

**SOUTH ASIAN LITERARY ASSOCIATION  
2026 ANNUAL CONFERENCE**



**Collective Currents in South Asian Collaborations  
March 27-28, 2026**  
**(Executive Committee Meeting on Mar. 26, 2026)**  
**Hilton Charlotte University Place**  
**8629 J M Keynes Dr.**  
**Charlotte, North Carolina 28262**

**Conference Co-Chairs:** Aniruddha Mukhopadhyay, Texas A&M University-Kingsville  
Jana Fedtke, NYU Shanghai

**THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2026**

**8:00 AM-4:00 PM: REGISTRATION**

**7:30-9:00 PM: SALA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Room**

**DAY 1: FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 2026**

**8:00 AM-4:00 PM: REGISTRATION**

**12:45-1:15 PM: SALA WELCOME ADDRESS**

**Room**

- Maryse Jayasuriya, SALA President
- Statement from Conference Co-chairs

**SESSION 1: 1:30-2:45 PM**

**1A: Collaborations from Around the World**

**Room**

Chair: Madhurima Chakraborty, Columbia College Chicago

“The Changing Logic of Collaboration: Ritual Logistics to Collective Memory in Nepal’s Dashain Festival”

Manling Xu, Peking University

“Networks of Collaborative Witnessing in Sri Lankan Anglophone Literature and Nineteenth-Century US Abolitionism”

Brian Yother, Saint Louis University

“Indians Vs. Asians: Performances of Rivalry and Acts of Collaboration by Hasan Minhaj and Ronny Chieng”

Madhurima Chakraborty, Columbia College Chicago  
"An Unwillingness to Collaborate: Trump's Neo-Orientalism and Its Origins in Raspail's *The Camp of the Saints*"  
Jeffrey Cass, Arkansas Tech University

## 1B: Solidarities of Resistance

### Room

Chair: John Hawley, Santa Clara University  
"On Ideology, Literature, and the possibility of Solidarity in Gautam Bhatia's *The Wall*"  
Srikanth Mallavarapu, Roanoke College  
"Transnational Feminist Solidarity and Resistance in the Poetry of Tarfia Faizullah and Fatimah Asghar"  
Subrata Chandra Mozumder, University of Louisiana at Lafayette  
"Navigating Moments of Violent Religious and National Eruption: The Anonymous Witness-Narrator in Gitanjali Shree's *Our City That Year*"  
Pennie Ticen, Virginia Military Institute  
"Literature, Empathy, and Class Warfare: Aravind Adiga's *Last Man in Tower* and *Amnesty*"  
John Hawley, Santa Clara University

## 2:45-3:00 PM: BEVERAGE BREAK

## SESSION 2: 3:00-4:15 PM

### 2A SALA-CEA Professionalization Panel: Graduate Students and Early Career Professionals

### Room

Chair: Moumin Quazi, Tarleton State University  
Aniruddha Mukhopadhyay, Texas A&M University-Kingsville  
Panelists: Maryse Jayasuriya, Saint Louis University  
Cynthia Leenerts, East Stroudsburg University  
Stacia Neeley Campbell, Texas Wesleyan University  
Laura Petersen, Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio, TX

## 2B: Cinematic Collaborations

### Room

Chair: Nidhi Shrivastava, Sacred Heart University  
"Radical Education and Revolutionary Praxis through Cinema"  
Ankita Rathour, Georgia Tech  
"Transnational Film Adaptations as Collaborations: The Case of Ritwik's *A River Called Titas*"  
Md Hasan Ashik Rahman, Binghamton University, SUNY  
"Reborn and reformed race, filling the void: Overcoming the Self through dialogue and collaboration with the Other in Mira Nair's *Mississippi Masala*"  
Swati Gilotra, University of Georgia  
"Desi Man in Mira Nair's *The Namesake* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*"  
Zahin Zaima, Saint Louis University

