

For immediate release

**ASIAN FESTIVAL OF CHILDREN'S CONTENT (AFCC)  
MARKS 10<sup>TH</sup> EDITION IN 2019  
CELEBRATES "DIVERSITY" THEME WITH OVER 80 LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL SPEAKERS**



**ASIAN  
FESTIVAL OF  
CHILDREN'S  
CONTENT  
2019**

**5-8 SEP**  
National Library  
Building  
[afcc.com.sg](http://afcc.com.sg)

**FEATURED SPEAKERS**

 PHILIP NEL (USA)	 HANNA ALKAF (MALAYSIA)	 SOE MARLAR LWIN (MYANMAR/ SINGAPORE)	 EMILY X.R. PAN (USA)	 CHEENO MARLO SAYUNO (PHILIPPINES)	 HELEN WANG (UK)	 MUHAMMAD BIN KAMIT (SINGAPORE)	 SARA SARGENT (USA)
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Artwork by guest illustrator Sai Parn Hein

SINGAPORE, 10 JUNE 2019 – Asia's premier festival for children's books and young adult (YA) fiction, the Asian Festival of Children's Content (AFCC), marks its 10<sup>th</sup> edition this year in September from 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>. Celebrating the theme "Diversity", the festival will feature over 80 Singapore and international speakers over four days. Organised by the Singapore Book Council, the festival will be held at the National Library Singapore.

Over the past decade, AFCC has been instrumental in providing a platform for authors, illustrators, translators, publishers, teachers and parents to come together to discuss the development of Asian children's books and YA. This year, AFCC focuses on the theme "Diversity", which explores the



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richness of our stories and narratives, as well as a wide gamut of pertinent topics on how books can help children and youths understand the world they live in today – from reading mother tongue literature to inclusive education, emotional trauma, minority representation and trends in YA fiction in Southeast Asia.

The festival will feature more than 80 speakers from Singapore, Southeast Asia and around the world. Some of the notable speakers include:

- Cheeno Marlo Sayuno (Philippines), educator and author who has won awards for his children's stories, *The Magic Bahag*, *Si Tiya Salome* and *The Missing Blanket*;
- Emily X.R. Pan (USA), the first-time novelist of *The Astonishing Color of After*, that *Publishers Weekly* calls an “emotionally charged debut” that is “a compelling exploration of grief and the insidiousness of depression”;
- Eva Wong Nava (Singapore), author of the award-winning book, *Open: A Boy's Wayang Adventure*, which tackles autism;
- Hanna Alkaf (Malaysia), the author of the critically acclaimed debut YA novel, *The Weight of Our Sky*, that deals with the racial riots in Malaysia in 1969;
- Helen Wang (UK), award-winning children's book translator who won the Marsh Christian Award for Children's Literature in Translation Award in 2017, and the Chen Bochui Special Contribution Award;
- 李木子 Li Muzi (Singapore), established drama educator who will conduct a Chinese-language workshop on using drama to teach literacy to preschoolers;
- Malarvele Ilangovan (Singapore), librarian and writer of five children's books, who will share about her journey of writing children's stories in Tamil;
- Muhammad bin Kamit (Singapore), educator who will conduct a workshop on creating purposeful play and bringing books to life in the outdoors;



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- Philip Nel (USA), renowned scholar of children's literature, and author or co-editor of 11 books, including *Was the Cat in the Hat Black?: The Hidden Racism of Children's Literature and The Need for Diverse Books*. He will be giving the AFCC Lecture, titled "Why Adults Refuse to Admit Racist Content in the Children's Books They Love";
- Soe Marlar (Myanmar/ Singapore), academic and educator who will share about narrative structures in Burmese folk tales, as part of the Country of Focus programme on Myanmar;
- Weng Cahiles (Philippines), a two-time National Children's Book Awards winner from the Philippines who will share about her latest title *Si Kian*, a haunting picture book about children being killed in the war of drugs in her country.

The speakers will take part in more than 70 events over four days, including panel talks, workshops, pitching sessions, masterclasses and lectures. The events are organised along three main programme tracks: Cross-Platform, Writers and Illustrators, as well as a two-day focus on Teachers and Parents (6-7 Sep).

