

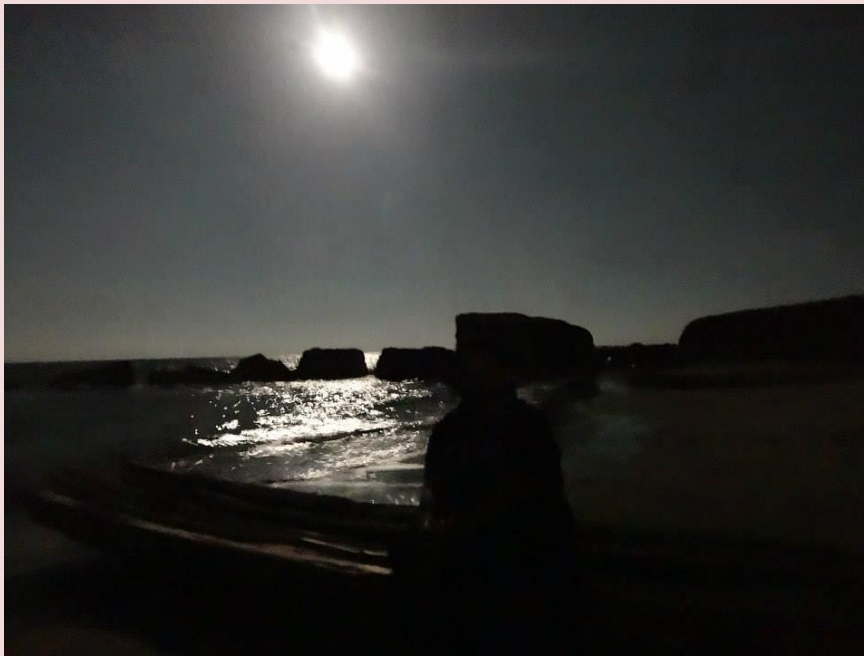
GloMag

GLORY

Monthly Online Poetry and Prose

Magazine

March 2017



Edited and Published by Glory Sasikala

Shreekumar Varma



Title of the Cover Pic: Tranquebar

WEBSITE

<http://shreevarma.homestead.com/>

Shreekumar Varma: Shreekumar Varma is an Indian author, playwright, newspaper columnist and poet, known for the novels Lament of Mohini (Penguin), Maria's Room (Harper Collins), Devil's Garden: Tales Of Pappudom (Puffin), The Magic Store of Nu-Cham-Vu (Puffin) and the historical book for children, Pazhassi Raja: The Royal Rebel (Macmillan). He received the R.K. Narayan Award for Excellence in Writing in English in 2015.

He was born in 1955 in Satelmond Palace, Poojapura, Thiruvananthapuram. His parents left Kerala and settled down in Madras when he was four. He studied in the Good Shepherd Convent, the Madras Christian College High School and the Madras Christian College, from where he completed his MA and M.Phil in English Literature. He also did a course in Journalism from the Bhavan's College of Journalism and Mass Communication. He took part in plays in school and college, and also participated in and devised programmes for All India Radio. He worked for the Indian Express and the Film Industry Journal (renamed Cinema Today) in Bombay. Back in Madras, he edited and published a magazine named Trident, and was associated with a printing press, as well as a publishing and creative training unit. He taught English Literature and Journalism at the Madras Christian College. He taught Creative English at the Chennai Mathematical Institute for 13 years. He was a charter member and President of the Rotary Club of Madras Southwest. His mother is the Matriarch of the Travancore Royal Family. He is the grandson of the last ruling Maharani of Travancore, Sethu Lakshmi Bayi, and the great grandson of the artist Raja Ravi Varma.

He lives in Chennai with his wife Geeta, and is a full-time writer. He has two sons, Vinayak and Karthik, and a daughter-in-law, Yamini.

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 verses, 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

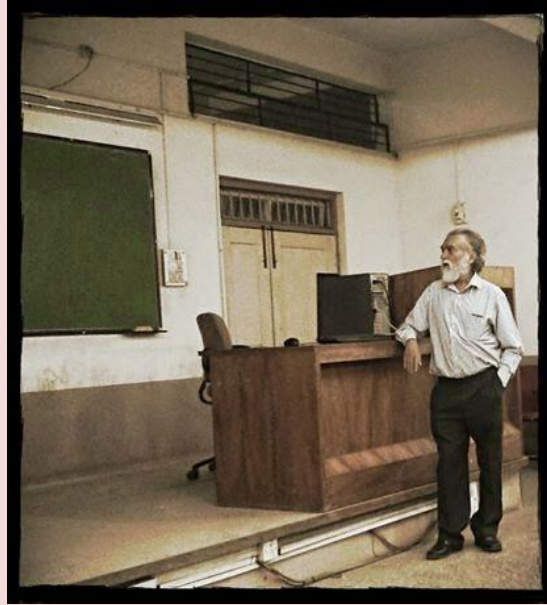
The copyrights of the works in this book vests with the individual authors. Prior written permission is required to reproduce any part of the magazine.

© All rights reserved. 2017

BACKGROUND MUSIC: Violin Concerto by Beethoven

PREFACE

Max Babi



Urdu And English - The Subtle Differences In Sensibility And Sensitivity

There are two questions I dread, and usually avoid answering. One is where are you from? The honest answer would put off most enquirers, because often I say in reply: I donno. The second and equally foxing query is what is your mother tongue. Again, I prefer to say: I donno. Not very tactful nor diplomatic answers but these two can hardly have a straight off answer. Reminds me of that delightful theory of Simplicity put together so winsomely by Jeffery Klueger, ex-editor of TIME magazine. It states, what is simple is in reality very complex and what is complex is truly speaking very simple. He gives the example of the former, the structure of the atom, which seems to be

simple but has foxed the physicists for over a century who have listed 250 sub-atomic particles and are now talking of more sub-sub-atomic particles that gang up to pose as sub-atomic particles. The example of something complex being simple is the crazy street traffic, that would terrify the average person, but for those who don't give a damn, they can simply wade in and wade out without a scratch. It reminds me of the old Cowboy adage that when the cattle stampede, just lied down on the ground and they will religiously avoid stomping all over you. Life is simple, isn't it?

In my simple life, Urdu I spoke at home, the first language I learnt in my 'crib'bing days. But went to play with street kids and spoke Gujarati, a little Sindhi. School was strictly in Gujarati and then English was taught at last. I ended up with two mother tongues, Gujarati and Urdu. But bulk of my writing I did in English – now more than half a century of writing in English. Muse India, a magazine for NRI Indians, has brought out a special edition on Gujarati literature this month, and my article eulogizing Dr. Suresh Joshi there. He unfortunately passed while in his mid-50s, so he never saw my brilliant writings in Gujarati and Urdu. I really rue that.

For me life was simple till my 12th year (Jr. College now) when aspiring doctors and engineers and scientists were studying together. My future mentor Dr. Suresh Joshi was desultorily taking late afternoon classes with our eyelids becoming leaden. One day he threw the book out of the window and yelled at us: Why are you wasting your time

listening to Gujarati poetry? I have taught you guys for ten years and not one has written a poem. I might as well stop coming from tomorrow. This really got my goat so badly, I started writing poems furiously, and got a few published in magazines.

Ten years later I went to meet him, feeling like a sack of jelly, because to me he was the epitome of a litterateur, the most ideal one. He had turned Gujarati literature on its head with his maverick style, contemporary poetry and brilliant short stories. He met me smilingly, and went through my poems, but he didn't seem impressed. He asked me to write in Gujarati, better still in my mother tongue Urdu.

Our main topic today is sensitivity and sensibility, let us first define them and then put them as straitjackets on Urdu and English.

Sensibility is a noun (plural sensibilities).

It implies:

1. The ability to feel or perceive.
2.
 1. Keen intellectual perception: the sensibility of a painter to color.
 2. Mental or emotional responsiveness toward something, such as the feelings of another.
3. Receptiveness to impression, whether pleasant or unpleasant; acuteness of feeling. Often used in the

plural: "The sufferings of the Cuban people shocked our sensibilities" (George F. Kennan).

4. Refined awareness and appreciation in matters of feeling.
5. The quality of being affected by changes in the environment.

On the other hand, **sensitivity** is a noun (plural sensitivities) too:-

It implies:

1. The quality or condition of being sensitive.
2. The capacity of an organ or organism to respond to stimulation.
3. Electronics: The degree of response of a receiver or an instrument to an incoming signal or to a change in the incoming signal; the signal strength required by an FM tuner to reduce noise and distortion.
4. The degree of response of a plate or film to light, especially to light of a specified wavelength.

The meanings of these two words are quite different as defined by the dictionary.

A sensitive person may be easily offended by an off-color joke, but without sensibility, that same person may be quite unsympathetic to the sufferings of war victims in Iraq.

Urdu and English

Broadly speaking, we are trying to compare a goat with a giraffe...so different are these two widely disparate

languages. English grew as a traders' language hence it has managed to remain bare-bones, and God bless the Americans, they have made it even more barebones – because they have no time for the turn of the phrase or idiomatic uses and the endless proverbs and maxims and homilies that English like so much, to sound cultured. Like Urdu, English has absorbed more than 20,000 words from Indian languages and many others. Thus it is a dynamic language, which is flexible and inventive, and lends itself to inventing new words, phrases even maxims and adages.

Urdu most incredibly is not derived naturally by a community or a nation. It is the fabrication of a single man, Hazrat Amir Khusraw, a Sufi saint of New Delhi who was the alter ego of the very famous Hazrat Nizamuddin Awliya, of the Chishtiyya order. He was of Turkish descent but wrote only in Persian which was the language of administration, literature and culture due to the Moghuls having assimilated it for their own unity. Khusraw saw that the armies were drawn up with members from the Arabic peninsula, Turkey, and Persia mainly. He also saw that the franca lingua in Indian North lands was the Khadi boli – the precursor of Hindi or Hindustani.

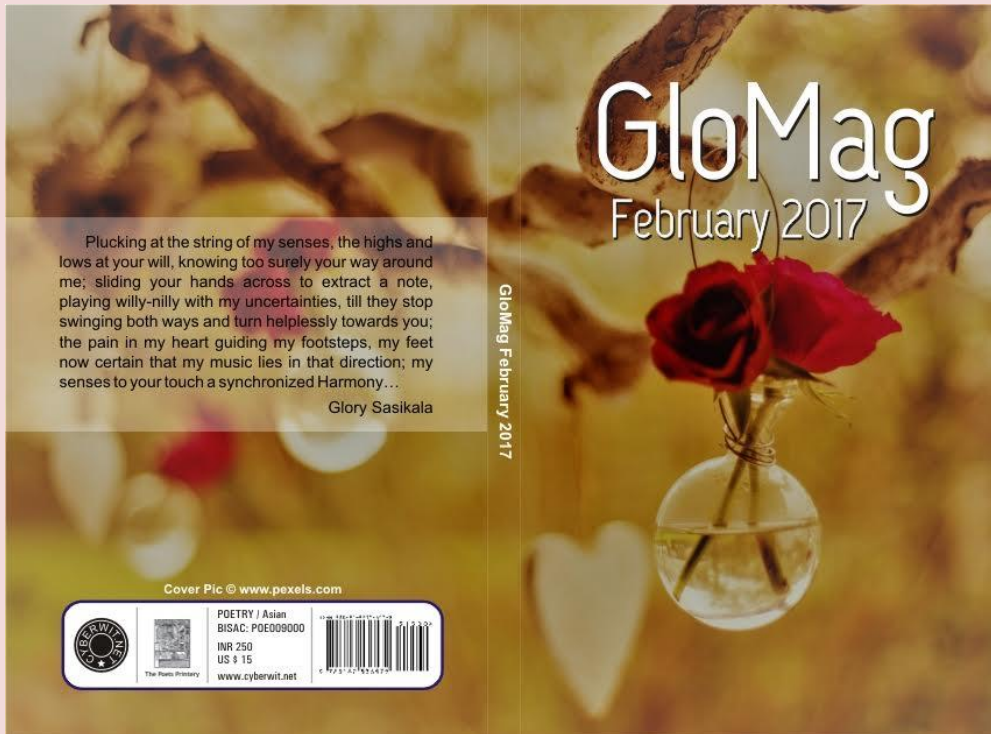
Urdu is a Turkish word for the army camp. Thus the hotch potch of Arabic Turkish all fixed like gems on the background of Persian and Khadi Boli, became Urdu. It is a paradox that a language made for the soldiers, took only a century or less to sneak into the courts and become the best language for poetry, song and dance and for love.

As we are coming to the end of this article, I shall refrain from opening up new topics, but will gladly do so in the next article. We cannot hope to discuss sensitivity of English poets and poetry and juxtapose the same with Urdu poets and poetry unless we define the basic tenets of poetry in these widely divergent cultures. However to relish the Urdu poetry, we shall start with the doha-like two liners, officially known as 'qata'a ' signifying small fragments or chips from a wooden stock, and then we shall see the sher (plural ashaar) and some quatrains in qata'a tradition or in Rubai format. Very naturally we shall also look up ghazals and nazms.

