

GloMag

GLOMAG

*Monthly Online Poetry and Prose
Magazine*

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VIDYA SHANKAR



TITLE OF COVER PIC

Vivacious Blooms

ARTIST'S PERSPECTIVE

I think I had always wanted to be a writer. And an artist. I cannot recollect when was the first time this thought occurred to me or when was it I wrote my first poem or created my first artwork. Ever since I can remember, I have wielded art materials. As a school girl, while many of my classmates would doodle, I would sketch portraits or paint with water colours, making art on par with those students

who had the fortune to take structured art classes outside of school.

My parents could not afford to put me through extra art classes, but they gave me all the encouragement I needed — my mother would find me pictures I could recreate and my father would take me to free art camps for children.

I loved kolams (rangoli), I could work at ease with both powder as well as wet flour. Family functions, festival days, and the Tamil month of Margazhi provided me opportunities to indulge in drawing large and challenging kolams. Occasionally, I would make kolam sketches in a drawing notebook and colour them using crayons. But mandalas, I had not heard the term mandalas then, much alone know that kolams are also a kind of mandalas.

Interestingly, I was quite surreptitious about my writing. My earliest recollection of accepting that I could write goes back to the summer holidays when I had passed out of Class 7 and getting ready for Class 8. I had a secret diary in which I used to scribble my thoughts. One afternoon, I wrote a poem. And dozed off. When I woke up, I saw my mother reading my diary. My heart thumping, I snatched the book out of her hands and tore up the pages. I thought she would scold me, say I was wasting my time with all that writing, but what happened next made my life. My

mother's eyes shone with pride. She made me realise the gift I was blessed with.

Ever since, if there was one dream my mother had for me, it was that I become a writer, publish books, win awards for my writing — something that I did not give her when she was alive. For though, from then onwards, I wrote, unafraid, yet, when 'life' happened to me, the first things I let go of was my writing and my art.

Until, a couple of decades later, on a whim, I decided I did not want to be closeted anymore. I started my blog in December 2012, which led me to be discovered by the sub-editor of The Gulf Today a few months later. Thus began my innings with 'Short Take', a weekly column with the newspaper that ran for five years until the newspaper decided to do away with it.

Around this time, I started writing poetry again, though I was yet to get back to art. In 2017, I decided to publish my poems. My mother was long gone by then, and my father could only send his blessings virtually. But I had the support of my husband who did, and still does, all within his means to make me live my dreams. We collaborated on the making of 'The Flautist of Brindaranyam'. At the time of the book release in January 2018, I did not know a single writer. For the book launch, I had to, in fact, threaten a few friends

to attend. But that did not deter me. I was determined to make a name as a writer. I pursued every opening I got to find a way into the world of writers. My quest led me, in November 2018, to India Poetry Circle (IPC), a WhatsApp group founded by Jairam Seshadri. And since then, my growth has been phenomenal, so much so that by November 2019, when I launched 'The Rise of Yogamaya', I had a plethora of poets and writers from India and across the globe sending me good wishes, while some of them even attended the launch.

I got into mandalas in December 2018. Mandalas have helped me deal with my issues and find myself in the same way yoga (which I have been practising since 2015) and poetry have.

The mandala, titled, 'Vivacious Blooms', which adorns the cover page of this issue of GloMag is very special to me. My father passed away in May this year, and fifteen days later, my niece delivered her baby girl. It was a phase of extreme emotions: coping with grief on the one hand while exulting in the joy of welcoming a new addition to our family.

The fallen flower smiles knowing there are vivacious blooms in its wake.

There is more poetry to be written, more art to be done, more avenues to be explored. The minutes, the years, the lives that are gone are gone. There is pain, grief, disappointment. But life goes on with every minute, every day, every year offering chances for a new beginning, a new life, a new, vivacious blooming.

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ABOUT GLOMAG

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

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

~ ***Glory Sasikala***

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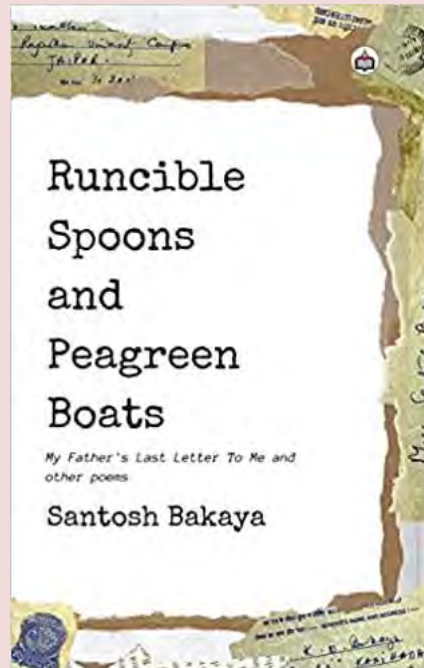
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BOOK OF THE MONTH

Runcible Spoons and Peagreen Boats

by

Santosh Bakaya



LINK

https://www.amazon.in/Runcible-Spoons-Peagreen-Boats-Fathers/dp/B09FGYKGY5/ref=sr_1_2?qid=1638524173&refinements=p_27%3ASantosh+Bakaya&s=books&sr=1-2

REVIEW BY GLORY SASIKALA

I was quite excited to buy this book. I kept seeing the title everywhere on Facebook. Santosh is very well loved by everybody and the book was selling very well. I had just come back from a trip and the title caught my eye for being quite quaint...***Runcible Spoons and Peagreen Boats***. Now, wait a minute! Where have I read about peagreen boats? Then I recalled it was a poem, ***The Owl and The Pussycat***, not in my textbook but in my brother's, and because I used to study with him, I knew and loved this poem. It brought back memories of a young 15-year-old boy lying in his bed and teaching his 10-year-old sister, "Now, repeat after me, ***"Pussy said to the Owl, You elegant fowl, how charmingly sweet you sing..."***" How many times did we sing out that poem?

I simply had to get hold of this book. I am a huge fan of Santosh's poetry. The Indian way of life has a flavor of its own that cannot be found elsewhere. I deem it the earthiness of this soil, the simple lifestyle, the spirituality that prevails, a simple acceptance of things as they are. Santosh's poetry somehow manages to capture this earthiness, the beauty, the colors, and the uniqueness of the people here. With a few select words, a few narrated experiences, you are in India and among her people.

These are beautiful narrations too. They are from the past...uhhhh...most of it when the well-known Santosh Bakaya of today—the writer, humanist, etc—was a very mischievous and irrepressible child. One does suspect as much even now...the smile and infectious laugh that have stayed on are clues that the naughty little girl is still in there somewhere.

The dedication made me smile, sounding almost like sweet revenge.

The book is dedicated to you Sr. Janet.

Yes, for making me stand under that tamarind tree fronting the Administrative Block of St. Angela Sophia School, Jaipur, where I learnt and unlearnt many lessons

The book is also dedicated to you, Sr. Theodora for your rebukes in the morning and soothing words in the evening at school.

The Author's note gives us an inkling into the reason for the title, and the nostalgia that runs right through, an inkling of what to expect. It is beautifully written.

“What is a runcible spoon, daddy?”

.....

“Why call it a spoon then, why not call it a fork, and why runcible?”

....

My fixation with Edward Lear began from there....

Dr. Ampat Koshy is closely associated with Santosh. They have even brought out a book of poetry together. Who better to write a glowing introduction?

Santosh Bakaya can be called a humanist, a realist, one who believes in non-violence, a secularist, a democrat and a socialist etc., but the happy confluence of what she is or became and the making of it is what is revealed in this book which was at the loving hands of her dad, mummy, granny and siblings as well as Jammu and Kashmir, Jaipur, India, her mother’s temple ad prayers, her father’s love for the English language and its literature ad what is good in it, the sound influences etc.

The book is a collection of the nostalgic memories of a child, some of which...most of which...resonate with all of us. Children live in a world of their own,, where everything is at once beautiful; at once possible; at once momentary. A magic world seen with fresh, innocent eyes...

The book is divided into four sections.

FOOTFALL...

Ah, this section is about this little child...mostly five year old...looking upon the world with excitement and fresh, unsullied eyes, taking in everything, experimenting, rushing off here and there, up to mischief, up to mischief...all the time!

Ah, the rejuvenating smell of a new morn,

The rustling of trees, the twittering of birds

*****_

A stray cat looks up at me, something stirs in me

As I hear her purring.

The second poem has become a favourite with me:

Yes, yes that is me,

Sitting gleefully in granny's lap a two year old....

That pigtailed brat running around

Footloose and fancy free

.....

That was me!

Running away with shoes and hiding them under trees....

Yes, I was always a tad mad.

A filcher no less this child...precocious!

Oh! I forgot that giraffe shaped eraser

That I conveniently pocketed...

Sometimes Memory is a noun and comes alive:

One memory sidles up to me,

Hops on to the edge of my bed,

Knuckles on chin, watches me....

GRANNY...

The toothless grin, and the acerbic warmth

Highly spirited and so wonderfully gruff...

Yes, I recall that hunched figure of my granny

Bent under the weight of those memories

I visualize her as a young girl,

Chased by a scrawny lad (my granddad, whom I never saw)

DAD...

Dads are the best, always put you and your needs above theirs:

I hear the cacophony of the clash of priorities

Our school and college fees, summer holidays clanging against

His dreams and tiny cravings.

A father is a son too

A look of puzzled compassion would suffuse his face

When she put a gnarled finger on her cheek,

Muttering through a toothless grin

“I had the tonic, now I am fine, see the glow!”

Dad in tweed cap, white sweater, white trousers...

Dad in shorts and vest untiringly de-weeding the garden...

Dad evaluating answer sheets...

Dads do crazy things

“Why on earth do we need a dinner gong dad?”

Up went our wails

“Nothing doing” asserted dad, in his authoritarian baritone

A last letter from a man well-loved but who felt too soon:

“Baby, do you want anything?”

He wrote in his last letter.

“Get better and spring back into action soon.”

I wanted to write in my letter, but my dad left soon after.

His thesis on Robert Browning unpublished,

His novel incomplete, his stories untold,

Yes he left soon after

MUMMY...

This last section talks of the love-hate relationship of a girl and her mother. A resigned mother of a precocious disobedient child apparently:

"Baby, do not lean against the railing, you might fall"

....

And daughters will be daughters, said I, leaning a little more trying to touch the creepers...

*****/

Gone too soon...

I look at the garden, so verdant, so bright.

Do the plants miss her loving touch?

Home is where mother is....

Who knows?

I suddenly felt cold, and headed towards my mom's room.

I knew it was warm there.

Mothers are always there...

That cold morning my mother became a prayer,

A prayer that refused to leave my lips.

But that cold day she still smiled in her deep, deep sleep – a warm smile

Like she always did.

This beautiful book ends where it began....

Magically, I am once more that toothless kid,

Sitting in granny's lap, eyes dancing in mirth,

Despite the dental dearth.

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HAPPY CHILDREN'S DAY

A gentleman enters a bookshop
and asks for an alphabet book
and chooses to buy the best at seventy.

A labourer also enters the bookshop
and asks for the same
he then wistfully flips its oily, wide pages
and timidly asks its price.

'Seventy,' the shopkeeper while taking tea
casually claims,
the labourer hastily put it aside and looks sideways.

'Tell your budget,' the shopkeeper annoyingly put,
'Twenty.'

The bookseller wearily offers him a coarse,
small book where letters appear hazy and dark
the labourer spreads a winning smile
and carefully keeps it in his nylon bag.



Abu Siddik: I am a writer, residing in Berhampore, Murshidabad, India. I work as Assistant Professor. I have contributed to various e-journals and anthologies. I have also published six books. Website: www.abusiddik.com



GAZAL

The cycle of my doom nay end my thought. So I am still here

There is no late spurt that I have ultimately got. So I am still here

Spur will continue to thrive in my bleak courage.

And nobody will suffer from fascism a lot. So I am still here

There will be no carnages every day in those tyrannized ravines

Every morning will nay be mourning by a gunshot. So I am still here

Downfall of trust and certainty will not be the cause

Mercy will prevail to seep at every beauty spot .So I am still here

It is not profound to only experience that in books

We need to bring justice from the world, in short .So I am still here



Adnan Shafi: I am a poet, writer, columnist, translator, Ghazal writer, motivational speaker, blogger, and reviewer from Tral Kashmir (J and K). I have contributed my poems to various reputed magazines and journals. I have also published my poetry book 'Tears fall in my heart'. In 2020, I was awarded by Gujarat Sahitya Academy for poetry. In 2021, I was awarded the Shakespeare medal for my literary merit, writing quality, uniqueness, and creativity. Furthermore, I have won the 2021 best achiever award in the field of English literature as the title, 'Best English Poet'.



OLD ROOM

Inside an old room

I am seeking a comfortable hand

My homeland is not the scented land

I touch the torn walls like a grown-up.

I examine an old face,

with a mouth but without a voice

I sense that soft music,

with the rhyme hanged by death.

My parents taught me to grace
Meanwhile, my father loves to drink
Just to help himself from thinking
Thirty-two years, still unable to find a cozy place.

Everything in this old room is long
The day seems miserably long
Then the night comes with no light
I take a piece of my broken heart to lit up my sorrow
longer.

Before I dream of armies, kings,
and emperors. I want my tongue
-again, loud and well-spoken to
behave like the way lovers did in this old room.



Ahmad Al-Khatat: Ahmad Al-Khatat was born in Baghdad, Iraq. His work has appeared in print and online journals globally and he has poems translated into several languages. He has been nominated for Best of the Net 2018. He is the author of *The Bleeding Heart Poet*, *Love On The War's Frontline*, *Gas Chamber*, *Wounds from Iraq*, *Roofs of Dreams*, *The Grey Revolution*, and *Noemi & Lips of Sweetness*. He lives in Montreal, Canada.



GOOD LIES

Good lies smile despite the sadness in their eyes
They bring words of encouragement and consolation
to the sick and the doubters.

They create a world of rainbow mirages
about a beautiful and distant future

The truth will always come
- it is waiting patiently outside the door

Then good lies splash like a fragile soap bubble

They are remembered as an illusory hope



Alicja Maria Kuberska: She is an awarded Polish poetess, novelist, journalist, editor. She is a member of the Polish Writers Associations in Warsaw, Poland and IWA Bogdani, Albania as well as other organisations. She has received two medals—the Nosside UNESCO Competition in Italy (2015) and European Academy of Science Arts and Letters in France (2017). She has also received a reward of international literary competition in Italy, “Tra le parole e ‘elfinito” (2018). She was announced a poet of the 2017 year by Soflay Literature Foundation (2018). She also received the Bolesław Prus Prize Poland (2019), Culture Animator Poland (2019) and first prize Premio Internazionale di Poesia Poseidonia- Paestrum Italy (2019).



WHEN TIME STILLED YET MOVED ON

4 o'clock.

The school is over.

We have spilled over
to the roads, ready to
board the bus to home.

4 o'clock.

Grandmother is neatly
braiding her hair, her

tête-à-tête with Gods

is about to begin.

4 o'clock.

I am frequently looking
at the watch, wishing it
a faster move towards 5 30-
the time to meet the lover.

4 o'clock.

Work is over, awaiting the train
I see the lights go dimmer,
like it is in winter. Where I alight,
is anyone waiting there?



Amanita Sen: Amanita has 2 collections of poems: ‘Candle In My Dream’ and ‘What I Don’t Tell You’. Her works have been published in numerous journals in India and abroad. She is a mental health professional and lives in Kolkata.



SMILEFLASHIN' MIRROR

flashing

eyes – hers

a a i n a

in a mirror – my eyes

catch glimpse

blipsof light racing

in greeeeen blurrrs

quick glance we – as when

car drives by patches of grass

wet

with rain

t le

h i

e s m

SOUL HUM OF TREES AND A DOVE

The Soul does through flakes fly
gazing at limpid light in the sky;
She ponders on a branch whitely
leaves covered undone by nightly.
Winds wild course through stove

unlit. Unlit by quiet un-gloved hands
warmed with breath in coldish lands.
May freeze melt the unloved heart;

May fire light up to singe its part.

She Soul hums of trees – Lone dove

rises wings spread as love's mantle.

Listen to her reply in a canticle.



Ambika Talwar: She is an India-born educator, author, artist, and wellness consultant whose ecstatic poetry “bridges worlds.” Winner of the Great India Poetry Contest (2018) and Pushcart nominee, she has authored *4 Stars & 25 Roses* (for her father); *My Greece: Mirrors & Metamorphoses*, a poetic-spiritual travelogue. Her poems appear in *Ruddy Ravens Cheshire Cats & Rusty Rats*, *Fasihi*, *Roseate Sonnet Anthology*, *We Are Here*, *Grateful Conversations*, *River Paws*, *Beyond Words*, *Aatish 2*, *GloMag*, and others. ~ Published also in *Kyoto Journal*,

Chopin with Cherries, On Divine Names, VIA-Vision in Action, St. Julian Press, Tower Journal, Enchanting Verses, Quill & Parchment, Ambika won an award for a short film. Recently retired as professor emerita (English), she also practices a fusion of holistic modalities. She notes, “*Poetry and holism offer a refining language for us to keep discovering our wholeness.*” She is board-member of CSPA (California State Poetry Society) and lives in USA and India.
~ <https://www.creativeinfinities.com>



No longer do I ask people how they are. They are so close-fisted that they can't even say heartily, "I'm fine." Ever. They have too many complaints to enumerate against life and destiny. As if the globe is tilting because of the immeasurable weight of their complaints; due to the black smoke of their sighs full of complaints, air pollution is increasing alarmingly. But the birds of the dawn let us know singing how fine they are even if never asked. The unknown flowers beside the road always burst into laughter and let us know how fine they are.



Aminool Islam: I am a poet residing in Bogra, Bangladesh. I work as an English language instructor. I have contributed to various anthologies. I am currently the sub-editor of a literary magazine named Neeharika.



PRECIOUS LOVE

On migratory wings
straddling a sea of oblivion
blue overpowers—
her womb's own pride
cocooned forever in
throbs of her heart
finds home in alien shores,
buckled in bucks
romancing depth
of aqua eyes,

his squalid past
now discarded shards
of pain poverty paucity
and a bond most precious
the mother forgivingly scoops
braids with her tears.

Fragile is the pinnacle sought
in contrived counts and steps
sans the hurt petals
of mother's love
withering as her wilting sighs.



Amita Ray: Amita Ray is former associate professor in English of a college and is based in Kolkata. An academic of varied interests, she is a Translator, Short Story writer and Poet. She has two volumes in translations of noted Bengali authors to her credit. She is presently a translator in several on-going projects. Her latest publication is a collection of short stories titled TRAIL OF LOVE AND LONGINGS. She has a passion for writing poems and has been widely published in various anthologies and journals. She is also an Executive Committee member of Intercultural Poetry and Performance Library, Kolkata.



