

Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival hosts the Book Launch of 'Days of Gold and Sepia' by Yasmeen Premji

Kolkata, 11th January, 2013: Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival 2013 hosted the launch of the book 'Days of Gold and Sepia' by Yasmeen Premji, author and former assistant editor of the Indian design magazine, Inside Outside.

An evocative memoir set in Bombay, the book was launched with Harper Collins to Kolkata audiences, by another Bombayite (Or Mumbaikar) Shyam Benegal, eminent film director, screenwriter and a Padma Shri and the Padma Bhushan awardee. The dignified presence of Justice Leila Seth lent a charming air of days gone by, while Anjum Katyal, Consultant, Publications, MAKAIAS moderated the session. The book launch was followed by an interaction where the author shared her experience of writing the novel, based on the memories and accounts of earlier generations growing up in the Bombay of yesteryear.

'Days of Gold and Sepia' is a fascinating tale of Lalljee Lakha, an impoverished villager from the deserts of Kutch, Gujarat who comes to Mumbai, makes his fame and fortune, and eventually becomes the city's uncrowned cotton king. Set in the turbulent era between the First War of Independence in 1857 and India's independence in 1947, the narrative takes the reader from the unforgiving desolation of Kutch to the bustling city of Bombay where Lalljee discovers his survivor's streak. It is a tale that characterizes a man who exemplifies courage and character at a time of pain and struggle. The story traces journey of Lalljee from the doomed love and family feuds to self-actualization of great personal integrity.

The story line is seamlessly intertwined with the historic background of the city of Bombay, now Mumbai, and vividly captures the quintessential charm of old Bombay. The novel chronicles extraordinary tales of some very ordinary lives.

About the author:

Yasmeen Premji, born and raised in erstwhile Bombay and graduated from St. Xaviers College before completing her master's degree from Smith College, USA. She worked as assistant editor for the Indian design magazine, Inside Outside, for many years before moving with her husband Azim to Bangalore, India's IT capital, which she now calls home. 'Days of Gold and Sepia' is her first novel.

About the book:

'Days of Gold and Sepia' is the saga of Lalljee Lakha as he rises from his humble beginnings as a penniless orphan in his desert homeland of Kutch to amass a large fortune as Bombay's 'Cotton King'. Set against the eventful period between India's War

for Independence in 1857 and the fledgling freedom struggle of the early twentieth century, this sweeping tale is peopled by a vibrant array of characters – merchant princes and maharajas, courtesans and soothsayers, pirates, freedom fighters and soldiers of the British Raj. The novel paints the portrait of a man of courage and character, and is the story of the discovery of life, the pain of a passionate and doomed love and family feuds and of great personal integrity and human frailty.

About Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF) 2013:

A Community initiative by the Apeejay Surrendra Group, the annual literary festival hosted since 2010 in Kolkata is the first international literary festival in Kolkata, a city celebrated for its intellectual depth and cultural heritage. An array of special curated discussions, performances and some of the finest literary events are scheduled for the fourth edition from 9th- 13th January, 2013. A noteworthy literary and cultural representation from across India and overseas will be seen at the Festival, amongst the finest minds from India and overseas. Prominent personalities attending will be Ramachandra Guha, William Dalrymple, Shyam Benegal, Pavan Varma, Yasmin Ali Bhai Brown, Amit Chaudhuri, Leila Seth, Manil Suri, Ruchir Joshi, Onir, Urvashi Butalia, Shobhaa De and Tishani Doshi and several others. Events are scheduled at significant cultural and heritage venues across Kolkata like National Library, St John's Church, banks of Hooghly, Lascar Monument, and at India's finest and most loved 92 year old iconic bookstore- Oxford Bookstore, Kolkata. Amongst the many highlights is Festival's collaboration with the Tibor-Jones South Asia Prize to recognize and encourage new and emerging writers in the South Asian region.

For event videos & pictures Log On to <http://www.aklf.in/>

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