

## Curriculum Vitae

### Chitra Divakaruni

Gene and Betty McDavid Professor of Creative Writing  
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## PUBLICATIONS

### Books, Fiction:

*An Uncommon Love* (HarperCollins, 2024)  
*Independence* (William Morrow/ HarperCollins, 2023)  
*The Last Queen* (William Morrow/HarperCollins, 2021)  
*The Forest of Enchantments* (HarperCollins, 2019)  
*Before We Visit the Goddess* (Simon and Schuster, 2016)  
*Oleander Girl* (Simon and Schuster, 2013)  
*One Amazing Thing* (Hyperion, 2010)  
*The Palace of Illusions* (Doubleday, 2008)  
*The Queen of Dreams* (Doubleday, 2005)  
*The Vine of Desire* (Doubleday, 2002)  
*The Unknown Errors of Our Lives*, (Doubleday, 2001)  
*Sister of My Heart* (Doubleday, 1999)  
*The Mistress of Spices* (Doubleday, 1997)  
*Arranged Marriage* (Anchor/Doubleday, 1995)

### Books, Poetry:

*Leaving Yuba City* (Doubleday, 1997)  
*Black Candle* (Calyx Books, 1991) reissued with new poems, 2001

### Children's Literature:

*Grandma and the Great Gourd*, an Indian Folk Tale Retold (Roaring Brook, 2013)  
*Shadowland*, a novel (Roaring Brook, 2009)  
*The Mirror of Fire and Dreaming*, a novel (Roaring Brook, 2006)  
*The Conch Bearer*, a novel (Roaring Brook, 2003)  
*Neela: Victory Song*, a novel (Pleasant Company, 2002)

### Opera Libretto:

Houston Grand Opera commissioned Divakaruni to write a libretto for a chamber opera, *River of Light* about an Indian woman in Houston. Performed in 2014 in Houston and 2015 in the San Francisco Area

### Anthologies edited:

*California Uncovered: Stories for the 21<sup>st</sup> century* (Heyday Books, 2005)

*We, Too, Sing America: Readings for Writers* (McGraw Hill, 1998)

*Multitude: A Cross Cultural Anthology* (McGraw Hill, 1st ed. 1993, 2nd ed. 1997)

## **AWARDS:**

### **Awards:**

Winner, American Book Award, for *Independence*, 2024.  
Winner, 2022 International Assn. of Working Women Award for BEST FICTION (for *Last Queen*).

Longlisted for the Dublin Award, *Last Queen*, 2022.

Times of India Best Fiction Award, for *Last Queen*, 2022.

Premio Scanno Award for Literature, Italy, 2015.

Light of India Award in Literature, given by Times of India, 2011. (Two awards were given in 2011. The other went to Salman Rushdie).

*Palace of Illusions* nominated for the Impac-Dublin Literary Award, 2010.

Distinguished Author Award, The South Asian Literary Association, Modern Languages Association, 2009.

Alumna of the year Award, International House, University of California at Berkeley, 2008.

O.Henry Prize, 2002.

Pushcart Prize, 2002.

California Arts Council Award, 1998.

*Mistress of Spices* shortlisted for the Orange Award, U.K., 1996.

C.Y. Lee Award, 1995, for *Mistress of Spices*, partial manuscript.

American Book Award, 1995, for *Arranged Marriage*.

PEN Oakland/ Josephine Miles Award, 1995, for *Arranged Marriage*.

Bay Area Book Reviewers Award, Best Fiction, 1995, for *Arranged Marriage*.

Pen Syndicated Fiction Award, 1993 and 1994, for short fiction.

Pushcart Prize, 1994.

Allen Ginsberg Poetry Prize, 1994.

Santa Clara Arts Council Award, California 1994.

Paterson Poetry Prize, 1992, honorable mention, for *Black Candle*.

Gerbode Foundation Award, California, 1992.

Santa Clara Arts Council Award, California 1990

Editor's Choice Award, Cream City Review, 1990.

Pushcart Prize nominations, 1989 -1993.

Barbara Deming Memorial Award, New York, 1989.

The Hackney Literary award, Birmingham-Southern College, Alabama, 1988.

**Honors:**

Divakaruni chosen by *Economic Times of India* for their List of 20 Most Influential Global Indian women, 2015.

*Oleander Girl* chosen as an Oprah's Book Club Recommendation, 2014.

*Grandma and the Great Gourd* chosen as a *Kirkus Reviews* Best Book of 2013.

