F. Sionil José
National Artist of the Philippines, Literature, 2001

F. (Francisco) Sionil José was born on December 3, 1924, in Rosales, Pangasinan. He is best known for The Rosales Saga, a five-novel epic that encompasses 100 years of Philippine history, 1872-1972, and depicts the Philippines' own revolutionary tradition.

A prolific writer, whose childhood memories of his hometown are the roots of his works of fiction, José has written more than 35 books -- novels, short stories, poetry, and social commentaries. He was also an award-winning journalist earlier in his writing career. His works have been translated into 28 languages, including Tagalog and Ilokano, and is the Philippines' most-widely translated writer. He has also been involved with international cultural organizations, notably International P.E.N., the world association of poets, playwrights, essayists, and novelists, the Philippine Center of which he founded in 1958 and for which he served as National Secretary until 2007.

In 1965, José and his wife, Teresita, founded the Solidaridad Bookshop and Publishing House in Ermita, Manila. The following year, he established Solidarity, a monthly magazine whose contributors included Asia’s leading writers, poets, statesmen, scholars, and political and social activists. The next year, the couple launched Solidaridad Galleries, which was dedicated to giving Filipino art a Filipino face, and to providing a space for new, young Filipino artists to exhibit their works.

Recognitions of José’s literary works and his influence on the Philippines and Asia include the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Journalism, Literature and Creative Arts (1980), National Artist of the Philippines, Literature (2001), the Order of Sacred Treasure, Japan (2001), the Pablo Neruda Centennial Award (2004), and Officer in the French Order of Arts and Letters (2014).

Now in his nineties, he continues to be a prolific writer and relentless voice against social injustice and national amnesia. Almost daily, he still climbs the steps to his writing alcove on the third floor of Solidaridad Bookshop.

He and Teresita have seven children, eleven grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.
PUBLICATIONS

Novels

● THE ROSALES SAGA

Novellas

● THREE FILIPINO WOMEN. New York, 1992

Short Stories

● SELECTED WORKS. Moscow, 1977
● WAYWAYA, ELEVEN FILIPINO SHORT STORIES. Hong Kong: Heineman, Asia, 1980; Manila, 1985
● SELECTED SHORT STORIES. Paris, 1999
● SELECTED STORIES. Manila: University of the Philippines Press, 2016

Drama


Verse

● QUESTIONS. Manila: Solidaridad Publishing House, 1988
**Non-fiction**
- IN SEARCH OF THE WORD, Manila: De La Salle University Press, 1998
- GLEANINGS FROM A LIFE IN LITERATURE. Manila: UST Publishing House, 2011

**Anthologies**
- Editor, EQUINOX I, An Anthology of New English Writing. Manila, 1965
- Editor, ASIAN P.E.N. ANTHOLOGY I. Manila, 1966; New York, 1968
- Editor, A FILIPINO AGENDA FOR THE 21ST CENTURY. Manila, 1987

**AWARDS**
- 3 First Prizes, National Press Club Annual Journalism Awards for articles on social change and agrarian reform
- 3 First Prizes, Palanca Annual Memorial Award for the English Short Story
- City of Manila Award for Literature, 1979
- 10th Anniversary Cultural Center of the Philippines Award for the Novel, 1979
- Ramon Magsaysay Award for Journalism, Literature and Creative Communications Arts, 1980
- Tawid Award for Literature, 1980
- First Prize, Palanca Annual Memorial Award for the English Novel, 1981
- Outstanding Fulbrighters Award for Literature, 40th Anniversary of the Philippine Fulbright Scholars Association, 1988
- Cultural Center of the Philippines Award (Gawad para sa Sining) for Literature, 1989
- Cultural Center of the Philippines Centennial Award, 1999
- Chevalier dans L’Ordre des Arts et Letters, France, 2000
- National Artist of the Philippines, Literature, 2001
- Kun Santo Zuiho Sho, The Order of Sacred Treasure, Japan, 2001
- Pablo Neruda Centennial Award, Chile, July 12, 2004
- Officier dans l’Ordre des Arts et Lettres, France, December 3, 2014

**FELLOWSHIPS**
- U.S. Department of State, Smith-Mundt Leader Grant, 1955
- Asia Foundation Grant (United States, South America and Southeast Asia), 1960
- British Council Grant (Great Britain), 1967
- ASPAC Fellowship to study regionalism and Japanese modernization, 1971
- Rockefeller Foundation Writing Fellowship (Bellagio), 1979
- East-West Center Senior CLI Fellow (Honolulu), 1981
- International House of Japan Fellow (Tokyo), 1983
- Rockefeller Foundation Writing Fellowship (Bellagio), 1993
- Japan Foundation Fellowship, 1993
ACADEMIC HONORS
● Ph.D., Honoris Causa (Humanities, University of the Philippines, Manila), April 26, 1992
● Ph.D., Honoris Causa (Humanities, De La Salle University, Manila), September 30, 1995
● Ph.D., Honoris Causa (Humanities, Far Eastern University, Manila), April 7, 2000
● Ph.D., Honoris Causa (Humanities, Foundation University, Dumaguete City), March 23, 2008
● Ph.D., Honoris Causa (Humanities, University of Pangasinan, Dagupan City), February 12, 2009

