

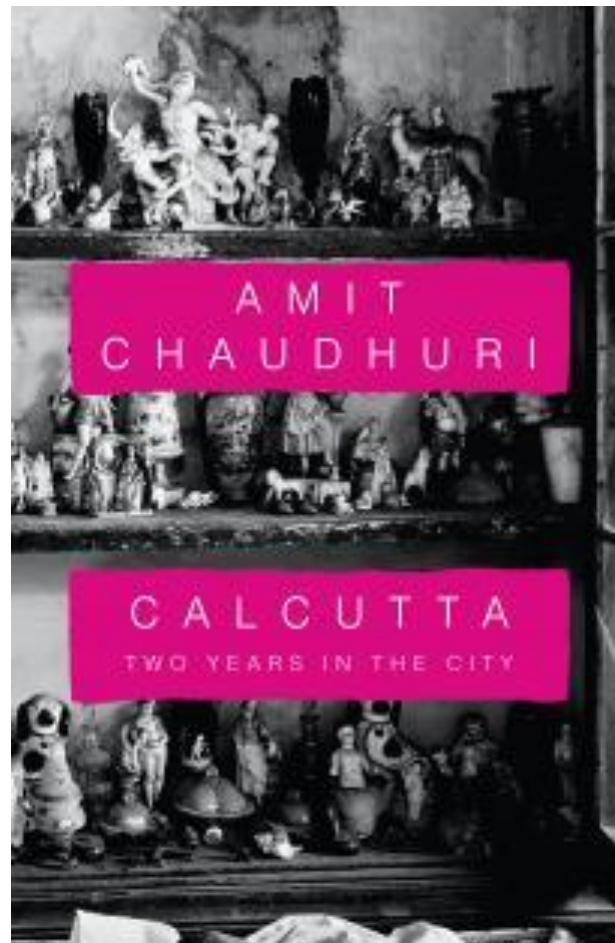
*Chaudhuri's languorous, elliptical, beautiful prose is impressively impossible to put in any category at all*  
**Salman Rushdie**

**Penguin Books India and Avid Learning**

**cordially invite you to the Mumbai launch of**

## ***Calcutta***

**By Amit Chaudhuri**



**On Thursday 28 February 2013, 6:30 pm**

**At Bungalow 8**

**1,2 and 3 Granta Building**

**17 Arthur Bunder Road, Colaba (Near Radio Club)**

**Mumbai**

*Amit Chaudhuri has, like Proust, perfected the art of the moment... (he) is a miniaturist, for whom tiny moments become radiant, and for whom the complexities of the fleeting mood uncurl onto the page like a leaf, a petal*

**Hilary Mantel, New York Review of Books**

*Chaudhuri's writing has a strangely mesmeric quality, using the quotidian to draw the reader into the author's mental world, his own way of looking. At its best it reads like Sebald or Naipaul in A Way in the World. His prose displays an ability amounting to brilliance for finding the right words to catch an emotion, a thought, a personality.* **Patrick French, Financial Times**

*India's great cities have been the subject of many outstanding travel books and now it is the turn of Calcutta. His stories are spun out of a mix of history and family memoir, but the joy here lies in his digressions, his wanderings through the city, his remembrances and conjectures.*

**Sunday Times – 'Travel Books of the Month', Picked by Anthony Sattin for February's essential reading**

*His (Amit) is a careful, fastidious, even fussy voice, like Pamuk's, deliciously witty at times and capable of its own poetry, but mostly thoughtful, fair and attentive to the quotidian in a way few writers on Calcutta have been*

**Mint**

*a perceptive, beautifully written and often wry portrait of Calcutta/ Kolkata – Hindustan Times*

**Mumbai** - February 25, 2013— AVID Learning, in association with Penguin India, is presenting a conversation between *Calcutta: Two Years in The City* author Amit Chaudhuri and Naresh Fernandes, founding editor of Time Out India and author of *Taj Mahal Foxtrot: The Story of Bombay's Jazz Age*.

