel discussions, workshops, book launches, screenings, exhibitions,



Nayantara Sahgal

cultural programmes, Art Street, events for college students and school children and so on. In all, the four-day festival recorded a footfall of 12000-15000.

Singapore was the 'Guest Nation' and Marathi the 'Indian Language in Focus'. While the Consul General of Singapore at Chennai was the Guest of Honour at the Inaugural, seven writers and five artistes from Singapore participated in panel discussions and readings, conducted workshops, and presented a cultural event during the festival. Besides, films from Singapore were screened and a Singapore-based multimedia company came on board as the online media partner. After Germany, France, Ireland, Poland, and now Singapore, **we look forward to hosting Australia as the guest nation at HLF in the near future to showcase its literature, art, and culture.**

In recognition of the historical links Hyderabad has had with Maharashtra for over three centuries, HLF 2016 spotlighted Marathi literature and culture. A plenary panel on Marathi Dalit literature; sessions on Marathi drama, and Endangered Languages of Maharashtra; Marathi poetry reading; and music, drama, and dance performances by Marathi artistes were some of the events organized as part of the focus on Marathi.

In addition to these two regular features, HLF 2016 paid special attention to inclusivity by featuring several LGBTQ and differently abled authors, artistes, and activists. 'Stage Talks' and 'Promote a Cause' were the two new features of the HLF 2016 programme. While events that combined oral presentations and visual demonstrations were presented under 'Stage Talks', 'Promote a Cause' offered a platform for participatory social initiatives. Each speaker was given 8-10 minutes time to promote a selected cause and enlist the audience's support for it.

Preparations for HLF 2017 are on and the dates and other details will be announced soon. Please visit <[www.hydlitfest.org](http://www.hydlitfest.org)> for festival updates.

**T Vijay Kumar**  
Director, HLF  
Hyderabad

## **“Relations and Networks” A Conference Report**

An International conference, “Relations and Networks in Indian Ocean Studies” took place from 26 - 27 November 2015 at the Autonomous University of Barcelona (Spain). The event was organised by the research group Ratnakara ([grupsderecerca.uab.cat/ratnakara](http://grupsderecerca.uab.cat/ratnakara)), led by Dr. Felicity Hand of the same university. It was conceived as the conclusion of the research project “Relations and Networks in Indian Ocean Writing” (FFI2012-32626), financed by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness. The two-day event, brought together delegates coming from eleven different countries, from the Indian Ocean countries and beyond.

On Thursday 26th, after the official welcomes by several personalities from the host institution, celebrated Mauritian writer Lindsey Collen gave a talk with the eloquent title: “The Indian Ocean: Surface and Undertow. From the Cradle of Humankind to a Call for Writers to Help Humankind Avoid Extinction.” In this highly inspiring inaugural lecture, she outlined a series of “indiscipline thoughts,” which really was a precise sequencing of great ideas. Importantly, the writer emphasised the need for finding solutions to serious problems of ecology and inequalities presently threatening us. Next day, Friday 27<sup>th</sup>, Berlin Humboldt University Professor Flora Veit-Wild shared her highly

suggestive reflections of the nature of life, writing and art in her talk “Family Constellations”, The third highlight of the first day of work was that of Senior Fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London, Dr. Shihan de Silva Jayasuriya, who generously offered a detailed introduction to the screening of her documentary “Indian Ocean Memories and African Migrants.” Dr. De Silva Jayasuriya’s areas of expertise (Historical Linguistics, Ethnomusicology, Portuguese Studies and Diaspora Studies) converge in this unique documentary, an account of some cultural specifics of the scattered communities of Afro-Asian communities in India and Sri Lanka. Besides language and cultural memory the documentary explored the role of music as the main evidence of the African substratum of these Indoceanic communities.

Twenty-eight excellent papers were presented on the two days which followed exploring multiple facets of the region. The most discussed writer was Amitav Ghosh, whose *Ibis Trilogy* was discussed by an entire opening panel and numerous other papers by Maria-Sabina Draga, Sneharika Roy, and Arunima Dey. In the parallel session, South African/ Indian identities were scrutinised by Modhumita Roy, Neville Choonoo and Lindy Stiebel.