AFCC will celebrate Myanmar as its Country of Focus this year, as it continues to showcase the best of children's book writers and illustrators from our Southeast Asian neighbours. Past COFs include Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines. The COF programmes will provide a window into the literary tradition and industry developments in Myanmar. AFCC has invited Sai Parn Hein, an established children's writer, cartoonist, and translator hailing from the Shan region in Myanmar as the guest illustrator this year.

Early bird specials for AFCC 2019 are now available till 31 July. Audiences can enjoy 25% off regular festival pass tickets. Secondary and tertiary students can also take advantage of a special promotion of \$50 pass to the entire festival (limited quantity only).

The full festival line-up and schedule will be available early July. For more information, please visit [afcc.com.sg](http://afcc.com.sg).



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## Event details

### **Asian Festival of Children's Content 2018**

Date: 5 to 8 September

Venue: National Library

100 Victoria St, Singapore 188064

### **Ticketing**

Early Bird promotion runs now till 31 July 2019.

25% off regular passes | 30% off group purchase of five passes or more

Ticketing website: [afcc.com.sg/2019/page/tickets](http://afcc.com.sg/2019/page/tickets)

	Early Bird	Regular
All Access Pass	\$200	\$260
One-day Pass	\$60	\$80
Two-day Pass	\$112.50	\$150
Three-day Pass	\$165	\$220
Student Pass	\$50	NA
Lectures	\$15	\$20

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Annex I: AFCC 2019 Programmes (Selected)

Annex II: Speakers' Bios (Selected)

For media related enquiries, please contact:

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# Singapore Book Council

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## About Singapore Book Council

The Singapore Book Council (SBC) is an independent charity with IPC status. Established in 1968 to support Singapore authors and literature, SBC aims to Build Our Imagine-nation by developing creativity, imagination, original thought and empathy through writing, reading, illustration and storytelling. We are committed to developing the literary arts sector through our festivals, training workshops and courses, as well as book awards to recognise excellence. Because it all starts with a story.

**Vision:** International recognition for quality, diverse Singapore literature.

**Mission:** To develop, support and advocate a multicultural literary arts sector.

SBC is supported by the National Arts Council of Singapore under the Major Company Scheme for the period from 2019 to 2021. For more information, please visit [www.bookcouncil.sg](http://www.bookcouncil.sg).

## About Asian Festival of Children's Content

The Asian Festival of Children's Content (AFCC), organised by the Singapore Book Council, is the leading festival in Asia focusing on children's books and stories and young adult (YA) fiction. Targeted at writers, illustrators, translators, publishers, parents, teachers and media producers, this one-of-a-kind festival offers a series of exciting panel discussions, workshops, lectures, masterclasses, pitching sessions, networking events and public activities promoting the creation and appreciation of quality children's literature and YA with a focus on Asian themes. For the past 10 years, the AFCC has since grown to become a key literary event in the region, attracting many local and international speakers, as well as thousands of delegates and participants.

For more information, please visit [www.afcc.com.sg](http://www.afcc.com.sg).



## Annex I: AFCC 2019 Programmes (Selected)

Programmes*	Speakers	Date	Time
<p><b>AFCC Lecture: Why Adults Refuse to Admit Racist Content in the Children's Books They Love</b></p> <p>As childhood is where the psyche becomes susceptible (or more resistant) to racism, children's books are one of the best places to combat this social ill. To better educate adults who resist considering that beloved children's literature may harbour racist content, Philip Nel will read the "hate mail" inspired by his 2017 book on <i>The Hidden Racism of Children's Literature and the Need for Diverse Books</i>, and offer some pedagogical strategies in response.</p>	Philip Nel	6 Sep (Fri)	6pm – 7.30pm
<p><b>Creating Transmedia Narratives: New Frontiers in Children's Storyworld Adventures Through Minecraft and Roblox</b></p> <p>Minecraft and Roblox are opportunities that allow children to create worlds and stories of their own through their transmedia engagement, shuffling the production, consumption, and distribution dynamic of children's content. Learn how storytelling for children has reached new frontiers in these avenues.</p>	Cheeno Marlo Sayuno	5 Sep (Thu)	3.15pm – 4.15pm
<p><b>Book-Screening: Adapting the Picture Book Reading Experience for the Digital Age</b></p> <p>The amount and variety of media entertainment available to children is increasing at a rapid rate. Join Aparna and Bijal as they discuss how embracing technology can renew the way stories are told in picture books and transform storytelling in digital media.</p>	Aparna Kapur, Bijal Vachharajani	7 Sep (Sat)	9am – 10am