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sepoy_Mutiny_1857.png

Inspired by Ruskin Bond's 'Flight of Pigeons'

the blind moulavi

under the banyan tree

rolled his head suddenly

and screamed

black clouds are coming

prognostication was the

glint of swords

patter of hooves

and screams of dying
the 1857 mutiny against
East India Company
was just arriving



Amitabh Mitra: He is an Indian-born South African physician, poet and artist. He is one of the most widely published poets globally.



By Steffen Gauger - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0,

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=5667823>

AUBADE: CHHATHH MORNING

*Chhatth will be celebrated from 8 to 11 November this year
(2021)*

It is Chhatth morning, will you not arise?

Since Friday last you have been sending gifts

To those who fast around you and perform

The rites of a devotion that uplifts

The Harvest Festival to Spirit's norm

The golden bamboo winnowers, the Soop

The season's fruits, areca, sugarcane

Stalks of banana clustered in a group

Coconuts in their shells, scarce can contain

Ginger, turmeric, radish, suthni roots

The candy-sweet potato, Misrikand

Tender young garlic with its fresh green shoots

Gathered from Ganga's banks, rich and fecund

All homes are ready for Chhatth Maiyya's coming

Dusted and swept, painstakingly whitewashed

Woodwork painted afresh, everyone humming

Melodious Folk Hymns, cheerfulness unquashed

Around you people washed and dried new grains

Ground them at home in heirloom grinding stones

Fetches Mango wood, made fires and took pains
To find new gur for making Thekua scones

Families carry Chhatth baskets aloft
And walk in groups across the river sands
The Sugwa Parrot songs through windows waft
And somewhere close a firecracker lands

It's only three o'clock, you have till four
You can still weigh your options and decide
The Chhatth Lamp's light sways softly at your door
You could go out or as ever, still hide

It is Chhatth Morning, will you not arise?



Amita Sarjit Ahluwalia: I am a retired civil servant but at heart a poet and teacher. I write, mostly poetry, in English, Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi. I was awarded the NISSIM International Poetry Award (First Prize) 2019 and then the Reuel International Award (First Prize) 2020 for Non-Fiction Prose by The Significant League, a well-known Creative Writing Group on Facebook. Recently, the Destiny International Community of Poets based out of Wakefield, England, UK declared me Winner of their Poet of the Year 2020 as well as Critic of the Year 2020 recognitions.



pic by Gauri Dixit

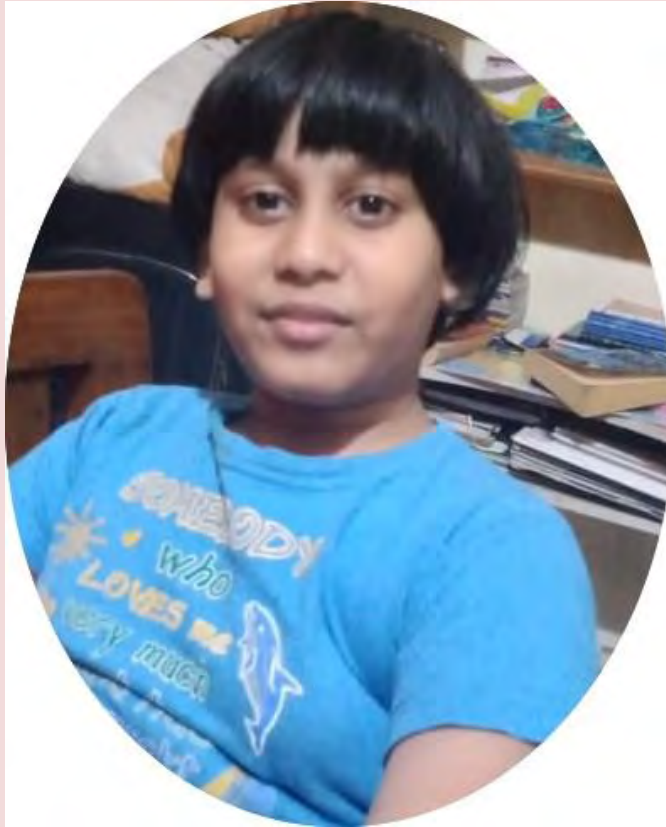
NIMISHA KAVITHA/INSTANT POETRY

Lovers sat on those benches
and husbands and wives who quarreled
on separate ones
some practiced social distancing
by leaving the one in between empty
tired people embraced them
and ones taking a break
then there were those who just wanted

to while away the time
watching the petals falling
in warm weather or cold times
how many stories they could tell
perhaps this shows lockdown
benches, man-made, oft unused, petals and leaves, natural
too, fallen
all subject to the chipping or yellowing wheel of time
here caught in a moment of abeyance



Ampat Koshy: Dr. Koshy A.V. was till recently working as an Assistant Professor in the English Department of Jazan University, Saudi Arabia. He has many books, degrees, diplomas, certificates, prizes, and awards to his credit and also, besides teaching, is an editor, anthology maker, poet, critic and writer of fiction. He runs an autism NPO with his wife, Anna Gabriel. Two of his co-authored books published in 2020 were Amazon best-sellers in India and USA, namely, *Wine-kissed Poems* with Jagari Mukherjee and *Vodka by the Volga* with Santosh Bakaya. His latest achievements are winning a certificate in Italy for his poetry, and editing an anthology as well as working for a UK firm Revise Radiology as content and copyeditor



FINGER PAINTING

Fingers dance in long-stemmed sway
Flesh flowers blossom love strokes away
I trace your lissome resting limbs
Your forehead and arched eyebrows grace
And catch my breath
At your loveliness.

My son, you softly murmur

“Mom, You are the best!”

The sun shines brighter

It shines brightest,

At your lovely behest

My son,

You are my first, my best,

My time worn test.

I take a picture with brimming earthly eyes

Of an existence, which beyond divinity lies

My silent prayer is hushed inside

May I remember you always dear,

Oh! Beyond human shores and bourns...

My dear I softly pray, “May I”.



Amrita Valan: Amrita Valan is a writer from India and a mother of two boys. Her work has been printed in anthologies, such as Poetica 2 and 3, (Clarendon Press), and The Poet's Christmas, Faith, Childhood, Friendship and Adversity anthologies. Her poems and short stories have been printed in online journals such as Piker's Press, Academy of Hearts and Minds, Short Story Town and Spillwords, among others. Her debut collection of 50 poems Arrivederci was published in May 2021, and a collection of 17 short stories titled In Between Pauses, was just published in November 2021 by ImpSpired Press.



BELLA MIA

Penetrating eyes reaching into your soul

She mesmerized a crowd

As she walked into a room.

Life would change in the sparkle of star.

What once was the flame of a fire

Becomes the ashes in the fireplace

Her breathe faint, yet steady

Like she was hanging onto life by a thread.

Every breath a gasp.

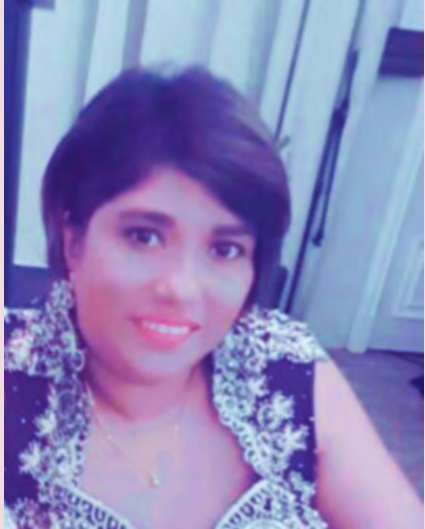
The beauty unveiled in the birth
Of love and joy.
What should have been a celebration
Liking flying high into in the skies
You sparkled like a gem
Hope on the horizon
Like the rainbow after the storm.

In those few moments
Sorrow enveloped her soul like a wet blanket
Drenched in the rain
Pleading and begging was to no avail
In all that was, there was nothing
Is the stark reality
Of the fluidity
Of the survival of the fittest.

Oh! Bella Mia

What dreams we had

What joys you brought us.



Angela Chetty: I am a poet residing in Durban, South Africa. I work as a consultant. I have contributed to various anthologies and numerous journals. I have also published a poetry anthology. I have been honoured as a contemporary poet with the most heartfelt poems in 2019 and had two poems featured in the Top 100 poems for 2019.



I HAVE STARTED LOVING YOU

In front of me a sea of lilies bloom

Giving solace to my heart, dispelling gloom

With vivid colours the earth looks fresh and new

From the day I saw you my heart fluttered for you

Draped in a canvas of green the hills

Feel peace listening to songs of dancing rills

The horizon shines painted deep in crimson hue

I feel like in heaven from the day I started loving you

Dew drops hang on to tip of grasses
Strings of Jasmine sway pinned to tresses
Bees and butterflies are feeling lazy is not true
They dance around the petals knowing that I love you

Across the valleys wind blows soft
Whispering songs that gently move aloft
Birds chirp at each other for their love to renew
And in this season of love I have started loving you



Anil Kumar Panda (alias Tiku): He was born in a small town, Brajrajnagar, in Odisha, India. At present he is working in coal mine sector and writes poems and stories when he gets time. He has already published two books of poems, *Fragrance of Love* and *Melody of Love*. He is working on his third book now. His poems have been published in many national and International Anthologies. He loves to write romantic poems. He likes travelling and meeting people of different nationalities and cultures. He takes inspiration from simple life of the villagers and Nature's beauty still thriving in rural areas. He enjoys walking by streams and into forests to be with flora and fauna.



Between the miles past
and the milestones ahead
that lie scattered, dice like
let's pause awhile
on the years traversed
in parallel lines

Like you, I carry a small burden
of life pulsing within its confines
Its smells, chased in circles
by its own tales
mingle with the mist
to linger in the air
like a sweet-sour aftertaste.

Let's set it down for a while
for the air to breathe in
its din
the skies to sponge
its sighs
and for the earth
to pat down
its fires for a while.

For a while let's drink silence
off the trees
Nothing quenches thirst
they say
like solitude does.
When it's time to chug on
the next milestone
wouldn't seem forlorn
for bathed it would be
with the sunshine
that crept in
while we paused for a while.



Anju Kishore: Anju Kishore calls herself a Window Wanderer. Once a professional accountant, her calling now is letting her spirit leap off the ledge of her window, into not only the bluetiful beyond but also into the humdrum of living, the clatter of which she attempts to placate with the warp and weft of words. A published poet, and editor of more than half-a-dozen anthologies over the last three years, she has just begun to savour the vistas offered by the vibrant window of theatre.



LUNAR FRACTIONS

tell me about the moon

when it shines in fractions

waxing and waning

through the light and shadow

of altered hues

and how remains

the sky

infinite, unchanged and forever in love!!!

when you tell me about the moon

can we also talk about us?

how can you
live by the sun
love by the moon
yet run from the night?
the phases bit by bit
writes the story of silent love
the stillness and the solace
the shadow and the silvery gleam
as they hold in an embrace
did the sky tell you to hide
when it eclipsed and melted
into the darkness?
time in the talons of fate,
it was not but a long wait.
almost red in the horizon
like the half-moon knows its path
the redness of the pulsating heart
draped in the lunar fractions

was finding its way back
to the blue infinite
of that lost path
or was it but lost?
it was in its orbit
through the dark
gently gliding back
to its fate
If the moon can take its time
Why can't I?



Ankurita Pathak: She is a writer, occasional poet, TEDx speaker and a seasoned communications professional with 15 years of experience. A former journalist, she is currently working with FICCI as Joint Director. A proud alumna of Cotton College, Guwahati, she is also a postgraduate in English from Delhi University. Born in a quaint little town called Golaghat in Assam, her tryst with writing began as a 11 year old, when her first poetry was published in the Northeast Times. She has been regularly writing articles, poems, travelogues and short stories for newspapers, magazines, portals, and blogs. She, along with her brother, has recently co-authored a coffee table book titled 'Black Coffee & Metamorphosis, which has been listed in the 10+ Hoppingo curated coffee table books alongside 'Masterpieces of Indian Art by Alka Pandey' and 'National Geographic Rarely Seen'.



ANXIETY ATTACK

Feeling pressure within my chest.

Shallow breath expels a sigh.

I grieve my existence, swimming
in emotions as thick as sweat,
drowning in my own apprehension.

A litany of lists, and undone
tasks, march through my head,
overtaking my mind.

Teeth clench,
biting down on an ambition
too grand to ever be achieved.

Black paints my world,
with no empathy for loss.

I scream,

I cry,

I moan!

Limp and inept,
numbness invades,
taking over my very being –

That feeling that no matter how hard
I try, nothing will ever be good enough.

Anxiety!

Published by The Piker Press, June 2020



Ann Christine Tabaka: I am a poet and writer residing in Delaware, USA. I am a retired organic chemist and a retired personal trainer. I have 14 poetry books. I was nominated for the 2017 Pushcart Prize in Poetry. I was the winner of Spillwords Press 2020 Publication of the Year (Poetic), my bio is featured in the “Who’s Who of Emerging Writers 2020 and 2021,” published by Sweetycat Press.

****(a complete list of publications is available upon request)***



WOMAN THY NAME IS MYSTERY

As he was easily driving his car on the highway, suddenly and uncontrollably a car driven by a woman came in front, and they met with an accident, but thankfully, both were safe. Both of them came out of their respective cars. First, the woman watched her car attentively, which had now become damaged and destroyed; and then, she went over to see the car of the man, where he was also watching his car so attentively. Then she began talking to the man and said, “It is quite ironical that we both met with the accident and although our cars got destroyed, we came out unharmed; it’s God's will that we should meet each other. And I do really think that we should and must be friends now.”

The man seemed pleasantly bewildered and completely taken aback by the woman's friendly gesture, and he said, "You are completely right that despite this unfortunate and unpleasant accident, it was only God's decree that we came out safe, and thus, we were destined to be friends."

In the meantime, the woman was filled with excitement and said, "One more wonder is that though my car got completely damaged, the wine bottle kept inside is completely safe."

The man also seconded her opinion, and said, "It's really magical and wonderful."

The woman opened the bottle and said, "Today we have got a new lease on life, and today, we became friends. Shouldn't we celebrate?"

The woman gave the bottle to her new-found friend. The man immediately and happily put his mouth on the bottle and gulped half the wine and gave the bottle back to the woman and said, "Now you should have the rest wine."

The man asked, "Will you not drink the wine?" The woman said "No, I would wait for the police, so that I could say to them that a habitual drinker and loafer has crashed his car into mine!"



Ashish Kumar Pathak: He is a middle school teacher posted at Dharhara block in Munger district of Bihar province (India). He has got a letter of appreciation from the President of India for his poem.



RIVULETS...

Behind an orange hill, sunrise again

The gypsies entertaining in the savage desire

Clasped hands of prayers an inward quest

The pale brown mountain grass silent

Endless words in this end autumn

The stain of passion and madness in the wind

Wind tears the shadow of memories

Buried between your knees

It was raining, the last autumn rain

Our eyes remember the madness of the night

Night bird cries, rivulets in shadows

I raise my hands, I touch the rain-soaked lips...



Asoke Kumar Mitra: He studied at Hindu school and St. Xavier's College, Kolkata, and is a retired journalist and was editor of 'Calcutta Canvas' and 'Indus Chronicle'. He is a bilingual poet. He has contributed to various anthologies published in India and abroad. His poems are translated into various languages. 'Savage Wind' is his first poetry book, a bilingual edition, translated into Spanish by Mexican poet Josep Juarez. 'Song Of Pebbles' is his second bilingual poetry book, which is translated into French. Poetry, photography, paintings are his passions.



IT IS A TIME

It is a time to
rediscover water
when our juices run dry.

It is a time when
milk is undelivered or sour or sickening.

A time when
our eyes grow dim,
And when, by force,
we to learn to thread
a needle that has grown

a smaller eye that pricks our hands like a cat claw, blooded.

It is a time when,

unused to stitching for ourselves,

our eyes sting and

with a redness vein, and

with a raw salt sting

It is a time when

our unpractised hands tremble ...



Barry Pittard: I am a poet, lyricist and short story writer, living in the Hinterland of South East Queensland, Australia. I am a retired (refreshed!) teacher, and have also worked as an NGO among the socially marginalised. I have broadcast on social just and world music themes on community radio. In the theatre, I worked as an actor, director and writer. Presently, I am doing a personal dance sadhana, extensively using the superb music of Uma Mohan.



WILL TOMORROW EVER COME?

I am no child of the darkness

I prefer the light

I've detached myself from what's wrong

Always seeking what is right

I've moved away from the circle of fools

Joined the wise instead

After swimming in prides pools

I've straightened out my head

I've gone through the furnace of life
Had my fingers burned
And from all those vast experiences
Quite a few lessons that I've learned

I've given up the crooked way
The straight and narrow I've befriended
Here in my maturity
I know fully understand

How this machine works
And how I need to operate
And if we don't make that change
Tomorrow might just be too late



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



THE NATURE OUTSIDE

6 O'clock on a summer morning

You've got to wake up

the sun is shining

If you look around

the birds are flying.

Look at the trees!!!

With their green leaves.

The birds build

their nest on them with ease.

I want to be like the birds

and fly high high high!

In the sky!

Look at the big blue sky

Its never-ending

You cannot deny.

The plants and flowers

You can admire them for hours.

When you spend time looking at the flowers,

They almost

give you super powers.

This is why I love the outside,

the Nature and the beautiful butterflies.

Then comes the night

Got to go to bed

And wake up to a new day

Beautiful and bright.



Beverly James: I am 12 years old and I like being creative. I used to go cycling every evening and it was always fun. Candies are my favorite and I love animals. I decided put all these things together and create a poem. Poem helps me create a world of my own with my imagination.



SELFIE

I selfie

To capture my image

Capture with me

My loved ones

My surroundings

The tree, temple, palace and sea

To capture

Who are

With me at the moment

As the moment

Will slip away

In the next moment

It will be past.

The tree will not come back

To me where I reclined

In that moment

For support

Got the shade

Got the cool oxygen.

I want to capture

The flower

Whose fragrance and beauty

Enchanted me

I want to capture

The beauty of the birds

Who fly making a 'V' sign under
The clouds so dark
I want to capture with me
The blue waves of the sea
The waves that rise and fall
With my emotions
I want to hold
In my camera
The cool moon
The warm sun
The green grass
The mother earth
Everything I love
Seen and unseen
And wait to see and hold
All the blessings of God.



