



**MAJLIS BAHASA MELAYU SINGAPURA** (*Malay Language Council, Singapore*)

Anugerah Persuratan 2020/2021

d/a Singapore Book Council

Goodman Arts Centre, 90 Goodman Road, Blk E #03-32, Singapore 439053

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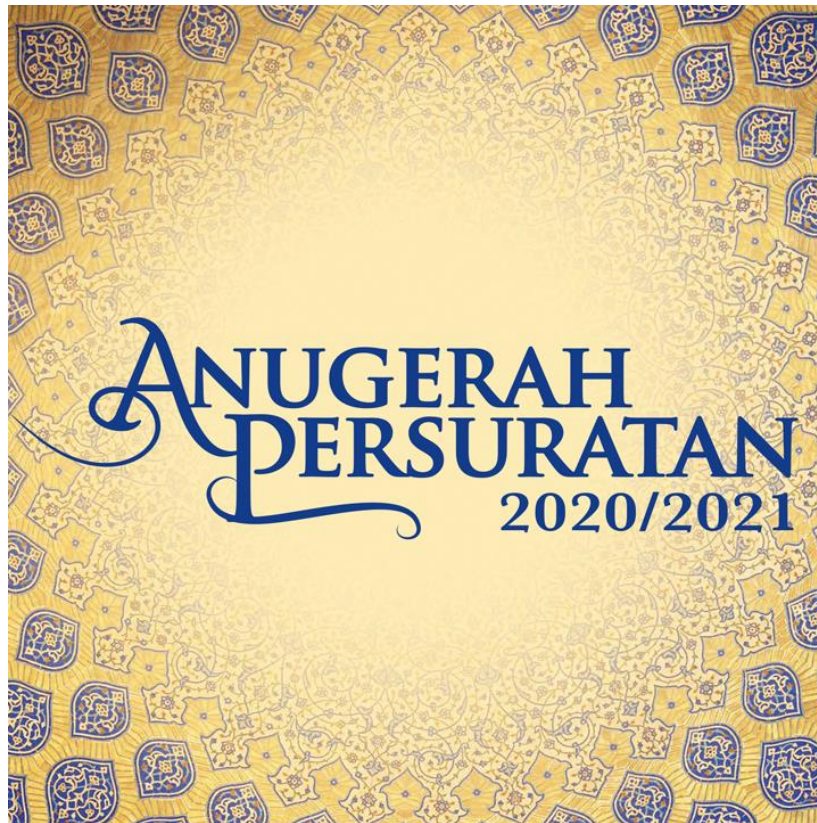
**MEDIA RELEASE** (Embargoed until Saturday, 10 April, 4pm)

## **ANUGERAH PERSURATAN 2020/2021**

### **(MALAY LITERARY AWARD 2020/2021)**

**HIGHEST RECOGNITION FOR 5 SINGAPORE MALAY WRITERS;**

**HAMED ISMAIL RECEIVES TUN SERI LANANG AWARD**



SINGAPORE, 6 April 2021 – Five outstanding Singapore Malay writers will receive the Anugerah Persuratan (AP) Award at the 14<sup>th</sup> awards ceremony on Saturday, 10 April 2021. **Mr Hamed Ismail** is named the recipient of the Tun Seri Lanang Award at the AP 2020/2021 edition, the highest recognition for his achievements. He is also the oldest



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literary writer to receive the award. Aged 73, he has been writing for over 30 years, and his works includes stage drama, poetry and short stories. He was also the former senior supervisor at Eaglevision TV Scripts, Mediacorp.

Meanwhile, the late **Zaidy Nandir**, who is known to many as an arts activist, songwriter and prolific lyricist, is conferred the Tun Seri Lanang Posthumous Award this year. He has also received many awards for the best song and lyrics in local Dikir Barat competitions. Zaidy Nandir passed on in 2018 when he was 45 years old and is the youngest recipient of the Tun Seri Lanang Posthumous Award.

Another established literary figure, **Mr Jamal Ismail**, receives two Literary Awards, for his works *GOD(A)* in the Short Story category, and *Tunjuk Langit (Pointing the Sky)* in the Novel category. In 2016, 32 years after his last published book, Jamal returned with *Yang Kekucingan*, a collection of 20 surreal and captivating short stories. He then wrote *GOD(A)* in 2018 and *Tunjuk Langit (Pointing the Sky)* in 2019. This has been a successful comeback for Jamal, after taking a break from publishing since 1984.

