

GloMag

GLOWING

Monthly Online Poetry and Prose

Magazine

April 2017



Edited and Published by Glory Sasikala

Padmini Rambhatla



Title of the Cover Pic: Winding Creek

Padmini Rambhatla: She is a homemaker and Creative writing teacher who enjoys her different roles as loving wife to an awesome and caring hubby, and as mom to her two sons, Rahul and Arjun. She loves the company of her students and strives to make them enjoy reading, writing and using their imagination to create wholesome and interesting stories. She enjoys watching movies in English, Tamil and Hindi. Padmini dabbles in art occasionally and loves cooking a variety dishes for friends and family.

Perspective On Painting

I find drawing and painting extremely therapeutic and relaxing. I have painted using oils and watercolours ever since I was a teenager. I love drawing landscapes and faces of beautiful women. I prefer watercolours as a medium though it's not too forgiving to work with.

ABOUT GLOMAG

GloMag is the coming together of writers in their diverse manifestations, thoughts, and expressions, and the visual interpretation of these. Sometimes the original thought of the writer gets completely lost in the interpretations. Visual aids help us to decipher the writer's intentions, and at the same time, enhance the reading experience. Perhaps you are sitting in solitude beneath a bough, besides a lake, and you turn the pages. The thoughts capture you, time stands still, and you become engrossed, oblivious to anything but these beautiful writings, expressions, and pictures. Your soul dances in ecstasy, participates in a cosmic experience, it sways and chants. Somewhere someone is telling you about duality, someone tells you about a forlorn house without music, someone shows you how to love, and someone raises questions about existence itself.

And when you come to, the world is still there, the lake is still there, the birds are chirping, shadows have lengthened. Nothing feels the same! You are not the same! You get up reluctantly. It's time to go home. ~ ***Glory Sasikala***

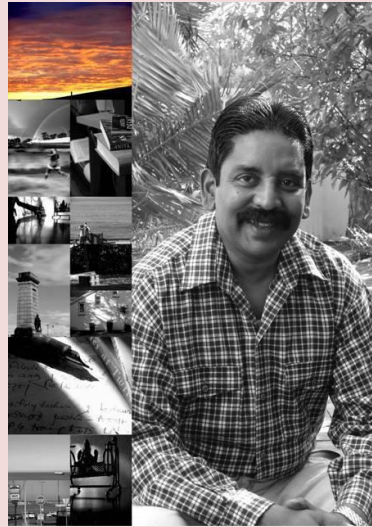
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BACKGROUND MUSIC: "Roja" from film Roja. Music by A. R. Rahman

PREFACE

Amitabh Mitra



IN BHUTAN

So this is something which happened many years back. Something which stuck to me, fibrils like so many others. It was in 1985.

I was working in a high altitude hospital in the Kingdom of Bhutan.

Evenings used to arrive by 3 pm and that was the time when my batman, a singular chap by the name of Sharief use to prepare my tray of "chota" (small in Hindi) peg of rum with spicy lamb pieces. Eventually I used to hit the bottle accompanied by belting urdu ghazals from the audio system and a roaring fire. It used to be foggy all day and temperatures were subzero and I remained foggy at night.

I lived and loved the Dzonkha way of life.

One day I learnt that my patients were being treated by a Buddhist monk, a Lama who happened to be passing by. It was only when I found out that he was treating such diseases as cancer that I decided to pay him a visit. I knew Bhutanese herbal medicine is very evolved and there is a Institute of Indigenous Therapy in Thimphu, Bhutan. His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuk has given his country a new outlook yet preserving the culture and traditions which has made this mountain kingdom a unique place, the last Shangri-la.

I requested my postmaster friend who is fluent in Dzonkha and Tibetan to accompany me to the Lama's abode. One fine day, early in a misty morning, I packed my jeep with essentials, a bottle of fruit juice for the Lama and I drove off with my friend, the postmaster.

It wasn't long before we had to stop, and Mr. Tshering suggested that we take a shortcut through the woods taking a walk instead. It was a difficult walk for me, being more used to the finer pleasures. The flying leeches kept on jumping on to us and I was wondering what I was doing here instead of my comfortable home, "The Dzong" (A Fortress). Mr. Tshering understood my discomfort and urged me with anecdotes of the Lama.

One goes like this: a young man travelled a long distance from a far off village in the mountains to pay his respects to the Lama. He was carrying a packet of home-made cheese that his mother had packed as an offering for His Holiness. These were the same woods he was treaded to reach the Lama's place. He had a long and an arduous journey. Suddenly he felt that the packet of cheese was getting too heavy for him to carry on with him. At that moment, he decided that he would rather divide the cheese into two halves and hide that piece in the bushes and carry the other half for the Lama. He believed that the Lama, being alone, would not need such a big piece of cheese. He arrived at the Lama's cottage in the afternoon to find that the Lama was waiting for him at his doorstep. He welcomed him, gave him some biscuits to eat and told him, "My son it's going to be evening soon, you have a long walk back home, please go quickly as the birds are eating away the cheese you left in the bushes."

Such were the "tales" Mr. Tshering related during our walk, accompanied by my constant Ha's and Oh's, utterances of a mixed reaction due to the pain of stuck leeches and the utter wonder of his narration.

We finally reached a glade on the top of a small hill at about 2 pm. The Sun was still shining but not with all its splendour. There were small makeshift huts, sick people

who were staying there with their relatives. I recognised some of them as they had visited me in the hospital. They all waved at us, children, elderly people running to greet and shouting Kuzo Zambola Dasho, a typical Bhutanese salutation. I felt at home again.

Mr Tshering pointed to me a small rustic cottage in the centre of the clearing. It was the Lama's residence. The people around us told us that he is inside and that he comes out only in the early hours of the morning to distribute medicine to his patients.

I knocked at his door.

The door was opened by a smiling man with mongoloid features typical of that region, wearing a straw hat, very rotund and of indeterminate age. I would put him at around fiftyish but he may have been older. The cottage interior was just enough for him to sit at the corner as the place was piled up with canned items, fruit juices, and so on that people had given him as offerings. I bowed and gave him the bottle of fruit juice. Kadrinche la, Thanks uttered the Lama, always smiling, his eyes twinkling as he looked at me.

Mr. Tshering introduced us and we all sat on mats on the floor, a bit cramped, while he sat in front of us in a semi-reclining position.

There was no way he could sleep in that room as there was no space nor was there any other room. There was only one door in that cottage.

I looked at him.

I felt so different, very calm and so full of happiness.

He asked me in Dzongkha that Mr. Tshering interpreted,

"What do I need?"

Nothing, I said.

He asked me to expose my navel.

He pulled out a hollow bamboo and placed its one end on my navel.

And then he blew, thrice.

Hoo, Hoo, Hoo.

I felt his breath, felt connected.

He was smiling.

He handed me a packet of biscuits.

I stood up to open the door, and then I looked back at him.

His straw hat was floating about 2 feet above his bald head.

He was smiling.

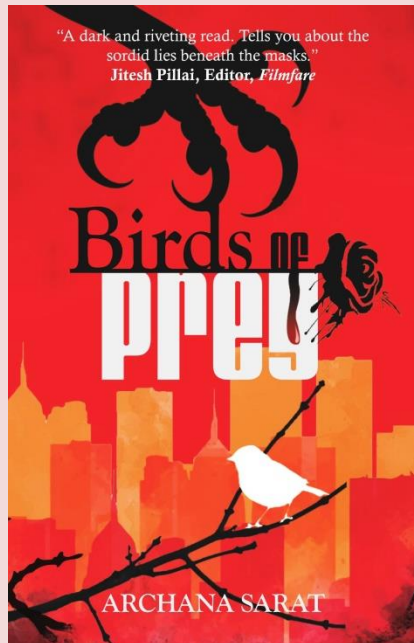
I bowed.

A humble gesture towards a great healer.

BOOK OF THE MONTH

Birds Of Prey

Published by Readomania



Amazon

http://www.amazon.in/Birds-Prey-Archana-Sarat/dp/9385854208/ref=cm_cr_arp_d_product_top?ie=UTF8

Readomania

http://www.books.readomania.com/book_detail.php?id=30

Birds of Prey is a psychological crime thriller based in Mumbai. It has gathered acclaim for being a pacy and gripping read. Jitesh Pillai, the Editor of Filmfare, calls it as

"A dark and riveting read that tells you about the sordid lies beneath the masks."

Reviews:

"I thoroughly enjoyed the book... couldn't really put it down over the weekend."

– Wai Cheng Foo, Law Professional, Mastercard, Singapore

"I took breaks to nurse my heart, wipe my tears, I kept the book down and stared at the wall point blank and what not? A novel that has to be read by each and every one."

– Kavipriya Moorthy, Author

"Archana Sarat's novel analyses human relationships with dexterity."

- Tamil Newspaper, Velliidhazh (translated)

"I need to like or at least understand the characters to like a book. Birds of Prey did that for me."

– Tulika Singh, Blogger and Book Reviewer

"This book is a perfect example of psychological horror, and at times, it reads like Stephen King's work. There is no doubt that the book has gone through quality-writing and quality-editing."

– Asif Uzzaman, Book Reviewer

About the Author:

Archana Sarat is an Author and Poet for the last ten years. She shuttles between Chennai and Mumbai and loves both cities passionately. Her works are published in various popular newspapers, magazines and anthologies like The Times of India, The Economic Times, The SEBI and Corporate Laws Journal, The CA Newsletter, Me Magazine, the Science Reporter, the Chicken Soup for the Soul series, the WRIMO India Anthology, the GloMag Literary Journal, Telegram Literary Journal and many more. She is popular in the online world for her flash fiction that appears every Saturday, called Saturday Shots. Though she is a Chartered Accountant by qualification, she took up her childhood love for writing as her vocation. She has a Diploma in Creative Writing from The Writers Bureau, UK. You can connect with her at www.archanasarat.com. Birds of Prey is her first novel.



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LOVE IS NOT PERTURBATION

If I am a perturbation for you

I'll leave your way

I promise not to disturb you

Even a word I won't say

It hurts nevertheless to break with you

You don't ever get hurt I'll pray

I feel to have lost my eloquence when I wish to express my
heart's fray

Your absence is like a January

and your presence brings me May

I console myself like this that

It's merely your temporary astray

My heart tells me that it may be my misunderstanding and

You still want me to stay



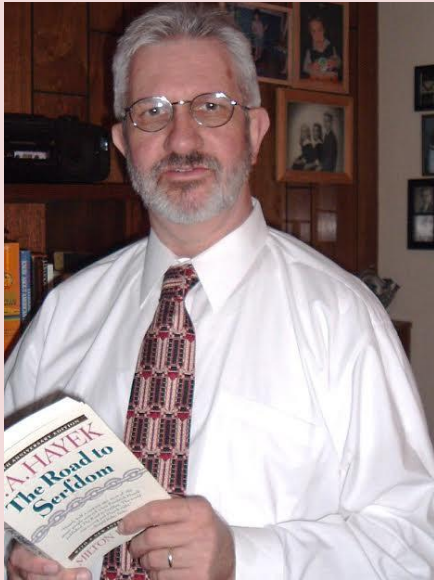
Zebish Farheen: I am a student of Dr. Shamenaz ma'am who is a meritorious professor and guide. It is due to her guidance that I felt motivated to get my pieces of writing published. I am a simple, affectionate, benevolent and emotional person. I believe in the adage -"Where there is a will, there is a way". So I never give way and make the best endeavour to wipe out the impediments in the way of life so as to access the destination of success.



DISPATCHES

In the end, if she
was not oblivious, my
mother's saboteur
steeped her in dementia
making death more like a cure.

Dad hugged me at ten
when his mother died; then years,
my ire, and our pride
split us so that his passing
deterred us from another.



William P. Cushing: Raised in New York by Prentice and Barbara (pictured out on the town in New York City after their wedding on April 14, 1951), Bill Cushing lived in numerous states, the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. Returning to college later in life, he earned an MFA in writing from Goddard College. He now resides in Glendale, California with his wife and their son. His work has been in anthologies, literary journals, magazines, and newspapers. When not teaching or writing, Bill facilitates a writing workshop and performs with a musician on a project called “Notes and Letters.” Bill's submission this month is to honor his parents for enduring 50+ years of marriage and mostly him and his shenanigans.



BEYOND I LOVE YOU...

What's beyond I love you?

Once it's been said a million times,
In manners varied in rhythmic rhymes,
On hills and by sea shores and jungles deep,
In tones of despair, under an emotional heap.
In Lusty voices and in naked embraces,
In moments of meaningful midnight promises.

What's beyond I love you?

When you are at a loss of words to share,
You know your love is a gem too rare.
When I love you is too less to show,
What transpires within, when your love you row.

Too less to know the pain, of moments spent apart,
An underestimation of the dreams in your heart,
What's beyond I love you?

I wonder...

No answers in words or in sweet nothings of what's
beyond,

Enlightenment in right doings and patiently sticking around,
In testing times it isn't what you said,

What you do is what makes a difference instead.



Vishak Chadrasekharan: Baker by day and Poet by night, Vishak lets his personal experiences decide the course of his pen on paper to come up with the most Vivid and brutal expression of Life situations everyone goes through. He uses his ability to connect to people emotionally to put those experiences on paper and enable others to look at

the world through their eyes. He currently runs and partners a Cafe in Coimbatore called V's and pens down poems and dark stories during the little free time he gets.



HOME

I came from
rugged conversations
with my worn out soul
that sometimes
lasted for a second
and some other times,
for years.

I came from hollow
hisses of pain, tearing
itself through
numbed wounds

that hurt no more
but still traded
memories with time.

I came from large canopies
of anger
that heard no
footstep until
love entered.

I came from
hidden gestures of
war
that saw no fire
and felt no blood
and yet reminded
me of my birth.

I came from
the plunging smell
of dusted books
that made a home of
its own, letting readers
take shelter, anonymously.

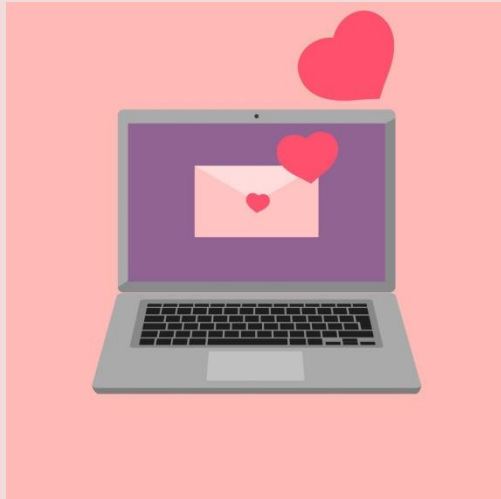
I came from everywhere
I wanted to go;
sagging skies,
shallow shadows,
soaring solitude.