LECTURES
● Professorial lecturer on Philippine Culture, Graduate School, University of the East, Manila, 1974
● Professorial lecturer on Philippine Culture, De La Salle University, Manila, 1984-1985
● Writer-in-Residence, National University of Singapore, July-August, 1987
● Visiting Research Scholar, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, January-June, 1988
● Professorial lecturer on Philippine Culture, Graduate School, De La Salle University, Manila, 1994
● Professorial lecturer on Philippine Culture, Faculty of Arts and Letters, University of Santo Tomas, 1996
● Professorial lecturer on Philippine Culture, University of California, Berkeley, 1998
● Professorial lecturer on Philippine Culture, De La Salle University, University of Santo Tomas, 1999
● Associate, University of Santo Tomas Creative Writing Center, 2000
● Writer-in-Residence, Division of Literatures, Cultures, and Languages, Stanford University, April-May, 2005

POSITIONS
1947-1948 : Staff Member, The Commonweal, National Catholic Weekly, Manila
1948-1949 : Assistant Editor, United States Information Service, Manila
1949-1960 : Managing Editor, The Manila Times Sunday Magazine
1957-1960 : Editor, Progress, annual publication of The Manila Times
1956-1962 : Editor, Comment, quarterly journal, Manila
1961-1962 : Managing Editor, The Asia Magazine (Weekly), Hong Kong
1965-Present : Founder and Publisher, Solidaridad Publishing House, Manila
1966-1996 : Publisher and Editor, Solidarity, journal on current affairs, ideas and the arts, Manila
1967-1981 : Founder and Curator, Solidaridad Galleries, Manila
1985-2003 : Chairman, Solidarity Foundation

EDUCATION
1946-1948 : College of Philosophy and Letters University of Santo Tomas, Manila
WHAT THEY SAY

"The mere mention of his name provokes the most partisan debates, but because of his prodigious output and the singeing social and moral vision that animates his best fiction, Jose (born 1924) is deserving of the National Artist Award. No Filipino novelist in English has written as adeptly, movingly, and in a language that is its own sole, freshly created universe about the Filipino’s quest for a just moral order. Jose’s fiction—limn and define a shining vision of today’s Filipino: a future that is more fair, more just, more caring and ultimately more creative." – Editorial, Philippine Daily Inquirer

"Francisco Sionil Jose, Asia’s white hope (or tan stand?) for the Nobel, has been translated into every major language, including the Scandinavian, and is, hands down, the most widely read Filipino author." – Nick Joaquin, Philippine Graphic

"I like to announce that we have among us the first great Filipino novels written in English and that the author, Francisco Sionil Jose, has spoken the awful truths and grappled with the fearful realities that centrally confront us, not in just one novel but in five books which, taken together, are the most impressive legacy of any writer to Philippine culture...." – Ricaredo Demetillo, University of the Philippines, Diamond Jubilee Lecture

"In Filipino literature in recent years, the creative work of Francisco Sionil Jose occupies a special place...the advocate of Filipino originality (he) is a master not so much of cultural as of social analysis, uncovering the essence of contemporary processes in the Philippines... Jose is a great artist...as is often the case, the creative work of the artist is broader and deeper than his rigid artistic declarations." -- Igor Podberezsky, Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow

"Sionil Jose has the ability to write evocatively...his descriptions of the rural environment have an intense glow and a lyrical shine...Linguistically and artistically he has developed his craft and is now the complete master of an American style...he is no longer an author depending on a language and psychology whose origins are in colonialism but is truly an emancipated stylist, an interpreter of character and analyst of society." – Artur Lundkvist, The Swedish Academy, Svenska Dagbladet, Stockholm

“America has no counterpart … no one who is simultaneously a prolific novelist, a social and political organizer, an editor and a journalist, a small-scale entrepreneur...Jose’s identity had equipped him to be fully sensitive to his nation’s miseries without succumbing, like many of his characters, to corruption or despair." – James Fallows, The Atlantic

"(Sionil Jose) captures the spirit of his country’s sullen and corrupt bureaucracy (and) tells the readers far more about Philippine society than many, far lengthier works of non-fiction...." – Steve Vines, South China Morning Post, Hong Kong
"The foremost Filipino novelist in English...his novels deserve a much wider readership than the Philippines can offer. His major work, the Rosales Saga, can be read as an allegory for the Filipino in search of an identity." – Ian Buruma, New York Review of Books

“Mr. Jose, a publisher, bookseller, and ubiquitous Philippine novelist, is a loving, anguished chronicler of the steady degradation of his once-elegant homeland.” – Pico Iyer, The New York Times

"...an outstanding saga writer. If ever a Nobel Prize in literature will be awarded to a Southeast Asia writer, it will be F. Sionil Jose." – The Mainichi Shimbun, Tokyo

"Seldom has a writer reflected so well the qualities and the failing of his people. Francisco Sionil Jose is one of the best-known writers in his country and abroad. He crossed this century embracing the hopes and the disillusions of his land: his essays and his articles as well as his novels are inseparable from the modern history of the Philippines." -- Philippe Pons, Le Monde des livres, Paris

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