Programmes*	Speakers	Date	Time
<p><b>Expanding Multicultural Understanding Through Muslim Children's and Young Adult Literature</b></p> <p>How can we counter Islamophobia through stories? Sadaf Siddique from KitaabWorld will share on a toolkit of books and programming ideas to facilitate positive representations of Muslims and to create a more inclusive environment.</p>	Sadaf Siddique	6 Sep (Fri)	9am – 10am
<p><b>Screen Free Adventures: Crafting Purposeful Play Anywhere!</b></p> <p>Learning adventures can happen anywhere and anytime! Learn from Muhammad, an experiential learning advocate and play crafter, as he shares how to create purposeful play in the everyday and highlight the benefits and basics of bringing books to life in the outdoors.</p>	Muhammad bin Kamit	6 Sep (Fri)	11.30am – 12.30pm
<p><b>Irama &amp; Buku: Merangsang Si Cilik Membaca Lewat Lagu (Rhythm &amp; Books To Get the Little Ones Hooked)</b></p> <p>Sesi ini berfokus kepada penggunaan lagu-lagu rakyat berserta buku kanak-kanak dalam usaha menyemai minat membaca dalam kalangan kanak-kanak dari kecil. Kemahiran literasi awal kanak-kanak boleh dibentuk melalui lima amalan literasi awal iaitu Bermain, Bernyanyi, Berbual, Membaca dan Menulis. Sesi ini juga akan berkongsi tentang penggunaan kreatif buku-buku bergambar serta lagu-lagu rakyat bersesuaian dengan tema-tema tertentu.</p> <p>How do we instil the love of books and reading in toddlers aged 1-3? This session discusses ways to facilitate children's early</p>	Muhammed Shahril Shaik Abdullah	6 Sep (Fri)	1.30pm – 2.30pm



Programmes*	Speakers	Date	Time
development through songs, rhymes and stories.			
<p><b>How animated ebooks could help children learn their Mother Tongue Language better</b></p> <p>How should parents and teachers select an animated e-storybook for emergent bilinguals? This study examines the effects of popular animated features, sound and motion, on children's ability in learning Mandarin.</p>	Sun He	6 Sep (Fri)	2.45pm – 3.45pm
<p><b>Teaching Empathy Through Stories</b></p> <p>Maya will lead the audience in a discussion of "empathy gaps" in our schools and society. She'll also look at ways for both teachers and parents to nurture a sense of empathy in children using stories and book discussions.</p>	Maya Thiagarajan	7 Sep (Sat)	9am – 10am
<p><b>Storytelling for Children with Learning Difficulties</b></p> <p>Join storyteller-author-educator Chen Wei Teng to find out more about how you can engage children with learning difficulties during storytelling. Learn strategies that will develop their language, and at the same time bring them on a meaningful journey alongside the story.</p>	Chen Wei Teng	7 Sep (Sat)	11.30am – 12.30pm
<p><b>Say no, walk out, tell a trusted adult! Using reading resources to equip young children with body safety skills</b></p> <p>Body safety skills are essential skills for the prevention of sexual abuse. These involve teaching children to differentiate between right and wrong actions, and to tell a trusted adult if sexual abuse happens. This workshop will introduce participants to a children's storybook on sexual abuse prevention, initiated by the Singapore</p>	Lin Xiaoling, Goh Eck Kheng	7 Sep (Sat)	11.30am – 1pm