I came from simple things
that went unnoticed,
for only I will know
that I was a dream

that you no longer
remember.



Vasanthi Swetha: She is extremely passionate about the art of poetry, dance, reading and dreaming, and she believes that every poem that she writes is a result of a conversation with her soul.



You say you exist
No reason to disbelieve
You appear before me
A daily ritual in an inanimate inbox
My nocturnal fix
You speak of chemistry
In our virtual space
But the typed outpourings
You render seem bland
You speak of passion
And leave the cynic wondering
Such virtual declarations
On screen gazing

Don't be the pulp fiction I gulped down
Sheer boredom the last flight home
Come to me in the flesh if you must?
I crave the inflections of a voice
As it moans my name
And not merely flashes on a screen
I need to see a heaving bosom
And smell your dripping ambrosia
Don't reduce lovemaking to the groaning that transpires
Between our collective logging in
And signing out



Vandana Kumar: She is a bon vivant who loves travelling, working with young minds and exploring creative possibilities beyond the ordinary. She has done her masters in History from Lady Shri Ram College and her Diplôme from the Alliance Française de Delhi. She is a French teacher in a couple of schools and private institutes and also translates for various publishing houses and corporates. An active member of various quiz clubs across Delhi-she has a soft corner for Kolkata where she spent her childhood. Her various passions include singing, playing the piano, composing music and participating in local antakshari competitions. She describes herself as a dreamer...a wanderer and a certified incurable romantic...the romantic moorings worsened with all her fancy French studies. Poetry for her is her stress buster -her flight of fancy-and strangely – what keeps her rooted too.



THE DENTIST

The dentist interns looked quite bored
As the patient's mouth was being duly gored.
Some new set up of a toothy kind,
Was surely taxing the senior fellow's mind.
The mouth was small the man so big,
The assistant wore a skewered wig.
The teevee crew plodded along
They were to shoot the creation of false teeth strong.
The blood was drawn so red, so dear,
T'was not the cost that hurt, but the fear.

The victim who was in great pain that day,
Would gladly have chewed those fingers away
But alas how the almighty strives,
On poor man's sorrows he surely thrives.
The mouth bereft of all thirty odd teeth,
Could hardly argue with the fingers beneath
He called himself a thousand fools
For falling prey to modern schools,
That offered him his new dentures free
If he would pose for history.
There he was in a soup of his own making,
His thirst for fame slowly slaking
As with each prick and neat little stitch
He counted the notes that would make him rich.
And then it was he saw himself on the TV screen
The sweat on his brow, the silvery sheen
And the bloody mess under his nose.
Oh! God, was ever vanity an inglorious sin?

Someone save me from this frenetic jinn
And yelling, he swung out of the dentist's chair.
And scampered away like a frightened hare
Running to the safety of his home so dear
Where, assembled were his family, far and near.
They were watching the program on the silver screen
Of dental history being worked on their very own kin.



Usha Chandrasekharan: She is a believer in the power of the universe, in the power of positive energy, in the power of words, in the power of good intentions. She has two children both of good literary prowess, both creative in their own way.



SIMILAR

The bearded man
searching dreams
on the street full of offices/banks
before him, while the city rushes by
or pauses sometime in the glittering night

the man, in the middle of the bustle,
looks like a chair abandoned

in a coffee cup held in a shaky hand
blank eyes fixed on the detritus

of an existence gone waste
living on a Paris street
near the Bastille---
with few belongings stuffed in three bags
bitter, lonely, grim
the bent human and his dog
on that little patch, open air

the two creatures
watched by the ghost of Baudelaire
hovering nearby.

Another hobo
bearded and thin
rummages through the dust-bin
for the residues of the overnight orgies
of the folks in the high-rises

crumbs for strays and him
the man with a blank stare
colonizing a broken street
in the posh New Delhi.

both identical scripts
human narratives
forgotten by a marching history
towards progress and development.



Sunil Sharma: Mumbai-based, Sunil Sharma is a widely-published writer. He has published three collections of poetry, one collection of short fiction, one novel and co-edited five books so far. He is a recipient of the UK-based Destiny Poets' inaugural Poet of the Year award---2012.

Recently his poems were published in the UN project:
Happiness: The Delight-Tree-2015.



PHANTASM

The laptop lights up your face,
Reflecting off your glasses, in your eyes.
Fish tank gurgles and tortoise shell cat snores
Your books and treasures wait within
Doors, windows tightly shut. The air is as still
As your fingers on your keyboard waiting
For your mind that dances with my perfume
That listens for my trembling heartbeat
Smiles devilishly, childishly at a recall of my jokes
Shivers at the warmth of my presence
Until suddenly transfixed by a vision
So intimate, so lewd, so shockingly strange

To think the thought could be born out of your soul.

You laugh, amused, amazed at yourself,

That you were capable of being swept away

By an unseen woman a whole world away.

Work! Your fingers hammer at the keyboard

Then reach for your cell phone to check

WhatsApp, my 'last seen' status,

A moment to stare at the display pic.

Your brother let the cat out...



Sumita Dutta: She is a photographer and the proprietor of Adlsh Photo Art. She has a degree in Fine Arts (Painting) from Chitrakala Parishad, Bangalore. She loves writing both

poetry and prose. She resides in the southern end of Chennai with her two sons, her father, a cat and a dog. Find her blog at: <https://zippythoughts.wordpress.com/>



Life is such a colourful platter

Depends on how seasoned is the batter

Tangy spicy sweet and sour

Dusted fine with heaps of flour

Just when you think it is poached

Opportunities come as if coached

Sticky situations kept in marination

Thinking out of the box without prevarication

Skewered stewed or grilled

Karmic justice sends its bills

Bake it fry it smoke it

Solutions for all so stoke it

Romantics in glorious stirrups
Life is soaked in sugar syrup
Singing hearts at its crest
Salad days are all dressed
All the ills seem cured
Epicurean delights that palate ensured
So the story gradually unfolds
Pleasure pain sides juxtaposed
Never a moment without sauce
Effects the action after a cause
Hilarity pensiveness together pickled
Laugh your guts out thoroughly tickled
Life is not always so stuffed
Do not unnecessarily huff and puff
Make it smooth creamy like custard
Delightfully savoury never be flustered.



Sudeshna Mukherjee: She is an Economics Major. She is a poet, short story writer and painter. Her book of poems “Meanderings of the Mind” has been published. Many of her poems have been published in national and international anthologies, magazines and e-publications.



EXTREMES OF LOVE

we always shared extremes

your soulfulness made me better

your negativity left me shattered

you brightened my life

you left me gloomy and forlorn

no one influences me as you do

you walked away one day

leaving my love-intoxicated heart

the lush green valley turned into desert

tried watering my deserted heart

planting saplings of love, alas nothing germinated

it seems it has given up hope of blossoming again

or may be fearful of consequences

what if the seed of love turned into tree

only to be uprooted

it seems my heart has lost its soul

or maybe it still waits for you

only heart can be such an optimist



Subhash Chandra Rai: Nonconformist by birth, wearing emotions on sleeve. Enjoying path less travelled and being myself.

Where there's a Will, there's a Way

Have you heard of Will Shakespeare,
That poet without peer?

He fasted right throughout the year
And shocked his near and dear

He was so thin

And grew more thin

His problem proved to be

To be or not to be.

When people passed him on the road,

Will found himself ignored;

And people thought it pretty weird

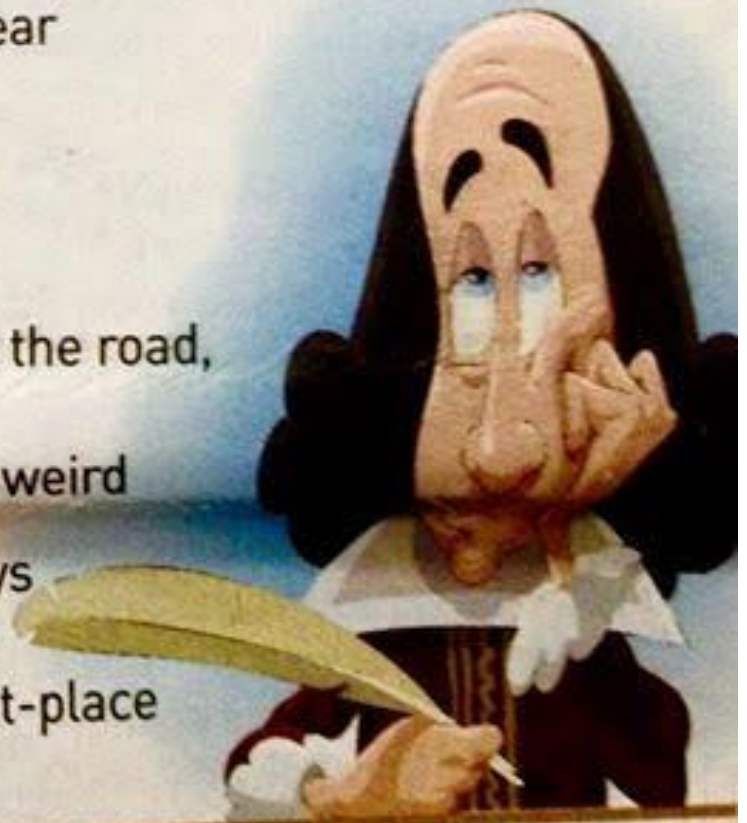
To see a floating beard!

Till finally, he wrote two plays

With tremendous a cast

And sold them at the market-place

To break his hungry fast.





Shreekumar Varma: He is an Indian author, playwright, newspaper columnist and poet. He received the R. K. Narayan Award for Excellence in Writing in English in 2015. He is known for the novels Lament of Mohini, Maria's Room, Devil's Garden: Tales Of Pappudom, The Magic Store of Nu-Cham-Vu and the historical book for children, Pazhassi Raja: The Royal Rebel Born as HH Prince Punartham Thirunal of the Travancore Royal Family, he is the great great grandson of the artist Raja Ravi Varma and grandson of Regent Maharani Sethu Lakshmi Bayi, the last ruling Maharani of Travancore. He is married to Geeta Varma (poet, teacher and columnist) and has two children, Vinayak and Karthik.



SUMMER

Razor yellow slicing the blue,
Licking my cheek, a drop of rain
Colours of paper exchanging hands,
To the drum-like jingles of sugarcane.

The palpable warmth is bid goodbye,
When liquid music sweetens lips o' mine,
The sweeter the kiss, the lesser the pain-
Crippling shackles of summer reigns.

Another drop, cheeks raspberry red
A sweet-sour stream trickles down,
The greater the gush, the lighter my head
It wasn't rain- but beady brows.

Drenched in crippling summer reigns,
The sugar flooding a drought-like thirst,
I let the seasons loose again,
To be trapped later- by poetic verse.



Shivank Sarin: Like chocolate sprinkles on dessert, poetry and music have added excitement and sweetness to my life. I'm technically 18, but to me, age acts as no barrier towards being cynical or insightful. I'm notorious for my gluttonous appetite and even skipping social gatherings just to attend music lessons. I'm a first-year student studying Economics at Ashoka University, where I hope to further develop my musical, literary as well as professional abilities. Would love to hear from you at shivanksarin98@gmail.com



(pic by Suvojit Banerjee entitled 'Artificial Ecosystems')

FUCHSIA LEAF

after Unforgettable, Finding Dory

On the other side of the wall
is a man singing of opportunities:
what if father had a kinder heart.

Small water tribes exist
like subsets – men don't dust
the turban fallen from the head

of a stone. Take a deep breath,
fill the gills with an easy death.

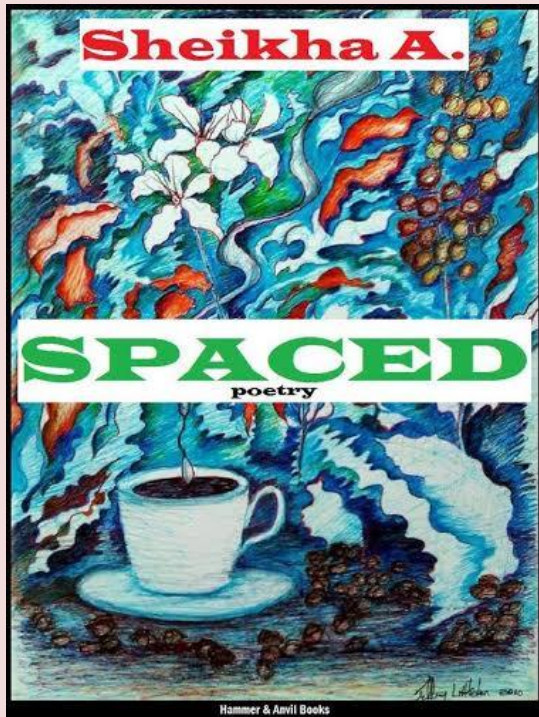
Lovers are prone to be slashed

by rusty tridents. On days
of forgotten prayers, braid
excessive lengths of these

water-paths into decorative
knots. My father's ears are
the feet walking on air

where conjunctions confuse
journeys. Too many signs
pollute our communication;

we swim in circles
on simpler instructions.



Sheikha A.: She is from Pakistan and United Arab Emirates. Her work has appeared in over 80 literary venues both print and online. She edits poetry at eFiction India. More about her can be found on her blog sheikha82.wordpress.com



DEAR FATHER

In childhood

When I used to pass by your grave every day

with a hope

to be blessed by you

with a desire

to see you in some way

But at this stage of my life

I firmly believe that

You were, you are

always with me

in all my hopes,
desires and aspirations
in all the struggles of my life
in all my pains and miseries
in all my ups and down of life
This belief I continue to cherish
till the end of my life
and my trust in you
will never fade
whatever the situation may be.



Shamenaz: I reside in Allahabad. I am a freelance writer, passionate reader, blogger, and poet, with many published poems in E-journals & magazines in India. I have presented

papers in India and abroad. I am in the Editorial board of journals: Literary Miscellany, Cyber Literature, Research Access, Expression, The Context & IJRS (Jordan). I am the Guest Editor of 'The Context' Volume 2, issue 3. I have served as a Chairperson of Women Cell of my College, AIET & Cultural Incharge, AIET.



AT THE MARGIN OF THINGS

Music opens my biosphere
and unheard of ghosts
come and go as they please
singing,
dance me to the end of love,
but I can't.

