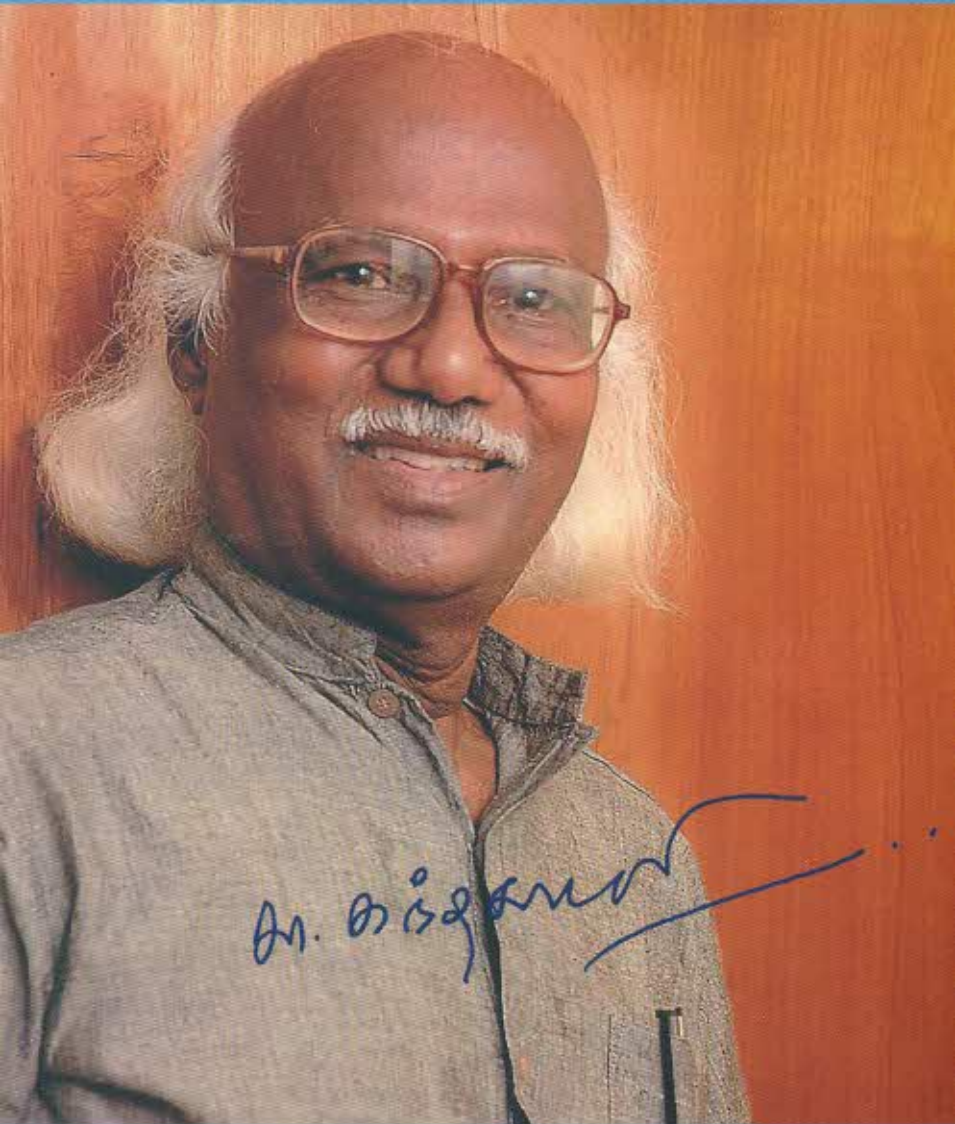




SAHITYA AKADEMI

September 26, 2015

Meet the Author



SA KANDASAMY

There are great writers who capture many a moment of life and convert them into fantastic stories. There are excellent writers whose imagination is quite difficult to match. And then there are writers like Sa Kandasamy whose stories convey the stories untold in the story itself and whose stories begin where they end.

The underlying literary principle in all of Sri Sa Kandasamy's works is that the purpose of storytelling is to convey all that has not been or could not be conveyed by the sounds and words in the story.

Sa Kandasamy, renowned Tamil critic, fiction writer, scholar and documentary film maker, has been contributing to Tamil literature in wide range of genres and topics - Short Stories, Novels, Criticism, on Social Institutions, Language, Painting and Sculpture among many others. He has also been making documentaries on Art, Literature, Writers, Painters and other achievers.

Born as Santhappa Thevar Kandasamy in 1940 at Mayiladuthurai, Sa Kandasamy completed his schooling and college in Madras and served briefly in the Madras Institute of Technology. He started writing at a fairly young age and completed his first novel 'Chaayaavanam' by the time he was 25. Sa Kandasamy's literary career took off with the publication of Chaayaavanam, that was published by Lakshmi Krishna Murthy at Vasagar



Vattam
and his
first short
s t o r y
collection.

Eminent artist Sri Adimoolam's
sketch of Sri Sa Kandasamy

This novel has been listed as one the masterpieces of Indian literature by the National Book Trust and Doordarshan has made this masterpiece as a short film too.

This novel was not traditional, was very unique and much ahead of time when it first appeared and it immediately caught the imagination and attention of the literary world. One of the most finely crafted fiction in modern Tamil literature, Sa Kandasamy clubbed the Nature along with its beauty and bounty and traditional lifestyles. Through a series of fantastic metaphors and imageries, he weaved a marvelous fiction depicting the destruction of a forest and its consequences for environment. This novel came when there was not even a discussion about the destruction of forests, nature etc. Chaayaavanam was the first environmental literature of modern Tamil traditions and probably in modern Indian literature itself. Justifiably this

epic has been translated into a number of languages as well.

