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Sahitya Akademi

invites you to

**meet the author**

**Sundri Uttamchandani**

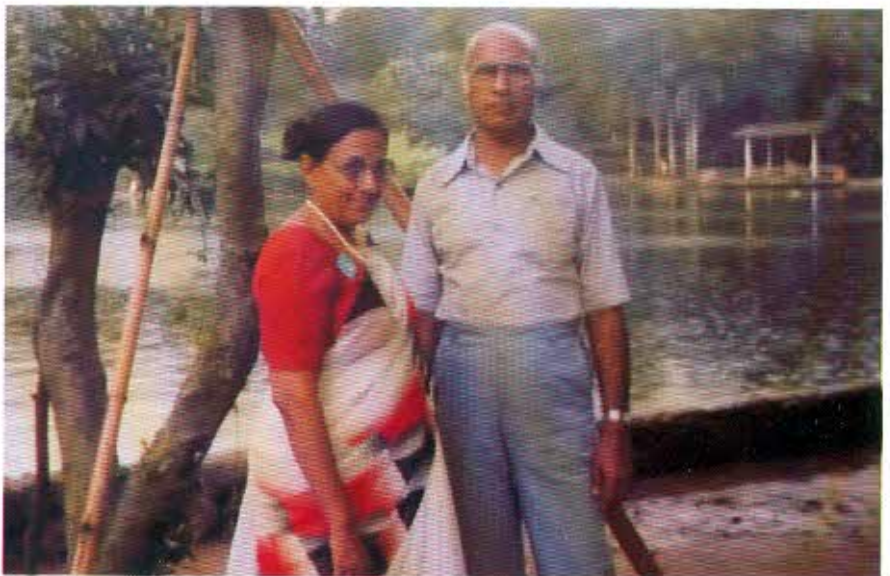


*Sundri Uttamchandani*



**S**undri Uttamchandani is an eminent poet, fiction writer, playwright, essayist and translator in post-independence era of Sindhi literature. Sundri Uttamchandani declares "Creative process is recreation of reality." Born on 28<sup>th</sup> September, 1924 in Hyderabad, Sindh, Sundri was exposed to a vast repertoire of folk and mythological tales which were narrated by her parents. The freedom movement was sweeping across the country when she was in her early

twenties. She could not but be drawn into it. She started her literary career while she was in the college, publishing her translation of a story entitled "Bahadur Maa Ji Bahadur Dheea" (A brave daughter of a brave mother). She married Assandas Uttamchandani in 1947. He was a freedom fighter, lover of literature with leanings toward Marxist philosophy, who, in later years, became one of the leading writers of Sindhi progressive literary movement. Assandas Uttamchandani, popularly known as A. J. Uttam, was one of the founders of Sindhi Sahit Mandal in Mumbai. Sundri accompanied him to weekly literary meetings presided over by literary stalwarts such as Prof. M. U. Malkani, an inspirer of upcoming writers. Such



*Sundri and Uttam in China*

exposures to Sindhi writers and their creative works became a source of inspiration for Sundri, and in the year 1953 she had published her first novel *Kirandar Deewroon* (Crumbling Walls). This novel proved to be a path breaking milestone in the history of Sindhi literature. Her novel shattered the monopoly of male domination in literature, but at the same time, she won the accolades from great writers for her use of 'homely' language, a folksy- idiomatic language used by women folk in their household and thus brought in a new literary flavour in Sindhi literature. The theme and structure of the novel was mature and it has distinction of being reprinted many times. The novel was translated into many Indian

languages that she was elevated from the status of being a writer in regional language to that of a writer of national repute. Her story "Bhoori" (A doll) is a touching portrayal of a beautiful young Sindhi lady in Sindh is devastated by the ravages of Partition. She bravely shoulders the household and economic responsibility of the family as well, ushering in gender equality without sounding stirringly feminist. However, she is still radiant with inner beauty, born out of dignity of labour.

