



NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2012

Hello everyone!

Apologies for the delayed newsletter. One of the reasons for this is the unusually busy and productive year we've had. So, jumping right in to our recent endeavors...

MONSOON MEDITATIONS AT TRANQUEBAR

In August 2011, the **Danish Arts Council** supported a two-week residency program that brought four Danish and five Indian writers together in Tranquebar, the tiny little port that was Denmark's first colonial outpost on the sub-continent.

A 5-minute film documenting the project can be seen here: [Moonsoon Meditations at Tranquebar](#)

Three hundred years ago, in 1712, Tranquebar became home to one of the earliest printing presses on the sub-continent and this special residency celebrated that moment -- the establishment of print culture as well as the encounter between the Danes and the Indians. **The Neemrana Hotels** hosted us at their gorgeous beachfront property—a restored building that had formerly been the colonial governor's mansion. Our first night there was a full moon and we were treated to dancing phosphorescence on the sea, in this place named for the 'singing waves.' That seemed to set the tone for us all -- after working all day on our own, we came together each evening for readings which were followed by an after hours "Love Stories Club," -- ah, the things we learned about our colleagues! Our Danish friend, **Benn Q. Holm**, hoisted the Indian flag at a local school's



Independence Day celebrations, which gives you some idea of the camaraderie we shared. Apart from all the fun and games, writers at the Monsoon Meditations at Tranquebar have handed in a short piece of writing, which we will publish later this year.

2012 RESIDENCY SEASON

For our regular season, which ran January through March this year, we continued to be located at **Nrityagram**, the dance village outside Bangalore. Our residential facility has officially been re-named Kula, which means family in most Indian languages. We were altogether more settled this time around, things went more smoothly and our legion of human and animal friends continued to expand. Mangala still takes care of us with her unerring good cheer and Gayaz's fleet of taxis has grown bigger. Ramaiah's, the local autorickshaw driver, has been taking people to his house for tea after the ride into Hesaraghatta, the local village. And our trio of canine thugs, Guru, Swamy and Tambi, are still the protective posse on morning and evening walks.

This year, Sangam was able to host as many as nineteen writers over the twelve-week season. For the first time, we had a writer from Sweden and one from Canada. **Pro-Helvetia, the Swiss Arts Council**, was a new partner this year, sending us our first writer from Switzerland. As with previous years, almost all our regular supporters partnered with us -- thank you for your confidence in Sangam House and for your unstinting support.

LEKHANA

In keeping with plans we had made for ourselves at the outset of Sangam House, this year, we organized our first literary festival in Bangalore -- though we preferred to call it a 'literary weekend!' Lekhana (which means 'writing' in most Indian languages) was put together in partnership with three other literary organizations in Bangalore and brought approximately 40 city and Sangam House writers in many languages (English, Hindi,



Kannada, Marathi, Tamil, Danish, French, German, to name a few) to one venue over a weekend. There were readings and literary screenings and performances and panel discussions -- even a poetry slam. Lekhana made a huge splash in the city -- there were about 300 people attending every day. We got a lot of very positive press coverage and there is already great anticipation for it's next edition.

PUBLISHING PROGRAM

It's time to bring out our second multi-lingual Sangam House Reader (supported by the **InKo Centre, Chennai**), which will have contributions from writers who were resident with us in our third and fourth seasons. Additionally, this volume will also contain the Tranquebar pieces so we can look forward to some really varied and exciting holiday reading at the end of the year.

This year marks the beginning of our publishing partnership with **Pratilipi Books** -- together, we hope to facilitate the movement of good writing, through translation and otherwise, across the country. Our first venture in this regard is a bilingual volume of Tamil poetry by four young Tamil women poets translated by the award-winning translator, Lakshmi Holmstrom. The **Kalachavudu Press** joins us in presenting this volume.

UPCOMING SEASON

Would you believe that we're already planning for the next season? The dates are November 3, 2012—January 27, 2013. We've already added a new partners for the upcoming season year – we are proud to be working with the **Singapore Arts Council**, which will help us bring a writer to Sangam House. **The Prakriti Foundation** from Chennai have deepened their partnership with Sangam House, now supporting four writers instead of two, and the **InKo Centre** is also looking at sending us two Korean writers instead of one. They are also working on expanding our exchange program so



that two Indian writers may experience a residency in Korea. We are absolutely thrilled with this vote of confidence from existing partners and equally delighted about our new and potential partners.

NRITYAGRAM IN NYC

One last piece of happy news -- the dancers from the Nrityagram Dance Ensemble are currently on a highly successful and critically acclaimed tour of the U.S. Their joy and their success is our pride, too, even though we missed them terribly in the last four weeks of the season.

Once again, we thank you all for your continuing faith in Sangam House and for your support. As always, we invite you to be our guests any time during the season -- it would be our pleasure to have you with us and to get to know you better.

Very good wishes from all of us,
Arshia Sattar & DW Gibson
www.sangamhouse.org