TO COMMEMORATE THE

55th anniversary

OF THE INDEPENDENCE AND THE **31** st ANNIVERSARY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS





President's Fund for Creative Writing, Under the aegis of the Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage

7th Floor, Renganaden Seeneevassen Building, Cnr Pope Hennessy and Maillard Streets, Port Louis. Tel: 2122112

To educate a person in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society.

Writers can pave the way for a new generation of people with innovative ideas.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

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Published by:

The President's Fund for Creative Writing, under the aegis of the Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage, Port Louis.

Printed by:

Bahadoor Printing Ltd.

YEAR: 2023







I believe that the means to encourage a flowering in the neglected inner lives of children will always be exposure to Literature and Arts

DAISAKU IKEDA BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHER

PFCW

A UNIQUE ENTITY UNDER THE AEGIS

of the

MINISTRY OF ARTS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

for the

PROMOTION AND PROPAGATION OF MAURITIAN LITERATURE

"Make an empty space in any corner of your mind, and

Creativity
will instantly fill it"

The greatness of an artist is measured by the balance the writer maintains between the value of creation and the values of humanity.

ALBERT CAMUS



55th ANNIVERSARY

OF THE INDEPENDENCE AND THE **3 1** st

ANNIVERSARY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

With a great sense of belonging,
Greater feelings of patriotism,
Dedication to the motherland,
In the name of Mauritian Literature
On behalf of all Mauritian authors

From the President's Fund For Creative Writing,

"under the aegis" of the

Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage,

Republic of Mauritius



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REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

HIS EXCELLENCY
THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF MAURITIUS

Message of His Excellency Prithvirajsing Roopun G.C.S.K

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

It is my immense pleasure to convey my best wishes to the whole team of the President's Fund for Creative Writing on the publication of this Souvenir Magazine in the context of the commemoration of the 55th anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Mauritius.

The President's Fund for Creative Writing operating under the aegis of the Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage was set up to promote, propagate and preserve the creative writings in all languages written and spoken in Mauritius. We are blessed that Mauritius is home to many ancestral languages which are given due recognition. Incentives are also given to encourage and assist Mauritian writers wishing to publish their work whatever the languages.

Creative writing comes in many forms, encompassing a number of genres and styles and is expressive of oneself. We need to encourage students from an early age to explore their imagination and express them confidently, both orally and through creative writing, in a world where texts messages and emojis are becoming so common.

As Sylvia Plath, American poet, novelist, and short-story writer once said: "Everything in life is writable about if you have the outgoing guts to do it, and the imagination to improvise. The worst enemy to creativity is self-doubt."

I congratulate all authors who, over the years, have been, with the support of the Fund, publishing their work. I also commend the Chairperson and members of the Fund for their dedication in the promotion of local writings for the benefit and progress of Mauritian literature.

Prithwirajsing Roopun, G. C. S. K

President of the Republic of Mauritius







REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS
MINISTRY OF ARTS AND CULTURAL
HERITAGE

Message of Hon Avinash Teeluck, Minister of Arts and Cultural Heritage

At the very outset, I would like to commend the President's Fund for Creative Writing for organizing activities to promote creative writings. As Mauritius is home to many languages, the President's Fund For Creative Writing is an excellent platform for all creative writers to publish their books in any language, thus giving them due recognition.

Creative writing conveys the world in meaningful and honest ways. Creative writers help us explore the human experience and advocate for a better society. As Mauritius is a multi-cultural country, creative writing helps promote cultural identity and integration, hence stimulating a nationalized sense of pride.

As we celebrate the 55th Anniversary of the Independence of our Republic, the Government is dedicated to provide continuous initiatives in favor of our deserving local writers. It is indeed encouraging that creative writing has been a powerful medium through which many of our writers have spread and instilled the spirit of patriotism in the hearts of our fellow Mauritians.

Thus, as the National Day is a time to reflect upon our achievements as a nation, I urge more Mauritian authors to support creative writing.

I wish the President's Fund For Creative Writing all the best in their future endeavors.

Hon Avinash Teeluck, Minister of Arts and Cultural Heritage March 2023









REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

MINISTRY OF ARTS AND CULTURAL
HERITAGE

Message of Dr [Mrs] Anitah Aujayeb

CHAIRPERSON, PRESIDENT'S FUND FOR CREATIVE WRITING

As Chairperson of the President's Fund for Creative Writing, I welcome this year's magazine of this unique unit, under the aegis of the Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage, in the literary world of Mauritius.

I dedicate the following lines to all those readers who will, one day or another, open this magazine for some pleasurable reading

Creativity is the greatest experience of liberty"

And

"Creativity is just connecting things

The spatial area of the writer is unfathomable and utterly vast and as far as his creative skills are concerned, the sky is the limit; hence he experiences nothing but liberty while connecting souls and lives, nature and divine entities, thoughts and feelings. But once the connection is done, words have sprouted

on paper; the book has taken shape, the writer needs helping hands. It is here then that the President's Fund For Creative Writing comes into action by providing the timely help and support. The books are published free of cost and put on the market for the joy of readers.

We have had the pleasure to publish many books of Mauritian writers in the past years and we have big dreams for the future too. My only wish is that my team and I can work harder everyday to serve this noble cause in a better way.

My plea to all readers here will be to give due consideration and respect to Mauritian literature by buying maximum books of Mauritian writers. The President's Fund For Creative Writing team is doing its utmost to upgrade, promote and propagate our local literature; it is up to the reading society to do the rest.

With my best wishes

Dr[Mrs] Anitah Aujayeb Chairperson, President's Fund for Creative Writing Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage





The Role of Speaking Unions on the Board of The President's Fund For Creative Writing

The Finance and Audit Regulations 2001 stipulated that the President's Fund for Creative Writing in English stood for works written in English only.

Hence, everything was geared towards helping writers, who wrote in English only, with the help of institutions which worked for the promotion and welfare of the English language.

The Finance and Audit Act 2010 opened the President's Fund for Creative Writing to all languages spoken and written in Mauritius and the appellation knew an important change.

Since then, it is known as the President's Fund for Creative Writing.

Existing Speaking Unions then sent representatives to sit on the board of the President's Fund For Creative Writing, namely English, Tamil, Urdu, Telugu, Hindi and Marathi.

They are here to see that Literature in their own languages is well promoted and preserved for the future generations.

Speaking Unions set up after 2010 are not represented on the President's Fund for Creative Writing board as a major amendment to the Finance and Audit Act 2010 is needed for that.

We are pleased to say that work towards the relevant amendment has started. However, we have already published books coming from these Speaking Unions.

The representatives of the various Speaking Unions on board ensure that the work of the President's Fund For Creative Writing is done in all integrity and great professionalism, for the promotion and propagation of Mauritian Literature, as per the guidelines, mission and vision of this institution.

We do not learn from experience, we learn from reflecting on experience. And Literature allows you to do that

JOHN DEWEY, AMERICAN REFORMER





MINISTRY OF ARTS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

7th Floor, Renganaden Seeneevassen Building, Port Louis.

DR (MRS.) A. AUJAYEB Chairperson	MRS. S. TOOLSY Office Management Executive, Office of the President	Dr. R KORLAPU-BUNGAREE Representative, English Speaking Union
MRS A. SAHEBALLY JAUHANGEER Principal Culture Officer, Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage	DR O. N. GANGOO Chairperson, Hindi Speaking Union	MRS A. MALLOO Representative, Marathi Speaking Union
MS. S. RAMPROSAND Analyst / Senior Analyst Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning & Development	MRS. N. A. BHOLAH Office Managemnt Assistant, Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage. (Secretary)	MR. B BENNY Manager, Financial Operations, Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage
MR. A. DAMREE Representative, Urdu Speaking Union	MR S. NARAYANA PILLAI Representative, Tamil Speaking Union	DR R. APPADOO Representative, Telugu Speaking Union
MR D MAUNTHROOA, From the English Speaking Union	MRS H ROJOA, Analyst / Senior Analyst Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning & Development	MRS U SOHAR-BOOLAKY, Assistant Permanent Secretary Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science & Technology

MR K. DAWORAZ, Culture Officer, Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage*

Celebrating a 55th anniversary

On this defining, all-signifying occasion, with the national mood at its epitome, one and all rallying to commemoratively mark half a fulfilling century and five years in addition, it is most salutary and fitting to chalk up the signal strides of progress made, the many facets enhanced and transformed, and in the process the many lives bettered, in qualities and longevities, in ways importantly new and unique, with visions boldly reaffirmed, revamped, even re-imagined, fresh challenges to embrace, freedom from the fetters of inchoate history, from the constraining years, again celebrated, ahead of more days of glories, and braver futures to toil towards in unison, in the venerable name of a nation in its noble mission to its apogee aspiring in full optimism.

©Jeewan Ramlugun

Mauritian-born UK Resident Author, Poet, Historian 7 October 2022

Copens begin in delight and end in wisdom...



Ile Maurice, Mon île, Ma Préférée

inquante-cinq ans depuis que l'île Maurice a acquis son indépendance! Que de chemins parcourus par toute la nation mauricienne depuis ce jour inoubliable du 12 mars 1968 où Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, le Premier Ministre, faisait monter et flotter très haut notre quadricolore – rouge, bleu, jaune, vert – dans le ciel Port-louisien pendant que la foule réunie au Champ de Mars entendait et reprenait en chœur, pour la première fois, notre hymne national, « Glory to thee, Motherland, O Motherland of mine ».

La route a été longue, parfois semée d'embûches, pour arriver à ce que notre pays est aujourd'hui : un pays moderne et dynamique – le premier pays émergent du continent africain – où la chance est donnée à chacun et à chacune de ses citoyens de recevoir une éducation gratuite, d'avoir accès tout aussi gratuitement à un service de santé, qui d'une manière générale, n'a rien à envier à ceux des autres grands pays du monde, et de bénéficier de généreuses prestations sociales et de pensions universelles qui garantissent un minimum vital à chaque famille mauricienne.

S'il est vrai, hélas, qu'il y a des poches de pauvreté dans quelques régions de notre pays, que certains de nos compatriotes se considèrent comme les laissés-pour-compte du développement exceptionnel que connaît notre pays ces dernières années, je suis convaincue qu'avec les efforts de tout un peuple uni qui sait oublier ses différences pour vivre son appartenance à une même mère-patrie, ce jour viendra où tous les Mauriciens se sentiront fiers d'être nés et de vivre à l'île Maurice, où seront chantés avec bonheur, avec le cœur, ces merveilleux mots, « Glory to thee, Motherland, O Motherland of mine. » Ce pays qui est le mien, le tien, le vôtre, le nôtre – fêtons-le dignement!

Moi, je l'aime, mon île Maurice! Et je lui dédie, en ce jour où elle fête son cinquante-cinquième printemps d'indépendance, de liberté, un sonnet qui lui dit tout simplement qu'elle sera toujours, même quand je suis loin d'elle..

Ma préférée

J'aurais beau parcourir tous les pays du monde J'aurais beau découvrir des endroits merveilleux J'aurais beau rencontrer d'autres gens plus heureux C'est toi, ma préférée, à chaque heure et seconde.

J'aurais beau connaître des terres plus fécondes J'aurais beau entendre des chants moins douloureux J'aurais beau prendre goût aux parfums capiteux C'es toi, ma préférée, car ta clarté m'inonde.

Ma petite île Maurice, elle, qui m'a vu naître, Est un livre d'histoire offert par le grand Maître. J'aurais beau le fermer, tourner toutes ses pages, Je ne peux m'empêcher de l'ouvrir à nouveau Pour retrouver encore, au bord d'autres rivages, Les chapitres écrits qui, pour moi, restent beaux.

ÉLIETTE COMARMONDMauritian Writer and Poet

To read is to voyage through time...

CSAGAN



Fostering Values by the PRESIDENT'S FUND FOR CREATIVE WRITING

Under the aegis of the Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage, President's Fund for Creative Writing's laudable aim is to pave Mutual understanding by propagating And preserving creative writing.