The insults, the injuries made
are unsafe halfway houses of terror,
where naked orange clowns
grow balls, and file their nails.

The world ceases to spin
under their wet boots

and it rains

all over

my margins.



Sergio A. Ortiz: He is the founding editor of Undertow Tanka Review. His collections of Tanka, *For the Men to Come* (2014), and *From Life to Life* (2014) were released by Amazon. He's a two time Pushcart nominee and a four time Best of the Web nominee. His poems have been published in over four hundred journals and anthologies.



SWIFT MOVING FORECAST

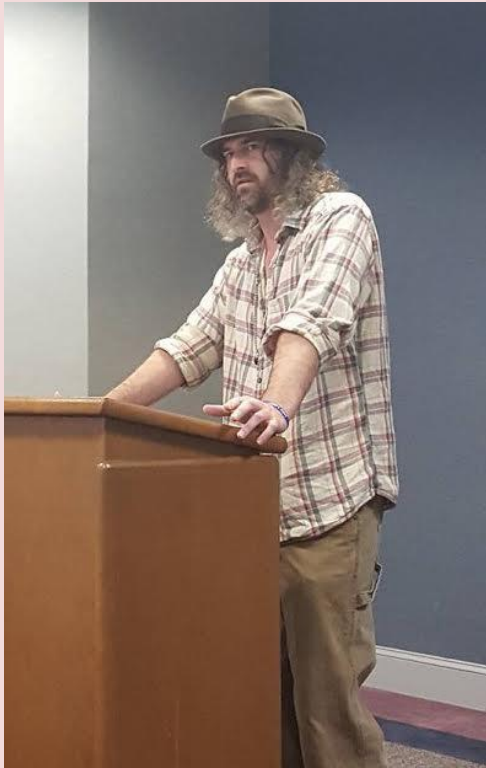
There is more light left in this world
than they will try to sell you
from their pillars of darkness
and stations full of broken channels.

If you stop buying into the hype,
you'll soon start to see
much more sunshine in your eyes.

Some storms might seem ominous,
even perilous,

as they're forming
directly above us in the sky,
but such signs
of chaos
have been calculated
toward perfect order
in the end
equation.

So wait it out
or dive right in;
either way,
these winds
they are a-changin'.



Scott Thomas Outlar: He hosts the site 17Numa.wordpress.com where links to his published poetry, fiction, essays, interviews, reviews, and books can be found. He serves as an editor for Walking Is Still Honest Press, The Blue Mountain Review, The Peregrine Muse, and Novelmasters.



Jagannath Chakravarti: He is the founding editor of 'CultureCult Magazine' and an ADmaker/independent filmmaker based out of Kolkata, India. He dabbles in several forms of artistic expression including poetry, fiction, photography, painting and acting. He holds a Masters degree in English Literature.



PENNYWISE, FOUND FOOLISH

One swipe and oops all is gone,
Nothing left, everything I had is lost,
With pockets empty, here I stood alone,
Not knowing what is my next resort

ATM has unveiled my idiocy,
Or maybe it could all be prophecy.

Even if spent for charity,
Or for an election campaign,

Would have attained divinity,
And enjoyed a MP's reign,
Even greatest emperors couldn't escape,
And left win or lose at His will,
Lost modestly all their estate,
Dreaming tomorrow they win a mill

Huh! How much could I self-condole?

For all that luck I can't behold,
If luck permits, at the same ATM,
Like the wild emperors' dream,
Gain all that's lost the next time.
And prove, am not a foolish queen.



Satya Vadlamani: She hails from Hyderabad and works for a construction company. She likes to experiment on various poetry forms with diverse genres and feel that one should be exposed to enjoyable forms of writing. She is also a co-founder and organiser at Twin cities poetry club, Hyderabad.



And I look through misty eyes

He lies there, consequence of his vice

I see Karma rejoice

I see Karma has a voice

It's late now, I must start packing

He shouldn't have anything lacking

His face is growing pale

He is going to sail

Into the depths of faraway lands

Slipping away from the grip of my hands

This is the end of our tale

For he is going to sail

Through the wild sea and raging ocean

Towards the horizon will be his direction

Somewhere even the compass can't nail

For he is going to sail.

The dogs are howling

His parents are bawling

I think he has begun his onward trail,

He has set sail.....



Sara Bubber: I am 19 years old going on 20 this year on June 23rd. I am a student of Second Year Human Development and Family Studies (soon to be in Third Year) in The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. I started writing poems properly when I was 15. I love reading books, mostly Love Stories, Mythology (Amar Chitra Katha's and novels), History of the Mughal Era etc. In my leisure time, I listen to Hindi songs and watch movies, again in Hindi. I love playing with my dogs and just watching them be themselves.



MIRTH

The pristine universe

Where, we, the lonely travelers,
constantly searching ourselves.

Time glides on and one day, a realization saunter,
we explore that el Dorado

In our works and a serene mirth pervades in every bits of
our odyssey!



Sanhita Sinha: She is a native of Tripura, is a teacher, a bilingual poet. Her poems got published in different national and international anthologies, journals & magazines like "Heavens above poetry below," "A haiku Treasury," "In our own words," "Scaling heights," "Epitaphs," "Milenge," "IFLAC PEACE ANTHOLOGY," "BETRAYAL," KIRNOKAL," "ANTOCHKORON," "RUPANTAR," "PURBHABASH," "GALAXY," etc. Apart from writing she is actively engaged in cultural activities too. She is a regular artist of television and radio too.



The train of time
Keeps rolling and
Bringing along irreversible
Changes that won't divert
Its course to make me
The exception to universal laws!

So, let's board now that train
That will take us to the temple
Where wisdom and faith
Gather at everything dawn
To lift up the higher spirit

Of love and peace,
Hold my hand and let's go
Together in harmony!

Take me as I come to you:
Genuine and honest
For I am nothing more
Than an entity made of
Flesh and a humble spirit!

Embedded I am with
The same substance
As anyone else but with
A unique vision and mission:
To spread the message of
Love and Peace throughout
The whole world!



Romeo della Valle: Born in a beautiful island named Quisqueya or Hispaniola and from Italian and Spanish parents and coming to America very young with a goal, mainly, to succeed in life and be happy. As a citizen of the world, there is not race, colour, or religious beliefs that would stop me from searching for happiness...I have become through times passed that I am a man with a Vision and a clear mission: 'To spread my message of Love an Peace throughout the World and if my poetry can touch a single soul in the World, then I would gladly die leaving my clear footprints behind!



CACTUSFLOWER

cactusflower

muted

still

Arabian desert,

yellow flower,

reminds the sun it is merely a star

to revive her

open her eyes

to the placid
sweet sky,
effortlessly

earlymorning doves
know her scent
tamarind blossoms
in deepest conviction
with all sincerity,
they gather up the raindrops
preciously,
and sip each one,
with dignity

cactusflower
Arabian dawn
yellow dawn,
picture of veiled

mystery,
classical Raga brown hands
intently turning pages of prophetic verse
weaving harmonium spells
memorizing
each yellow flower
the sun awakens,
while yellow dawn
ignites the sky,
Arabian dawn,
stillness,
listening for the whisper of
her petals opening,
waiting for a vision
another presence of dawn,
as the new day
weds the ancient Arabian nighttime,
and the gentle tabla Arabian breezes

melt away like glory
through her fertile black desert garden

cactusflower
perfectflower
ragawoman
patiently listens
waits for desert shadows to
pass by her window,
and at last
she will unveil her eyes
in the break of Arabian dawn



Robert Feldman: Born in Paterson, New Jersey, Robert Feldman was inspired at an early age by members of Paterson’s literary tradition. He has organized and participated in poetry readings, produced and hosted a community issues news hour and a biweekly bebop jazz radio program on KDNA-FM. Robert was instrumental in publishing influential writers such as Drummond Hadley and Michael Gregory, and collaborated with Lawrence Ferlinghetti on his Bisbee publication, “Mule Mountain Dreams.” He continues to write, paint, and play tabla, besides working with high-school students as faculty advisor of the Park Vista Writers Workshop.



MY GRANDFATHER'S DREAM OF DYING

my grandfather dreams of dying

in a desolate room,

seeing a distant dot on ceiling

eyes open, listening to Mohd Rafi

from an old radio.

before dying, he says, he will

switchoff the radio and light.

and then, he says,

he will incise the ancient silence

of his room in whose womb, he says,

there is a ray of light wriggling,

an unborn worm. as he slowly gives a cut

with the dexterity of a surgeon -

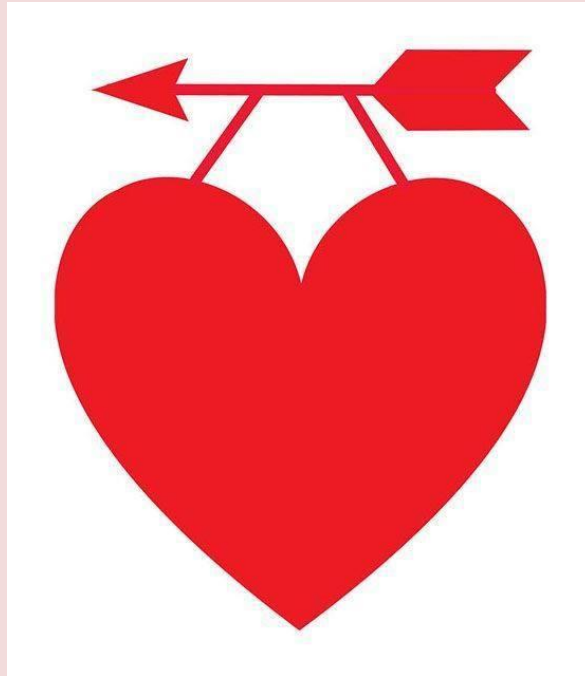
the slit of incision
opens like the sky of the evening
on last day on earth.

a thin song comes from that breach
he says, unfurling its melody,
unwrapping its lyrics,
shuddering like a waking bird,
a song that hunts his memories
like a desperate hand-net
running behind a troop of butterflies,

a sick cloud, a fog of perfume
the ghost of a bird - he says -
the song will abduct his life.



Ro Hith: He is a poet and a medico from Andhra Pradesh, writing poetry since 7 years. His poetry has been published in various online magazines, including Muse India, The Four Quarterly, Istanbul Review, Kritiya, New Mirage Journal and print magazines like Kavya English, which was applauded and complimented by various senior poets. Currently, he is working on his first book of poems, which will be published shortly and an online magazine that deals with progressive poetry and translations from various Indian languages.



LOVE IN THE TIME OF ANGIOPLASTY

if the god of non-existent desires asks me what i desire to be, without hesitation, i will say i want to be a stent in her body in one of the arteries leading to her heart.

firmly positioning myself there, i will watch the passage of corpuscles and molecules, thoughts and events, kisses and chemical compounds of love, a few

stars, certain violet moons, some sparks
of exploding light and galaxies in demise.

she will never know I am there inside her,
smoothing the creases, dilating the
blocks, swimming in her protoplasm,
merging with her genes, navigating spirals.

when she dies, i will watch her heart
decay, her body dissolve. I will float
in some fluid moored to her bones.

Her soul, translucent, will sway
above me, her hair pouring down
on me. She will pick me up gingerly
and stick me in her hair bun like a pin.

that will be the moment I choose to die.



Ravi Shanker (Ra Sh): He translates from Malayalam and Tamil to English and vice versa. Published English translations of stories by Bama (Tamil), Mother Forest (from Malayalam) and Waking is Another Dream (Sri Lankan Tamil Poetry) and for Anthologies of Dalit literature published by OUP and Penguin India. Published poems in magazines, journals and anthologies. He is one of the five contributing poets to the anthology, "A Strange Place Other Than Earlobes" (five voices seventy poems). A collection of his poetry, "Architecture of Flesh" was published by Paperwala in 2015. E-mail: shankeran@gmail.com



ADULTERY

Your body -

Swollen

Like

A river

In spate.

Your tongue -

Moving all over

Ferreting out

Little secrets.

Your lips -

Moist,
Pliant,
Urging me in.

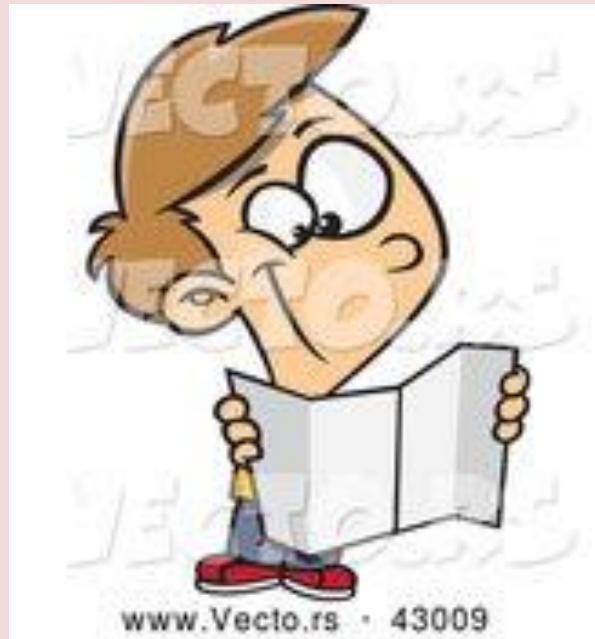
Your eyes -
Half closed,
Half open,
Seeing in me
A silhouette
From the past.

More often,
It is not
The body
But the mind
Which commits
Adultery...



Ramendra Kumar: What would you call a person who is a writer by passion, a story teller by obsession, a mentor by aspiration and a communicator by profession? You would probably call him insane. Well, we call him Ramen.

www.ramendra.in



LETTER TO 12-YEAR-OLD ME

Dear boy with the stars in his eyes,
by now you must know that Santa Claus is a lie,
and blowing eyelashes from the back of your left palm
changes nothing,
but don't let these make you stop believing in miracles.

make your own miracles

~

you will meet a lot of people.

make friends, make many

for people are beautiful.

be the friend everybody wants to become.

~

you will soon find yourself tangled in conundrums of the heart,

remember

the only answer is love.

and more love.

fall in love, have your heart-broken

then love more with every shard of your broken heart.

~

be happy.

the world's a funny place

so laugh,

a lot.

and sometimes it's ok to cry too.

i'll tell you a secret, shhhh!

always cry in front of the mirror

you look funny when you do that,

so then you'll laugh again.

it works,

every single time.

~

finally know that you are beautiful,

and don't believe anybody who says otherwise.

love,

a boy with no regrets.