The talk is slated for Thursday, February 28<sup>th</sup> at 6PM at Bungalow 8, Grants Mansion, Colaba. This occasion also marks the launch of Amit Chaudhuri's book, *Calcutta: Two Years in the City*.

Asad Lalljee, CEO of AVID Learning commented, "While most Mumbaikars are familiar with Flurys chocolates, fish curry with mustard, and Rabindranath Tagore's and Satyajit Ray's artistic descriptions of Calcutta, they are less familiar with the modern realities of Calcutta. This AVID program will allow audience members to hear simultaneously an inside and outside perspective on Calcutta."

During the discussion, Chaudhuri and Fernandes will touch on how Calcutta has juggled its history with 21<sup>st</sup> century issues. They will also draw out the interesting similarities and marked differences between Calcutta and Bombay.

Chaudhuri stated, "I am eager to share aloud my experiences in Calcutta with a live Bombay audience. AVID has built a strong reputation in the field of arts programming over the past few years, and I am delighted to be partnering with them for my book launch and talk."

Author Amit Chaudhuri, born in Calcutta but raised in Bombay, has written his book from the intermeshing of a native's intimacy and émigré's distance and surprise. Chaudhuri evokes the extraordinary about Calcutta—from its houses with their slatted windows to its effervescent cultural life, its change of season, and its Christmas and pujas. He also paints an acute, often ironic, and occasionally terribly funny picture of life in the city today—of its malls and restaurants, its fitful attempts

to embrace globalization, its middle class who leave and then return reluctantly, its bygone aristocracy, and its homeless and poor itinerants.

### **About the book**

In 1999, Amit Chaudhuri returned with his family to Calcutta. He did so tentatively. Calcutta was where his parents had moved after retirement; it was the city he had loved in his youth and in whose lanes he had spent tranquil childhood holidays; one he had made his name writing about. But that Calcutta had receded and another had taken its place.

Calcutta is Chaudhuri's account of two years (2009–11) in the great metropolis. Using the idea of return and the historical elections of 2011 as his fulcrum, he travels between the nineteenth century, when the city burst with a new vitality, to the twenty-first century, when, utterly changed, it seems to be on the verge of another turn.

Along the way Chaudhuri evokes all that is most particular and extraordinary about the city—from its houses with their slatted windows to its effervescent cultural life, its change of season, and its Christmas and pujas. He paints, too, an acute, often ironic, and occasionally terribly funny picture of life in the city today—of its malls and restaurants, its fitful attempts to embrace globalisation, its middle class who leave and then return reluctantly, its bygone aristocracy, and its homeless and poor itinerants.

Amit Chaudhuri is the author of five novels, the latest of which is *The Immortals*. Among the many prizes he has won for his fiction are the Commonwealth Literature Prize, the Betty Trask Prize, the Los Angeles Times Book Prize, and the Sahitya Akademi Award. He is also a highly respected critic, a fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, and Professor of Contemporary Literature at the University of East Anglia. Amit Chaudhuri lives in Kolkata and Norwich, and is also an acclaimed musician.

### **About Avid**

**Avid Learning**, an Essar Group initiative, fosters creative learning through workshops, discussion forums and other programs across the fields of Culture & Heritage, Literature, and Art including Visual, Performing & Applied Arts. Started in 2009, AVID has touched the lives of over 10,000 participants with 150 programs. AVID workshops are open to all and are delivered by experts from India and abroad. With its presence in India and Dubai, and future plans for New York and London, AVID aspires to make its learning platform global. AVID believes today's knowledge seekers should have limitless opportunities...because learning never stops. For more details on AVID, please visit our website [www.avidlearning.in](http://www.avidlearning.in)

**Penguin Books India** is the largest English language trade publisher in the subcontinent. Founded in 1985, Penguin India began publishing in October 1987 with six books. Celebrating its twenty-fifth year in 2012, the company now publishes more than 250 new titles every year and has an active backlist of over 3000 titles. Known for its strong fiction and narrative non-fiction list, Penguin India publishes across virtually 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.

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