

Githa Hariharan

Biography

Githa Hariharan was born in Coimbatore, India, and she grew up in Bombay and Manila. She was educated in these two cities and later in the United States. She worked as a staff writer in WNET-Channel 13 in New York, and from 1979 to 1984, she worked as an editor in the Mumbai, Chennai and New Delhi offices of Orient Longman. Since 1985, she has undertaken professional editing on a freelance basis. Githa Hariharan lives in New Delhi.

Her first novel, **The Thousand Faces of Night** (1992) won the Commonwealth Writers' Prize. Since then, she has published a collection of stories, **The Art of Dying** (1993); the novels **The Ghosts of Vasu Master** (1994), **When Dreams Travel** (1999), **In Times of Siege** (2003), and **Fugitive Histories** (2009); and a children's book, **The Winning Team** (2004). She has edited **A Southern Harvest**, a volume of stories in English translation from four major South Indian languages; and, with co-editor Shama Futehally, a collection of stories of children, **Sorry, Best Friend!**

Educational Background

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in English Literature and Psychology, Bombay University, 1974

Master of Arts in Communications, Graduate School of Corporate and Political Communication, Fairfield University, Connecticut, 1977

Publication details

Books

- **The Thousand Faces of Night**, Penguin Books India, 1992; The Women's Press, London 1996; Editions Zoe, Geneva 1996; Van Gennep, Amsterdam 1996; Ediciones del Bronce, Barcelona 2000; Philippe Picquier, Paris, 2006; Women Publishing House, Hanoi, 2008.
- **The Art of Dying and Other Stories**, Penguin Books India, 1993.
- **The Ghosts of Vasu Master**, Viking, Penguin Books India, 1994.
- **When Dreams Travel**, Picador UK, Picador India, 1999; Empiria, Athens 2001; Penguin Books India, 2008.
- **In Times of Siege**, Viking, Penguin Books India 2003; Pantheon, New York, 2003; Vintage, New York, 2004; Mashal Books, Lahore, 2004; Editions Zoe, Geneva, 2006; Il Saggiatore, Milan, 2007.
- **The Winning Team**, Rupa and Co., New Delhi, 2004.
- **Fugitive Histories**, Viking, Penguin Books India 2009.

Edited collections

- **A Southern Harvest** (ed.), Katha-Rupa, New Delhi, 1993.
- **Sorry, Best Friend!** (co-edited with Shama Futehally), Tulika, Chennai, 1997. Also in Hindi and Tamil translation.

Contributions: short fiction/extracts

- **In Other Words, New Writing by Indian Women**, Kali for Women, 1992, The Women's Press, 1993.
- **Into the Nineties, Post-Colonial Women's Writing**, eds. Anna Rutherford and Shirley Chew, Dangaroo Press, 1994.
- **Conjunctions**, vol. 24, Bard, New York, 1995.
- **The New Internationalist**, No. 264, Ageing with Attitude, February 1995, Oxford.
- **The Arnold Anthology of Post-Colonial Literatures in English**, ed. John Thieme, Arnold, 1996.

- **Feast! Women Write About Food**, eds. Laurie Critchely and Helen Windrath, The Women's Press, 1996.
- "A Night with Scheherazade," short story aired on **The Sound of Writing**, National Public Radio, Washington D.C., 1996.
- **Enigmas and Arrivals, An Anthology of Commonwealth Writing**, eds. Alastair Niven and Michael Schmidt, Caracenet, 1997.
- **The Vintage Book of Indian Writing 1947-1997**, eds. Salman Rushdie and Elizabeth West, Vintage, 1997.
- Translated extract from *The Thousand Faces of Night*, **Andere Lander, Andere Zeiten, Zeit-Geschichten aus aller Welt**, Marino Verlag, 1997.
- **India and Pakistan 1947-1997: A Celebration**, Special issue edited by Shirley Chew, Kunapipi 1997 No 3.
- **The Writer's Path, An Introduction to Short Fiction**, eds. Constance Rooke and Leon Rooke, ITP Nelson 1998.
- **Imaging the Other**, eds. Sara Rai and G.J.V. Prasad, Katha, 1999.
- **Best Loved Indian Stories**, Volume 1, eds. Indira Srinivasan and Chetna Bhat, Penguin India, 1999.
- **Options**, Women and Media Collective, 1st Quarter 1999, Colombo.
- **First Frost**, Women's Press, 2000.
- Translated extract from **Karlek, uppör och kardemummakarnor, Berättelser**
- **Fran Indien**, Bokforlaget Tranan, Stockholm, 2001.
- **A Matter of Taste**, ed. Nilanjana S. Roy, Penguin India, 2004.
- **The HarperCollins Book of New Indian Fiction**, Contemporary Writing in English, ed. Khushwant Singh, HarperCollins India, 2005.
- **Women Writers on Women's Lives**, ed. Jasbir Jain, Rawat Publications, New Delhi, 2005.
- "Becoming a Woman", **Fotografia**, DGE Equilibrista, Mexico, 2005.
- **The Inner Line, The Zubaan Anthology of Stories by Indian Women**, ed. Urvashi Butalia, Zubaan, New Delhi, an imprint of Kali for women, 2006.
- **The Table is Laid, The Oxford Anthology to South Asian Food Writing**, ed. John Thieme and Ira Raja, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2006.
- **The Fiction Collection 1: 20 Years of Penguin India**, Penguin India, New Delhi, 2007.
- "Diablo Baby" in the **Kenyon Review**, Fall issue, 2008.
- **An Endless Winter's Night, An Anthology of Mother-Daughter Stories**, ed. Ira Raja and Kay Souter, Women Unlimited, New Delhi, 2010.

