



December 2021

Per Bloch: Children's book, spoken word album, giles help with translation, Carlos publishing in Brazil (?)

Dear Friends of Sangam House,

We hope this finds all of you safe and healthy during these uncertain times.

Like so many non-profit organizations, Sangam House has fought hard to keep up with its mission during the last year – a second of a global pandemic, which we've all endured on our own terms. We want to take a moment to share with you what our organization and some of our alumni have been able to accomplish in 2021, and let you know what we have in store for the future.

We published the latest reader in March

There is a certain intimacy to every good residency experience, sharing meals and walks and conversing with our colleagues who know what the fight feels like, who know when to encourage each other and how to thoughtfully challenge assumptions. In some ways, the idea of a residency feels endangered in the context of the pandemic—if not permanently then certainly for the foreseeable future. A residency isn't something that can be moved over to Zoom. Facilitating a shared *physical* space is such a big part of nurturing and protecting a writer's time. In some ways, the experience becomes about the time zone, the kitchen and the dinner table, the weather and the bird songs—everything that the writers experience together while pushing through the solitude of writing.

At Sangam House, we remain committed to supporting writers the way we always have but the pandemic has, indeed, demanded some adjustments. Most notably, this year we were not able to invite writers who were not already living in India, as international travel and visa distributions have largely ground to a halt. And there were several required practical changes made for the eight writers who were able to join us this year. These included masks, social distancing, a heck of a lot of hand sanitizing stations, and various other safety contingencies that, while necessary, chip away at how we share space. While these dynamics might alter what Sangam House is able to provide this year, we have come to realize that the opportunity to be with others who are struggling through their own literary endeavours is particularly valuable to the those who have been cooped up in isolation for much of the pandemic.

Sangam House's capacity to respond to the COVID-19 crisis is, in fact, strengthened by our nomadic lifestyle – flexibility is integral to our design; we are inherently nimble without a home of our own. We are grateful to be working with **Trupti Prasad, Veronica Shanthini** and everyone at our



partnering organization, **The Jamun**, to host our thirteenth season. We're happy to announce that Sangam House alumna **Priyanka Sarkar** is filling the role of residency manager this year, with **Pascal Sieger** and **Giles Hazelgrove** continuing to support her work remotely.

Our alumni continue to be showered with honours and awards. Some highlights:

the telugu translation of jayant kaikini's toofan mail (in kannada) was published today
we worked on it i guess in 2019 or 2018

ranganath ramachandra rao was the translator
directly from kannada

volga was the telugu mentor
and jayant, mult-lingual speaker, if not writer
came in for a day long session to discuss details

And today's news is that the same book by Jayant, called No Presents Please, in English, has won the US Literary Translation award. Translated by Tejaswini Niranjana.

Joao Tordo (Award?)

Karen Jennings, *An Island*, long-listed for the Booker Prize

Krupa Ge, *What We Know About Her*, on JCB long list

Jeremy Tiang announced as a juror for the 2022 Booker Prize

Rahul Soni, Publishing Next Industry Awards, Editor of the year

Taran Khan, *Shadow City* won the Stanford Dolman Travel Book of the Year

Ashutosh Bhardwaj won the Declaration of Devishankar Awasthi Award

Rohan Chhetri won a PEN American translation grant

[**Annie Zaidi**, **Ram Ganesh Kamathem** and **Taran Khan** won Tata Literature Live! Awards. Zaidi was also short-listed for the JCB Prize for Literature. **Ashutosh Bhardwaj** was short listed for a Tata Literature Live! Award and won the Atta Galatta-Bangalore Literature Festival Book Prize for nonfiction. **Caroline Brothers'** novel *The Memory Stones* was shortlisted for the Eyelands Book Award for fiction, and **Neal Hall** was nominated for the same award in the poetry category. **Rohini Mohan** won the Chameli Devi Jain Award for Outstanding Women Mediapersons and **Namwali Serpell's** novel *The Old Drift* won the Arthur C. Clarke Award. **Perumal Murugan** was again short-listed for the National Book Award in the translated novel category and **Bijal Vachharajani** won the Auther Award for best children's author, while **Sharanya Manivannan** was shortlisted for the Hindu Prize in the fiction category. And finally, **Rahul Soni**, an alumnus who has been integral to Sangam's administrative operations for the past several years was recently profiled in FirstPost; he reflects on his role as senior editor at HarperCollins, where he has worked on several critically acclaimed and prizewinning books, including a new title out this year from our very own **Arshia Sattar**.]



As for publications, the list is too bountiful to enumerate! New books from alumni this year include titles from

Nabina Das, edited *Witness*, a poetry collection focused on the topic of dissent.

A Map of Longings, Manan Kapoor

The Rock Eaters, Brenda Peynado

Sing of Life, Priya Sarukkai Chabria

The House Next to the Factory, Sonal Kohli

The Library of the Dead, T.L. Huchu

Title tk, Prashant Bagad

Perumal?

[**Anita Roy, Uttaran Das Gupta, Sanjay Kumar, Saubhik De Sarkar, Priyanka Sarkar, João Tordo, Usha Rajagopalan, Claus Ankersen, Sudeep Aadil-Aman Almitra, Anandh Krishna and Maxim Loskutoff.**]

We couldn't carry on with our residency or translation work if it weren't for all of our wonderful sponsors—so many of whom have been supporting our work for more than a decade. Our heartfelt thanks to **Kalpana Raina** and **The Aditi Foundation, Samir Gandhi, Bronwen Bledsoe, Rachel Saltz, Laurie Patton, the InKo Centre in Chennai, The Reed Foundation, Toto Funds the Arts, The Prakriti Foundation, Neeraj Nevatia, Bhoomija, The Nambisan Foundation**, as well as **Jake Short** and **The Kathleen Brooks Family Foundation**.

We are also happy to announce that friends of the late poet **Margaret Mascarenhas** have established the **Fireflies Fellowship** at Sangam House in her memory, while the **Prasad family** has created the **Ammi Fellowship** for writing in Indian languages.

Lastly, we're happy to announce that **Sangam House Reader Vol. VI** will be available early in the new year. This volume will feature work from our alumni in seasons 11 and 12. We will be sending copies to all of those contributors, as well as to all our financial sponsors. If you do not fit into either of those categories and would like to be sent a copy, please let us know.

We thank everyone for continuing to support Sangam House, through your donations, counsel and engagement. We rely on you as part of our broader community to keep the work going.

Here's to making 2021 a year full of good health, cooperation and understanding.

With continued good wishes,

Arshia Sattar, DW Gibson and Rahul Soni