

Author Ruskin Bond inaugurates the Children's Lit, Art & Music Fest | #GetSetParent | #ChildrensFest

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SUMMARY

The inaugural session of the Get Set Parent Literature, Arts, and Music Festival features celebrated author Ruskin Bond, who shares insights from his extensive writing career and discusses the importance of literature for children. The festival aims to engage children and parents through various creative sessions over the next seven days, providing a platform for storytelling, art, and music.

- *The festival includes storytelling sessions, art workshops, puppet shows, and musical concerts.*
- *Ruskin Bond reflects on his 70+ years of writing, emphasizing his commitment to literature and the joy of storytelling.*
- *He began writing for children in his 40s, creating beloved characters like Rusty from "The Room on the Roof."*
- *Bond highlights the influence of nature and the hills on his writing, which resonates with children seeking connection to the natural world.*
- *He encourages aspiring writers to read voraciously, develop their unique voice, and maintain discipline in their writing practice.*
- *Bond notes the evolution of children's literature in India, with a growing variety of authors and genres available today.*
- *He advises parents to balance academic pressure with encouragement for creativity and exploration in their children.*
- *Bond emphasizes that writing is a long-term commitment that requires perseverance despite early rejections.*

[Music] hello hello and a warm welcome to all my wonderful parents and children who are tuned in to get said parent with pallavi for the last several months we know each other because of the tips and tricks that i share with you on helping you with your parenting journey from today for seven days we're going to be doing something very very different i'm super

excited to bring to you the first edition of the get set parent literature arts and music festival in association with vishwarang a lot of you were writing in and telling me what do we do our kids are really getting bugged off this uh lockdown and you know staying in at home and you know what can we do to entertain them so your wait is over for the next seven days they're going to be wonderful sessions meeting uh celebrated

authors storytelling sessions art appreciation workshops puppet shows mime shows musical concerts theater workshops and whatnot so for the next seven days i would urge you and your children to look at the schedule

carefully and mark all the wonderful sessions that you want to be a part of before we get into today's inaugural session and the much awaited uh inaugural speaker for the entire festival

i'm going to urge all of you to subscribe to my channel by pressing the bell icon and pressing all so that you don't miss on a single uh video up to date that comes your way over the next seven days follow me also on my instagram and facebook uh pages so that you know you uh are completely in tune with what i'm doing so here's um you know hoping that the entire seven day festival is a

treat for all of you and for us at the organizing end so let's get started and get into the first session of the get set parent children's literature art and music festival in association with wishwell [Music] what do i say about one of india's most prolific writers born in india pre-independence and having an illustrious career

spanning over seven decades this gentleman is the proud recipient of the padma bhoshan padmashri and the sahti academy awards his brilliant stories and novels have been adapted into series like a tarasti which was aired on doordarshan and films like saath khun math my parents grew up reading his work i grew up reading his work and today my children are avid readers of his stories a wordsmith extraordinaire but still

carrying a childlike charm and curiosity even at the wonderful age of 86. it is my immense joy and pleasure to be inviting on to the get set parent literature art and music festival as our first speaker the one and only mr ruskin bond good morning mr bond how are you doing good morning i'm fine up here in the hills um nice and sunny

outside but a bit chilly inside nice to meet you yeah so yeah it must be this is when it probably starts getting really cold and uh you know for us the winter that you're talking about is already peak winter for the rest of the country yes i think you have to wait a little longer right so how have you been this pandemic how has it been for you locked in at home

have you ventured out somehow not much very little but then writers usually work from home anyway so i've been lucky in that in that sense done quite a lot of writing during this long period of confinement and lots of reading lots of sleeping wow so that's

lovely so sir as as you know uh we are embarking on a beautiful seven-day literature art and music festival uh this is the first uh children's literature festival that uh get set parent in association with vishwaran we are hosting and i'm so excited that you are the first speaker and you are going to be formally inaugurating our festival today so children we're going to get into a beautiful

discussion with uh the one and only mr ruskin bond but before that may i request you sir to kindly declare the festival open thank you and it's it's great to be um taking part in a children's literature festival and i take great pleasure in declaring it open this festival of literature arts and music it's called the get set parents festival so parents