Contributions: essays

- "The Fantasywalla of Bombay", **The Atlas of Literature**, ed. Malcolm Bradbury, De Agostini Editions, 1996.
- "Zeera Rasam", **Something to Savour, Food for Thought from Women Writers**, ed. Laurie Critchley and Helen Windrath, The Women's Press, 1996.
- "The Storyteller and the Noose", **The Penguin Book of Death**, ed. Gabrielle Carey, Penguin Australia, 1997.
- "In the City of Victory", **Indiens Suden, Merian**, 7 July 1997, Hamburg.
- "Time was, Time to come", **The Telegraph Millennium Magazine**, 21 Ideas for the 21st Century, Kolkata, January 2000.
- "All About H. Hatterr by G.V. Desani", **Lost Classics**, Michael Ondaatje et al (eds), Knopf Canada, 2000; Bloomsbury pbks, London, 2003.
- "Ten to Six", special edition, Pomeriggio/Afternoon, **Storie**, Leconte Editore, Rome, 2001.
- "Seven Cities and Anycity", **Storie**, Leconte Editore, Rome, 2003.
- "The Ignoble Politics of Naipaul's Nobel", **Kunapipi** xxv: 1, Festschrift for Shirley Chew edited by John McLeod and Catherine Batt, Australia, 2003.

- "Nissim Ezekiel: The Teacher Behind the Poet", **The Best of Tehelka**, Buffalo Books, New Delhi, 2003.
- "Discrete Thoughts", **Desert in Bloom**, Contemporary Indian Women's Fiction in English, ed. Meenakshi Bharat, Pencraft International, New Delhi, 2004.
- "Shrinking Spaces in Times of Globalisation", in **JSL**, Spring 2004, Journal of the School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.
- "New Voices, New Challenges", **Indian Literature**, Issue 228, July-August, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, 2005.
- "The Sari and the Fan", **Moving Worlds**, ed. Shirley Chew, Vol 5, No. 2, University of Leeds, 2005.
- Introduction to **Fragments of a Life** by Mythily Sivaraman, Zubaan Books, New Delhi, 2006.
- Introduction to **Frontiers, Collected Stories** by Shama Futehally, Penguin Books India, 2006.
- "In Search of Our Other Selves: Literature as Resistance" in the **Journal of Postcolonial Writing**, Vol 43, Issue 2 August 2007, Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, Oxfordshire.
- "In Times of Siege: Shrinking Spaces in Times of Globalization", Centre for Communication and Development Studies, Pune, 2007.
- "Bloodthirsty Honour", **Writing a Nation: An Anthology of Indian Journalism**, ed. Nirmala Lakshman, Rupa & Co, New Delhi, 2007.
- "Owning Books, Being Owned by Books", **First City**, April 2008, New Delhi.
- "A Vision for Keeps", **The Idea of a University: Jamia Millia Islamia**, ed. Rakshanda Jalil, Aakar Books, New Delhi, 2009.
- "The Multiple Joys of a Polygamous Reader", **First City**, June 2009, New Delhi.

Awards and nominations

The Thousand Faces of Night won the 1993 Commonwealth Writers Prize for best first book. The book was also nominated for the IMPAC award in 1996. The story "The Warden" from **The Art of Dying** was nominated for the Pushcart Prize in 1995. **The Ghosts of Vasu Master** was nominated for the Commonwealth Writers Prize in 1995. **When Dreams Travel** was nominated for the Booker Prize in 1999. **In Times of Siege** was short listed for the Eurasian section of the Commonwealth Writers Prize 2004, and it was also nominated for the Kiriyama Prize in 2004.

Writer's residencies/ fellowships

- Charles Wallace Writer-in-Residence, University of Kent, Canterbury, England, 1995
- Senior Fellowship in Literature, the Ministry for Human Resources Development, Government of India, 1996-1998
- Writer-in-Residence, "A World of Words: International Women Writers," Hedgebrook Retreat for Women Writers, Washington State, USA, 2001
- Writer's residency at the Rockefeller Foundation's study and conference centre at Bellagio, Italy, 2001
- World Literature Residency, George Washington University, USA, 2004
- Distinguished Montgomery Fellow, Dartmouth College, USA, 2006
- Writer-in-Residence, Jamia Millia Islamia University, New Delhi, 2008-2009
- Scholar-in-Residence, Jamia Millia Islamia University, New Delhi, 2010-2011

Lectures, readings, conferences and membership in juries and boards

1993: Commonwealth Writers Prize week, Singapore

1994: Conference on Commonwealth literature, Leeds University; Reading at the Nehru Centre, London; Jury member, Neustadt Prize, University of Oklahoma

1995: Lecture at the University of Leeds; Readings and seminars in the English

Departments of the University of Zurich and the University of Geneva; reading and conference at the University of Chandigarh.