Bharati Nayak: Bharati Nayak is a bilingual poet, critic and translator from Bhubaneswar, India. She has done her graduation from Ravenshaw College, Cuttack and post-graduation from Utkal University, Bhubaneswar. Her poems have been published in more than hundred books, e-books and magazines of national and international repute. She has so far published eight books. She was conferred the Sahitya Lahari award by International Cosmos Society, India in 2018 and Star Ambassador of World Poetry And Art Philosophique Poetica International Award in Literature by the World Poetry Conference in Bhatinda, Punjab, India in 2019.



SO LONG, DR. JOHN

Bid farewell to New Orleans' favored son:

after more than a six-decade run

infusing sound with flamboyant fun,

we woke up to learn that Dr. John

had folded his sheet music and was gone.

He left us music that was *c'est bon*

making whoopee with syncopated ease
as hands danced and flirted across keys,
taking us back in time, but now he's

in the right place at the wrong time.

He could make voodoo blues sublime
like Mardi Gras goes on all the time.



Bill Cushing: For this month's issue of *GloMag*, Bill Cushing honors what would have marked Dr. John's 80th birthday (November 20). Bill lived throughout the United States as well as the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico before moving to Glendale, California where he now resides with his wife and their son. Entering college after serving in the Navy and working on oil tankers, classmates at the University of Central Florida called him the “blue collar writer.” He is currently working on a memoir documenting those years of his life. Bill earned an MFA in creative writing from Goddard College. Recently retired after years teaching college English in the Los Angeles area, Bill’s writing has appeared in newspapers, magazines, journals, and anthologies both in print and online. Besides writing, Bill facilitates writing workshops. He has three books of poetry available: *A Former Life*, *Music Speaks*, and *...this just in. . .*



YOU'LL UNMASK ONE DAY!

Behind a cold, composed mien,
A heart vulnerable remains unseen,
Primed to implode with the burden
It so charismatically bears,
Over the years of strange restraints.

Tender emotions struggle for breath,
Beneath your stern cold gaze,
As you triumphantly stifle the laughter
Bursting from your soul,
In the noise of your calculating, commanding voice.

The senses in me has keenly sensed, the
Loneliness beneath your seething words,
Impatiently waiting to blurt out sweet nothings,
In the ears of someone who can reach
beyond your infuriating facade.

Oh, yes I can vouch for all I say,
For a flame of faith flickers in me,
Promising showers of incessant love from you,
When one day the fragrance of my love
shall permeate the walls of your incertitude.

With your own volition, then, you shall gladly
Rip off your mask, trampling it under your feet and
Come forward eagerly to kiss these waiting lips,
And gently rest your head on my shoulder,
To let your frozen emotions melt downstream.



Bilquis Fatima: She loves Nature and speaks for social issues, expressing her feelings in the form of short articles and speeches right from her college time. **Poetic Aroma** is her first published book of poems and she is a regular contributor to **GloMag** and On Fire Cultural movement. Her poems have also been published in **Spillwords Press, Sahitya Ananad journal, Destiny Poets(UK)**, and commended by various other national and international publications. She has also contributed to some Anthologies, **“Queen”** published by Vishwa Bharti Research Center being the first one, **Nostalgia** by Prose and Poetry Group, **Inked Thoughts** by The Impish Lass Publications, **The Roseate Anthology, Ruddy Ravens and Cheshire cats and Rusty Rats** by The Significant League group, being the latest one.



CHAINED LIFE

After a brisk morning walk

And a cup of tea with some friends at the street corner,
my day breaks.

Rush to the office,

Bounded with the corridors of work,

Routine drudgery of everyday life

Bargaining in relationships

An eerie day ends,
leading to a rather weary evening.

On my return home
Through the station square,
I envy at the togetherness of the chirping birds,
on an old banyan tree,
Looking at the giggling stars up in the sky
I sigh and tell to myself,
I am chained,
and have no freedom...
To be vast as a sky
And giggle with the stars
To stretch like a greeny landscape,
Smiling with the hedge roses
To mingle with the horizon
I sigh,
My life is chained...



Bishnu Charan Parida: Bishnu Charan Parida from Jajpur Road Odisha, India is a bilingual poet. His poems have been published in many anthologies and magazines of national and International repute. He has been honoured on many literary platforms and won awards from literary organisations.



GALLIPOLI

The Anzacs and Brits
dig deep in their trenches
a stone's throw away
the Turks look down

In-between rotting bodies
both sides with their slaughter
the stench of death
In no man's land

the order comes
one final great battle
a final charge to gain the land
over the wall with your fear
to face the spite
of their Gatling guns
wave after wave
crawl over dead bodies
and still the great Generals
won't halt the charge

all these young lads
maimed and butchered
their futures stolen
by useless orders
of incompetent men

while the battle rages

Lord Hamilton and his Generals

all dress for dinner

fine dining for them



Brian Mackenzie: I was born in Inverness in 1949 and have lived there until 1969. Since then I lived in Lond and Saudi Arabia. I have worked most of my life in the Airline Industry which enabled me to travel the world quite easily and cheaply. I am now retired and have lived in Spain for the last ten years. I only started writing since I retired in 2009 and it is only in the last few years I started writing songs and poems and I suppose have become quite prolific. I self-published 6 books and 1 book by a publisher, the second soon to be released.



RAINBOW AS A METAPHOR FOR BIRTH, HAPPINESS, FREEDOM AND COLORS OF LIFE

Slowly, simultaneously,
the dark curtains of labor
unveil
for the due date
has arrived
for the 'midnight's children' to be born,
dilating, the maiden mother clouds
bleed, splintering, scattering,
vermilion red blobs

forming arcs of indigo and violet
across the expansive blue bed sheet.

Screaming, shrieking,
outburst as they louder
for the offsprings to
see the world of greener grass,
labor progresses,
aches of excitement continue
until finally
the chief doctor
robed in lemon yellow
and pumpkin orange
visits
and peeps to see
if the colors of life
have been delivered.



Brindha Vinodh: She is a postgraduate in Econometrics but a writer within. She has contributed to several anthologies and has been a featured poet in 'year of the poet' by InnerChildPress international', USA, and her roseate sonnet selected as one of the best poems of 2020 by the same team.



LET'S PUT OUT TO SEA

(1)

The rising sun smears crimson on sea

Fairly pleasant, neither cold nor hot,

Waves rising and falling there I see,

For eternal journey ready is the boat.

(2)

Come, my dear now let us embark
And go, very far beyond the stars,
Soothing notes in the air I can hark,
Ethereal place without worldly bars.

(3)

We sail smoothly under the blue sky
You let your head rest on my shoulder,
I begin to feel the two souls soar high,
Time thaws away, stood like boulder.

(4)

Earth no more a pretty place to stay
Let's seek a haunt where joys bloom,
No sorrows, no tears, nothing to say,
We sail on and on, crossing the gloom.

(5)

This splendid journey goes on till eternity
No more the burden of wait, two souls bear,
The moments of realization of utterly rarity,
Awake, awake, open dreamy eyes, my dear.



B.S.Tyagi: B S Tyagi from India is a bilingual poet and novelist. He has several books – fiction and non-fiction to his credit. His poems and short stories have been included in a number of anthologies. His writes-ups, short stories and poems appear in national and international literary magazines. Besides, he has translated seven poetry books from Hindi into English. Inner joy of creativity is the best prize to him.



SILENT WORDS

Imprisoned by my own poem

Plain-speech slang

Circled Barbed wires

Contain pools of grammar

Poetry is a constructed conversation

On the frontier

Of word dreaming and

silence on paper.

Speechless in a world
Of riotous birdsong
A sense of being caught
In a future temporal myth.



Carl Scharwath: Carl Scharwath has appeared globally with 170+ journals selecting his poetry, prose, interviews, essays, plays or art. Two poetry books *Journey to Become Forgotten* (Kind of a Hurricane Press) and *Abandoned* (Scars Tv) have been published. His new book *The Playground of Destiny* (Impspired Press) features prose, poems, and photography. His first photography book was published by Praxis in Africa. His photography was also exhibited in the Mount Dora and Leesburg Center for The

Arts galleries. Carl is the art editor for Minute Magazine (USA), a competitive runner, and a 2nd degree black-belt in Taekwondo. Carl was recently nominated for Best of the Net 2021 award and was a finalist for the Mary Cassatt award for photography.



backyardpoultry.iamcountryside.com

Petty comments, petty people

he, she too tall,

too black, brown

too fair, too short

too slim, too fat

too grim a face

smiley,

none normal,

except me



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. He writes poems to be subsequently brought out into a collection.



LEAH

He loved my sister. I was not the prize
Beautiful Rachel was supposed to be
The morning after my weak eyes could see
My place in bed was not a nice surprise.
For seven years I'd wanted him, father
Said I was the first-born and should first mate
Jacob's so handsome but he would rather

With my witch sister all my dreams frustrate
That wedding night I would replace
An unworthy sibling and taste pleasure
In his firm arms I did at last embrace
All longed for in long years beyond measure
The rage, as if he had never been tricked
Anyone himself, he was not grateful
For my love, I was mere trash to be kicked
Rachel was his a week later. Hateful
Were their smiles and glances, I gave him sons
I gave him everything I could, but no
He could not love me and now time outruns
Oh Lord love me as I love Jacob so!



Christopher Villiers: I am a poet residing in Braunton, England. I work as a writer. I have contributed to various anthologies and have also published three volumes of poetry.



WANDERING AGAIN

Wandering again

Thoughts drifting through my mind's sky

Each cloud a question

Changing shapes and moods

Unseen winds and silent dreams

Light and shadows play

Sunlight reaches out
for what I can't remember

Dusk embraces me

Through soft hazy veils
Stars shine from so far away
Midnights' curtain falls



Dale Adams: Dale Adams lives in Bethany Oklahoma with his wife, 1 dog, and an unknown number of guitars. He enjoys reading history and science, as well as poetry and music. He has been writing poetry and composing songs since 2011. Dale has established SoundCloud and YouTube Channels, and has converted poems into songs for many other poets. When one of his own poems becomes a song, he records it in his home studio and posts to Soundcloud, YouTube, and Facebook. Some of Dale's publications are Warriors With Wings Anthology, and Fallen Angel Anthology.

<https://soundcloud.com/dale-adams-272904153>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/DrBuggs13>



Inside of the Cemetery of Moradillo de Roa (Burgos). Daniel's Pic

AT THE END OF A TIME, THE CEMETERY OR THE GRAVEYARD

Good or bad, friends and companies come to visit our dead on the first day of November. The Cemetery, or Graveyard, next to the church of the town, is on a roost that stands out in the distance. The church is plump and short, like the neighbors who inhabit it. They have a walking priest, like a stone curlew, who gives advice and has none for himself, with four or five other towns. Who, at the same time, is a sacristan; although he is helped by the women of the town, whom they call "Father."

The Christianity of this town carries in its entrails a fine hatred because, sometimes, when a deceased passes by on the way to the Cemetery, some people are heard saying:

-Each pig gets its Saint Martin; that he is taken from the fact that pigs are killed by Saint Martín.

You see the dead or the dead pass and, in truth, you think that: "There is no deadline that does not come."

It is a good day that a certain Porrás and the priest were buried, before saying goodbye to him on behalf of all the people, and before they threw the earth on top of the mortuary box, he said:

-Here we come with Porrás, rest in Peace!

Some strangers or relatives from abroad thought that, after the burial, they gave us coffee with milk, or chocolate with batons (porras), which here would be "Sardinillas", a typical village cake.

Another day of burial, it happened that they had buried a certain "Wolf", and some comadres, who were present at the responso (funeral oration), separated from the responsorial group, exclaiming one of them:

-Achicar, comadres, (godmothers), the Galga is coming.

Galga is a woman little esteemed in the town because it was commented that several neighbors of the town had passed her through the panty, in the Cotarro, or in the typical winery, next to the walls of the Cemetery.

One of the comadres told her as soon as she approached them:

-Now you will be happy, that you have a husband forever outside, and two inside, because she brought twins from no one knows which gentleman.

She smiled, shedding a single tear from her left eye.

As I left the Cemetery, I began to think and recite:

- To Death I go, from Death I come, if they are not loves, I do not know what I have.

Taking a few steps and others to the Plaza (Square), I continued to sing:

-I go to the village, especially patron saint festivities and, in the musical evening, I prepare my crossbow to hunt she birds, although afterwards, I do not eat one.



Daniel de Culla: I am a Daniel de Culla, poet, writer, etc., residing in Burgos, Spain. I am retired. I have also published poetry, anthologies more than seventy.



UBUNTU

We are as different as the flowers of the universe and yet we are united

by values that honour integrity, the family, the religions,
That honour love.

Our attire is as varied as there are peoples in the world
And yet we all love and respect each other, similarly.

Our colours are genetically, divinely bestowed.

They are physiological, functional and protective among
our melanin enriched.

Melanin deficiency allows the others to absorb vitamin D as their sun is weak.

Our music is beautiful, whether emanating from east or west, north or south.

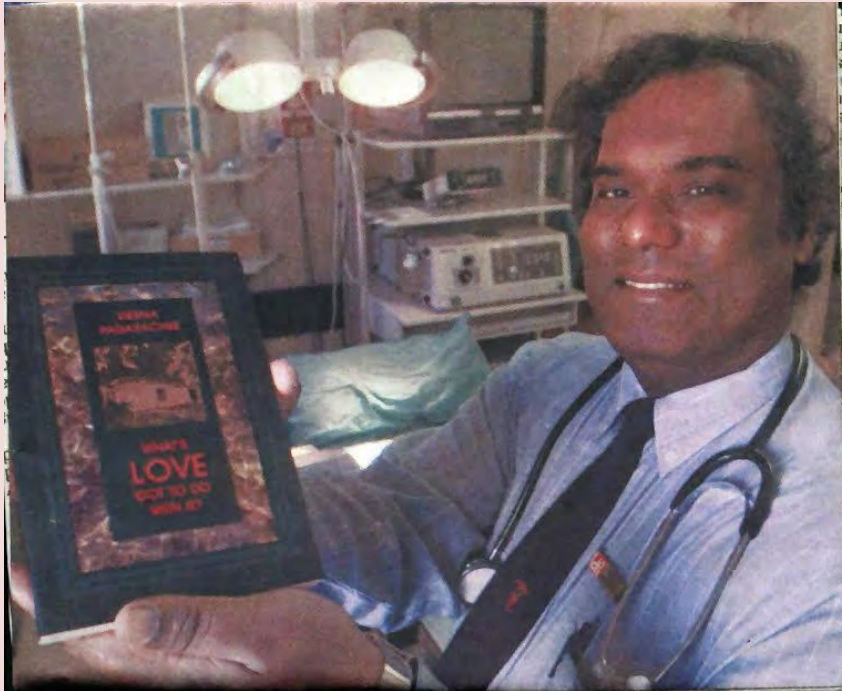
Our dance and our rhythm speaks to our souls,
wherever the serenades emanate from.

The diversity of human life is the desire of the Divine One.

Let us never attack God's creations
for then we attack God.

Ubuntu: It is an Nguni term that means "I am because we are."

The term honours the love, respect and humanity present in all human beings.



Deena Padayachee: Dr Deena Padayachee is a medical doctor, a graduate of Natal University in South Africa. He is the recipient of the Olive Schreiner and Nadine Gordimer prizes for prose. His poems have been published in India (GloMag), the United Kingdom, the USA, Australia and South Africa. His book of liberation poems, 'A Voice from the Cauldron' was published during Apartheid in 1986. Some of his oeuvres have been translated into Xhosa, Zulu, Tamil, Hindi and Italian. He has been invited to speak at literary conferences at universities in Germany, India, Denmark, Mauritius, the USA and South Africa.



RANDOM

At random

Just a series of cards

On a barren land, barren

With no trees

No Rhododendron, no Lily

No sheds anywhere

Just dryness abundant

The Ace of hearts rules

Rules over all others

All the diamonds, hearts, spades, and clubs

At random

Pulled up by the hair

Painted with the red nails

Sing and dance for the praise

Praise for the Ace of hearts

The Kings and the Queens

Just stare on

Still, motionless, blank

Just like the stones in the barren land

At random

On the barren land

Just a series of cards, almost lifeless

Painted with red nails.



Dipankar Sarkar: I am only a part-time poet residing in Kolkata, India. I work as the CEO of Mongia Green Foundation. Poetry is the only soulmate I have. I find solace in poetry when my heart bleeds. Poetry comes to me completely unannounced, without a notice. I wake up sometimes, out of an altered reality or out of a daydream, and voila, words just start flowing out of nowhere and completely inundate me, forcing me to live an experience of writing.



Photo Credit © Roscoe Masters

THE CARPENTER

(In Memory of Craig Masters)

Hope Street – A chance meeting maybe a foretold greeting
written in the

stars touching two creative hearts unexpectedly forging a
lasting bond in a world

constantly changing evolving reversing catapulting into
unknown futures –

A street carpenter carving creating hoping his wooden
masterpieces forged from

discarded wood fragments moulded from vegetable
wooden boxes would adorn any
home with unique furniture pieces delivering constant awe
and admiration securing
a small income to stay alive on the streets of Cape Town
inspiring an artist to always
be grateful hopeful content creative contemplative pensive
and most of all genuine.

Diary of an Artist – I find inspiration from the laughter tears
frustrations and dreams
of people living in shadows mostly unseen and
unappreciated mocked
misunderstood dismissed targeted but mostly the invisible
ones. I remember
crossing paths with a street carpenter proudly displaying
his wooden furniture pieces
upcycled from vegetable boxes in Hope Street Cape Town
South Africa, mother city
to a unique mix of original descendants of the Khoi, a
coastal dwelling tribe and

those who crossed oceans to forcibly claim land and people for their new haven. I

distinctly recall that Carpenter's positive outlook on life and his hustling mind-set to

meet his existential needs to survive whilst remaining grateful . It reminded me of the

love of God – All-encompassing and forgiving. We, who were lost troubled and

broken until God found us and healed our fractured spirits to restore our faith in Him

and purpose in life. Most of all my strength of spirit is as a result of a loving

supportive mother and father – His name was ***Craig Masters***, a Master artist whose

legacy lives on in his phenomenal art collection and indeed in our hearts and souls.

Hope Rising – A raw background canvass reflecting a street carpenter's life on these

streets. A cohesive stitching reflecting mankind's healing process and how our

experiences are inevitably drawn together to hold our futures in place. A kite soaring ever higher dancing on winds of hope even just to make us cope through dark days.

Black our fears of losing loved ones dear. *Purple* our marks of suffering in silence.