BOOK OF THE MONTH

GloMag February 2017

Published by Karunesh Kumar Agrawal, Managing Director,
Cyberwit.net, Edited by Glory Sasikala



LINKS TO BUY THE BOOK

<http://www.amazon.in/dp/9385945785>

https://www.amazon.com/gp/offer-listing/9385945785/ref=tmm_other_meta_binding_new_olp_sr?ie=UTF8&condition=new&qid=1485668037&sr=1-4

<https://www.cyberwit.net/publications/957>

<https://www.flipkart.com/glomag/p/itmehsa82zwffm7d?pid=9789385945786&srno=s 1 1&otracker=search&lid=LSTBOK9789385945786HS9EHY&qH=8a29d7a3f3cd3f53>

CONTENT

Aakash Sagar Chouhan	18
Allan Britt	20
Allison Grayhurst	22
Ameeta Agnihotri	25
Amitabh Mitra	28
Amit Bitra	31
Ampat Koshy	35
Anand Gautam	38
Angela Chetty	41
Anil Kumar Panda	45
Anish Vyavahare	48
Anurag Mathur	51
Asoke Kumar Mitra	54
Avik Kumar Maiti	56
Avishek Ramaswamy Aiyar	58
Bevan Boggenpoel	63
Bilkis Moola	66

Brishti Manjima Bandyopadhyay	69
Chandramohan Naidu	71
Chestlyn Draghoender	73
Christopher Villiers	76
Daniel de Culla	78
Darren C. Demaree	81
Deena Padayachee	83
Deepti Singh	86
Devyani Deshmukh	88
Dipankar Sarkar	90
Don Beukes	93
Gauri Dixit	98
Geethanjali Dilip	100
Geoffrey Jackson	103
Glory Sasikala	106
Gonapragasen Naicker Aka Danny	109
Jayant Singhal	114
Joan McNerney	117

Joseph Elebaas	120
John P. Matthew	122
Kerala Varma	126
Kiran Zehra Komail	128
Lakshminarayan Nariangadu	131
Mahitha Kasireddi	134
Mallika Bhaumik	142
Mushtaque Ali Khan Babi AKA Max Babi	145
Merlyn Alexander	147
Moinak Dutta	151
Nandini Sahu	154
Nilesh Mondal	163
Nivedita Karthik	166
Padmini Rambhatla	168
Panjami Anand	172
Parasuram Ramamoorthi	175
Paresh Tiwari	177
Philip G. Bell	180

Prahallad Satpathy	183
Pratima Apte	187
Praveen Ranjit	190
Raamesh Gowri Raghavan	192
S. Radhamani	195
Ramendra Kumar	200
Ravi Shanker (Ra Sh)	203
Ro Hith	206
Robert Feldman	209
Romeo della Valle	214
Sanhita Sinha	218
Sara Bubber	220
Scott Thomas Outlar	223
Sergio A. Ortiz	226
Shamenaz	228
Sheikha A.	230
Shobha Warriier	233
Shreekumar Varma	236

Sonia Gupta	238
Subhash Chandra Rai	241
Sudeshna Mukherjee	243
Sumita Dutta	246
Sunil Sharma	249
Usha Chandrasekharan	252
Vandana Kumar	254
Vasanthi Swetha	257
Vinay Virwani	260
Vishak Chadrasekharan	262
William P. Cushing	267
Yegnaraman Raghavan	270
Zebish Farheen	273



"A PRAYER"

A frozen man melts like an iceberg on her navel,
The mermaid bends her curves to marvel;
Her virginity surrenders to uncage a sage from rusted hell
cell,
Two Tantrics in trance get ready for a time travel.

Twin pair of palms join and a prayer begins,
Yin liplocks Yang to charge their tools in machines;
An old banyan tree invites her to climb the swing upon him,
Goosebumps prick the skin like tickling love resins.

Gasping time in gaps change grips to grasp,
She fuels the fire in him for flames to clasp;
After all to be in home never felt like a trap,
Loud slaps flap in sweat when clutched hands can't clap.

The delayed relay of love reaches multiple climaxes,
Million bodies die because the soul relaxes;
In this celestial romance the glimpses of divine dances,
Lovers in grateful stances on a Sunbeam and the God
balances.

(An Excerpt from "Unofficial: The Basic Instinct")

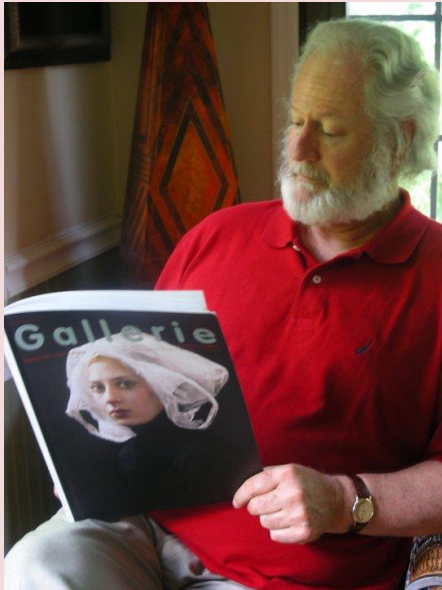


Aakash Sagar Chouhan: He is a he is a contributing Author, a blogger, a prose writer, a Poet, an article contributor, Group's Admin of many Pages and Communities residing in Rourkela. He co-authored the book "Between Moms & Sons" along with Geethanjali Dilip in 2016.



WHAT?

This hole in my tee-shirt—
the size of a ladybug with coarse
ground pepper on her turmeric wings,
this hole that tastes like black pepper,
this hole that never had one but heard of one,
this hole that heard the news today,
this hole that lost sight of the ladybug
with flecks of black pepper on her wings—
just about then this hole disguised itself
as itself just for the fun of it.



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.



(Sculpture by Allison Grayhurst)

STEEL AND SPICE

Inch across
the bell-cups of lilies
in the dead oblivion
of decades of reality's denial.

Inch into the sweetness
of a lilac's centre,
nourished on imagination everytime
over the bite of bitter soup.

Gather the crows in your morning sky,
ask them to envelop you and then ask
their forgiveness.

Hiding your panic
in the promises of miracles, licking the acid
off of your skin to make for a good story,
for the belief in an undamageable surface.
Mistaking silk for bread, counting on
God's kindness to come on the brink

of desperate need.

Will you now
be a slave to the feast of worms or
strip-mine until what little gold you find
feels like abundance?

Maybe you are safe, living in this
burning garden, protected with a poet's peace
and by a faith that bypasses gravity's consequences, but
has consequences and demands of its own – ones
you must live by and dedicate yourself to keep
turn a blind-eye to practicality,
and press all fear into a resounding prayer,
existing on the substance of
divine gifts, gifts that are final,
that have no price to pay except that you
leave yourself leaning, tied and planted only
to this holy dreamscape liberation.



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/>



(pic by Ameeta Agnihotri)

AH GOA!

It is beautiful in December, January and February...

Quiet, green and hugged by the ocean,

That shimmers - timeless,

It churns up little frothy ripples

Lazy, reluctant

They caress waiting golden sands...

Once in a while, I see a tiny Sail boat bob along, drifting to
an unknown destination,

I Keep track of its progress...

Wondering where it's heading

Even after it has crossed to the other side...

My horizon changes once again

As I watch new hope drift in

A dot in the distance

Becomes

Another boat

Another

Ray of hope...



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/>



And then finally when night stood still, an evening, its reign of suntrance years, of wealth, wilderness and glory of many campaigns left in a river of subterfuge, its long sinewy columns rolled down the glitter in a night borderless on stealth and stubbornness. I have been living years of such understanding, that one day in a cover of duress and despair, time might conclude a hasty retreat, its tiny droplets may not even join and sections of unrepaired horizons would differ as nights and evenings revise a no dissolving pact. The Volga at Tatarstan had refused time and again of curtailing the living with the living, different voices share a confluence of similar strengths, Tartar warriors stood on banks stretching to sea and the sea to

many skies holding aloft such spoken memories such relived lives. I had even forgiven you, you who once called upon words to reopen old forgotten closures. In an ageless complete, you are the reversal, you remain the scroll, and you are the substrate of my many lives.

Hillbrow at Johannesburg faces darkness with such ferocity; lights clamor over each other's shoulder, holding a falling sun, for here there can never be any nights. Forever evenings scream in shrill rejoinder, a clay complexioned Ethiopian girl with long neck revises proximity from a cabaret number. Men from Abuja listen with shaking heads, some even recite silently. Colors of evening find asylum on foreign surfaces. The scarred white girl rolls her eyes and gives voice to expanding vessels. Living is defiance. Illumination is not just a street here and curtains part revealing revelry of age old explanation. It cannot be the same as in NoorGunj at Gwalior and Shafiq Manzil, Old Delhi. Each living stays far behind in closed alleys and assembling them leaves footsteps that can never return.



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.



IN ABSENTIA

Sailing high on the breeze of golden afternoon,
I dream and wait for my dreams to come true,
And let it all go with a sigh I release
To realize once again- I dreamt of you
The evening came staggering and I reckon the time has
passed,
Went with the change as I know nothing can last,
But acceptance don't come so easy, mainly when it's the
gift of your loss,
And the empty handed evening, I knew, will too shy away
too fast,
The impasse still persists, but never the time,

I am all the same but not the night,
The night looks sad, timid and meek,
Still offers me hope and the comfort I seek,
But the rudimentary joy comes with some prices to pay,
It visits just for a while, but not a forever stay,
With the serene silence in air and a touch of motherly care,
The night bids me adieu and makes way for the day,
And then comes the sun to light up the sky,
The smothering torment inside gets heightened up high
Like everyone else I too wish the morning to be new,
To bring fresh hopes and promises a few,
But the morning is greedy and even jealous of me
It takes my peace and the desire to live free,
Nothing changes with the day, only the sky gleams blue,
Still for me, an eternal smog of gloom is all in the view,
Black is my color now, it will never leave,
Pondering on the past, an irrevertible loss,
To realize that once again I dreamt of you!!

The warm aroma of candles, the scattered pieces of paper
Lying on the floor,
The half empty inkpot, the half open door,
The broken glasses of the mirror, the intact sufferings that
afloat,
The wet pillow on the bed, the lost letters you once wrote,
The empty coffee mugs, the naked canvas on the board,
The dreams unfulfilled, the promises untold,
The shattered hopes and a dried rose,
All lay in front of me - still, silent, without a clue,
And suddenly realize - once again I dreamt of you!!



Amit Bitra: Student of MBA, second year, Department of Management Sciences, Pune University (Pumba). He's interested in reading, writing, and music, and plays the guitar.



A ROSEATE SONNET

Soft and slow, death is singing to me.

I did not know death had such a beautiful face.

Sweet and low, it hums a melody.

I did not know death came in this wondrous wise.

Dark are the wings of the storm that unfolds.

At sea, sinking the ship, making the widow for free

But not as dark as the poet who life holds

Flying a sail-pennant, moorings lost, who's 'at sea.'

Boatman, come take me

Where I do not want to be.

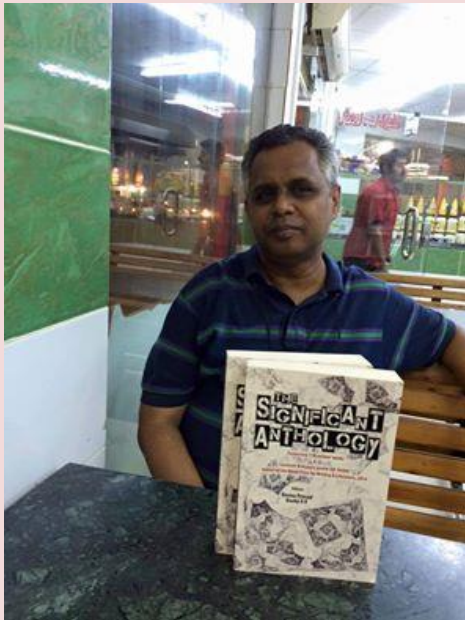
Rise, ye waves, ever more treacherously.

Oh, the cliffs loom nearer! Will the wreck be me?

Say no man failed so much, so gloriously.

Enormous white waves, chargers, come rescue me!

(Two quatrains and a couplet with the last stanza, again a quatrain, making an acrostic of the word ROSE every time. An alteration of the sonnet form, made by me.)



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*.



(NO) FORTUNE TELLER

Each time I'd passed by the road,
The homeless gypsy used to stare at me;
Wrinkled cheeks and dark eyes,
She seemed to be in misery.

I'd smile at her, and pay her a penny.
'You'll have a great fortune', she'd say.

I flew high in my career
Was miles away, yet
The gypsy's near:
In my memory.

Seven years later, I returned
And I have seen her,
Again, at the same place.
She grew old, more wrinkled
And close to her end.

I walked to her; smiled,
And paid her a penny.
'You'll have a great fortune',
She recognized and said.

This time, I smiled.
'I already have one',
I said, and took her home.

She is not a fortune teller for sure,
and I don't believe in one.
But her blessings, perhaps,

Had brought me a fortune;

And my belief in her blessings,

Had changed hers, perhaps.



Anand Gautam: I am from Hyderabad. I studied life sciences; currently working as a techie, but my heart has always been inclined towards poetry and fiction. I often use simple words to write. I have to snatch some time from my daily life to write and I believe that one's passion must be kept alive to be alive. I occasionally blog at <https://notesandwords.wordpress.com/>



LIGHT YOUR FLAME

When all seems dark,

hope seems lost

and gloom prevails

I see your faint flicker

in the distance

I muster the strength

Struggling to move forward

My mind says “no”

It’s too much pain

Yet my spirit digs deep

Within me.

My feet treading slowly
Carefully finding my way
In the darkness
of my confused mind,
Impassioned heart and
Tortured soul.

When I look at you
I see the depths
Of your soulful spirit
The beacon of hope
You light up my life
You make the sun shine
In the darkest days.