Rajesh Jethwani: He was born in Madras and has done his BA in economics. He now takes care of his family business and has his own online store. His love for tea resulted in a beautiful tea house he now runs along with his best friends. He loves train journeys, photography, eating out and playing cricket. He loves writing and reading love poems. His poem was first published last year in South Africa.



I AM A WITHERING LEAF

Me thought

I am a withering leaf,
floating on the oily water,
chlorophyll already deserting:
lines criss cross sustain me
to the stemmed plant.

Lengthy stalk and stem,
cute buds, fragranced blossoms,
pecks and pots and pails of water
flow to the rim of the brim
of leafage. Still I am inconsolable;

early birds call, close by
chirp and sing, as if knit
Ode to God and Nature,
sit and serenade- a see-saw.
I lose my shade.

Near to yellow, yearn for
The preservation of Green:
Every bud, every offspring
A delectable bonanza, amidst
The tiny gregarious leaflets.

Sudden drop of Mercy from
Above, a huggie from a
good Samaritan: to undo
the withering: No, no, I am
not a withering leaf anymore.



S. Radhamani: She was born in Madras, did B.A. English, obtained M.A. English from Venkateswara University, Tirupati, did her doctoral thesis on W.H. Auden's Plays, subsequently obtained PGDTE from CIEFL (Hyderabad). A Professor of English with 31 years of teaching experience in a post-graduate and research institution, published four books of poems and one book of short story, widely published and anthologized, guided M.Phil. research scholars and PhD candidates, and a reviewer and critic. Also published poems and short stories in many websites, presented papers in National and International conferences.



small givings with great love

make us feel better

without the rich heart

wealth is an ugly beggar.

~ ~ ~

help all as we can

let them love the God

who lives within us.



Praveen Ranjit: He is a creative writer who gets inspiration from nature to social issues and enjoys writing poems on love, life, compassion, happiness, human relations nature's beauty etc. At a very young age he developed his writing skills, published poems in various anthologies and periodicals and received many awards of excellence. He was a professor in the Department of Commerce, St. Albert's college, Kochi, Kerala from 1981 to 2014.



LOOP POETRY

A jumble of words,
Words tumbling over each other,
Other tasks on hold,
Hold my attention these pranksters,
Pranksters out to make a fool of me,
Me, the ever ready listener,
Listener mesmerised by their crazy notions,
Notions tumbling forth in haste,
Haste makes me lose my reins,
Reins to control the flow,
Flow of words threatening to deplete ink and paper,
Paper, keep my honour,

Honour i must my muse,
Muse, we meet after a long time,
Time lost, we have to make good!



Pratima Apte: I am an English Hons. Graduate of Delhi University. I am a homemaker, recently turned grandmother! I used to write sporadically in the Pune edition's Women's page of the Indian Express. I love reading and writing, words are my world. My interests in reading are self-help books, spiritual and cookbooks and fiction. Books by Ayn Rand, Taylor Caldwell, Leon Uris, J Krishnamurthy, Dan Brown have been my favourites, as also layman's homeopathy, astrology and medical books.



DROP ME

Drop me

Drop me here, drop me gently

I am a mutilated body enveloped!

Let someone write an address

I know but I can't write

I don't want to die an anonymous death

I can see clearly the jaw of the post box

The colour is red

Oozing blood only

Within me I am having not just words, rather a whole world

Two eyes that are eager to see her

A heart that beats only for her

a beat is missing I know

I could not gather

I met with an accident

The city has become a slaughterhouse

Hanged we are

Running helter-skelter

Blood splattered are streets these days

I have lost my memory

Under a state of coma

But I want to live

May someone tell me the address of life that

I have seen in her two beautiful eyes

To date I have been shuttling in between two passionate
deaths

Drop me in the post box please

Don't forget to write her name and address

The colour of the smile she wears
The sound of silences in her lips
She has identification marks, moles they say
But for me those are beauty spots
Very often I shuttle there
Just to have a glance
Gently drop me
I am not words merely
I am poetry
Wounded, splattered with blood.



Prahallad Satpathy: He hails from Balangir district of Odisha (India) is a bilingual poet. He writes both in Odia and English. So far he has published three anthologies of poetry

in Odia to his credit. His poems have been published in national anthologies like Scaling Heights and international anthologies like GLOBAL ANTHOLOGY ON PEACE AND HARMONY, HAPPY ISLE, FEELINGS INTERNATIONAL, etc. By profession, Dr. Satpathy is a Reader in Economics, at present in Rajendra autonomous college, Balangir (Odisha). He has represented Odisha Sahitya Academy as honorary member for two consecutive terms.



A SPELL OF WET WEATHER

Take the spit of a single ant

Now don't argue and say you can't

Mix it well with elephant dripping

(When through his nose, the water he's sipping)

Stir it well and stir it twice

Sprinkle some sugar to make it nice

Dip your fingers and dip your toes

Touch each digit on your nose

Sit then stand and spin around

Lift both feet up off the ground

Hover there for just a while

Try to do with some style

This is the spell to make it rain

When its dry upon the plain

A wizard told me so it must be true

(But elephant dripping is just like glue!)



Late Philip G. Bell: He was born in West London and became a professional in the field of vibration and acoustics. He was awarded a Fellowship of the Society of Environmental Engineers. He has two sons and a daughter and 3 grandsons. He has written a number of technical papers, which were published internationally, before turning attention to writing poetry, short stories and a children's novel. He also founded The Young Poet Society. He has published a novel, "The Elfin Child," which is available through Amazon, Barnes and Noble and at www.elfinchild.com



ICARUS

The dead peep out from the grainy monochromes of obituary columns. Wearing eagle wings over their frail arms they leap off the pages to crash into clouds or slip-in amongst unsuspecting mortals where the wind whistles through the trees. But they often seem out of place, with cashmere scarves draped over their dissolving shoulders and colourful hats donned over wispy heads.

They also give themselves away with their elaborate plans for rebellion. Who would tell them that this is an age of silence?

'Enough of clichéd epitaphs.' says one and I nod in agreement.

*in step with
a guitar's melancholy
the road back home*

When the mourners leave and the flowers begin to wither, I lay over my own grave where the headstone should have, but does not read - 'Here lies a man who flew if only for a moment.'



Paresh Tiwari: An electrical engineer by profession, a creative writer, and illustrator by choice, Paresh Tiwari, grew up in the labyrinthine lanes of Lucknow. He took to Japanese literary short forms in the winter of 2012. Since then his haiku, haibun, tanka, haiga, free-form poems and

flash fiction pieces have been published in various journals, anthologies and books. His first collection of haiku and haibun 'An inch of sky' was published by 20 Notebooks Press and is available online.



Let no one sing to me

“you are my sunshine”

Sing to me

“You are my gentle breeze”

Would you like me to be the running water

Or a torrent of Wind

May be glazed tiles of snow

Lavender water in your bath.

I keep complaining every summer

Winter does not affect me

Makes me desire more

More of Life, more desire

Warmth, love, cuddles, hugs

Tea cups, more tea cups

Less electricity bills

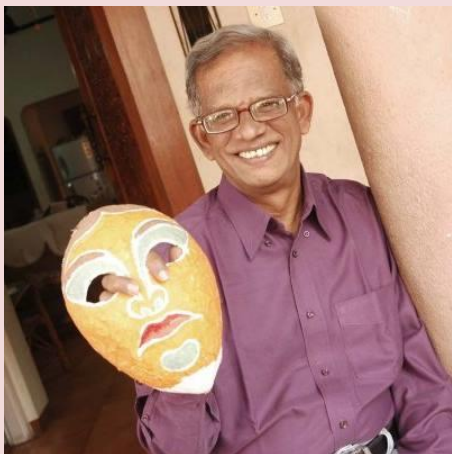
Bhajans, satsanghs, crowds huddled

Streets decked with colours

Unused shirts and trousers, sweaters

Pulled from the wardrobes, dusted, ironed

A winter morn my cup of Coffee.



Parasuram Ramamoorthi: Poet with three published volumes of Poetry. Norwich Musings (2003); Fire courts Water 2009; Neem Gita 2011; Playwright with twelve plays published and Performed. Autism Advocate and Pioneer in the file of Drama for Autism. Chairman VELVI www.velvi.org



DAYS CALLED 'US'

In a crowded world

Our bubble floats in ecstasy

I stare at you unblinkingly...

You confront my gaze

Trying to peer into

Thoughts cascading through me

I hear the intent in your voice

Knocking on the threshold of my soul

You want to know if I'm thinking of you

Lost at something you have said or done.

But it is hard to voice my thought

As I hold your soul in my palm

Feel your tenderness, turn to your dark,

All consuming, fervent, longing love.

I stand here thinking of how to embrace

The whole of you knowing

The thousand ways you will love,

Devour and hurt me

During our days called “us”.



Panjami Anand: I am an occult practitioner by profession and I see every day it is hard to be honest in a brutal world that demands the best façade even at the cost of one’s inner well-being. Sometimes it helps to know that we are all fighting secret battles and we are not the only ones in pain. I love to observe human relationships and nothing inspires my writing more. Thus the dominating theme of all my writings are conflicts and triumphs of the same. I thank each and every one who has encouraged me to better my expression. Gratitude for reading!



THE COUNTRYSIDE

The gentle rustle of leaves in the trees
the pleasing gurgle of the flowing stream
the scent of blooms wafting on the breeze.

The daffodils golden trumpets do gleam
along the stream and up into the hill
where peace and tranquility reign supreme.

Wisteria over the fences spill,
bluebell carpets far as the eye can see;
hard to believe such beauty exists still.



Nivedita Karthik: She is a graduate in Integrated Immunology from the University of Oxford and likes reading books and travelling. She is an accomplished Bharatanatyam dancer and has given many performances. She loves any form of creative writing, especially poems, and writes whenever she can.



THE EVER-CHANGING VERANDAH OF MY GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE

There was no room for the TV set
in the ever-changing verandah
of Grandmother's house. When I was small, the iron cot
occupied the room and the shelves'
compartments were stuffed with old newspapers,
showcase items like wooden dolls.

The Nampally exhibition sold those wooden dolls.
and as we grew a 14-inch TV set
was placed before the shelf of newspapers
how crowded it was—the verandah!
especially with that iron cot

During my uncles' and aunts' exams, the iron cot metamorphosed into a study table, the wooden dolls would be moved and academic books would occupy the shelves

Grandmother also decided to move the TV set out of the verandah.

now, the shelves had books and newspapers

there was no space otherwise for newspapers

that soaked oil from savouries. The dough mixed on the iron cot,

which now shuttled between the bedroom and the verandah.

When guests would visit, the shelf would be filled with the dolls

and the new 28-inch TV set

would be placed in front the shelves

had the shelves
not be fixed, the pile of newspapers
would travel too. The new TV set
with Cable network would be a nomad like the iron cot
and the wooden dolls.
but this tiny verandah
would never look like a verandah
unless all these changes were made. The shelves
still have those aging wooden dolls
and those multi-purpose newspapers,
with which we grew and the iron cot,
on which we sit to watch programs on a Plasma TV.

The verandah has a sofa set and the shelf with newspapers
Last, I went to grandmother's house, the iron cot
was moved in the bedroom with a HD TV set.



Nivedita Narsapuram: She is an unschooled student of poetry and prose. She writes to make sense of the chaotic world around through her stories and poetry. Among her other interests, she loves exploring Wisconsin and soaking in the warmth of its people and its harsh winters. She blogs at: nnivedita.com.



FOR THE WOMEN WHO HOLD GODDESSES IN THEIR HEARTS.

Come aching bones.

Come pillars of fortitude, the ones who were restricted to building homes and hearths, the ones who were asked to support and celebrate others.

Come those who were told love is only about giving.

Come those who were taught to err is human, to forgive is a woman.

Come tired, battered, abandoned souls.

Come together, this moving magnitude of earthly brilliance.

Come into the knowledge that has been denied from you.

Come claim the apple of wisdom for which you were
punished millenniums ago.

Come because it was yours to keep.

Come unlearn the lessons of your mothers.

Come unbound yourself from the duties you didn't want
but were given all the same.

Come those who were destined to win wars.

Come those who were shunned because they knew their
worth.

Come those the witch hunts didn't burn.

Come, goddesses of strength and grace.

Come, and build your altar again.



Nilesch Mondal: He is 23 years old, is an engineer by choice and a poet by chance. He works as a writer for Terribly Tiny Tales and Thought Catalog, and as a prose editor for Moledro Magazine. His first book of poetry, Degrees of Separation, is scheduled for a 2017 release.



MEMORIES: HAIKU POEMS

I never step my feet in the same
river, in the flowing water, twice. After all,
it's poignant for eternity. Watershed memories are the
best.

II

Well, of late I realized, kitchen is the best place of
memories.

To rid sunusunia spinach of soil
a natural pragmatism unmarred by mature abridgment.



Nandini Sahu: She is a major voice in Indian English poetry, is an Associate Professor of English in IGNOU, New Delhi, India; she is a creative writer, theorist and folklorist ; she is the author/editor of eleven books; has been widely published in India, U.S.A., U.K., Africa and Pakistan. Dr.Sahu is a double gold medalist in English literature, the award winner of All India Poetry Contest, Shiksha Rattan Purashkar and Poiesis Award of Honour, 2015. She is the Chief Editor and Founder Editor of two bi-annual refereed journals, Interdisciplinary Journal of Literature and Language(IJLL) and Panorama Literaria. Her areas of research interest cover New Literatures, Critical Theory, Folklore and Culture Studies, Children’s Literature, American Literature and ELT. www.kavinandini.blogspot.in



TIASHA, ME AND POETRY

Can an evening be
A thing of beauty?'

Tiasha asked me,

The lake before us
Caught all the hues that passed
On its water, a picture of dusk,

I looked at the scene
Calm, still and serene,
And wondered what it did bring,

'Surely it can', ventured I
As a possible reply,
Looking at the colorful sky,

Tiasha looked at me
Her eyes speaking quietly
Her love, her unsung poetry,

'What did the evening
To us really bring?'
She asked, almost singing,

'Love', I thought I should've said
'That really the evening made,
That really sky before us laid,'

But then I those words left
Unuttered, not expressed,

I just in my heart them kept,

Tiasha being what she always had been

Perhaps gathered traces of them from the scene

And my hands to her face she doth bring

And then she kissed on them gently and soft

Like an angel perhaps, straight from heaven dropped,

Making me unburdened, as if held aloft,

I felt I had become a bird then

A creature winged, devoid of pains,

Ready to fly with her, my lovely maiden,

To faraway lands, distant shores,

Where evenings such always colors pour,

Only to find love more and more.



