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INDO-AMERICAN ARTS COUNCIL 6th ANNUAL LITERARY FESTIVAL ALL-VIRTUAL CELEBRATING “STORIES OF HUMANITY”

The Festival will feature internationally bestselling and award-winning authors such as Diksha Basu, Aseem Chhabra, Oliver Craske, Sopan Deb, Avni Doshi, Ambassador Haksar, Balli Kaur Jaswal, Anupam Kher, Megha Majumdar, Rajiv Malhotra, Dr. Pratapaditya Pal and Sejal Shah

The Indo-American Arts Council (IAAC) Literary Festival from December 4-13th 2020 will celebrate literature influenced by the Indian subcontinent. Run in the virtual space, readers globally will be able to experience internationally renowned authors discussing their work. Authors will come together over the course of 10 days to present exceptional literary works. From the secret lives of India’s urban teens to a *New York Times* journalist’s attempt to find his parents, quantum marketing skills to a spirited romance, translation of 2500-year-old Sanskrit classics to the life of Irrfan Khan, **the IAAC Literary Festival showcases a stellar range of writers on a remarkable range of topics.**

Taking place during a pandemic, this year’s theme “Stories of Humanity” beautifully illuminates the breadth of the festival’s offerings. Including books by novelists, essayists, art scholars, journalists, biographers, actors and more, the IAAC Literary Festival explores the diversity of literature in and influenced by India.

“Known for its wide-ranging and inclusive programming, this year’s Annual Literary Festival allows for an even greater range of participation,” said IAAC Chairman Dr. Nirmal Mattoo, “I am sure audience will be delighted that we have attracted authors from around the world, representing different genres of literature.”

Featuring both debut authors and established voices, the IAAC festival spotlights an array of varied topics, including spiritual journeys, the challenges and joys of translation, the power of claiming one's identity, mental health issues, the intimate creative lives of beloved artists and performers, and emerging threats to individual freedom. Each evening of the 10-day festival will include two in-conversation events and many of the featured authors will have their premiere launch at the festival.

“Our Literary Festival promises to have blockbuster book launches, with stories that will move the heart and the mind,” stated IAAC Vice Chairman and author Rakesh K. Kaul. “This carefully curated selection reflects IAAC’s unique sense and sensibility, which pays homage to the principle that grand stories unite us and are forever.”

Festival Director Nili Lakhani stated, **“The IAAC Literary Festival celebrates our voices that have been shaped by the Indian ethos and experience.** Notwithstanding these unprecedented times, our stories capture our collective shared experiences that have reshaped our perspectives and uplifted us. **We are especially proud to present the young, emerging, powerful authors from within our global community.”**

FEATURED WRITERS AND CONVERSATION PARTNERS AT THE IAAC LITERARY FESTIVAL

Dr. Madhu Bazaz Wangu, founder of the Mindful Writers, will discuss her novel *The Immigrant Wife*, winner of the National Indie Excellence Award, with journalist and author **Jean Nayar**.

Internationally renowned actor **Anupam Kher**, who is currently starring in the hit NBC TV series *New Amsterdam*, will launch his new book *Your Best Day is Today*. Kher will be in-conversation with bestselling author and purpose coach **Jay Shetty**.

Rajiv Malhotra will launch his mind bender *Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Power: Five Battlefields* in conversation with tech leader **Usha Chaudhary**.

Megha Majumdar will delve into her *New York Times*' bestselling debut novel, *A Burning*, with writer **Eshani Surya**. “*A Burning* signals the arrival of a new voice of immense talent and promise” (Amitav Ghosh).

Dr. Makarand Paranjape will present *JNU Nationalism and India's Uncivil War*, a powerful look at the forces shaping Jawaharlal Nehru University, in conversation with Professor Lou Marinoff .

Diplomat and acclaimed translator Ambassador **Aditya Narayan Dhairyasheel Haksar** will illuminate his masterful translation of *Chanakya Niti* and Kshemendra's *Three Satires from Kashmir* with **Consul General of India Randhir Jaiswal**.