**4:30-5:30 PM: SALA GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING**  
**Room**

**5:45-6:45 PM: CEA OPEN BUSINESS MEETING**  
**Room**

**DAY 2: SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 2026**

**8:00 AM-4:00 PM: REGISTRATION**

**SESSION 3: 9:00-10:15 AM**

**3A: Collaborations against the Caste System**

**Room**

Chair: Ruma Sinha, Mercer County Community College

“Caste Across Borders: The Politics of Analogy and Collaboration”

Ruma Sinha, Mercer County Community College

“Stories Within Stories: Caste, Faith, and the Form of Resistance in Kusumabale”

Ali Ahsan, University of Georgia

“Dalit Experience of Indian History and Democracy”

Soma Mandal, Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi

“The Pan-Indian Dalit Rap: Forging Collaborative Counterpublic Spheres in New Media”

Jomal Jose, National Institute of Science Education and Research (NISER), Bhubaneswar

**3B: Justice as a Collaborative Process in the Sri Lankan Diasporas**

**Room**

Chair: Dinidu Karunananayake, Elon University, North Carolina

“Mediated Collaborations and the Politics of Recognition”

Kumi Silva, University of North Carolina

“Webs of Care and Collaboration: Disability Justice in the Writings of Leah Lakshmi Piepnza-Samarasinha”

Maryse Jayasuriya, Saint Louis University

“Time of Disappearance: Staging a Post-War Sri Lankan Narrative of Inquiry”

Sandamini Ranwalage, Skidmore College, NY

“Shyam Selvadurai’s Buddhist Postmemories of Sri Lankan America”

Dinidu Karunananayake, Elon University, North Carolina

Discussant: Nalini Iyer, Seattle University

**3C: Eco-critical Collaborations**

**Room**

Chair: Pallavi Rastogi, Louisiana State University

“Solar Dreams and Salomon’s House: Eco-Utopian Dialogues between Francis Bacon’s *New Atlantis* and Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain’s *Sultana’s Dream*”

Jahidul Alam, Jackson State University

“From Truth to Trope: Ecological Memory and Refugee Consciousness in Enjeela Ahmadi-Miller’s *The Broken Circle*”

Pallavi Rastogi, Louisiana State University  
"Fighting for the Forest Way of Life in Ita Mehrotra's *Uprooted: A Graphic Account of the Struggle for Forest Rights*"  
Bhawana Pillai, Texas Tech University

**10:15-10:30 AM: BEVERAGE BREAK**

**SESSION 4: 10:30-11:45 AM**

**4A: Diasporic Collaborations**

**Room**

Chair: Cynthia Leenerts, East Stroudsburg University  
"Superheroes, South Asian Histories, and Diasporic Identities: Adapting Ms. Marvel to a Global Audience"

Tharini Viswanath, University of South Carolina  
"Listening Across Borders: Storytelling, Plagiarism, and Dream Dissolve as Diasporic Collaboration"

Tehmina Pirzada, Bradley University  
"Listening in Slow Time: Translation, Diaspora, and Relational Ethics in Rajiv Mohabir's *Antiman*"  
Ishan Mukhopadhyay, Brandeis University

**4B: Collaborations of Resistance**

**Room**

Chair: Meghan Gorman-DaRif, San Jose State University  
"Ethnographic Realism and the Maoist Struggle"

Meghan Gorman-DaRif, San Jose State University  
"A Case for Decolonial Erotics: Amrita Pritam and Sahir Ludhianvi in Lotus"

Wafa Asher Syeda, The University of Chicago  
"States of Ungroundedness: Envisioning a Counter-Intuitive Alliance on the Question of Land"  
Asmita Saha and Ridita Mizan, Illinois State University

**4C: Literary Collaborations**

**Room**

Chair: Jana Fedtke, NYU Shanghai  
"A New Empire of AI? GenAI Usage among Contemporary South Asian Authors"

Jana Fedtke, NYU Shanghai  
"Salman and Hanif Get Hurt: An Unusual Collaboration"

Hans-Georg Erney, Georgia Southern University  
"Mother-Daughter Collaboration: Anita Desai and Kiran Desai"

