

PRESS CLIPS

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“Be prepared for rejection and criticism”

1. How do you think the Pune International Literary Festival (PILF) can help youngsters in the city?

Pune is probably one of the most educated, enlightened and well-read cities of India. It is one of the few cities where people continue to enjoy reading. In demographic terms, it is a city with a very high literacy rate and a strong emphasis on culture, values and education. I believe that a literary festival such as the PILF will help engage younger audiences and give further impetus to the wonderful habit of reading.

2. How can more awareness be created about authors? What do you think are the most popular

genres today?

There has already been a sea change of sorts in book publishing, retail and consumption. It is almost impossible to compare the publishing landscape of a decade ago with that of today. Many younger and newer authors are bringing along with them a whole new generation of readers. Fiction genres that were never given too much importance by publishers — mysteries, adventures, thrillers, romance, young adult — are now, suddenly, seeing a great deal of action. More importantly, Indian authors are being preferred over international names. All of these developments augur well for India.

3. Could you give a few tips to

young and aspiring writers about the to write a good book?

Do it your way and be original. If you are not noticed, don't be dejected. It's not you but the market. The average browser in a bookshop spends eight seconds on the front cover and 15 seconds on the back cover. Most readers do not get past page 18 of an average book.

Also, don't be afraid to emulate as all stories fall into one of seven plots. You can read a book called *The Seven Basic Plots* by Christopher Booker. Be prepared for rejection and criticism — it goes with the territory.

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