Born in a traditional agrarian family that was deeply devoted to M.K. Gandhi and the independence movement, Sa Kandasamy got attracted to books and painting at a very early age and the dawn of independent India and a newly surcharged atmosphere helped him along.

Reading of Sangam Literature, Tiruvalluvar, Silappathikaram, Plato, U.Ve. Swaminatha Iyer, Jawaharlal Nehru, Periyar, to name a few, laid a solid foundation on which Sa Kandasamy built a long and illustrious literary career. More importantly, this platform gave strong flip to his literary ambitions over that of other art forms. He once wrote about the influence of these works - "The level of scholarship I acquired through this gave me strength, confidence and character. These immortal works subtly influenced my works."

There are very few writers in the modern India who has written constantly, consistently and with the same intensity and purpose for a period of over five decades as Sa Kandasamy has done. His belief systems, ideology, lifestyle and the way of working also contributed to a large extent in this. As he did not aspire to get his stories published in the magazines and as he was never forced to liquidate the core he has been able to maintain the same lyrical intensity over a period of five decades in his fiction as well as in other prose writings. His belief that all creative works should have certain quality or standard enabled him to find a field within every genre to ensure such a standard in all his writings.

He once said, "I am one of those who believe that the art of writing does not have to be ornamental. The best literature is one which transcends the barriers of time, culture, language and political ideology. It does not relate to a particular community or gender.



Sri Sa Kandasamy with his family

More importantly, a reader from any part of the world should be able to internalize a novel or short story."

More than his belief, ideology etc, it is his passion for letters and literature that helped Sa Kandasamy in excelling in all the genres that he touched. It is the same passion that moved Sa Kandasamy to found 'Literary Society' in 1960s much against all odds or to found and associate himself with a literary little magazine 'Ka Sa Da Tha Pa Ra' or to go around constantly irrespective of the circumstances to engage the writers, scholars, translators and critics of all hues. For Sa Kandasamy, literature was the beginning, the middle and the end of life. Literature filled all his thinking and as a corollary all his endeavors.

Sa Kandasamy's association and conversations with the writers are legendary. He moved closely with many a great writer such as V. Swaminatha Sharma, Thi. Ja. Ranganathan, Manikkodi B.S. Ramaiah, veteran translator Tha. Naa. Kumaraswamy, eminent critic Ka. Na. Subramaniam, distinguished writers Ku. Alagiriswamy, Thi. Janakiraman, C.S. Chellappa,



Sri Sa Kandasamy and his wife Smt. Rohini

Jayakanthan, Ashokamitran, besides artist Aadimoolam and the sculptor S. Dhanapal.

Sa Kandasamy is also a reputed documentary maker. His documentary, 'Suduman Silaigal' received International recognition and awards. He has also made documentaries on distinguished writers and artists such as Jayakanthan, Ashokamitran, S. Dhanapal and Aadimoolam. For the Central Institute of Indian Languages, Sa Kandasamy has produced films on European Contribution to Tamil Literature, Migration of Tamil People and Tamil Letters.

Sa Kandasamy has represented India and various literary organizations of the country in various countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, U.S.A. and Canada in numerous literary meets.

During his long and illustrious career, Sa Kandasamy has been decorated with several prestigious awards and honors such as Sahitya Akademi Award, Lalit Kala Akademi Fellowship, Senior Fellowship of Government of India, Tamil Nadu Government Literary Award, and Kalaimamani Award among others.



Sri Sa Kandasamy with distinguished Tamil writer Sri D. Jayakanthan and publisher Sri Chokkalingam

A SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

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CHRONOLOGY

1940	Born in Mayiladuthurai, Tamil Nadu
1950-1954	Schooling in Koorainadu, Mayiladuthurai
1958	Completed schooling from Singarampillai High School, Madras
1960	Obtained diploma from Central Polytechnic, Guindy, Madras
1960 -1964	Served as instructor in Madras Institute of Technology, Madras
1965	Completed the first novel 'Chaayaavanam'
1966	Founded literary association in Madras
1968	Married Rohini
1968	Publication of 'Konalkal' first short story collection with friends
1968	Served in the Food Corporation of India, Madras
1969	Publication of 'Chaayaavanam'
1970	Association with 'Ka Sa Da Tha Pa Ra' begins
1974	Publication of 'Thakkaiyin Meedhu Naanku Kankal,' a short story collection
1981	Publication of 'Avan Aanadhu,' a novel
1983	Received Junior Fellowship from the Ministry of Culture
1983	Received Dhwanyaloka Fellowship. Begins 'Suryavamsam,' a novel
1984	Begins 'Tholaindhu Ponavargal' and publication of 'Suryavamsam'
1984	Becomes advisory board member in Film Censor Board
1986	Becomes advisory board member in National Book Trust, India
1990	Becomes advisory board member in Sahitya Akademi
1994	Completion of 'Visaranai Commission,' a novel
1995	Becomes a juri member of National Arts Council, Singapore
1998	Receives Sahitya Akademi Award for 'Visaranai Commission'
2004	Receives Senior Fellowship from the Ministry of Culture
2006	Receives Tamil Nadu Govt Literary Award
2007	Receives 'Writer-in-Residence' grant from Sahitya Akademi
2009	Receives 'Kalaimamani' Award from Government of Tamil Nadu



Sri Sa Kandasamy receiving Sahitya Akademi Award from Dr Ramakanta Rata



Sri Sa Kandasamy receiving Kalaimamani Award from Chief Minister Dr M. Karunanidhi

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