Thus, written and spoken languages enhancing To foster values and enriching
Our cultural heritage for future generations,
If not for eons.

The Mauritian artists are supported with funds,
Authors too are given assistance,
What with manuscripts' reading, assessing and editing,
Under professionals of high calibre's supervision,
Passing through the controlling panels' cross-examination.
More expenses are incurred in printing.
Finally, when this is all done, it is followed by launching
After which the artist or writer, brim-full with happiness
Handles the cherished oeuvre, in all joyousness.

All done free of cost for the writers or artists, again
The Ministry works with might and main,
Organising book festivals thus, facilitating sales.
The interested readers can then purchase
The works of Mauritian writers at lower rates,
And this process, all-round development generates,
With regular knowledge imbibing,
Through the noble culture of reading.

And reading acts as mental stimulation,
Being as good as a panacea for desperation.

Instead of leading to confusion or probably to dementia,
Reading transports us to other realms, reducing inertia.





Making our tensions drain away, Allowing us from worries to stay away, Ultimately bringing much good, With high elevation of mood. Besides, books arouse new interests,

With knowledge of different cultures and their quests
Enabling personal and societal harmony to radiate best.
They never fail to boost self-confidence,
Creating readiness to face challenges, bringing resilience,
Emitting optimism, serenity, and surely
Creating a wonderful serendipity,

While lending a hand to face life with assiduity.

President's Fund for Creative Writing is thus a crucial role playing
In the process of Mauritian writers globally radiating,
And evolving socially, politically, culturally, intellectually,
Using their talents to the best of their ability.

Making our paradisiacal island shine with literary productivity, Honouring our land of rainbows, and shooting stars jubilant in unity, In harmony with its surpassing pristine beauty, Leading to universal acknowledgement of our writers in fraternity.

©PUSHMAOTEE SUBRUN

MAURITIAN AUTHOR

A Poet is born, not made







Message of
Darmalingum Kandasamy
(Kevin) Pather

PRESIDENT, ENGLISH SPEAKING UNION-MAURITIUS

Let us be creative. A resurrected Voltaire is mulling over the relevance of the President's Fund for Creative Writing instead of God. He aptly concludes: "If President's Fund For Creative Writing did not exist, it would be necessary to invent it." Had such a prolific creative writer and philosopher known the linguistic pluralism of Mauritius, he would have voluntarily tweaked his own famous quotation about God - at least for the sake of Mauritian literature.

With no less than 12 languages still alive and kicking - and despite its relatively small size and population - Mauritius may legitimately pride itself on its linguistic diversity. Crucially, the President's Fund For Creative Writing caters for the unity of this diversity. It places all these languages on the same footing and provides a welcome fillip for creativity among local writers.

In year 2000, the President's Fund For Creative Writing was set up to promote creative writing in English language. The English-Speaking Union understandably became its closest collaborator. However, in July 2010 - thanks to some judicious decision-making - the President's Fund For Creative Writing incarnated into a wide-ranging entity. Indeed, under the Fund, new regulations were made to also preserve and propagate creative writings of other languages written and spoken in Mauritius.

Since then - surprisingly perhaps -the ESU-President's Fund For Creative Writing cordial working relationship has grown even stronger. The reason is simple. The ESU ought to be true to its mission: to promote English by creating understanding and building bridges. No wonder, over the years, several ESU members have been active contributors within the President's Fund For Creative Writing. In an increasingly globalized world, English represents the 'lingua franca' among people of diverse backgrounds.

As a neutral and bridge language, English positions itself as the ideal means of communication



for people to work and live together for a better world. This has become a truism.

As ESU President, I am glad to be associated with the President's Fund For Creative Writing 2023 Souvenir Magazine.

The Chairperson of the President's Fund For Creative Writing and its members have our best wishes in their laudable mission. One essential component of a country's culture is its literature. Mauritian literature looks like a rivetingly inviting garden with flowers of diverse types, colours and sizes. The President's Fund For Creative Writing has the privilege and responsibility of guarding, watering, and nurturing it. Today, nobody can reasonably imagine our country without an institution like the President's Fund For Creative Writing. That is why a contemporary Voltaire would have been more than delighted to provide a variant of his well-known quotation about God. He would have readily acknowledged the pivotal role of the President's Fund For Creative Writing in unleashing local literary talents and - by ricochet - buttressing Mauritian culture.

Creating Global Understanding Through English

[MOTTO OF THE ESU]



A book is a gift you can open again and again...

G KEILLOR







Message of
Anwarally Dustmahomed
PRESIDENT - URDU SPEAKING UNION

It is always a matter of great privilege and immense pleasure to be associated with the publication of a souvenir magazine. I commend the effort of all those involved in this project.

Having myself been a board member of the President's Fund For Creative Writing for the past few years, I acknowledge the laudable work being carried out by the Fund despite all hurdles on the way. Mauritius is a blessed country, with approximately a dozen written and spoken languages of which Urdu is an undeniable part. The Urdu Speaking Union (USU) has left no stone unturned in the promotion and propagation of this beautiful and lyrical language across the island but as the saying goes in Urdu 'khub se khubtar ki talaash' translated as: in search of the best amongst the best, I believe there is still a long way ahead.

Today at the dawn of our 55th Independence anniversary, we find in retrospection that the National Urdu Institute – a benevolent socio-cultural organisation founded just two years after the independence by an enthusiastic group of Urdu speaking Mauritians and Urdu lovers – remains the driving force which has paved the way for the propagation of Urdu language and culture across the island. The USU is trying to follow in the footsteps, supported by all the facilities provided by the government.

It is obvious that with time new challenges arise and we have to be prepared for them. One of the main challenges that keep arising is the absence of a reading culture, especially among our young generation – an issue for all other languages in Mauritius as well. Efforts, although being made at different levels to instill reading as a fundamental culture in the Mauritian society, remain inadequate. I appeal to all Speaking Unions to work in collaboration in view of enhancing reading in respective languages.

Though languages and cultures differ, our aim remains the same: fostering harmony and unity in Mauritius and this cannot be achieved without our ancestral languages and cultures. Indeed, we are indebted to the promoters of these languages and cultures, who by their indefatigable efforts have so far safeguarded the beauty within the diversity of our multicultural society.

Books enable the children to view the past, use the experience for the present and dream for the future.

- A.P.J ABDUL KALAM -







Message of

Dr O.N.Gangoo, G.O.S.K, Arya Ratna

PRESIDENT HINDI SPEAKING UNION

The setting up of the President's Fund for Creative Writing is a laudable initiative. It enables authors, playwrights and poets to give expression to their thoughts in all the languages which are written and spoken in Mauritius.

The Fund comes as a great help to anyone who wields the pen with felicity. Many Hindi writers have seized this opportunity to publish their works which have been accepted by the executive committee free of charge.

Hindi, during the Pre-Independence period was taught mainly in 'Baitkas' by Sanatanists and Arya Samajists. The important role played by Pandit Cashinath Kistoe, Pandit Benimadho Sutteeram, Pandit Ramavad Sharma and the Bhagat family of Montagne Longue cannot be consigned to oblivion. The 'Arya Paropkarini Sabha', the 'Arya Pratinidhi Sabha' and the 'Hindi Pracharini Sabha' have played a stellar role in the propagation of Hindi in our island during this period. When Prof. Basdeo Bissoondoyal returned to Mauritius after completing his studies in India, he gave a boost to Hindi through the 'JAN ANDOLAN', so did Jay Narain Roy in the thirties and O.S. Geerjanand through the Hindi Pracharini Sabha.

With the advent of Independence, a new impetus was given to Hindi. Besides, the Government ran primary schools, Hindi was taught in the secondary schools. Then, it was available at the University level. Graduate and later Post Graduate courses were run by the Mahatma Gandhi Institute in collaboration with the University of Mauritius.

The AryaSabha Mauritius, for its part, had set up the Rishi Dayanand Institute at Pailles. Graduate and Post-Graduate courses in Hindi were run there, too, in collaboration with the Kurukshetra University.

Prior to the setting up of these two institutions, Mauritians studied Hindi in Indian Universities. On the occasion of the 55th anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Mauritius, it behoves us to mention that the corpus of literary works in Hindi is consequent. It covers all genres including travelogues.

The works of our Hindi writers are prescribed by the Cambridge Examination Syndicate for the S.C and H.S.C examinations.

Hindi has travelled a long way from the "Baitka" to the University.









Message of

E. Nagapen

CHAIRPERSON OF THE TAMIL SPEAKING UNION

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to be part of this laudable project of launching this souvenir magazine on the occasion of the 55th anniversary of the independence of our beloved country. My predecessor, Dr P. Tiroumalechetty, OSK, embraced the cause espoused by the President's fund for creative writing. In fact he motivated many educators and Tamil language lovers to write short stories to portray the realities of our Mauritian society.

As the new Chairperson, I will continue in this venture of inspiring our young generation to motivate them to write and enlighten our youngsters.

Though we have made lot of progress in many fields whereby our country is cited as a model to be followed, we are witnessing a continuous and alarming erosion of our ancestral values. It is imperative that the President's Fund For Creative Writing, together with all Speaking Unions ponder on this issue, and address it by bringing out literary creations which exemplify our values and at the same time bringing an awareness in our society.

Our writings should elevate the minds of our youngsters. They should be the torchbearers to this generation which is sadly groping in the darkness of ignorance and materialism.

The new TSU board will cooperate fully with the President's Fund For Creative Writing to achieve its objectives.

Long live the Republic of Mauritius!

There is no friend as loyal as a book. >>

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Message of
Niteen Bappoo

Humble Greetings to you all.

It is indeed a great honour for the Marathi Speaking Union to be part of this souvenir magazine launched by the President's Fund For Creative Writing. On behalf of all members of the Marathi Speaking Union, I extend my good wishes to all our fellow Mauritian citizens on the occasion of the 55th anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Mauritius.

MARATHI SPEAKING UNION

Over the years, the President's Fund For Creative Writing has become a highly instrumental institution in connecting the multi-cultural and multi-linguistic society together through our Mauritian literature. Through the various publications, platforms and aids brought forward by the President's Fund For Creative Writting, our local authors and poets are securing various opportunities to showcase their writing skills and talents.

In 2016, the Marathi Speaking Union in collaboration with the President's Fund For Creative Writing launched "Prerna"- a collection of 23 Marathi poems written by our local poets. This publication has been enthusiastically acclaimed and no doubt inspired the authors and poets into more creative writings. We certainly look forward for likewise joint ventures in the future. The Marathi Speaking Union, represented by Mrs. A. Malloo on the board of the President's Fund For Creative Writing, will also continuously provide its assistance and support.

On behalf of the Marathi Speaking Union, let me congratulate the President's Fund For Creative Writing for all the excellent works accomplished and extend my good wishes to the Chairperson and Board Members for all their future endeavours.

Long Live our Mauritian Authors & Poets!
Long Live our Mauritian Literature!
Long Live our Republic of Mauritius!

Heartfelt Thanks and Kind Regards.





L'univers Du Livre

Beaucoup de questions posées
Qu'est-ce qu'un livre?
Comment choisir ses livres?
C'est quoi la littérature?
Pourquoi étudier la littérature? A quelles fins?
C'est quoi la littérature Mauricienne?
Au nom des auteurs Mauriciens, le Ministère des Arts et du Patrimoine Culturel essaie de vous donner des réponses par le biais du President's Fund for Creative Writing.
Mesdames et Messieurs, on vous invite à visiter l'univers du livre.

Laissez vous séduire, laissez vous convaincre de notre ambition, vision et mission de vous aider et de répondre à vos urgences et exigences. Tous vos textes créatifs, rédigés dans toutes les langues parlées et écrites à Maurice, sont les bienvenus chez nous.

Tous les genres littéraires qui sont représentés sous notre bannière : Roman, Poésie, Théâtre, Nouvelle, Contes, sont l'occasion pour les écrivains d'exprimer leur point de vue et d'évoquer leurs souvenirs, ainsi nous essayons d'encourager la création personnelle.

