



BOOK NOTES: Acclaimed author plans July visit to Batavia  
Naseem Rakha

By Ben Beagle [bbeagle@batavianews.com](mailto:bbeagle@batavianews.com)

Published: Saturday, May 30, 2009 7:12 AM EDT

A writer whose debut novel is finding her hailed as an emerging literary voice is scheduled to stop in Batavia for a booksigning in July.

Naseem Rakha, author of *The Crying Tree*, is planning to stop from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. July 29 at Present Tense, 101 Washington Ave.

Rakha's book is creating considerable buzz. This afternoon she is speaking at BookExpo America, a publishing industry gathering in New York City, as part of its "Emerging Voices" program. *The Crying Tree* has also been selected by Barnes and Noble for its fall "Discover Great New Writers" promotion.

"I think her book stands out because she has wonderfully developed characters, the story is about ordinary people put into a very unique situation and she writes of them convincingly," says Erica Caldwell, the book store's owner.

*The Crying Tree*, to be released this summer, is about a mother who must overcome the hate, grief, and secrets that surround the murder of her 15 year old son -- and defy church and family -- as she attempts to stop the execution of the man who killed her boy.

"The family relationships are complex and their emotions and reactions are very human," Caldwell said.

Caldwell says the novel -- which the store's Storyslingers book club will read as its July selection -- will appeal to readers "not only because it is a good, well-written story, but also because the subject is one that touches on themes of death and forgiveness that are universally relevant."

*The Crying Tree* has been called dramatic, wrenching, and ultimately uplifting.

Naseem's stories have been heard on NPR's *All Things Considered*, *Morning Edition*, *Marketplace Radio*, *Christian Science Monitor*, and *Living on Earth*. She lives in Oregon's Willamette Valley with her husband, son and a whole bunch of animals.