Safe Havens - Freedom Talk #7
Freedom Talk@Shuddhashar

Reflecting on pressing issues and cases related to the freedom of artistic expression with international participants in the Global Stream 2020 and following the six earlier panel talks with speakers from around the world, Safe Havens Freedom Talks continues its series with yet another important conversation. For this Freedom Talk on 27 August 2021, join Shuddhashar’s publisher and editor Tutul and co-editor Lisa Irene Knight as they retell origin stories, narratives of exile and transformation, and highlights about Shuddhashar’s online international journey as a magazine about human rights, freedom of expression, and literature. Shuddhashar’s story is about youthful beginnings, disrupted dreams, and resilience and creative determination in the face of obstacles.

The event is produced in collaboration with Shuddhashar and it will be live streamed on Friday, 27 August 2021 at 2.00 pm CET on
https://www.facebook.com/events/352508906424028

In the event, Ahmedur Rashid Chowdhury aka Tutul (publisher, editor, and co-director of Shuddhashar) and Lisa Irene Knight (editor and co-director of Shuddhashar) will have a conversation.

In 1990 in Bangladesh, Shuddhashar began as a little magazine and later evolved into a publication house that was known for printing books and articles about literature and controversial topics such as women’s rights, homosexuality and LGBTIQ+ rights, and rationality and anti-superstition. In 2013, Shuddhashar received the Bangla Academy Shahid Munir Chowdhury Award for most bestsellers. Through publishing and blogging, Shuddhashar attracted the attention of radical Islamists who made numerous deadly attacks on writers, especially between 2013-16. Shuddhashar’s publisher, Ahmedur Rashid Chowdhury (Tutul) narrowly survived an attack by machete- and firearm-wielding Islamists who stormed his office. From the hospital, he went into exile and was invited to Norway as a guest writer by the International Cities of Refuge Network.
Notes:
About Freedom Talks
Safe Havens - Freedom Talks series is closely connected to the annual global Safe Havens conference which was organized in Malmö 2013-2018; in Cape Town, South Africa in 2019; and as a streamed event in 2020. The Freedom Talks series is focused on issues regarding threats towards artistic freedom, free press and intangible heritage. Guests in the Freedom Talks series are highly knowledgeable and prolific actors in the global Arts Rights Justice sector – fighting for artistic freedom. The talks are presented in - or translated to - English. The talks can be watched through the Freedom Talks Facebook account and through our partner Howlround, where also previous events are archived, https://howlround.com/series/safe-havens-freedom-talks.

The Speakers @Shuddhashar

Ahmedur Rashid Chowdhury (Tutul) is publisher, editor, and co-director of Shuddhashar. His collection of poetry, Nil Bishe Sish Kate Thot (Whistling through Blue Poison), was published in 1995. Since exile from Bangladesh in 2015, he received several awards for his activities promoting freedom of expression, including the Jeri Laber International Freedom to Publish Award (2016), the PEN Pinter International Writer of Courage Award (2016, and the Norwegian PEN's Ossietzky Prize (2018). He restarted Shuddhashar as an online magazine in 2017.

Lisa Irene Knight joined Shuddhashar in 2018 as editor and co-director. She is Alva and Beatrice Bradley Professor of Asian Studies and Religion, and chair of the Department of Asian Studies and Anthropology Program at Furman University in South Carolina, USA. She focuses on religions of South Asia and feminist ethnography and is currently researching activism, secularism, and exiled Bangladeshis. She published Contradictory Lives: Baul Women in India and Bangladesh (2011) with Oxford University Press.
*The event is organized by the independent international NGO Safe Havens & Freedom Talks (SH*FT), through collaborations within the global Arts Rights Justice sector, and with Safemuse graciously supporting as its mentoring organization in the start-up period. The Freedom Talks are sponsored by the Swedish Institute.