The other two Literary Awards winners for the AP 2020/2021 are **Mr Farihan Bahron** for his work *Tukang Tunjuk Telunjuk (Finger-Pointing Expert)* in the Poetry category, and **Ms Rilla Melati** for her work *Si Pencuri Ketawa – Kisah Di Dalam Taman Di Persisiran (The One Who Stole Laughter – A Tale from Gardens By The Bay)* in the Children's Literature category.

Since 1993, the biennial award recognises Singapore Malay writers who have made excellent contributions to the Malay literary arts. In 2020, Anugerah Persuratan was streamlined to focus on books by writers and publishers to ensure that literary works are accessible through the library and book-selling platforms. It is organised by the Malay Language Council, Singapore (MLCS), managed by Singapore Book Council (SBC) and



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supported the National Arts Council (NAC), National Heritage Board (NHB) and Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY). To date, more than 150 writers have received the awards.

The Guest-of-Honour for Anugerah Persuratan 2020/2021 is Mr Edwin Tong, Minister for Culture, Community and Youth and Second Minister for Law.

The ceremony details are as follows:

Day/Date: Saturday, 10 April 2021

Time: 3:00pm – 4:00pm

Venue: River Room @ Asian Civilisation Museum

*Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the ceremony is by-invite only and limited to 50 guests.*

The following awards will be conferred at the Anugerah Persuratan 2020/2021 award ceremony.

| No. | Award                              | Award Recipients      |
|-----|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1.  | Tun Seri Lanang Award              | Hamed Ismail          |
| 2.  | Tun Seri Lanang (Posthumous) Award | The Late Zaidy Nandir |

| No. | Literary Awards categories | Award Recipients   | Book Title   |
|-----|----------------------------|--------------------|--|
| 1.  | Short Story                | Jamal Ismail       | <i>GOD(A)</i>  |
| 2.  | Novel                      | Jamal Ismail       | <i>Tunjuk Langit (Pointing the Sky)</i>                |
| 3.  | Poetry                     | Farihan Bahron     | <i>Tukang Tunjuk Telunjuk (Finger-Pointing Expert)</i> |
| 4.  | Children's Literature      | Rilla Melati Bahri | <i>Si Pencuri Ketawa – Kisah Di Dalam</i>              |



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|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  | <i>Taman Di Persisiran (The One Who Stole Laughter – A Tale from Gardens By The Bay)</i> |
|--|--|--|--|

See **Annex A** for further details of the award recipients and their works.

The call for submission of entries for the Literary Awards was opened from 17 September to 12 November 2020. AP 2020/2021 received a total of 66 works submitted (anthologies and collections) across six categories, an increase of 50% compared to the 2017 edition. The call also invited public nominations for Anugerah Tun Seri Lanang (Tun Seri Lanang Award), Anumerta Tun Seri Lanang (Tun Seri Lanang Posthumous Award) and Anugerah Harapan (Promising Award).

Original Malay language literary works submitted for the Literary Awards must be written by Singaporeans or Singapore Permanent Residents for works published in 2017, 2018 or 2019, in Singapore or overseas complete with ISBN number.

See **Annex B** for details of the various awards.

THANK YOU

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**For further details, pls contact:**