do get set and and make sure your children can take part in it thank you sir thank you so much so um you know one of the questions i've always wanted to ask you you've had a career spanning over

seven decades right if not longer and uh you know you you have really um you know the pinnacle of writing right that's that's what you are to the rest of us you've won the sahit academy award the padma bhushan the padmashri numerous international awards national awards looking back is this the way you envisioned your life to go is this something you manifested for yourself and what you feel looking back as a you know i've read that

you started writing as a young boy of 10 or 12 and today you're doing it into your 80s how do you feel well i was fond of writing even when i was at school but i got published for the first time when i was about 16 or 17. 17 and as for envisaging this long writing career i'd i certainly didn't envisage awards and prizes what i really wanted

to do was have a lifetime of um of of um being a literary person of writing stories books poetry i was you know i just wanted to write and if along the way i could make a living from it even better yeah and i think for most of those 70 years of writing um about 60

was spent i actually lived off lived off my writing that is my income came from it there were a few year few years a few periods when i took a job okay times were difficult when i had to do other things but basically i was committed to being a writer and that's what i still am and and your focus was always on writing for children specifically and how did the love for children's literature come about for you

yes well you know when i started out when i was 16 or 17 i i took myself very seriously and i was writing for adults okay as a young man i was writing for adults and it was only when i reached middle age when i was about 40 that i began writing seriously for children specifically for children otherwise there were always stories written even in those early years which were typical for children or could go

into children's books but they were written for the general reader so it it's i think it was only when around 1970 that uh i wrote my first book which was aimed specifically at young readers meant for them otherwise i'm just writing for everybody for everybody but some of the stories are maybe more

you know are more popular with with youngsters and others maybe with uh older readers so that's how the character of become older yeah so when you started writing for children you created rusty well rusty was me uh rusty was the boy in my first novel the room on the roof yes which was an autobiographical novel it grew out of a journalized captain and um so rusty

i call myself rusty because at school everyone called me dusty but um i changed it to rusty yeah whether so um you know your stories uh whether it's for children or the adults and the ghost stories series all of these prominently feature the hills and um i mean the description is is so

delicious it is it's almost like you know we are we're feeling the chill we're feeling uh you know the uh sipping on some on hot chocolate sitting on those bases wayside cafes so um what's been the role of the hills in your life and in your stories um what's the story behind that well you know up up to 1964 when i was

30 years old up to that time i'd been living largely in cities i'd been four or five years in delhi um three or four years in london so and i'd after some time i felt i wasn't writing as freely and naturally as i wanted to and i thought i needed a physical change too so i i came up to live in the hills and i took a cottage

outside missouri so this was uh a good 60 70 years ago now um and and things changed almost immediately you know i became almost uh at once in touch with the natural world because this cottage was right in the forest uh it's not the one i'm living in now i've since had then had to move further up the hill i see for the first 10 years in in the hills i was living almost in

the forest and that brought me closer to nature to birds to animals to trees and wildflowers and they became a part of my stories and a part of my writing so in a way that the natural world took over and um from being maybe a um industrial writer i became a nature writer too and um so a lot of my stories written off from that period

onwards so you'll find that the the the element of nature is is is very much to the fall so do you think that's one of the major factors that makes you click with children they kind of transport themselves into that magical world uh you know when they're mostly disconnected from nature living in cities and do you think that that really many great writers who've written about city life um

you take dickens writing about london in the 19th century or um writing about life in calcutta or arcane ryan writing about life so citizens follow you too some writers thrive on city life yeah and um and because no two writers are the same anyway so i think i guess it's we

different ways to different kinds of stimuli yeah so sir please please please yes um at the same time i grew up in a small town dera dune which was uh and really neither mountain nor plains it's sort of in the foothills and that too gave me a lot of material

because of my my many of my very early stories written in the 1950s late 50s um set there in this small town are still very popular amongst the more popular of my stories you know stills like night trainer daily or time stops at sharmly a lot of people still like those so um so i won't i can't say that that there is any i think a writer

should be able to write anywhere anywhere but of course if if your environment is a present one and you're happy that and naturally i think you you'll be you'll write better in that environment right right so sir can you tell us a little bit about your early early influences in writing i mean did you have role models growing up did you have your favorite authors were you influenced by um you know any writers on your journey

