Wang Gungwu, Suratman Markasan on Singapore Literature Prize shortlist at 91

Historian Wang Gungwu and literary pioneer Suratman Markasan have made the Singapore Literature Prize shortlist aged 91. They are the oldest writers nominated for this year’s prize, the shortlist of which was announced yesterday.

Home Is Where We Are, the second part of Wang’s memoirs, is in the running for English creative non-fiction.

It is the first time on the shortlist for the National University of Singapore (NUS) professor, who is known for his research on Chinese history. It was “a sweet surprise”, he told The Straits Times.

The book, which follows Home Is Not Here (2018), was written with his wife Margaret Wang, who died before it was published.

By the time he started working on it, she could no longer write. “I asked her if I could use what she had earlier written for our children and she agreed,” he recalled. Together they chose the parts she wanted to be included and the final version was read to her before it was sent to the publisher.

Suratman, a Cultural Medallion recipient, has been shortlisted for four previous editions of the prize.

The biennial prize, organised by the Singapore Book Council, is Singapore’s oldest ongoing literary award in all four official languages.

The book, which follows Home Is Not Here (2018), was written with his wife Margaret Wang, who died before it was published.

By the time he started working on it, she could no longer write. “I asked her if I could use what she had earlier written for our children and she agreed,” he recalled. Together they chose the parts she wanted to be included and the final version was read to her before it was sent to the publisher.

The biennial prize, organised by the Singapore Book Council, is Singapore’s oldest ongoing literary award in all four official languages.

The book, which follows Home Is Not Here (2018), was written with his wife Margaret Wang, who died before it was published.

By the time he started working on it, she could no longer write. “I asked her if I could use what she had earlier written for our children and she agreed,” he recalled. Together they chose the parts she wanted to be included and the final version was read to her before it was sent to the publisher.

The biennial prize, organised by the Singapore Book Council, is Singapore’s oldest ongoing literary award in all four official languages.

The book, which follows Home Is Not Here (2018), was written with his wife Margaret Wang, who died before it was published.

By the time he started working on it, she could no longer write. “I asked her if I could use what she had earlier written for our children and she agreed,” he recalled. Together they chose the parts she wanted to be included and the final version was read to her before it was sent to the publisher.

The biennial prize, organised by the Singapore Book Council, is Singapore’s oldest ongoing literary award in all four official languages.