

Amitav Ghosh returns to The Royal Opera House, Mumbai with one of the most important and keenly anticipated works of non-fiction

For Immediate Release

Literature Live! and **Harper Collins** in association with **The Royal Opera House, Mumbai** and **Avid Learning** proudly announce the launch of Author **Amitav Ghosh's** latest non-fiction book, available first in India, *Smoke and Ashes: A Writer's Journey Through Opium's Hidden Histories*. This is the second time that Amitav Ghosh will be launching his book at The Royal Opera House, after the grand celebration of *Gun Island* in 2019.

The memorable evening will include a discussion between the *Radio & Podcast Host and National Brand Head, RadioOne Network*, **Hrishikesh Kannan** on the themes, narratives, and stories behind the book.

The description of the book is as below:

When Amitav Ghosh began his research for the Ibis Trilogy some twenty years ago, he was startled to find how the lives of the nineteenth-century sailors and soldiers he wrote of were dictated not only by the currents of the Indian Ocean but also by a precious commodity carried in enormous quantities on those currents: opium. Most surprising of all was the discovery that his own identity and family history were swept up in the story.

Moving deftly between horticultural histories, the mythologies of capitalism, and the social and cultural repercussions of colonialism, *Smoke and Ashes* reveals the pivotal role one small plant has played in the making of the world as we know—a world that is now teetering on the edge of catastrophe.

In the words of **Amitav Ghosh**, “My new book, *Smoke and Ashes: A Writer's Journey Through Opium's Hidden Histories*, is based on the enormous quantities of material I accumulated while researching the trilogy of novels I wrote between 2005 and 2015. When I started writing the novels, I thought they would be mainly about the transportation of indentured workers from India to Mauritius in the early nineteenth century. But in the course of my research, and much to my surprise, I stumbled upon a different trade in a precious commodity that was being carried in large quantities from India to China—opium!”

Udayan Mitra, *Executive Publisher, HarperCollins India*, says, *Smoke and Ashes* is one of the most powerful, thought-provoking works of non-fiction I have read in some time. We at HarperCollins India are privileged to be the first publisher to bring this exceptional book to readers, before its publication elsewhere across the world. I can hardly wait for booklovers everywhere to read and respond to what is most certainly, for me, the non-fiction book of the year.”

Whether you are a literary enthusiast or a history buff, mark your calendar, because this is an event not to be missed!

Where: Royal Opera House, Mumbai

When: Tuesday, 18th July, 2023 | 6:00 PM – Registrations | 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM – Book Launch and Panel Discussion

RSVP: www.insider.in

Press: ayeshah.avid@gmail.com

About Speakers:

Amitav Ghosh was born in Calcutta, and grew up in India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka; he studied in Delhi, Oxford and Alexandria. He is the author of several acclaimed works of fiction and non-fiction including *The Shadow Lines*, *The Glass Palace*, *The Hungry Tide*, the Ibis Trilogy (comprising the novels *Sea of Poppies*, *River of Smoke* and *Flood of Fire*), *Gun Island*, *The Great Derangement*, *The Nutmeg's Curse*, *Jungle Nama* and *The Living Mountain*.

Amitav Ghosh's work has been translated into more than thirty languages. He has been awarded and felicitated across the world. In 2019 *Foreign Policy* magazine named him one of the most important global thinkers of the past decade. The same year, the Jnanpith Award, India's highest literary honour, was conferred on him: he was the first English language writer to receive it.

Hrishikesh Kannan popularly known as Hrishi K is producer & presenter on the nations biggest breakfast radio show on 94.3 RadioOne & Podcast creator & anchor on the online platforms Spotify, '[moneycontrol.com](https://www.moneycontrol.com)' & HT Smartcast. He is also National Brand Head for the RadioOne Network. A multiple RAPA & PROMAX award winning radio host, voice artiste & MC, the year 2022 saw Hrishikesh pick up a total of 4 'Golden Mikes' in various categories at the Exchange4Media Golden Mike Radio Awards. His podcast "The HrishiKay Sessions" is one of the most heard podcasts on Amazon Prime Music, Gaana, Apple Podcasts & JioSaavn

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