L'équipe du President's Fund For Creative Writing a alors la rude tâche de choisir avec le plus grand soin, des exercices appelés au sens de l'observation et à la créativité, avec l'emphase sur, le résumé, les richesses du vocabulaire, l'approche du texte, l'organisation, des objectifs bien précis, la variété, le titre, la présentation et beaucoup d'autres ambigüités du schéma narratif et créatif.

Notre univers de livres alors, vous fait découvrir le livre purement mauricien, les langues du patrimoine mauricien, les personnages mauriciens venant des meilleures plumes mauriciennes.

On vous demande simplement de les lire, de les acheter, d'en faire des cadeaux, de les ranger dans votre bibliothèque, d'en faire votre livre de chevet, d'enfouir un dans votre sac de travail, bref d'en faire un ami, un vrai!

Ce petit geste venant de vous apportera un sourire à un écrivain qui vous bénira.

Dr (Mrs) Anitah Aujayeb

Chairperson, President's Fund For Creative Writing

A room without books is like a body without a soul...

CICERO



About Our First Magazine 2019

A Souvenir Magazine of the President's Fund For Creative Writing was issued in the year 2019. This venture was a success, truly, as it was the First magazine to be published in the history of the President's Fund For Creative Writing.

500 copies of the magazine were distributed freely to almost all parastatal bodies, as well as to authors, during book launches organised by the President's Fund For Creative Writing.

The magazine comprised messages from the Patron of the President's Fund For Creative Writing, the then Acting President of the Republic, Mr Barlen Vyapoory as well as the then Minister of Arts and Culture, Mr P. Roopun along with relevant poems and articles

The key article on Creative Writing came from Dr Prakash Joshi, from the University of Sagar Delhi, India, who happened to be our chief guest during a conference on creative writing organised by the President's Fund For Creative Writing, at the Labourdonnais Waterfront Hotel, Port Louis.

This magazine was a first but was well acclaimed by each and everyone.





A BRIEF ON PRESIDENT'S FUND FOR CREATIVE WRITING

BACKGROUND

In July 2010, new regulations cited as the President's Fund for Creative Writing Regulations 2010 gazetted under Section 24 of the Finance and Audit Act, to provide for the scope of the President's Fund for Creative Writing in English to be extended to other languages written and spoken in Mauritius.

The said Regulation provides for the Fund to be administered and managed by a Committee. The President's Fund For Creative Writing operates under the aegis of the Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage

VISION

To promote, propagate and preserve the creative writings in all languages written and spoken in Mauritius.

MISSION:

- to provide an appropriate forum to Mauritian writers to fulfil their educational, cultural and artistic aspirations, through creative writing.
- to encourage and assist deserving Mauritian writers by publishing their works.

OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of the Fund are:

- to finance Schemes to encourage and assist deserving Mauritian writers wishing to have their creative writings published.
- the promotion of creative writing in all languages written and spoken in Mauritius,
- the organisation of workshops at national level for Mauritian writers, with local and international expertise and support;
- •the organisation of workshops and forums in creative writing, in collaboration with the Mauritius Institute of Education and other

Governmental organisations, for writers, trainee teachers and students of primary, secondary and tertiary sectors;

- the organization of Essay competitions, short story writing competitions and other literary activities., and
- the setting up of a network among educational institutions in Mauritius to promote creative writing in all genres.

PROFILE:

The Fund is administered and managed by a Committee composed of:

- a Chairperson;
- a representative of the Office of the President;
- a representative of the Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage;
- a representative from the Ministry of Finance;
- a representative from the Ministry of Education;
- a representative of the English Speaking Union established under the English Speaking Union Act;
- a representative of the Hindi Speaking Union established under the Hindi Speaking Union Act;
- a representative of the Marathi Speaking Union established under the Marathi Speaking Union Act 2008;
- a representative of the Tamil Speaking Union established under the Tamil Speaking Union Act 2008:
- a representative of the Telugu Speaking Union established under the Telugu Speaking Union Act 2008;
- a representative of the Urdu Speaking Union established under the Urdu Speaking Union Act 2008;
- •an officer of the Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage who serves as Secretary of the Fund
- an officer of the Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage who serves as Finance Manager of the Fund.



Main Activities of The President's Fund For Creative Writing throughout the Year

The President's Fund for Creative Writing has as mission and vision, the promotion and propagation of Mauritian Literature.

The President's Fund For Creative Writing is open to all languages written and spoken in Mauritius. Writers of the various languages opt for either one of the two schemes proposed namely, Financial Assistance or publication of their work by the President's Fund For Creative Writing.

A pool of Readers and Editors of the President's Fund For Creative Writing have the challenging task to select/approve/read/proof read and edit the manuscript to get it ready for publication. We also deem it fit to organise an annual workshop for our Readers and Editors, a sort of refresher course, where all rules and regulations are repeated and we make sure that readers are on the right track.

Writers opting for financial assistance are able to have the cheque, only after they have delivered eight copies of their published book, having the logo of the President's Fund For Creative Writing visibly inserted.

We are also in the habit of organising Poetry and Short Story Writing competitions for schools as well as for the general public.

Finally, we always have a launch of books published by the President's Fund For Creative Writing, almost every year.

As from February 2023, the President's Fund For Creative Writing is proposing to revise the Financial Grant scheme.

All authors will be hereby informed.

A new application form is being prepared in this context, where all modalities will be explained.



People say "What advice do you have for people who want to be writers. I say They don't really need advice; they know they want to be writers, they are cut out for it and they know it 99

R L STYNE



Workshop for Readers and Editors 2020



Workshop for Readers and Editors

The President's Fund For Creative Writing regulaly holds workshops intended for the pool of Readers and Editors working for this organisation.

Unfortunately, we could not hold any workshop lately, due to the Covid 19 pandemic, associated with stringent confinement conditions.

Our pool comprises readers in all languages written and spoken in Mauritius.

This pool was set up following an advertisement in the newspapers. The readers were selected on the basis of their experience and qualifications in the fields of publishing or writing of books.

Our last workshop dates to the year 2020 and was held at the Hennessy Park Hotel, Ebene. This exercise met with tremendous success, with the help of one and all.



MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS 2021/2022

ONLINE POETRY WRITING COMPETITION

The President's Fund For Creative Writing organised an online Poetry Writing Competition, to pay tribute to late Mauritian Poet, Edouard Maunick, in all languages written and spoken in Mauritius.

This activity was well acclaimed, and some 100 participants submitted their entries.

A panel of adjudicators was set up for all the languages concerned.

22 winning entries were awarded cash prizes and sets of books published by the Fund.

All participants were handed a certificate of participation.

Guests of the day included the former Director of Culture, Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage, late Mr Islam Bhugan and the Lord Mayor, of the Municipal Council of Port Louis Mr M. M Cadersaib, among other dignitaries.

The Award Ceremony was held at the City Hall, Municipal Council of Port Louis on 21st October 2021.



Participants of the Poetry Writing Competition, with Mrs A D Poreema, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage





Chairperson of the President's Fund For Creative Writing, with the Lord Mayor of the Municipal Council of Port Louis Mr M. M Cadersaib, and the then Director of Culture at the Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage, late Mr I. Bhugan



Vice President of the English Speaking Union, Dr Rajendra Korlapu-Bungaree, addressing the audience as Master of Ceremony



Late Mr I. Bhugan, the then Director of Culture at the Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage, addressing the audience



First Prize winner in English, Mr Rajeev Auchambit, being awarded by Mrs A. D Poreema, Deputy Permanent Secretary.



First Prize winner in French, Mr Jean Francois Achille, being awarded by Mrs A. D Poreema, Deputy Permanent Secretary.





First Prize Winner in Hindi, Mrs Nivedita Bhoolaton being awarded by Miss S. Ramprosand, President's Fund For Creative Writing Board Member



First Prize Winner in Marathi, Mr R. Malloo, being awarded by the Lord Mayor of the Municipal Council of Port Louis, Mr M. M. Cadersaib



First Prize Winner in Creole, Mr K Karupudayyan, being awarded by Chairperson, President's Fund For Creative Writing, Dr A. Aujayeb



First Prize Winner in Telugu, Dr Mrs Rajwantee Dhaliah, being awarded by the Lord Mayor of the Municipal Council of Port Louis, Mr M. M Cadersaib



First Prize Winner in Bhojpuri, Dr M. Kashinath, being awarded by Dr A. Aujayeb, Chairperson, President's Fund For Creative Writing,



First Prize Winner in Tamil being awarded by late Mr I. Bhugan, the then Director of Culture





Felicitations by Chairperson, President's Fund For Creative Writing to the then Director of Culture, late Mr I. Bhugan



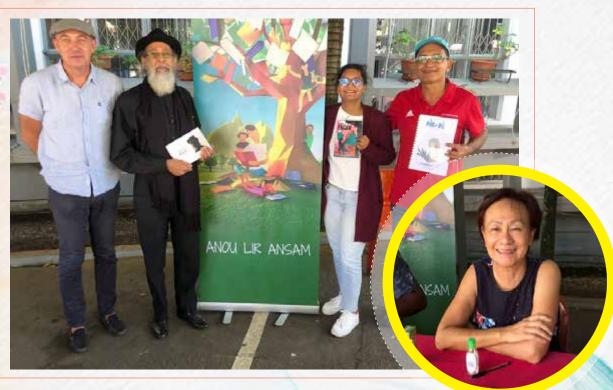
Certificate awarded to a participant by Board member, President's Fund For Creative Writing, Mr A. Dustmahomed



Felicitations by the Chairperson, President's Fund For Creative Writing to the Lord Mayor of the Municipal Council of Port Louis, Mr M. M Cadersaib

World Book Day

Four Authors who had benefitted from the Financial Assistance Scheme of the President's Fund For Creative Writing were present on the Municipal Grounds of Quatre Bornes, in a Book Fair, in the context of the World Book Day held on the 21st of April 2022. This activity was a joint programme of the Municipality of Quatre Bornes and the ONG entitled **ANOU LIRE ENSAM**.



The Organiser with 4 Authors who benefitted from the President's Fund For Creative Writing's assistance [from left to right: Mr John Nielsen, Mr Ismet Ganti, Miss Nawsheen Goolam Hossen, Mr Cyril Luximan, Mrs Margaret Li Yin]



LAUNCH OF BOOKS

Five books of Mauritian authors, published by the President's Fund For Creative Writing in the year 2021/2022 were launched at the City Hall of the Municipal Council of Port Louis, on 11th of May 2022.

The Minister of Arts and Cultural Heritage, Honourable Avinash Teeluck, did the honours as the Chief Guest of the day.

The Lord Mayor of the Municipal Council of Port Louis, Mr M. M Cadersaib also attended the event, among other dignitaries.



Director of Culture, Mr V. N. Boodhun , Chairperson, PFCW, Dr A. Aujayeb , The Minister of Arts and Cultural Heritage, Honourable Avinash Teeluck and Deputy Permanent Secretary, Mrs N. Payneeandy





Minister of Arts and Cultural Heritage, Honourable A. Teeluck , addressing the audience



Author, Mrs P. Subrun, with her book entitled "From Dreams to Reality"



Minister of Arts and Cultural Heritage, Honourable Avinash Teeluck, as Chief Guest of the day



Author, Mr T. Domun, with his novel entitled "I am Silly"





Author, Mr M. Chowa, with his book in French " Un Arc en Ciel en quête D'arcs-boutants"



Author, Mr J. Poonit, with his book in Hindi "Updesha<mark>mrit"</mark>



Author, Mr I. Ganti, with his book in French"Poésies"



Donation of books to the Honourable Minister, by Miss S. Ramprosand, Board member, President's Fund For Creative Writing



Felicitations to the Lord Mayor of the Municipal Council of Port Louis, by Miss S. Ramprosand, Board member, President's Fund For Creative Writing



Photo Souvenir

- The Minister of Arts and Cultural Heritage,
- The Lord Mayor of the Municipal Council of Port Louis,
- Chairperson of the President's Fund For Creative Writing,
 - · And authors

Books are a uniquely portable magic...