Carry this fervent hope
Protect it from dying
Keep the fire burning

In your precious heart
Wherever you go
No matter the obstacles
Let the flame keep alive
Never let it die

Has this walk been lit
By the smouldering
flames in your precious heart,
Kept alive by soulful desires
And instilled in
the contours of the mind.

Let your heart shine
Let it touch
the souls of humanity.



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.



PULSE

It is the night with a story
When stars drop cinders
Instead of soft light;
You need me by your side
To take me into a much
Passionate flight;

It is the night with so many
Shattered dreams flying
Away with tear;

We could not make it and
Pain of parting was too
Much for you to bear;

It is the night where silence
Rules like a despot and
Sends a shiver;
Down your spine when you
Remember me and have
a little love fever;

It is the night you cut vein
And lie motionless for
Days on the floor;
A faint breath that has stuck
In your throat left as I
Knocked on your door



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.

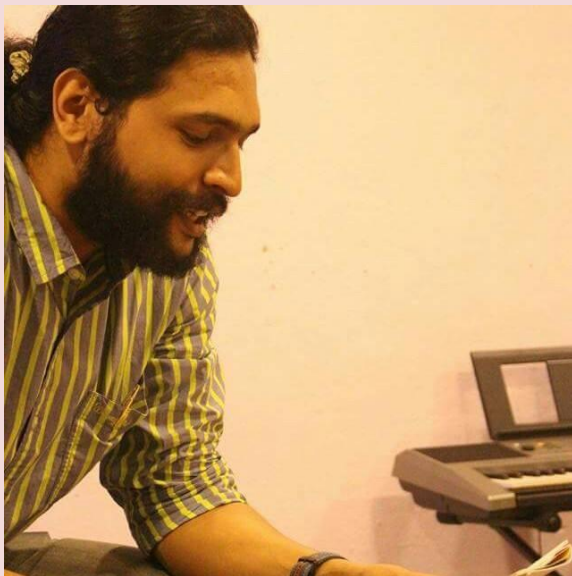


Two idiots,
scream from opposite ends of the line
that divides our washing hand from our dine;
and shout the loudest shouts they can scream,
riding chariots of oppression, blowing conches of TV.
Histories, genders, skin tones become sins,
warriors are blameless, circumstantial and victims.
Each invokes a weapon of ideas reduced,
brahmastras of labels exploding in eager revenge.
A sword forged from old stories and legends and myths,
A crossbow designed from new stories and legends and
myths.

A hundred and forty characters ruin the antiquity of this image.

Open letters threadbare the use of an insulting mental health allusion;

Rape threats openly clash against visually impaired banshee agitation.



Anish Vyavahare: Writer, brand builder, quizzer, public speaker, event organiser, psychology, advertising and writing teacher - essentially if there is a job to be done, I do it. Or get you people for it. I have a long standing affair with eating, cooking and Wikipedia. I like to travel if there is someone from the land to show me around. So if you want to invite me to where you are, I am welcome. :). For the serious stuff, I teach UG and PG Mass Media students. I help businesses do smart marketing where they build a

strong brand, make money and do some really cool stuff to engage with their audience. I have been running a Poetry open mic in Thane, called Poetry Tuesday, for the last 5 years (almost!). I teach basic creative writing to beginners. And I have recently launched a multi-lingual Youtube channel called The Poetry Affair of India where you are welcome to feature with your poetry! You can check us out here - bit.ly/1LnZdUB



SHE

She'd be either walking with her guy

Or yakkin on her mobile

Givin' you the onceover

AS she mischievously passes you by

She's got the money baby

Yeah an' she's got the style

But the smile on her face baby

Ain't reachin' those eyes

Those stilettos go boldly

Her head is head high

Her lipstick doesn't stain

Her glass of port wine

She's got around to being

Where she wanted to be

She's got to her dreams

She's got there early

She's at the bend in the road

Wondering where she's coming from

She's suddenly not sure

Where she now wants to go



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.



GRAFFITI.....

where the water lily bloom?

asked a blind man

a strange darkness engraved in the silence of eyes...

in this lonely hour of evening

in this empty living room

dangling moon and evening flowers

frozen shadows

unending quest

there is silence, complete silence

madness returns at the stroke of midnight

as damp moon in the barren sky.....



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



HELEN - A TRIBUTE

Have heard now found Helen can still destroy a Troy,
And still after the destruction blind Menelaus,
Sheltering his face within her bare bosom,
Where he would smell the fragrance of Innocence again -
just as Paris did.

Have heard all these, yet waiting for my opening
To be like an octopus to embrace you. Like a crazy demon I
am ready to fight with all to be lost in deep within you.
Waiting pervertedly for your coy call
Time to be burnt by your sweat, to be robbed of peace.
I know your smooth ivory, white concealed in black

Will fill with hemlock and lead to eternal fever.

Yet I'll not resist myself.

Nature is a cycle which needs annihilation too.

You are the force to create and wipe out,

Without the balance how will Nature survive?



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.



THE MAN WITHOUT A FACE

There are places, I know of,
Burnt by brimstone from the heights,
Yet as cold as darkness in man,
Hard reason in mute rhetoric,
Chained by the abysmal void,
Scaling paths tread by light,
Yet virgin, unconsumed.
There are people, I know of,
Eyes treading either path,
Yet, with vistas shorter than
Arges, Steropes or Brontes,

Mind in cold oblivion,
Thoughts abroad, in myriad dimensions,
Unlike the beggar in the alley.

Cobwebs laid, the old Maharaja's ruin,
Was in more faithful attire,
Than the rags that shrouded
what was left of the greater ruin,
either direction of his frame,
Skeptical of movement.

The old pant I had given him,
In scarce supply, with,
the odd bruise peeking
through the rat holes in abundance,
bosom riddled with keys of a piano,
playing a song unheard,

And, white teeth breaking into
A wide smile, nudging through gaps in his beard.

Content, in such ignorant bliss,
Feeding off morsels people dropped off,
And some from the benevolence
Of others who parted with mercy,
At the sight of a blind soul,
Feigning a helpless blindness.
In such quality he survived,
Sharing the sweat of his hardship,
With a communal celebration,
In the luxury of a cigarette and a cup
full of the best liquor his dearth did dare,
Not once, part of the hoi-poloi,
Counting the thorns,
In the bush of red roses.

He died, someday of the week,
His corpse duly dumped in the mortuary,
Along with a few cherished moments

Of a denied existence, though happy,
the lizard that shared the dark patch in the alley,
Inheriting his part of the damp dwelling.
I miss the stooped figure,
At the corner of the alley,
Laughing, mumbling to himself,
Higher mortals though in deep ponderance,
As if in wake of Judgement Day,
A fallacy of life,
A surreal, slow life, pleading, begging,
For a better existence.



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.



MY GREAT ESCAPE

When cares in this world

Wears me down

When unpleasantness

Makes me frown.

When endless problems

Is so persistent

When hopeless situations

Becomes consistent.

When all the money

Cannot pay

When royalties

Cannot stop decay.

When I find

No solution

When I'm trapped in

Utter confusion.

My great escape

Is to your arms

You strengthen me

With your charms.



Bevan Boggendoel: 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.



(Image Courtesy of ZP Dala)

HOWLING DERVISH

Memories swirl like the dance of a dervish
in a whirlpool of love and loss -
drenched in salt's fluid
of sorrow's whimpering plea,
frail with fatigue's
scarred Archille's heel.

Pleasure and sorrow tear her heart
in liquid chunks of they who were
and are now, no more -
“Adieu” bleeds the dervish.

Round and round the dervish spins
to a “sickening” twist
“Ad Nauseum” -
stifled by silent screams
sealed in lips and fixed lines
of contempt.

Her furied, frenzied skeptic's shriek is received
as lamb to the slaughter
forsaken, for her faith in freedom -
her pledge “ad infinitum” forever.

“Adieu” dances the dervish
as she howls “Ad Lib”,
to liberty's rhythmic sway of her hip's swish -
swirl and twirl of pleasure.



Bilkis Moola: She is an Educator who resides in Nelspruit, Mpumalanga Province. Her first published anthology, “Wounds and Wings: A Lyrical Salve Through Metaphor” was received throughout South Africa and launched her poetic persona. It evolved as an introspective quest for recovery from her personal narrative of an abusive marriage. Her poetry is a delicate negotiation of patriotism and ethnicity. Bilkis Moola navigates a pluralistic dialogue towards multiculturalism and transformational activism in post-apartheid South Africa as “A Sprightly Cultural Hybrid In Metamorphosis”. She presently divides her time between professional responsibilities and post-graduate studies in Education. Her pen continues to sketch the flotsam in her mind from the passion in her heart on shreds of paper that bloom into poems.



LIVE ACTION

My hands

steering

gears...

real drive

from sidewalk

to road

live action

I now want

Live action

My hands

are steering away

my car this way

I take gears

fun yes?

To the market

through the gate

then attaboy

counting who's so and so

such and such



Brishti Manjima Bandyopadhyay: Hi, I am Bristi Manjima Bandyopadhyay from Delhi and like penning poetry. I am a content writer and editor by profession, a part-time versifier by inclination. Hope you enjoy my poem.



RIOT

There was a riot

but was peaceful

police said

people threw sharp stones

some policemen were injured

they in turn lathi charged

nobody was hurt.

Some complained that they were hurt

but doctors said

those injuries were self-inflicted

there was death

but again doctor said

it was a case of suicide

made to look as a murder
investigations are going on
as the dead man is unable to speak
we are trying to search for witnesses
all shops remained closed except the wine shop
kids played cricket on the road
everything is normal now said the officer
yes there was a riot it was peaceful.



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.



Love is not made of plastic

Compassion

is way more than

handing out gifts

or speaking a kind word.

It is a test of character;

it defines who you are.

Sometimes, when you don't

want anyone else to know,

it reveals what you have been through.

It is the courage to say:

" I am here for you",

and then to actually stay.

Love is not made of plastic.
It is not the feeling
you have for someone else,
but the satisfaction of knowing
you did your best for another's life.
Love doesn't say:
"We are too different".
It is the essence
of democracy.
The assurance
that if all else fails,
our love for one another
will be the last thing we remember.



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.



SIREN

It's not bad really; at least I can sit,
Which is better than the last job I had,
Singing to sailors has made me a hit,
"A voice to die for," that's not too bad.
Yes I admit there have been some shipwrecks,
But my fans know that's a small price to pay,
They sing from the rigging, dance on the decks,
And then jive down into jiggling sea-spray.
They die happy, more than most on dry land,
Have they got anywhere better to go?
My music is heaven, please understand
That I'm worth all dark waters below.
I make a good living, it's not wrong,
Calm down and listen; I'll sing you a song.



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.



WORKINGS IN POETRY AND LOVE

What instincts are we? What history?

Intuition/imagination possesses us?

As Wo/Man we are a laughing matter.

What is made in being humane?

Earth teaches us what is known

And what is yet unknown.

We learn our hard way

Questioning the Life as Asses

Laughing as they at first, too

Ready to start for a new crib

Words rooting in concepts
And concepts spring from
One's environment surrounds
As some small exclamation of the tongue:
The Hee-Haw
The birth of Languagej:
"I want to eat good feed
And so be alive when I had assess kids
And so come to be a grandfather
And grandmother to them
Giving magnificence back to the Universe
Stranded between Reason and Awe
As Asses make
Giving latitude and longitude
Without any organizing meridians
Of Poetry and Love
Overflowing from our brains
While birds in the old trees

Play a poignant song of daggers and guns

For ever and ever again.



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.



REPLACING THE MONUMENT

Once we removed the walls,
we, too, became the storm,
but if you are of the storm

there is no survival beyond
your creation. That took us
too long to figure out. It took

us even longer to realize that
the walls were only a promise
to shield us from the display.



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.



21 FEBRUARY

It's so difficult when you like a lady
And you aren't allowed to get closer.

You enjoy her femininity.

The life in her smile

The light in her eyes

Her divine grace

The love in her voice

The way in which she glides

The softness in her hands

The way she walks

The warmth in her gaze

The joy in her laugh.

You love everything about her –

And then you're expected to keep away from her

When all you want to do

Is to be around her

To laugh with her

To savour her mind

To have fun with her

To love her for the rest of our lives.

But then you're expected to keep away from her.

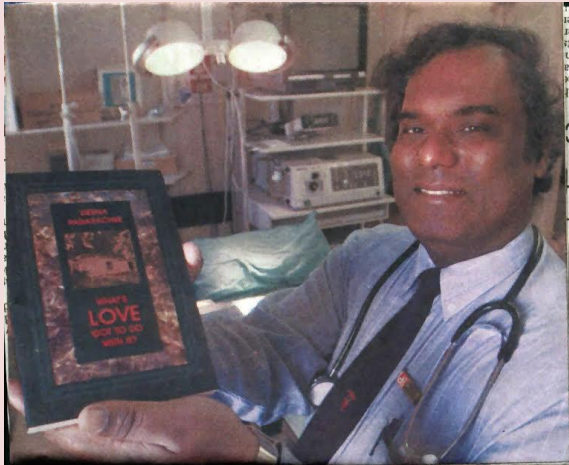
To not phone her when all you want to do

Is to hear the words from her heart

To hear her breathe

And hold her in your arms

And love her.



Deena Padayachee: He has been awarded both the Olive Schreiner and the Nadine Gordimer prizes for prose. In 1987 he published a book of poems called *A Voice from the Cauldron*. His short stories are featured in a few anthologies, including Jonathan Ball's *A Century of South African short stories*, Penguin's *Modern South African short stories*, Reader's Digest's *Best South African short stories* and the University of Cambridge's *New South African short stories*. Wasafiri, Crux and Skive have published his poems.



