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Shani Mootoo to join Amitava Kumar, In Conversation April 3 at 7 PM Books & Ideas Series 2019

Toronto, March 13, 2019 ... The Koffler Centre of the Arts announced today that the award-winning writer and visual artist **Shani Mootoo** will join author and journalist **Amitava Kumar: In Conversation** on **Wednesday, April 3, 2019, 7:00 PM** at The Great Hall, part of the **2019 Books & Ideas** series. Kumar is the author of several books of nonfiction, poetry, and his most recent novel, *Immigrant, Montana* — one of President Obama's favourite books of 2018. *Immigrant, Montana* was also selected by the *New York Times* and the *New Yorker* as one of the top titles of the past year.

Shani Mootoo was born in Ireland, grew up in Trinidad, and has lived in Canada most of her life. She writes fiction and poetry, and is a visual artist whose paintings and short videos have been exhibited locally and internationally. Mootoo's critically acclaimed novels include *Moving Forward Sideways Like a Crab*, *Valmiki's Daughter*, *He Drown She in the Sea*, and *Cereus Blooms at Night*. She is a recipient of the K.M. Hunter Arts Award, a Chalmers Fellowship Award, and most recently the James Duggins Outstanding Midcareer Novelist Award.

Weaving together fiction and autobiography, [Immigrant, Montana](#) tells the story of Kailash, a young Indian man who leaves home to attend graduate school in the United States. As he begins to settle into American existence, Kailash navigates his new identity through a series of messy romantic relationships. Set against the backdrop of a New York college campus, *Immigrant, Montana* is an exploration of immigration and selfhood, memory and desire, politics and sex.

Looking back on the formative period of his youth, Kailash's wry, vivid perception of the world he is in, but never quite of, unfurls in a brilliant melding of anecdote and annotation, picture and text. Building a case for himself, both as a good man in spite of his flaws and as an American in defiance of his place of birth, Kailash weaves a story that is at its core an incandescent investigation of love—despite, beyond, and across dividing lines.

"Immigrant Montana explores the intersection of the sexual and the political." — The New Yorker

"As cerebral as it is sensual... Immigrant, Montana is intelligent, melancholy, quirky. At a time when feelings run high over which immigrants get to call themselves American, Kailash's idiosyncratic voice adds a welcome tonic note to the debate." — Boston Globe

Listing Information:

Amitava Kumar: In Conversation with Shani Mootoo
Wednesday, April 3, 2019 | 7 PM (doors 6 PM)
The Great Hall, 1087 Queen St West

Tickets: \$20 General Admission | \$15 Student/Senior (w/valid ID) available through kofflerarts.org

Preferred Access tickets:

\$250 ticket includes reserved/best in-house seating, a signed copy of *Immigrant, Montana*, a pre-event reception in the Conversation Hall, and a tax receipt for the maximum allowable amount. To purchase: Call Lauren Abecassis-Kandravy, Director of Development 647-925-0643 ext. 226 or email lauren.ak@kofflerarts.org

ABOUT AMITAVA KUMAR

Amitava Kumar is a writer and journalist. He was born in Ara, and grew up in the nearby town of Patna, famous for its corruption, crushing poverty, and delicious mangoes. Kumar is the author of several books of nonfiction and a novel. He lives in Poughkeepsie, in upstate New York, where he is Helen D. Lockwood Professor of English at Vassar College. In 2016, Amitava Kumar was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship (General Nonfiction) as well as a Ford Fellowship in Literature from United States Artists.

ABOUT THE KOFFLER CENTRE OF THE ARTS

The Koffler Centre of the Arts is a cultural platform that explores critical ideas and concerns of our time through exhibitions, publications, performances, conversations and digital initiatives. We examine complex issues in respectful, constructive discussions that position our Jewish identity in conversation with diverse perspectives and global voices. The Koffler Gallery and its administrative offices are located at Artscape Youngplace, in Toronto's vibrant downtown West Queen West art and design district.

Amitava Kumar in Conversation is presented as part of the Koffler Centre of the Arts 2019 Books & Ideas Series, generously supported by Media Partner, the Toronto Star. 2019 Books & Ideas Series is presented in partnership with Ben McNally Books.

For further information and high resolution images, contact:

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