STEPHEN KING



ONLINE POETRY WRITING COMPETITION 2021:

PRIZE WINNING POEMS

ENGLISH 1

for - Wer RAAJEEV AUCHAMBIT

Winning Poem in English:

Shh, with this Saut dans l'arc en ciel, the end-dearing, ever-lasting poet's only gone for-N-ever.

He's sleeping. And, here stay his say-sos.

An army of unperishable: Oh, slay, slay. Always a power play.

Far from the pen, which has convinced many worlds, 'you do exist',

Far from the hand, curving words to stand, and dance;

The good, great poet continues to speak in loud silence:

On no occasion in simple past tense, but in future continuous resilience—
Like The Birds of Blood pumping the veins of poetry,

High, in a very high kind of way;

Yet, never seen someone of any other end-dearing, ever-lasting nature flying here, so close to us.

Ding dong! for-N-ever, the good, great poet gonna ring us.

"Are we all there?" He asks from Lazarus Pit, offering verses for our hearts.

From an extinguished body, burning the flames of end-dearing, ever-lasting gifts,

From Taming the Sea to Mascaret or The Book of the Sea and of Death, to more,

"We'll all, Sire, be witnessing the grand prix of your ABC; its victory with jubilee ..."

Now and tomorrow ... oeuvres of our local Mandela mort et vif echoing. 'For certain, Eternity.'

Again, far from the cemetery, and near every reading thing,

Far from anything, besides a legacy that is pure reminiscence, of

Your speaking presence, a real difference to the art of words;

Your speaking absence, a real difference to the invisible presence.

A Manière de dire non à la mort. Time for-N-ever! It's more a matter of time ...

Why is it that the body can just leave, unlike the end-dearing, ever-lasting body of work?

Why is it that we shall for-N-ever remember, at no time missing him, once?

Death is simple. Everyone is gone.

Surviving, not so. Not all can exist within a frozen clock.

En mémoire du memorable, all eyes upon the good, great poet –
To feel, again, what only that bright light imagined on that bright day,
And eventually, cementing this thoughtfulness. Fusillez-moi, if I'm wrong!

Just you see. The end-dearing, ever-lasting poet extends beyond sadness, or nostalgia.
for-N-ever and for-N-ever, the metaphoric, Maunick, remains historic!

ENGLISH 2

Reminiquence

By GAITREE SHUNKER

A tribute to a poet who never died: Edouard Maunick

As the light wind blows from the South East coasts,

Sending a sweet perfume of the marine salt to my nostrils,

Through the Filaos, the tea lands and the sugarcane fields,

I am overwhelmed with memories of verses, lines and words,

Are these not the poems written by a son of the soil, an engaged poet?

The rustling of the leaves caressed by the breeze on its way,

Seems to me like the fluttering of the pages of a book invaluable,

Out of which precious lines and words leaving their realm,

Fusioning with the gleam and warmth of the sun golden,

To fill the air with poetry in abundance for eternity.

Your prints and your voice as undying mementos you have left,
Of you here on earth we common mortals are too envious,
For in heaven Keats, Rimbeau, Walcott and Cesaire are your peers,
In a universe of great minds where verses bloom in the place of flowers,
Lines flow in the place of rivers and instead of stars words shine.

The ebbing waves, the colourful boughs and the singing birds,
The thoughtful adults and cheerful children you painted with words,
As timeless witnesses remind me that you, a poet born in this land,
Which you proudly carried across the seas in your heart and art,
Is breathing 'Les Manèges de la Mer' and 'Les oiseaux de sang'.

ig Ø

FRENCH 1

Le Chef D'orchettre
JEAN FRANCOIS ACHILLE

Seul, triste accablé

Dans l'accueil salutaire des solitaires, troublé,

Il est là, baguette à la main

Murmurant : cet univers c'est le mien.

Le battement de mesure
D'un chef d'orchestre
Que l'on prend pour ordure
A cause de ses ivresses.
Il sombre au paradis de la détresse.

Sa musique, l'unique fil Qui fait vibrer la harpe de son cœur fébrile Dans sa vie où toute mélodie Se transforme en cacophonie.

La symphonie des amours indigènes Le renvoie face au taureau dans l'arène. Il se bat pour une cause, pour une reine Pour qui son cœur explose et se déchaîne.

Dans les valises de l'ennui

Il se revoit attristé par ces fleurs éphémères
Aux nectars volés, au goût amer
Qui se referme sans bruit, chaque nuit
Pour tout effacer, pour tout oublier
Pour tout pardonner, pour tout sanctifier
Dans l'infernal cri de haine
Après l'ablution dans l'eau écumeuse
des fontaines.

Sa musique rythme ses amours
Ses cantiques accompagnent ses retours
Dans les bras de ces femmes infâmes
Qui l'acclament sans tort ni remord

Après l'avoir ébloui Après l'avoir converti en débris. Synonyme de la consommation sans raison L'orgie de la sagesse L'ivresse de sa jeunesse. Les avalanches de souvenirs dansent dans sa tête Il se revoit toujours dans son île, une nuit à faire la fête Il racquitte les dettes de son corps en défaite Sur sa nouvelle conquête, une sacrée Bernadette Il se réjouit de la fête Même dans l'empire des souvenirs Même dans l'effeuillement du tiroir de la mémoire Imagée dans le reflet d'un miroir Avec des choses pas belles à voir Mais que chacun aimerait bien vivre Dans l'hypocrisie d'une intimité; Dormir dans ses extases, être ivre Dans le veloutement de sa volupté

Ses regrets, vaporisés, se recondensent en matière à réflexion. Ses passions, ensoleillées vives, brillent de mille feux Comme la feuille morte à l'affût du vent, Il se laisse emporter par la fantasmagorie De ces rêves endormis Délectant la saveur d'un orgasme multidimensionnel Qui exalte ses sens, exulte sa pensée, décime sa volonté, Amplifie son orgueil, embellit sa carte de tristesse A la rendre infiniment gaie de bonheur et de tendresse. Enfin, sa joie il l'a connue Sa croix le rend bossu, A la longue, il perdra la vue Mais demeurera toujours un dandy Pour ceux qui l'ont eu pour ami.



Chalo

FRENCH 2

BY UTAM RAMCHURN

Aie! Ayo! Mon toréador, me voici vaincue par tes
"Non!" incessants et infatigables
Me voilà vautrée sur le lit de tes écrits, à bout de
souffle, gémissant "oui"
Tu m'as bien donné le change, moi que l'on fuit
comme une Daïne
Moi, qui jamais ne rate sa cible...
tu m'as faite flèche perdue

Moi, terreur de monarques, raseuse d'armées...
tu m'en as fait voir de tes couleurs Holi
Tu m'as bien "gidi-gidi", "touk-touke", "tik-tike",
"zwekoukkasiett!"
Grand alchimiste de mots! Toi qui as saupoudré
les épices de ta terre
Dans ton chaudron linguistique
dont le monde s'est abreuvé!

Moi, terreur du monde, me voici Apsara
qui chante ta gloire...

Mon vainqueur, mon Ustad...pour toi seulement
je me dévoile

Déposant ma faux en offrande, laissant glisser
à terre mon morbide suaire

Vois ma chair resplendissante qui miroite l'éternité
de ton verbe

Ils sont peu d'hommes et femmes qui la voient avant
le dernier souffle
Vois sur ma peau le parcours de ta plume,
qui a traversé les continents,
Tantôt noble, tantôt chouchoundar, parfois
choul-choul, toujours rayonnante!
Vois tes vers qui pétillent comme
le champagne... qui embaument l'air
tel un bon masala!

La voilà ... la mer...Elle est là ... à tes pieds Il est l'heure, mon barde, il est temps de lever l'ancre Viens! ... Vini! Chalo!

Chalo! Mon cholo...mon noble cholo,
fier de sa grande gueule
Si grande qu'elle avale l'éternité ...Viens... vinido!
Regarde au loin, sur l'autre rivage... le concile familier
de visages
Garvey et Césaire souriants..et plus loin agitant chapeau
dans les airs: Chazal
Voici Hart qui se penche par dessus la falaise
pour saluer ta venue
Voilà Raymonde de Kervern qui fait carillonner
les cloches mystiques

Vois Cabon qui dit namaste pendant qu'Emmanuel Juste déroule le tapis cosmique.

Il t'appellent! « Hé! Eta! Maunick! Vini vini!

La table est déjà dressée! »

Voguons ensemble! Déjà mot d'ordre est donné, et mots d'or résonnent

Épitaphesemée aux quatre vents grave ta légende sur la peau des océans

Car tu le sais mon Édouard, tu le sais...

un poète ne meurt jamais tant que survivent ses mots.



Our literature: () wr treasure

BY Dr MANOJ KASHINATH

Mauritian Writer

iterature is a treasure which safeguards the gems of creative intellectual outcomes of the past and the present for the future generations. It surpasses the geographical boundaries and the limitations of time. The realm of literary masterpieces even goes beyond restrictions of languages. Literary masterpieces of great poets and writers have always been translated and served to readers belonging to different linguistic diaspora. There is no doubt that literature reflects the society. Hence sometimes, it provides elusive materials related to history, which easily fade out with time. This makes literature not only a collection of works of imagination but also an archaeological site for researchers.

Institutions like the President's Fund for Creative Writing, the World Hindi Secretariat and various Speaking Unions amongst others are leaving no stone unturned to ensure that the flow of creative writing in English, French and other ancestral languages does not suffer a rupture at any point of time. The first thing a monument requires to stand strong in the test of time is a good foundation. There is no doubt that the first crusaders of creative writing for the languages spoken and written in Mauritius have given their best to nurture the Mauritian literature. Names like Richard Maunick, Malcom de Chazal, Azize Asgarally, Ananda Devi, Dev Virahsawmy, Abhimanyu Unnuth, Ramdeo Dhurrundhur along with many others have helped our literature to leap beyond our geographical boundaries. The works of our immortal poets and writers which are embodiment of subjects like interracial relationship, multiracialism and exoticism have been able to attract a broad scope of readers. We have been served with poetry which has a great appeal to humanity and stories which

reflects the dichotomy of old and new ways of life, along with an endeavour to go beyond mere political issues, old superstitions and ethnically exclusive matters. Hereby, many of our literary brothers and sisters have stood on international podiums and made the Mauritian diaspora proud of their realised dreams.

Life can't defeat a writer who is in love with writing For life itself is a writer's lover

EDNA FERBER

However, the dream to establish a relentless flow in high standards in our literature and a continuous flow in creative writing, is not a won battle. This crusade should never stop and the task of searching for and preparing new crusaders will always dwell in the realm of the present generation of writers. The great esteem for Mauritian Literature will only be assured with the emergence of new poets and writers. For this, it is crucial to organise workshops for aspiring writers and guide them through their process of incubation, without destroying the originality they add to the canvas of Mauritian literature. Providing logistic and intellectual support to young writers along with those who are already exercising their intellectual duty, we must give them a platform to exhibit their masterpieces. This will not only boost up their morale but make them conscious of various possibilities they can adopt to develop a better or progressive style of writing. There is no doubt that the present of the treasure of the Mauritian literature is in good hands, let us ensure that its future will be in better hands.



The turquoise, emerald
And lapis lazuli waters
Of your lagoons,
The coral marvels
Off your shores
Dance scintillatingly
In the mind
Even from so far

There is every hope
Into the seas of recollections
To be able to dip
And recover the jewels
Of the ages, making them
Inwardly sparkle and gleam

The passages of eons

Do not diminish

The majesty of all that

At the altar of beauty
Is eternally on display

AND

Your lustrousness I will

Forever recall

Your lush greeneries

Your warm winsome smile

Brightening the shrubberies

And countless countenances, no match

There being for your charms

Your seductive swaying bewitches Always, beholding the voluptuous waves Of your cane fields, the grasslands Undulating

Your seas sparkle forever
Your mountain glinting
In their granite splendour
Come what may;
As we come and go, in memory
We carry the best you display,
The rest, as they say, shall be history!