definitely definitely unless you're a reader you're not going to be a writer i think if you look into the lives of all successful writers you'll find that they were readers and still are they don't stop reading and it it was my i was a real bookworm so fortunately at my school we had a good library and i would sort of read practically everything that came my way

you know from plays stories novels poetry travel um even even comics you know any i was a voracious reader and so i never i wanted to emulate my favorite writers not write like them not copyright you know but to be lighter in their mold in in in their attitude or and their outlook um so favorite writers went range from

the classics from dickens to emily bronte and then to um current writers of my school days like somerset mom and graham greene and others and then later more popular writers like pj wordhouse and agatha christie okay and then when i went to england for three or four years um and i was homesick for india so i was reading indian writers i was reading tagalog orders to god's place and poems

and and our narayan and murkraj and the writers of that period um so and i've never stopped reading um so so there it is i still read old favorites and down then i ventured into something recent yeah so that's wonderful and that's something we you know i i get from so many writers that to be a good writer you need to be a voracious reader and it's not going to happen that you just you know for all my aspiring uh writers

they're children who are who want to write reading the writer of a creative writer writer of of fiction or poetry i think you need to be a reader because that you you you learn from reading you know how writers think yeah um so it's you you get into the same sort of thought process right so otherwise it's it would be very strange for someone to set off

to write a novel if you've never read one well and yet people do think that that's possible yeah but i think you have to because you need a love for words a love for right uh for putting sentences together true a love of language no yeah so it's not just not just a story it's the language you use to tell the story that's important and and where do you where do you enrich yourself with

language except through exceptional literature as a whole yeah so so in the last in the last so many decades you know six or seven decades children's literature itself has had a transformative journey both india within india and internationally what have been some of your observations regarding that like earlier you know when we were growing up we we were we had a restricted set of uh authors you know the more uh you know

a few comics a few authors but today i mean uh it's it's it's huge so what do you what's what's your observation you're right in fact when i was a boy i found as soon as i was a fluent reader i was reading adult literature because there wasn't much in the way of children's literature apart from the established classics you know we all read alice in wonderland and treasure island and others but uh and then you went almost straight

into uh reading sagata christian exactly yeah so uh and i mean you can still do that but now i there's a certainly

also when you i go back to the 1950s and 60s in india we didn't have publishers who brought in our children's books we actually depended on what came in from from britain or america's or other

countries um very few children's books were being published except maybe in bengal kerala maybe here and there and regional and that too in in the regional languages so um uh but that has changed now and i think most of our better known publishers in india also bring out books for children they have a list of children's books apart from importing or bringing in also a wide

selection so there is a lot to choose from so kids can read well they can read harry potter or roll down or on the way to reading and then there's a whole category of teen novels also you know your percy jackson's and you know that the transition between you know absolute underrate and your adult literature there's a lot in this the lord of the rings and all of that is it's kind of an intermediate section

also which is being created now i think there is a lot of literature for young adults yeah this is what the perhaps a section that uh was ignored before i have a lot of my books somehow fit into that uh category number of young adults my first novel the room on the roof was written just for the general reader it wasn't written as a children's book now i find it goes in into the category

of very often of young adult reading sort of falling in between children's writing and adult writing yeah but i don't want to specify or or put books into categories because it because children come to books at varying ages you know you can become a prolific reader when you're seven or eight years old

and on the other hand you may not what discover books till you're 16 or 17. so there's really no you can't i don't really believe in in the modern method of saying this book is meant for 10 year olds or this is for 12 year olds because i think kids meant developmentally at different ages too and uh books that you may not be a reader till you're in your late teens or even an adult and

at the other hand you might start very young yeah so you do think that reading can be picked up so you know a lot of our parents go through this issue that just i think what i've always done is just write for myself in a way and if i'm if i'm enjoying what i'm writing maybe so so you do believe that uh if one hasn't grown up reading they can still pick it

up as a teen or as a young adult or even as an adult because today the emphasis is on early reading skills a lot of parents you know wants their children to start reading early and if they don't they kind of start feeling that you know the kids being left behind it's too late to pick up the reading habit so what so what do you think about that i worry too much um provided they they should be have started reading at