Of conceit, deceit and lies
If I were to write sagacity
Where would it lie
The lie spells a lie too
Moralties are a thing of past
Where would I find a few
If love and lust had differing shades
Which would I reject
What would I woo

The seething pain breaks

few bones

Before it releases a life anew

If pain is what I abhorred really

Which God should I make to set or sue?



Deepti Singh: A doctor by profession and a writer by hobby,
I have love for nature with all its colours and life itself.



VALENTINE'S DAY!

To this Valentine's Day

Where there was rose bed for others

Her eyes had thorns in them..

Thorns from the unruffled and stagnant

Rock bed for her..

Starring at the locked phone

And playing with the feckless games..

Inadvertently waiting for his call..

Which she knew then was a thing of past

Which would never ever come true..

Little though her heart knew the truth!!

Adamant of showing him the petulance,

And not falling for his counterfeited promise,
Where the minutes were passing by her
A small note of his flashing on her screen
“My life would be nothing without you to share it with”
Made a miracle once again..
Brought back the tears in her eyes,
For she realized this was the best ever he could gift
To this special day!!



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.



THE ONLY ONE SKY THAT SHE OWNED

In the only one sky that she owned

There were a few stars

And a room with a view.

All that she wanted

Was to ensure that the stars sign

Always and brighter than ever before.

Never worry for anything, she would always say

With a broad smile and assuring hugs

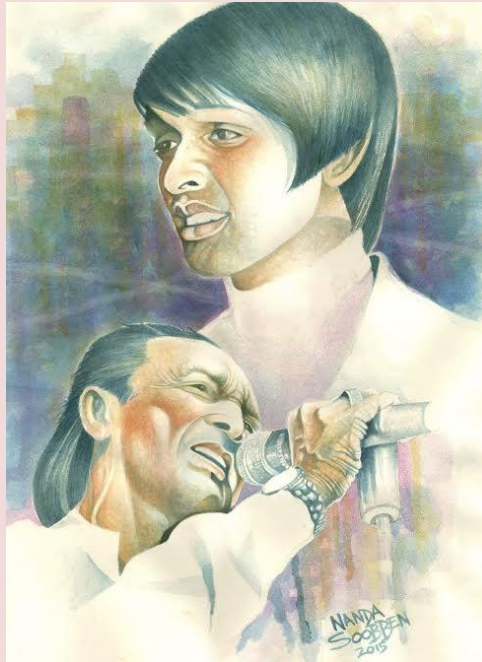
She used to absorb all pains.

She would look up at us smiling

Through the veil of smoke from the clay stove
When we wanted our rice and curried fish.
Soonest, just wait, she would say
Wiping her hands in her saree
Stained with spots of oil and turmeric.
With drops of perspiration on her forehead
And a bright spot of vermilion
She would look like the Sun, of her own sky.
There was nothing that could have spoilt her world
No evil eyes and no black force
As she would fast for our well-being
On every auspicious day.
All her wishes for our good
For our safety and our prosperity
Still rule the sky, the sky of our Ma,
Of the only one sky that she owned.



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.



Nanda Soobben is a widely and internationally acclaimed South African cartoonist from Durban and the only color artist during apartheid. He has received several awards, including the Amnesty International Award at the World Affairs Council in San Francisco, A United States Congressional Award from Speaker, Nancy Pelosi and a Doctorate from the Durban University Of Technology. His works are in the Nelson Mandela Collection, The Killie Campbell Collection, The Luthuli Museum and the Smithsonian. It was the Tom Thumb art competition, which he won when he was nine years old that sparked his desire to explore his creative talent. In 1987 he was made an honorary life member of the Brazilian Academy of Fine Art. The Centre for Fine Art Animation and Design (CFAD) was founded in 1994 by Nanda Soobben, and through this tertiary institution many previously disadvantaged individuals have been equipped with skills to thrive in a high technology art and design work environment.

MY NAME IS ZAYN ADAMS

I was born in Salt River, Cape Town South Africa in 1947

Music was to engulf me, consume me and ignite me to shine

Bright in my own musical heaven, so I played guitar from age 11

Yet my talent could not freely be shared for all, as my
country decided

To install an unseen Apartheid social, creative and cultural
divisive wall

Did I mention my father and brother captained a Cape
Malay choir called

'The Celtics Sing Koor' or that I joined the 'Golden City
Dixies Carnival Show'

Aged fifteen yearning to be musically seen? Despite
political tornados damaging

My developing creative flavours – I refused to lie low and
performed in

'Stars of Africa' in a calypso trio in Johannesburg our 'city of
gold' bursting with

Opportunities despite appalling racial discrimination
extremes – My creative journey

Took me back to the 'Cape Flats' of Cape Town, a sprawling
racially created segregated

Poverty infected neglected shanty metropolis reality
designed by an evil racist mentality

Creating their own bible swinging affluent fantasy – But
that only united us more and fired

Up our pulsating inner core. It was here I helped form
'Pacific Express' our jazz rock band

With founding friends Paul Abrahams, Jack Nomphe and Issy
Ariefdien ready for the scene

We recorded with Basil Coetzee and Robbie Jansen from
'The Express' on the Black Fire

Project and Kitty Tsikana joined me on vocals with Chris
Schilder joining us on piano who

Would also write one of my most successful soul ballads
but the apartheid regime intervened

And even prevented us by law to perform with Paul Young
on an international tour in Cape

Town stating no racially mixed performance on the same
stage fueling our creative rage

It even made the Australian papers about how the regime
really intensely hated us and to top

It all they removed the video clip from South African
television enhancing our creative vision

Whilst our 'On Time' album released in France and Japan
amidst the apartheid machine ban

I left this earth in February 2015 aged 68 but my legacy
although racially punctured lives on

In 'Give a Little Love' penned by Chris Schilder – 'I see you
walking with a halo/No need to

Try and be a hero/I've had enough/Give a little love...'

My voice will echo on as I float to a better land taking a
spiritual stand and continue

To valiantly defend my former beloved creative homeland
so if you still seek to analyse

All this just remember me and know I'm free – My name is
Mogamed Zayn Adams.



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.



MAGICAL MORNING

Words so soft

They visit me oft

As I open my eyes

At the vibrant silky dawn

And dew drops embracing the lawn

Words so soft

Makings of the gossamer bedspread

That we lie on

In the arms of baby sunlight

Warming the cold from last night



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 3 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. She has also co-edited a mini anthology for TSL and Different Truths for the Refugee Day.



THE FLIGHT

Can you take me to a little clearing where only silence speaks? Where the hum of the universe sits in the rustle of viridian leaves that hold out a tapestry of green lace ? And I peek at the stark blue of a cloudless sky?

Can you take me to that fragment of heaven that fell on its way to a celestial atrium and stayed mesmerized by the immaculate beauty of mountains that puffed icy dust to frisk with the clouds??

Can you take me to that glassy ripple free lake that quenched the thirst of the purest souls who glided down from the land of milk and honey because they needed to feel the pinch of pain?

But most of all can you take me to that trail that skirts through the virgin forest where the most melodious birds

sing of unadulterated love in a song whose notes are the very lyrics?

All I want is that little space to visit before I rest my head on my pillow that suspends me unawares in my near death moment of no return to reality!

"I just did" said my soul ... "And now you are back where you belong".

I let the dream play on ...and the stars giggled at my naïvety!



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. Her family includes her husband, Dilip Narsimhan, daughter, Manasa, son-in-law, Ajay, granddaughter, Aarushi, and her parents.



BEGGING THE QUESTION

What happens to the beggars?

One day

They're there

Next day, they're gone

Whatever happens to

Them

Dunno

Are they taken away

And shot

They're only foreigners

After all

Who shoots them?

Dunno

I guess the police

Shoot them

Just cleaning the streets

I guess

Whatever happened to all the

Jews

In the concentration camps

The Germans didn't know

Not even the ones

Living next to the camps

I don't know either

I don't want to



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 cosmopolitan and Americanophile with New World dreams, Geoff is the Poetry Editor for Fullosia Press.



PROPOSING IN MARCH

dear

the autumn leaves are all on the ground

the trees are bare

but wait!

are they?

do you see what i see?

where?

there! just below that cloud

in the clear blue sky

a little bud peeping out

oh my! here's some more

why! they're all over the place
this one's a baby leaf
just beginning to unfurl
there's one that's so green and tender
hi di, look! the flowers are beginning to bloom
let's get some chairs
into the garden
mmmm! there's fragrance in this soft, cool breeze!
the winter just kissed me goodbye...
i'm thinking i'll write a book
with you by my side
so hey! will you marry me
this Spring?



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



(Those who danced were thought to be quite insane by those who could not hear the music. John Milton 1608-1674)

in the silence of the night

souls palpitate, to rhythms' hypnotic,

melodies come alive, resonate, and pulsate, with the
heartbeat of the night

solo concertos serenade

harmony pervades over the solitary night

spirits lost in night's euphoria

attaining peace in immaculate samadhi*

embrace enchanting symphonies

captivated lovers in ecstatic trances

in celebrations worship crystal skies
adorned in golden light
dance, dance to the night

in the stillness of the night
love's flamboyant light
burns deep, kindles fires
finds tenderness in nights pleasures
solitaire lovers, caress the night
love-souls in celebrations
embrace enchanting symphonies
captivated lovers in ecstatic trances
worship crystal skies
adorned in golden light
dance, dance to the night

in the beauty of the night
time forever still, in tranquillity lingers,

mellow enchantments, incantations flow
feelings deep and warm awaken within
free spirits unwind, float
new horizons, revelations unfurl
love-souls in celebrations'
embrace enchanting symphonies
captivated lovers in ecstatic trances
worship crystal skies
adorned in golden light
dance, dance to the night

In the tender peaceful night
passions in spellbound trances
ecstasies divine journey to nirvana*
rare flawless apparitions
mesmerizes gentle souls
lovers behold amazing phenomena
passions caught in serene exhilarations

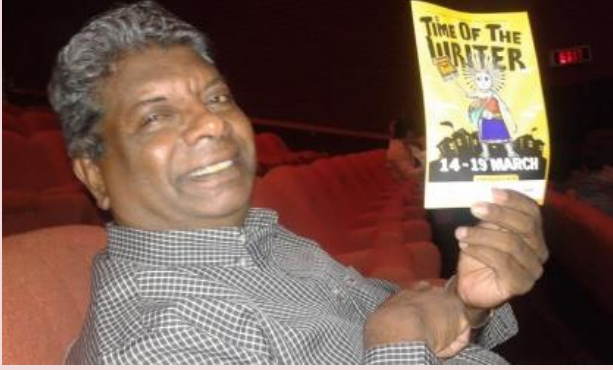
lover's passions intoxicated
love-souls in celebrations'
embrace enchanting symphonies
gentle lovers in ecstatic trances
worship crystal skies
adorned in golden light,
dance, dance to the night

daylight comes breaking
night fragrances linger on
reminder that love, life
earthly joys, and tears,
a part of life it matters not,
when love-souls in celebrations'
embrace enchanting symphonies
captivated lovers in ecstatic trances
worship crystal skies
adorned in golden light

danced, danced to the night.

(samadhi deep divine Transcendental trance like state -Sanskrit*

nirvana- reaching the pinnacle of sacred blissfulness – Sanskrit)*



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.



RIPPLES OF BLUES

Bogged down under the pressure,
With each passing moment I weaken,
Am no longer strong enough,
Am tired, consumed and broken.

Jar of this humdrum is scrunching,
Leaving behind these fissures,
Gore in nerves is now frozen,
Pain's inside; nostalgic rumours.

Fouls of the past chide,

Now, am dumbstruck and blind,
Problems still persist and pine,
Sorrows enveloped in the posts,
For me to taste the bitter toasts!!



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.



BUTTERFLY

Wrapped in ashen clouds
pale shrouds of sadness.

Retracing each dimension of
my heart yet finding no refuge.

My head bent recounting
all the days of my life.

Lost in this blur, this landscape.
Where are we? Where can we go?
Wanting only one fine thought to
fill this empty haze of hours.

One fine contour, touch, tincture,
one fine tone to dim the noise.

Who stole my sparkling heaven
leaving only memories of love?

What remains is only minute after
minute of more and more loss.

Trying to read calligraphy of oceans
where waves rise to carress the sky.

Within deep quiet, small awakenings begin.

Fragile butterfly...radiant blue winging up up.



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.



where can I chance everything

and hit

where the die dot hasn't

touched?

the furred breeze and machinery

flesh everything out.

you live, also, with the inconstancy



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



Too long have we suffered tyrannies of powerful people,
Engaged with them in their enterprise of human deceit,
Rarely have we asked this life to be indexed, better
organised,
We fell in love, we forgot, we ignored what is important to
us.

We believed in love but love never gave us a second
chance,
One chance too many, life seemed to whisper in our ear,
We saw our true love disappear in train rides, and crowded
airports,
We didn't read their histories, or, what happened to them
next.

We stared at the things we don't have in store windows,
We postponed the things we wanted to the nearest future,
We didn't mind the profanities, the insults, written in
restrooms,
We forced our habits around hard work to rest our heads in
sleep.

We sleepwalked days chasing corporate targets, but forgot
our own,

We lost what we earned in the sweep of cards, a turn of
wheel,

We wept our sorrows in doctors' clinics and intensive units,
When the needle hurt us, we shook up, and screamed in
pain.

Like mad we clung to seats in office cubicles and
conference rooms,

We said tomorrow will be ours, but tomorrow never
arrived,

We dreamed our dreams in theatres and pleasure houses,

We were full of promise, truth be told, those promises never came.