J E E W A N R A M L U G U N

Mauritian born UK resident

Author/poet/historian







SHORT STORY WRITING COMPETITION ORGANISED BY THE President's Fund For Creative Writing IN THE YEAR 2020.



His Excellency, Mr Prithvirajsing Roopun G.C.S.K , the President of the Republic of Mauritius, with the winners and the Chairperson of the President's Fund For Creative Writing

A Short story competition was organised by the President's Fund For Creative Writing in the context of the Independence of Mauritius.

The competition was advertised in the dailies.

The competion targeted two categories;
namely

i. students

ii. general public

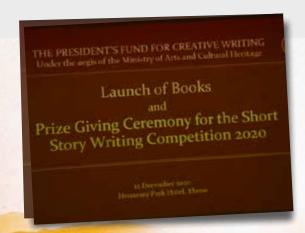
The theme set was: from 1968 to 2020..... a retrospective of pains and pleasures.

We were pleased to have some 60 entries, both categories combined.

A jury panel was set up to assess the entries and select winners in each category.

An award ceremony was held at the Hennessy Park Hotel, with His Excellency, Mr P Roopun the President of the Republic, the Patron of the President's Fund For Creative Writing, as the Chief Guest of the day.

A cash prize and a shield were given to all prize winners and a certificate of participation to all participants.





Launch of books... December 2020

Along with the award ceremony for the Short Story Writing in English, the President's Fund For Creative Writing had also launched three (3) books of Mauritian authors on the same day. Our Chief Guest was His Excellency, Mr Prithvirajsing Roopun G.C.S.K, the President of the Republic of Mauritius.



Authors Nawsheen Golam Hossen, Judex Viramalay, Rusha Mathoo Books launched: Curse of Engan, Mise au Poing, Reckless

His Excellency, Mr P. Roopun, the President of the Republic of Mauritius, launching the book of Miss Nawsheen Golam Hossen entitled "The Curse of Engan"

The launching Ceremony was attended by many lovers of literature, as well as dignitaries from various institutions.







FIRST PRIZE-CATEGORY: GENERAL PUBLIC

THE RETURN OF MOKSHDA BY RAJ P. TEELUCK

It was a Sunday morning. The weather was wonderful. The new rays of sunshine had appeared behind the Moka Range. A few white clouds were drifting across the blue sky. A calm atmosphere was reigning in the neighbourhood of her family house in Sodnac, at Quatre Bornes. A pleasant scent of damp grass wafted to her nostrils while she was standing there in an open veranda, staring at the green rugged landscape of Candos Hill. Lifting her eyes to a remote distance, she could see a postcard-like view, a view that haunts her whenever she is all alone in her comfortable apartment in Wood Green, a suburban area in London.

The return journey from London to Mauritius and back, she had already made it twice. Back again in Mauritius on vacation, Mokshda – that was her name – would, as usual, visit her kiths and kins and places of her childhood, taste local cuisine, see with her own eyes the new achievements of the country, and, this time, to pray at the sacred lake of Grand Bassin, something that she had not done since the inauguration in 2007 of the imposing statue of God Shiva on the banks of the lake.

Strangely enough, it turned out that Mokshda was also looking to travelling by Metro Express. Fifty years back, such mode of transport would have been unthinkable. So, she was happy, very happy that this transportation project has been realised. It has modernized the inland transport system, which, at a time, consisted of horse-driven carts and, later, trains. Mauritius Government Railways started operating in 1864. Train was the only means of mass transport, connecting most parts of the island. Unfortunately, it stopped its operation in 1956. For that, Mokshda felt a tinge of regret; she was not able to travel by train. Her grandmother told her that the Last Passenger Train had already left Victoria station when they arrived there for a ride. However, this time Mokshda would not miss the Metro Express. Yes, there was no doubt!

No sooner said than done. Eventually, accompanied by Kevin, her 15-year nephew, son of her brother Premchand, a doctor by profession, Mokshda took a bus for Port Louis, at a place called "Bistop Rio", in the centre of Quatre Bornes. The bus stop has been so called because formerly a cinema house named Rio was located just behind the bus shelter, and Rio cinema house was famous as a place of affordable distraction for the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, showing three Indian, European or Western films in matinee at one rupee for the cost of an admission ticket.

In no time, the bus left, teemed with passengers. Sitting by the window, Mokshda could see a reflection of further development and progress in the unfurling scenes: high-rise office buildings, shopping malls, big parking lots, fly-over bridges and other infrastructure, noticeably in the regions of Trianon, Ebene, Bagatelle and Pailles. These have emerged from an area—that was once covered with vegetation, in the main, sugarcane. That transported



Mokshda to a distant past. She recalled men and women toiling in the cane fields, sometimes under precarious conditions. Their sweat and tears have significantly contributed to the new panorama, an iconic panorama of socio-economic transformation.

Mokshda enjoyed the delights of modern Mauritius, viewing another cascade of scenes as the bus pulled in Port Louis. Port Louis is historically regarded as the cradle of development. By same token, Mokshda 's life is inextricably linked to the capital; she was born and grew up there. Retaining a visceral attachment to her birthplace, she went to visit her childhood house. It was a sad encounter. It was an encounter with a symbol of untold sacrifices. Her eyes were swollen with tears as she was looking at the house. It stood in ruins, offering a window onto past life. Memories were flowing in her mind. She remembered the words of her father who was an illiterate workman. "Education is the gateway to success in life, "he used to say. No wonder now, after sixty or so years, Mokshda still recognises the cradle of her education. She learned the ABC of life through hardships.

During those days, life was not a bed of roses for almost everybody in the neighbourhood. They had to struggle to make both ends meet. They prayed too. Yes, they were praying for a new dawn. Mokshda could still remember the daily ritual of lighting a little earthen lamp on the altar of the shrine to Mahavir Swami every evening. The shrine was near a big mango tree, now extinct. Her father used to relax himself there in the shade of the mango tree after a tiring day's work.

That mango tree was also a source of subsistence. Her grandmother would prepare mango pickles and these complemented their usual staples like rice and dholl. Feeding a family was no less an ordeal. And ordeals there were in large families. However, they were content to live quietly with the little they had as foods. Around a simple dish, the family members would interact with each other and talk about their joys and sorrows, their hopes and needs, and their experiences -- good and bad.

Formal education was as difficult, not to say that it was barely accessible to poor people. They could not even send their children to infant schools. Childhood memories never die. Mokshda could recall, in that case, the only infant school in the neighbourhood which was ran by a retired teacher named Miss Maryse. Miss Maryse was a dedicated teacher. She loved her work, despite the fact that she was facing some difficulties. For instance, at the end of each month she would go from home to home in order to collect school fee, which was sometimes settled in instalment. That could explain the reason why such schools were rare or were of a low standard.

To illustrate that, Miss Maryse was conducting her class under the shade of a flamboyant tree. Children had to sit on rocks to follow the class. Was it a technique to bring children closer to Nature? That was not the reason. Far from it. Much later it dawned on Mokshda that Miss Maryse's house was not adequate for the handful of pupils she had. That obviously was equated to a painful experience of schooling, everybody recognised it but could do nothing. But time is a healer. With the passage of time many of her pupils, including Mokshda and her brother, reached great heights.

At a stone's throw from former Miss Maryse's premises, stood an imposing building. Mokshda walked toward it. On approaching it, she found that it was a supermarket. She was pleased when she had learnt that the son of Phillipe – who was her former school classmate –- was the owner of that supermarket. Actually, the supermarket has replaced a small shop that belonged to Phillipe. The shop was known as "La Boutique Phillipe." Others would just call it "La boutique chinois." Whatever was the name, the shop will always be remembered for the services Phillipe



had rendered to the needy people of the area. In this connection, Mokshda has a recollection of a "carnet rouge". Phillipe would give credit facilities to his regular customers and these would be recorded in the "carnet". People would take advantage of the credit facilities when they encountered financial difficulties, or fell in a situation that demanded extra expenses, for example, like a wedding. Thus, in helping others, Phillipe has been blessed with a supermarket. Further away from the supermarket, the road crosses a river. Mokshda walked down to the river. Standing on the bank of the river, she let herself go with the prevailing stillness, recalling with nostalgia the presence of seasonal washerwomen at the river when it was carrying a lot of water after a heavy rain. They would come with bundles of clothes for washing, an opportunity for them to avoid the rush at a single tap allocated to four or five families living on the same premises. It was also an occasion for children to play in the pools. But on that day, Mokshda could see no soul around or hear no cries or shouts. In the quietude of the river Mokshda could feel that changes had really swept over the country, all started with its accession to independence on 12th March 1968.

The flag hoisting ceremony was held at the Champ de Mars in the presence of then Prime Minister Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam and Sir John Shaw Rennie, Governor of Mauritius. It was attended by thousands of people from all walks of life. Participating in a student rally on that occasion, Mokshda could see exultation in the eyes of the people, presumably all dreaming for a new destiny.

To quote a Chinese saying: "The journey of a hundred miles starts with a single step." Actually, Mauritius has been thriving on the historical path opened by independence. Today, as a result, after fifty years of independence, Mauritius can boast of having achieved a lot in every field, all clearly visible to the naked eye.

Changes have touched different areas like housing, education and culture, health care, leisure and entertainment, law and order, communication, and social benefits. Housing estates are found everywhere, all equipped with sophisticated amenities. Education is free, unbelievably, from primary education to tertiary. The rich cultural heritage of Mauritius has been preserved through various activities. Healthcare facilities have reached the inhabitants of all localities, however remote they are. Leisure activities are greatly encouraged with an array of facilities put at the disposal of the people, be it young or old, like sports grounds, gyms, wellness parks and tracks. Likewise, entertainment facilities are numerous. To put it in a nutshell, the socioeconomic transformation of the country has been the cornerstone of the wellbeing of the Mauritian population today, something that many foreign visitors do not forget to place on record.

For Mokshda, the journey must have been an interesting experience. She would obviously share the reminiscences of this journey to her grandchildren living in the UK, for them to know about the history of Mauritius and its development since independence. Until her return to England, Mokshda would definitely enjoy going to other places in Mauritius.

Having secured a seat in the Metro Express, Mokshda was already excited with the idea that she would be seeing things representative of the transition from pains to pleasures.

A writer only begins a book, a reader finishes it.. >>

SJOHNSON



FIRST PRIZE - CATEGORY: STUDENTS FROM SECONDARY SCHOOLS

ON THE EDGE OF TOMORROW

BY KÉSAVEN MURDHEN

I

The sky was vast, dark and freezing.

And strangely interspersed with clearings, which at the end of the afternoon gave the agitated cloud an unreal aspect, an oneiric atmosphere.

At dusk, the sun lit up the coruscant ocean that lay before me. With the cold wind and the boiling clouds, the setting was interminable, grandiose, full of sadness.

Fifty years later, I still remember it. It was in August 1970.

What was so remarkable about that fiery August evening? While contemplating the spectacle of the season, I slept on a rock... But I was not dreaming.

In front of me was a green sea adorned with infinite deep blue, shrouded in the stigmata of the orange sun. My mind freed itself and let itself be carried away by the tumultuous waves to wither away serenely on the shore of life... I am always in search of plenitude, zenitude, which can therefore better tell me, whisper it to me, than a beautiful landscape with sea scents?

The mystery—for it was indeed one—seemed to unfold on the horizon, in reality everything was happening within me. Through a painting of cosmic dimensions, the elements presented the terrestrial and celestial expanses around me. An August that looked like February.

My head was in the clouds.

Happy and icy, sharp and melancholy, dark and light, such appeared to me the waves of this increasingly red aerial ocean.

