

25 October 2007

The 2007 Man Asian Literary Prize - Shortlist Announced

Five authors make the shortlist for inaugural prize

Hong Kong, 25 October 2007 – Jose Dalisay Jr., Reeti Gadekar, Jiang Rong, Nu Nu Yi Inwa and Xu Xi are the five authors selected for the shortlist by the judging panel for the inaugural Man Asian Literary Prize, the first regional prize for a work unpublished in English. The winner of the prize will be announced on Saturday 10 November, 2007 at a ceremony in Hong Kong.

The five shortlisted works were chosen from a longlist of 23 and are:

- Jose Dalisay Jr., *Soledad's Sister*
- Reeti Gadekar, *Families at Home*
- Jiang Rong, *Wolf Totem*
- Nu Nu Yi Inwa, *Smile As They Bow*
- Xu Xi, *Habit of a Foreign Sky*

Adrienne Clarkson, Chair of the judges for the inaugural prize said:

"The diverse and outstanding finalists for the Man Asian Literary Prize are a revelation of fiction today in Asia. With an entrancing psychic geography, they challenge readers to an exhilarating discovery of ethical and imaginary worlds."

The winner will receive USD 10,000 and can look forward to publication and wider recognition in the English-reading world. There is additionally a USD 3,000 award for the translator (if any).

The judging panel for the 2007 Man Asian Literary Prize is: Adrienne Clarkson, former Governor General of Canada (Chair); André Aciman, New York-based author and scholar, and Nicholas Jose, writer, scholar and former Cultural Counsellor at the Australian Embassy in China.

Man Group plc is the sponsor of the Man Asian Literary Prize, in cooperation with Asian Literary Prize Ltd. Man Group also supports a variety of other programmes as well as charities aimed at furthering literature and literacy, including the Man Hong Kong International Literary Festival, a 10-day event that attracts authors from around the world and thousands of attendees. Man Group also sponsors the annual Man Booker Prize and the biennial Man Booker International Prize. Both these prizes are awarded and administered by the Booker Prize Foundation.

For further information about the Man Asian Literary Prize and press enquiries please contact:

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Additional information on the website: www.manasianliteraryprize.org

Notes to Editors

The Man Asian Literary Prize will be awarded in November 2007. This major new literary prize aims to recognise the best of new Asian literature and to bring it to the attention of the world literary community. A distinguished panel of judges selects a single work of fiction to be awarded the prize each year. Works submitted for consideration must not yet have been published in English, although they may have been published in other languages. The prize is jointly administered by representatives of the Man Hong Kong International Literary Festival, the University of Hong and the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and is sponsored by Man Group plc, a leading global financial services firm based in London.

Man Group plc is a leading global provider of alternative investment products and solutions. The company employs 1,600 people in 13 countries, with key centres in London and Pfäffikon (Switzerland), and offices in Chicago, Dubai, Hong Kong, Montevideo, Nassau, New York, Singapore, Sydney, Tokyo and Toronto. Man Group plc is listed on the London Stock Exchange (EMG) and is a constituent of the FTSE 100 Index. Further information on Man Group can be found at www.mangroupplc.com.



***Soledad's Sister* by Jose Dalisay Jr.**

Filipino author Dr. Jose Y. Dalisay Jr. was born in 1954. He writes in both English and Filipino and has published fifteen books of his stories, plays, and essays, with five of those books receiving the National Book Award from the Manila Critics Circle. He graduated from the University of the Philippines in 1984 (AB English, cum laude), and then received an MFA from the University of Michigan (1988) and a PhD in English from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (1991) on a Fulbright-Hays grant. Dalisay teaches English and Creative Writing as a full professor at the University of the Philippines. He has been a Hawthornden Castle, British Council, David Wong, and Rockefeller (Bellagio) fellow, and has lectured on Philippine culture and politics at the University of Michigan, University of Auckland, Australia National University, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, St. Norbert College, University of East Anglia, University of Rome, and the London School of Economics, among others.

Soledad's Sister begins when a casket arrives at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Manila, bearing the body of someone manifested as "Aurora V. Cabahug" – one among over 300 overseas workers who return as corpses at this airport every year. The real Aurora, however, is very much alive.

Soledad's Sister is due to be published by Anvil Publishing in early 2008.

For further information on Jose Dalisay Jr. or interview requests please contact the author. jdalisay@mac.com



***Families at Home* by Reeti Gadekar**

Indian author Reeti Gadekar was born and brought up in New Delhi. She has a PhD in German Literature from the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi (2003) and has worked variously as a librarian, translator (German – English) and as a teacher of German. Since 2006 she has been writing full-time.

Families at Home opens with a suicide in one of New Delhi's leading families. But Addl. CP Nihkil Juneja, who's a playboy when he's not a cop, discovers that the young woman in question has in fact been murdered for reasons the family would prefer kept quiet.