In the next time slot, a panel was devoted to literary and Sci-Fi speculations on South African

futures and the first day concluded with the documentary “Indian Ocean Memories and African Migrants.”

On Friday 27, several panels went on exploring a variety of Indoceanic Relations and Network from new avenues of historical research to contemporary matters of local and global concern. Insights into South African Indian identities and fiction begun the previous day continued in a parallel session offering exploration of a wide range of topics.

An excellent panel presentation offered by PO CRIF (from the University of Barcelona) was the feature of the day. Martin Renes introduced this innovative area of research into postcolonial crime fiction with his paper on *Anil's Ghost*, showing that urgent global ethical matters intersect within the genre's conventions. ASAA associated committee member and founder of the University of Barcelona Centre for Australian Studies, Sue Ballyn, introduced Sri Lanka-born, Singapore-based multitalented writer Nury Vittachi and his “Feng Shui Detective” novel series. Bill Phillips delighted the delegates with an interactive discussion of Vikram Chandra's *Sacred Games* language performativity, metaphysics and authorship.

Closing remark were pronounced by Professor Makarand Paranjape, and Dr. Felicity Hand. At the conference dinner, came the last highlight of the conference a brief

sampling of Odissi dance and music providing a beautiful closure.

**Isabel Alonso-Breto**  
Spain

### **Australian Interest in Indian Writing in English – ABC Radio National Books and Arts Programme 1915**

In 2015, ABC Radio National's Books and Arts devised a programme focused on exploring selected works from the subcontinent. This was based on selections which had been voted on by the listeners themselves and the final list included Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1980), Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* (1997) and Michelle de Kretser's *Questions of Travel* (2012) among other great titles.

#### **V.S. Naipaul** *A House for Mr. Biswas* (1961)

The month of June saw The Book Club record a vibrant discussion on V.S. Naipaul's novel *A House for Mr Biswas* (1961) with presenter Michael Cathcart and guests Kavita Nandan, Gillian Dooley and Ashish Kaul. The speakers discussed the system of indenture through which Naipaul's ancestors first arrived in Trinidad. Other points discussed were: Naipaul's relationship with his father, the character of Biswas, the novel's protagonist and the central importance of family to the story. Nandan said, “A House for Mr Biswas is a book I love. For me the story of this unlikely hero is

quintessentially about a migrant wanting to feel a sense of belonging in an often hostile world." This story is set in the colonial island of Trinidad but the desire for home is something most readers can relate to today, as we continue to witness, it remains even more elusive.

**Kavita Nandan**  
Canberra

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**R.K. Narayan**  
*Malgudi Days (1943, 1982)*

R K Narayan's *Malgudi Days* was featured on the programme on November 11 2015. Michael Cathcart chaired the discussion between three panel members: Sunil Badami man of many talents ranging from circus clown to master chef, and freelance writer, who described himself as a 'Narayan addict'; Sarah Macdonald, author of a controversial work entitled, *Holy Cow an Indian Adventure* recording initial shock in her early experience of India and the spiritual journey that she later experienced. Cynthia vanden Driesen joined the discussion from the ABC's Perth Studio. She had written a book on Narayan's work and had actually met the writer himself twice in India. (See pics and link given below).

While, the text chosen was one of his lesser achievements, the discussion evolved in such a way that the panel touched on some of the central qualities of his work : his ability to create a vast variety of characters—postmen, clerks,

university student, beggars, mad men, crooks and holy men with a few deft strokes that evoke the variety and uniqueness of the 'Indian' scene with a veracity understanding and humour which has led to his being widely recognised for his ability to evoke the "true India" for a range of readers - from his own Indian readerships to literary critics abroad like Ved Mehta in the US to Graham Greene his earliest 'patron' in the U K who succeeded in bringing his work to an international audience several decades ago.

What emerged from the discussion was the fact that the charm of his work remains uniquely alive. The discussion moved from his short stories to Narayan's achievement in the novel form, particularly *The Guide*; his unique achievement in the creation of Malgudi a fictional place which somehow has evolved into being regarded as a microcosm of India, his use of a form of English that works as a credible medium of expression for an Indian sensibility, so that the most casual reader of his work ends up becoming an 'addict.'