Terracotta our lives living this life. *Green* our love of nature. *Blue* our hopes and

dreams reaching for azure skies. *White* our spiritual cleansing from earthly grime.

Epitaph – Live life. Embrace lost souls. Give hope to strangers. Forgive. Inspire- **RM**

(For Roscoe and Cheryl Masters and family)



Don Beukes: He is a South African, British and EU Poet and writer. He is a Poetry Chapbook Reviewer at The Poetry Café. He has written Ekphrastic Poetry since 2015 collaborating with artists internationally. He is the author of 'The Salamander Chronicles', 'Icarus Rising-Volume 1' (ABP), an ekphrastic collection and 'Sic Transit Gloria Mundi'. He taught English and Geography in both South Africa and the UK. His poetry has been translated into various languages. He was nominated for the 'Best of the Net' in 2017 as well as the Pushcart Poetry Prize (USA) in 2016. He was published in his first SA Anthology 'In Pursuit of Poetic Perfection' in 2018 (eBook) and his second, 'Cape Sounds' in 2019. He is also an amateur photographer and his debut Photographic publication appeared in Spirit Fire Review in June 2019.

Roscoe Reid Masters: He is a Visual artist from Cape Town who has graduated from Ruth Prowse School of Art in 2009.



THE MYTHIC ARCHAIC CUB, HIS MANDALAS, AND ME

I wait here still for the wise old man
and his chatter of universal traits,
how they shape my acts like hands
on a potter's wheel (but hereditary, innate).

"Archetypes are to psychology
as instincts to biology."

I sit in his psyche, peeling my mandarins,
and wonder, is this a proper asana?
Some tables down someone plays a red mandolin
and my self stifles respondent hosannas.

My me was always confused by the we,
and I was never the one I used to be.

I used to take my tea with cream
but now I prefer lemon.

Why do I have all these dreams
about so many different women?

Decades have passed like clouds over seas
as I searched for any available lee.

The minutes pass like birds in flight
and my shadow cowers in shadows

I interpret as monstrous daytime nights.

Mandolinist fingers dissolve into adders.



Duane Vorhees: He grew up in rural Ohio, fell in love, went to school, fell in love, stuck his toe on bits of four continents, fell in love, taught and learned various subjects, fell in love, grew chronologically and physically. Fell in love, fell in love fell in love. 'Love's Autobiography' is the first part of a longer meditation, 'The Many Loves of Duane Vorhees'. It is based on a lifetime of observation, imagination, introspection, experience, and fantasy.



LIFE IS NOTHING BUT A ROLE

So little you love and so little you hate

Know not for whom love is meant

Applause you to me like a thunder

Sprinkle sweet words as rose water

Sometimes cry and sometimes laugh

Know not when I will moan or clap

Here is so soft and there is so hard

Now fully bloomed and then is just a bud

It is the iron law, no one can violate

All would be altered when time met

Love and hate are two sides of a coin

Can't see each other, under a reign
Entrusts great teacher each a role
No love no hate can touch the soul
All human sentiments are just smoke
Now is seen, but then can't evoke
Role is gone and gone with all mourn
New life, new body, all new in reborn
Yet our face is smeared with colour
The stage is new but same director



Dusmanta Choudhury: He is a poet residing in Jeypore, in the district of Koraput, Odisha, India. He is a Lecturer in English in Dr.B.R.Ambedkar Jr. College, Lamtaput in Koraput district in the Department of Higher Education Government of Odisha. He has contributed to various anthologies. He has recently got the Honour of Pentasi B World Featured Poet 2020 Honour. He is also a member of the Pentasi B world Friendship Poetry, The Tunisian Asian Poetry, The Poetry Society, The World Nation's Writers Union, The Love, The Global Literary Society, The Namaste ink an Author's Manifesto, etc. He has also published many Odia and English poems.



UNITY FROM GREATNESS

To Heather Jansch

Translated by Ula de B.

The sea hides treasures

Underwater gardens

lure the divers,

wooden raft

inspires artists

Parts disposed on the beach

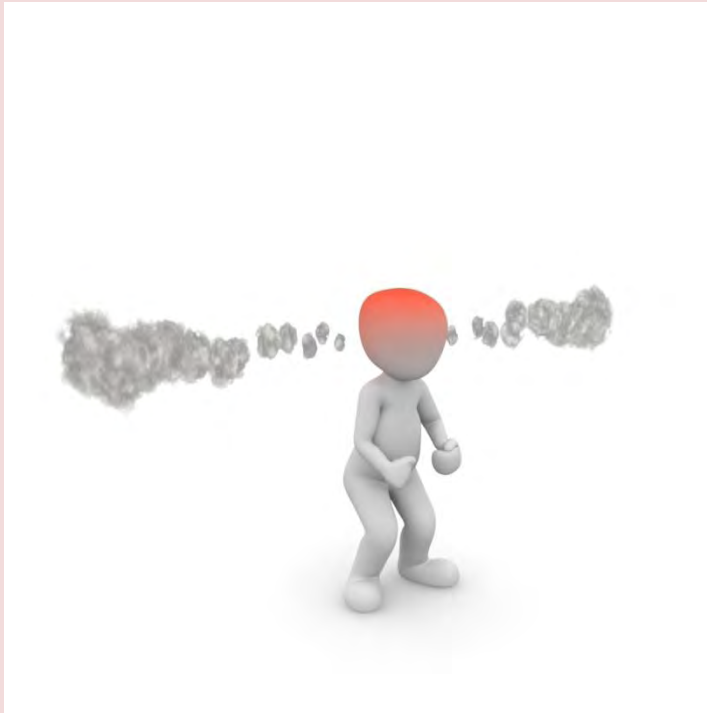
reawaken in another form.

Before, shapeless,
now, formed into a sculpture,
stopping, revealing
that unity from greatness
is
the creator
the inspiration
the masterpiece

The endless azure
brings new life to art.



Eliza Segiet: She received the Global Literature Guardian Award – from Motivational Strips, World Nations Writers Union and Union Hispanomundial De Escritores (UHE) 2018. She was nominated for the Pushcart Prize 2019. She won the Laureate Naji Naaman Literary Prize 2020; the Laureate International Award Paragon of Hope (2020); the Laureate World Award 2020 Cesar Vallejo for Literary Excellence; the Laureate of the Special Jury Sahitto International Award 2021; the Laureate World Award Premiul Fănuș Neagu 2021; and she is a finalist for the Golden Aster Book World Literary Prize 2020. It is in the last stage of an international competition Mili Dueli 2020.



TICKLES

My minister's order is diligent.

He never plucked a revolver

he didn't aim to use.

A ridiculous fellow, weighs

but cannot resolve.

It's a frigid father

who will hover.

He roars at the animal quality;

the blood tickles his ear.



Ferris E Jones: He is an award-winning, internationally published poet and screenwriter living in Puyallup Washington. His work has appeared in both print and online magazines including as the featured poet for Creative Talents Unleashed. Other magazines include: GloMag, Piker Press, Se La Vie Writers Journal, Write on Magazine, Outlaw Poetry, Degenerate Literature 17, Tuck Magazine, The Literary Hatchet, Warriors with Wings, In Between Hangovers. He is the recipient of two grants from the Nevada Arts Council and the Editor/Publisher of Nevada Poets 2009. Ferris has twice received honorable mention awards from Writers Digest annual screenwriting contest. He is also the Author / Editor of seven collections of poetry. You can learn more about Ferris E. Jones by visiting www.inquisitionpoetry.com where each month he features the work of other poets. The goal of this site is to spread the word of poetry throughout the world.



IS THERE HOPE

I am thirsty, my mouth is dry

My heart and soul are in search of water

I look around aimlessly

I look with hope within me

But do I see a flicker

Somewhere far on the horizon

A flicker that will help me,

Tread the long stretch of expanse ahead of me

Suddenly I look around

And the flicker is gone

My hopes are shattered

I roam around parched and dry around my lips

Will I get the drop of water, that is rightfully mine

Or will I be forever thirsty.



Fiza Abubacker: I am an English teacher living in Chennai, India. My passion is to express my thoughts through poetry. I work for a school. I have also written a couple of short stories and a book.



RIVERSIDE EXCHANGE

Weaver bird, weaver bird
of the Benue riverbed
sitting high and calm
on a solitary palm.

tell me what thou see
across this sea?
what is the bond
between here and beyond?

little child, little child

tender and mild

you enquire

as curiosity require.

many crossings have shown

what lies beyond is unknown.

I think the smiling water lotus

bear messages of those that left us.



Francis Otole: Francis Otole is a Nigerian born poet and academician. A member of the Association of Nigerian authors(ANA) and many other literary groups. He is an award winning poet from the local and international scenes. Has been featured in magazines, journals, and anthologies; locally and internationally. He is a graduate of the prestigious Benue State University and a student of life. His hobby is reading and writing. He is married with two children



a pickle beyond its expiry dates sits smelling bad in its jar
no amount of water or soap can wash away the grime
without washing away the pickle itself
what was I thinking making loads of it for just the two of
us?

I know that question is a lie
yet I continue to ask it

I haven't looked at the moon for a while now
looking for it was a past time
in a past life

now I keep counting the wrinkles on the bedsheet

it is a such a zen thing to do

one might exhaust counting stars but not the wrinkles on
the bedsheet when one starts afresh every time they blink



Gauri Dixit: When not busy working in her office, she is busy being a traveller, climbing mountains, walking on untrodden paths, capturing the voice of a solitary flower blossoming from a rock or the bird sitting on a hanging branch, sometimes the setting sun or the sea in her camera as well as in the words she weaves. Her poems speak in a voice which is unique, cold and direct. That she has been a part of many anthologies as well as a Reuel Prize awardee and had commendable mention at Destiny's Poet is

incidental. In her first book, 'In My Skin, I Find Freedom', there are poems on varied subjects, yet there is a common thread of a skeptical questioning mind of a free woman.



IF I ASK YOU

When all words fail what consoles you?

When you listen to some unheard melodies

Do you feel like drifting away to a faraway land?

When you feel exhausted

Do you find a shoulder to lean on?

When you lay your head with moist, tired eyes

Does your pillow hold you dearly?

What makes you stand firm and strong?

Do you wait to see the light after every storm passes?

Do you forget what you have been through?

When you meet someone who needs you

You make them laugh and feel good despite the flaws

And your own pain shrinks and fades

Do you sometimes feel the way I do?

Because I know it's the same questions you ask yourself
too...



Gayatree G. Lahon: Gayatree is a teacher by profession and a poet by passion. She is a post-graduate in English literature from Gauhati University .Being a true aesthete, she finds beauty in every object of life and Nature and her ink pours those elements in a subtle way. For her, poetry is a passion where she finds peace and solace amidst the complexities of life. Her poems have been published in various national and international anthologies, magazines, newspapers and web journals.



In the blazing sun,
She saw her land,
Wet with her tears, go dry.
The axes struck
A hundred of them
Leaving stumps,
Twigs and branches.
Her voice rose
From inside

As she cursed,
“May they rot!”

A tall complex
Stands in place
Of a hundred lives
Lost.



Geeta Varma: She is a poet based in Chennai, India. She has contributed to numerous anthologies. She has also published two books. She has been a teacher for thirty years and a freelance journalist. She is now an Educational Consultant and writes for Deccan Herald. She enjoys working with children and has conducted many creative workshops. Her interests include music, reading, writing (poems and stories for children) and travelling.



LAMPS AND EYES

Behind these eyes float oceans of infinite river sources,
That have poured themselves into oceans through a myriad
courses,
Gushing, bouncing, meandering through verdant meadows,
Trying to touch deserts with waves of dunes and shadows,
Waiting to quench parched throats for they know the pain
and anguish,
Pitchers that see, listen and talk to many without leaving
out any to languish,

These streams behind my eyes trickle down through smiles,
Feelings unsaid and inexpressible, turbulence of other
rivers through endless miles,

But spread cheer they must lighting up the path through
dappled crests,

Splintering vivid rainbows in prisms dispelling adversity that
infests.

So let's all smile together for spreading light and cheer,
That glows like in two lamps of our eyes with hope and
nothing to fear.

Behind these eyes spin stories etched in irises,
Unfurling their sagas in history of triumphs and promises,
Fit into skulls that play different roles each time they blink,
In births that crawled through desert sands, and rivers on
the brink,

Wondering what colour they were and from which roots,
Till earth feeds their desires and they surface in fronds and
grass shoots.



Geethanjali Dilip: Geethanjali takes her name seriously and evolves as a handful of songs. A French teacher by profession she contributes to several ezines and blogs. She is a recipient of The Reuel International award for Poetry 2017 and also the meritorious award for commendable mention in Great Indian Poetry Contest 2018. Residing at Salem, India, Geeth believes that poetry connects and moves the world.



Fingertip

Lightly

What will tear

Is poetry

Some thoughts

Some feelings

A moment

Of pinpoint pain

Excruciating



Glory Sasikala: She is a writer, publisher, and poet currently residing in Chennai, Tamilnadu, India. She is the Editor and Publisher of GloMag, an international poetry and prose magazine. Her poetry books, novels, and short stories are available in various online bookstores such as Amazon and Flipkart as well as on her blogs. She is on the brink of publishing a very interesting collection of anecdotes and short stories inspired by her rather colourful and chequered life.



COVID 19

a plague conspires with unknown viruses

to colonise the world

to debilitate the human race

science with all its modernity and know how

lost in a quandary

could not reach consensus on treatment protocols

arguing that the virus

was not of pandemic proportions

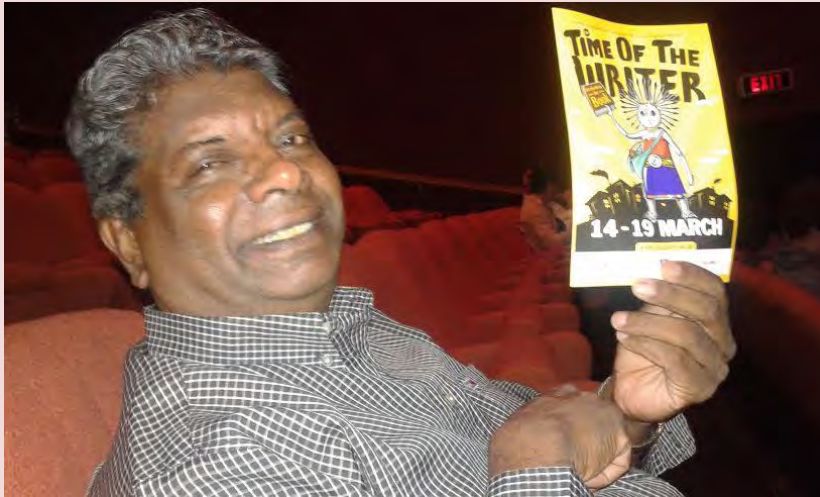
just a passing phase

those in power with the oath taken
to govern and protect the people
cannot solve the crisis
having all the means but not the will
their actions in utter disarray
intoxicated paralysis numbed their brains
denial and confusion ruled the day
they turned a blind eye
to the dead and the dying
the body count multiplied and multiplied
and became statistics for political rhetoric
and the graveyard space
became scarce like water in the arid desert

those donned in ecclesiastical robes.
their loud rhetoric sermons
full of brimstone and fire
warning of the torments of hell

for our immoral cursed behaviour
god's wrath has befallen the earth
they made the naïve believe
pray, pray for redemption
and forgiveness to save you from hell
repent! The end is nigh.

the soothsayers and naysayers
and cynics were having a field day
fake news and tall stores found its way
through the grapevine internet
gossip mongers of fear from all walks of life
overnight became experts on medicine and virology
took to social media to spread their lies.
confusion reigned supreme
while the people died



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.



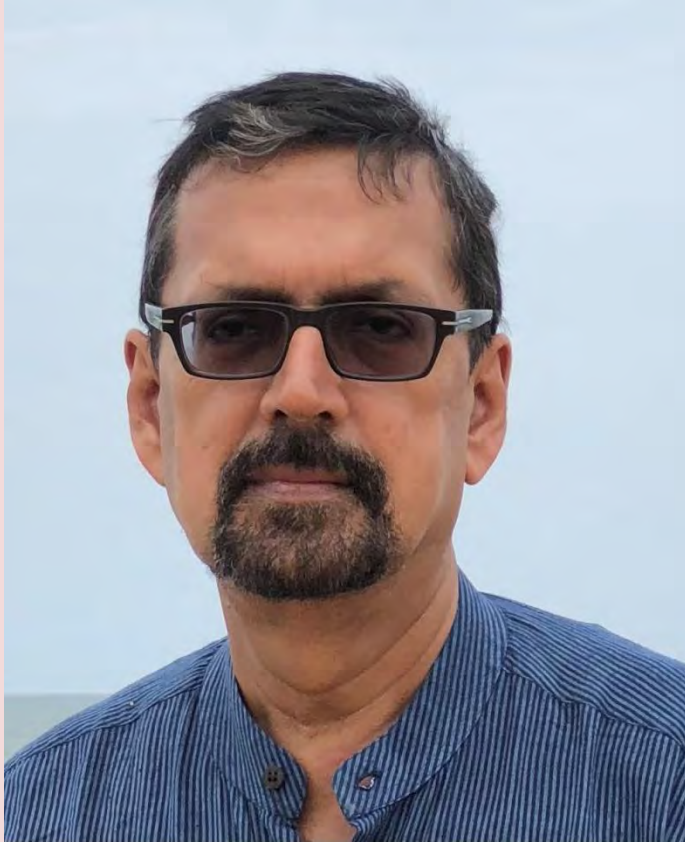
LIGHT AND SHADOW

Darkness eyes light, black hair white,
ghost of the distant memories
move slowly through the mind
down each curvature,
fort wall is all echoes and metaphors.

Clouds drift about in dim white lace
brick colour seeps into shadow lines,
the faces of dead warrior keep returning

fragments of history spooling into modern times,
ever-circling presence of the solitude.

Deep in self-effacing shadows
monochrome photos of the past
glance at life but reformed by time,
light passes through dark leaves
downward and downward.



Gopal Lahiri: I am a bilingual poet, writer, critic and translator residing in Kolkata. I have contributed to various anthologies and have also published ten volumes of poetry in English and eight volumes in Bengali. In addition, I have also jointly edited four anthologies of poems in English and also have one translation work of short stories of Israel, translated by me from English to Bengali. Two recently published books of mine; 'Alleys are filled with Future Alphabets' and 'From Prinsep Ghat to Peer Panjal' (joint e-book).