Programmes*	Speakers	Date	Time
Children's Society. Learn how to use storytelling and other interactive resources to help children pick up body safety skills.			
<p><b>《想吃苹果的鼠小弟》：趣味十足的华文戏剧课 (The Little Mouse: Using Chinese Drama to Engage the Early Years)</b></p> <p>一起跟鼠小弟寻找那又红又脆又多汁的苹果！他会怎么做呢？他又会遇到谁呢？跟着木子和鼠小弟一起探索吧！在这个工作坊里，木子会与大家分享，通过参与和演出华文戏剧，用有趣，活泼的方式来激发小朋友的语言能力。这个工作坊会用中文进行。</p> <p>Join The Little Mouse as he goes on a journey to look for that red, crunchy, juicy apple! What is he going to do to achieve it? Who is he going to meet along the way? Join Muzi and The Little Mouse to find out! Using drama as a tool, this workshop will show how Chinese Drama can be a fun and exciting medium in teaching language literacy to children.</p>	李木子 Li Muzi	7 Sep (Sat)	1.30pm – 2.30pm
<p><b>Dealing with Difficult Topics In Children's Literature</b></p> <p>This panel will give participants an overview of the process of developing children's literature on difficult topics such as sexual abuse, depression and terminal illness. It will cover the preparatory work that authors and illustrators can undertake to familiarise themselves with the context at hand, as well as the possible social or cultural biases to avoid when presenting such topics to young children.</p>	Lin Xiaoling, Goh Eck Kheng, Joanne Poon, Sabrinah Morad	5 Sep (Thu)	10.45am – 11.45am
<p><b>Portrayal of Special Needs in YA and Children's Books</b></p> <p>Join us for a panel discussion on choosing books with positive depictions of disability</p>	Suzanne Kamata, Myra Bacsal, Sarinajit Kaur,	5 Sep (Thu)	12pm – 1.30pm



Programmes*	Speakers	Date	Time
and writing sensitively about children with disabilities. Learn more about book titles that feature children or young adults with disabilities.	Hanna Alkaf		
<b>Southeast Asian YA Science Fiction and Fantasy: We Do Exist!</b> What is Southeast Asian YA science fiction and fantasy? Who writes them? Joyce Chng shares her experience and journey in writing science fantasy fiction inspired by the Southeast Asia region for young adults.	Joyce Chng	5 Sep (Thu)	12pm – 1pm
<b>The Making of <i>Si Kian</i>: Children's Literature, Journalism and Storytelling under the War on Drugs</b> Learn more about <i>Si Kian</i> , a children's book that bravely discusses the dark topic of minors being killed in the war of drugs. Join the <i>Si Kian</i> team as they share their experience with combining journalism and literature in storytelling.	Weng Cahiles, Aldy Aguirre, Kimberly dela Cruz	5 Sep (Thu)	2pm – 3pm
<b>Diverse Books For A Diverse Audience</b> The argument for diversity and fair representation has never been more louder than it is today. With the eroding of class, racial and gender boundaries, how has this movement been reflected in contemporary literature? How will it shape or influence the reading ecosystem as we know it?	Philip Nel Emily X.R. Pan	5 Sep (Thu)	12pm – 1pm
<b>Visualizing Emotions: Learning Grief and Loss in Contemporary Picturebooks</b> Illustrations bring variety to the expression of emotions. This presentation explores the visual construction of grief and loss in contemporary picturebooks and the effect of visual literacy on the acquisition	Ping-Shi Kao	5 Sep (Thu)	12pm – 1pm