home and not and the parents shouldn't think that the children should learn everything in school i think i learned read and write from my father um at home before i was put in a boarding school or a school and in fact i did not start attending school till i was about seven in those days you didn't know right now you notice people

send their kids to school when they're three or something two two and a half

three yeah i didn't go to school till i was seven but i did know how to read and write uh a little because i'd learnt at home yeah um which gave me an advantage when i did go to school because some kids were just then starting out and i i'd already so it a lot depends on parents and leave everything to teachers true no spot-on

and in our country a lot of you say disadvantaged um underprivileged children uh might be growing up in a home where their parents may not be may not have had much education um so they would depend a lot on their teacher or on this on the school um but where the parents are educated then i think it's up to them to uh also provide the exposure to kids

so sir you know going back to that point you touched upon that you know writing is not an uh it's not an overnight success story and one needs to toilet it it's supposed to be very lonely can you take us through a typical day in the life of mr askin bond what is a typical day like and how do you kind of bring in the discipline of writing into your schedule yes well it's mine is not a lonely life

because i have a large adoptive family and there's always somebody around but i have my room to myself and the early morning sun comes in very welcome in winter and i do most of my writing in the morning when i get up okay before usually so i do an auto two in the morning and that's the best time okay um because later in the day there'll be interruptions you know when the family is awake

and yeah you see people are knocking on the door or bringing the bell out the phone rings so you know all the postman comes 101 things to do right so at the morning you usually have time to yourself and for a writer it's probably the best time later in the day you can do more routine work you know corresponding or getting in touch with your publishers or correcting groups and you know things like that but

i think the original work if you're writing a news story or or working on a book morning is best um but if i wake up do you write every day sir do you write every day i try to um i'm not too strict about it but i'll i'll i'll be happy if i write uh two or three pages every morning oh okay at least my conscience is addressed right and um but

but if say uh i get an idea in the middle of the night well i'm gonna sit down and write the story then but i'll i'll put on the light and jot it down so that it's not forgotten because you can get ideas any time you on a during a walk yes in bed or kitchen so it's it's useful then to make a note of it to keep a notebook or paper handy so that you don't forget it

because that's something you may not be able to work on immediately yeah but it could be useful later on an idea for a story or just a thought your mind is ticking your mind is on and you're absorbing the life around you sometimes very often consciously you know if say if i go to uh

some festival in town i would go with the idea that i might be able to write something about it and and therefore

be looking for something scouting for a few inspirational moments so sir in your day do you have any technological disturbances so are you are you do you watch any seasons are you on netflix or any of these uh streaming channels technologically

illiterate that's why i decided to depend on my grandson siddharth to put me in touch with you or 60 or one of the others and um but but i do um well i watch television and if and if somebody puts on a nice film on this laptop i'll watch that too as long as i don't have to all day so that's the secret of finding time as well right like so that's one of the things you

know today the distraction for children so is so much right i mean the kind of availability of entertainment services on television on live streaming video gaming uh most of the days consumed by technology and um uh that's true you can't get them to talk to you because they're you know stuck to the ear yeah or it is in front

of you where they're viewing something yeah you get you get so much now on the phone yeah um i don't keep one no but i use everybody else's so i'm very cunning but yeah so uh so any any tips you have for children uh or or you know young adults who want to start seriously getting into creative writing what are those two or three things they should keep in mind when they embark on a serious commitment towards writing

yes that's um well have something to say you have to you know if you know what kind of writer you want to be you want to be okay or you want to maybe write history or biography or be a scientific writer you know you um also you must have confidence in your language that is you must be fluent in in uh whatever language you're going to write in whether it's or any other language in the country

you you must be confident and of your of your fluency you know at least be reasonably correct dramatically right and uh and be able to put sentences together in a good in a an attractive way use words in an attractive way be original too be different not try to write like everybody else um so so those are the i think the basics

um have ideas you need ideas uh you need some imagination not very much after all you you need imagination if you're going to write fantasy yeah but if you're a realistic writer like i am you don't have to be highly imaginative um then then be regular with your writing discipline discipline and also don't give up easily because as i did you're bound to in in

