

## Creative Activism in Words and Action: Writers & Activists at the United Nations

"Creative Activism in Words & Action: Writers & Activists at the United Nations," event at the [2022 AWP Conference](#) in Philadelphia (March 23–26), is presented by [Life and Legends](#), a journal of international literature, supported by [Silent River Film and Literary Society](#). The event will take place virtually.

### EVENT DESCRIPTION

Writers and artists have always inspired and influenced the world through literature and art. Many have taken the initiative to impact political and cultural shifts. However, their engagement in civic actions is much needed than ever before. The panel will explore how writers, poets, and artists can join hands to safeguard global interests and find solutions to concerns such as wars, human rights, hunger, illiteracy, climate change, and more by working with the United Nations Associations.

This event will draw the attention of a diverse group of writers and artists passionate about advocacy. It will underline the importance of activism to bring awareness about issues we face and inspire positive changes. The esteemed panel of poets, writers, filmmakers, and UNA members will share their journey of Creative Activism and explore how to make our voices heard to the people in power and use the tools, resources and focus provided for advocacy by the United Nations Associations worldwide.

### FOCUS

The panel will focus on how the members of the creative community can activate their voices and empower themselves to impact global issues and how they can use the art of storytelling to share understandings of the issues from their parts of the world and use it as a means of activism. Moreover, how they can engage in Creative Activism to bridge the divide between the nations and communities to bring peace and work with politicians, social workers, and the United Nations to advocate for the causes, they are passionate about.

### PARTICIPANTS

**Rachel Bowen Pittman** (Panelist): Rachel Bowen Pittman is the Executive Director of the United Nations Association of the USA (UNA-USA). She guides the UNA-USA's strategic work, cultivates partnerships with UN and government officials, oversees membership expansion, and spearheads advocacy initiatives to help the U.S.-UN relations.

**Christopher Merrill** (Panelist): Christopher Merrill has published many books of poetry, translations, and nonfiction, most recently, *Boat, Necessities, The Tree of the Doves: Ceremony, Expedition, War, and Self-Portrait with Dogwood*. He directs the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa.

**Dunya Mikhail** (Panelist): Dunya Mikhail was awarded the Kresge Fellowship in 2013 and the United Nations Human Rights Award for Freedom of Writing in 2001. Her books include *The War Works Hard, Diary of A Wave Outside the Sea, The Iraqi Nights, and The Beekeeper: Rescuing the Stolen Women of Iraq*.

**Megha Sood** (Panelist): Megha Sood is Pushcart Nominated Award-Winning Poet, Editor, and Literary Activist based in New Jersey, USA. Associate Editor at MookyChick(UK), Life and Legends (USA), and Literary Partner in the project "Life in Quarantine" with Stanford University, USA. Panelist at the WNBA and Member at UNA-USA.

**Kalpna Singh-Chitnis** (Panelist and Moderator): Kalpna Singh-Chitnis is a Pushcart Prize nominated, award-winning poet, writer, and Editor-in-Chief of *Life and Legends*. She is the author of four poetry collections. Her works have appeared in notable journals, and her poetry has been translated into fourteen languages. Poems from her award-winning book "*Bare Soul*" and poetry film "*River of Songs*" have been included in the "Nova Collection" and the "Polaris Collection" Lunar Codex time capsules to go on the moon with NASA's "Nova-C lander missions to Oceanus Procellarum" in 2022 and "NASA VIPER rover mission to the Lunar South Pole" in 2023. A UN Advocacy Member of the UNA-USA and a former lecturer of Political Science, Kalpna Singh-Chitnis holds a degree in Film Directing from the New York Film Academy and works as an independent filmmaker in Hollywood.