Programmes*	Speakers	Date	Time
of emotion, to promote awareness of life education in Asia.			
<b>Children's Tamil Stories in Singapore</b> It's one of the four official languages in Singapore, but how much do we know about the stories that are written in Tamil? Learn more about the publishing output and trends for children stories in Tamil in Singapore, and the journey of writing and producing children's stories in Tamil.	Malarvele Ilangovan	6 Sep (Fri)	9am – 10am
<b>Diversity and Minority Representation in Children's Literature</b> How do writers and publishers ensure that they are representing minority cultures appropriately? Join the four panelists as they share their reflections and challenges working in the field, from their efforts to increasing diversity, to writing as an outsider, and how this helps preserve a nation's heritage and culture.	Yovita Siswati, Agnes Bemoe, Cheeno Marlo Sayuno, Sadaf Siddique	6 Sep (Fri)	10.15am – 11.15am
<b>A Glimpse of Myanmar Culture through Selected Myanmar Folktales</b> Folktales manifest the cultural heritage of a people. This talk will bring the audience through the narrative structures and contents of Myanmar folktales to appreciate certain aspects of Myanmar culture.	Soe Marlar Lwin	5 Sep (Thu)	2pm – 3pm

\*Programmes subject to change. Please visit [afcc.com.sg](http://afcc.com.sg) for the latest updates.



## Annex II: Speakers' Bios (Selected)

### **Aditi Krishnakumar (India / Singapore)**

Aditi's first book, *A Whole Summer Long*, was published in 2012. Her manuscript *Ergo Sum*, eventually rewritten as *The Magicians of Madh*, was shortlisted for the Scholastic Asian Book Award. Aditi's *Codex: The Lost Treasure of the Indus* won the 2016 Scholastic Asian Book Award.

### **Bijal Vachharajani (India)**

When Bijal Vachharajani isn't reading *Harry Potter*, she is Senior Editor at Pratham Books. Also a journalist, Bijal is the author of three children's books, *So You Want to Know About the Environment*, *The Seed Savers* and *What's Neema Eating Today?*

### **Barbara Moxham (Germany / Singapore)**

Barbara Moxham was born in Munich, raised in Sydney and currently calls Singapore home. She worked as an art director after completing a Master of Arts in Painting and Drawing. Her addiction to books and becoming a mum led her to illustrating picture books, including two books for highly sensitive children.

### **Cheeno Marlo Sayuno (Philippines)**

Cheeno Marlo Sayuno is an Assistant Professor at the University of the Philippines Los Baño. He has won awards for his children's stories *The Magic Bahag*, *Si Tiya Salome*, and *The Missing Blanket*. His research interests also include discourse analysis, communication research, and dance.

### **Chen Wei Teng (Singapore)**

Wei Teng is an educator currently teaching at NorthLight School. She works with teenagers with learning difficulties such as dyslexia and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and who often come from challenging or disadvantaged family backgrounds.

### **Debasmita Dasgupta (Singapore)**

Debasmita is a Singapore-based internationally-published picture-book illustrator and graphic novel artist. She enjoys drawing both fiction and non-fiction for children and young-adults. She is currently working on her first independent graphic novel with Scholastic.

### **Emily X.R. Pan (USA)**

Emily X.R. Pan lives in Brooklyn, New York, but was originally born in the Midwestern United States to immigrant parents from Taiwan. She is the founding



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editor-in-chief of *Bodega Magazine* and author of *The Astonishing Color of After*.

## **Eva Wong Nava (Singapore)**

Eva Wong Nava writes stories that help children to understand the world and how everyone is unique and different. Her award-winning book, *Open: A Boy's Wayang Adventure*, helps young readers be more compassionate to people on the autism spectrum.

## **Far'ain Jaafar (Singapore)**

Far'ain Jaafar is an educator, mother, children's book enthusiast and author. She loves children's picture books, strongly believing that stories are powerful agents of change, and enjoys reading to children.

## **Friska Titi Nova (Indonesia)**

Friska is a literacy activist and librarian. Friska, also known as Kak Peri, is currently managing the Pustakawan Mendunia website, and compiling storybooks for children. She enjoys sharing her experiences and knowledge about librarianship, storytelling and literacy.

## **Goh Eck Kheng (Singapore)**

Goh Eck Kheng is an editor, book designer and publisher of Landmark Books. He is a keen photographer and potter, and also a long-time collector of children's books. He is the author of two children's books, *Jun and the Octopus* and *Friends, A Counting Book*.