*One Amazing Thing* chosen as one of *USA Today's Best Books of 2011*.

*The Conch Bearer* chosen as one of *Publisher's Weekly's Best Books of 2003* and selected for the Bluebonnet List 2005.

*Mistress of Spices* chosen for the California Reading Series along with Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior*, 2003.

Divakaruni chosen as a Literary Laureate by the San Francisco Public Library, 2002. Was invited co-chair for their annual literary celebration

*Vine of Desire* named one of the Best Books of 2002 by the San Francisco Chronicle.

*Vine of Desire* named one of the Best Books of 2002 by the L.A. Times.

*The Mistress of Spices* named one of the best books of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by the San Francisco Chronicle.

"Mrs. Dutta Writes a Letter" chosen as one of the *Best American Short Stories of 1999*.

*Sister of My Heart* chosen by Alan Cheuse of National Public Radio for recommended reading on All Things Considered.

*The Mistress of Spices* named one of the Best Paperbacks of 1998 by the Seattle Times.

*The Mistress of Spices* nominated for the Orange Prize, England, 1998.

*The Mistress of Spices* named one of the Best Books of 1997 by the Los Angeles Times.

**Short Fiction and Poetry Published in the following Anthologies:**

*The Bedford Introduction to Literature* by Michael Meyer (Bedford, 2010, 2012)

*American Voices* (McGraw-Hill, 2006)

*3x33, Short Fiction by 33 Writers* (Thomson/Wadsworth 2005, 2008)

*Arguing Through Literature* (McGraw-Hill, 2005)

*A Fierce Brightness* (Calyx Books, 2003)

*The O. Henry Prize Stories, 2002* (Anchor Books, 2002)  
*The Pushcart Prize Anthology* (Pushcart Press, 2002)  
*Bold Words: A Century of Asian American Writing*  
 (Rutgers Univ. Press, 2001)  
*The Best American Stories, 1999* (Houghton Mifflin, 1999).  
*California Shorts* (Heydey Books, 1999)  
*The Geography of Home* (Heydey Books, 1999)  
*Highway 99* (Heydey Books, 1997).  
*Into the Fire* (Greenfield Review Press, 1996).  
*Contours of the Heart* (Asian American Writers Workshop, 1996).  
*New Indian Writing in English* (Penguin, India, 1995)  
*Diverse Voices of Women* (Mayfield, 1995)  
*Under Western Eyes: Personal Essays* (Anchor, 1995)  
*Bedford Introduction to Literature* (St. Martin's Press, 1995, 1997).  
*Living in America* (Westview Press, 1995)  
*In Their Own Voice* (Penguin, India, 1994)  
*Her Mother's Ashes and Other Stories* (TSAR Publications, Canada, 1994)  
*Blood Into Ink: Women Writing About War* (Westview Press, 1994)  
*Unsettling America* (Viking, 1994)  
*Imagining Worlds* (McGraw Hill, 1994)  
*No More Masks: An Anthology of American Women Poets* (HarperCollins, 1993)  
*Our Feet Walk the Sky* (Aunt Lute, 1993)  
*Dissident Song* (U.C.Santa Cruz, 1992)  
*The Open Boat: An Asian American Anthology* (Doubleday, 1992)  
*Encountering Cultures* (Blair Press, 1991)  
*The House on Via Gombito* (New Rivers, 1990)  
*Looking for Home: Women Writing About Exile* (Milkweed Editions, 1990)  
*Home To Stay* (Greenfield Review Press, 1989)  
*The Forbidden Stitch* (Calyx Books, 1989)

**Short Fiction and Poetry Published in the following Magazines:**

*The New Yorker, Atlantic, Ms., Agni, The Prairie Schooner, The Beloit Poetry Journal, Calyx, Chelsea, Chicago Review, Cream City Review, Floating Island, Santa Clara Review, International Poetry Review, Woman of Power, Z Miscellaneous, Amelia, Berkeley Poets Co-op Magazine, The California Quarterly, Colorado Review, Folio, Occident, Cape Rock, Calapooya Collage, Buffalo Spree, Kalliope, India Currents, Kyoto Journal, Hurricane*

*Alice, Indiana Review, Primavera, Red Dirt, The Literary Review, The Gulf Coast, Paterson Literary Review, Threepenny Review, Toronto Review, Quarry West, Kingfisher, Snowy Egret, Miscellany (India), The Telegraph, (India), The Toronto South Asian Review, Wasafiri (England), The Sun, ZZZZYVA, O Magazine, Good Housekeeping, etc.*

**Employment:** Betty & Gene McDavid Professor of Creative Writing,  
Dept. of English, University of Houston, 1998-current.

