

Respect For The Written Word

Webzines, e-books and self publishing being the name of the game, there maybe one too many writers. But it takes true grit and perseverance to keep writing, narrating one tale after another. Musharraf Ali Farooqi, believes literature is ageless. Born in Hyderabad, Pakistan, he is at home in Canada as well as in New York. Author, novelist, translator, Musharraf talks about his passion, the written word...

1: Did you become a writer by choice or by chance?

By choice.

2: What were the challenges you faced while landing a publisher, literary agents, grants etc?

Once I had finished writing my first novel in 1999, I sent it to about a dozen literary agents in Canada and US. One of the agencies accepted me, and a couple of years later they found me a publisher. Meanwhile I supported myself by doing odd jobs.

3: According to you, what kind of literature is being produced globally? Do you think there will be a Dickens, a Dostoyevskys or a Flaubert among them?

There was never a time in human history when good literature was not being produced. And as long as human beings remain, they will continue producing good literature. Contemporary time is no exception. Just like Dickens, Dostoyevsky, and Flaubert were great without being someone else, the contemporary writers too would make their own mark.

4: Soft wares, self-publishing, instant writers and overnight a published authors. Is literature gaining or losing respect?

It is becoming more accessible and it is a great thing.

5: Are there any serious readers left these days? Reason being the same obvious one, every other person one bumps into, is a writer.

Even non-serious readers can be good readers. And I do not think that the great number of people writing today shows that literature is becoming non-serious. One way of looking at it is that people now give such importance to literature and the glory earned from literary accomplishments that they wish to be writers themselves. It can only happen in a society where people have a close connection with literature. I would like to think that it means they are serious readers.

6: Do you think subcontinent writing and writers are making a mark globally?

They would truly make a mark globally once more fiction from the subcontinent will be translated into world languages.

7: Canada is very encouraging to new immigrant talent. How much help is that for artists?

The artists have a good support network in Canada. There are arts organizations in the cities and all the provinces. That provides a meeting place for artists and helps collaborative work for those in performing arts and media.