"Hi Shahar" (This City) is a story of a meek Nepali watchman in a lower middle class apartment in a city. The city is portrayed as a ruthless and soulless, unmindful of any concern of an individual. Sundri's short story "Kheer



*Sundri and Ullam with the eminent poet Sheikh Ajaz*



*Receiving the Sahitya Akademi Award*

Bariya Hathra" won the first prize in short story competition in early sixties held by *Kahani*, a popular literary journal.

Sundri has tried her hand at composing traditional poetry with proper metre, but it is in free verse where she has found her niche. She has four poetry collections to her credit. Her poems delve deep into subtle and delicate gamut of emotions and find artistic and imaginative articulation with her individual stamp. Another dimension of Sundri as a litterateur rests with her attribution to translation. She has translated many novels, short stories and poems of renowned writers such as Amrita Pritam, Maxim Gorky, Krishna Chandra, Sholokhov, etc. Apart from bagging many awards throughout her vast

and eventful literary career, she was bestowed with the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Award for her book *Vichhoro* in the year 1986. As a part of Progressive Writers' movement she has written on erstwhile Soviet Union, "Naeen Sabhyata Jo Darshan" and "Bharat Roos Ba Banh Beli" (India - Russia - Two Comrades In Arms) for which she won the coveted Soviet Land Nehru Award.

Sundri has been inspiring generations of women writers through her creative endeavour and will continue to inspire future generations. Sundri has been praised and admired time and again for depicting real life characters. Commenting on her creative process Sundri says, "I feel any creative work such as poetry, story, novel or play

should not be a photographic depiction of reality. It is to be clothed with imagination, artistic ideas and style of his or her own, with unity of objective and subjective world. Thus the real facts are like diamonds strewn in the valley found by Sindbad. One has to pick and choose the diamonds, cut, polish and create dimensions to make them attractive and

invaluable."

Reminiscing her career as writer spanning over six decades, Sundri Uttamchandani says, "When I look back over the valleys of past years to understand how this urge towards becoming a writer developed in me, the events of past flash in my mind's eye like playing of a video tape, so fertile in endless continuity".

### A SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

#### BOOKS

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*Preet Purani Reet Niralee*, 1956  
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*Hik Sassui Sao Soor* (Trans), 1963  
*Achaa Vaar Gaara Gul*, 1965  
*Aman Sade Peyo*, 1966  
*To Jin Jee Taat*, 1970  
*Naien Sabhitya Jo darshan*, 1975  
*Bhoori*, 1979 (3 editions)  
*Bandhan*, 1985 (3 editions)  
*Vichhoru*, 1989 (2 editions)  
*Yugaantar*, 1989  
*Kheryal dharti*, 1992  
*Murk Te Manah*, 1992  
*Atam Vishwas*, 1999  
*Sindhu* (Dramas), 2000  
*Nakhreliyun*, 2001  
*Daath Bani Aa Laat*, 2004

#### TELEFILMS IN SINDHI

- Vilayati Ghot Ji Golha*, 2006  
*Bhoori*, 2008  
*Kitty Party*, 2008

#### TELEFILMS IN HINDI

- Bandhan*, 1986



Sundri speaking at Soviet Land Nehru Award Ceremony



*Receiving Soviet Land Nehru Peace Award from Smt. Indira Gandhi,  
former Prime Minister of India*

### **A CHRONOLOGY**

- 1924 Born in Hyderabad, Sindh (Pakistan)
- 1946 Started her writing career
- 1947 Her marriage with Assandas Uttamchandani
- 1953 Her first novel *Kirandar Deewroon* published
- 1956 Has second novel *Preet Purani Reet Nirali*, published
- 1966  
&
- 1979 Soviet Land Nehru Award
- 1986 Sahitya Akademi Award for *Vichhoro*
- 1990 Gaurav puraskar, Founded Sindhi Sahitya Mandal



*Sundri with her daughters, Asha & Bina (now Geeta),  
grandson Manish and his wife Kavita*