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ANNEX A

**TUN SERI LANANG AWARD AND TUN SERI LANANG (POSTHUMOUS) AWARD  
RECIPIENTS**

| No. | Award Recipient  | Short Bio  |
|-----|--|--|
| 1.  | <br><b>Hamed Ismail<br/>Tun Seri Lanang<br/>Award</b>                           | <p>Hamed Ismail is a former Senior Supervisor with Eaglevision TV Scripts, Mediacorp. He still serves as a TV Drama Script Advisor. He has written radio drama scripts, theatre scripts, countless TV drama scripts as well as poetry, short stories and essays. His collection of poetry, <i>Suara Dalam (Inner Voice)</i> was shortlisted for the Singapore Literary Prize (2014). The novel <i>Bunga Tanjung</i> has won the Merit Prize, Singapore Literature Prize (2018). The anthology <i>Tafsiran Tiga Alam (Interpretation of Three Realms)</i> written with Samsudin Said and Hartinah Ahmad, won the Malay Literary Award (2017) and the Singapore Literature Prize (2016). He has also won the Golden Point Award (for poetry and short stories) and the Malay Literary Award (for theatre scripts, television drama scripts and short stories).</p> |
| 2.  | <br><b>The Late Zaidy<br/>Nandir<br/>Tun Seri Lanang<br/>Posthumous Award</b> | <p>The late Zaidy Nandir was very talented in music and lyric writing. A dedicated teacher, he devoted his energy to educate his students in the Malay language. His sincerity and talent shone in the art of Dikir Barat, for which he had produced more than 200 pieces. He provided guidance to local Dikir Barat practitioners and became an inspiration for all. In addition, Zaidy was also active in scouting activities. Many continue to miss his presence and remember him as someone who was kind-hearted, smart, honest, generous and willing to share his knowledge.</p> <p>His achievements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Third Place, at a lyric writing competition organised by Suria, Mediacorp, 2004</li></ul>   |



|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
|  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Champion, Best Lyrics, Mega Perdana, organised by Persekutuan Dikir Barat Singapura (GABUNGAN), 2006 dan 2010</li> <li>• Champion, Singa Raya, at a Hari Raya song competition organised by Esplanade, 2007</li> <li>• Third Place, at a song competition organised by Ria 89.7 FM, 2008.</li> </ul> |
|--|--|---|

## LITERARY AWARD RECIPIENTS

| No. | Details   | Photos/Book Cover   |
|-----|---|---|
| 1.  | <p><b>Name: Jamal Ismail</b></p> <p>Short Bio: Jamal Ismail explores various genres of writing, including theatre, radio and TV scripts, poetry, essays, short stories, and novels. Born in 1952, Jamal won the Loheh-Nur Award for Islamic Documentary from the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Literary Award for fiction for <i>Yang</i>, and the National Book Development Council of Singapore (NBDCS) National Book Award for the novel <i>Songsang</i>.</p> <p>Category: <b>Short Story</b></p> <p>Title: <b>GOD(A)</b></p> <p>Publisher: Unggun Creative, 2018</p> <p>Synopsis: <i>GOD(A)</i> seduces the reader with 10 tales of extraordinary lives by weaving magical realism into ordinary circumstances. A mosque caretaker is tasked with ensuring that the ablution pool is not abused as a public bath. A boy must face the truth about why his trip to Ipoh for a Quran recital contest is cancelled. A British officer accuses a religious leader of counterfeiting money. These stories address issues about the lives of Muslims, their faith, and their devotion to God.</p> | <br> |

|           |   |  |
|-----------|---|--|
| <p>2.</p> | <p>Name: <b>Jamal Ismail</b></p> <p>Short Bio: Jamal Ismail explores various genres of writing, including theater, radio and TV scripts, poetry, essays, short stories, and novels. Born in 1952, Jamal won the Loheh-Nur Award for Islamic Documentary from the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Literary Award for fiction for <i>Yang</i>, and the National Book Development Council of Singapore (NBDCS) National Book Award for the novel <i>Songsang</i>.</p> <p>Category: <b>Novel</b></p> <p>Title: <b><i>Pointing The Sky</i></b></p> <p>Publisher: Unggun Creative, 2018</p> <p>Synopsis: <i>Tunjuk Langit (Pointing the Sky)</i> depicts a multiracial group of senior citizens living at a welfare home named after tunjuk langit trees that grow in Choa Chu Kang. The fictional home reflects the challenging realities of Singapore life. When the financially challenged home is forced to close, its ingenious residents try to keep it from being demolished. Habeb has to pull the most outrageous stunt to save the home that has been entrusted to him by the deceased owner.</p> |   |
| <p>3.</p> | <p>Name: <b>Farihan Bahron</b></p> <p>Short Bio: Farihan Bahron, recipient of the 2017 Promising Award (Malay Literary Award), has won several competitions including the 1998 <i>Peraduan Asah Bakat</i> Competition (First Prize – Poetry), the 2000 <i>Anugerah Pena Bakti</i> Award (Third Prize – Poetry), 2003 Golden Point Award (Second Prize – Poetry), 2015 Golden Point Award (First Prize – Poetry and Short Stories), the 2016 <i>Mencari Kristal</i> 2016 (Third Prize – Short Story), 2017 National Poetry Competition (Merit) and the 2020 <i>Kata-Pilar</i> Poetry Competition (Grand Prize). At the 2018</p>  |   |



