

**Amitav Ghosh's much-anticipated new novel to be launched at The Royal Opera House, Mumbai**

**For Immediate Release**

Amitav Ghosh 's rich narrative worlds are set to come alive once more.

**Literature Live!** and **Penguin Random House** in association with **Royal Opera House, Mumbai** and **Avid Learning** proudly announce the launch of *Author Amitav Ghosh's* anticipated new novel, ***Gun Island***.

The evening will include a discussion on the book and its main themes between the Author and *Filmmaker Shekhar Kapur*.

*The description of the book is as below:*

*Gun Island* is peopled with a diverse cast of characters, and set in places that range from the Sundarbans to Los Angeles and Venice, this is a story about a world in which creatures and beings of every kind have been torn loose from their accustomed homes by the catastrophic processes of displacement that are now unfolding across the Earth, at an ever-increasing pace. It is also a story about a man whose faith in the world is restored by two remarkable women.

The story follows a Brooklyn-based dealer in rare books on a visit to his birthplace, Kolkata, where he finds his life becoming entangled with an ancient legend about the goddess of snakes, Manasa Devi. While visiting a temple, deep within the vast mangrove forests of Bengal, he has a disturbing encounter with the most feared, and revered, of Indian snakes, a king cobra. This is followed by a series of increasingly uncanny episodes that seem to dissolve the borders of the human and non-human.

Join us for an exciting evening which showcases one of India's finest living English Language writers!

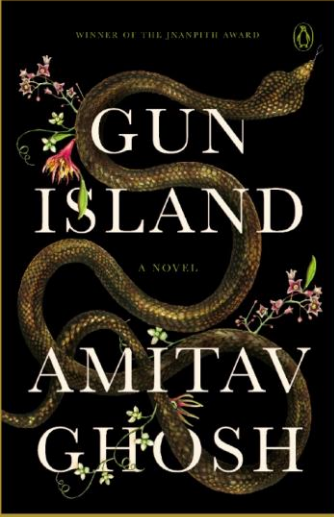
**WHERE:** Royal Opera House, Mama Parmanand Marg, Mumbai - 400 004

**WHEN:** Monday, 17<sup>th</sup> June 2019 | 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM – Book Launch and Discussion

**RSVP:** [www.avidlearning.in/](http://www.avidlearning.in/)

**PRESS EMAIL / CALL:** Ayeshah Dadachanji on [ayeshah.avid@gmail.com](mailto:ayeshah.avid@gmail.com) / +91 9820155297





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## About the Speakers

**Amitav Ghosh** was born in Calcutta in 1956. He grew up in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and India. He studied at the universities of Delhi and Oxford and published the first of eight novels, *The Circle of Reason*, in 1986. The first novel in his Ibis trilogy, *Sea of Poppies*, was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize. He received the Jnanpith Award in 2018.

**Shekhar Kapur** is a globally-recognised film director, media visionary and proponent on the future of New Media. Having started his career as an accountant, management consultant and economist in London, he returned to India in search of a new direction and went on to become a well-known actor, director, writer and producer. He is best known for films, such as *Elizabeth the Golden Age*, *Bandit Queen* and *Four Feathers*, that have won or been nominated for numerous awards including the Oscars, BAFTAs and Filmfare Awards. He has executive produced the Bollywood-themed, Andrew Lloyd Webber musical *Bombay Dreams* as well as films such as *The Guru* for Universal Studios. He set up Virgin Comics and Virgin Animation, focused on creating new stories and characters for a global audience, with Richard Branson and Deepak Chopra. He is the Founder and Chairman of Qyuki Media, a company he started last year in partnership with Cisco, and is creating emotive Social Media communities beyond Facebook. He also sits on a number of boards and advisory committees including the Media Development Authority of Singapore, the Prime Minister of India's Special Advisory Board for Innovation, Media and New Media and the International Global Water Challenge. He was given one of India's highest civilian state awards, the Padma Shri, for his service to media in the nation.