Our ill-health took us by surprise; we never knew we could be sick,

We realised doctors can test and diagnose but never heal,

We wept bitter tears when our hearts were clogged by unhappiness,

We wanted a quick death, but it lingered from drugs to emergency, back to emergency.



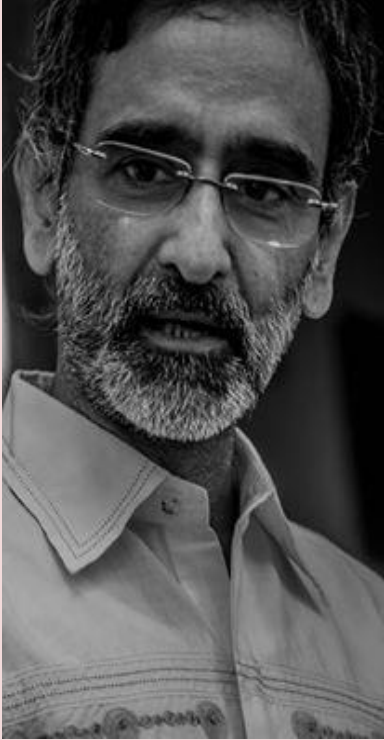
John P. Matthew: Writer, poet, singer-songwriter, and blogger John P Matthew was born in the state of Kerala,

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.

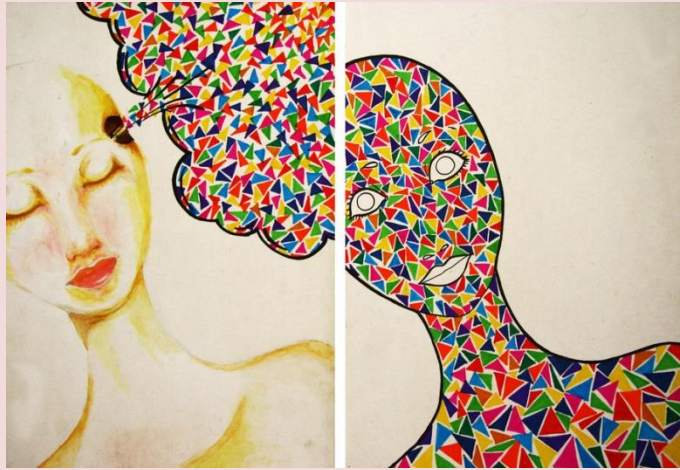


WAYANAD

Wayanad slowly became a part of me,
a part of my feet as I walked a thousand miles on it,
a part of my eyes as I could never separate my eyes from
her ravishing and seductive beauty,
a part of my ears as all those sounds at dawn
and the silences under the shadows of trees would never
leave my ears,
a part of my nose as the fragrance of Wayanad entrapped it
and a part of my skin which became one with Wayanad's
touch-me-nots;
but my heart became a part of Wayanad as I could not take
it back!



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.



WITHIN

a Kiran Zehra Poem

The inward eye, it has no rest
Putting it to peace is always a test,
It worries, jolts, sings and jives
It is its own friend and its very own guide
When it's unhappy it finds a friend
With ego beside, it's hard to bend
And when the sun of happiness shines
It draws a celebration with great wines
Discreet is its nature
That which your lies can't hide
It takes you to what you deserve

For it knows all your truth and lies

Trick it and you are at losers end

Look into its eyes to find a mend

Smile at it and wait to see

You will have what you want to be

It cannot hide from love and death

But hate and stress become its breath

Smothered with greed yet shimmering with grace

It holds on to kindness to help end the chase



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.



30 LINES

30 lines, the limit, my editor says,
before January third, on her trays!

For poetry unblemished and straight.
From the heart, in its own free gait.

Preposterous, i say, for goodness sake.
Prose in 250 words. Yes, i can make!

But Poetry; the unfettered ramblings;
Of nothing words and vibrant meanings!

How could it be? Oh! How could it be!
Mean, as mean it can be. Woe to me!

30 lines, that is all. So, it be done.

The line can be long and so much fun!

Long and long the line shall go.

No wrong i do, for friend or foe.

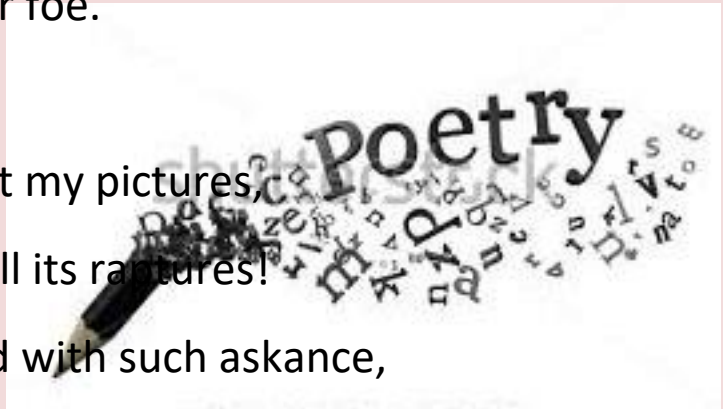
Words and lines, help paint my pictures,

As the mind prances into all its raptures!

Statements stated and said with such askance,

Can never stop the pixies and their merry dance!

Happiness to all and may the lines be long!





Lakshminarayan Nariangadu: Professor of Physics, retired from the Madras Christian College, he has around a fifty publications - science books, research Journals & conferences. Chained to logical and well-structured language, he also lets loose to write otherwise. Then the mood sets in, the emotions tingle and words just fall in place. In this space, he writes both in Tamil and English. One of his spontaneous(nearly) creatives is included here.



HOW TO SLEEP WITH A QUIVERING HEART?

My heart pounds
like it's banging
on the railing of
my rib cage.

(knock,
bang,
spang.)

Lately, it has
developed limbs
and arms. It keeps
sticking out its hands
and punching on my
lungs with the hope that
they would burst open.

(smack,
smash,
dash.)

It makes me
sit up in the middle
of the night - such are
its demands.

(jittery,

nervy,
jumpy.)

How to sleep
with a quivering heart?
There's little power
in my own arms to
wrestle with a heart
that grew claws
under my chest.

(It crawls up,
falls back.)
(crawls up,
falls back.)

And then it started
extended its limbs
and vigorously cycled
in the air while imaging
itself jogging on the streets.

(tread,
step,
trample.)

I jibbed wildly
on my bed with my
palms pressed
against my chest.
My body resonated
with its groans.

(gnarl,
grumble,
murmur.)

How to sleep
with a quivering heart?
It's not just a lump
with a tongue anymore.
It turned into a vehicle
with fuel and wheels,
it does not station
itself anymore,
it turned into a
gypsy on the road.

(march,
stop,
start,

repeat.)

All my conditioning
came down at once.

My heart stretched its
arms and looked around
with avenging eyes and
seething breath.

It broke open its veins
and spilled the red like
ink spilling from a bottle.

(splash,
splash,
splash.)

In no time it
widened its wings,

It outgrew its bondage,
it shattered all bars
and flew away.

(flap,
snap,
glide.)



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.



BETWEEN US

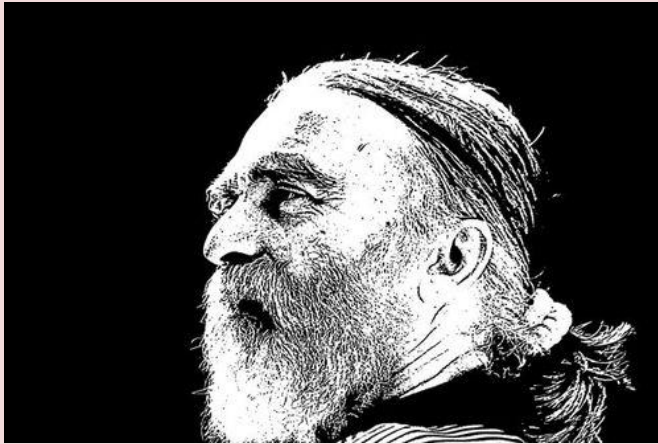
A cleaning spree,
some dusty memories
found in a drawer
of the bedside table.

A cluster of things,
bills ,receipts , prescriptions ,
warranty of proud purchases
that at times perhaps, defined us ,
bits and pieces of our humdrum life

lying randomly .
I sort them with deft hands
pale ,brittle pieces of paper ,
grown weary and useless with time
mostly to be trashed,
like our rambling conversations
on etcetera etcetera
during these togetherness years,
while the silence ,
in between folds and pleats
of million insignificant words,
hold our feelings,
.....muted, unshared.



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.



(Taken from <http://maxvani.blogspot.in/>) (courtesy Raamesh Gowri Raghavan)

Shopkeeper

Shopkeeper dozes
boredom dripping from
open mouth.

Auditorium

Just fifty seats full
the auditorium
freezes.

Madras Cafe

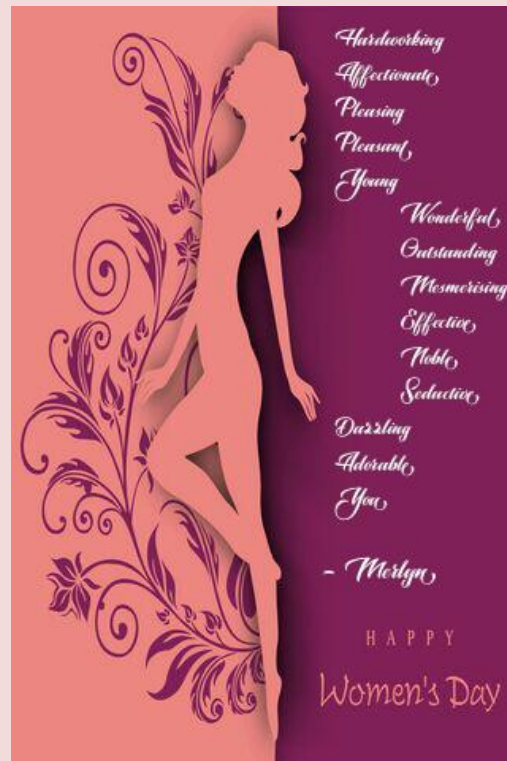
Madras Café

furniture food service

all sombre



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 versatilist. 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.



SHE

She knows where she's going
with twists and turns on her toes
and wearing a smile on her lips
She keeps moving confidently
until she reaches her goal
She's cool
and takes the world in her stride
She is bold yet graceful
and achieves with a strong mind

what she wants in life
She is compassionate
and showers her unconditional love
She shows she cares
when you face difficult circumstances
She cheers you up
with her words of encouragement
She understands your gestures
with her gentle smile
She brings abundance of joy
by simply being there

She is an epitome of success
She is a woman of substance
by being herself
She is a phenomenal woman
She is a perfect blend

of love and happiness

She is the best gift

you can ever possess

As your Mother Wife

Daughter Sister or Friend



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



MAIL WOMAN'S LOVER

Mail woman mail woman

Where do you go?

Is it not painful for him

To stand waiting

For you in chilling snow?

Mail woman mail woman

Where do you go?

Has the day not ended

And the evening descended

With light turning low?

Mail woman mail woman

Pedal down you to that place

Where waits your man

Half frozen braving cold

Only for your sweet embrace,

Go there and plant a kiss

Right there on his parched lips

And say a few words warm

Into his ears soft till they will glow,

Mail woman mail woman

Where do you go?



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...



THESE DAYS I DO ONLY WHAT THE HEART SAYS

These days I do only what the heart says.

These days I swim in the deep waters within,
this is the vanaprastha, emotive of the jungle inside;
no, it's not leaving living-life, it's delving
deeper into the verve,
gloriously singing Gloria's romantic number
"You are too good to be true..."

These days I do only what my heart says.

I warm up my hands with brewing coffee
and the soul with the kaleidoscopic changes around.

Brooding over my own fascination, happily
parting with the ever-nourished austere Puritan gravity,
these days I listen to my spirit.

Marveling, perhaps there is someone at the other end ---
too willing to read, waiting eagerly
for my outpourings
to show on the
screen .

These days I just let time get inundated
in the racy and energetic madness of a
'fleet-footed-polar-deer'.

These mornings I have the leisure to
argue over the daily breaking news,
I have the occasion to wear a confident smile
and the wish to read messages
from friends and strangers as well.

These days I am reaching a stage

when I can dictate terms and life doesn't
have much of a choice.

Talking only blissful things
surrounded all the time by
frolicking flowers and cool
tender moonlight and foam on a sea of frenzy.
Being quietly impatient, engaged in an eternal monologue
smiling at the innuendo and paradox of it
living in the moments impassioned, uninhibited,
a little flirtatious, a little mischievous perhaps,
marveling at the flash of
buzzing, inexplicable joy.

These evenings I have the time to water the plants
without worrying much about the
daily homework of my child
or about the evening menu.
I have the rider of leaving the kitchen

to the cook, the worrying jiffy to time,
and the wind to blow whichever direction it pleases--
without my approval.

These evenings

I can reach home late, after a solitary long drive
following the tinkling wind chime
and the singing birds.

Afternoons I can spend with friends
planning home for the homeless and
pouring life-giving manna to the bowl of the lifeless.

My friends say, these days I do nothing much
nothing worthwhile
because
these days I do only what my heart says.

Smiling glorious like the Shakespearean heroine,
sparkling wit, sharp mind, quick repartee and awesome
energy

and of course governing the scene.

Living life

of sensuous abundance

under a star-spangled sky, on the apex of the blue-green waves

with their vast vastness all around,

breathing an elating air of sovereignty and bondage.

