

Namita Gokhale, Bratya Basu Sahitya Akademi '21 winners

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New Delhi: English novelist Namita Gokhale, Bengali playwright Bratya Basu, and writers Ambai, George Onakoor and Wali Mohammed Kashtawari were among the 20 authors whose works were on Thursday declared winners of the Sahitya Akademi Awards for 2021.

The awards spanning 20 languages include seven books of poetry, two novels, five short stories, two plays and one biography, autobiography, epic poetry and criticism. A statement by the Sahitya Akademi said the awards for Maithili, Manipuri, Gujarati and Urdu will be announced later.

Sahitya Akademi also announced Anita Vachharajani as winner of the Bal Sahitya Puraskar, awarded for children's literature, for her book 'Amrita Shergil: Rebel With A



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Paintbrush', while Megha Majumdar won the Sahitya Akademi Yuva Puraskar, awarded to young writers, for her novel 'A Burning'.

Gokhale, who won the award for her novel 'Things to Leave Behind', said in a post on Twitter that she was "deeply honoured" to receive it. "Feel a deep sense of pride and gratitude to belong to the vibrant Indian literatures," she said. Malayalam writer George Onakoor won the award for his autobiography 'Hryudyarangangal (Songs of the Heart)'. Onakoor, 80, is a two-time recipient of the Ker-

ala Sahitya Academy Award and is known for his novels, short stories, film scripts and a travelogue.

Tamil feminist writer CS Lakshmi, better known as Ambai, whose writings have challenged the stereotyping of women, won for her short story collection 'Sivappu Kazhuthudan Oru Patchaiparavai' and is the fourth woman from Tamil Nadu to receive the award.

The list of winners also includes poet and Telangana MLC Gorati Venkanna, Trinamool Congress minister, playwright and film director Bratya Basu, and Kashmir's Wali Mohammed Kashtawari, whose criticism 'Tawazun' won the award. Basu, whose film had courted controversy in the recently-concluded IFFI in Goa for being dropped from the festival line up, won the Sahitya Akademi for his play 'Mirjafar O Ananya Natak'.