

Fearless: Indian Poets Celebrate Diversity in the Face of Hindu Nationalism

Indian American poets Pramila Venkateswaran, Ralph Nazareth, Sophia Naz, and Zilka Joseph, celebrate the diversity of their belief systems, their different backgrounds, religions and cultures, and discuss the effects of right-wing nationalism in their country of origin, India, where moves to suppress minorities and free speech are on the rise. The poets, from Hindu, Christian, Muslim, and Jewish communities, will express their concerns about intolerance and the rise of nationalism both in India and the US—which is their home now, discuss how that influences their work and read their poems.

Organizer, Moderator, & Panelist: Zilka Joseph

Zilka Joseph has authored five books, was nominated for Pushcart, the ABA, and PEN awards. She was a finalist for the Foreword Indies Book Award twice. *In Our Beautiful Bones* is her newest book. Her work is influenced by Indian and Western cultures, and her Bene Israel roots.

www.zilkajoseph.com

Panelist: Pramila Venkateswaran

Pramila Venkateswaran, poet laureate of Suffolk County, Long Island, WWBA Poet of the Year, and author of *We Are Not a Museum*, *Thirtha*, *Behind Dark Waters*, *Trace*, *Thirteen Days to Let Go*, *The Singer of Alleppey*, and *Slow Ripening*, is an award winning poet who teaches in SUNY, Nassau.

Panelist: Ralph Nazareth

Ralph Nazareth, has published four books of poetry and has read at venues in the US and abroad. He has taught for forty years—in colleges, schools and maximum-security prisons. The managing editor of Yuganta Press, he is also on the board of GraceWorks, Inc., an international nonprofit foundation.

Panelist: Sophia Naz

Sophia Naz has been nominated twice for the Pushcart Prize. Her work features in numerous literary journals. She has authored the poetry

collections *Peripheries*, *Pointillism*, *Date Palms*, and *Shehnaz*, a biography. *Open Zero*, her fourth poetry collection, published from Yoda Press in 2021.