So much so that through those twilight flames of magnified density, my night vision continued to infinity. And my inner vision was also expanding to infinity. The palpable world had collided with poetry in a highly spiritual crash.

The sky was vast, icy, even darker. I no longer knew whether it was February or August, drowned in the mists of the indefinable, haunted by this enigmatic twilight that I will never forget.

The grandeur of the sea, the sky and the sand made me reverent. At one corner of the beach, a fire was lit. Like a butterfly in the night, I was fascinated by the light of the flame. The procreant power of the Fire which brought back from my memory the magic of my earliest childhood. The fire symbolised a precarious life which could be smothered at any time. Jet of flames, shower of sparks: interior fireworks of inclinations, appetites, joys, the creaking of the logs which burst: mystery of the inner bark which twists and cracks. The past too worn out, the chimerical future, and all things unexpectedly come to an end. Again, an ocean of dark, dense, haunting, terrifying darkness. It revelled in the empty space around me, my being compressed like this dying fire, prisoner of the whims of the breeze of this wintry night.

Under the halcyon sun of early August, the sea was an unremitting calm, dappled by a million shards of light—each one so infinitesimal yet, together, were intense in a way that was utterly exquisite. I lay in supine, feeling the harsh wood of the jetty under my light cotton clothing and



dangled a hand into the ocean. The water was soothing, cool. I splashed for a moment and then squealed with surprise. Where moments ago there was just briny water, leapt the shiny grey head of a dolphin. From his ashen topside and whiter under belly, water droplets cascaded down, bejewelled in the light. His body arced and tail flipped.

I soon realized it was time to go home and my thunderous voice was tantamount to my apathy to set foot in that place.

IIThe relationship between my parents, my sister and I had been phlegmatic, distant and hostile

for as long as I can remember. For me, my mother was delirious, castigating and hurling hurtful invectives at the slightest infraction. "It doesn't matter," my mother grumbled when I asked her where she moved my watercolor paintings, "it's not like you have any talent." She always derided me for all my shortcomings with alacrity and I would watch her as she relayed my ignorance to my relatives with comical hilarity. And my sister took my mother's side against me every time. Five years my senior, Malagassa didn't seem to have a brain in her head. She dithered over everything, unable to make a firm decision. No matter how many times my mother deprecated her— "stupid, ugly, fat"—Malagassa made vain attempts to fawn her way back into my mother's good graces. No matter how Stygian the storm was at home, I would always scuttle with the gaping eyes of a child, befuddled, shrouding the fear. However, at dinner, I had no other choice than to face my papa's rage at the austerity of his life and my mama's sulky withdrawal at the callousness of hers. She would serve the meal and he would always criticise. I ate in mock oblivion, erecting volcanoes out of my satinipomme de terre, anything to keep my eyes fixed on the plates and not their hating miens. The trick was to do everything right, be sweet, smile, otherwise the wrath they weren't

There were nights nothing could stifle the yelling and, on those occasions, my mind would fill with escapade plans. When you're 13 years old and the most stable thing in your life was made of hessian fabric, there's a problem. Some say that when parents fight, it's like tearing asunder the foundations of your child, but for me it was more than that. It crept into my psyche. Was this all there was in my world? Fear with nothing to ward it off but a poupette goni and a tattered molton to hide under?" But, at the end of the day, wasn't it that the life of a child? To be one denuded of power or choice, always going with the change in wind and praying for a safe haven?

nakedly showing each other found a new and smaller target.

In fact, the only sanctuary I had was the beach. The usual difélaplaz would crackle as I scrutinised at the clustered cinders of an evanescent fire up in the sky. If I were to call these stars beautiful, it wouldn't do it any justice. It was more than that. It was like staring into someone's eyes. And somewhere out there was my late grandpapa who would always spoil me. I couldn't help but feel like the last man standing.

The waves of vulnerability and anxiety that hit me had long trapped me in an intricate maelstrom. It would subtly be building up and gaining momentum while I recalled the string of hideous events. "Can't breathe!" my mind would gasp in panic as the receding waves dragged me into the sea of abysmal darkness. In my imagination, I would be flailing my arms around frantically, desperate for someone, something, or anything to cling on to. "Help, please..." my inner voice would plead as I sank deeper, tears threatening to spill. And as always, only cold silence greeted me.

My grandfather, Maclavou, always used to pontificate, "Our seas are the lungs of the world." Oh



how I miss my grandfather! When I was little, I loved for him to tell me stories about himself. No matter how tired he was, he never adumbrated them. He would fill with the minutest details, and they were always fascinating.

Another thing he did was tell me the stories with such grandiloquence! My favourite bedtime story was the one about his brief affair with the sea fairy, Varuna.

The story is etched in my mind:

"I still remember her from time to time, Varuna, the sea fairy. She had bulging eyes, chapped lips, sharp fingernails, and a heart as big as Buddha.

I gave her a look that spoke volumes about my lustful intentions for her.

The female apparition on the beach on that beautiful Sunday morning, beautiful as a witch, as intelligent as Brahma, winsomely dressed, filled me with enthusiasm.

With her elegance, she knew how to seduce me not only by her pulchritudinous esthetics, but also by her sepulchral poetry.

In her arms, I discovered the joy of being two and becoming one. Like the congruity of the carrion and the toad, the cockroach dance between the crab's legs, the song of death to the Moon in the night.

It was my first amorous rockery, my dearest neurotic fire, the only flame in my life. I was her most dreadful conquest, her glorious misery, her despicable darling. Together we formed an incendiary love."

Ш

After a life of whirlpool busyness where time is seen as a commodity which must be parceled up and doled out with the same circumspection as cash, at 63, I decided to go back to my demulcent, lenitive niche. Like a breath of whiteness which maintains the floe in its eternal purity, the scents of the morning mixed with mists, the foam of the ocean under the firmament, it was exactly what I needed to win the war on my cancer.

Sitting since morning on a rock, I gaze into space. The placid gaze, the dull forehead, the speechless mouth, the silly expression. The sun acquiesces my consternation. With my torpid swings and inertia, I accompany every hollow word, every meaningless thought, every sterile movement of my old age.

The sight oozes of exquisite perdition. It echoes in the toxic air of the black tide which surrounds me in a dismal and deafening atmosphere. What used to galvanise and enthuse me is gone. What snailed and feasted on me like the tarragon that clumps to the top of starches has been replaced by darkness. The sea is no longer blue, the sand is gone, the sun is enveloped in a thick cloud of smoke. Through this smoke the sun shimmers, jaspering the ocean with ephemeral bronze puddles.

The ocean that was cerulean blue just yesterday, lapping the golden sands with the cold water of an early spring tide, is now blacker and murkier than the night sky. The surface moves in the slick way oil like a sheen rainbow that holds no beauty. No longer does the air smell of brine and washed up seaweed; it smells foul and the onshore breeze now carries toxic chemicals that made me wheeze. The birds flops helplessly on the black beach, coated in sticky crude and mostly blinded.



A few metres ahead, a dolphin is weaving his way through the waters he had known all his life, swimming with the family he loves so dearly. Today there is a new taste to the water, a pollutant for which they have no vocabulary—and so he will tell his loved ones that the water tastes like "bad." They already know but like him they can't fathom why. Their eyes sting and there is no way to escape the toxins. They surface, breaking the top to feel cool air instead of the keen sting. The air is helpful but they can't stay above the surface indefinitely.

While they are at the top, a tourist boat passes, children and adults alike point excitedly, snapping photographs they will treasure always. The sight of the dolphin pod brings the watchers a bliss they find hard to replicate in other ways and they stand mesmerised until the pod moves on. Back under the brine it is as pleasant as swimming in bleach and the babies are becoming distressed. All they can do is swim and pray that in time they will reach water that tastes like "good."

As I glance at that unrecognisable vista, I reminisce over what my grandpapa used to say:

"Every drop is inconsequential, nothing in the grandness of Point d'Esny. But when they all move together, as one body—therein lies the power. From the surface it may remain tranquil for many days, months even, but its strength is not gone, merely dormant. Below the surface, no matter how still, are unstoppable currents moving unimaginable volumes of briny water many thousands of kilometres. From above it seems no more alive than a bucket of water, yet below is more life than the skies above or the land it kisses."

The world where I used to come to find solace, my alcove, had moulded into an alien landscape. Rather than treating it with reverence, it was being used as a toilet bowl and dumping ground of human toxicity as we continue to pollute like children addicted to the sugar of commercialism. As I gaze in abhorrence at the place I once cherished, I can't help feel blue.

The sea is vast, dark and freezing.



G MARTIN



A Blessed Island

I saw in a dream,

My island, shining so bright in both the day and the night time That the Gods themselves stopped their toils, to center upon it, Their whole attention!

Upon its soils, unity was a flower, eternal and fated to be unwilted, It rested calmly and peacefully in the garden of peace and tolerance A garden that would open its doors to the rest of the world For as long as the island itself, would exist!

Its rivers gurgled joyfully and teemed with some sort of other worldly purity

That such allowed everyone to drink its waters fearlessly

For water pollution is certainly not a problem here!

The air itself breathed in its own fragrance
Since our tropical atmosphere is full of cool menthol freshness
Being undisturbed by all that which can stain it with unhealthiness!

The Gods, soothed, smiled at how diligently the youth cares for their elders
And how courageous they are at giving themselves in to their duties
While never forgetting to revere the divine, in all of its forms,
At each and every opportunity that comes through their way!

Education primes and allows for modernity to make its way through
The good habits that everyone adopts, thereby making of the island,
A sustainable and smart one, aiming to nurture itself towards its own sovereignty!

Mauritius, said the Gods, is a poem in itself, one that has to be engraved In the beating heart of the cosmos

For an emblem it is, and shall remain for as long as existence itself shall be!

Mauritius, said the Gods, is more than a poem, it is an open book,

And its storyline shall rhyme in the coming years with positivity and well being

For an island it is, that shall be remembered for being perfect upon all grounds!

I woke up and smiled at the dawn, for if blessed we are to be by the Gods
Then, our tomorrow is sure to hurl at us, fragranced flowers of all sorts
And we, are to make sure we grab them to root them in the soils of our foundations!

ANOUCHEKA GANGABISSOON,
MAURITIAN AUTHOR

"A Professional writer is an amateur who did not quit"

RICHARD BACH



Reflections in tranquility on Reading, Libraries and Cultural Memory

"A good book is like a good friend. It will stay with you for the rest of your life. When you first get to know it, it will give you excitement and adventure, and years later, it will provide you with comfort and familiarity. And best of all, you can share it with your children or your grandchildren or anyone you love enough to let into its secrets."

(Charles Lovett, First Impressions: A Novel of Old Books, Unexpected, Penguin, Random House, 2015

Books were my first friends, apart from my brothers, but in Beau-Bassin in the 1950s, I did not have much access to them, since there was, as far as I know, no public library, and my primary school (Sacré Coeur RCA) had no library, to speak of. In the 1960s, after the family moved to Curepipe, I discovered the splendours of the Carnegie Library after classes at RCC and the fun to be derived from a small lending library behind Ste Thérèse Church (in effect the salle d'oeuvre, which held quite a few issues of Tintin). So, in terms of any Literacy Autobiography until 1959, my offering would have consisted of a very slim volume.

Once, I was gripped by the quest for knowledge (libido sciendi) at the Carnegie, I never looked back. I collected books in Aberdeen, where I did my Tertiary Studies, Toronto and Hamilton in Canada, St Andrews, Edinburgh, and everywhere else in the world where I have travelled. Today, my private library holds some

4000 volumes, even after donating so many books to the National Library, RCC, where there is a Rivière Collection, and to many grateful friends. Without my books around, I cannot write, let alone think; their vibes trigger off creativity in me and the "daring to know" first mentioned by the philosopher Immanuel Kant as "sapere aude". The oldest book I own goes back to the 16th century and the latest addition is my own Travels with Voltaire: Academic Memoirs (ELP, 2021), where I undertake an attempt at Literacy Autobiography. And here, I pause to encourage Teachers of English and Languages to urge their students to enquire of their elders how they learnt languages, to write these accounts down and to compose their own personal records of language learning in diaries or booklets on a daily or weekly basis. This is now the "buzz word" in Canadian University ESL classes, and it is likely to catch on here in Mauritius sooner or later.