Moinak Dutta: WELCOME! JULEY! BON JOUR! CIAO!

Me? I am nothing...I'm not a conscious poet...I just scribble;
For scribbling is like singing spontaneously...It is like
dancing loving the movements of body...So I live...So I wish
to depart...



NOSTALGIC APRIL FOOL DAYS

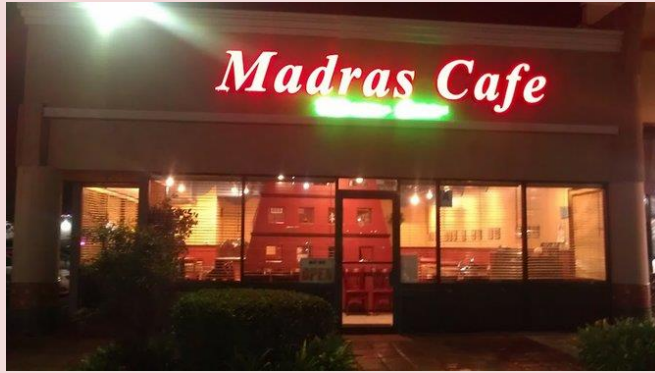
April sprouts with little joys
And fades gently the same way
I'm glad I'm a fool
Proudly watching others as well
Love to watch them laugh
When an unexpected surprise
Makes them happy and glee
Friends requesting to join pranks
Eagerly beckoning to take part
Spinning funny tales to tell
Stealing chalks and powdering
Just to have loads of fun

Hiding and throwing on others
Filling old and new ink pens
And saving just for that one day
Shaving crayons and colouring
Clean steam ironed white shirts
Being restless to be free waiting
For intervals and lunch hour
And as the bell rings by four
School will be over for the day
On April Fools Day
It's a bad day if something
Went wrong on April Fools Day
And it all seems like a dream
As I lay awake thinking of
April Fools Day



Merlyn Alexander: I hail from Nagercoil, had my schooling and college there and did my post-graduation in Botany. Surrounded by nature all around our district with tall coconut trees fringed sea shores, beginning of the Western Ghats, paddy fields and coconut grove, rubber plantations, with some red cliff valleys and scattered mountainous terrain, I feel blessed that nature has lots to offer for my poems. I'm an ardent lover of nature. Other than writing my hobbies include painting, craft, travelling, music, reading, and cooking. I'm a blogger and I have a cookery blog. I would love to publish a cookery book someday. My collection of poems in a book. Gimme some time.

www.alexanderskitchenrecipes.blogspot.com



Madras Cafe
furniture food service
all sombre



Lovely weather
home to hospital
a picnic.



There would be no wars
if everyone drank
said the Bulgarian doctor.



Late Mushtaque Ali Khan Babi AKA Max Babi: Max was a multilingual writer, poet who liked a wide variety of formats – whose life was full of oxymoronic shades, a polymath who went from being a specialist to a generalist to a versatelist. Mentoring by being a catalyst enthralled him, he wrote on serendipity and intuition, conducted workshops on a range of subjects and topics. He was a very friendly Santa Claus.



CONTRAST

A canvas
stands on an easel,
a beaming bride in her finery,
as the paintbrush drapes
the flowers, buds and bees
in shades of desire,
and the blazing orange
of the spring sun
spreads its radiance.

And within,
a loss takes the shape

of a deep black crater,
a memory,
like a melancholy tune,
wafts through the lonely boulevards
of the sleeping city,
revisiting old haunts.

A starless December night
remains witness
to the contrast.



Mallika Bhaumik: She had been a student of literature and did her masters in English Literature from the University of Calcutta. She is passionate about writing and many of her poems and stories have been published in National and International anthologies, well known magazines. She is an event planner by profession and is fond of music, travelling and cooking. She lives with her husband and sons in Kolkata and is a proud Kolkatan.



GREEN

Green rivers

flow through the hollows

by bone cavities each time

I see my desires kissing the

threshold of another doorstep

I spit out a green bile

from my empty stomach of

acid burnt walls each time I

refuse to swallow the sugar

crystals dissolved in the tea

brewing in another kitchen.

I draw close the virtual
green curtains to block my
eyes and ears from the ever
jeering crowd each time they
showcase their fancy lives
that reek of accidental privilege.

I wear green shades,
overly sized to cover also
my cheek bones protruding
a little further out each time
people live their mutually
agreed unequal lives like a
god-planned fairy tale.

I feel green cold temperature,
on my summer dried skin,
green hunger in my belly

laced with layers and layers
of lipids I consumed to evince
my green anguish mixed with
belligerence.

I will die of my own green curse,
biting every unit of my body and
mind; eating away my potentials
like weeds creeping in between
happily grown rows of flowers.
I will be the kill of my own envy.



Mahitha Kasireddi: She is from Hyderabad, India. She had been a writer with online magazines Youth Ki Awaaz. She is a former content director at Campus Diaries. Her poems have been published in literary journals such as GloMag, The Ink Drift Magazine, Unbound Emagazine and the Telegram Magazine by the Talking Books, Delhi and in The New Indian Express. She is the writing finalist of the Campus Diaries 25 Under 25 2016 National Contest. She's certified by the University of Iowa for completing the International Writing Program MOOC on How writers write fiction 2016: Storied Women. Her poems are also to be published in an upcoming anthology by Author Press India called Women Poetess: Within and Beyond Shore



THE LITTLE BOY

a Kiran Zehra poem

Over the rubbles stands a little boy

Dusting his clothes sans joy.

He seemed like he just got of a bad ride

And fell into this rubble tide.

And we know not his name

If this is this part of some game?

That throws children down

And bleeds their whole town.

His face looks dusted and speared with blood

Behind his shoulder rise more children from the mud.

Who are these children?

Where is this town?

He seems to have made a home in my head

He screams in pain, tired of bloodshed.

I want to console him and say 'Don't cry.'

When I reach out to him he asks me 'Why?'

Why my home and why my town?

Why me as your internet clown?

I have nothing to say and I cry too

Why isn't there anything I can do?

Closer I look he seems like my own child

This town is mine with peace exiled

His motionless and painful eyes

Stare at me defying all lies

Will he grow old to love the world?

Or crash it with the hate that upon him hurled?

How should I tell him that I really care?

How should I tell him that I am there?



Kiran Zehra Komail: Put her in the mountains and she will bargain rhymes and rhythm from the tallest tree and the sward. Place her in the concrete jungle and she will sing you a song of love midst the streets and the walls. Show her a burning torch and she would tell you hope is approaching! Call Ms Kiran Zehra Komail, a whirlwind of ideas or a foodie her zest for life is endless and so are her dreams! She could redefine the shades of red, yellow, black or white in words so vivid you'd almost wonder if the true shade of it was this. She works for Rotary News as the Sub Editor of the English and Hindi magazine. Travel, gourmet and people to her are intriguing. Her poems and sketches are her theorem – simple yet deep and humble.



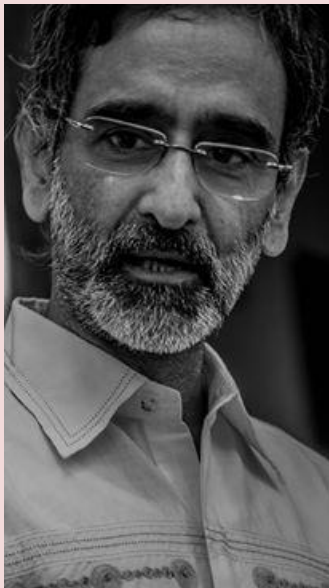
THE PARAGON KOZHIKODE

Today Chitra and I had our breakfast of appam and puttu at the iconic Paragon in Kozhikode. I was eating at this restaurant after 40 long years after being a regular there for two plus years in 1974-76.

The 1970s were perhaps its golden period, not just for its reasonably priced Kozhikode cuisine but for the way the hotel's Room No 1 on the first floor hosted every evening Kozhikode's own creative geniuses like M T Vasudevan Nair (Jnanpith Award winning novelist and Best Film national award winning film writer-director), Aravindan (cartoonist and film director), artist Nampoothiri, writer Pattathuvila Karunakaran, writer Dr Punathil Kunhabdulla and writer Prof K T Rama Varma, and occasionally visiting writers like O V Vijayan and Mukundan and a few artists.

My paternal cousin Ravindrannan and I had once hosted John Abraham, celebrated for his unorthodox living and equally unorthodox film making, in Room#1.

The first floor is now an AC restaurant after they demolished the rooms some time ago. I wish they had retained the iconic "Room#1 Paragon" as an exclusive bar adorned with wall pics of the room's celebrated drinkers and their quotes/scenes, admission to which would be reserved to only those who can prove their genius or creativity!



Kerala Varma: He hails from Chirakkal (Kannur), Kerala, is a former Deputy General Manager of State Bank of India and lives in Chennai with his wife Chitra. He is an amateur writer, who believes in “simple living, simple thinking”, welcoming enrichers of life like love, humour, long walk,

the river, sea, mountain, books, music and Internet and avoiding complicaters of life like greed, anger, ambition, sentimentalism, sexism, god, rituals, religion and superstitions.



FOR YOU, MARINA ABRAMOVIC

Standing for six hours, an exhibit,
Seventy-two objects on the table,
Feathers, razors, knives, flowers, water, and a gun,
Were you not afraid of what they would do?
They made you sit,
So they could abuse and humiliate;
Slowly magnified the torture,
Attached things to your body,
Touched you to feel your skin tremble,
Used a razor to lacerate your neck,
Excoriated your tender breasts.
Did their glee mitigate your pain?

Experimenting with your garments,
Tearing up parts till you were naked,
Enjoying your shame.
Curiosity: arousal: masochism: BDSM:
Call it what you will,
It was nothing but savagery
Of man against his species.
Not content, not satiated,
Pointed a loaded gun to your head,
These common folks stuck rose thorns to your bosom,
Drove a knife between your legs.
They grew frenzied towards the end,
Searching for ways to hurt you more,
A gradual spiral of cruelty.
Were they ugly perverts in ordinary garb,
Looking for some distraction from boring lives?
Now, what lies inside has been revealed,
The cruelty lurking inside us.

Admire your courageous performance artistry,
Not even once did you flinch.
When they treated you as an object,
Why didn't you,
Defend? Defend? Defend? Defend?
Like any human being would.



John P. Matthew: Writer, poet, singer-songwriter, and blogger John P Matthew was born in the state of Kerala, India. His first success as a writer was Penguin's world-wide short story contest "India Smiles" in which his short story "Flirting in Short Messages" was selected for publication in an anthology. His poem "Call of the Cuckoo" has been published by Poetry Rivals. He is working on his first novel and writing a book-length travelogue about his native state of Kerala.



VINEGAR, YOU ARE BLUSHING

the lampshade. She writes well within
the confines of the almond cloud. pushes.
pushes out

the fennel in an exhaustion only
traipse bean bags count with
saggylips. I implore the wagon wheel
do not count ugly between your
straight spokes squeeking across desolate lapland and
scraping the last walking escape from vivacious earth
below. Understand

Understand the concavity of a woman can hold
myself. myself talking of myself. or

that I'm gone, another obsidian stone one would
never wish to dream of in the night
of moth fauna black, scarlet licking at
the last hopeful candle, melting.



Joseph Elebaas: I am a Christian writer, living in West Michigan.



A glimpse of spring
shy blue morning
black trees etch sky

children skipping
over puddles

bramble on snow
soft birdsong

listening to water
race downstream

winds gently kiss
my forehead

grass shoots push
through first thaw



Joan McNerney: Her poetry has been included in numerous literary magazines such as Seven Circle Press, Dinner with the Muse, Moonlight Dreamers of Yellow Haze, Blueline, and Halcyon Days. Three Bright Hills Press Anthologies, several Poppy Road Review Journals, and numerous Kind of A Hurricane Press Publications has accepted her work. Her latest title is Having Lunch with the Sky and she has four e-books. She has been nominated three times for Best of the Net.



MANGO SHAKE

Scorching winds that tilt the seeds,
Scathing summers that inflate the pukers,
Illusionary aroma pushing into coma,
Are razed off with a happiness loaf,
Comes into play the exquisite lay,
When a soothing piece enriches the peace,
That delicious taste leaving no waste,
Savouring times killing the mimes
Of all sorrows and unhealthy furrows,
That pleasurable layers showing the cares,
Yellow and pulpy to uplift the sulky,
Rich with swirls and bright curls,

Foamy essence to chill the sense,
Galoped by under the shady lie,
Milk with mango vibrates the tango,
Inner waves riding the caves,
Relaxes the person with an energetic lesson,
Scrumptious tales of the blissful days.



Jayant Singhal: A voracious reader and an enraptured author, Jayant Singhal, under the animated pseudonym of 'Saaransh'. He began nurturing the passion for expressing the enchanted aura of the world through his pen just a few months ago. Having a strong affinity for English language, he loves to feel the imbuing effect of it. He is currently writing a Facebook page, "Aroma - The Essence of Life".

Dazzling through the twists and turns of this beautiful voyage, commonly known as 'Life', he is en route to the bewitching nature of happiness and peace.



DRAGONFLIES

My dragonflies don't carry stones.

They are weak enough to know how the

Blue rivulets of sky torn under an

Eagle's flight, ribbon perfectly on a mad

Poet's pen, how the ink breaks one

With its metal wings, and still, fly.

White flowers bloom and wither and bloom

Again on my bosom, a hibiscus in

My hair, the wild forest on my skin.

My suns are cut out of them with

Black knives, and burned in their

Own fire, the tepid moon painted

Red on my forehead. They come to me
Each with three nails in his palm,
And wait while the fear turns
Gold and liquescent in the bluegreen
Of the firmament. The nails grow wings,
They do not see, transparent with the
Heavens embroidered on them,
Now, dragonflies, the color of the
Monsoon on my lips.
My dragonflies,
They don't carry stones.
We fly.



Gowri Suresh: She lives in Kottayam, Kerala and has been writing poems since she was 10. She is a student of class 12. She was the winner of the Reuel Prize for the most promising young writer of the year in 2016.



