

## **SINGAPORE LITERATURE PRIZE SHORTLIST 2018 ANNOUNCED**

### **50 local writers to vie for top literary prize across four languages**

SINGAPORE, 19 June 2018 – The much-anticipated shortlist for the prestigious Singapore Literature Prize (SLP) has been announced by the Singapore Book Council today. Fifty shortlisted authors and their books are in the running for Singapore’s top literary prize. Awards in 12 categories will be given out at an awards ceremony on 6 August 2018.

The categories span across three genres – fiction, creative nonfiction and poetry – in four languages: Chinese, English, Malay and Tamil. Each winner will receive a cash prize of \$10,000 and a specially commissioned plaque.

For the first time in SLP’s history, the public can attend the ceremony via free registration and take part in the proceedings. William Phuan, Executive Director of SBC, says: “In conjunction with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Singapore Book Council this year, we decided to open up the ceremony to the public and invite them to be part of it. We thought what better way to mark our milestone and kick off Singapore’s birthday celebrations than to come together and honour our best writers?” The ceremony will be held at the Stephen Riady Auditorium at NTUC Centre.

The theme of the ceremony is to “acknowledge, celebrate and inspire”. SBC will pay tribute to the past winners of SLP during the ceremony – from all the way back to 1992 when the first award was given out – as well as in a series of outreach events over the next few months.

Among the 50 shortlisted writers this year, 32 are nominated for the first time. The biennial award attracted a total of 172 eligible submissions from across the different genres and languages. There were 43 submissions in the Chinese categories; 91 in English; 16 in Malay and 22 in Tamil. The poetry category received a total of 50 submissions; creative nonfiction had 66; and fiction 56.

The shortlists were selected by 12 panels of judges, one for each category. Each panel comprised three judges, who are a mix of local and overseas writers, academics and industry practitioners. The judges will pick the pinners in their respective category as well.

To promote SLP and showcase the writers, SBC will be organising a series of outreach events. One of the events is a special display of all the SLP-winning titles at the National Library. Running from 16 Jul to 8 Sep at the Lee Kong Chian Reference section on level 9 of the library, the exhibition “Celebrating Our Writers: The Journey of the Singapore Literature Prize” will trace the development of the prize vis-à-vis SBC’s own history.

Furthermore, shortlisted writers will be featured in public talks at local bookstores, schools, as well as the National Library as part of Read! Fest in July. SBC is also launching the SLP Campus initiative in an effort to promote Singapore writers and SingLit in schools. A couple of SLP writers will be speaking at the National Schools Literature Festival end July. For more information about SLP Outreach and Campus events, please visit <https://bookcouncil.sg/awards/singapore-literature-prize>.

The Singapore Literature Prize is organised by the Singapore Book Council.

### **Event details**

Singapore Literature Prize 2018 Awards Ceremony

**Date:** 6 August 2018, Monday

**Time:** 6.30pm – 8pm (followed by reception)

**Venue:** Stephen Riady Auditorium

1 Marina Boulevard, #07-01

Singapore 018989

**Admission:** Free by registration here, <https://slp2018ceremony.peatix.com/>

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## ANNEX I: About Singapore Literature Prize

The Singapore Literature Prize (SLP) is organised by the Singapore Book Council (SBC) and is Singapore's top literary prize. Established in 1991, the awards aim to:

- Promote Singapore literary talent through recognition of outstanding published works by Singapore authors in any of the four official languages: English, Chinese, Malay, or Tamil;
- Stimulate public interest and support for creative writing in Singapore.

This biennial competition is open to Singapore citizens and Permanent Residents whose works of fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction have been published in Singapore or abroad during specified period of time in any of Singapore's four official languages.

The award has undergone many changes over the years. During the first years of the award, it was conceived as an annual competition to promote creative writing and local literary works in English. The award was presented to the best unpublished work and carried a cash prize of \$10,000. Veteran writer Suchen Christine Lim won the inaugural award in 1992 for her novel "Fistful of Colours".

SLP became biennial in 2004 and was open to published works in the four languages. In 2014, a creative nonfiction category was added, and a separate category for poetry was created as well.

Many notable local writers have won the SLP, including Mohamed Latiff Mohamed, Yeng Pway Ngon, KTM Iqbal, Cyril Wong, Josephine Chia, Amanda Lee Koe and Sonny Liew.

For more information, please visit <https://bookcouncil.sg/awards/singapore-literature-prize>.

## ANNEX II: About Singapore Book Council

Singapore Book Council (SBC) is a charity founded in 1968. Its vision is to Build Our Imagine-nation by developing creativity, imagination and original thought through writing, reading, illustrating and storytelling. Its mission is to fulfil this vision by developing the literary arts sector through books and literary arts events, workshops, and awards. Its focus is Singapore and Asian content, content creation, training, translation, and appreciation of SingLit.

SBC is currently chaired by Ms Claire Chiang, co-founder of Banyan Tree Hotels & Resorts.

SBC supports the community at all levels, from language programmes and books for children, to aspiring individuals and professionals like writers, illustrators, storytellers and relevant industry partners by providing a platform to learn, network and collaborate. It also organises events to foster professional and community engagement like the annual Asian Festival of Children's Content and All In! Young Writers Festival, and grants prestigious awards, like the Singapore Literature Prize, to recognise and encourage excellence. Finally, SBC offers publishing-related and literary arts-focused courses and workshops to enhance skills and encourage lifelong learning through its academy.

SBC aims to become a hub for Asian content for the world, encouraging stories to be created and told across platforms. Through telling our own stories by writing or illustrations, it promotes understanding, impacts legacy and connects Asia with the world.

Because it all starts with a story.

SBC is supported by NAC under the Major Company Scheme for the period from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2019. For more information, please visit [bookcouncil.sg](http://bookcouncil.sg).