STONE

Translated by Nirendra Nath Thakuria

By beating and pounding
stones can be made only smaller
but never made any bigger

Stones normally have no home
They lie around anywhere

Run over by vehicles
stones don't get flattened
Pedestrians tread on them
yet no skin is broken

Pounded by the hammer
smaller and smaller they turn
Even then we call them
hard cruel and so on

Stones are eternal
as they can turn smaller instantly
for the good of others
(The beneficent do not die)

No lasting aesthetic is attainable without sculpture
In every age stone sculpture proves best

Still we find it hard to easily believe that
the eternal stone is all in all the glory of humans



Guna Moran: Guna Moran, winner of Creator Of Justice Award honoured by International Human Right Art Festival 2020, is an internationally acclaimed poet and book reviewer. His poems are published in more than 150 international magazines, journals, webzines, newspapers, blogs, anthologies and have been translated into thirty languages around the world. He has three poetry books to his credit. He lives in Assam, India.



FORGIVENESS

It is said—

Forget and forgive.

Difficult may be

to forget,

But one can forgive.

For a person wronged,

Natural reactions—

Anger, hatred, revenge

Towards wrong doers.

Not healthy for
Body and mind,
For relationships.
But the act of
Forgiveness, brings
Calmness and peace.

One who forgives,
Has a broad mind
and a large heart.

A wrong doer—if
Knowingly or unknowingly, intentionally or without,
Has committed mistake or
Wrong, and has
Realised, repented—
Should ask for forgiveness,
From the wronged.

Wronged or wrong doer,
Should realise the
Great human quality—
Forgiveness.



Jagadish Prasad: I am writer residing in Chennai, Tamilnadu, India. I am an HR and Media consultant/Resource Person and also a partner in an HR/Talent Resources consultancy company. I have contributed poems to the annual magazine of Chennai poets circle, Chennai. I have also contributed prose and poetry to the in-house magazine of IOB (Iobian).



LOST LANDSCAPE

I am driving down a hill
without name on an
unnumbered highway.

This road transforms into
a snake winding around
coiled on hair pin turns.

See how it hisses though this
long night. Why am I alone?
Alone in my dream.

At bottom of the incline
lies a dark village strangely
hushed with secrets.

How black it is. How difficult
to find what I must discover.

My fingers are tingling cool, smoke
combs the air, static fills night.

I continue to cross gas lit streets
encountering dim intersections.

Another maze. One line
leads to another. Dead ends
become beginnings.

Listening to lisp of the road.

My slur of thoughts sink as
snake rasps grow louder.

See how the road slithers.

What can be explored? Where
can it be? All is in question.



Joan McNerney: She has been the recipient of three scholarships which includes one from the University of Mexico School for Foreign Students in San Antonio, Texas. She received her Bachelor of Arts Degree in English Literature from New York State Board of Regents, Excelsior

University. She has recited her work at the National Arts Club, New York City, State University of New York, Oneonta, McNay Art Institute, San Antonio and the University of Houston, Texas as well as other distinguished venues. A reading in Treadwell, New York was sponsored by the American Academy of Poetry. Her poetry is found in many literary magazines. She has four Best of the Net nominations. *The Muse in Miniature* and *Love Poems for Michael* are both available on Amazon.com and Cyberwit.net. Just released is a new title *At Work*. This collection shows colorful snapshots of working women and men in their daily lives.



CHRISTMAS IN PURGATORY

might it well be done tonight

a minutiae or a millennium

oh what time, what pain has passed

what day, what dot, what, what

I dare not pray for mercy, nor for a gift of love

knees bent, I cross my breast for those I have inflamed

my eye does not see my hand, my hand cannot find my
heart

endlessly I move directionless, through caverns, through
fires, through you all

keeping the company, the consequence, the burden, of a
time alive

now buried deep within the hollow earth, the frozen border
of hell itself

no flesh, no bones, no voice with which to carry or cry

perhaps for an instant if I may break through

perhaps you may read these words' intention

that come to you from an unimagined realm

a population of one plus one million

if so, then I am not forgotten

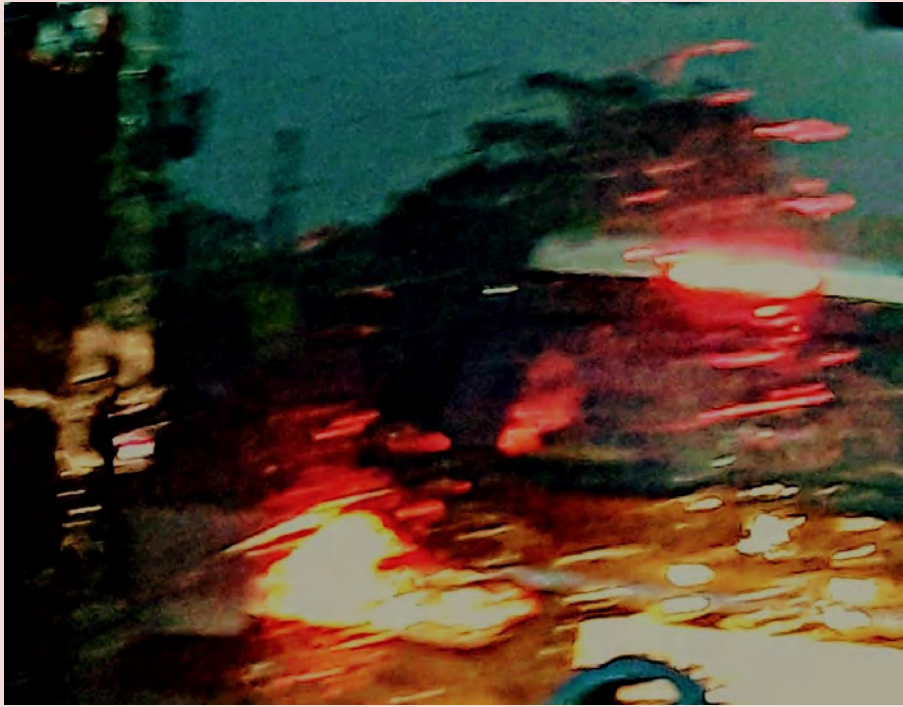
a soul alone in desolation



Joe Kidd: He is a multi-award-winning songwriter, speech writer, music/film critic, and ordained minister, inducted into Michigan Rock & Roll Hall of Fame 2017, recipient of Michigan Governor's and US House of Representatives certificates for work promoting Peace, Social Justice, Cultural Diversity. He lives in Detroit Michigan USA with partner, author/vocalist Sheila Burke. He has a CD titled *Everybody Has A Purpose* 2015, a book of poetry titled *The Invisible Waterhole* 2020. His works appear in benefit recordings, Music For Japan, and Songs For Standing Rock, many poetry journals. He was on tour throughout North America and Western Europe.

<https://www.amazon.com/Joe-Kidd/e/B089QYDXSM>

<https://joekiddandsheilaburke.com/>



A WAY AWAY...

Scrambled back lights
of the front cars
on my rainy windscreen
bring back whispering tears;
the breezy tunes of old melodies
playing in the radio FM
caress your warm absence.

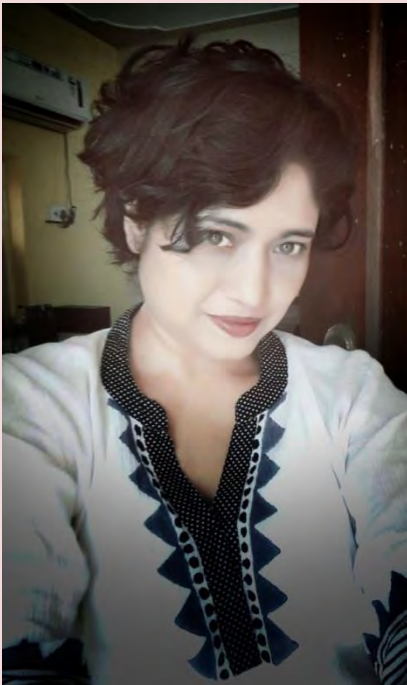
Gulping down the billowing sleep
with some soda water
I tightly grip the dark
steering through the measured truth.
Fizzy dreams plop up
through my foggy breath;
your pouting void blows bubbles.

Blurry traffic confuses the wipers,
highway mocks at my destination;
taking a tea break I wipe the mirrors;
curly smoke from my cigarette
entangle with the dangling winter.

Drowsiness splash water in my eyes,
the scent of the far crowd blooms.

Empty earthen cups
thrown carelessly after tea,

break the eminent identities
into shards of indifference.
Highway licks our bleeding distance,
the seat belt secures the void
sitting beside me in prominence.



Kakoli Ghosh: She is a poet/short story writer from Durgapur, West Bengal, India. She wears many hats—a freelance writer, painter, beauty advisor and jewellery designer and has a keen interest in music and art in general. Apart from contributing to various anthologies, she has also published a poetry book.



<https://in.pinterest.com/pin/315040936418437156/>

SOFT SILKY BREEZE

Light winds move an amber leaf
Branches sway in slow harmony
Spreading roots in the moonlight
Leaves falling upon a light frost
Hum a song to the winter queen
Commune with fairies upon a log
Twinkling stars fill my dreams
A snowflake kisses my cheek.
In the valley a train rumbles on
The alarm creates an uneasiness

Peace returns to the enchanted wood

Sitting quietly in a soft silky breeze.



Ken Allan Dronsfield: Ken Allan Dronsfield is a disabled veteran and prize winning poet from New Hampshire, now residing in Oklahoma. A proud member of the Poetry Society of New Hampshire, he has five poetry collections to date; 'The Cellaring', 'A Taint of Pity', 'Zephyr's Whisper', 'The Cellaring, Second Edition' and 'Sonnets and Scribbles'. Ken's been nominated three times for the Pushcart Prize and six times for Best of the Net. He was First Prize Winner for the 2018 and 2019, Realistic Poetry International Nature Poetry Contests. He has recently begun producing Creative Content on his YouTube channel and has had wonderful success sharing his poetry. Ken loves writing, thunderstorms, and spending time with his cats Willa and Yumpy.



LAST NIGHT

Last night I heard the strains of a Shehnai

Wafting up from far below.

Diwali drenched happiness wandered there

Amidst joyful lights.

People in festive clothes and laughter fed on a splurge of
festive colours...

The music touched and internalised in me.

The noise and the crowd faded out.

The sweetness of the Shehnai spoke and music just folded
in to a world of

Sandalwood and Haldi...

Four auspicious banana plants in four corners,

Clay pots, garlands, marigold, tender coconut, mango
leaves,

The paan and supari...

Joyful women chattering.

I remembered the night of tinkling bangles,

Layers of necklaces, ear rings shining, the maang tika,
beauty on my forehead...

The chandan paste design put delicately with a clove...

While the Shehnai played.

Red Banarasi draped and the veil spoke its own story.

The fragrances of rose water sprinkled on guests,

The Jasmine blooms wound around my hair and newness of
many feelings.

In this internal quiet moment years later,
I gave myself permission to dwell for a while in nostalgia...
Drenched in sounds that reverberated
and caught at my throat.



Ketaki Mazumdar: I am a poet, a dreamer and an author. I reside in Mumbai, India, but grew up in Kolkata. After an amazing thirty-six years of being an educationist, receiving a National Award from the then President, Dr. Abdul Kalam, I now indulge in my passion for writing poetry and authoring children's books. I have contributed my poems to many poetry sites and authored a boutique book of hundred poems, for private circulation. I continue to learn, be awed by Nature's beauty and mystery, human relationships and the spirituality of life and death.



THE SHADOW OF INNOCENCE

The shadow of innocence is so far
behind the façade of age its frayed
edges hardly touch your toes.

It hovers over mind, often in the interstices,
a spark that lost its flicker.

You move into the rarefied corridors
of the elite, learn and ape a lingo
that earns your spurs; A feeling,

often flicked aside like an unwanted
toy in the attic, niggles up to remind
you are unsteady on the ground.

Yetit is the world you would like to
belong, be it secluded and indrawn;
No wordy spat with an auto driver
over the fare lest you lose the spurs
earned the hard way; Oh! an
unequal exchange too!

Yet it is a safe world to cosy up,
a sturdy woollen cloak against
the biting cold; A lovable, randy world
humming with avant garde art and chat;
Away from the darts of shadow of innocence.



K.S.Subramanian: I am a poet and short story writer living in Chennai. I have published two volumes of verse through Writers Workshop, Kolkata. I have nine published short stories and also poems in several anthologies. 'Dreams' got the Asian Age prize.



DAWN AND DARK

Dawn arrives in juvenile splendour

Already the dusky red horizon dims with sundown beams

The golden orb is geared to sink in nocturnal
amnesia

Time rings but we are soon on our way to eternal dreams...

We do hear gongs of some distant gloomy knell

While the dark nights tremulously overwhelm

The unstoppable river ceaselessly flows

The black clouds gurgle as the scythe mows

Though the autumn welcomes the wintry psalm
The blooms fall to ground with beauty and calm
The rain songs drench arid souls in riveting balm
With hopes of springtime trundling all along...

Time the gatekeeper a lurid stern icon
Moves a dangling pendulum between heaven and hell
As my firm heart trills in silence with love and faith
The divine gloriole rings the cosmic joyous bell...



Laksmisree Banerjee: Prof. Dr. Laksmisree Banerjee is an established Poet, Writer, Literary Critic, Editor, Educationist and Vocalist. An Ex-Vice Chancellor and University Professor of English and Culture Studies, she has Eight Books of Poetry, 160 Research Publications and Academic Books on the diverse areas of Literature, Art and Culture. Dr. Banerjee is a National and International Sr. Fulbright and Commonwealth Scholar, having taught, lectured and recited her Poetry and Music in premier Universities and Festivals across the globe. She has several Awards and International Assignments to her credit. A Multiple Paul Harris Fellow and Rotarian she believes in using her Pen and Voice for Social Change. Dr. Banerjee is the Indian Rashtrapati's Nominee on Boards of Central Universities.



It's days like this

When I know that I'm loved by Jesus

It's days like this

When I remember what the Lord has done

And I know for certain

That He's not done

It's days like this

When I think about back then

And with emotion

I thank God for John 10:10

The enemy came to kill, steal and destroy

But Jesus came and gave me life

And even added three children and my wife

When many said go

We don't want you

He said, "Come,

I have a plan for you."

When I slept in toilets and others yards

He was a Shelter for me

Lord, how could I ever

Stop thanking Thee

You pulled me

Out of slime

Took me away

From crime

He will forever be

My King



Leroy Abrahams: He lives in South Africa, Port Elizabeth, Helenvale. He currently works as a Spot Welder at a Motor Industry Firm. He is a Published Author and enjoys writing poetry. His first book entitled, 'Verse en Inspirasie' was published by Selwyn Milborrow (Milborrow Media). His second book entitled, 'Testimony in Poetry' was published by Bevan Boggenpoel, and the third book entitled, 'In Pursuit of Poetic Perfection,' which he wrote together with Bevan Boggenpoel, Selwyn Milborrow, and Don Beukes was published by Milborrow Media. His poetry describes himself and how God has transformed his life. He is also a member of a Master Class group of writers as well as Afrikaanse Digters.



CORONATION

The ceremony will be authentic,
but which sensation will be crowned?

The ear's attention to deep, throbbing bass notes,
amplification of pulse woven around the melody.

The smell of a mothballed house,
threadbare carpet, and a chipped sink within.

Remember what's important of all you have seen,
the splendor of a pink, orange, and purple streaked sky,
a newborn baby's scrunchy face.

Savoring the taste of marmalade,
slathered upon an English Muffin,
a thin layer of butter spread underneath.

Finger tangent, back and forth,
skin connecting to marble or silk,
variations of touch during contact.

Senses arranged, none deranged,
each laureled according to that moment's need.



Linda Imbler: Linda Imbler's poetry collections include six published paperbacks: *Big Questions*, *Little Sleep*, *Big Questions*, *Little Sleep*" second edition (expanded with 66 additional poems), *Lost and Found*, *Red Is The Sunrise*, *Bus Lights*, *Travel Sights*, and *Spica's Frequency*. Soma Publishing has published her four e-book collections, *The Sea's Secret Song*, *Pairings*, a hybrid of short fiction and poetry, and *That Fifth Element*, and *Per Quindecim*. Examples of Linda's poetry and a listing of publications can be found at lindaspotryblog.blogspot.com. In addition to writing, she helps her husband, a Luthier, build acoustic guitars and steel strings in Wichita, Kansas, U.S.A. They are currently working on number 10.



RANDOM LINES

Some memories always linger

Some incidents often trigger

Few instances buzz loud

Very few silently sound

Often past carries forward in action

As if present has to accept the motion

Carrying the concept we think,

Concurrence may happen in future

So our action becomes its reaction

We always think we are right

Pretend to be ignorant about the adverse plight

We commit something equal to crime
And then the position changes
with a lesser chance of rectification
Once the heart is connected to heart
Soul is committed automatically to the other heart
The truthfulness never demands propagation
What we are, how we are
Hope we are
Are judged and then is our resurrection
Words are precious
So are the letters
Carefully we should use
Sincerely we should think and reuse.



Lopamudra Mishra: She resides in Bhubaneswar, Orissa. She completed her graduation in English Hons from Sailabala Women's college, Cuttack and post-graduation in English from Ravenshaw University, Cuttack. Her fascination for writing came from her grandfather and father from an early age. Writing for her is the powerful medium of expression. Her poems have been published in many magazines and anthologies. Her works include her very own published books *Rhyme of Rain; First Rain; Tingling Parables; Rivulet of Emotions; and Red Tulips.*



PORCELAIN TEA SET

My bone china porcelain tea set intricate design in white & gold

Still shines bright even though pretty old

My most prized possession of many years

Gifted to me on my wedding by my mother dears

The memories attached to my gold tea set

Pulls the strings of my heart I seldom forget

I remember you my beloved having tea in the cup gold
Your fingers intertwining it in the hold

A secret of my heart till date
Didn't tell a soul of your existence mate
Your sipping tea slowly sensuously our eyes interlocked
I was thrilled though pretended to be shocked

Your taking me in your arms suddenly
Kissing my lips ever so passionately
I savored and devoured your kiss
My heart fluttering giving the beat a miss

A thrill ran up my spine
Is this what is called love divine
I couldn't forget however I might
It definitely was love at first sight

Whenever I sight the beautiful white & gold cup set

My heart starts beating marathon rate

The beautiful moments come alive my dear

Just you and me lost in our rendezvous without fear



Lubna Ahmed: She is a Certified Master NLP (Neurological Linguistic Programming) Practitioner; NLP Workshop Facilitator and Soft Skills trainer; and Certified Advanced Life Coach. She conducts SuperKoolKids Art Therapy workshops. She resides in Delhi with her family. She has managed to carve a niche for herself in the literary world by her ever so simple 'Love poems'. 'Princess Lubna' is her pen name, her writers' identity. Her love poems are spiritual and have a Mystical Aura. She has written many poems for National and International Anthologies. She is an avid traveller.