These days I understand that no one can

affront my spirit. Can the cuckoo slur the

tranquility of the night, or the firefly dishonor the sun?

Just because they sing or smolder!!

Disallowing myself the bliss of life

I have but piled up wishes galore

in the alcoves of my being. These days my body

understands its heritage and its equitable wishes.

I know, it will no more be swindled.

Because

these days I do only what my heart says.

My body is the judgment of my spirit;
and it is me to bring forth engaging melody
from the bemused chaotic sounds to it.

These days I do only what my heart says.
Because the heart may weary, but it would never die.

These days, I do not try not to sound romantic
as earlier
because my efforts to do so
prove futile as at some unguarded moment,
some word, expression shows
my true inner-self and I stand revealed.
Only the heart speaks. No carrot-and-stick story, this.
No rewards and punishment theory
to induce behavior.

I am like a bird on the wing, soaring into the clouds,

seized with a sublime feeling of ecstasy,
in the first flush of love
and looking down at the earth below
treating everything there as apparently insignificant
compared to what my heart bids
me do.

Silence does not hurt me anymore,
though I realize words have their own worth
and necessity; sometimes they don't have
substitutes and they have to be there
in some form---oral or written.

These days I speak and listen
the pursuit of silence is over.

In this game of hide-and-seek, I am the
prime mover, enjoying
my occasional wild wandering spirits
(a poet's prerogative I suppose).

These days I do only what my heart says.

These days I live

in uninhibited wishes and irresistible charm

and unabashed confiding

while enjoying the occasional mood swings.

Not distinguishing between

their quality and quantity

drinking words, mouth agape,

these days I speak and listen to life.

These days I do only what my heart says.



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.



To the woman with hazel eyes,
awkward smile, and a laugh
that was as fierce as it was unafraid:
here's something I never told you,
the first time we met, and you left
me unsure of almost everything, I
knew we'd part way some day, like
your lips miss the base
of your nose, at the
tiny cleft.



In case they ask you why
you're always fighting
for what you believe in,
remind them

that's what every woman
you knew has always
done, that's what
your mother did,
when she believed
in you



Nilesh Mondal: He is 23, is an engineer by choice and a poet by chance. His works have been published in magazines like Muse India, Coldnoon Travel Poetic, Inklette, The Bombay Review, and many more. He works at Terribly Tiny Tales as writer and curator, and is prose editor for Moledro Magazine. His first book of poetry, 'Degrees of Separation' (Writers Workshop), is scheduled for a February 2017 release.



CIRCUS

I went to the circus one day
to see animals and humans at play.

Sitting in my front row seat,
eagerly I awaited the treat.

Horses pranced and trotted and danced all around,
and trapeze artists flew high above the ground.

The clowns sure were a lot of fun
making bad jokes and outrageous puns.

The elephant played cricket with a tiny bat,
Hit a six and won a hat.

The lions roared and growled
and around their ringmaster prowled.

They rode a bike,
and sang on the mike.

But one little fellow refused to perform...oops

He said the ringmaster made him *jump through hoops!*



Nivedita Karthik: is a graduate in Integrated Immunology from the University of Oxford who 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 them whenever she can.



MONSOON FURY

Cloudy skies ,a portent of rain
Marred the sunny sky of Chennai.
Diwali was dampened by showers
Of rain and just a few firework flowers.

Torrents of rain devastated the city
That had been craving rain.
The unceasing Fury, battered the vicinity.
The city reeled under the lashing deluge,
People ran for refuge.

The downpour drenched the cities,
towns and villages.

Dams and rivers ,pregnant with water,
streamed steadily and swiftly,
Inundating the city with calamity.

Lakes breached, snakes swam
And reached the habitat of humans,
Seeking refuge from Mother Nature.

Homes were wrecked, boats were plied
People lamented, people helped
People cried, people tried
To make a difference. And they did
Shelters were created
homes were opened wide
along with hearts.

A beautiful lesson that I learned,
When we tempt Nature,
She teaches lessons of pain,
Suffering and sorrow.

She watches with sorrow
the destruction of her bounties,
and vents her anger,
Less mother and more Fury.

Chennai will rise again,
Hopefully wiser and more attuned,
to the whims and vagaries of the monsoon.



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.



TO THE HAWK

You are the hawk

And me the tortoise

You perch on my shell

Waiting to prey on me

The moment I peep

Into that beautiful world

Live in its glory.

You peck, peck, peck

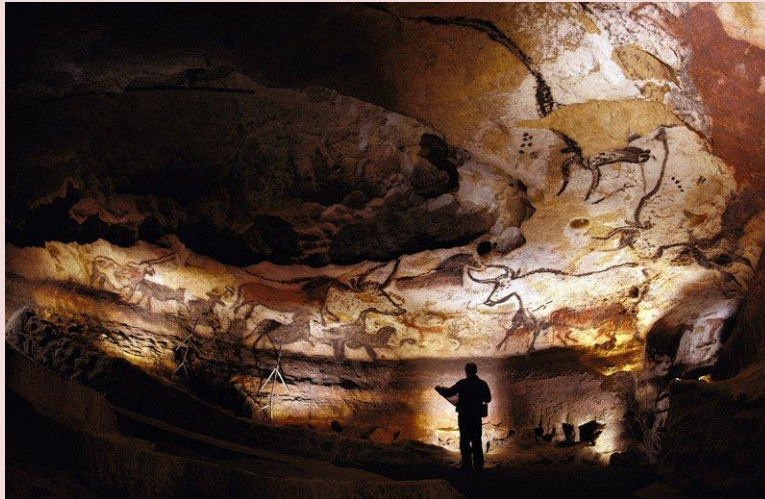
With your predatory beak

Trying to break into me.
With such soul numbing tap
Squawking in my ear
I wonder what lies in me
That you want to kill so

I have to crawl ahead
Few paces at a time, slowly
With you high and mighty
Preying elsewhere.
But look how far I've come
You stupid bird
Who lives to tear me down.



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!



My bone has the secret of secrets

Let them be burnt

Burnt until all the bones become ashes

Sweet, sour, bitter

Pleasant stays together

Travelling ten hours to meet

Meeting in strange soils

Strange languages, culture

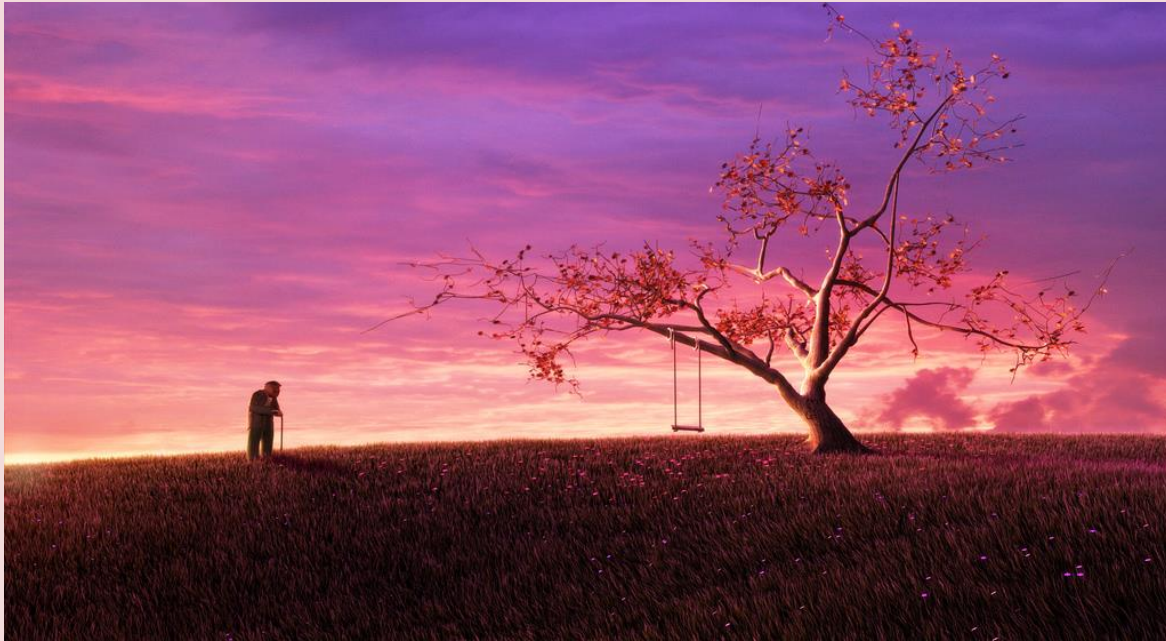
the bones that hid them

Like the paintings in the cave

My secrets, my paintings.



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



COLD CLOUDS

His is the visage of a man who has lost his shadow. His is the face of a boy scraped raw over the shards of sun. He folds the prayer mat along its worn-out creases, takes off the skull cap and puts a clean shirt over his stooped back. He has waited for this telephone call for six years now. During these years he swung from hope, to desperation, to numbness, till finally all he wanted was a closure.

He leaves the door of his one-room house unlocked, walks the six miles of a rot-and-rat-infested city. The dust of a land constantly expanding its belly of high-rises trails his tottering footsteps through gutters and potholes.

A crow tears at the carcass of the slow moving day.

On the road that curves by the side of *Gomati*, he takes a detour, climbs down the embankment, one shaky foothold

at a time and sits down on the muddy waterfront. Breaking a slice of bread into tiny morsels, he scatters it over the gentle current and fishes out a photograph from his breast pocket, a black and white picture with frayed edges. A pair of clear fourteen-year-old eyes stares back at him from a face that has started sprouting a mist-thin moustache. He remembers the dimples and the impish smile that used to break out like the sun from pewter clouds. Finally, he slips the photograph too into the river.

At the police station, he sits on a run-down wooden bench, his silent eyes fixed on the mosaic floor, awaiting his turn to identify the body of his long-lost son.

withered field...

the mongrel's howl

an inch thick



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.



A RUSTY COUGH

A rusty cough

From an old iron chest

'Tis a sign my friend

That I've been blessed

The rising damp

Meets the pouring rain

Meets in the middle

At the Window of Pain

But the Sun will rise

and start the healing

And Love will treat
Warming, feeling

And so my friend
It's true I'm blessed
A heart is firm
In the old iron chest



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



BE WITH ME TONIGHT

I have spent the evening with you

You spend the night with me

I have a star-studded sky with me and you are possessing
two beautiful eyes

See me, talk to me

Cover me with your skins

Give flesh to my bones

May our breath ensure life in this beautiful planet earth

Mirror is not enough

I want to see my face in your eyes

Be my dream tonight

Let us carry all the seas known unknown
Let us scale all the peaks known unknown
You take me to invisible destinations
I will take you to unchartered shores

Be With me tonight

Now that I am experiencing leaf storm

Now that I am becoming naked shedding all leaves

Only branches

Only trunks, only roots

A palm with scratches

A Head that is held high

Two eyes sans dreams

Be my dream tonight

With rainbow of words

The world is nothing but a painting of words when you are
with me

May I touch your lips the storehouse of words

May I kiss your cheek, the doorway to all the romances

Be With me tonight, feeling lonely I am
Wherever eyes go blood
Wherever eyes go devastation
Even my breath becomes fury
Walls all around, imprisoned I am
Pieces of sky, as if a loaf of bread the moon
Dead are trees, asleep all those birds with wings
Brooks of life never murmuring
Dead too the song of earth
Be With me tonight when alphabets of poetry speak to one
another in a whispering tune
Sing a song in my ear that will bite my ear lobe
Embrace me as if you are the passionate death and ours
the final embrace!



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.



ADIMAYA

Man's double standards, woman idolised and yet enslaved
to do his bidding,

Devi and daasi two sides of the same coin!

It is time for a change.

Caesar's wife – why should she be above reproach?

A beautiful woman is not a 'trophy' to fight over!

How many women widowed for that one Helen of Troy?!

This Raavan dahan is only a spectacle!

Enough!

Sita will fight her own battles,

Save her honour,

Emasculate the dirty minds, then only will man respect her
firm 'no'.

These nuts and their nuts,

Sita will ask Mother Earth to bury alive!

A woman, the female entity, the Primordial Being, above
the Trinity!

Wake up!

Man, her progeny, recognised her unique powers of
creation,

Jealous, feeling inadequate,

Systematically poisoned her mind against herself and other
womenfolk,

Thoughts of pure and impure, denying her true knowledge,

Has tried to subjugate her in all religions, all societies,

One who bit her tail now is slowly awakening to her
kundalini powers,

Before long, she will not need man to procreate,

Woman, awaken, respect and exercise your Shakti!



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.



Move out of my comfort zone
Walk over to all I meet
Break the ice, become friends
Laugh more, worry less, live long.

POEM 2

whoever I meet become friends forever
not even one foe in my life.
we count our deeds and not our mean
love and help each other, so happy we are.

POEM 3

time slips through our hands

like grains of sand.

the time to live greatly is today

not tomorrow.