Cynthia vanden Driesen with RK Narayan in Madras (1992)



Narayan with his daughter who posed very reluctantly for the camera (1992). She was the little girl whom he writes about in his autobiographical novel *The English Teacher*, which records his grief at the loss of his young wife early in their marriage. When Cynthia met him again in 1997 this daughter had passed on and he was very glad to be given a copy of this photo.

[Visit <[www.mcc.murdoch.edu.au/readingroom/litserv/SPAN/34/Driesen.html](http://www.mcc.murdoch.edu.au/readingroom/litserv/SPAN/34/Driesen.html)> to read the interview published in *Span*]

**Cynthia vanden Driesen**  
Perth

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### **Brief Encounters: Literature and Beyond**

A writer-friend of mine recently wrote a witty and wise essay on my work titled 'From Maigania to Malgudi'. Coincidentally I had just completed a draft of an account of my first and longest journey from Nadi to New Delhi.

Since then I've travelled to many faraway places but the world seems to have shrunk in my mind or perhaps my mind has expanded. But that first flight from Nadi remains the most memorable and,

in a sense, the most eventful journey of my life.

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My journey was from a village in Fiji to the modern capital of India. Delhi itself was a city of many cities, a graveyard of dynasties, but I had no idea of its history, plurality or the variety or travellers' tales. Only once I'd gone to Suva for a scholarship interview with my village companion Mr Mithai Lal, the best tractor driver on the pineapple fields of Legalega and the sugar-cane plantations of Maigania.

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I was given one of the few Indian government scholarships to study for four years at Delhi University. I completed the B.A. English Hons degree at the University of Delhi: three delightful years of study, explored in eight papers in English – from William Shakespeare to Lord Tennyson.

Remarkably, no Indian writer was ever mentioned by my lecturers, especially those teaching English. At the college; once or twice Rabindranath Tagore's name was dropped by a Bengali lecturer, Mr P. Mitra, wrapped in his accommodating dhoti of pure white cotton. Tagore was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913, the first Asian to be thus honoured. No other Indian writer has been awarded the prize since, although R K Narayan was nominated a couple of times.

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It was ten years later, at the University of Leeds in 1971, that I first began reading a course in Indian Writing in English. Leeds led

in several pioneering areas—and changed the direction of English studies in many university departments all over the world.

The course was taught by the redoubtable Mysorian Professor C D Narasimhaiah, who had studied in Cambridge and was more English than many Professors of English. CDN, as we fondly called him, visited Fiji in 1981. Several of my Fiji friends and I visited him later at his Literary Criterion Centre in Mysore.

It was in this course I discovered that India's most prolific novelist writing in English at the time, R K Narayan, was from Mysore. At Delhi University the only living writers who visited our college were Dom Moraes and Ved Mehta from Oxford, on a visit to India under the auspices of the British Council. We hadn't read anything by them either.

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The story of India was particularly meaningful as Europe was descending into the very heart of darkness while India was seeking freedom from the imprisoning British imperial chain. In a sense this is the extraordinary achievement of Indian writers: using the English language as a weapon of deepest creative illumination and communication especially the generation from Nehru to Narayan, inspired by Gandhi and the *Gita*. They gave the English a contrite conscience as they read these writers and began to understand the anguish of a subjugated people.

Yet, parliamentary democracy and the English language remain two of the most enduring gifts of England to a brutally British - divided India. The teaching and writing of literature, too, is part of that unique encounter between two of the world's most literate civilisations.

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Today, of course, Indian Writing in English is an industry: with the work of distinguished writers from Amitav Ghosh to Vikram Seth, Anita Desai to Arundhati Roy—a varied harvest of Indian writers has opened the Indian realities to the English-speaking world as only writers can do and produced 'a body of literature unsurpassed in its sustained imagination.' This literary tree is mainly in English and its branches have spread to every continent through translations.

