



PLEASE INCLUDE IN YOUR LISTINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Koffler Centre of the Arts Books & Ideas Series 2019
presents
Amitava Kumar, April 3, 2019
Author of *Immigrant, Montana*

"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

Toronto, February 28, 2019 ... Koffler Centre of the Arts presents the award-winning author and journalist **Amitava Kumar** in conversation on **Wednesday, April 3, 2019, 7:00 PM** at The Great Hall. 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.

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.

In a recent interview, Amitava Kumar spoke about the ways in which his own personal experiences mirror those of Kailash. "I was eager to succeed in America, largely because I felt I was failing at every turn. I often felt like an impostor. I think many immigrants can relate to this; you feel like you have the whole might of the state bearing down on you. This is the reality for immigrants when they interact with border security, or face the custom agent at the airport. You feel like you are being scrutinized in the darkest corners of your soul."

"So there was always the desire, or the ambition on my part, to do the right thing — to remove doubt in the minds of the judging other — someone in power, often white. Because you begin to feel like you don't deserve the right to be here."

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.

Listing Information:

Amitava Kumar in Conversation

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.

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