## About the Partners

**Literature Live!** The Mumbai LitFest, is India's leading literary festival, attracting the world's great writers, performers and publishers. Last year, over 150 writers from 17 countries took

part in the festival. It has hosted world renowned authors like Sir Vidya Naipual, Anne Enright, Martin Amis, Germaine Greer, Amitav Ghosh, Shashi Tharoor, Ramchandra Guha, Ben Okri, Vikram Seth, Tom Friedman, Sebastian Faulks, AC Grayling, Lionel Shriver, Neil McGregor and many other Nobel, Booker and Pulitzer Prize winning authors. Now celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> year, the festival will take place from November 14 to 17, 2019, at NCPA, Nariman Point; Title Waves, Bandra and Prithvi Theatre, Juhu.

**Penguin Random House India** is the largest English language trade publisher. The company publishes over 250 new titles every year and has an active backlist of 3000 titles. With a strong fiction and nonfiction list, we publish across every segment including biography, travel, business, politics, history, religion and philosophy, lifestyle, cookery, health and fitness, sports and leisure, visual books and children's books. The children's titles are published the Puffin and Ladybird imprints. We also publish Disney India's iconic Mickey and Friends characters and five classic characters- Aladdin, Peter Pan, Pinocchio, Dumbo and the cast of The Jungle Book- under the Puffin imprint in India. Our illustrious author list includes three Booker Prize winning novels (The God of Small Things, The Inheritance of Loss and Life of Pi) and virtually every major literary prize, including the Nobel Prize, the Magsaysay Award, the Jnanpith Award, the Sahitya Akademi Award and the Commonwealth Writers' Prize. Several of our authors are also recipients of the Bharat Ratna and Padma Vibhushan, India's highest civilian honours. Penguin Random House India has a co-publishing partnership with Majul Publishing House for local language translations across adult and children's fiction and non-fiction titles that are available in Hindi, Gujrati, Tamil, Telugu and Marathi. Further, we are also the exclusive distribution partners for some of the leading publishing houses – Faber, Granta, Short Books, Atlantic Books UK, Canongate, Ingram Publishing Services, Pushkin, Sterling US, Egmont, Walker Books, Icon, FW Media, Guinness, Hay House, Wiley Business India, Zubaan, Black Ink and Fun OK Please – in India.

**Royal Opera House, Mumbai** is widely touted as Mumbai's Cultural Crown Jewel and India's only surviving Opera House. The original idea for the space was conceived of in 1908, inaugurated in 1911 by King George V, and eventually completed in 1916. The design incorporated a blend of European and Indian detailing. The space became a cinema in later years before falling into disrepair and shutting by the 1990s. Fittingly, the space has been owned by the Royal Family of Gondal since 1952 and was eventually restored by conservation architect, Abha Narain Lambah under the leadership of His Highness, Maharaja Shri Jyotendrasinhji of Gondal. The Royal Opera House Mumbai, now one of the last remaining Baroque structures in the city, reopened after 23 years in October 2016. The building was included on the 2012 World Monuments Watch to raise awareness about its history and significance, and support preservation efforts. The building has since been recognized with an Award of Merit in the 2017 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation. The restored facilities feature a 575-seater 3-level auditorium with an orchestra pit and state of the art technological upgradations, including acoustics, stagecraft, lighting and air-conditioning, alongside retaining the old world charm of the proscenium stage, the royal boxes and the magnificent regal chandeliers. Some more enhancements to the venue include a motorized screen, co-axial ceiling speaker system, Four-zone volume control and all round wifi access. Today, it stands as a key performance and creative hub in the city's cultural landscape, while being a premier heritage landmark. *Facebook:* MumbaiOpera *Twitter:* @MumbaiOpera *Instagram:* @mumbaiopera

**Avid Learning**, a public programming platform and cultural arm of the Essar Group, has conducted over 1000 programs and connected with more than 125,000 individuals since its inception in 2009. Driven by the belief that Learning Never Stops, AVID's multiple formats like Workshops, Panel Discussions, Gallery Walkthroughs, and Festival Platforms create a dynamic and interactive atmosphere that stimulates intellectual and creative growth across the fields of Culture & Heritage, Literature, Art and Innovation.

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