**Satendra Nandan**

Canberra

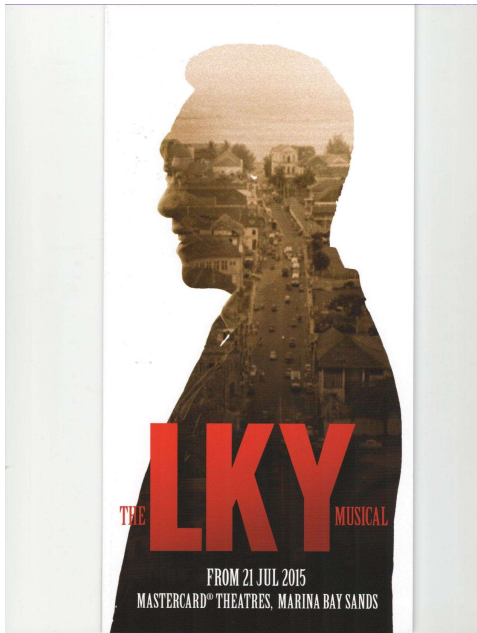
(Edited essay from the forthcoming volume)

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## The LKY Musical

Last year, 2015, was Singapore's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a modern nation state. In the 50 years since its independence, Singapore has transformed itself from a 'Third world' country into one of the most efficient and modern nations in Asia today. This transformation can be credited to the nation's founder, Lee Kuan Yew, and his colleagues. It was therefore appropriate that *The LKY Musical* was staged as part of the anniversary celebrations. Based on a story I was commissioned to write, the production involved a

large group of artistes and producers.



Singapore producers, Metropolitan Productions, assembled an international team of artists to create the play. With music by Singapore's iconic musician and composer, Dick Lee, script by American Tony Petito, direction by veteran London director Steven Dexter, and lyrics by award winning UK lyricist Stephen Clerk, it was a thoroughly international production. All the actors were Singaporean, and Adrian Pang, the country's most eminent actor played the role of Lee Kuan Yew.

I do not mind admitting that when I was first approached to write a story from which a musical on Mr Lee Kuan Yew's life could be developed; I was taken aback. Yet, in the world of stage musicals the unlikely subjects of *Evita Peron* in *Evita*, and the French Revolution in *Les Miserables*, have inspired and

touched many people. The story of Singapore and its birthing is one of great drama, and the more I thought about it, the more I felt it was a wonderful narrative to expand upon.



It is not easy to write about an iconic man whose life is so widely known and revered. Focusing on the years before independence, an era of Mr Lee's life that is perhaps less well known to a younger generation of Singaporeans than his later years seemed a pertinent viewpoint. At that time his *persona*, beliefs and political skills were still in the process of evolving through the historic events and life experiences he was facing. He was surrounded by struggle and beset with doubt.

Through research, I came to know the young Mr Lee, his fears and his entrepreneurship through the trauma of the war years and Japanese occupation; the misery of his life in England and his determination to excel academically; the later struggles for independence against the colonial regime and then the communists. Today it is easy to forget that back then the way ahead was not clear to Mr Lee or to anyone else of his circle

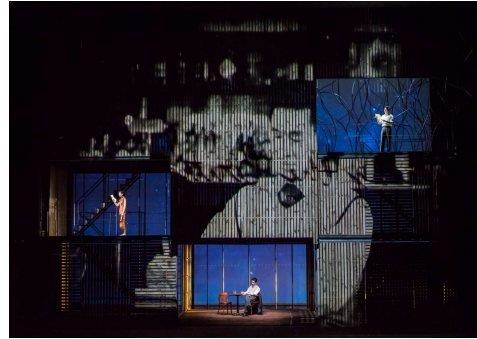
of idealistic friends. The courage and single-mindedness it took to be true to a vision was exceptional. The violence and drama of the era have also been largely forgotten, strikes and bloody riots and daylight assassinations by the communists were the stuff of everyday life.

It is also easy to forget how young Me Lee was at that time, only 31 when he was first elected to Singapore's colonially administered Legislative Assembly, and 35 when he became an independent Singapore's first Prime Minister. Two great themes emerged for me during this research. The first was how right won out against might in the struggle against colonialism and communism; the second was how the impossible was made possible in the years since independence.

As a novelist I am used to continually putting the flesh of words onto the bones of narrative. The story I sat down to write for *The LKY Musical* was a very different experience. The construction was the opposite of what I usually do; condensing rather than expanding—a more linear viewpoint and way of writing.

I am a novelist, and by its very nature my work is a solitary occupation. My involvement with *The LKY Musical* was therefore a very different experience. It involved me in collaboration, a creative sharing and building. It was fascinating to exchange thoughts and ideas with the Creative Team, and to see in my

mind's eye a multi-dimensional work emerging from the flat words on a page and to see my story taken and developed to a different level in a different genre.