How do books and Libraries contribute to National Cultural Heritage?

There should be no need to ask the question; in my day, without the internet or other distractions, the answer was simple. But today, we see 'progress' in another light. Voltaire, the patriarch of the European Enlightenment (1694-1778), believed above all in the efficacy of reason. Social progress could be achieved through reason, and no authority—religious or political or otherwise—should be immune to a challenge by reason. And in this campaign to "change the common way of thinking," books became his chief weapon; "I write in order

to act". Hence, my ownership of 100 different editions of his works, old and new, allows me to foray into the rationalism of the eighteenth century. His private Library was purchased by Catherine II, Empress of all Russia and is now held at the Hermitage Palace in St Petersburg, where I have always wanted to work but, alas, have never been able to do so.

Cultural Memory is the faculty that should allow us to build a more or less clear and instructive picture of our past, as individuals and as a nation. Through this process, each one of us develops a unique identity, and Mauritius can lay claim to a national identity. Think of photos of your great grand-parents or ancestors and images of the houses which they lived in and of their lifestyle. Without this, would you really know to what kind of family or clan you belong? This is yet another reason why young people should interview their elders and write the responses down as Literacy Biography.

Moreover, Cultural Memory should preserve the physical, architectural, literary and symbolic heritage which individuals can resort to in order to build up their own identities and see themselves as part of a group, thereby reinforcing a sense of appartenance. The same also applies to nations, like ours, as we already celebrated our Independence on 12 March 2023. Libraries and books have a vital part to play in this process. This is, in effect, my main concern and apprehension, as I reflect on the way libraries and books are neither funded nor encouraged adequately in our small island in the sun.

As one people, we need to cast a reflexive gaze on our past in order to better grasp the present

and prepare more efficiently for the future. Cultural Memory, therefore, goes hand in hand with the construction of a National Identity. Memory, albeit very personal, is shaped by our collective experiences and public, written, oral and architectural, representations of our past play a vital role here. Newspapers, television, statues, monuments, old buildings, books and festivities, both religious, lay and cultural, mark not only who we are, but also who we were and how we have evolved as a nation, that is where we are at.

We may call ourselves a "Rainbow Nation", a human Mosaic, a "melting pot", "un vrai laboratoire humain" according to Malcolm de Chazal. All cultural ingredients combine in the "alchemist's bowl" where our gold is made. And our literary and archival heritage is part of this precious metal, lest we let it fade away.

There is so much more to be done to safeguard our old books and archival papers, in brief our Cultural Heritage. After prolonged visits to our Libraries and National Archives, Stéphane Sinclair did not mince words in the

Books are not made to be believed, but to be subjected to inquiry.

When we consider a book, we mustn't ask ourselves what it says but what it means..

UMBERTO ECO



Report of the Truth and Justice Commission (2011), as he deplored the state of neglect that prevails: "Nos visites dans les services de conservation mauriciens et la lecture de textes d'experts missionnés pour aider les pays en développement à mener une politique patrimoniale et archivistique efficace nous incitent à recommander de porter maintenant tous les efforts sur le sauvetage des archives et de quelques fonds patrimoniaux de bibliothèques ». (Vol. 4, Part X, p. 747)

"Books are not made to be believed, but to be subjected to inquiry. When we consider a book, we mustn't ask ourselves what it says but what it means..." wrote Umberto Eco "A book is a fragile creature, it suffers the wear of time, it fears rodents, the elements and clumsy hands. So the librarian protects the books, not only against mankind but also against nature and devotes his life to this war with the forces of oblivion."

I believe that if one day, I were allowed to choose my personal form of paradise, it would look like a library, adorned with old and new books, maps, manuscripts, in various colours and rare ancient documents, a place where there would be silence and an opportunity to reflect in tranquility.

Professor Marc Serge Rivière

PATRON OF HONOUR, ENGLISH SPEAKING UNION (MAURITIUS BRANCH)



A literature of one's own

What does it mean,

To have a literature of one's own,

In a society as colourful and mixed as ours?

A small group of islands we physically may be,

Yet, the imagination of more than a million souls

Cannot be minimised,

And indeed, need to be fostered.

We have grown in the shadows of colonial greatness,

Admiring literary giants from diverse cultures and languages,

And perhaps, some of us felt dwarfed at the prospect

Of ever writing something comparable,

While yet others, saw endless possibilities.

Yet I say to you – O Reader! –

That a society cannot truly exist without Art;

Without Art, life would be soulless,

Devoid of Meaning

Let's find our own references, and create our own allusions;

Let our Readers and Viewers recognise the places we mention,

Remember the events we subtly refer to,

See themselves in the fictionalised experiences of our imagined characters.

What will it take, for Mauritians, young and old,

To pick up a pencil, a pen, a mouse,

And write down their experiences,

Or imagined experiences based on Mauritian life?

Perhaps some might think that there is little to say,

But they would be wrong in that view:

For the wondrous lies not in great deeds only,

But also in the everyday accounts, the reminiscences, the casual encounters,

The cultural, religious, and linguistic connections

We have forged with one another over centuries,

And especially, the Mauritian imagination

That sees a unique reality and seeks to present

What it means to live in Mauritius,

To be a Mauritian, And to live amongst Mauritians. More importantly, what will it take, for Mauritians

To pick up poems, short stories, novellas, novels, non-fiction,

Written by their fellow Mauritian brothers and sisters,

And to understand, that we, too,

Are capable of literary greatness?

Our Mauritian writers need this lifeline;

Writers aim to be read, appreciated, and understood;

Their books await you, in libraries and book fairs,

Let us not disappoint them;

Let us seek them out, and read their work.

Only then, perhaps, will appreciation flow,

And recognition for our local artists grow.

RAJENDRA KORLAPU-BUNGAREE

Senior Lecturer, Mauritius Institute of Education, and Vice-President, English Speaking Union

> Poetry is the record of the happiest moments of the happiest and best minds....

> > W B SHELLEY



A conversation between a layman and a philosopher

Do you become more divine as you become more creative?

This is a question put by a layman to a philosopher

Question: I believed I was uncreative. What else can be creativity besides dancing and painting and how to find out what my creativity is?

Answer:

Anything can be creative- you bring that quality to the activity. Activity itself is neither creative nor uncreative. You can paint....or sing in an uncreative way. You can clean the floor in a creative way. You can cook in a creative way. Creativity is the quality you bring to the activity you are doing. It is an attitude, an inner approach- how you look at things.

So, the first thing to be remembered: don't confine creativity to anything in particular. A man is creative, whatsoever he does, even if he walks, you can see in his walking there is creativity. Even if he sits silently and does nothing, even non-doing will be a creative act. Sages, saints, philosophers, prophets doing nothing are the greatest creators the world has ever known. Once you understand it-that it is you, the person, who is creative and uncreative- then this problem disappears.

Not everybody can be a painter- and there is no need also. If everybody is a painter, the world will be very ugly: it will be difficult to live in. And not everybody can be a dancer as there is no need. But everybody can be creative.

Whatsoever you do, if you do it joyfully, if you do it lovingly, if your act of doing it is not purely economical, then it is creative. If you

have something growing out of it within you, if it gives you growth, it is spiritual, it is creative, and it is divine.

You become more divine as you become more creative. All the religions of the world have said: God is the Creator. I don't know if he is the creator or not, but one thing I know: the more creative you become, the godlier you become. When your creativity comes to a climax, when your whole life becomes creative, you live in God. So He must be the Creator because people who have been creative have been closest to Him. Love what you do. Be meditative whilst you are doing it- whatsoever it is! Irrelevant of the fact of what it is.

Have you seen a cleaner cleaning the floor of an auditorium? Then you will know: cleaning can become creative. With that love! Almost singing and dancing. If you clean the floor with such love, you have done an invisible painting. You lived that moment in such delight that it has given you some inner growth. You cannot be the same after a creative act.

Creativity means loving whatsoever you doenjoying, celebrating it, as a gift of existence! Maybe nobody comes to know about it. Who is going to praise a cleaner for cleaning this floor? History will not take any account of it; newspapers will not publish his/her name and pictures that are irrelevant. They enjoyed it. The value is intrinsic.

So if you are looking for fame and then you think you are creative- if you become famous like Picasso, then you are creative. You are a politician, ambitious: if fame happens, well.



If it doesn't happen, well. It should not be the consideration. The consideration should be that you are enjoying whatsoever you are doing. It is your love affair.

The questioner asks: "I believed I was uncreative." If you believe in that way, you will become uncreative- because belief is not just belief. It opens doors; it closes doors. If you have a wrong belief, then that will hang around you as a closed door. If you believe that you are uncreative, you will become uncreative-because that belief will obstruct, continuously negate, all possibilities of flowing. It will not allow your energy to flow because you will continuously say: "I am uncreative."

Every human being is a born creator. Watch children and you will see: all children are creative. By and by, we destroy their creativity. By and by, we force wrong beliefs on them. By and by, we distract them. By and by, we make them more and more economical and political and ambitious. When ambition enters, creativity disappears- because an ambitious man cannot be creative, because an ambitious man cannot love any activity for its own sake. While he is painting he is looking ahead; he is thinking, "When am I going to get a Nobel Prize?" When he is writing a novel, he is looking ahead. He is always in the futureand a creative person is always in the present. To be and to be creative are synonymous. It is impossible to be and not to be creative. But the impossible thing has happened, because all your creative sources have been plugged, blocked, destroyed, and your whole energy

has been forced into some activity that the society thinks is going to pay.

Our whole attitude about life is moneyoriented. And money is one of the most uncreative things one can become interested in. Our whole approach is power-oriented and power is destructive, not creative. A man who is after money will become destructive, because money has to be robbed, exploited; it has to be taken away from many people, only then you have it.

A creative act enhances the beauty of the world. It gives something to the world, it never takes anything away from it. A creative person comes into the world, enhances the beauty of the world- a song here, a painting there. He makes the world dance better, enjoy better, love better, and meditate better. When he leaves this world, he leaves a better world behind him. Nobody may know him; somebody may know him- that is not the point. But he leaves the world a better place, tremendously fulfilled because his life has been of some intrinsic value.

Each man comes into this world with a specific destiny: he has something to fulfil, some message to be delivered, some work to be completed. You are not here accidentally but are here meaningfully. There is a purpose behind you. The whole intends to do something through you.

So, Be Creative and leave a legacy behind for the future generations.

COURTESY: INDIA TODAY



Reviews by former Members of the President's Fund For Creative Writing

Over the past few years it has been an enriching and fruitful experience to be a member of the President's Fund for Creative Writing.

I initially joined the President's Fund For Creative Writing as a member of the Tamil Speaking Union but left proudly as a family member of the President's Fund For Creative Writing. We have shared countless memorable moments working in team spirit, to achieve events such as Seminars, Workshops and Book Launches.

I consider the Chairperson as a mother figure, who had always welcomed me with a smile and guidance Thank you all and all my best wishes and regards to the actual team.

MRS SEEROOMBEN C

TREASURER, TAMIL SPEAKING UNION



As a former member of the Quality Control for the President's Fund For Creative Writing, I would like to share some of my views.

On 21st December 2017, I participated in a workshop for quality control, readers and editors at Viewing Room, First floor, R. Seeneevassen Building. On 21st and 22nd September 2018, I attended a conference on Creative Writing held at Labourdonnais Hotel, Caudan Waterfront.

These events were very successful and brought all languages: English, Kreol, Bhojpuri, Arabic, French, Hindi, Marathi, Telugu, Tamil and Urdu under the same umbrella to depict how our rainbow nation is prospering.

The President's Fund For Creative Writing has promoted and will continue to enhance and publish creative writing in all languages.