1996: National seminar, "Breakthroughs in Modern Indian Literature," Sahitya Akademi Annual Festival of Letters, Bangalore; G.C. Bannerjee Memorial Lecture, University of Bombay; Workshops for the Refresher Course for college teachers, University of Bombay; Reading, British Council, Mumbai.

1997: Commonwealth Writers Prize 10th anniversary festival of literature, London; Reading, Voice Box, Royal Festival Hall, London; "Enigmas and Arrivals: Writing Now," international symposium, SOAS, London; Commonwealth Writers Tour, Arts Council reading tour of England with Louis de Bernieres and Rohinton Mistry; Reading, University of East Anglia, Norwich; Readings and conference, "The Empire Writes Back: Indian and Pakistan Literature after 1947," House of World Cultures, Berlin; International Writers Meeting, InterLit 4, Erlangen and Berlin; Lecture and reading tour of the Netherlands; Reading and panel on Indian writing, Cheltenham Literary Festival, England; Panel on Indian writing, Nehru Centre, London, 1997.

1998: Member of expert committee to award government fellowships in literature, New Delhi; Conference on "Europe and the Other," House of World Cultures, Berlin; Readings in the University of Hanover and Bremen; Writing workshop for senior students, Kodaikanal International School, Tamil Nadu,; Reading and lecture, American College, Madurai.

1999: Member of jury, best writing on cinema, National Film Awards, New Delhi; readings in New Delhi, launch of *When Dreams Travel*; Meet the Author event, Akshara Books, Hyderabad; reading, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur.

2000: Lecture at the University of Cyprus and readings in Nicosia; lecture and reading, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kanpur; Lecture as part of refresher course of college teachers, Amritsar; Keynote address, National Conference of the Chattisgarh English Teachers Association, Raipur.

2001: Reading in The Elliott Bay Book Company, Seattle; Lectures under the Seattle Arts and Lectures' Writers in the Schools Programme; Advisory Board, *Moving Worlds*, A Journal of Transcultural Writings, University of Leeds.

2002: Panel discussions, "At Home in the World": International Festival of Indian Literature, Neemrana, Rajasthan; Special lecture, Graduate School of Literature and Literary Theory, Blekinge Institute of Technology, Karlskrona, Sweden; Book release, International Centre, Dona Paula, Goa; Reading and panel discussion, University of Lucknow.

2003: Keynote address, "Shrinking Spaces in Times of Globalisation," IACLALS Annual Conference, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi; Readings in New Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Hyderabad and Bangalore, launch of *In Times of Siege*; panel discussion, UK-South Asia Women Writers Conference, British Council, New Delhi; Jury member, Public Hearing on Girl Child Labour, Mysore; Panel organizer and participant, "Voices of Resistance: Real Lives, Imagined Lives," House of World Cultures, Berlin; Readings and panel discussions, Japan-India Writers Caravan, Tokyo and Yamagata.

2004: Public lecture, "In Times of Siege: Real Sites, Disputed Sites," George Washington University; Reading, Barnes and Noble at West 82nd Street, New York; Lecture, "The Politics of Writing: Women, Language and the Postcolonial," Gender Studies Programme, Yale University; Panel discussion, "Women's Writing: Borders and Boundaries," Women's Initiative for Peace in South Asia, New Delhi.

2005: Jury, Classmate Young Author contest, Mumbai; panel discussion, "Subverting the Norm: Sexuality, Writing and Power, dialogue between Norwegian and Indian women writers, New Delhi.

2006: Keynote address, international conference on Literature as Resistance, University of Mumbai; panel discussion on Globalisation and Post-colonial Writing, University of Kolkata; public lecture, "In Search of Our Other Selves", Dartmouth College; member, Board of Trustees, India Foundation for the Arts (2006-).

2007: Keynote address, international conference, "Women's Studies and

Contemporary Literatures", Mysore University; Book release, Toto Funds the Arts, Bangalore; Meet the Author, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi; Salon du Livre 2007 (Paris Book Fair).

2008: Writer-in-Residence, Jamia University, New Delhi.

2009: Reading, Chandigarh Arts and Heritage Festival; lecture in conference on diversity, University of Cordoba, Spain; readings at Ranga Shankara, Bengaluru and Akshara, Hyderabad; reading organized by Prakriti Foundation and Madras Book Club, Chennai; "Speaking in Many Voices", reading and talk at The Attic, New Delhi; keynote address at conference on the Booker Prize and the Indian novel in English, Osmania University Centre for International Programmes, Hyderabad; lecture at the Refresher Course in English, Jamia Academic Staff College, New Delhi; reading at international conference on the Arabian Nights, "The Compass of Story", New York University Abu Dhabi.

2010: Scholar-in-Residence, Jamia University, New Delhi.