Sadly, Mr Lee died in the early part of the year and we thought we may possibly have to cancel the production. Instead, we were encouraged to go ahead, and in the aftermath of Mr Lee's death the production became not only a tribute to the man, but took on the aura of a legacy project. The production had a highly successful run at the Mastercard Theatres at Marina Bay Sands. It played to a packed house and drew standing ovations each night.

**Meira Chand**  
Singapore

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### **International Seminar, University of Delhi**

An international seminar on "Multiculturalism and Globalism: India and the World" was organized at Shaheed Bhagat Singh College, University of Delhi, in collaboration with the Indian Society for Commonwealth Studies on 29 January 2016. Dr. Suman Bala, convener, addressed the audience emphasizing the the purpose and

relevance of Multiculturalism in the present-day global scenario. The session was chaired by Dr. R.K. Dhawan, former Professor at Delhi University and began with the key address by Dr. Christine Nicholls, Professor of Australian Studies at Adelaide University who enlightened the participants about the theme of the seminar and its relevance in contemporary academia. She spoke at length about the Aborigines and their status in the contemporary society in Australia. After the keynote, Dr. Nilanjana Mukherjee presented a paper titled 'Musemising the Other'. The paper dealt with the cultural politics of tribal and aboriginal representations in museums in India and Australia. A brief discussion followed her presentation where the audience, especially the students, made an attempt to articulate the complexities of the local and ritual

artefacts and the politics of the urban gaze. Professor Frank S. Deena from East Carolina University, U.S.A., delivered a talk on "The State of the World is Not Good/Good". Dr. Garima Yadav presented a paper titled 'Cadaver of a Young Revolutionary: Representation of Student Activists in Neel Mukherjee's *The Lives of Others* and Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Lowland*.' The last presentation was followed by a general discussion among the discussants on the theme of Multiculturalism and Globalism. The infinite responses showed that the seminar was a tremendous success and there were requests from the audience for further explorations on the subject.

**R.K. Dhawan**  
Delhi

### Forthcoming Conferences

#### **Europe and Down Under: Bridging Gaps and Fostering Connections**

An interdisciplinary International Conference - July 1-2 2016, Faculty of English, Adam Mickiewicz University Poznań, Poland

#### **Call for Papers**

The aim of the conference is to bring together European, Australian, and New Zealand scholars and to provide a venue for exchanging views, ideas and research findings on Australian and New Zealand

cultures and societies. We invite scholars representing multiple disciplines (history, sociology, Indigenous studies, anthropology, cultural studies, literary studies, law, political science, linguistics and other) to share their research and pedagogies; and Australian and New Zealand writers and artists to share their work. Inspired by the enthusiasm and scholarship of the students of our Faculty's "Australia and New Zealand" MA Program, we would also like to encourage BA and MA students to submit their proposals as student sessions are planned during the conference.

**Confirmed Keynote Speaker:** Prof. Ryszard Wolny, Head of the Institute of English, Opole University, Poland

(<http://www.ryszardwolny.pl>).

The language of the conference is English.

A **post-conference publication** of selected papers in *Studia Anglica Posnania*, an international peer-reviewed journal is planned.

We invite proposals for 20-minute papers, 60-minute interactive workshops, roundtable discussions, posters, and poetry and prose readings.

Please email your abstract 250-word-long proposal and a brief CV to the conference secretary Patrycja Tomkowiak at [anz.conference.poznan.2016@gmail.com](mailto:anz.conference.poznan.2016@gmail.com) or via the conference website: <http://anzconferencepoznan.wix.com/2016>

The deadline for proposals is **February 15th 2016**. Submissions will be acknowledged by email. Acceptance information will be emailed to participants on March 1st.

Conference fees: The full fee includes the cost of all tea/coffee breaks and lunches during the conference, and conference materials. The fee **does not** include accommodation costs nor the cost of the conference dinner (70 PLN/20 Euro/30 AUD/30 NZD), which will

be held on the first day of the conference.

Conference organizers: Dr Zuzana Buchowska, Dr Tomasz Skirecki, Prof. Jacek Fabiszak

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**INASA Conference  
'Re-Imagining Australia':  
Encounter, Recognition,  
Responsibility**

**7-9 December 2016 Fremantle,  
Western Australia**

Hosted by the Centre for Human Rights Education, Australia-Asia-Pacific Institute, the School of Media, Culture and Creative Arts, Curtin University.