The President's Fund For Creative Writing has extended an equal opportunity to all creative writers of diverse languages to fulfill their dream of writing a book. I wish the President's Fund For Creative Writing all the best.

MRS T. DEWNARAIN

FORMER MEMBER OF QUALITY CONTROL UNIT



As a former Member of the President's Fund For Creative Writing, I extend my congratulations to the actual team for this new venture and I wish them lots of success.

While there, I did my best to serve, to the best of my abilities, as the representative of the English Speaking Union and I know the President's Fund For Creative Writing is working hard towards the welfare of Mauritian Literature.

MR RAJEN GANGOOSING

VICE PRESIDENT, ENGLISH SPEAKING UNION



I wish to express my great satisfaction at the publication of this magazine, to which I hope, as former board member, to have made a small contribution. While I was a board member, I enjoyed the discussions and the different activities organised by the President's Fund for Creative Writing. The President's Fund for Creative Writing has a laudable mission, and often labours in the face of great adversity and several challenges to carry its mission. As such, I can only congratulate the Chairperson and her team for all the good work done so far and wish them much success in furthering the goals of the Board to promote Mauritian literature.

Best regards

DR RAJENDRA KORLAPU-BUNGAREE VICE-PRESIDENT, ENGLISH SPEAKING UNION



In my capacity as Desk Officer of the President's Fund for Creative Writing, I had the immense pleasure to monitor, fine tune and advise on several pertinent issues related to the works of the Fund. I can say that it was for me a great opportunity to contribute towards the promotion and propagation of Mauritian Literature.

I wish the current team of the President's Fund For Creative Writing lots of success and great determination in reaching to their goals in this great mission.

MRS SARITA DOOKHIT

ASSISTANT PERMANENT SECRETARY
FORMER DESK OFFICER, PRESIDENT'S FUND FOR CREATIVE WRITING,
MINISTRY OF ARTS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE



I had the golden opportunity to work with the President's Fund for Creative Writing when a decision was taken by the parent Ministry to open the Fund for other existing Speaking Unions, such as Hindi, Urdu, Marathi, Tamil and Telugu.

It was a very good experience for me to discuss the various issues related to Creative Writing in several languages.

The President's Fund For Creative Writing is launching a Souvenir magazine very soon.

I avail of this opportunity to wish the editorial team plenty of success in all their coming activities also.

Long live the President's Fund for Creative Writing

Dr HOMRAJEN GOWREEA, OSK,

SENIOR LECTURER MGI, VICE PRESIDENT, MARATHI SPEAKING UNION





As a former member of the President's Fund for Creative Writing, I can say that the achievements of this institution are laudable. Many Mauritian writers have benefitted from the President's Fund For Creative Writing.

I really miss the discussions, the arguments, the various functions and all those good moments spent together working for the welfare of literature.

All my good wishes go to the entire team.

MR SONAH DHURMEA



It is with great pleasure that I am conveying my warm greetings to the Chairperson and members of the President's Fund for Creative Writing and thanking them for allowing me to write a few words in this magazine.

I believe that the President's Fund For Creative Writing is doing a remarkable work in promoting creative writing in all written and spoken languages in Mauritius.

As a former member, it was always a great pleasure to team up with other members for supporting new writers in helping them to publish their work. We have also organised various workshops, talks and competitions for writers, readers & youngsters and launched books of Mauritian writers.

"Writing is the painting of the voice'. Voltaire."

I wish the President's Fund For Creative Writing a bright and fruitful future.

MISS P. M. R. DOCILE

PREVIOUS PRESIDENT'S FUND FOR CREATIVE WRITING BOARD MEMBER ANALYST/SENIOR ANALYST AT THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE, ECONOMIC PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT



When I first joined the Civil Service and I was posted at the then Ministry of Arts and Culture in 2014, my very first assignment was to provide administrative assistance to the President's Fund for Creative Writing.

Throughout the years I was lucky to have met so many talented Mauritian authors of different ages and backgrounds.

Guiding them through the process of publishing and launching their books has been one of the most enriching experience of my journey with the Fund. Indeed there is nothing more rewarding than witnessing the joy and pride of these authors as they emotionally hold their first publication. I was glad to have been part of it. I will always cherish those fond moments and all the learning experiences I acquired from the President's Fund For Creative Writing.

I wish the team great success ahead.

TRACY WONG



I would say at the first instance that it was indeed a lovely and significant experience for me to participate in the meetings under the headship of an illustrated author, Dr Aujayeb, who always placed the interest of the Mauritian nation at large in her capacity as the Chairperson,

The selection of the works received in the different languages spoken and read in our Republic of Mauritius, the rainbow island, was only approved by the President's Fund For Creative Writing, for publication, after severe scrutiny at different levels and certainly with the required seriousness.

I sincerely hope that this literary mission of the President's Fund For Creative Writing, is more than ever needed and should continue with added support from the authorities.

SURESH RAMBURN, MBE

FORMER BOARD MEMBER, REPRESENTING THE HINDI SPEAKINGUNION.



Since its creation, the President's Fund For Creative Writing has played a vital role in fostering a brilliant literary community in Mauritius.

The Fund has provided resources and opportunities to a diverse range of writers, to pursue their craft and share their voices with wider audiences.

As Desk Officer of the said organisation during my tenure of office as Assistant Permanent Secretary at the then Ministry of Arts and Culture , I was happy to be part of organising numerous events and programs to showcase the work of supported writers and engage with audiences. These events have included readings, book launches, and writing workshops among others and have helped to create a dynamic movement in the literary world.

Overall, the President's Fund For Creative Writing has had a significant impact on the literary landscape of Mauritius since its inception and I know that it will continue to work for the country's rich literary heritage and emerging writers.

I wish the whole team lots of success.

MR RAJESH HUMATH

FORMER APS, MINISTRY OF ARTS AND CULTURE,
AND DESK OFFICER, PRESIDENT'S FUND FOR CREATIVE WRITING



"It was an enriching experience to be part of the PFCW Team as I got to learn about such a scheme that encourages local creative writers to share their talent and passion with the rest of the world. I got the chance to discover some truly interesting literary works in various languages and it was fulfilling to promote local art and culture through writing.

In the digital era of E-books, the PFCW becomes even more vital to ensure that words printed in black ink on a blank page continue to be embedded in our life.

I congratulate the team for all their constant efforts and dedication despite the challenges and wish them all the best for the future."

MRS D. DABEE,

ASSISTANT PERMANENT SECRETARY, FORMER DESK OFFICER OF THE PFCW AT THE MINISTRY OF ARTS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE (2017-2019)

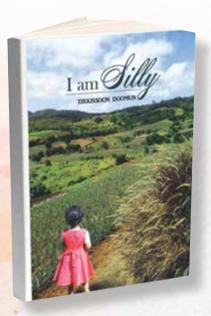


Undoubtedly, the PFCW, has been doing a wonderful job since its inception. The decision to incorporate other speaking unions was indeed a commendable step. I got the privilege to form part of the board as the secretary of the Urdu Speaking Union. The large variety of books published in different languages, seminars, workshops on different topics under the banner of the PFCW, affirm the huge work carried out by the Fund. My wish is that in the very near future, the PFCW has its own secretariat and this would be another great step ahead in the history of the Fund. I wish the Fund luck and success in its future endeavor.

FORMER MEMBER ANWAR DUSTMAHOMED



Some of the books published by the President's Fund For Creative Writing

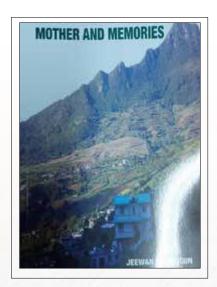


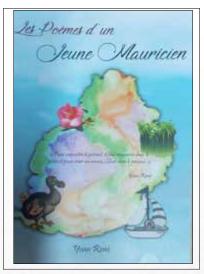


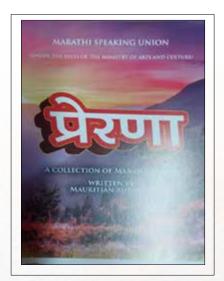


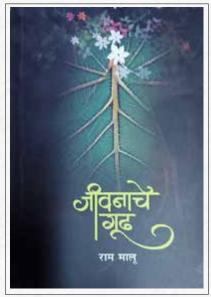


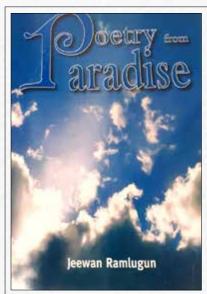




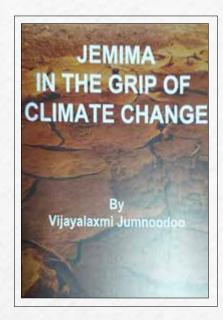


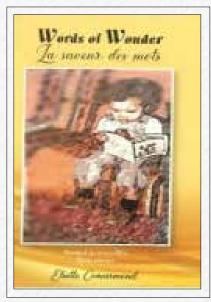


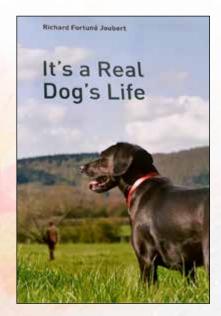


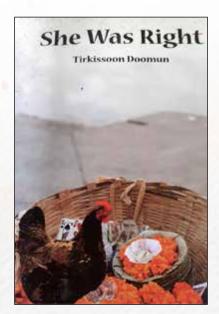




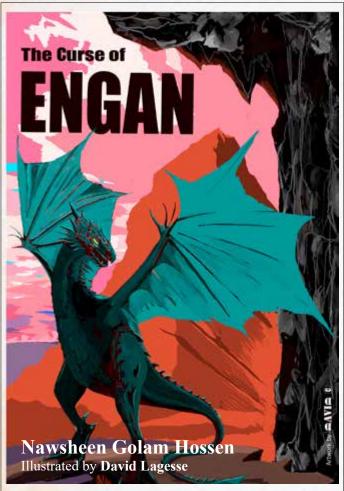




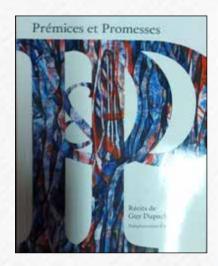




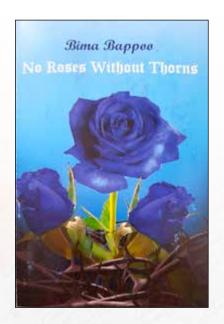




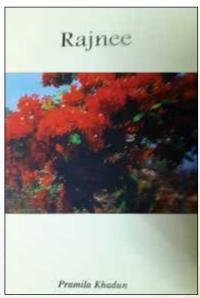


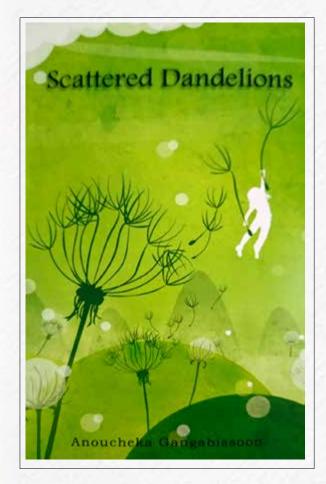








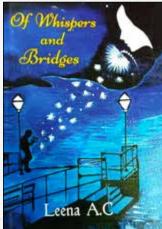












Acknowledgements

Thank you

FROM THE WHOLE TEAM OF THE PRESIDENT'S FUND FOR CREATIVE WRITING









- To the Patron of the President's Fund For Creative Writing, His Excellency, the President of the Republic, Mr Prithvirajsing Roopun G.C.S.K
 - The Minister of Arts and Cultural Heritage, Honourable Avinash Teeluck
 - The various authors who have contributed
 - The Speaking Unions, represented on the Board

All those who directly or indirectly helped in making this endeavour a success.

Books are the plane, the train and the road.

They are the destination, the journey, they are home.