## **Hanna Alkaf (Malaysia)**

Hanna Alkaf spent a decade writing everything from marketing emails to investigative feature articles. She now spends her time making it up as she goes along, both as an author of fiction and as a mom. *The Weight of Our Sky* is her first novel.

## **Helen Wang (UK)**

Helen Wang translates Chinese children's books into English. In 2017 she won the Marsh Christian Award for Children's Literature in Translation Award, and the Chen Bochui Special Contribution Award.

## **Joyce Chng (Singapore)**

Joyce Chng writes mainly science fiction and YA. Her fiction has appeared in *The Apex Book of World SF II*, *We See A Different Frontier*, *Cranky Ladies of History*, and *Accessing The Future*. Her YA includes a trilogy about a desert planet and a fantasy duology in Qing China.



## **Joyce Chua (Singapore)**

Joyce is a fashion journalist and editor, and author of *Lambs For Dinner*. She is the co-founder of the short story blog *Muse in Pocket, Pen in Hand*, where she publishes her short fiction, and shares her thoughts at *The Writes of Passage* in between writing her next novel.

## **Leila Boukarim (Lebanon / Singapore)**

Leila Boukarim was born in Lebanon, raised in several countries, and now resides in Singapore. She spends her time writing stories that inspire empathy and encourage meaningful discussions between children and caregivers. She has self-published two picture books and worked with publishers such as Marshall Cavendish, World Scientific and Penguin Random House.

## **李木子 (新加坡) Li Muzi (Singapore)**

木子是 The Learning Connections 的一位资深戏剧教育者。她在华文戏剧艺术领域有多年的教学经验。她精通过程戏剧法和奥尔夫音乐教学法，在日常教学中，她把这两种教学方法相融合，并运用到课程活动当中。

Li Muzi is a Senior Drama Educator in The Learning Connections. She has years of experience in the field Chinese Drama and Theatre Arts. She is well-versed in the Process Drama Approaches and the Orff Approach and fuses both approaches in her daily classes.

## **Lin Xiaoling (Singapore)**

Lin Xiaoling oversees the Advocacy and Public Education Department at Singapore Children's Society. She has more than eight years' experience in developing public education initiatives, such as training workshops and resources, centered on child abuse and neglect prevention.

## **Malarvele Ilangovan (Singapore)**

Malarvele is a librarian that has also authored five children books, with four in Tamil, *Amma Enke, Ito Vantatu Dino, Luluvum Sundeliyum, Ammuvin piranthanaal parisu*, and an English book, *Dino, the Dinosaur*.

## **Mark C. Evans (Australia)**

Mark's early career as a professional actor led him to tour schools performing characters from books and realizing the potential quality literature had to enrich the lives of children and how a well written book with a great message could influence the minds of a generation and create change for the better ... or just make them laugh and appreciate the colour and joy of life.



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## **Maya Thiagarajan (USA/ India)**

Maya Thiagarajan is a global educator that is currently Founder and Education Director at TREE. Besides authoring *Beyond the Tiger Mom: East-West Parenting for the Global Age*, Maya has also conducted numerous teacher training workshops and acts as consultant and advisor to a number of schools.

## **Muhammad bin Kamit (Singapore)**

Muhammad loves educating children but often found himself troubled by the lack of opportunities they had to learn and play outside. He believes that young minds deserve the chance to discover and explore the world outside with confidence and curiosity to stretch their imagination - which contributes to well-rounded education that understands that learning also takes place outside of a classroom.

## **Muhammed Shahril Shaik Abdullah (Singapore)**

Muhammed Shahril Shaik Abdullah bertugas sebagai pustakawan bersekutu di Perpustakaan Negara Singapura di mana beliau mengendalikan beberapa program bacaan untuk kanak-kanak dari umur 1 hingga 9 tahun. Beliau memegang Sarjana Pendidikan dari Universiti Monash dalam bidang kepimpinan, dasar dan perubahan. Minat penyelidikan beliau termasuk sastera kanak-kanak dan pedagogi kritis.

Muhammed Shahril Shaik Abdullah is an Associate Librarian with the National Library Board where he oversees reading programmes for children aged 1-9. He holds a Master of Education from Monash University, with a research interest in children's literature and critical pedagogy.