early days have disappointments in trying to get published you may not your work may not get published for some time it might come back to you from editors or publishers so you could easily get discouraged i've known over the years young writers who were talented but because they had rej early rejections that they sort of got discouraged and went

and did other things you went into advertising or intuition so yeah so don't give up easily that you you have to be if you're truly committed and want to be a writer you you will stick with it for some time yeah and remember that if your work is good you are entitled to a reward i've always felt that a writer should be paid for what he or

she does

if it's good and if people are reading it whereas a lot of nowadays youngsters and old students too who are impatient to get into print you want to see that byline on a book spend their own money you know spend a couple of likes to get published yeah yeah because they're in a hurry and they might be disappointed then if that book doesn't take off or if it's because it

uh maybe they should have waited longer or work work more on it a bit not being too impaired and then that first one flopping they may not want to do another do another so i think one should uh expect um something in return well that's how i made a living from it all these years yeah i didn't get filthy rich but i

didn't stay filthy poor either you know i managed to to live off my writing of course of course so clearly writing is not an instant gratification game it's not like i've written a story so i'll get published it'll become a bestseller it's none of those and it needs it needs a pursuit and rigorous pursuit of that yes it is true that instant best seller might have been once once in 500 cases out of 700

it says but sheer luck but normally it normally takes time to get established right name is a writer yes it takes time um my my first novel was quite successful but after that since i was so young i was i was just 18 19. i didn't have anything else to write so there was quite a gap before before the next one could come out it'll be written yeah yeah so sir apart from writing you

also you also dabbled in a movie you did a uh bollywood movie recently how was your experience not recently a few years with satkun math how was that experience for you well i must have been very bad because nobody has offered me a role after that you were memorable for sure as the father in the role i'd had i'd written the in the story for this film

yes and i had to act as a sort of benevolent elderly gentleman giving advice to priyanka chopra in a bar and i had to just hand about two lines and give her a fatherly peck on the cheek well i i don't have the good fortune to give fatherly pecks on the cheek on beautiful

actresses i did it rather clumsily and the director said another take do it again mr bond so i give it another fatherly peck on the cheek it still wasn't very good so it once more so after seven fatherly pecks on the cheek he said i think you're doing this deliberately mister oh it was it was such a it was such a uh

treat to you know see you suddenly on screen and again also also yeah at school i should be good in in in yeah they used to make me actors usually as a as a tipsy uh fellow with a bottle of whiskey in my hand filled with weak tea tea no no

no milk or sugar and had to pretend it was liquor so i used to win prizes for that but but otherwise i'm afraid my acting career never really took off um so i wanted to touch on your ghost stories a little bit so you've you've had

this as a consistent genre in your writing and i'm i'm personally a fan of your ghost stories and you know i used to i used to actually think that you know how

many plots could be there in ghost stories it's typically these three or four things but you've managed to churn out several short stories you know mr captain young was the book i was recently reading and uh how where is the inspiration for ghost stories coming from well have you had any personal encounters as well i've not had any personal encounters i have to i have to now confess that i have never in my life met a ghost

i make them all out wow i have fun doing so and kids like like being scared a little although they sometimes um little girl complained to me she said so i like your ghost stories but they're not scary enough she said can't you make them more frightening um but ghost stories are easy to write because

you're just inventing a ghost you're writing dealing with real people um and one of the first books i read as of as a boy when i was 809 which i remember was called the ghost stories of an antiquity by a writer called emma james and he was brilliant writer of ghost stories okay um and so i perhaps felt i should write the occasional ghost

story myself you know just explore that genre but i haven't explored the supernatural world i'm sure i'd be scared to that if i'm sort of ghost so but i do make them up yeah no and what i love about them is you know you you introduce the characters you get so deep and you have wound up the story sometimes in all the four pages and it's like you know you've been so succinct with your language and uh and the story has

unfolded and folded you know in flat three or four pages that's amazing a lot of people do believe in ghosts and and see them and have psychic experiences so i try to imagine what it's what it's like for them maybe and to put myself in their minds and see what they're seeing um so it's interesting because um i mean a lot of famous writers did believe in ghosts including arthur

conan who who wrote the sherlock holmes stories yeah yeah yeah the fiancée's and call up the dead so but i i wouldn't want to get too far too far into it i just regarding this coronavirus epidemic i've been writing a few news stories okay and i've written a couple of ghost stories one of them is about a it's not exactly a ghost story it's about a girl who who at night turns into a