For further information on Reeti Gadekar or interview requests please contact the author. reetiji@hotmail.com



***Wolf Totem* by Jiang Rong**

Chinese author Jiang Rong was born in Jiangsu in 1946, and graduated from the middle school attached to China Art College in 1966. In 1967, Jiang joined the first wave of intellectuals who moved to the countryside as volunteers, living with nomadic communities on the Chinese border of Inner and Outer Mongolia for 11 years. Following his return to Beijing in 1978, Jiang embarked on postgraduate studies in political science at the renowned Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and assumed an academic position at a Beijing university. Now retired, he lives in Beijing, with his wife. *Wolf Totem* is a fictional account of life in the 1970s that draws on Jiang's personal experience of the grasslands of China's border region. Translated by Howard Goldblatt, *Wolf Totem* will be released worldwide by Penguin in March 2008.

Wolf Totem is set in the final 1960s heyday for the people of the Inner Mongolian grasslands – a time when an age-old balance based on culture and tradition was maintained between the nomads, their livestock, and the wild wolves who roamed the plains. Beijing intellectual Chen Zhen volunteers to live in a remote nomadic settlement on the border of Inner and Outer Mongolia. There, he discovers life of apparent idyllic simplicity based on an eternal struggle between the wolves and the humans in their fight to survive. But once the careful balance between the wolves and humans is disrupted, however, culture and tradition is damaged, and the environment suffers.

Wolf Totem is due to be published by Penguin Books in March 2008.

For further information on Jiang Rong or interview requests please contact Jo Lusby, General Manager, Penguin China. jo.lusby@cn.penguin.com



***Smile As They Bow* by Nu Nu Yi Inwa**

Burmese author Nu Nu Yi was born in 1957 in the village of Inwa near Mandalay (as Burmese customarily have no surnames, she affixes the place name as an identifying part of her pen name.) Since her debut in 1984, she has written over fifteen novels, a hundred short stories, and various diaristic magazine articles. Now one of Myanmar's (Burma's) leading writers, she currently resides in Yangon (Rangoon), although her writings are more often set among the rural poor and social outcasts. She has travelled abroad only briefly: to the Oxford University Centre for Cross-Cultural Research on Women and to the University of Iowa's International Writers' Program, as well as working with BBC World Radio in Chiang Mai to script Burmese language radio plays to promote HIV/AIDS awareness in Thai border areas.

Smile As They Bow unfolds during the week-long Taungbyon Festival held near Mandalay to propitiate the Burmese spirits known as nats, and follows an elder gay transvestite medium who fears losing his much younger partner to a woman in the heat of the festivities.

Smile As They Bow is due to be published by Hyperion East in September 2008.

For further information on Nu Nu Yi Inwa or interview requests please contact Will Schwalbe, Senior Vice President and Editor in Chief, Hyperion Books. Will.Schwalbe@abc.com



***Habit of a Foreign Sky* by Xu Xi**

Xu Xi is a Chinese-Indonesian native of Hong Kong and the author of six books of fiction/essays. She also compiled and edited the first comprehensive anthologies of Hong Kong literature in English. In 1998, she finally left an 18-year corporate life in favor of the writing life. She currently teaches creative writing at the MFA program in Vermont College and the University of Hong Kong, and inhabits the flight path connecting New York, Hong Kong and New Zealand. Please see www.xuxiwriter.com.

Habit of a Foreign Sky is set during the Asian financial crisis, and provides a snapshot into that tumultuous era, and into the Sino-American relations of the time, through the story a woman who loses both her mother and son in a single day.

For further information on Xu Xi or interview requests please contact Marysia Juszczakiewicz, Creative Work Ltd. marysiaj@creative-work.com

Judges biographies



Adrienne Clarkson (Chair) came to Canada as a refugee during the War in 1942. A leading figure in Canada's cultural life, Madame Clarkson had a rich and distinguished career in broadcasting, journalism, the arts and the public service. During her career Madame Clarkson received numerous prestigious awards both in Canada and abroad in recognition for her outstanding contribution in professional and charitable endeavours. Madame Clarkson was Governor General of Canada from 1999 to 2005. Madame Clarkson is a judge of the 2006 Scotiabank Giller Prize. Her memoirs were published under the title *Heart Matters*.



André Aciman is the author of *Call Me by Your Name*, *Out of Egypt* and *False Papers: Essays on Exile and Memory*. He has also co-authored and edited *The Proust Project* and *Letters of Transit*. Born in Alexandria, he lived in Italy and France. He received his Ph.D. from Harvard University and has taught at Princeton University and Bard College and is currently the chair of The Graduate Center's doctoral program in Comparative Literature and director of The Writers' Institute at The Graduate Center. He is the recipient of a Whiting Writers' Award, a Guggenheim Fellowship, and a fellowship from The New York Public Library's Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers. He has written for *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *The New York Review of Books*, and *The New Republic*. He was a judge for the National Book Award in 2001.



Nicholas Jose grew up in South Australia and has lived and worked in Britain, Italy and China. He has published short stories, essays, translations, several acclaimed novels, including *Paper Nautilus* (1987, reprinted 2006), *The Rose Crossing* (1994), *The Custodians* (1997) and *The Red Thread* (2000), and a memoir, *Black Sheep: Journey to Borroloola* (2002). His most recent book is a novel, *Original Face* (2005). He was Cultural Counsellor at the Australian Embassy, Beijing, 1987-1990, and has written widely on contemporary Asian and Australian culture. He was president of Sydney PEN, 2002-2005. He currently holds the Chair of Creative Writing at the University of Adelaide and is General Editor of the Macquarie PEN Anthology of Australian Literature.