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.



who writes poems to karela chips

i do

after poems for coffee and cyanide

and the bitter pills of life why not

especially if they have been fried

in coconut oil after being dried in dahi

to take the sting out and spiced

with just a bit of chilly and kadipatta

and since i am a good poet who gets felicitated by

chief ministers and likes awkward enjambments

and using that word

i will draw metaphor

no

so karela as self

and dahi as hope

and the sun as experience

get it

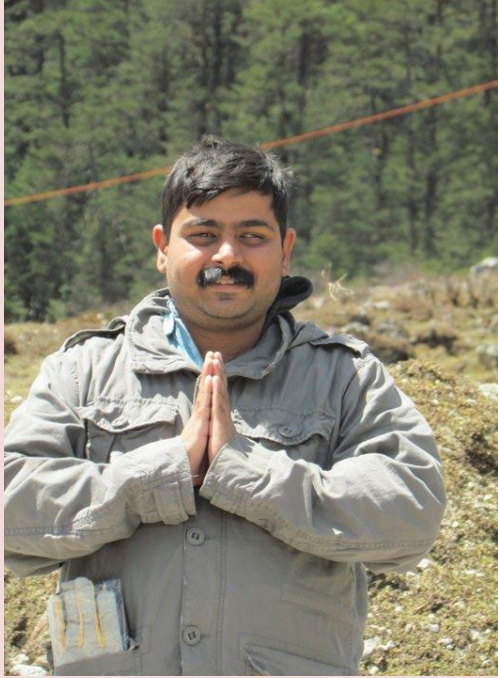
they coat you with hope and

put you out to face the world

and the coconut oil as the little joys of life

and that is being literal

my poem is done and i have no space



Raamesh Gowri Raghavan: He moonlights as an award-winning copywriter by day and daylights as an award-winning poet by night, and sandwiches an archaeology course, running two literary clubs, astronomy, the occasional trek, some peer counselling for suicide prevention, and learning languages in between. He thinks he is funny, but his friends vehemently disagree.



WE ALL TWINE AROUND THIS HOPE

Hope is a tiny, growing plant

Stemming out between two rocky stones
of despair and almost a feel of null:

Hoping to survive amidst blowing winds

Hoping to serenade and sing

defeating the ghost like anti - songs

domineering forest and bush thick,

thickets and thimbles:

a soft melody passing through

brambles and lute's corner.

The unequalled Glory and Victory

amidst teething setbacks, Hope
Sings and Dances, but not aloud,
Serene in its select way.
Garland Hope, abrogate all thimbles,
Hope will garland you in earnest.



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.



LET THE WORLD

Is the desire to lick, bite and suck

Your Love,

Sinful?

Is the ability to blur

The line between pleasure and pain

An anathema?

Is the insane need

To possess and be possessed

Truly insane?

Is the inability to think
Beyond 'heat and lust'
A failing?

If Yes,
Let the world
Crucify us;
If No,
Let the world
Deify us,
As the greatest lovers
Whoever lusted.



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



POST RAPE MORTEM

Today on the table

lay a rainbow

twisted and maimed.

I dictated notes.

Death by disfigurement

after rape.

With a surgeon's knife

I slit open the body

colour by colour.

Violet ashened by shock

Indigo grafted on soiled blue
irreparably grilled by
green yellowed by a paste of
orange peels and red dust
of a dead planet.

I signed the report.
To determine the cause of death
the mortician needs
more samples.

In the distance I heard
the wail of rainbows.



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



DRINKING COLD WATER FROM TAP ON RETURNING HOME.

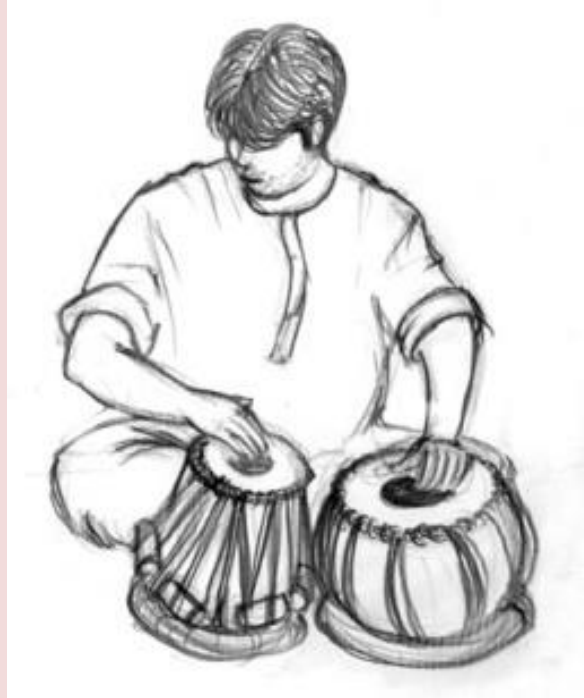
it tastes of a kiss
from past. like a
plaintive gulp of
memories, it crawls
through oral tract,
a palatable snake
slithering into depths
of fatigued existence.
it descends into
bowl of silence in
slow coils.
blessed be the water

that cuts its way
into maps of
nostalgia; the water
that sculpts empty
spaces; water that
strums the primitive
sensual strings; water
that dreams of a
universal language.
water that evokes
the forgotten.

blessed be the water
that quenches thirst.



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, Kritya, 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.



(The "Sum" is the first beat of a time cycle or tal. The most emphasized beat... The essence of improvisational understanding in Indian classical music)

SUM

alap...

streaming surs,

dhuns

in teental rhythms

spin, dizzying

maze of

tal,

linear diagonal multi-dimensional
sheets of sound,
leading back to the thread...the home... the sum,
and begin again...

dha dha tee na dha tee...

bols, just six beats,

profound

placid

passionate,

cool summer Ganga,

wave,

Sangam sapphire sky,

aahroh to aavroh,

evening raga

sunflower sutra,
a thread....a home...and the sum.
and begin again...

hummingbird hurry-up fingers
flutter,
tonal feathers fly
rubygold colors
dāhna and dagga
brush and canvas
scattering gorgeous light...

and the *gharānā*

smile

understand

the thread...

the home...

the sum...

(perhaps one day we shall too!)



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.



LIKE A GHOST

Take a stand and let me know
Which direction we shall go
For a nearer time than today
Shall not again come our way!

Hearts be true yet hands be still,
Paralyzed, they wait until
The moments have all but passed,
Few in reach are left to grasp!

Like a ghost crept out at night
Moaning still his weary plight
Around the house where he lived,
The life he once spent unfulfilled!

The vapors of something lost
Into composition tossed
Which makes this unnatural ghost
A most disconsolate host!

I fear that's what's left of me,
An unreparable deficiency,
As the truth cannot be falsified,
Since somewhere it may appear
In full bloom and more sincere!

So, hurry up come my love
I don't want feel like a ghost,

Come to me without fear

Before I drop more tears!



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, color, 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 and 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!



before I leave

Before I fall off

Your arms

Like those vernal golden leaves,

Will leave the warmth of

My touches to perch on your memories

Before I shed dried petals

Of my lips

On thy soul I will leave

My last kiss.

Before I Proceed for

An unknown world to face

Will leave the fragrance of my skin

In thy warm embrace!



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" ,"ANTOHKORON" " 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.



I walk I walk unknown

I walk amongst others I walk forlorn

I walk unrecognised

I walk unrealized

I walk when temperatures freeze

I walk under trees

I walk under their shade

I walk when lights fade

I walk past whizzing cars

I walk under the stars

I walk across streets

I walk giving silent greets

I walk I walk I walk

I walk without a word of talk

I walk,

I'm neither American, Indian or Russian

I walk, I am a pedestrian.



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.



217 POETIC POINTS

(abstract excerpts)

Poetry is a pile of smoldering charcoal, steaming, hissing smoke, ready to ignite, patient for the next match to strike.

Poetry is a fire of steady embers fed with twigs, pine straw, and leaves leftover from the emptied branches of a winter season surging toward spring.

Poetry is an eruption of crashing color; kaleidoscopic collision commencing.

Poetry is an effort to draw outside the lines while still remaining on the same energetic page.

Poetry drip-drops in the top-left corner, and slides across the canvass in motions of abstraction.

Poetry sees red on yonder horizon, bathes in the sun, takes a sip of salvation, gets caught up in the hype of day, feasts as if there is no tomorrow, lounges with the lions for a spell, and then dances in the desert for good measure before black curtains finally descend from the fading sky into the fall of silent night.

Poetry swirls into the rhythm of spiral, twisting, turning, torqueing, whirling, whipping around with whimsical winds, brushing aside all cause for concern, splish-splashing paint at the point of contact, blotting out a wall of white, returning to void for a final flash of entropic vision, resurrecting with symphonic shades to smear in hues of liquid plasma glory.

Poetry is a snapshot of time captured with a click.



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.



Charity Janisse: She is an Artist, Author, Poet, Mystic, Explorer. Art is knowing, appreciating and expressing what moves you. Find out more at charityjanisse.com.



THE DROWNED

I want to clarify
it was not in a river
but in the very ground
in front of the Presidential Park
where I drowned.

The only river I have
in my memory is
a shudder
where small things
sink but never disappear.

Sometimes, I sink
before the river passes,
and my request
for help
is always late.



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.



(Translation of Nida Fazli's 'Masjidon-Mandiron ki Duniya Mein' in English as 'In The World of Mosques and Temples' by Shamenaz)

IN THE WORLD OF MOSQUES AND TEMPLES

In the world of Mosques and Temples,
People don't recognize me.

I come like a moon every day,
and shines like a sun in the day time.

I glitter in my mother's jewelry,
and keep laughing hidden behind my sisters.

I am in the sweat of a labour,
I am in the raining season.

My picture is the tears of the eyes
My details are in the magic of body.

In the world of Mosques and Temples,
People don't recognize me.

I often leave the world without living,
and go back to sky.

I devastate everything becoming God.



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 & IJRHS (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.



(Picture is by Suvojit Banerjee 'Lunar Flood, 02')

EQUILIBRIUM

Seconds lumber into hours;
this night isn't ending soon.

I have been reading about the many gates –
Your Gardens of Greece – and how we imitate
their architectures;

how we baffle pointlessly
and that centuries of incarnating
should have sought us the truth.

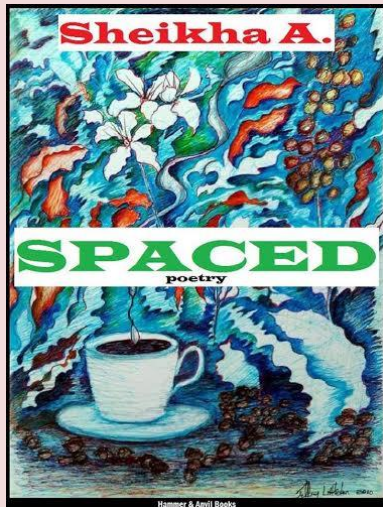
The night has borne crags
into which I diligently slip
a gospel;

the clouds rumble a prophecy,
and as if to awash, You then send down
anaesthesia.

Sleep covers the lids
and dreams divert

but the night continues to germinate

through. The dawn exposes
a burnished rainbow.



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



IN SEARCH OF PEACE

Is there joy

Is there peace

Can I ever be unfettered

From the ever changing

World of mindless tatters

As I see, far away into space

A huge cavern emerging

Slowly sucked in

By the world diverging

Of many hues and colours

Slowly, but surely a pattern emerging
From the many hued world of darkness

Rising the Phoenix
Imbuing a sense of
Fulfilment and calmness

Mind, on its road to recovery
Climbing over hills
Covering a vast expanse of territory
Seemingly a beautiful
Terrain of love and kindness
God in all his kindness
Has been an all-encompassing form
Of beautifulness and calmness
Forging a bridge between
Sensitivity and activity

Yes, sounds can be heard
Through the chasm of lightness and darkness
Sifting through the turmoil
Of wilfulness and bleakness
A beauteous sound, a ray of bright hope
Cleaving through webs of
Silent and stoic optimism



Shobha Warriar: Born near Trichur in Kerala, Shobha was highly influenced by her maternal grandfather who was a distinguished Sanskrit scholar. Shobha has a keen interest in languages, be it prose or poetry. She has also worked as a teacher in schools for some time.



THE GREEN INSIDE

the river is broad, and contains the movements
of everything green on either bank.

mirror-water stilled by a questing breeze that
raises random ripples from mysterious places.

it takes five light seconds for the breeze to flutter

the leaves on the very top and then reach the

flowing container where their bodies lie in state,

never the same, never a good reflection, never

raising smoke or memory, always the surprise of mobility.

i wait long enough, but my eyes must open soon

to concede the flowing time that may move me away.



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.



WISHES AND DESIRES

Single life

Single body

Everyone is blessed with

On this earth

Yet so many wishes

So many desires

Everyone possesses

And everyone puts all efforts

To get them fulfilled

Yet some remain incomplete

Having a desire to have

More and more wishes

And desires

This is what the story tells

And finally inspires

Keep alive all your wishes

And desires!!!