The trickling drops of water
Full of myriad shades
The teardrops trailing
From the parched heartland
The emotional outplay
At the pretext
The unspoken truth
Let loosen the soul
Unconventional sentiments

In and out

Conundrum of life

Some feelings deployed

In qualm of some

Forbidden peace...



Madhu Jaiswal: She is a bilingual poet, writer and social worker hailing from the city of joy, Kolkata. She is associated with The Impish Lass Publishing House, Mumbai in the capacity of an executive editor. Her creative contributions have been published in various national and international anthologies and she often gets featured in various prestigious e-zines. She was recently featured in the prestigious anthology Aatish 2 alongside various stalwarts. She bagged third prize in Beyond Black Sakhi Annual Poetry Awards 2019-2020. She is attached to a social group named Share A Smile and volunteers for social causes and upliftment of the destitute.



NOSTALGIA

When winds of change
Tossed the leaves backwards
I chanced upon a relic of the
past.
Then floated along the path
Woolgathering, tossing clouds
Of memory up and down,
hither and thither with the
nimble fingers of a magician.
How I fell a weightless feather

On the rosebud of young love!
Perfuming every thought
my trembling heart throbbed
to melodious tunes, an aria of pain or pining love?
With cupped hands I partake nostalgia spilling over, trying
to save the nectar of love
trickling down the fingers
of bygone boisterous days.
Now, moonlight is silver grey
lighting my way through dark alleys.
Roses try hard to look their best
Not to drop and wilt with age
Its tap root gripping the brown soil
Rooted deep down in the heart of the soil.



Madhumathy. R: Dr. Madhumathy is a retired Associate Professor of English. A lover of literature, her poems have figured in journals and anthologies. A member of Destiny Poets (ICOP), Wakefield, UK, many of her poems have come under their highly commended category. She is also in their panel of critics. Her poems have appeared in the US-based 'Setu Bilingual' published from Pittsburgh. One of her poems titled 'Erasure' was selected as the Poem Of The Month by Destiny Poets.



SPRING

spring will probably be in me forever

efflorescent

just like the leaves of this tree

green and luxuriant

fertile as love

that thrives

in every flower

in every leaf

shines

sparkles

and embraces
writes its name
in every pore of spring
my name
and yours
then swings
from vines
touching the vine
ever climbing
rises to the sky
becomes a flower
and scatters
in many colors
to get in and
settle in my veins
with the ever-flowing spring
it wants to see
the spring flow in me

the forever youthful spring

this spring will probably be in me forever



Madhumita Bhattacharjee Nayyar: She is a bilingual writer (writing both in Hindi and English). A poetess, blogger, lifeskills counsellor, healer, she is also a social commentator and works with women and children. She is the author of “THE NIGHT JASMINE AND OTHER LOVE POEMS”. She is the winner of ICON OF THE YEAR-LIFESKILLS COUNSELLOR 2015-2016, CREATIVE WRITER OF THE YEAR 2016, and Indian Women Achievers Award 2016 for Creative Writing.



SCATTER BRAIN

Pressure cooker calls....

Leave my poem to attend

Attend the doorbell instead

Courier man...receive things

Sanitize hands at once!

Return to the poem...

What were the words in line?

Metaphor, images shape up...

Sudden ring tone buzz!

Call from Carpenter...

Need to confirm his contract
Where was I ... my poem?
Ohh...yes... hmm ...now it's done
I mail it to myself
Will edit it in leisure
Now time to serve tea
I stand with my cuppa
To see the setting sun
Birds flying home bound
Silhouette the crimson west
With hot sips I inhale
A few moments of grace!
Plan dinner for the evening
Check WhatsApp, messenger at pace
My scattered brain needs some rest!



Madhu Sriwastav: Madhu Sriwastav is an academic, writer, poet, translator, reviewer. She writes to express herself about anything that catches her fancy and touches a chord. She is based in Kolkata. She has published in several International and National anthologies and journals. She is a regular GloMag contributor.



THAT KISS

Our first kiss

Happened like a dream

The kiss I was dreaming about

To be just ours to embrace forever

The kiss only between us

The kiss that's always mine

A kiss so pure filled with love

Melting my heart

Giving me the trust

Possessing all of me

Giving me a start
To begin a whole new life
Now I have been fooled
By that kiss forever



Merlyn Alexander: I'm a poetess residing in Nagercoil, India. I'm a housewife. My passion includes writing, cooking, and painting. I have contributed to many anthologies. I have published six books in Haiku Poetry. I'm currently waiting for my first anthology of English poems to be published soon.



ALBERTA BOUND

I own a gate to this prairie
that ends facing the Rocky Mountains.

They call it Alberta—
trails of endless blue sky
asylum of endless winters,
the hermitage of indolent retracted sun.

Deep freeze drips haphazardly into spring.

Drumheller, dinosaur badlands, dried bones,
ancient hoodoos sculpt high, prairie toadstools.

Alberta highway 2 opens the gateway of endless miles.

Travel weary, I stop by roadsides, ears open to whispering pines.

In harmony North to South

Gordon Lightfoot pitches out a tune-

“Alberta Bound.”

With independence in my veins,

I am a long way from my home.



Michael Lee Johnson: He lived ten years in Canada during the Vietnam era and is a dual citizen of the United States and Canada. Today he is a poet, freelance writer, amateur photographer, and small business owner in Itasca, DuPage County, Illinois. Mr. Johnson is published in more than 1098 new publications, and his poems have appeared in 40 countries, he edits, publishes ten poetry sites. Michael Lee Johnson has been nominated for 2 Pushcart Prize awards poetry 2015/1 Best of the Net 2016/2 Best of the Net 2017, 2 Best of the Net 2018. Two hundred seventeen poetry videos are now on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/poetrymanusa/videos>



FEAR

Fear is a hole

It makes nothing whole.

Fear is a rocket

It scars the pocket.

Fear is a game

It can bring shame.

Fear is a price

It can come thrice.

Fear is a grass

It can burn the mass.

Fear is complex

It can tower to the apex

And cause a reflex.



Ngozi Olivia Osuoha: I am a poet/writer/thinker residing in Nigeria. I currently enjoy my work as a writer; I have contributed to over forty international anthologies. I have also published three poetry books and co-authored one, and published over two hundred and fifty poems/articles in over twenty countries. Some of my pieces have been translated and published in different languages too.



UNIVERSAL AFFLICTION

Between my joys and sorrows

Lies a line

Neither the joys leap here

Nor the sorrows spring there

And the obstinate line of fate too

refuses to stir



Nikhat Mahmood: She is a self-employed teacher of English Creative Writing, a short story writer and an occasional poet. She has translated from Urdu to English and also transliterated in Hindi, a book of poems ‘Zard Patton ki Shawl’ written by a prominent Pakistani poet. Several of her stories have been published in various anthologies and magazines. She is currently working on her debut book of short stories, ‘Scent of the Bitter Almonds’ and a novel, ‘Revived Oaths’. She lives in Karachi with her husband and two children.



WHILE WALKING THE PATH..!

Meandering through the mystic path of life,
wrapped in contiguous burden of senses,
often admire the bleeding feet,
as if a joke has been unearth beneath it,
before setting off to the garden of Eden
when they dance in unknown fit..!

Meandering through the mystic path of life,
satiating urges
letter's been crafted
inking life into myriad characters,
As the fall in golden envelope,
mummifying the legacy of the old bard's thought,
in the canvas of copper coloured leaves
A song to the budding twigs in the New Year's Eve..!

Meandering through the mystic path of life,
At times somewhere trapped in the commotion of
emptiness,
despite injuring the corner of eyes,
not to see those vacant vacuums,
Always been desired to be filled with...
The contiguous burden of senses...!
that wrapped in broken dreams and shattered hopes.



Nitusmita Saikia: By profession, an instructor in National Cadet Core, India, Nitusmita Saikia is a keen worshipper of literature. She is working presently in Jorhat, Assam, India. She writes in both English and own regional language (Assamese). Being active in various online Poetry groups and blogs, she has been writing for E-Magazines like Tuck Magazine (USA), FM-Online (USA) poetry magazine, GloMag (poetry magazine) and blog Sparking.biz. With these, her poems have been published in various poetry anthologies National and International (www.realisticpoetry.com (USA), Arduus Publication (Germany), etc. She is also an active social worker. Working for various NGOs, socio-cultural organizations within her city Jorhat, Assam, Nitusmita takes interest in animal welfare too.



ODE TO THE MIGHTY WAVES

O wild bubbly wave! You whose foamy jaws caress
You whose secrets we all wish we knew
So that we may receive mighty Neptune's bless.

Green and turquoise and white and fathomless blue
Your calmness belies the churning wrath of your attack
But in the blink of an eye you show your colours true

Of the deepest blue and frothy white and darkest black
Till like dandelion seeds tossed by the wild wild breeze

To calmer shores we all wend our way back

And from afar we gaze till your fury does freeze

And wisdom prevails and your gentle soul beams

Once more charming us right to our jellied knees.

O mighty blue waves! The cause of countless screams

Of joy and sorrow...and the star of many dreams.



Nivedita Karthik: I am a poet residing in Gurgaon. I work as a senior associated editor. I have published many poems in various national and international magazines and participated in many poetry open mic shows. I am a professional Bharatanatyam dancer and amateur photographer. I am working on my first book of poems.



REFLECTION

The busy days pass in a haze
So much of herself is lost in a maze
Of chores, and self-imposed perception of duties
She chances to look at herself in a mirror
as she pauses to wipe an invisible speck of dust
And sees her reflection,
Amazed at the dark eyes looking back at her,
without any expression
Neutral, blank and still
Like a muddy pond after a deluge.

she swipes at the mirror playfully
with the soft chamois cloth
And wills her eyes to sparkle
in gleeful competition with the spotless shine
Like a pebble makes a ripple in the pond,
Her willful act reflects her inherent joy.



Padmini Rambhatla: I am a poet, teacher and homemaker residing in Chennai, India. I work as a high school English teacher. I have contributed to Glomag and my children's school magazine. I have not published anything so far but in the near future, I will. I also enjoy painting in different mediums, watching movies and listening to music.



SEEMING

My demeanour
To you, my love
Appears to be that
Of an unconditional giver
But you must know that
I am but a shy, naive, girl
Who knows not
How or how much
I should give.
I am void of boundaries

As I seem to be this
Bounteous reserve.
So I beseech, my love,
Please be a kind taker,
Replenish me
Even if I seem full
Give me kind, sweet
Words and gestures,
Be by my side
Even if I seem
To soar and fly
All on my own.



Panjami Anand: Greetings, I am but a speck in the world, aspiring to be as aware and genuine as possible. My poems are fragments of my soul. Thank you for running your palms through them.



SENSE OF SELF

Some people fall in love with themselves
pause as Narcissus, the son of the river god Cephissus
and live in an unreal world as victims of vanity
pre-occupied with a grandiose sense of importance.

Some imagine Cupid has loaded on their heads
the whole weight of global patent of love
attuned in their psyche as dirt clouded in diamonds
and go on trumpeting their success.

Some others weave sly plots to create fake images
that reflects their own limitations as in a mirror
and exposes the offshoot of their lowliness
that grows like dodders weakening the host.

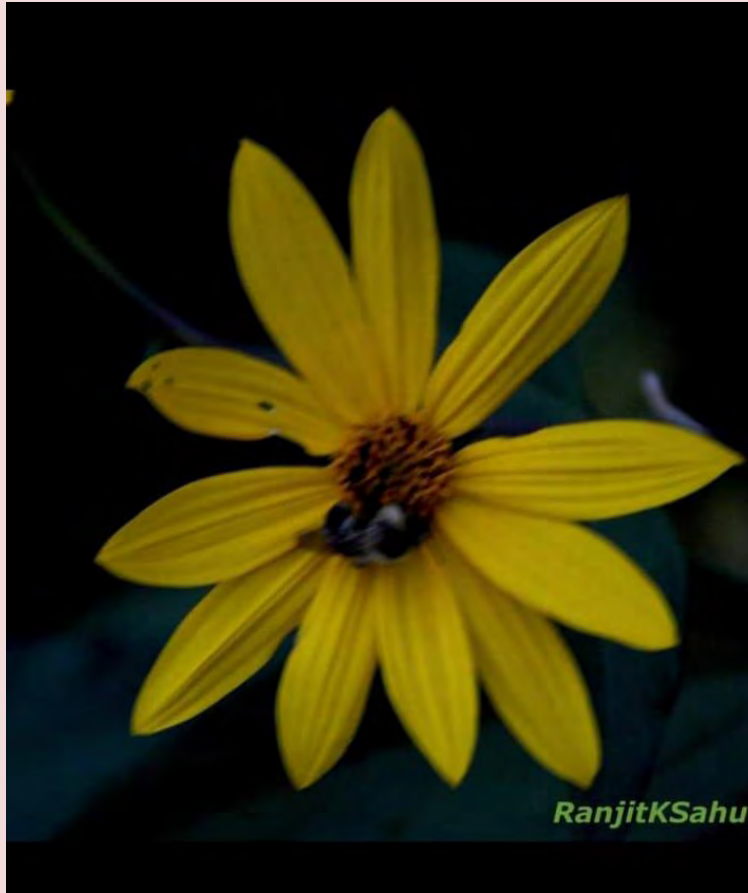
A few espoused by their spouses' good looks,
social acceptance or credentials,
or obsessed with extreme possessiveness
with a 'Be Mine' mantra, an invidious impudence,
perching in one's soul with an arthritic grip
shrinks the other's world, makes life a bumpy ride.

Inheritors of Narcissus or Cupid's agents
dodders or people with fear of rejection,
all tread on edges of slippery slopes
with old primal pains of the past rooted deep

not knowing how to oust the inner critic at the wheel,
the green-eyed monsters, who feed warped views.



Pankajam: Pankajam, retired from BHEL as DM/Finance is a bilingual poet and novelist settled at Chennai, India. In addition to several poems, book reviews and articles published in national and international journals, she has twenty-eight books to her credit, including sixteen books of poems, a translated poetry collection in French and three fictions in English. Three books on literary criticism, viz., *Femininity Poetic Endeavours*; *History of Contemporary Indian English Poetry-An Appraisal*; and *Socio-Cultural Transition in Modern Indian English Writing & Translation* discuss her works in detail. She has won many awards for poems and short stories, including Rock Pebbles National Literary Award 2019.



THE FLOWER AND THE BEE

The flower and the bee.

All alone in the human sea.

The bee busy all day.

Came to rest after flying a long way.

The bee lulled to sleep by the flower.

The bee found comfort in the love shower.

The yellow flower and bee complemented in colour.

The bee working hard with strength and valour.

Collecting nectar from each flower that it visits.

Calm and patiently it sits.

The story of the flower and the bee never ends.

For aeons and aeons, they are eternal friends.



Paramita Mukherjee Mullick: I am Dr. Paramita Mukherjee Mullick and I live in Mumbai, India. I am a scientist transformed into a globally loved, award-winning poet. I have eight books to my credit. My poems have been widely published in Indian and international journals. Some poems have been translated into 39 languages. I have started and

is the President of the Mumbai Chapter of the Intercultural Poetry and Performance Library (IPPL). I am also the Cultural Convenor and Literary Coordinator (West India) of the International Society for Intercultural Studies and Research (ISISAR).



Give me my rights

My son told me

Joys of childhood

No adult rules for me

Explore the world as I want

Touch the trees

Run after dogs

Wear what is comfortable

Spend time with me

Tell me stories

Your yarns, adventures

Laugh with me.

Amma don't waste too much time on me

Have your life

Have something silly

Come and share with me

Dance with me

Cuddle me

Eat with me

Don't spoon-feed me.

Give me my space and Time

Let me grow like the Mango Tree.



Parasuram Ramamoorthi: He is a 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



LAWN CUTTING

Wife likes our lawn to be cut in straight lines.

A mute boy next door in fascination

Keenly watches the geometric times

I reach the edge, marks the delineation.

He has a toy lawnmower of his own.

Sometimes his mam kindly allows him grip

her hands on their mower, grass mown

by both, her feet follow his as they strip

the wildness out of their lawn. His toy won't
cut grass but safely glides over its length,
so he stamps and bawls when his world don't
conform to his straight lines, because it's bent.

My wife says "Better" to our short shorn lawn.
We all want the wild to be uniform.



Paul Brookes: I am a writer residing in Wombwell, England. I work as shop assistant. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have also published five poetry books. Forthcoming is another poetry collection called Ghost Holiday (Alien Buddha Press, 2018). My book 'Please Take Change' was published by Cyberwit recently.



THE INVISIBLE HAND

Since morning I have done nothing except edit a poem,
to be more specific, simply deleted a word 'woman' from
the poem.

To my utter surprise, after the deletion
the poetry is lost!

I am left with a blank sheet of white paper sans alphabets,
words, emotion, passion.

With a vacant look I gaze at the sky
no more does it look blue

The Earth too looks barren,

Streets deserted.

How come I dared to omit woman, when I know that women are the very life blood of poetry!

After the deletion I feel as if I have stabbed a woman in broad daylight.

Since then, words are dismembered,

The Sun looks like a wound oozing blood and poetry blood splattered.

I feel a sense of guilt, the way I feel when my octogenarian schizophrenic mother was tested corona positive and I was forced to isolate myself from her and life became an isolation ward.

Mother is the best piece of poem ever written, even though while editing, the invisible hand deleted the most powerful woman of my life and to me poetry is lost forever.



Prahallad Satpathy: Dr. Prahallad Kumar Satpathy, who hails from Odisha (India), is a bilingual poet writing both in Odia and English. He is a retired Associate Professor of Economics. To his credit, he has four published anthologies in Odia language. His poems are published in many national and international journals. Twice he has represented Odisha Sahitya Academy as an honorary member.



FEAR

Down the ages,
What held Man away from progress?!
The fear of the unknown,
the unheard of dangers,
fearing his own shadow,
Darkness of fear clouding his thinking,
Making a stick appear a snake!
Unless he takes a leap of faith,
Trusting his gut instinct,

He can never progress!

Time and again, a messiah has shown the way out of the woods,

Hunger, the fire in the belly,

Helps fight fear,

Hunger for knowledge helps him seek a pinhole of light,

That guides him out of deep, dark, wells,

An earthen lamp, enough to dispel darkness,

Protect its luminescence,

That it may ignite, many, many more

lamps to light up our worlds,

To live harmoniously with one and all.



