

Press Note: Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival 2016 – Day 4

Event: *Sugar n Spice with MasterChef Christine Manfield & Meera Syal*
Cooking demo from the MasterChef

Kolkata, 17th January, 2016: Renowned Australian Chef **Christine Manfield** and British Journalist and Actor **Meera Syal** went down memory lane of their childhood and favourite desserts hosted at a very special closing day event at the Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival 2016. Held in association with The Park and Australian High Commission, the highlight of the event was Manfield's demo of a special dessert from her book **Dessert Divas**.

In her book, Christine Manfield presents 45 show-stopping dessert recipes including the legendary *Gaytime Goes Nuts* recipe that bought the finalists of MasterChef 2012 to their knees. The recipes reflect Christine's trademark whimsical sense of humour which has always underlined how she conceptualizes desserts. In *Dessert Divas*, Christine celebrates the folly and playfulness a dessert can offer, and the sensory journey that a good dessert can take the unassuming diner on.

About Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF): 2016

Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF) is Kolkata's pioneering literary festival. Instituted in 2010 by the Apeejay Surrendra Group and its heritage Oxford Bookstore on Park Street, AKLF grew out of the bookstore's year round involvement with books, writers & publishers. In the seven years since Kolkata saw her first literary festival in AKLF, literary festivals have mushroomed across the country, but AKLF stands apart with its unique identity as the only one nearly 100 year-old bookstore as its nucleus. AKLF offers an atmosphere of warm, welcoming intimacy, favours depth over size, and includes a variety of subjects, from history to the environment. AKLF also celebrates Kolkata's magnificent public monuments and heritage sites as settings for Festival events, and eminent literati and cultural stalwarts from across India and overseas join the festival scheduled every year in the second week of January. In 2016 AKLF celebrates diverse themes encompassing books, theatre, the arts and cinema. AKLF's focus is on younger writers, newer voices and fresh audiences in its ongoing attempt to build an audience for books and reading. The 7th edition of AKLF is poised to scale new heights, with an outstanding and meticulously curated programme, bringing the world and the nation to Kolkata. Continuing to celebrate the city's magnificent public monuments and heritage sites the festival rediscovers the quaint and hidden charms of the city through heritage walks. AKLF highlights several unique concepts with a fresh approach that reflects current concerns such as diversity, gender equality, continuities across borders and youth engagements, which are also broad themes running through the festival. AKLF signature heritage sites include Nandan, Town Hall steps, The Indian Museum, Presidency University, Tollygunge Club and Victoria Memorial. AKLF 2016 has participation from Australia, Israel, Scotland, Italy, Nigeria, Portugal as well as England, France, Germany, Pakistan, Bhutan and others. Some of the prominent personalities who will be part of the literary

extravaganza are Ben Okri, Meera Syal, Christine Manfield, Ashis Nandy, Vir Sanghvi, Bharathi S Pradhan, Shatrughan Sinha, Shobhaa De and more. The four day long, multi-faceted event has several stimulating components designed to give visitors and the audience an enriching experience, with a great blend of literature, culture, art and heritage. And all of this is absolutely free for Kolkata and her culture-loving audience.

Notes to Editor:

Christine Manfield is a highly regarded Australian chef, author, food and travel writer, food manufacturer, presenter, teacher and gastronomic traveller. She currently runs Universal Restaurant in the Sydney suburb of Darlinghurst. She is considered one of Australia's best chefs. Christine has published ten acclaimed and award winning books with Lantern Penguin Australia. Christine is a contributor to travel features in Australian Gourmet Traveller, Delicious Magazine, SMH Traveller and Australian Financial Review. She also writes occasional food columns in various Australian magazines and newspapers. Some of the books written by her are - *Tasting India* (2011), *Fire and Spice* (2012), *Lantern Cookery Classics* (2013), *Dessert Divas* (2014). Christine has appeared as a guest chef and judge on Junior MasterChef Australia series 1 (2010), MasterChef Australia Series 2 (2010), Series 3 (2011) and Series 4 (2012) where her 'Gaytime Goes Nuts' dessert was the final challenge that determined the winner. Her latest book is *A Personal Guide to India and Bhutan* (2015).

Meera Syal is a British comedian, writer, playwright, singer, journalist, producer and actress. She rose to prominence as one of the team that created *Goodness Gracious Me* and became one of the UK's best-known Indian personalities portraying Sanjeev's grandmother, Umami, in *The Kumars at No. 42*. Meera Syal's childhood experiences growing up in a small mining community provided the background to her first novel, *Anita and Me* (1996). The novel was shortlisted for the Guardian Fiction Prize and won a Betty Trask Award. She also won the 'Media Personality of the Year' award at the Commission for Racial Equality's annual 'Race in the Media' awards (2000), as well as the EMMA (BT Ethnic and Multicultural Media Award) for Media Personality of the Year in 2001. She was awarded the MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire) in 1997 for her services to drama. She was also appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in 2015 New Year Honours for services to drama and literature. She has also dabbled in scriptwriting, where she wrote the script for Gurinder Chadha's *Bhaji on the Beach*. She also worked as a journalist and is a regular contributor to The Guardian.

AKLF 2016 Partners and Associations:

The AKLF 2016 edition has forged several new, prestigious associations, following its impressive collaborations in first year in 2010. We are proud to welcome on board both our new and regular partners including the Victoria Memorial Hall, Indian Museum, Australian High Commission, Embassy of Italy in India, Bloody Scotland, British Council, Calcutta Debating Circle, Crime Writers Festival, Embassy of Israel in India, Alliance Française, Portugal Embassy, Presidency University, Jaipur Literary Festival, Yes Foundation, FACES, Open Doors, FREED, The Creative Arts, Poetry Paradigm, MAKAIAS, Tollygunge Club, Max Muller Bhavan - Goethe Institute, The Park, Modern High School for Girls, Rakshak Foundation, Aishee, Streets of Calcutta, Calcutta Instagrammers, Wikipedia, Caravan, BEE books, GIBL.in, Bulk Email SMS India, Presto, She and Griffith Review. We also have 91.9 friends FM as radio partner, The Times of India as Print Media Partner, Anderson as Printing Partner, Selvel as Outdoor Partner, Typhoo as Refreshment Partner, Mera Tiffin as Food Partner, Indismart and Anon Production as special partners. A wide cross section of publishers, which include Niyogi Publishers, Future Publishers, OM Books and others

will showcase their authors at AKLF 2016. AKLF is proud of these associations and hope they keep growing year on year.

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