Sonia Gupta: She is an oral pathologist and senior lecturer in a dental institute. PUBLISHED BOOKS: Two English poetry anthologies; FOUNTAIN OF INSPIRATIONS, CANVAS OF LIFE..WITH MY PEN; Two Hindi poetry anthologies. OTHER PUBLICATIONS: Various common anthologies such as “Roses & Rhymes”; “Divine madness”; “Christmas”; “Bouquets of love and verses”; “Voices of Humanity”; “Hope reborn”, “The reeest verses”, “Nibstears cave

anthology for peace"! Regular contributor for "Glomag magazine; Hall of poets, and "Reflection" magazine! AWARDS: Nari gaurav samman, Yug surbhi samman, Prem sagar samman, Women of the year samman, sahitay gaurav samman in hindi literature. OTHER HOBBIES: paintings, singing, Cooking, Knitting, Embroidery, Designing. EMAIL: Sonia.4840@gmail.com

Facebook :100004964983747@facebook.com

Blog :<http://drsoniablogspot.blogspot.in/>



HEARTLESS

Have forgotten

How it feels to be in love

Reflect and remember

The innocent, emotional and soulful me

It all seems unknown

It's no more within me

May be, invested all on you

Strange but true

I don't feel betrayed

No no

Have not become magnanimous

To forget and forgive

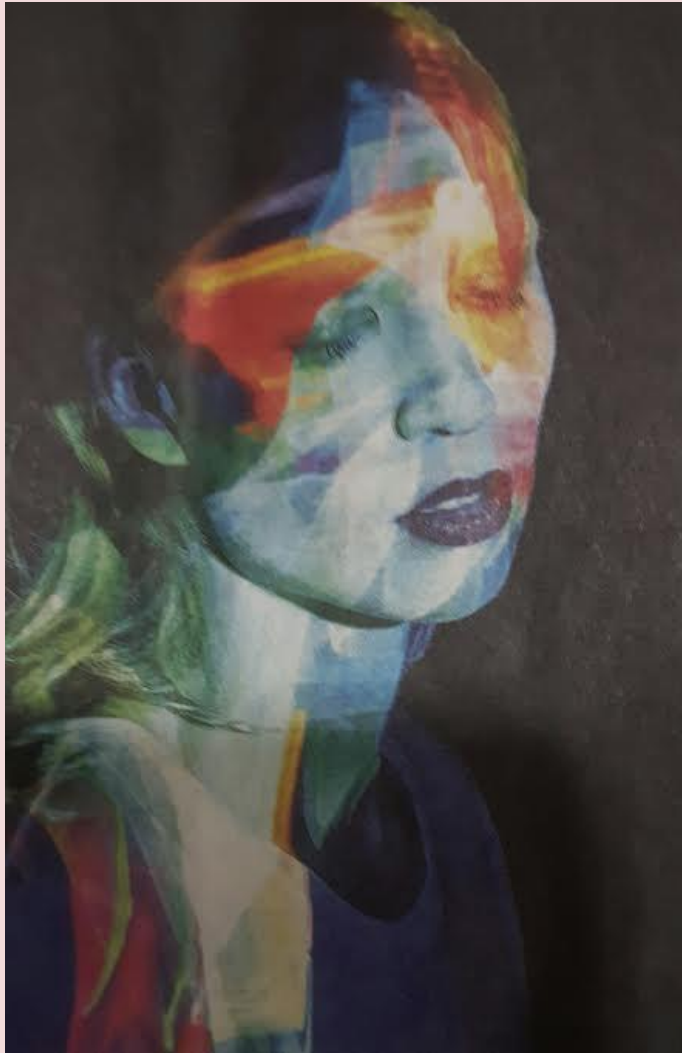
My emotions have dried to death

Cremated all my feelings and heart

I am heartless



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



RADIANT WOMAN

I am a thought endless

A link in the sky boundless

Ocean of selflessness

Decisive yet undecided

Tangible yet intangible

Domesticated yet slotted

Mysterious and elusive
A fragile fragrance pervading
Empowered with the force divine
I am glimpsed in the red dot of the Third Eye
Or, in the vermilion parting
Under the shade of my red canopy
My progeny prospers
I flow in the veins
For I create in my being
Nurturing and loving
With care that behoves
My genteel love
I try to step out casting aside the shadows of darkness
Enveloped in black whirlpools of churning Desires
Shackled and disrobed of dignity
Paradoxical in existence
My inner core struggles
Restless to stride forging ahead

To pathways of scarlet rose petals
Carpeted at the pinnacle
Of glorious red mornings .



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.



TOLLING TIME

He was the handsomest

Once upon a time.

Broad shoulders, carved biceps;

A high diving gymnast

Twirling thrice in air

Once upon a time.

His rough palm, my head,

That rare praise, lost

Amidst skirmishes, for

A rebellious daughter

Was I.

Face cadaverous he sleeps
Dentures out, mouth caved;
Walker, wheelchair, under-pads,
Medicines, knee-brace, shoulder-guard,
The calibrated jar – his urinal
Populate his room, awaiting
His attention, as I once did.
Busy wrapping my work,
I scan the years –
Once scrambling over wet rocks
I'd found a precarious perch
Over a deep thundering waterfall
And waved in triumphant response
To my name, his terrified scream.
I listen for his hoarse call now,
His embarrassed, helpless need...
Time has tolled; I'm his loving mother now,
And he's my proud recalcitrant son.



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/>



WALKING ADS

three youth

slave labour

for an MNC

greedy for more eyeballs

in an age of attention-deficit

and ad clutter

the trio---

walking down

the crowded Mumbai street

fluorescent ads

strapped on their thin backs

like huge straps
a weird sight---
the mobile ad-poles
rather than humans
with some dignity
or, autonomy
in a global market

the burdened figures
akin to anothe breed
the grime-coated workers
with oppressive bundles of coal
emerging as black ghosts
from the dark circles of hell
deep down
of a ravished earth
elsewhere.



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.



SOLITUDE

Waking up to the cold sweat of solitude
Dripping wet, knowing that I had slept
With my various nemeses
Jostling in the dank dark.
Choosing the nearest and dearest,
Seeking the caresses of the myriad grabbing
Hungry fingers, a symbiotic two way quench
Lolling in the luxury of another's need
Almost basking in the mesmerizing sluggishness

The importance of being needed
Is a starker reality
Than the truth of the vows that bound .



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.



You celebrate today

The woman

My gender in Toto

Pedestal is clearly

A little too high for me

My demons still lurk

Hell I ain't this goddess

You make me out to be

I wait to exhale

Virtues of perfection

I never did hold

I rest on wild grasses

Blow trees now and then

No 'lady' to be patronized this
Hemmed in by labels
Perfect 'wife' 'mother' 'child' and more
Where would I go?
The messed up woman

Royally flawed
Let me be
Or find a day
For the pagan in me



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.



HOW LONG HAVE WOMEN KNOWN FEAR

My hands shiver.

News papers, televisions

and mobile phones

sound like an alarm

of danger,

telling me stories of 5 -year- olds

getting raped,

20- year -olds, 70 -year -olds,

by fathers, brothers, priests,

teachers, fellow humans;

every time I hear or read such news

my stomach aches, somewhere deep down

knowing it wouldn't have taken long

for me to have been that girl,
there is a deep sadness that fills me
with anger and unanswered questions,
her screams seem to ring in my ears
all through the day, her tears make my
trust wet with doubt, her uncontrollable breath echoes
asking me
to be careful, aware and warned.
About what, about humans trying steal
the liberty of my body and mind,
my space to breathe,
the sound of my footsteps,
my eyes that constantly check
for people walking beside me.
Yes, I doubt everybody, my mind forms
judgements and I pester my gut voice,
"Are they safe?"
I ask,
silently praying that one day

I don't have to fear the visibility of my body
and the sound of my silence.



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.



WITH YOUR HAND IN MINE

In the hustle of the market and the crowds

I felt safe with your hand in mine

The mass of humanity with its virtues and vices

The glory and disgrace of the past

The joyous prospect of an enticing future

The pulse of life - throbbing again

The letting go of everything and the letting in of everything

With fear, shame, anger, excitement and bliss

Giving in to love, Giving in to you

I cried.....



Vinay Virwani: A marketing guy by profession, I can't help but try and convince you that a particular brand of detergent powder can really change your life! And while you may choose not to believe me, at least I ended up telling you a story! Alas, while the breed of storytelling marketers is fast getting replaced by number-chasing, profit-making, excel sheet enthusiasts, I write....to continue telling stories....A misfit perhaps, in a rapidly format-driven, number crunching world.....but a misfit who has successfully blended in.....:)



DON'T BE A STRANGER TO ME AGAIN

Hey boy! Yes you, my new found love, my soulmate from yesteryear,

My best friend, confidante, a stranger surprisingly turned too dear.

I'm making memories of this transition for a distant bargain,

In this soulful journey please, don't be a stranger to me again.

In moments of joyful company we mindlessly did dwell,
Conversing, laughing and baring our souls living far too well.

In fits of camaraderie we spoke of all under the deep blue sky,

Of promises for tomorrow, a wish for today that made us very shy.

I'm making memories of this transition for a distant bargain,

When this wonderful journey ends, don't be a stranger to me again.

Lengthy embraces in deep thoughts at the foothills of a mountain range,

Heartbeats heard, breaths exchanged warmth shared in manners strange.

Love filled kisses that marked instances, of moments real eternal and fine

Long eye stares, screaming silent conversations with words which made us shine.

I'm making memories of this transition for a distant bargain,

If we aren't meant to be, please don't be a stranger to me again.

Fits of longing crushed under the might of an unassuming, ignorant society

No consideration about your confidence, your worth just doubts on your credibility

I might not stand by you and give you time to prove your worth and mettle

I'll give in to their whims and dreams and give up on ours of letting us settle.

Shhh My girl... yes you! my new found love from yesteryear.

Your fears right now won't mean a thing when in a better embrace

I'd be a figment of your thoughts, a dream you had in a passing phase,

Caught in your duties, hopefully your dreams, and new experiences least

These thoughts would be a summer rain, an admirable
rainbow in the east.

I'd have made memories of this transition for a distant
bargain,

Incomplete, no closures, no complete experiences, just you
and me in pain.

A broken dream, a faded phrase, an altered course, a
ruffled mane

Who owns tomorrow my friend, not you not me not this
world insane?

I'm afraid life is not about wants and dreams and promises
made

In the foibles of everyday strife, we just might end up as
strangers again.



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 enables 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.



A FATHER'S "ATTABOY" STORY

Although restricted to a wheelchair and unable to speak because of strokes suffered in utero, our son Gabriel was in kindergarten and active. In this case, despite a diagnosis of "developmental delay," he proved how incorrect that assessment might be.

Val, a teacher's aide, was testing his math skills with flashcards, those laminated placards with a problem on one side, the answer on the other. She held each up, showing Gabriel a problem to solve. He, in turn, replied with a digital keyboard used to communicate. The exercise began tentatively: he answered some equations; others he was either wrong or refused to answer. Soon though, Gabriel slowed his response time, meditating.

Looking at the problem, he'd lean over in his wheelchair to cup his sharp jaw in a small, meaty right hand, then type his response. It worked. By taking his time, deliberating over the problem, he began getting them.

One after another, Val showed an equation; one after another, he would stop, lean—chin in palm, to answer the question. This encouraged her. Gabriel answered problems, each harder than the last. She marveled at the thoughtful and measured responses, how comfortably he handled the task. It was almost too good to be true.

It was.

Val noted Gabriel's procedure was regular, almost predictable. She held up a card; he stopped, leaned, and answered.

Correctly.

Without hesitation.

Everytime.

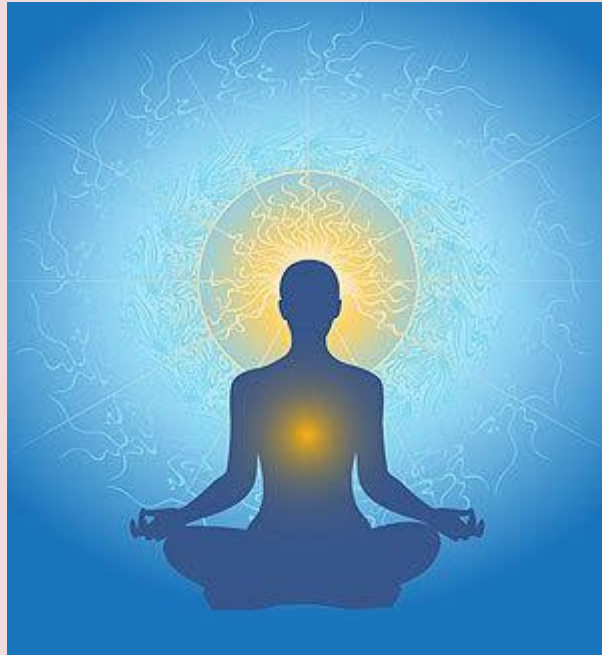
That was the "tell." Val picked a card, this time watching his eyes fix on a point behind her. Swiveling in her chair, she stared at her reflection in a mirror mounted on the back wall.

Gabriel had been reading the reflected answer to each problem, reversing the exposed information, then answering the question. Here he was, gaming the system at six.

Like I said: "Attaboy."



William P. Cushing: And now for something different in the form of a birthday celebration. Bill's latest piece is an abbreviated version of a piece named as a "finalist" in 2016's Pen 2 Paper competition, an annual writing contest for work dealing with the subject of disabilities. He submits it here in the hope that GloMag readers will enjoy this event as much as he did and as a way of honoring Gabriel's 16th birthday on March 23.



A MEDITATION

Been a friend of so many yet

never of one, myself;

What has the world got to give you,

when you gave everything?

The world is filled with pockets

of knowledge past, present and future...

just fill your pockets

at the earliest, be greedy about it.

Never be content with the amount

you know, always think,

there is more to learn
or more knowledge to acquire
than to teach or give.

Fill it with the world over,
fill it with
every second,
every corner stone
is full of it.



Yegnaraman Raghavan: He was born in 1954, served as a Signals officer in the army for 20 years before taking premature retirement in 1995. Since then he has worn many hats, as an operations manager, mathematics teacher

and bullion market analyst. He used to write poetry as a young cadet, but sadly most poems are lost now. He remains his son Raamesh's strongest inspiration to this day.



EVERGROWING CORRUPTION

Exploitation is an adorable fashion

Everyone loves to swim in the pool of corruption

No one responds when they see the cases of molestation

Politicians are engaged in

beautifying their mansion

No one takes the responsibility because everyone is independent

Indians are bound to wear the tag of independence in a beautiful pendant
There seems to be no growth of such a nation

As the authority holders are working to reach their destination

I Zebish try to peep outside to see if we have reached some station

But then sit back with a hope to see a different nation..



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.



ciao! 😊