I LOVE YOU

the wind rustles amongst the leaves

dewdrops shimmer

reflections of the morning sun

will our love become a parable

lost between the pages

of our anthology

even after the writings on the pages have faded

and all the words on the pages disappear

I love you

will you pine for the years
that time has stolen
of our youthful exuberances
will you need a mirror
to reveal images of our love

my heart is the repository of our memories
my soul is the custodian of our love
my every heart beat resonates for you
I love you

when the rivers runs dry
and the mountains weep
and the earth cries out for the rain
will you walk on the shores
of listless dreams
chasing shadows
grieving for that which has been

even if there is no hint of Spring
and the Summer rains do not fall
and the melancholy blues
haunts my dreams
I love you

when all the world
has lost its sensibilities
mankind is floundering in the dark
when the light of love is diminished
and love becomes shallow
will our love become fragile
and be crushed like glass

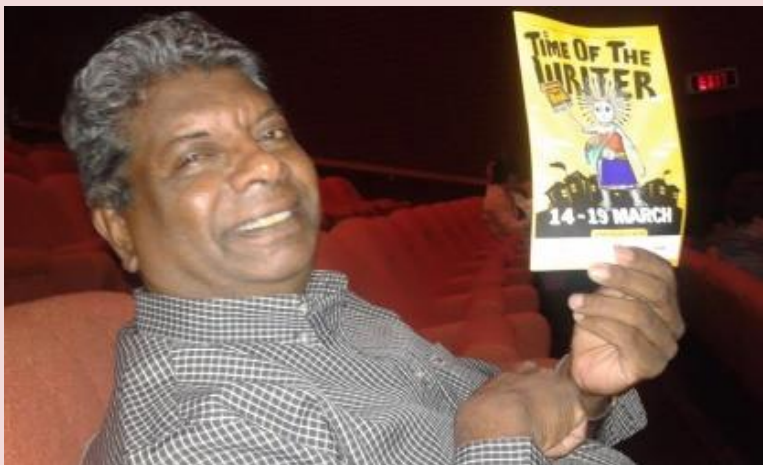
if the world
should come crushing around me
I will be your pillar of strength

never to lose my faith
in this love we vowed to share together
come what may
till the end of time
I love you

they say we are dreamers
you and I
chasing after the elusive rainbow
in the sky
true love is a figment of our dreams
a trivial pastime of adolescents
we could never be faithful to love
the phenomenon called true love
is just a myth living in our fantasies

my ears I will close
listen not to the prophets of doom

the world is full of dreamers
you and I are not the only one
i feel you
i touch you
you are the embodiment of all my desires
incarnate in my soul
you are real
I love you



Gonapragasen Naicker Aka Danny: He is an Indian born, and brought up in South Africa. He has been fascinated by, and writing poetry since his early boyhood. He has performed his poetry at various forums, including the Poetry Africa Festival, the Mauritian Writers' Association, and Glorioustimes, India. He is the Convenor of the Live Poets Society, Durban, South Africa.

HAPPINESS IS



...shopping.

(c) lasfemon.com

HAPPINESS IS SHOPPING?

Shopping tonight is a running away from my Self. I lock Self in when I leave my house. And then I go searching, seeking...Is it in this brass pot so shiny? It could hold flowers for sure, and the flowers would bring fragrance. Ow, beat it! Dosa! Yes, dosa is the answer. And with every bit of dosa dipped in sambar and chutney, you slip away from my mind just a leetle bit. But you're back again as I step out and think, "What next?" There's Spencer Daily, of course. Spencers never fails to please. The security guy takes my bags. Here's the lady who will browse, who will seek herself in shelves, in packets of over shiny apples and downsized pomegranates. In bunches of grapes and over ripe bananas. She will go on with her trolley, seeking out new products, sizing their buyability. She will then go to her favorite shelves and load up. Security hands me back my

soul along with my baggage. He clips my 1000 Rs. spent on another futile search for the elusive. Outside, the snide Moon hovers deliberately over me, snickering at my foibles, and I realize it's time to go home. I shake my head at the alluring chocolate cake. I'm diabetic. So what, says the baker. Here's a cake for diabetics. Really? I'm interested! I find myself peevishly bargaining with the auto man knowing full well I will hand him his pay check not caring about the pennies. But then, bargaining is his hobby and mine too. There's a joy in his saying 50 Rs, me saying 30 Rs. and both of us settling to a tepid 40 Rs. We've come to an understanding and are now friends. We discuss the weather, politics, share notes on life issues. I thank him and make my way to my house. Self welcomes me, "I've made you a cup of coffee. Now, dump all that stuff you bought some place and settle down with a good book."



Glory Sasikala: She is a poet and writer, currently residing in Chennai. She is the editor and publisher of GloMag.



ABLE CAIN?

You have killed

For me,

Brother

You have paid the price

With

The blood of the Lamb

Oh, my Brother,

Where was it?

When was it?

I know

Why it was

He was a drugs dealer

Hiding in the shadows
Was he?
With a knife,
You cut him up,
And through his body in the sea
Or left it for the crows on the
High ground
Oh, my brother
You have bought me
Paid the bride-price
For me
The highest price possible
The blood of Cain
Whom Able killed
With bloody hands
You have bought my soul



Geoffrey Jackson: He has been an intrepid TESOL instructor at 5 universities and 4 colleges, blown off course from England to Holland, Finland, Hungary, Oman, Saudi Arabia and, in the Roaring Forties, to Denmark. A self-described European cosmotrollop and Americanophile with New World dreams, Geoff is the Poetry Editor for Fullosia Press.



BORN AGAIN

If I were to be born again
I would be your song again
Where words are neither yours nor mine
But the lyrics write themselves
In all that we do not say to each other,
I would be your recurring dream
Of meadows strewn with fragrant flowers
Drifting with winds that visit your windows,
I would also be your placid pond
Drinking up the stars and moonlight
While the sun dapples satin folds in it,
Water pure to quench your parched solitude

A gentle rain fanned by mountain breeze,
I will be all this in your imagination,
And you would sing me in quiet hours,
When the sun has left the horizon,
And the moon floats in the white of your eyes
Where you will seek me in every passing girl you see.
Only I would be just a dream.



Geethanjali Dilip: A Chennaiite at heart, she is a graduate from Ethiraj College and a postgraduate in French from Bangalore University. She is passionate about poetry, travel, teaching travel, gardening, interior decoration, and enjoying a deep spiritual connection with everything. She's been teaching French, freelance, in Salem for the past 34 years in schools and colleges, and at her centre, Zone Francophone, in Salem.



This time too,
Krishna,
You played your magic flute,
Made us long for you,
Dark and silent as you always are,
Filled my heart, standing there,
As though a stone,
You think no one sees you,
Because you close your eyes,
A little one, stealing,
But my heart, no stone, no butter,

Weeps, bleeds, swells, bursts,
A volcano that cannot contain,
Then you speak volumes,
Only I can hear, understand,
Some unguarded moment,
For a very short while,
It surprises me,
When you say my time is up,
I thought I just arrived,
And before I come to know,
You disappear,
It hurts, don't you know that?



Geeta Varma: She has been a teacher for thirty years and a Freelance journalist. She is now an Educational Consultant and writes for Deccan Herald. She enjoys working with children and has conducted many creative workshops. Her interests include music, reading, writing (poems and stories for children) and travelling. She is married to Shreekumar Varma (Writer and Novelist) and has two sons, Vinayak and Karthik and a daughter-in-law daughter Yamini. She lives in Neelankarai, Chennai.



'HONEYMOON PERIOD IS OVER'

Wash the vessels, mop the floors

Brush and stiffen, what we wore

Cook some food, clean some more

Put away what we bought in stores,

Sweat and fatigue in our pores.

Foolish and young, we believed in lore,

That these chores, lots of chores

Do them alone and they're such a bore

Do them together, we can do much more

With these chores, lots of chores
A honeymoon, it lay ignored,
Our honeymoon, inside our doors.



Gayatri Sekar: She likes words and all the things they can do. Favorite quote: "All these signs lead to science"



Surrounded by headstones

She lives

In cemeteries

About breath and life

She writes

My kind of poetry

Death is one cool gal

After life

She drives symmetry



Gauri Dixit: She is a software professional from Pune, India. She is an avid reader and regularly writes in poetry groups on Facebook. Her poems have been published in multiple anthologies. Her poems were featured in the Poet's Corner for the E-zine 'Mind Creative' published from Sydney Australia and Learning and Creativity e magazine.



CHASING RAINBOWS AT HOLI

Holika Dihan – It's time for internal cleansing again, a time for reflection of your fragile human condition. Beware the flaming spitting of Holika, her wrath her acid demonic breath, let her be as we dance and pray in our bonfire healing reverie and allow yourself to truly see.

I see you – Dancing so gleefully, looking up at the full moon this diamond sparkling neon night of

Purnima, hoping to catch a glimpse of me once again
as you do every year without fear because you know
I will shower you with the colours of the rainbow the
next day on Holi, hoping to be with me, free like me...

Emergence – I cannot help but smile from aromatic
intoxication

and remember your morning essence of jasmine, drowning
me in liquid love; awake! Then partake once again in a
cascade of cleansing colours and know that each one
signifies your many blessings our multicoloured kissing
now breathe each colour and joyfully throw it on each
other as does our nature Mother, to whom I have returned.

Holi – Hurry and spread the good news to all you encounter
it's time for renewal no chance for reckless refusal, forgive
and forget, even those who made you sad, like I said
I see you I know you I remember you I miss you I still
adore you I admire you I still love you but if you suddenly

find it hard just sip a bit of bhang to sing a new song even
amidst the jolly happy throng – Then rest a while
and when you see our loved ones tonight tell them
I miss and love them, that I'm sorry I left them as
I'm chasing rainbows at Holi...

Blue my emotions as they stir and swirl every Holi
Yellow my essence as your smile evaporates my
melancholy.



Don Beukes: He is a retired teacher of English and Geography now writing poetry. Originally from Cape Town, South Africa, where he was born, raised and educated in the last two decades of Apartheid, he taught in both South

Africa and the UK for twenty years and hold EU citizenship. As a person of 'mixed race' heritage, his poetry reflects the racial and cultural battles growing up in a racially divided society and indeed as a global citizen and hopes to adjust our moral compass. He also writes about the socio-political, life and death, womanhood, nature and religion.

Jonel Scholtz: She started painting in 1988, while in high school, with Louise Goudemond, an American born artist, specializing in figurative work and oil portraits. She has exhibited in South Africa in Johannesburg, Clarens, Cape Town, Swellendam, Hartebeespoort Dam and Dullstroom. Internationally, she has exhibited in New York, Miami, Italy, NY at the International Expo in 2010 and the United Nations as part of International Women's Day.



THE BALLAD OF THE ONE

(1)

Give me a handful of dust or the whole earth,
I can build the most magnificent minaret for you.
Give me a piece of stone or the entire mountain,
I can build the most majestic temple for you.

(2)

I am the butterfly with all the colors of this world,
The Master Craftsman who can build any shape,
Any sculpture or any form that pleases the different Gods.

(3)

You follow your pathways, your chosen ones,
I follow mine, crafting the whole universe.

While you fight to keep your faith alive,
I fill the whole cosmos with your consciousness,
And mine; the collective consciousness.

(4)

While you keep on losing your eyes to see,
And blunt your senses to perceive the reality,
I pervade every speck of this world in entirety.

(5)

Whatever or whomsoever is there in this universe,
However, wherever and whenever,
All of that is me, I am the one,
In every faith, in every temple, every minaret,
Every synagogue and in every church.

(6)

While you fight to divide one from the other
I exist in all the consciousness, as the one,
And the only one.



Dipankar Sarkar: He is on a continuous journey to discover himself and the mystery called life. He remains an eternal optimist with a never-ending zeal, in spite of the many battles that he has lost and few that he has won.



WHISPERING TO THE NIGHT!!

And again in this murkiness

I was caught whispering with the stars and the moon..

talking about the incorrupt, trusty, loyal night,

talking about the tranquil and unruffled moonlight,

talking about the silentious, shy, soundless leaves..

And in this darkness

I saw myself blind yet revealing..

Folded, yet not wrapped...

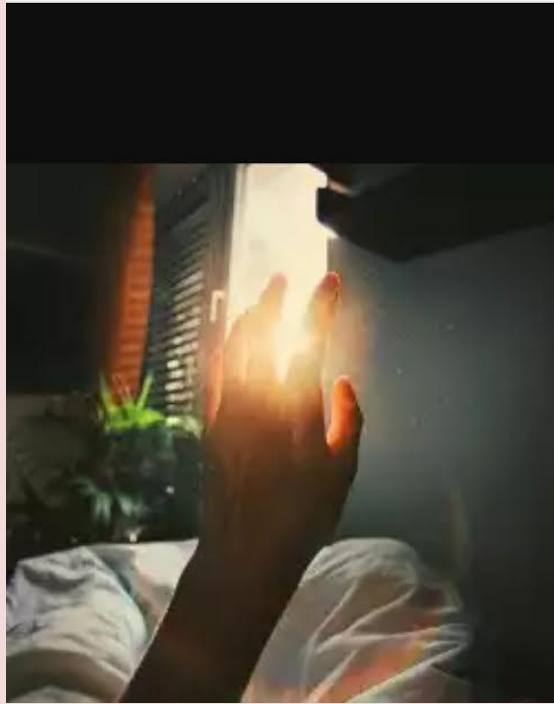
Unbarred yet concealed..

and numb yet compassionate..

And in this duskiness..
In search of someone very pure
I was cuddled by the wind puffing,
teaching me to peek light
while whispering to the night....



Devyani Deshmukh: She is pursuing master's degree in computer science at US. I am highly interested in writing. This poem is nothing but a fictional work. It shows the plight of a girl who is broken in love and made to keep distance from him.



TALKING DREAMS

Night comes in my eyes like the dark kohi

That lines up the dusk sun in its jealous bid to outdo the
crimson red

And fills my palms with bizarre lights

They dance in my hands and tenderly kiss my tired lines of
destiny

Sweet glowworms, where did they come from?

I must be dreaming my daytime hallucinations!

Am I getting too jittery with these

Or are they really tickling my crease?

Uneasy at this invasion, I puff and blow

And whew!

Watch them fly, like dewdrops enveloping the stardust

The smoky breeze shimmering with a million chandeliers

Mom! You're talking in your dreams again, my son snuggles
by my side

Ah! Wish I could voice them loud enough, sweetie!

I kiss him lazily, and open my eyes

The glowworms are there, dancing in the morning rays,
seeping in through my window mesh

At a distance, the sun smiles.



Deepti Singh: I am a Doctor in Community Medicine in State Government service and writing and music is my passion. I love to experiment and explore, and my favorites in this regard are nature and human behavior.