Nalini Iyer, Seattle University  
"Mera Joota Hai Japani, Ye Patloon Englishtani: A Case Study of English Haiku in India"  
Rachayita Bhattacharyya, Indian Institute of Technology, Jodhpur

**12:00-1:30 PM: LUNCH ON YOUR OWN**

**OR**

**CEA ALL-CONFERENCE LUNCHEON**

**SESSION 5: 2:00-3:15 PM****5A: Collaborations in Time: A Roadmap to South Asian Pasts, Presents, and Futures  
Room**

Chair: Waseem Anwar, Kinnaird College for Women

"Women and Entrepreneurship: Light and Darkness in Displaced Life"

Umme Al-wazedi, Augustana College

"Envisioning Collaboration, Imagining Solidarity: Kinnaird ICPWE and Its South Asian Profile"

Waseem Anwar, Kinnaird College for Women

"Contrasting Collaboration: Partition Trauma in Rahad Abir's *Bengal Hound* and in Bollywood's  
*Refugee*"

Sonia Sharmin, Augusta University

**5B: Historical Contexts****Room**

Chair: Billie T. Guarino, St. Anselm College

"I Want to be Killed by An Indian Bullet": Reimagining Collaborations and Everyday Resistance in  
Militarized India"

Billie T. Guarino, St. Anselm College

"India's Daughters' and #MeToo: Investigating Women's Stories in the 1947 Partition Archive"

Nidhi Shrivastava, Sacred Heart University

"The Pāṇinian Treatment of Nitya Samāsa (obligatory compounds): The Inapplicability of Internal  
Expansion (Svapada-Vigraha)"

Sudarshan Gautam, Indian Institute of Technology BHU Varanasi

**5C: South Asian Feelings****Room**

Chair: Shwetha Chandrashekhar, University of South Dakota

Saumya Lal, Louisiana State University

"Blind Opacity: Ved Mehta, Cold War Institutionalality, and Disability Refusal"

Kalyan Nadiminti, Northwestern University

"What Comes After Tolerance?"

Shwetha Chandrashekhar, University of South Dakota

"Middle-Class Empathy and the Specter of a People's War in *The Lives of Others*"

Saumya Lal, Louisiana State University

"Ajeeb Feelings"

Mehak Faisal Khan, University of Notre Dame

**SESSION 6: 3:30-4:45 PM****6A: Pedagogical Collaborations****Room**

Chair: Nalini Iyer, Seattle University

"Nature and the Divine: Designing Eco-Spiritual Curricula through Hindu Thought and  
Rabindranath Tagore"

Mommina Tarar, Western Washington University

"Pedagogy and empathy: Re-imagining Collaborative praxis within the Literature classroom"

Mayuri Deka, The University of the Bahamas

“The American Dream and the Public Humanities”

Umme Al-wazedi, Augustana College

“AI vs. Tagore: Can generative AI write like a human? A Comparative Analysis”

Austin Grant Bennett, Montana State University, Billings

## **6B: Folk Collaborations**

### **Room**

Chair: Hans-Georg Erney, Georgia Southern University

“Scattered voices but collaborative impact: Examining the facets of desire, caste, class and regions in non-urban regions of India”

Kumari Ruchi, UPES, Dehradun, India

“Bridging the Artistic and the Academic: The Mobile Girls Koottam”

Sangamithra Nataraj, Michigan State University

“Reading Against the Beef Taboo: Folk Collaboration and Craft-Story Interactions in Bachch Dua Rituals”

Shreya Sharma, University of Hawai'i at Manoa

## **5:00-6:30 PM: CONFERENCE KEYNOTE & AWARDS CEREMONY**

### **Room**

Keynote Speaker: Aarthi Vadde, Duke University

“The Writer’s Hand-at-a-Distance: Literary Craft after Large Language Models”

## **7:00-9:00 PM: SALA CONFERENCE DINNER**

**Zafran Kabab Palace**

**230 E W.T. Harris Blvd, Charlotte, NC**

**SPECIAL THANKS TO**

The College English Association (CEA) for a wonderful collaboration.