## **Myra Garces-Bacsal (Singapore)**

Rhoda Myra Garces-Bacsal is an Assistant Professor at the National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. She is the Co-Coordinator of the Diploma in Special Education and the Professional Development Leader of the Early Childhood and Special Needs Education Academic Group. She manages the vibrant website [gatheringbooks.org](http://gatheringbooks.org)

## **Philip Nel (USA)**

Philip Nel is a University Distinguished Professor of English at Kansas State University. He is the author or co-editor of eleven books, the most recent of which is *Was the Cat in the Hat Black?: The Hidden Racism of Children's Literature, and the Need for Diverse Books*.



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## **Ping-Shi Kao (Taiwan / Ireland)**

Ping-Shi Kao is a freelance illustrator whose research interests focus on visual texts, material culture, childhood history and history of emotions. Her newest illustration was published in *It's All about Love* 《原來都是愛》, a collection of short stories for youths, by Linking Publishing.

## **Rosemarie Somaiah (Singapore)**

Rosemarie is an established author, storyteller and artist-educator who runs Asian Storytelling Network. She works with all ages including toddlers, teenagers, volunteers and adults in the corporate world. She has been a National Arts Council 'Writer-in-School' for 5 years and enjoys cross-disciplinary work and collaborations with artists and educators.

## **Sadaf Siddique (India / USA)**

Sadaf Siddique is a co-founder of KitaabWorld, an online platform for the discovery and distribution of South Asian children and young adult literature. With a focus on curated content and community outreach, KitaabWorld seeks to address social issues in the South Asian community and beyond.

## **Sara Sargent (USA)**

Sara Sargent is a Senior Executive Editor at Random House Books for Young Readers, where she publishes platform-driven fiction and nonfiction in the picture book, middle grade, and young adult categories. She has previously held positions at HarperCollins and Simon & Schuster, where she worked on many *New York Times*, *USA Today*, and *Wall Street Journal* bestsellers.

## **Sarinajit Kaur (Singapore)**

Sarina is a Master Teacher at the Pedagogical Excellence Branch at the Academy of Singapore Teachers (AST). Sarina's area of work includes supporting the education fraternity in the area of special education. She oversees direction and focus in the area to grow professional excellence as well as promote a culture of networked learning.

## **Soe Marlar Lwin (Myanmar/ Singapore)**

Soe Marlar Lwin is currently an associate professor and Head of Applied Linguistics in Singapore University of Social Sciences. She enjoys sharing and exchanging ideas with teachers and teacher educators on how Asian folktales and contemporary oral storytelling can be used as powerful tools to help children and young adults develop language and literacy skills.

## **Sun He (China / Singapore)**



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Sun He is a research scientist at National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Her major research interests include how to select and use books and eBooks to promote child bilingual development in language, literacy, and social-emotional well being.

## **Suzanne Kamata (USA / Japan)**

Suzanne Kamata is the author of four YA novels, including *Indigo Girl*, and the picture book, *Playing for Papa*. Her stories featuring children or teens with disabilities have appeared in *Ladybug*, *Cicada*, *OUP's Dragonfly Reader series*, and more.

## **Tina Narang (India)**

Tina Narang is the Children's Publisher at HarperCollins India, having joined to launch the children's imprint, HarperCollins Children's Book. Previously, Tina was with Scholastic India from 2005-2017 and has presented three papers at AFCC 2015.

## **Weng Cahiles (Philippines)**

Weng Cahiles is the author of three children's books. She is a two-time National Children's Book Awards winner. Her books *What Kids Should Know About Andres and the Katipunan* won in 2014 and *Si Kian*, supported by The PCIJ Story Project, won at the 2018 National Children's Book Awards.

## **Yovita Siswati (Indonesia)**

Yovita very much enjoys writing stories for children including novels, especially ones with historical backgrounds. She has written almost 50 children's books. One of Yovita's books, *Misteri Kota Tua*, has been placed on the IBBY Honor List in 2016.