

# MEDIA RELEASE

## THE SILENT RAGA IS BEING HEARD

*Merchant's latest book nominated for the Commonwealth Writers' Prize for Best First Book*

**VANCOUVER, BC. 15 FEBRUARY 2008.** The finalists for this year's Commonwealth Writers' Prize have been announced and Ameen Merchant's book, *The Silent Raga*, has been nominated for the Best First Book Award, in the Canada and the Caribbean region. Winners for each region will be announced on March 13th, and will continue on to compete against other winners from the remaining regions (Africa, Europe & South Asia, South East Asia & South Pacific) for the overall Best First Book Award.

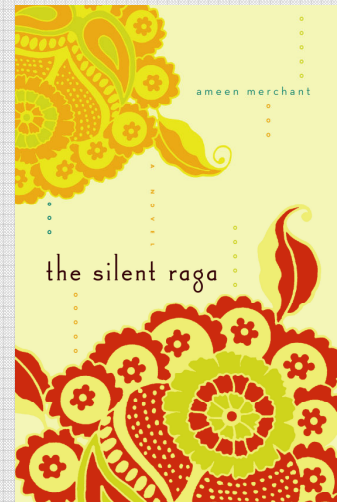
Regional winners will be invited to take part in a week-long program of readings, community activities and other public events alongside the final pan-Commonwealth judging, in South Africa in May 2008. Now in its 22<sup>nd</sup> year, this prize grants a £5,000 cash prize to the winning author of the Best First Book Award.

In the literary tradition of Rohinton Mistry and Arundhati Roy, *The Silent Raga* is a moving tale of family, tradition, loss and reconciliation that follows Janaki and Mallika, two sisters from a middle-class Brahmin family in Madras, India. In confident prose that resembles the rhythms and progression of an Indian raga, Merchant captures in rich detail the world of these Brahmin women, a world restricted by caste and cultural rules but also teeming with colour, music and food. The book will be published by HarperCollins India this spring.

For more information on *The Silent Raga* please visit our website at: <http://www.douglas-mcintyre.com/book/9781553653097>.

**AMEEN MERCHANT** was born in Bombay and raised in Madras, India. *The Silent Raga* is his first novel. He lives in Vancouver, BC, where he is working on his next novel and programming a new Bollywood audio channel for the CBC.

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### THE SILENT RAGA

Hardcover • \$32.95 CDN

ISBN: 978-1-55365-309-7

5 ½ x 8 ½ in • 400 pages

### Ameen Merchant



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