REPLACING THE MONUMENT

Backwards again, the rooster
has saluted the moon,
because there is no restive

intelligence in the call
of a flightless bird
and that moment of perception,

where it must determine
when we should be awake
is easily fooled by the awesome

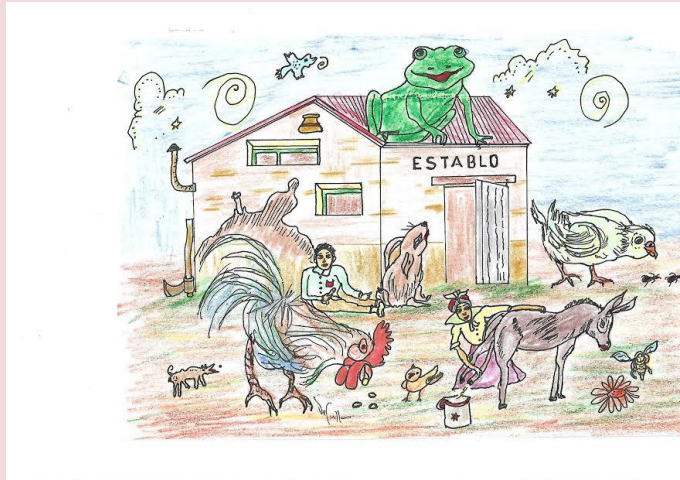
vantage of a skyline
that is only skyline. One foot
off the ground, that feathering

is in awe almost all of the time.

He is like a child witnessing
the enormity of because it is.



Darren C. Demaree: He is the author of five poetry collections, most recently “The Nineteen Steps Between Us” (2016, After the Pause Press). He is the Managing Editor of the Best of the Net Anthology and Ovenbird Poetry. He is currently living in Columbus, Ohio with his wife and children.



MODERN AND ANCIENT SCORPION WITH ITS STING

Modern and ancient scorpion with its sting

How little everything has changed

Saints of yesterday are today pedophiles priests

And devout men

That with kids they play a lot.

Yesterday's nuns are lesbians today

That give kisses and hugs

To their adopted children.

Old military men have to cut their tongue

And serve it between two plates

For the young bisexual sub-lieutenants.

Boy or girl tell to their parents:

The child: Dad, mum: I'm a girl!

The Girl: Mum, dad: I'm a kid!

The State and its Governments

Modern and ancient, only know how to punish.

Yesterday's criminals and rapists

Are reflected in the murky waters of today's rivers.

The ancient lard Jack

Sticks out the tongue to the modern exhibitionist

That is located at the doors of children's schools

Or at one subway station.

Of the sticks where the Inquisition, yesterday

Burning witches, agnostics and atheists

New inquisitors make chopsticks

For the mighty teeth.

Demons are always at the cross of the roads

Looking for arriving the visionaries

That crash with their cars

To, on wings, raise them to no one sky.

Yesterday like today

There are the same crazy ones that govern us

Throwing wax to the submissive and subdued people:

Eternal repression returns

The same laws and its terror.

From World War I and World War II

Lords of the Crusade War

Bandits of oil and power

The modern and the ancient criminals

Have made cakes so that today's Arabs

Distribute to themselves

Taking their mortuary box

And, as immigrants, kissing it.

Yesterday they were slaves traveling in chains

From the Old Continent

To the new one of the Americas.



Daniel de Culla (1955): He is a writer, poet, and photographer. He is also a member of the Spanish Writers Association, Earthly Writers International Caucus, Director of the Gallo Tricolor Review, and Robespierre Review. He's moving between North Hollywood, Madrid and Burgos, Spain.



UNICORN

I do exist thank you very much
I just keep rather select company:
Virgins and pure visionaries, not such
As would thrust me in a documentary.
A real star needs to promote his mystique,
So I steer clear of cheap publicity,
It's not the gossip columns that I seek,
Or interviewer's sly duplicity.
Legends sing my praises and Scotland brave
Bears me in heraldry, a symbol true,
Spare me your scientists, from them I crave
Obscurity, like my friend Yeti-Lou.
You're all just jealous of my magic horn,
So you go make out there's no unicorn.



Christopher Villiers: I am freelance writer in the United Kingdom, with a Master's degree in Theology, who writes about God, Love and the Universe, big things in little poems! You can see more of my poetry on my Facebook page.



SAVING WATER

I am a winter child.

I enjoy the rain

on my lips and my eyes.

The cold that wakes me up

like ice on my neck.

I enjoy the rain so.

When we were little

we used to play in the water

with our hands.

And dance in the mud

until our parents came to fetch us.

Sometimes

we take things for granted.

Like the food we eat,

or the water we drink.

God has indeed heard our prayers,

let's be thankful.

In a country where water is so scarce,

we need to learn to

count every drop.

Water is not a luxury.

It is a gift of life,

like breast milk from a mother

to her child.

Let's show our appreciation

to God and nature

by saving what is left.

Let's save water

for the next generation.



Chestlyn Draghoender: He is a young South African poet based in Cape Town. His writings have appeared in numerous literary journals, online and print. Chestlyn is passionate about music and literature.



ANTI-NATIONAL

The whole place was festooned
people lined up on both sides
there was singing and dancing
jugglers, clowns entertained
came elephants
camels
horses
the king is coming the king is coming
with his new set of clothes
come one come all
see for yourself the unique dress of the king
people rubbed their eyes,

craned their necks

on the balcony a boy wedged between his father and
mother

came the king on chariot

look said the prime minister

look at the clothes of the king

people shook their head, they clapped

the boy shouted- where are the clothes he is naked

the prime minister pointed at the boy

commanded the soldiers to arrest him

he is anti-national

he is poisoned.

the crowd cheered.



Chandramohan Naidu: He is a retired bank employee, now a freelance writer and photographer based in Chennai, part of the poetry circle which meets first Wednesday of every month. I am writing poems to be subsequently brought out into a collection.



POEM THAT IS DEATH

Death-

With no rhyme or reason,

Is still the best poem...

Poem that branches out to infinitude-

Where winged visceral images come to roost,

From where memories drop and bite the dust.

Poetry is death...

Or vice versa?

Death is poetry?

One knows not,

As the scribbling of death-

(Oh that hieroglyphic verse),
Remains strangely imperceptible...
Yet it is there,
Still, with no rhyme or reason



Bini B.S.: She is currently a post-doctoral fellow at Balvant Parekh Centre for General Semantics and Other Human Sciences, Baroda, Gujarat. Her research articles, poems and translations have appeared in national and international Journals and anthologies. She is the editor of *Anekaant: A Journal of Polysemic Thought* and the Managing Editor of *JCT (Journal of Contemporary Thought)*. Her poems were part of an anthology of corporeal poems titled *A Strange Place Other than Earlobes: Five Poets, Seventy Voices* published by Sampark, Calcutta in 2014. She is the winner of the 2016 J. Talbot Winchell award for her contributions to the discipline of general semantics, which she received in a ceremony in New York on October 21, 2016.



FRUITY FLAVOURS

Humanity are like fruit

With different flavours

Going around life

With distinctive behaviours

Some are sour

Like lemons

Their attitudes

Like lethal weapons

Others are pleasant

Like exotic fruit

You love being around

Their attitude

Some are bruised

That needs repair

Different people

We have out there

Fruity Flavours

Each a distinctive taste

Just like people

Some gentle, others toxic waste



Bevan Boggenpoel: He was born in Salt Lake, Port Elizabeth, South Africa. He attended Soutpan Primary and matriculated at Westville Secondary School. He completed a Baccalaureate in Education at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. He launched his debut Anthology 1 December 2016. The book was well received by the public and he sold 200 copies locally. He is also an author at a South African website known as Litnet (Literature Network in South Africa). His poetry is written in a South African context that covers different issues in daily life. In his writings he strives to tell a story or teach a lesson that will inspire and motivate. He is currently a teacher at Bethelsdorp Road Primary in the northern areas of Port Elizabeth.



THE DREAMER

Every day, passing by,
Every thought without thought,
No meaning to a theory,
Passing, as if urged by
Material method, with reason without,
Into the other end of a tired daylight,
No gates to request permit,
A voice in the wind,
Astray, with no ear to shed mercy.
The rites pursued with dogged assurance,
Yet no fruit to feed off pursuit,
As the brides don the scarlet ring,

And the color on their cheeks swell,
And blush as the grooms leave for work,
Again!!

Waking through a music unsurpassed,
Battling with a semi-open light,
I, submerged, emerged,
Arms stretching to either level of my reach,
Wounded soldiers, surveying,
In loud protest, the aftermath of daylight,
 Moments before the mutual truce,
One, ascending to higher retreat,
The other nursed, by cool ambrosia.
Feelings surpassed, wounds healed,
In ignorant conveyance of the cycle,
No meaning to the theory,
Yet in mute supplement.
Just a cursory glance upwards, a smile,

And the day had begun.

Wisps of gentle wind combing through,
Leaves rustling in rhythmic confusion,
Surya, his justice mitigated by my plea,
As if in unsaid congruence,
With all the thoughts that do not think.
Such wonders I beheld, I wondered.
Yonder, I see faithless sheen,
Fade in the shadows of that cherubic smile,
That grandma unleashed on my self,
Delight, such state of mind,
Not borne by one intellect,
That overtook the mild, hopeless reason,
To embrace my only reason,
My source through darkness of light,
My only dream.

Cold air, in tight embrace,
Voiding this moment of little justice,
Yet, a drop tethered, unsublimed,
That draws, with merciless mercy,
Other drops chained to other moments
Of like semblance, warm within and cold without.
Drops, that wet parched emotions,
Of a delivered existence,
Time in void suspension,
At the helm of a moribund daylight,
That yet shall not be muffled,
Victorious in dulled defeat.
Drops, that yet to me, dried,
In delivery of the volume it bore,
But, content in the smiles that replied.

Such morning bathed in delighted arrays,
The Roopnarayan, washed ashore,
Feeding the fertility of Mankur,
Little mirrors on its brow in deep conspiracy,
Throwing the Sun in such wealth,
Where eyes did fail to sight.
And at once, over the hills,
And around Chatterjee Lane,
I did see a life never lived hitherto.
Clothed in such audacity,
Loud colors, freed of monotone,
Frolicking through the Baganbadi.
The runts in deep conflict,
Over a bald patch of bearded track,
With beauty watching over.

The river licking away at the water steeds
Of the Majhis, slapping the waves of protest,

Donned in semi-nakedness, conjuring
Some long lost melody, riding on
the lilting notes of the Roopnarayan.
Kantababu, blending into the music,
Pan stained teeth, curving his lips,
To the best smile his age did muster,
Waved at me, and faded into the morning mist.
The day matured as the grooms returned,
Mankur, adorned in spots of little light,
Peeking through the many windows,
A thousand glowworms in congruence,
Slept to the lullabies of the Roopnarayan,
Even as I awoke, bereft of dreams,
That haunted me like the Majhis' music.



Avishek Ramaswamy Aiyar: I was born and brought up in pristine Calcutta and lived the first 18 years of my life there before moving to Chennai for my undergraduate education. I eventually moved to the US, where I completed my doctoral studies in Chemical Engineering. I currently work as a Sr. Scientist at Illumina in San Diego, sunny California.

CUT YOUR TONGUE IN SHAME

Some scenic forty-five minutes from fishy holy Puri leads
you beyond the age

To the southern banks of river Bhargavi, this coconut-palm
shaded village.

An idyllic setting among groves of coconut, palm laced with
betel vines,

The narrow village wrinkled like the vocally dumb faces of
ninety to nines.



In the flickering dark the sooty corner of the open rooms
with pale smile

'll welcome you, the babu as you are sanctifying with along
their exhausted will.

Like swarm they'll gather around you, inviting you and you
play to be cerebral.

And abruptly your ego will go thump thump as like curious cat you will notice some

'Padmashree, Padmabibhushan'-almost at every door the lotus titles come.



Welcome to Raghurajpur, the hamlet, the abode of Hamlets, the last knights Art.

The oil lamp consuming hours and men beg for a glance as you are the first.

A sympathetic step into his 'studio' displaying Pattachitra, chitrakars and carvings

Proudly pathetically they like setting sun with subdued honour will display their belongings.

Time will stop and they will show how to weave in hands with colour and carve

Take a snap just, if not buy, show to your pals and skill and coconut they will serve.

Some hundred adept craft huts and not a buyer nearby, no worm hand of admiration.

Bona fide art is ever stoic and they go on maintaining their mural painting tradition.



The clock tickles leaving the parish in dark, overstrained to Puri with a sigh you start

And the last tattered panorama is awaiting still, boasting of shame and disgrace smart.

The man on whose step our country dances, Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra, looking at

Through the phenomenal pose and postures from a ruined chalet residing in abode of rats.

A patched scribble will be kindly inform you he was born to revolutionize the century

The palm leaf engravings and carvings are bought cheap at bulk by arid hands for Puri.



Note: Raghurajpur is a heritage crafts village on Odisha state, 10 kms from Puri and 55 kms from the state capital Bhubaneshwar. There are about a 100 houses in the village and almost everyone is an artisan. They are Pattachitra painters, an art form which dates back to 5 BC. They also make traditional masks, stone idols, paper mache, sculptures, wooden toys.

Most of these artists have also won National Awards for their exceptional work. Can we not extend a day of Puri vacation and come here and help them by giving much-needed publicity if not buy at all? I know if you come here, you will feel the same.

(All pictures are snapped by Avik Kumar Maiti)



Avik Kumar Maiti: (email - itzakm@gmail.com) He is a poet and writer from Midnapore. He is a permanent ESL teacher at Belda Gangadhar Academy, West Bengal. He likes to travel, explore the locale with cultures, to drink life to the lees', passion in humanity and drenched in literature. He believes that God is there and one day everything will be fine again. He believes in the flame eternal that is within us, which may cause a miracle with just a sympathetic touch.



(pic by Asoke Mitra)

GRAFFITI OF DARKNESS.....

Graffiti of darkness, corridors of night
a forest where the shadows played
azure mountain trembling in the eyes of autumn.....

it was raining and the whispers of stars
like a mist you came to tame the wild
buried in me

huddled corpses in the dark and the
phantom fear, clenched lilac and the unspoken word....

between my fingers a sacred river ran
tonight we shall go to the riverside
to sing a sweet melodious song
darkness smiled as the moon closed
it's eyes.....
night is over and our memories have set sail



Asoke Kumar Mitra: I am from India, Kolkata. Poetry is my passion.