**Education:** Ph.D., English, University of California  
at Berkeley, CA, 1984. Danforth Fellow, 1978-82.  
M.A., English, Wright State University, Dayton, OH, 1978.  
B.A., Honors First Class, President's Medal Recipient,  
English, Calcutta University, India, 1976.

**Invited Judge for:** Jesse Jones Award and Steven Turner Award, Texas  
Institute of Letters, 2010.  
Tagore Society of Houston Essay Contest, 2009, 2010,  
2011.  
Pen Faulkner Awards, 2003.  
National Book Awards, New York, 2000.  
Oregon Literary Awards, Portland, OR, 1999.  
Asian American Writers Workshop Awards, New York,  
NY, 1999.  
Nelson-Algren Award, Chicago Tribune, 1998.  
PEN West Fiction Award, Los Angeles, CA, 1997.  
Haas Creative Works Fund, San Francisco, CA, 1997.  
Loft-McKnight Fellowships, Minneapolis, MN, 1996.  
Villa Montalvo Artist Residency Program, Saratoga, CA,  
1993-95.  
Katha Fiction Contest, India Currents Magazine, 1995.

**Invited Speaker/Reader/ Visiting Faculty at Educational Institutions:**

Harvard, Northeast Illinois University, New School (New  
York), New School (San Francisco), University of  
California at Los Angeles, University of California at  
Berkeley, Duke University, Murray State Univ., Kentucky,  
Miami-Dade College, Columbia College, Chicago,  
California State University, Northridge and Sacramento,

Pomona College, University of California at San Diego, St. Mary's College, CA, San Francisco State Univ., University of California at Santa Cruz, University of California at Davis, University of Chicago, Emory University, Spelman College (Atlanta), Northwestern University, University of Wisconsin (Madison), University of Michigan (Ann Arbor), Stanford University, Oberlin College, El Camino College, CA, Mary Washington University, Brown University, Mills College, University of Utah (Salt Lake), University of Oregon (Eugene), Shasta College, Redding, CA, University of California at Santa Barbara, Santa Clara University, etc.

### **Community Service:**

Advisory Board Member, DAYA, a Houston non-profit service organization for South Asian women in distress, 2005-current.

Board Member, Pratham, a non-profit organization bringing education to disadvantaged children in India, 2005-10. Currently serving on the Emeritus Board.

Advisory Board Member, Asians against Domestic Abuse, Houston, 2002—4.

Volunteer, CASA of Fort Bend County, volunteering in the Children's Advocacy Center with child survivors of abuse (2017- 2019)

Volunteer, Chinmaya Mission (nonprofit Indian community service organization), 1998—2012, editing consultant.

Volunteer, Houston Area Women's Center, 1999--2000.

Board Member & volunteer, DAYA, a Houston service organization for South Asian women in distress, 1998—2000.

Co-founder and President, MAITRI, a hotline for South Asian women, Sunnyvale, CA, (worked with women in abusive situations) 1991-98, 2000-02. Advisory board (2020-current).

Consultant, Minority Transfer Program, and Mentor, Pass the Torch Program, Foothill College, 1993-98, (worked with at risk minority students)

Consultant and translator, Support Network for Battered Women, Mountain View, CA, 1991-98.

Volunteer, Support Network for Battered Women, Mountain View, CA, 1990-91.

Volunteer, Companions of Alameda County, 1987-88, (worked with disadvantaged children from minority backgrounds)

Consultant, Women's Center, Diablo Valley College, Pleasant Hill, CA, 1987-88.

Volunteer, Volunteer Centers of Alameda County, CA, 1986-87, (worked with Afghani women refugees)

Board Member and volunteer , Badarikashrama (Indian non-profit organization), San Leandro, CA, 1983-87.

President, Yoga Club, University of California at Berkeley, CA, 1981-84.

**Community Awards:**

2009: Cultural Jewel Award, Indian Culture Center, Houston

Champion of Literacy Award, 2007, Houston, Tx.

American Immigration Law Foundation Award, 2002.

Woman of Vision, San Jose, CA, 1997

The Girl Scouts' World of the Arts Award, 1997.

The Federation of Indian Associations'

Excellence in Literature and Community Service Award, 1995.

Woman of Achievement Award, Santa Clara, CA, 1995.