Pratima Apte: She is a poet residing in Pune, India. She is a homemaker and a grandmother! She used to write sporadically in the Pune edition's Women's page of the Indian Express. She loves reading and writing, and words are her world.



IN THE FROZEN SILENCE OF THE LAND

The path was not flawless

Nor was that so easy and tranquil

There was no sunshine,

All above darkness around me.

In the frozen silence of the land

I peeped through the lenses of my heart

Found nothing but some pieces of stones and bricks.

My soul roared with terrible pain
Hope found no horizon.
I kept walking down the memory lane
Keeping aside the broken pieces of my heart,
I had experienced both survival and death
Through the whole journey.
I buried my loneliness and grief
In the salty lake of tears,
Those golden memories of yesterday's burnt my days and
night
When the tall eucalyptus trees swayed,
When autumn breeze blew through the dusty fields,
When joyful birds chirped and danced
and when my gypsy soul wandered around the flower
strewn paths,
Every time I stood there with thorny heart.
The curtain of death hit the wall uplifting the breeze.
I have encountered so many sleepless nights,
Suffering soul missed the vibrant hues

Wanted to rest in the breast of blue vast
Like an old river, I tried to rejuvenate
the quench of my thirsty soul.



Preety Bora: Hailing from a beautiful state “Assam” (India), the poetess, Mrs Preety Bora, started writing from her college days. She lives in a city called Golaghat with her family. Nature inspires her to write poetry. She writes in both languages: in English and in Assamese (her mother tongue). Her poems have been published in various anthologies and magazines in India and in foreign countries.



MOTHER

Mother has many names.

Anak Krakatau might be one of them,

Or Uttarkashi or Qinghai,

Haiti certainly is.

She's the mother that swallowed
Maui into her womb,
the mother that disarmed Karna,
who led Oedipus to sin.

She plays pranks too,
in that cheerful way unique to her.
We find strange names to give them
- tsunami, hurricane.

Kali is another name
we've given her, for when she
will be an old woman
looking for some kind of elixir of youth.
Perhaps some quack will mislead
her to find it in our blood.

She has a heart of gold they say -
pure, molten lava,
that sometimes erupts on her skin
like a ripe pimple.

She loves nothing more
than the sound of babies crying -
orphaned, bloodied, hungry, dying -
their carcasses feeding hyaenas.
But hyaenas are her children too.

But she is the green mother
who feeds us, clothes us,
protects us from the sun's
ionizing radiation,
we came from her loins,
which is where we go.



Raamesh Gowri Raghavan: Raamesh Gowri Raghavan is a Thane-based epigraphist, historian, copywriter and poet. He has been published in several anthologies and magazines. He is the editor of Narrow Road Literary Journal, a e-zine of poetry, haibun and flash fiction.



www.timesofindia.indiatimes.com

IN NOVEMBER'S HEAVY FLOODS...

In November's heavy floods...

Can you call it mercy from above,
Wintry bed overflowing all streets,
Or seasons' bounden duty in earnest.

How to channelize hectic overflow,
how to turn tubes and tunnels to ground,

avoid destruction and loss and sabotage,
those in responsible think all around.

Some always contemplate ever and deep,
those horrid days when taps went dry,
Pots in queue rolling, women going impatient
A stone or stick in their place to be back to kitchen.

A boy catching fish and playing boat,
Now forbidden for floods overpower,
All a shrewd man with poetic eye glances,
Record seasons and serendipity,

Seasons' attire and care run and over run
in all changes of exuberance and turgid show
testing man and teasing him, beyond boundary,
Call it Nature or Superior show of Cosmic power.

A philosopher's eye and mind

Slow and steadfast gauge honest and true.



Radhamani Sarma: She is a student of Ethiraj college, Chennai. She specialized in the plays of W.H. Auden for her doctoral thesis from the University of Madras. She obtained PGDTE from CIEFL from Hyderabad. She served in Pachaiyappa's college and is a retired professor of English with 31 years of teaching experience. She has published four books of poems and one book of short stories. She is widely published in various anthologies and is a reviewer and critic.

pearlrade.blogspot.in

pearlrade.wordpress.com



VARIATIONS ON A THEME

Crowd

Washing over body

Prone on pavement.

And I, a pebble,

Think that

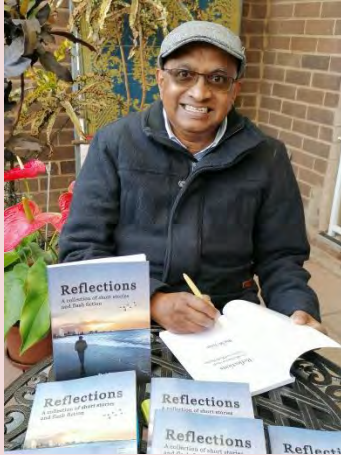
He might be drunk

Or dead.

Inside the temples,

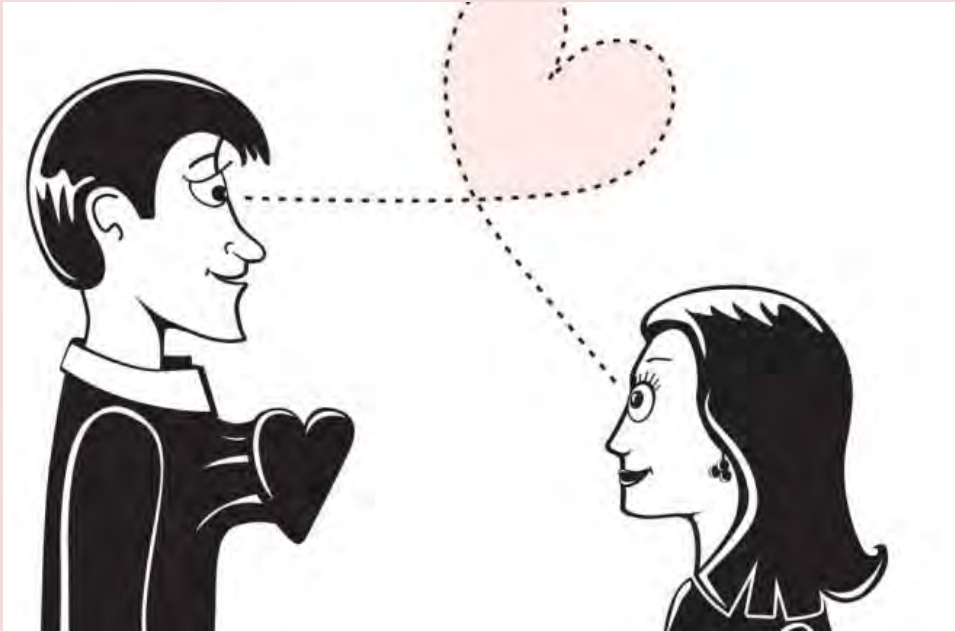
People wrapt in prayer.

Outside,
Beggars sharing space with
Sad-eyed dogs and flies.
All seeking salvation.



Raj Isaac: I am a retired educator who specialized in the teaching of English up to the tertiary level. I reside in Durban, South Africa and have had my writings featured in various local publications. I have self-published two books – a family history and a collection of short stories and flash fiction. My writing journey is recorded in my Facebook page, “The stories I write”.

<https://www.facebook.com/Raj.M.Isaac/>



www.discovermagazine.com

SHORT STORY

Start.

It's a short story,
really short.

Her eyes met mine.

They were strangers,
the eyes.

I could read nothing in them.

There was nothing to read.

Then we parted ways.

There was something about those eyes.

In them I wanted to read love for me.

The pages were blank.

I wrote our story, scene by scene,
with unreal ending.

We met.

She smiled.

I was conquered.

The end!



Rajnish Mishra: Rajnish Mishra is a poet, writer, translator and blogger born and brought up in Varanasi, India and now in exile from his city. His work originates at the point of intersection between his psyche and his city. He edits PPP Ezine and writes at:

<https://rajnishmishravns.wordpress.com/>



Painting Courtesy: Iman Maleki, Iran.

AN ENIGMA CALLED LOVE

Let me fix my gaze

On the words inscribed on the pages

Of the book lying safely in the grip

Of my soft palms which, sadly,

Doesn't mirror the writing on my tender

Heart written by the cruel hands

Of destiny, making me lovelorn, lonely dove;
Oh! don't nudge me for the explanations,
My dearest, at the moment I'm
A shadow of my vibrant persona;
I'm submerging slowly into oblivion, bereft
Of any choices left;

My life is an open book,
Penned by me in language lucid,

Of love to be read by my lover,
Possessing a sensitive heart and open mind;
Yet he glossed over the pages of my
Unfinished book in hurried manner,
Jumping upon the cascade of words,
To reach the final conclusion, leaving
Me distraught and confounded over
My established identity painted on the canvas

Of life by the caressing touches
Of masterly strokes of Time;

I'm a lame duck, a victim
Of my own destiny left alone on
The sand dunes of life
To face the fury of ravaging storms.



Rakesh Chandra: Mr Rakesh Chandra is a retired civil servant. He is currently pursuing his Ph.D in Law from Lucknow University. He has got two collections of poems titled 'Moon is Black' and 'Circle Of Life'. He also has one collection of Hindi poems. His English poems have found place in different poetry journals and newspapers' literary supplements. He also has authored two books on Law.



THE EDGE OF SPACE

I stood on the edge of space

Losing track of time: demented!

Faintly alive, catching shadows

Of flickering horizons.

Spots and strips of nature,

Blue water of a shoreless sea

Asked me, "Where are you?"

I looked with obscure eyes--

My lashes long and drooping!

Terra incognita!

An in-between time:

The landscape partly green,

Partly brown with

Splashes of spring,

Sparks of rain,

Touches of winter!

I was alive in the singing

Accents of spring

And the rush of rain;

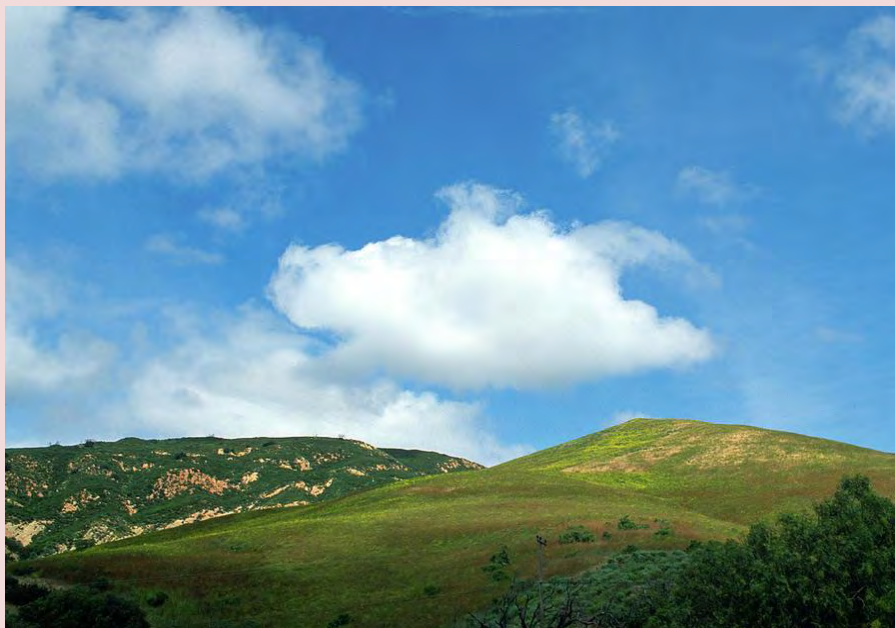
I was dead in

The blizzards of winter--

Roaring and rearing!



Ranjana Sharan Sinha: Dr. Sinha is an eminent poet, author and professor of English. She has a number of awards to her credit for her contribution to poetry. Her poems from her collection "Scents and Shadows" are included in the syllabus of Purnea University. She has the honour of receiving a commendation from the former President of India, A P.J. Abdul Kalam for her poem, 'Mother Nature' contained in her collection 'Spring Zone'. She has received several other awards. Her poems, short stories, articles and research papers have been widely published in highly-acclaimed journals and anthologies. She has authored published 9 books in different genres and 50 research papers.



EFFULGENCE

When the hills keep calling you
You are floored!
You keep opening your eyes wider
Lest you miss something.
You are jealous of clouds and space
And lights that are trying to trace
That source of divinity.
You feel they are hazily
Gazing at your face
To detect that spark

Encircled in the dark.
You close your eyes now
Not to deny them any access
But to get sunk into that scene
And rejoice in the reverie!
You end up
Seeing deep inward
A heavenly hill, a cosmic cloud
A spiral space and a limpid Light!...



Ravi Ranganathan: Ravi Ranganathan is a writer, Poet and critic. He is also a retired banker settled in Chennai. He has to his credit three books of poems entitled “Lyrics of Life” and “Blade of green grass” and “Of Cloudless Climes”. He revels in writing his thought-provoking short poems called ‘Myku’. His poems are featured regularly in many anthologies. He has won many awards for his poetry, including recognition in "Poiesis award for excellence" of Poiesisonline, Sahitya Gaurav award by Literati Cosmos Society, Mathura and ‘Master of creative Impulse’ award by Philosophyque Poetica. He contributes poems and articles regularly for monthly webzine “Literary Vibes” and monthly e-magazine Glomag and quarterly International magazine “Metverse”.



LIQUID LAUGHTER

The evening swayed slightly to mellow music
Above our sparkling glass rims
gulls circled slender minarets
Looking around in bliss we found
the room of kindred souls
mimicking the flight of the gulls
albeit rather slow

A wildfire spread
burning up discord and petty gripes
We held hands like kids do and laughter tumbled out
emboldened by an expensive host
The music retreated into rich brocades
We glided towards the nearest door
intent on exploring the city exploring us

In this joyful world
nothing could go wrong
The uniformed waiter halted our bare foot tango
with the bill
Strange cities call for stranger visitors
Our shoes somehow made it to the window sill

Pockets empty, shoes in hand
we hit the road

a last one swilled to even out its ruts

Two drunks measuring a foreign street

and liquid laughter oozing from now patched up cuts



Reena Prasad: Reena R's poems have been published in The Copperfield Review, First Literary Review-East, Angle Journal, Poetry Quarterly, York Literary Review, Lakeview International Journal, Glomag, Duane's Poe Tree, Mad Swirl, etc. She is also the Destiny Poets UK's Poet of the year for 2014 and one of the editors of The Significant Anthology released in July 2015. She was adjudged second in the 'World Union Of Poet's' poetry competition, 2016

and won an award for poetry in 2016 As 'You Like It International Poetry Contest', commemorating the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare. She won the Reuel International Prize for poetry, 2018.



“YOU’RE MY ENEMY!”

a scream

followed by three

and then more.

“Help!” my child blasts. “You’re my enemy!”

I can’t catch my breath.

I’m starting to get a nosebleed.

Wow, my son’s “enemy”?

“What’s an enemy?”

“You know- I hate you!”

“But I bought you organic carrots”.

“I’m calling Mommy!”

“But I just helped you with your homework”.

This is too painful to be happening.

Such anger- rage: “help!”?

“Don’t you feel safe with your Daddy?”

No response.

What have I done to you, son?
Are we not sweet gifts to each other?
Partners in this long song?

I hurry back to his bedroom with a glass of water-
my little son lying there fast asleep.



Robert Feldman: Born in Paterson, New Jersey, Robert Feldman was inspired by members of Paterson's literary tradition, notably Allen Ginsberg and William Carlos Williams. Later, while living in St. Louis, he organized poetry readings, produced and hosted a community-issues news hour and a biweekly bebop jazz radio program on KDNA-

FM. After relocating to Bisbee, Arizona, Robert was instrumental in publishing some of Arizona's most influential writers such as Drummond Hadley and Michael Gregory, and in 1980, collaborated with Lawrence Ferlinghetti on his Bisbee publication, "Mule Mountain Dreams." Currently, Robert resides in greater Phoenix, continuing to write, paint, and play tabla, besides actively publishing in several online poetry magazines. Hineni, a collection of 15 Hebraic photographic poetry published in Spring, 2018, and Sunflowers, Sutras, Wheatfields, and other ArtPoems in the summer of 2019. The body of Robert's writing and painting can be viewed at albionmoonlight.net; he can be reached at rffeldman@gmail.com.



www.pinterest.com

BE SINCERE

If you are sincere,
Ask for me please
And I will come
To stay beside you
Till the end of time!

I need to know
That you really want
My love and company,
Tonight and everyday
As I do yours passionately!

Don't be afraid my love
To let me come to you
When time is flying
Just like the wind
On this rainy night!

I cannot resolve reticence
Without your honest words
Because it is too risky
To totally offer oneself

Without hope of a straight

And sincere answer!



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. I am a man with a Vision and a clear mission: 'To spread my message of Love an Peace throughout the World and if my poetry can touch a single soul in the World, then I would gladly die leaving my clear footprints behind!



WILD BERGAMOT

The cemetery is full of the living,
a flush lavender sheen over everything,
clusters of wild bergamot the caretaker has
been unwilling to remove or not gotten to yet –
they say everything is medicinal these days
so that you get the feeling modern medicine
is trying to take credit for anything you can think of;
flowers from the shop are fine, but something native
and natural is much preferred:
fruit bearing, perennial, the smell of mint
everywhere.



Ryan Quinn Flanagan: Ryan is a Canadian-born author residing in Elliot Lake, Ontario, Canada with his wife and many bears that rifle through his garbage. His work can be found both in print and online in such places as: *Evergreen Review*, *The New York Quarterly*, *GloMag*, *The Poet Community*, *Red Fez*, and *The Oklahoma Review*. He enjoys listening to the blues and cruising down the TransCanada in his big blacked out truck.



THE ETERNITY

Oh! Eternal love,

What shall I call you?

Oh! Immortal beauty,

How do I compare you?

Since everything is made of you,

As everything in you,

And you are in everything.

You left no space for others

But no one knows the moment

How and where you've begun

Though, I realize that,
You neither had a beginning
Nor have an end,
That's why you are eternal!
The enduring beauty and eternity,
Your love causes the tranquility
For the entire universe,
Galaxies and creatures.
Your loves and comforts
Those who abided you,
In all perspectives.
You are the most compassionate
And the most merciful
Your supremacy is unquestionable
And you are the incomparable
The kindly light, the lonely power



Saleem Raza (Saleem Kattuchola): A freelance writer and painter from Kerala, India, working in Doha as Franchise General Manager. He writes short stories, poems and travelogues in various regional language magazines (Malayalam), periodicals with a pen name as ‘Saleem Kattuchola’, and writes English poems and articles in International magazines and newspapers.



CHILDHOOD TREASURES

I have a bunch of old stuffed toys
lying around my house. I wonder
if you have any too?