**Call for Papers: Deadline 30 June 2016**

<http://info.humanrights.curtin.edu.au/events/call-for-papers.cfm>

As a result of the intensification of overlapping, interpenetrating and mixing of cultures and peoples in everyday life in Australia - its public culture has become increasingly re-imagined through intense conversations and inter-epistemic dialogue and debate, activating the possibilities of an emerging cosmopolitan society. This, however, continues to be challenged at the same time by, amongst other things, recurrent racism, misogyny, homophobia and ecophobia produced in the public sphere. To re-imagine Australia thus demands new ways of thinking and understanding what is required

to go beyond Australia's ambivalence, among other things, towards Asia and, importantly, refusal to adequately accept Aboriginal sovereignty or ontological belonging. The purpose of this conference is to understand, document, invoke, listen to, learn about and enquire into the conversations, discussions, histories, stories and creative production that have happened and are happening that help or hinder a re-imagining of Australia, one that is conscious of the limitations of Enlightenment thinking and therefore framed through questions of cultural encounter, social and political recognition and responsibility. The conference will showcase research about how Australia is being re-imagined through interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches that are critical, creative and artistic.

For the first time, the International Association of Australian Studies conference will take place in Western Australia (WA), following on the zeitgeist of *Griffith Review's* 'Looking West' (2014), the end of the mining boom and vigorous national protests against the closure of remote Aboriginal communities based on a racial and cultural politics of 'lifestyle' that bear the hallmarks of European Enlightenment triumph. WA offers a rich context to explore the creative, cultural and critical dynamics of Australian society. Its proximity to the Indian Ocean, to Indonesia, Southeast Asia, India, China and Africa make WA an ideal place from which to look at

Australia, as well as a place to understand how others see it.

The conference encourages postgraduates, early career and senior scholars to present new and innovative work cognate to our theme. The conference also encourages the participation of postgraduate, junior and senior scholars from Australian Studies and other relevant Centres throughout the world.

To submit a Paper proposal or to visit the Conference website please click:

<http://info.humanrights.curtin.edu.au/events/call-for-papers.cfm>

PLEASE NOTE: ALL POSTGRADUATES: INASA is offering a Conference Travel Bursary to HDR candidates to assist attendance at the 2016 conference. These bursaries are up to \$700 per applicant and provide financial assistance to cover travel and accommodation to attend the conference. To find out more please refer to the following: Travel Bursary Terms and Conditions. For Travel Bursary Application Form click this link.

We welcome the submission of abstracts from the following disciplines and fields:

Australian Studies, Asian Studies, Critical Race and Whiteness Studies, Cultural Studies, Ethnography, Environmental Studies, Gender and Sexuality, Heritage, History, Human rights,

Indian Ocean Studies, Indigenous Studies, Literature, Media and Film Studies, Multicultural Studies, Postcolonial Studies, Settler Colonial Studies, Dance studies, Creative Arts, Creative Writing.

Other links about the conference locations:

<http://museum.wa.gov.au/museums/maritime>

<http://museum.wa.gov.au/venue-hire/conferences-meetings/fremantle>

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*Australian Studies:  
Interdisciplinary Perspectives*

**Edited by Anne Brewster,  
University of New South Wales  
ISSN: 2297-8194**

This interdisciplinary book series showcases dynamic, innovative research on contemporary and historical Australian culture. It aims to foster interventions in established debates on Australia as well as opening up new areas of enquiry that reflect the diversity of interests in the scholarly community. The series includes research in a range of fields across the humanities and social sciences, such as history, literature, media, philosophy, cultural studies, gender studies and politics. Proposals are encouraged in areas such as Indigenous studies, critical race and whiteness studies, women's studies, studies in colonialism and colonality, multiculturalism, the experimental humanities and ecocriticism. Of

particular interest is research that promotes the study of Australia in cross-cultural, transnational and comparative contexts. Cross-disciplinarity and new methodologies are welcomed. The series will feature the work of leading authors but also invites proposals from emerging scholars. Proposals for monographs and high-quality edited volumes are welcomed. Proposals and manuscripts considered for the series will be subject to rigorous peer review and editorial attention. The series is affiliated with the International Australian Studies Association ([www.inasa.org](http://www.inasa.org)). Proposals are welcome for monographs or edited collections. Those interested in contributing to the series should send a detailed project outline either to the series editor or to [oxford@peterlang.com](mailto:oxford@peterlang.com). For further information, please contact Dr Laurel Plapp, Senior Commissioning Editor, Email: [l.plapp@peterlang.com](mailto:l.plapp@peterlang.com). Tel. +44 (0) 1865 514160