OF SONS AND FATHERS

I made you aware, I had warned
For I have seen you stand lonely and blank
I that grinned at their strategic embark
on destiny's laugh at your birth in dark

When you missed me at your infant nights
when you wished me at your instant flights
I deserted you at your innocent rights
I, that shine the world
I, that pine in yours tears scald
dear son, I once faltered, left you shattered
when nightmarish fate kept you tortured

But then, I was god
protecting this infectious world

Today, my mission is just being dented
to retain honour, unruffled by my philanthropy blunted
I would rather hold you tight
in you, the whole earth and sky look bright
I can't stand your morose eyes
chariot fallen, memory ridden amid enemy noise
brahmastra is but a little skill
inferior to a father's stubborn and burning zeal

my love, I scare you
stir and soothe, yet perhaps I snare you
am love, still undone manifest in kind
a state of timeless, moody and mighty southern wind
my love, I am awake into night's air
restive yet redolent, supreme and rare

Fathers are but sons dipped in sulky love
forever young to take up action and cast their curve
History knows, the epical duel
Loss was only a fortune cruel
Towery arms' forgiving jewel
So dear, why get shaken
or act ever slight heart-broken
When the Suns have vowed to raise the precious Karns fallen?



Asim Ranjan Parhi: He was Professor & Head, Dept. of English and Dean of Languages at Rajiv Gandhi University (Central), Arunachal Pradesh before joining the Dept of English, Utkal University. Specialising on ELT, he has a book, Indian English Through Newspapers from Concept, New Delhi, and many research papers published in journals. He writes poetry in Odia and English, simultaneously nourishing a deep interest in Odia and Hindi musical compositions.



WORDS

If I were a poem
And you were my words
A gurgling brook,
Couldn't compete
Against the raging torrent
Of your ideas

If I were a poem
And you were my words
We'd go farther,
Than the fastest wind

Dropping happiness in

Open windows

If I were a poem

And you were my words

We'd rain down the forest

Of people's minds

Starting chatters they'd never believe

Could come from their souls

If I were a poem

And you were my words

No ink could ever capture

Or solitude ignite

The crackles of conversation

We'd leave behind



Anurag Mathur: He is a trained bean counter, works for a financial services group and has spent almost 2 decades serving that industry. Whatever little time that has been spared from work or sleep or reflective meditation has – with quite a few well-meaning prods and nudges from friends – been devoted to occasionally tapping to the Muse’s dictats from time to time.



WITHDRAWN

The song you sing is full of pain

I hear it from behind the door

The dream you see is false

It sticks in your eyes as a sore

All your needs are impossible

The path you tread is full of thorns

Your heart is as black as coal

It leaves cinders of hate as it burns

Leave me alone in a dense forest
In its darkness I can cry in peace
Our stars won't come close ever
You have nurtured love in a disguise

Mock at me as if I don't belong
To the paradise of love and charm
Let me withdraw to my musty cell
Feel free I won't do you any harm



Anil Kumar Panda: My name is Anil Kumar Panda. Tiku is my pen name. I was born in a small town, Brajrajnagar, in the state of Odisha, in India. I am currently residing here. I work as a mine surveyor in coal mines. I write short stories and poems whenever I get time.



MORNING GLORY

When the morning sun rises
Whether convex or concave
The foundation stands firmly
The shifting forms
Parading in the
filtering morning sunlight
The paradigm remains

When blessed by
nature's beauty
It's warmth fills
the precious heart
The longing dreams
The vivacious joys
The simple things
All free available

Look to the open
expanse of the blue sky
From the earth's surface
Knowing this distance
Is the daily journey
Of your heart
For every sunrise
Every new day
The journey traverses
Through spaces and times.

Coolness of
the wintery sun
Sultry long summer days.

As earth and sky meet
we remain together
amidst this beauty.

Nature's gifts
It's blessings abound
We yield to this
Beautiful story
The story of

our life's journey
Each chapter
Silhouetted by the mystery
of beautiful moments
The treasured memories.

Love knows no boundaries
Sees no differences
Touched by the heart
In rhythm and tone.



Angela Chetty: Angela Chetty is a HR Manager, an avid poet and lyricist who lives in Durban, South Africa. In 2013, an Anthology of Poetry entitled, Heartfelt moments - A Treasure Trove was published. In 2015, her poem “Miss Me” was selected as Editor’s choice for the Contemporary Poetry Digest and has been chosen as the best poems of

2015 for a Valentine's Special Publication. Angela has been selected as an Elite Poet for 2016. Her poem "Heart and Soul" has been selected as Publisher's choice for the Evergreen Journal of Poetry. In 2017 her poem "Lover of Mine" was selected for a special edition - From the Heart.

Her poems have also been chosen as semi-finalist for International Poetry Contests.



DATA

Data, data, data

A universe full

And more!

Parsecs, Angstroms

Light years, Logarithms

Algorithms, Algebras

Clustered mechanisms

Complex patterns

Quantum mechanics

Computed logics

Artificial Intelligence

Altered genomes

Designer babies

Disease-resistant strains

Are we humans –

Flesh and blood

Or just genome data?

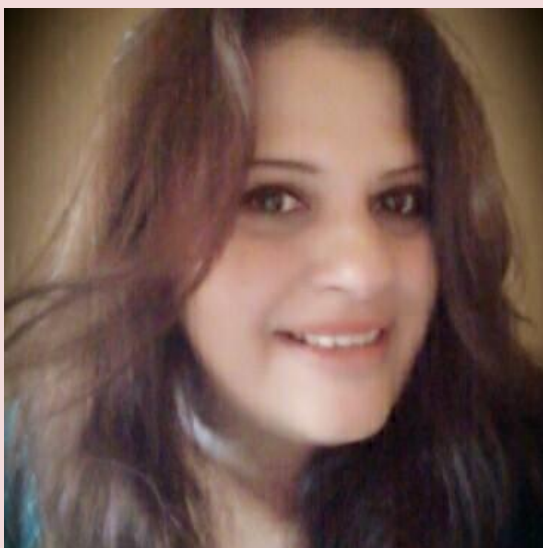
Data, data, data

A universe full

And more!



Anand Gautam: He hails from Hyderabad, India. He studied life sciences, currently works in a tech giant, and his heart and soul has always been inclined towards poetry and fiction. He snatches a few minutes every day from his life for his love of writing and believes that one's passion must be kept alive to be alive. He can be found on Instagram handle, @anand_writes and he blogs at <https://notesandwords.wordpress.com/>



**NUKA: AN ELEGIAC ODE. (FOR ANUSHKA RAMCHURAN,
SISTER SPIRIT)**

Anushka, where are you now?

I imagine you in some savannah

A few lions by your side

and a tent, with somebody smoking

a pipe in it

listening for the call

of the Shepherd your heart beat for

no longer bound by the ravages of your illness

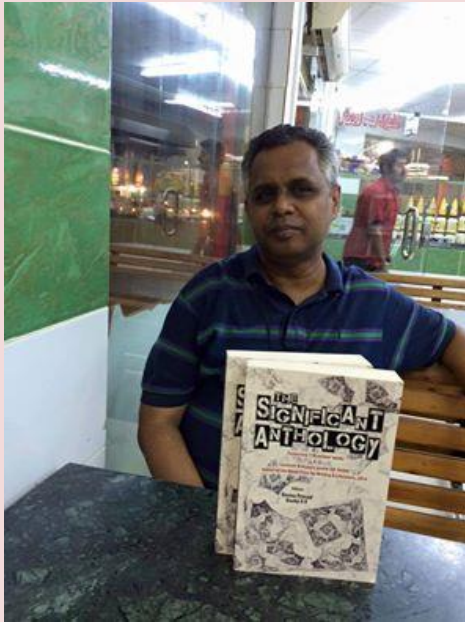
but free to loiter around and loll

on the grass

and write for all
your words that left a piquant charm
on your readers, often holding them in thrall
We have not forgotten
We still go on
reading those words
and asking you to call
Listen in to us today as we write
of you and on your poems
in the midst of your looking after your loved ones
from above
and your intercession for them
and smile indulgently at us all
for a brief while
as we pay tribute to the cosmic
mystery that births and takes away
before we have of someone our fill
awaiting in our turn the unfolding

of knowing after we die
if anything's left or not
and we will meet you again
or not

But this we know, Nuka
here your words, art, poems and conversations remain
Your book of verses with us remains
and your Lover whose name you were not
ashamed to confess
who in return has done that for you too
keeping your name and flame alive still
even here, now, today, thereby.



Ampat Koshy: He teaches in a college as Assistant Professor in Jazan, Saudi Arabia. He is the author of books like Art of Poetry, Wrighteings: In Media Res, Figs, Allusions to Simplicity (poetry), and co-author of Wake Up India: Essays for Our Times with Dr Bina Biswas and co-editor of The Significant Anthology with Reena Prasad and Michele Baron etc. He also runs The Significant League and has instituted the Reuel International Prize for Literature. He is a poet and critic and fiction writer of renown in India and abroad plus a Pushcart Prize Poetry Nominee of 2012. His Ph.D was on Samuel Beckett and his thesis was later published as Samuel Beckett's English Poetry: Transcending the Roots of Resistance in Language. He has also co-edited Inklings and Umbilical Chords.



TRANSCENDENCE

The crevices in heart are still filled with hope

I sit beneath the blue sky, half bitter half mellow

The caressing wind testifies to a superior presence from
other realm

But the rational mind keeps on diminishing all such claims

Evidence and reason seem so futile sometimes

When you know the dots can be connected only looking
back in time

It's in vain for a reasonable mind to search for divine

The mundane logic disdains adherence to that presence

But the golden rays of faith that in our hearts enshrine

Triggers the pursuit of self, piercing the clouds of ignorance

But faith and folly seem so enigmatically close
Esoteric crystallisations on either sides of the core
The sceptical eye of reason can't see the thin and narrow
line,
And takes for truth the tarnished beauty it beholds,
Whilst the leap of faith seems absurd and infertile
In exposing the reality of this deception sevenfold

The conflict between reason and faith causes a diabolic halt
Not the natural course as the show must go on,
And I carry on, striking a reconciliatory equilibrium
Between the Soul and the mind,
Reason crafting the path ahead
And faith ending all the blasphemous whines,

Balancing the two-edged sword, again I embark the rope,
Unquestioning the blowing wind that the seeds of change
are sown,

The amber turned sky corroborates the arrival of change
Reminding me that the crevices in heart are still filled with
hope

And with unwavering certitude inside

I look beyond to fly away again, on my own!!



Amit Bitra: Student of MBA, second year, Department of Management Sciences, Pune University (Pumba). Interested in reading, writing and music. Plays the guitar.



a strange river snaked within mdantsane
shaking the sky of remembrances
black rain tinged with blood made cesspools
hunger is an imagination
smirking at doors and lost streets
tapping at windows long closed
i had thought of you and the river
and our parting forsaking another innocence
an orange moulds the mdantsane sky
thoughts of yet another day.



Amitabh Mitra: He is a Poet/Artist and a Medical Doctor at East London, East Cape, South Africa. He lives in many worlds and narrates his life in hallucinatory stopovers. Words and images tend to amalgamate in many such strange journeys.



IT'S OVER

Does my vibe reach you?

Do you know

That I know

Nothing's changed?

We still hide behind

Fake smiles

Random hugs

So the world

Thinks

All is well.

I know,

And so do you

That nothing's changed.
Nothing we say or do
Will change the way we feel.
You can never ever
Let go.
Me...
I can,
But, after last time
I don't want to.
For me,
That tiny place
In my heart
That you occupied
Is no longer yours.



Ameeta Agnihotri: First of all, I love to write. Then I love to travel, and write about my travels, including about the food I eat on my blog. Being a Food Critic, I have four food books to my name: The Times Food and Nightlife Guide. My restaurant reviews come out every Friday in the Chennai Times. Yes, life's good. My book is done. It was done five years ago. Am still trying to muster the courage to edit it.

Work: <http://timescity.com/chennai>

Blogs: <http://silentsensation.blogspot.com/>

<http://fascinatingtastes.blogspot.in/>



(Sculpture by Allison Grayhurst)

ALCHEMY COMPLETION

Far enough
to line the bed with
lavender clouds,
pull off the covers
and be entombed.
Fine sleep and soft

tenderness warming limbs,
wetting where it warms,
soon to cool – breathing like
singing, lines smeared into
unified devotion, matching frequencies,
backward, forward leading toward a tower
to leap off of, a bed to stretch on, sink into.
It is holy, mud-caked, drawn curtains torn
from their rod. It is thinking in intonations
and shades, a cascading buzz riveting from
bone to bone – two spliced and joining opposite halves,
a power equal in its mercy. Far enough,
just there, drawing breath on the summit, dissolving
boundaries in sensual elevation, far enough
continuing, collapsing, swallowed
into the pitching current.



Allison Grayhurst: She is a member of the League of Canadian Poets. Three times nominated for Sundress Publications “Best of the Net” 2015, she has over 850 poems published in over 380 international journals. She has twelve published books of poetry, seven collections, nine chapbooks, and a chapbook pending publication. She lives in Toronto with her family. She is a vegan. She also sculpts, working with clay; <http://www.allisongrayhurst.com/>



6:14 AM

What time is it?

6:14.

Will you transcend
the gravitational limitations
of the universe, the universe
broiled like an all-beef patty
on a hemlock bun, or will you
opt for larvae spun tight as a knuckle
of virgin garlic stuck in the middle
of another Sunday Spanish mass?

You there?

Yes.

So?

Not so much the corporate all-beef patty,
but spinning like a larva of garlic . . . !



Allan Britt: In August 2015 Alan Britt was invited by the Ecuadorian House of Culture Benjamín Carrión in Quito, Ecuador as part of the first cultural exchange of poets between Ecuador and the United States. In 2013 he served as judge for the The Bitter Oleander Press Library of Poetry

Book Award. His interview at The Library of Congress for The Poet and the Poem aired on Pacifica Radio, January 2013. He has published 15 books of poetry, his latest being Violin Smoke (Translated into Hungarian by Paul Sohar and published in Romania: 2015). He teaches English/Creative Writing at Towson University.



"IS BORN TO DIE"

Moist is every last night,
A seed to sprout in its first fight;
The red apple before a bite,
Wasted teeth of an impotent might.
Stands a Key,
On an unlocked ground;
Who are We?
In our next creation will be found.
Tonight would wait again,
For the Moon is full in no pain;
And tides defy gravity to remain,

With blind eyes near the windowpane.

A wish is born to die in sighs,

Why time lies never asks the wise;

When even Earth yearns for skies to cry,

The river still flows but dry.

(An Excerpt from "Prakriti and Purusha")



Aakash Sagar Chouhan: He is a he is a contributing Author, a blogger, a prose writer, a Poet, an article contributor, Group's Admin of many Pages and Communities residing in Rourkela. He co-authored the book "Between Moms & Sons" along with Geethanjali Dilip in 2016.



ciao! 😊