Film journalist and film festival director **Aseem Chhabra** will discuss his newest book, *Irrfan Khan: The Man, The Dreamer, The Star*, an emotive look at the artistic and personal life of the international star, in conversation with film critic and television host **Rajeev Masand**.

Sejal Shah will present *This is One Way To Dance*, a debut essay collection that Kiran Desai calls “one of the most nuanced, wise, and tender portraits of immigration I have ever read.” Shah will be in conversation with editor and writer **Geeta Kothari**.

Nev March will discuss her debut novel *Murder in Old Bombay*, winner of the Mystery Writers of America’s award for Best First Crime Novel, with screenwriter **Sooni Taraporevala**.

International bestselling author **Diksha Basu** will dive into *Destination Wedding* (which Chrissy Teigen is “extremely obsessed with”) with writer and filmmaker **Priyanka Mattoo**.

Tazmeen Amna will discuss her debut novel *Goner*, which explores a young woman’s mental health crisis and overdose, with research scholar **Anab Naiyer**.

Global marketing executive **Raja Rajamannar** will offer his expertise regarding *Quantum Marketing*, in conversation with author and marketing leader **Rakesh Kaul**.

Journalist **Yashica Dutt** will present her powerful memoir, *Coming Out as Dalit*, which forces readers to confront the injustices of caste. Dutt will be in conversation with Convener of the National Campaign for Dalit Human Rights, Professor **Vimal Thorat**.

New York Times’ writer and comedian **Sopan Deb** will discuss *Missed Translations*, his search for his estranged parents and family history, with art and culture writer **Aarti Virani**.

Dr. Aparna Pande will delve into *Making India Great: The Promise of a Reluctant Global Power* with business leader **Anil Bansal**, IAAC Board Member and President of the Federation of Indian Associations.

Jyotsna Mohan Bhargava will discuss *Stoned, Shamed, and Depressed*, which explores the secret lives of India’s urban teens, with former Managing Editor of NDTV 24x7 **Manika Raikwar**.

Balli Kaur Jaswal, author of *The Unlikely Adventures of the Shergill Sisters* and the runaway international bestseller *Erotic Stories for Punjabi Widow*, will delve into her creative process and inspirations with novelist and advertising creative director **Pia Padukone**.

Avni Doshi will discuss her debut novel *Burnt Sugar*, which was shortlisted for the 2020 Booker Prize, with writer and arts organizer **Swati Khurana**. “Doshi’s prose is arresting and her ideas fiercely intelligent” (*Sunday Times*).

Oliver Craske will present *Indian Sun*, his definitive biography of Ravi Shankar--a “superb” (*Times Literary Supplement*) book “written with insight and compassion” (*The Hindu*). Craske will be in conversation with award-winning documentary filmmaker **Mark Kidel**.

Museum curator and prodigious art writer **Dr. Pratapaditya Pal**, will be in conversation with Asia scholar **Dr. Vishakha Desai** about Dr. Pal’s *Quest for Coomaraswamy: A Life in the Arts*.

FOR MORE DETAILS: Visit <https://iaac.us/iaac-literary-festival-2020/> for the complete Festival lineup, including dates and times for every presenting author. Downloadable images of the authors and books are available at: <https://iaac.us/iaac-literary-festival-2020-press-materials/>.

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About the Indo-American Arts Council

The Indo-American Arts Council is a not-for-profit arts organization passionately dedicated to promoting, showcasing and building an awareness of the arts and artists whose heritage lies in the Indian subcontinent in the performing arts, visual arts, literary arts and folk arts. IAAC supports all the artistic disciplines in classical, fusion, folk and innovative forms influenced by the arts of India. They work cooperatively with colleagues around the United States to broaden collective audiences and to create a network for shared information, resources and funding. The IAAC’s focus is to help artists and art organizations in North America as well as to facilitate artists from India to exhibit, perform and produce their work in the United States.