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**IMPORTANT NOTE:**

**The next ASAA Newsletter (March 2017) will be compiled and edited by the ASAA Committee members of Osmania University of Hyderabad: Professor T. Vijay Kumar and Dr. Parimala Kulkarni. We wish to express our warmest appreciation of their volunteering to take on this responsibility.**

## ASAA TEAM

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**Jeanine Leane—President, ASAA (Australia)** is a Wiradjuri woman from South-West New South Wales. Formerly a Research Fellow at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, she currently holds a postdoctoral fellowship in the Australian Centre for Indigenous History at the Australian National University. In 2010, Jeanine's first volume of poetry, *Dark Secrets After Dreaming*: - won the Scanlon Prize for Indigenous Poetry and her manuscript, *Purple Threads* won the David Unaipon Award at the Queensland Premier's Literary Awards and was shortlisted for the 2012 Commonwealth Book Prize. Jeanine is the recipient of an Australian Research Council grant for a project: "Reading the Nation: A critical study of Aboriginal/Settler representations in the contemporary Australian Literary Landscape." Having attended the ASAA Conference in India in 2012, she also attended a Symposium at Mysore University with Indigenous writers. A book of her poems was translated into Punjabi by Ishmeet Kaur. Email: jeanine.lean@anu.edu.au

**Ralph Crane—Vice-President, ASAA (Australia)** is Head of the English Programme at the University of Tasmania. He has particular interests in colonial fiction and the intersections of literature and geography. Ralph is a member of the editorial boards of the *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, the *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, and *The Atlantic Critical Review*. He has published three sole-authored books and at least seven co-edited books on Indian writing in English. His latest co-authored publication (with Jane Stafford and Mark Williams both long-term members of ASAA) is *The Oxford History of the Novel in English, Vol. 9, The World Novel in English to 1950*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. Ralph was Vice-President of ASAA (2006 -2008) and co-edited the volume *Diaspora* with Cynthia vanden Driesen. Email: Ralph.Crane@utas.edu.au

**Kavita Ivy Nandan—Secretary, ASAA (Australia)** is the editor of *Stolen Worlds* (2005) and *Requiem for a Rainbow* (2001); the co-editor of *Writing the Pacific* (2007) and *Unfinished Journeys* (1998). Her first novel *Home after Dark* was recently published by the University of the South Pacific Press. She completed her PhD in Literature at the Australian National University and has lectured in Creative Writing and Literature at the University of Canberra, the University of the South Pacific, Charles Darwin University and the Australian National University. Kavita was born in New Delhi, grew up in Suva and moved to Canberra in 1987. It is interesting to note that Kavita, while still a postgraduate, attended the historic first ASAA conference in Kerala in 1997. Email: nandan.kavita@gmail.com

**Vijay Kumar Tadakamalla—President, ASAA (Asia)** is Professor of English at Osmania University, Hyderabad. In Fall 2013, he designed and taught a course on the Indian Novel in English at The University of Utah. His research interests include postcolonial literatures, the Indian literary diaspora, and translation. He has co-edited *Globalisation: Australian-Asian Perspectives* (2014), *Focus India: Postcolonial Narratives of the Nation* (2007), and translated into English (with C Vijayasree) an early twentieth century Telugu classic *Kanyasulkam* (2002). He has interviewed several writers for print and electronic media. He was Fellow Oxford Seminar (2000), and Treasurer ACLALS (Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies; 2001–2004). He is a founder-editor of *Muse India: the literary e-journal* and is a Director of the annual Hyderabad Literary Festival. Email: tvk2k15@gmail.com