|           |  |   |
|-----------|--|---|
|           | <p>Singapore Literature Prize, <i>Tukang Tunjuk Telunjuk</i> (<i>Finger-Pointing Expert</i>) won the Malay poetry category while his short story collection, <i>Kesumat Sang Avatar</i> (<i>The Avatar's Wrath</i>), received the Commendation Prize (Malay fiction). Farihan has also been active in writing lyrics for the Singapore Dikir Barat scene since 1996 and has received the Best Lyrics trophy 14 times.</p> <p>Category: <b>Poetry</b><br/>         Title: <b><i>Finger-Pointing Expert</i></b><br/>         Publisher: Unggun Creative, 2018</p> <p>Synopsis: Written from 2000 to 2016, the verses in this collection of poems touch on various aspects of a young man's life whilst in search of direction, identity and moral compass. It is hoped that this collection of 40 poems will provide clarity on the meaning of life in the Lion City at the beginning of the 21st century. Several poems in <i>Tukang Tunjuk Telunjuk</i> (<i>Finger-Pointing Expert</i>) won poetry writing contest prizes, such as the 2003 Golden Point Award (Second Prize) and the 2015 Golden Point Award (First Prize).</p> |    |
| <p>4.</p> | <p>Name: <b>Rilla Melati Bahri</b><br/>         Short Bio:<br/>         Rilla Melati develops creative content for the classroom and television. She is an educator, author, entrepreneur, entertainer and pioneer of Malay speech and drama programmes in schools in Singapore. As the founder of Mini Monsters, she hopes to revive interest in the Malay language through bilingual workshops and publishing bilingual books.</p> <p>Category: <b>Children's Literature</b></p>   |  |



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Title: ***The One Who Stole Laughter – A Tale from Gardens By The Bay***

Publisher: Mini Monsters, 2017

Synopsis: *Si Pencuri Ketawa – Kisah Di Dalam Taman Di Persisiran (The One Who Stole Laughter – A Tale from Gardens By The Bay)* was written by Rilla Melati Bahri and illustrated by Dionisius Kartalaksana. This story is suitable for primary school level readers and features adorable creatures, as tall as three guavas, who love to make friends and play with children.





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## ANNEX B

### **Hadiah Persuratan (Literary Awards)**

Each recipient will receive \$3,000 in cash, a trophy and a certificate of achievement. One Literary Award will be conferred for each of the following categories:

| Category              | Remarks                            |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Short story           |                                    |
| Drama (for Stage)     | <i>No recipient for AP 2020/21</i> |
| Literature Essay      | <i>No recipient for AP 2020/21</i> |
| Novel                 |                                    |
| Poetry                |                                    |
| Children's Literature |                                    |

Single works are not accepted or assessed.

### **Anugerah Tun Seri Lanang (Tun Seri Lanang Award) / \*Anumerta Tun Seri Lanang (Tun Seri Lanang Posthumous Award)**

Nominees will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- i) outstanding qualities as a local language and literary activist;
- ii) excellent contributions to both local and international literary scene;
- iii) ability to lead / have led and shaped collective thinking towards nation-building, through writings (creative and non-creative works); and
- iv) exemplary dedication to the pursuit of knowledge to hone the writing craft

\* Nominees who fulfilled the above criteria in his/her lifetime.

Notes:

- Recipient for Tun Seri Lanang Award will receive \$5,000 in cash, a trophy and certificate of achievement.
- Recipient for Anumerta Tun Seri Lanang (Posthumous Award) will receive \$2,000 in cash, a trophy and certificate of achievement to be awarded to the late family member.
- A \$5,000 grant will also be available for award for research works on the award recipient(s).

### **Anugerah Harapan (Promising Award)**

Nominees must be below 40 years of age, and display potential in the field of literary



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writing. Nominees will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- i) active involvement in literary activities to promote writings such as short story, poetry, novel, drama, non-fiction works;
- ii) conducts literary sharing sessions to students and youth; and
- iii) produces quality works that can add value to both creative and non-creative writing, in printed or electronic form, to shape collective thinking towards nation-building.

*No recipient for Promising Award for AP 2020/2021*

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