



Big little
Book
award

Shirshendu Mukhopadhyay

Author (Bengali)

Shortlist 2017



I was especially unsure about writing for children. But looking back I see that it has been 40 years and the years have turned out well.

How did you become a children's author?

I became a children's author by chance. I began my writing career by writing only for adults. Later, publishers probed me to write for children and that is how I began, and have been continuing since then.

Do you feel that there has been a shift in Bengali children's literature over the last few decades?

A trend for detective stories has set in. It is only these that are making children's literature popular now.

What has been your most treasured experience in your writing journey?

Writing built confidence in me. I was especially unsure about writing for children. But looking back I see that it has been 40 years and the years have turned out well.

Who are your favourite authors and why?

Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, Bibhuti Bhushan Bandopadhyay, Jibananda Das, Rabindranath Tagore, Kafka, Lev Tolstoy, Leo Tolstoy, Albert Camus, T.S. Eliot, Madhusudhan Dutta, Nicolai Gogol. It is a different and unique appeal for each author.

According to you, what role does an award play in promoting children's literature?

In the past awards have not done much for literature. Publicity is seldom the real aspect. But it is true that an award helps an author gain recognition.

Have your books been translated into other Indian languages? If not, what are the challenges and would you like your books to be translated?

My books have been translated in 14 languages; many novels and short stories in English. Over the recent years, three of my stories have been made into graphic novels.

How can we encourage young authors to write for children?

It is an enormous task; may be it helps with incentives. It is something to think about.