into a leopard and by day she's there's a man who's in love with her but in the evening when the sun starts going down she wants to kill him and so there's going on wow so um so um when can we expect to read all of these when will they reach all of us the new the new lockdown collection of mr ruskin bond

yeah i've written a few the thing is the publishers are slowing down now so hopefully um things will pick up and more books will be coming out in the coming year yeah no sir eagerly are waiting so you know just before we conclude one or two things to parents you know we have a lot of parents uh you know on our youtube channel and everywhere um you know frequent questions that they have one is you know parents are stressed

about how their kids will turn out you know they want them to do a lot of things there is you know there is a lot of pressure that kids also go through from their parents and uh a lot is academic of course you know when it comes to not just school performance but the extracurriculars the co-curriculars the reading what's your advice to parents of the young generation parents who are in their 30s today or 40s yeah it is a problem because the world

is so competitive now isn't it yeah yes and although there are far more avenues of uh for careers open to you than there used to be i mean i remember when i finished school most of the boys either they went into the army or or maybe they became engineers or teachers they were very limited right and and now there's so many career openings and things that you can do but at the same time

the competitiveness is there because over the years education has spread so much whereas and so say 50 years back you know when a few thousand kids were coming out of school looking for jobs now there'll be hundreds of thousands of kids coming to the school yeah yeah or looking for for jobs or a way to make a living so it is difficult and the pressures are there so everybody wants their their son or

daughter to get over 90 percent in in their exams when i was at school nobody got more than 70 percent that's probably oh hundreds hundreds commonplace these days the way it appears so what happens to somebody like me who just struggled to pass you have to become a writer that's right they become mr ruskin bond the amazing writer i guess who never could get through in match

so yeah so it is difficult uh but i would ask so tell pence not to not to put too much pressure on their on their kids but at the same time a little pressure they otherwise say it's i mean after all it's only natural for a boy or girl to prefer going to a party than to be going to class yeah so so you need a little um uh reigning in too right right right so my sympathies with

parents after all i depend on parents in a way because even if a young reader wants to buy a book he has to get the pocket money from his mom or dad absolutely absolutely so sir um which which are those three four books from your collection you would recommend to our young readers that parents should like go out and get there i have a few of the books here this is the great stories for children yeah

and i have the popular one the essential very popular yes at the whistling school boy this is adorable as well yeah they're all doing well those day yes it's a good selection thank you and and the how to be a writer which might be useful that's yeah how to be a writer for uh kids or parents as well anybody could yeah you know just two three weeks back

it might be hopefully it will be helpful yeah so it's a parting word uh parting note you know we're going through difficult times in the pandemic and children especially are locked in at home since march they haven't gone to school they haven't met their friends and it looks like this will go on a little longer any any cheering up words for our little audience out there yes it's tough on young youngsters because they don't like to be cooped up

all the time aren't you yes all right writer in his eighties i do more work but um for young people it gets it is tough definitely and um things are gradually easing and hopefully with everybody seems to be coming up with vaccinations i hope they can be used soon and in any case young people are mostly are pretty well i think immune in a way

if they're normally healthy and yeah look after them yes they're not going to get freaky and i think with the recovery rate also being so good in india particularly um i think that's that's a good sign a little bit hopefully just like another cough or cold in the end hopefully fingers crossed and yes

so so thank you sir thank you i've had a wonderful chat with you and you know all our wonderful readers who've always been curious to get into uh you know the life of mr ruskin born thank you for inviting us into your living room in missouri and uh you know uh uh you're spending a beautiful chilly morning with you and it's been such a pleasure to you and good luck to all of you thank

you thank you so much and yeah so dear children today was the first day and uh stay tuned because we have the u.s puppet theater coming up with a wonderful puppet show next so don't log off and tomorrow we have a wonderful storytelling uh session and uh meeting the author of um you know the the boy who loved his numbers the story of ramanujan and a lot of art workshops as well tomorrow so stay tuned

thank you mr bond again and do take care of yourself and we can't wait to uh get hold of the next uh collection of stories that you release thanks thanks a million [Music] you