**K.T. Sunitha—Vice-President, ASAA (Asia)** is Professor of English at the University of Mysore. She organised the ASAA Conference in Mysore in July 2010,

bringing together several institutions, besides the University of Mysore: Professor C.D. Narasimhaiah's Dhvanyaloka as well as Professor Anniah Gowda's International Centre for Commonwealth and American Literature and Language Studies. She has presented research papers on Indian writers at Australian university conferences and taught Australian literature and presented research papers in the field at Indian and other international conferences. Email: kt\_sunitha@yahoo.co.in

**Parimala Kulkarni—Secretary, ASAA (Asia)** is Assistant Professor in the Department of English, Osmania University, Hyderabad. She has an MA from the University of Hyderabad and PhD from Osmania University. Her area of specialization is Women's Writing. Her research interests include Indian Literature, Gender Studies, and English Language Pedagogy. She has co-edited a book on Contemporary British Literature-post 1990s. She is currently on a UGC Research Award 2014-2016. Email: paripavan@gmail.com

**Ishmeet Kaur—Editor, ASAA Newsletter and Website** is an Assistant Professor in the School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies at the Central University of Gujarat, Gandhinagar. She teaches courses in English literature, language and communication studies and has also worked on translations of texts from Punjabi into English and vice versa. Her specialist interests in research lie in Australian Literature, Post-colonial Studies and Sikh Studies. She also works on Indigenous writing from Australia and India. Her doctoral thesis was a comparative study of Patrick White's novels and *Guru Granth Sahib*. She has recently published (2014) a work entitled, *Patrick White: Critical Issues*. She represented her University as an "Inspired Teacher" for the President of India's In-Residence Programme at Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi. Email: ishmeetsaini@gmail.com

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## ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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**Greg Battye** is Professor of Media Production in the Faculty of Arts and Design at the University of Canberra. His research includes photography, narrative theory and cognitive literary studies. Greg's photographic works are held by the National Gallery of Australia, the National Library of Australia and other national institutions. Greg was vice-president of ASAA from 2007 to 2015. Email: Greg.Battye@canberra.edu.au.

**Tony Simoes da Silva** was at the University of Wollongong until 2015, where he was Professor, Dean of Programmes and Pro Vice-Chancellor (South East Asia). He took up the position of Head of the School of Humanities at the University of Tasmania in May 2015. Tony co-edits the Journal of the Association for the Study of Australian Literature (JASAL) and *La Questioners Meridionale /The Southern Question*. He attended the ASAA conference at Osmania University and is well-known to many of our Asian colleagues. Email: Tony.SimoesdaSilva@utas.edu.au

**Glen Phillips** is a well-known poet and is Director of the Landscape and Language Centre at Edith Cowan University adjunct ECU professor. He serves on several literary boards and Foundations and is represented in more than 20 anthologies and is author or editor of 20 books. Glen has been a long-time supporter of ASAA initiatives, since its inception in 1995. Email: glenlyp@bigpond.com

**Anjali Gera Roy** is Professor in the Department of Humanities of Social Sciences at the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur. She has published essays in literature,

film and cultural studies on India as well as on African culture. She is now researching the transnational flows of Bollywood cinema and has recently co-edited several volumes in this field. She has been Asian President of ASAA since 2007). Email: agera\_99@yahoo.com

**Satendra Nandan** is Emeritus Professor at the University of Canberra. He is also widely known for his creative work as a novelist and as a poet. In March 2012 he was awarded the prestigious Harold White Fellowship at the National Library to write his autobiography. He has lately been appointed a member of the Fiji Constitutional Commission (July 2, 2012). He helped found ASAA at the historic meeting at the ACLALS conference in Colombo in 1995 and has served as vice –president for many years. Email: satendra.nandan@gmail.com

**Cynthia vanden Driesen** is a Research Fellow with the School of Humanities, University of Western Australia. Her research and publications are mainly in the area of Australian writing and other New Literatures in English. With help from Satendra Nandan she set up ASAA at an international meeting of Asian and Australian academic in Colombo (noted above). She has served continuously as President since the inception of the Association and is more than glad to have found a successor to fill this position. Email: cynthia.v@westnet.com.au

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**Institutional Affiliation** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone No** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Special interest in Australian/NZ Studies (Publications/Research/Teaching)**

**Signature**

**Date:**

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