

## Event Outline :

### Indian Writers Challenge State Violence

In the popular depictions of India circulating in the US, we rarely see the stories that the nation's jingoistic governments have shoved under the carpet, stories of massive human rights violations committed by the Indian state in the country's margins: military violence and Hindu fundamentalist oppression - nearly absent in the vast array of widely read work about India available in English in the US. The panelists will discuss how they represent this in their work and the challenges associated

The panelists address the theme of state violence in a variety of genres and from different subject -positions in their topical, subversive work. Attendees will not only discover a severely underrepresented body of work that deserves wider discussion but will also learn how women and queer writers have addressed this topic in their fiction and nonfiction.

After the moderator introduces the panel, participants will discuss how their books have represented insurgency and extra-judicial killings in India, uncover/explore the extent to which State violence and politics dictate the mores of intimate relationships, write fiction about contemporary homophobic attitudes in Hinduism while underscoring the inclusive attitudes in the religious texts, \

1. The moderator will read the bios of the panelists (7 mins)
2. and each writer will speak for 10 minutes on how their work addresses the theme (30 mins).
3. Panelists will take questions from audience members. (15 mins)

Aruni Kashyap <a href="mailto:aruni.kashyap@uga.edu">aruni.kashyap@uga.edu</a>	<p>Aruni Kashyap is the author of the novel <i>The House With a Thousand Stories</i> (Penguin Random House, 2013) and a short story collection <i>His Father's Disease</i> (Gaudy Boy Books NY 2024). He is the Director of the Creative Writing Program at the University of Georgia, where he works as an Associate Professor in the Department of English.</p> <p>Aruni Kashyap will talk about how he has addressed this theme as a writer from Assam, Northeast India in all his first two books that address insurgency and extra-judicial killings.</p>
Shastri Akella	<p>Shastri Akella's debut novel is <i>The Sea Elephants</i> (Flatiron (US-Canada), Penguin (India)). His writing has appeared in <i>Guernica</i>, <i>Fairy Tale Review</i>, <i>Masters Review</i>, <i>The Rumpus</i>, <i>World Literature Today</i>, <i>CRAFT</i>, etc. He's an Assistant Professor of Creative Writing at Michigan State University.</p>

	<p>Akella will speak about his novel “The Sea Elephants” that follows a young gay man who after the sudden, accidental death of his sisters, flees his father's threat to send him to conversion therapy by joining a street theater troupe.</p>
Suchira Vijayan	<p>Suchitra Vijayan is a New York-based author of the critically acclaimed <i>Midnight's Borders: A People's History of Modern India</i>. (2021) and <i>How Long Can the Moon Be Caged? Voices of Indian Political Prisoners</i> (2023). She is a lawyer, researcher and teaches at NYU Gallatin and Columbia University.</p> <p>Drawing examples from her two books, <i>Midnight's Borders</i> and <i>How Long the Moon Can be Caged : Voices from India’s Political Prisoners</i>, Suchitra Vijayan will discuss how her work addresses the ongoing persecution of minorities and dissidents in India and what role nonfiction writes can play in highlighting these.</p>
<p>Torsa Ghosal  <a href="mailto:torsa.ghosal@csus.edu">/torsa.ghosal@csus.edu</a></p>	<p>Torsa Ghosal is the author of an experimental novella, <i>Open Couplets</i>, and a book of literary criticism, <i>Out of Mind</i>. Her work has appeared in <i>Berkeley Fiction Review</i>, <i>Massachusetts Review</i>, <i>LARB</i>, and elsewhere. She is a professor of English at California State University and is at work on a novel.</p> <p>Torsa will talk about how her fiction tries to uncover/explore the extent to which State violence and politics dictate the mores of intimate relationships, and where/how these relationships are able to challenge the state and where/how they falter.</p> <p>I am also interested in the question of form and genre as a fiction writer: there seems to be an expectation that Indian novelists addressing state violence write in a particular mode—address “large” conflicts (riots, Partition etc.)--but I am interested in the novel as a space where large conflicts can be telegraphed through smaller moments and not always in the straight up realist vein but also alternative modes like the dark comedy (which is the mode I am working in at present).</p>