Mine smell like my girlhood and my
childish fantasies, and one glimpse
of them releases me from the daily stress
that plagues me. Morning and night.

There's one whom I call 'Winnie the Pooh'
because of his fur, so I put an old
red sweater from another old (torn) teddy on
him, and he looks almost real.

He's my sister's favourite, and we often squabbled for it.
Still do sometimes.

There's Scooby Doo, though I'm afraid
I haven't watched the show much.
He's kept company by a green mouse with
a long, colourful tail;
him we call Hickory Dickory Dock.

Others, too, keep him company—
a Santa Claus, a squirrel, a Redcoat bear.
There are others too that I could

talk about, but for now?

I leave you here.



Samixa Bajaj: I am a teenager from Guwahati, Assam. Besides writing, I love reading, dancing, sketching and music.



PLACES WHERE GRIEF MEETS YOU:

Grief meets you at the strangest of places, ironically enough the most familiar of places

On old cobbled streets, empty sidewalks, busy pavements

It's like a long forgotten friend or foe maybe, someone you lovingly hate

Taking a regular walk to the grocery store,

You see a familiar looking face; and before you realise, you are biting your lips and blinking back sudden tears

Yes, grief was walking towards you from the U-bend,
Dressed in khaki shorts and a white t-shirt...

It's early morning and you are admiring some fresh blossoms, and out of the blue come tears - spilling over the petals like drops of dew

Grief weaves itself right through the crochet of memories and you are left with a gaping hollowness

Driving past busy roads and highways, you are enjoying a long drive

And as you pass by some oft visited markets and monuments,

Your hands go numb, as the sudden realisation dawns on you - how things will never be the same again

Grief meets you in the conspicuous absence of the person who loved the city and long drives...

It's not only in darkness, in solitude and the quiet, sleepless nights that grief comes unannounced

It comes and meets you in the most unexpected of places
and times

And even as you acknowledge the loss, the pain, the tears

Weeping through crochets of nostalgia, smiling wistfully,

Somehow you learn to make friends with grief - loving,
hating, and yet accepting the inevitable - bland reality

And you know, you will grow old with this foe, grudgingly
turned friend - grief

For, grief is simply all the love you ever wanted to give, but
couldn't find a place to...

Yes, now you know grief will meet you in the most
unexpected of places and times

That's the terrible beauty of both love and pain...

***(Written in loving memory of Dr. U.C. Biswal (Former HoD,
Surgery, R.M.L Hospital, New Delhi) whom we lost to the brutal
second wave of COVID-19 on 13th May 2021)***



Samrudhi Dash: I am a poet, novelist, editor and motivational speaker, currently residing in New Delhi, India. I write under the pseudonym “Inara”. Along with contributions to over two dozen anthologies, international e-zines and magazines, I have published till date five solo poetry anthologies and three novels and conceptualised and edited four anthologies of different genres. Apart from writing and poetry, my other hobbies include crafting, painting and photography. My signature words are “Hope, Live, Believe”. I have recently published my third novel "Letters from A Stranger - A Life Changing Map", a blend of a medical thriller with epistolary and philosophical underpinnings which is now available as an e-book on Amazon Kindle and figured in the Amazon Bestseller List at Rank 10.



Pic by Yatin Dave

MOON MONOLOGUE

The large orb is
low in an ebony envelope.
Eyelashes mask his brilliance
He says nothing to me;
He has nothing to say to me.
All these years,
month after month
He watched, patient.
Through my waxing and waning

Lunacies synchronized with his faces,
my phases

An eternity he has seen in his lifetime;

An eternity that has been his lifetime

And mine

a mere moment

I gaze up and hope,

benignly atavistic.

He has nothing to say to me...

The moon crawls slowly

through dark fluid.

Abysmally weary.



Sangita Kalarickal: She has been wordsmithing since childhood and honing her craft in the forms of poetry and fiction. She is a published fantasy author with a soft corner for literary fiction. Her poems have appeared in anthologies and e-zines and she is currently working on her poetry collection. She lives in Minnesota, USA where the winter cold stretches almost half the year. She is a physicist at her

day job, and currently she spends much of her time studying and honing her skills in haiku.

Yatin Dave: A certified and experienced yoga teacher, Yatin Dave has keen interest in various genres of photography. His favorite hobby is to be out in nature, snapping wildlife, flora and fauna. Dedicated to the truth as told by his camera, he prefers raw captures of the moments, rather than software enhancing or transforming his photos.



THE TREE STUMP

On a foggy morning [or was it smoggy?]

I saw a groggy-eyed man coaxing his ancient car over a bend.

I followed him, but he disappeared in the smog.

The smog cleared, and I looked up at the blanched,
cloudless skies.

The coarse road crested and then dipped into a barren
creek bed.

All around me were scattered petals of some anonymous
wildflowers,

and the nameless creek rippled noiselessly.

My eyes were riveted on a tree stump.

Was it ever a full-blooded one, pulsating with life?

Did it ever have a name, some claim to fame?

Some term of endearment?

Did birds ever sing songs of hope swinging from its boughs?

It stood there like some forgotten artifact,

embellished with bird droppings.

A squirrel hopped around,

unfazed by its decrepitude, eyes round, hunting for food.

In the distance on a slender branch sat a bird,
perhaps a cormorant, looking nonchalantly at the world.
An egret breasted the blue beyond with tender grace,
but my eyes refused to leave the tree stump, so forlorn.
Would a new dawn help in removing the traces of misery
from the stump of the tree? I wondered, blundering
forward.



Santosh Bakaya: Recipient of the Reuel Award for poetry [2014] for my long narrative poem, *Oh Hark!* Setu International Award in recognition of my '*stellar contribution to world literature*, [Pittsburgh, USA, 2018],

Keshav Malik Award [2019], for my contribution to fiction, prose, and poetry, I am a poet, essayist, novelist, TEDx speaker, biographer, creative writing mentor, critically acclaimed for my poetic biography of Mahatma Gandhi, *Ballad of Bapu* [Vitasta, 2015]. My Ted Talk on *The Myth of Writer's Block* is very popular in creative writing circles. I write a weekly column *Morning Meanderings* in Learning and Creativity.Com, the first part of which is an e-book now. My two collaborative e-books, *Vodka by the Volga* with Dr. Ampat Koshy [Blue Pencil, 2020] and *From Prinsep Ghat to Peer Panjal* with Gopal Lahiri [Blue Pencil, 2021] have been Amazon bestsellers. My latest book is *Runcible Spoons and Peagreen Boats* [Poetry, AuthorsPress, 2021].



And once the monsoon settled out

Winter came to give a shout out

The sun came along

The trees sang their autumn song

One day the clouds gathered like a storm

the day was quite warm

But afternoon felt chilly

As if we sat on a hilly

Within minutes it went pitter patter
Which made our teeth go chatter chatter
The rain was back again
And the sun stayed out of lane



Sara Bubber: Sara Bubber is a children's, teachers and parents storyteller with an educational background in child development. She loves developing her skills in storytelling, podcasting, video editing and making her own puppets. She has some lovely four legged cuddle bags to keep her busy.



PICK A PERSPECTIVE

Maybe it's a miracle
or a stroke of luck
or synchronicity earned
by playing the game correctly

Maybe it's all from above
or found within
or permeating throughout the entire field

Maybe it's source consciousness
or random genes
or ones and zeros to the core

Maybe it's a perfect plan
or a stumbling fool
or a goal in constant expansion

Maybe it's an existential problem
or a point of known fact
or a pearl of wisdom
hiding stubborn in its shell



Scott Thomas Outlar: Scott Thomas Outlar lives and writes in the suburbs outside of Atlanta, Georgia. His work has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net. He guest-edited the Hope Anthology of Poetry from CultureCult Press as well as the 2019, 2020, and 2021 Western Voices editions of Setu Mag. He has been a weekly contributor at Dissident Voice for the past seven years. More than 2,000 of his poems have been published in literary venues around the world. Selections of his poetry have been translated into Afrikaans, Albanian, Azerbaijani, Bengali, Dutch, French, Hindi, Italian, Kurdish, Malayalam, Persian, Serbian, and Spanish. His seventh book, *Evermore*, was written along with coauthor Mihaela Melnic and released in 2021. More about Outlar's work can be found at 17Numa.com.



RAIN-DELUGE OR SOLACE

Softly does the rain fall down

Pitter-pattering away in the moonlight

The sound of which

Lulls one into a sound dreamless sleep

Rains – a deluge pouring down

Swiftly does the water rise

Whether it be wells, lakes or rivers

Silently and menacingly

As if in a world of oblivion

Rain contrasting in its severity

Contradicting Nature's fury

A beautiful plethora of colours

Floating in an invisible canvas

Beautifully, yet intricately

Weaving through mists of time

A beautiful rainbow shining through

Thoughts of a magnificent emulsion



Shobha Warriar: I am a poet residing in Chennai. I am a housewife. I have contributed to a few anthologies. I have also published poems and also one collection of a few poems written by me.



www.socialnews.xyz

MARINA

Long-lived citizens who long loved Marina,
watched her austerity swathed by changes
through hasty, thoughtless times;
Nature was gilded, overlooked or admired.

Sands were over-run by love and commerce,
statuesque statesmen in frozen procession,
stately buildings as reminder landmarks,
memories of a mammoth ship washed ashore.

Marina tried hard to fight her storms.

Some she weathered, others overwhelmed her.

Until last week, the sands were flooded

and the sea saw its own face as if in a mirror.



Shreekumar Varma: He is a poet, novelist, and playwright residing in Chennai, India. He is a writer. He has contributed to various anthologies. He has received the R. K. Narayan Award for Creative Writing.

www.shreevarma.com

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shreekumar_Varma



ANGELS ON EARTH

Dressed in white with a caring face

Is that an angel with an angelic face?

Who is the person walking with majestic steps?

Is he the head of this place called paradise?

Does he have magic in his hand?

How does he cure aches and pains in every land?

What is the bitter-sweet potion given in a pill or a bottle?

Will that potion make us immortal?

Where is the magic wand which is found in every angel's hand?

This angel has a strange thing called stethoscope in his hand

The stethoscope claims to hear the beats of our heart

Will it now give us only happiness in our cart?

The angels have descended on earth

And it's our duty to realise their worth

The angel on Earth is called a DOCTOR

We should only love, support, respect our protector and benefactor.



Shreya Suraj: I'm a mathematician, artist, photographer, and an environmentalist. I am the Founder of an art group called 'Anybody Can Draw' on Facebook, which has more than 6000 members from all over the world. I have also taken part in more than 175 beach clean-ups in Qatar and do my best to fight against plastic pollution. I am generally a very creative person, so I spend a lot of my time learning new art styles, writing poems and generally love to do a lot of voluntary work towards creating a better world.



www.pinterest.com

THE POTTER'S WHEEL

Dawn to dusk I work at my
potter's wheel-my hands deft and brisk
spinning out countless lamps and pots
with my spindle and my disc.

I work with scarry hands
dipped in water fire and clay
then arrange my harvest in rows
and groups
and pray for the sunlight gay.

with Diwali round the corner
and Pujas at their height
and my familial hands
ready to help
I dream of a future bright.

Some onlookers gather around
maybe looking for fun
this maybe an inspiration for
a painter or a writer
but for me it assures--
there is food on my platter.

Pray take a few with
Cheer in hearts of thine--
they will surely light up your
hearts and houses

and

also this little dwelling of mine!



Sindhu Rana: I am a poet and writer residing in Jalandhar, Punjab (India). I have contributed to various leading newspapers n journals; e-zines and anthologies. I am a script writer and voice-over artist for documentaries. However, reading and writing remains my first love.



A LOOK AT LIFE—162

Wasted past

Uneventful present

Future in the dark

With trembling mind and body,
my legs once again in the abyss

Once more I am on my ashes
witnessing life in the ashtray

The moment never came

I deceived myself all along

Time flew away
With it flew away the urge
For which I come again and again

I accomplished nothing
except for relationships,
pelf, power and recognition,
that faded like the fading colours of life.

Time consumed everything I thought my own
except for my regrets,
one more opportunity went in begging

Time consumed the best part of life
My childhood and youth
In return, it gave me nothing
but an ounce of external glitter
Which is so heavy on my shoulder,

something I cannot live with,
something I cannot carry to the other side

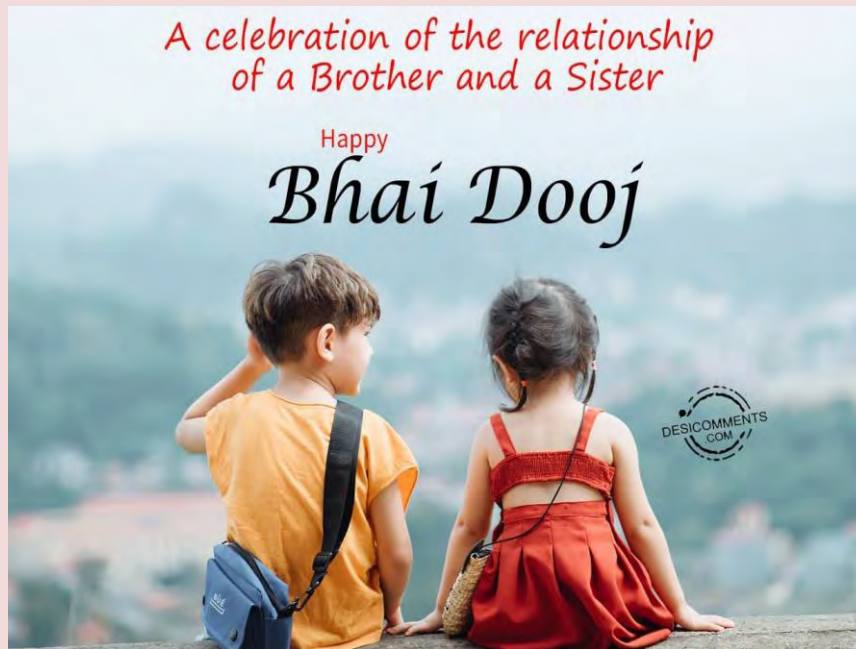


Smruti Ranjan Mohanty: Working in the Finance Services of Odisha, he is a multilingual poet, essayist and writer whose write-ups are published in newspapers and in various national and international magazines, journals and anthologies. He writes extensively on life and its intricacies. His collection of poems and proses are published in his blogs. His accolades in the international arena include Order of Mahatma medal, Kairat Dussinov Medal for poetic

excellence, Haven International Muse award in 2020, Order of Shakespeare, Double Cross gold medal from World Union of Poets. In the year 2019 and 2020, he has been awarded with the medal of International Faith Poet of the year and as one of the highly commended poets for four years by Destiny Poet International Community of Poets, Wakefield, U.K.

smrutiweb.wordpress.com

smrutitanuja.blogspot.com



BHAI DOOJ

Screaming advertisements,

Of smart phones and watches,

Of diamonds, gold and silver,

Of chocolates and sweetmeats,

Of lip smacking menus in fancy restaurants

Commercializing credence of bestowal, making a mockery of bonding and brotherly love, a sister's prayers for a brother's longevity,

Equating and measuring the valued time-honored tradition of ardor and fervor with expensive mementos.

Mita crouched in a mud-thatched hut, waiting, eyes shining with love, shackled by reneging on unfulfilled dowry demands,

Her obdurate and unrelenting family, circumventing her from adorning her beloved brother's forehead with the coveted sandalwood Tilak,

Even as she bathed and dressed, gathering the three-leaf blades of grass, considered auspicious,

Waiting in hope, outside her hutment, praying for her brother's health with head bowed, in her fresh sari, eyes glistening with tears in abject misery,

Hoping for a glimpse of her beloved brother, who would perchance glance her way, while proceeding to the market with eyes downcast and helpless, to sell his home-grown vegetables.

Bhai Dooj: Celebrated by the Hindus where the bonding between a brother and sister is celebrated with promises of love and protection, the ceremonial 'Tilak' of sandalwood paste applied on the forehead of the brother.



Someeta Das: She is a retired Professor of English with twenty-eight years of teaching experience from Maharaja Manindra Chandra College, Kolkata. She is interested in writing short stories and stories on travel. She has published in Glomag, The Statesman, Setu, Woman's era and a number of e-zines.



NOSTALGIA

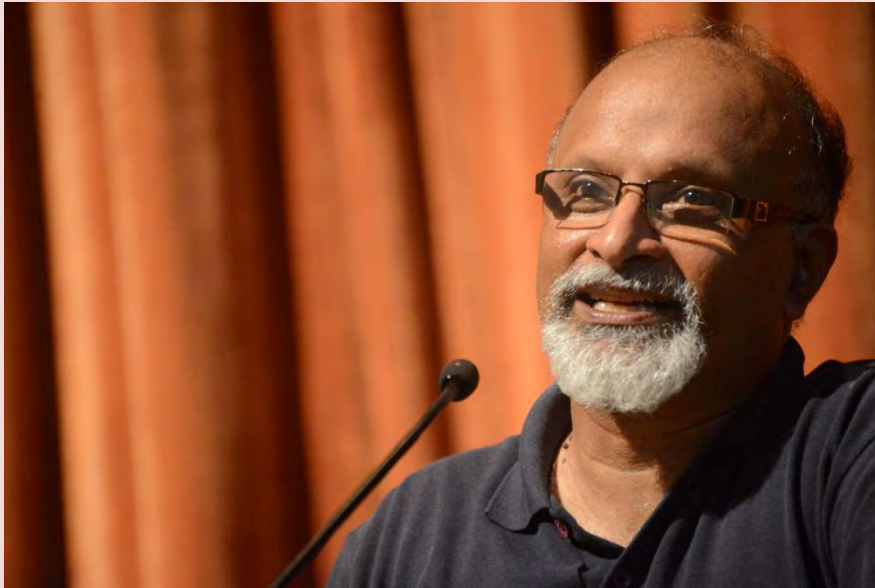
The old house in the middle of a four ground plot
with a zinc sheet roofed first floor front and an open
terrace behind
comes back these days in my dreams a lot,
time is not altogether unkind.

The garden brimming with roses, jasmine and tulsii,
Two tall casurina and an equally tall amla,
An octet of coconut palms and a lone one of supari
Six varieties each of mangoes and henna.

A thirty feet deep well with soft, clear water
that you drew with a bucket knotted to a rope over a pulley
The chirping of the birds and the squirrels' chatter
and the loud ramblings of passers-by in the alley.

In place of the old house now stands a different building
with little greenery around
the trees have all been cut down to make way for another
dwelling
the birds have become silent and the squirrels make no
sound.

The people too have grown older and much farther apart
some have gone on to meet their maker and the rest are on
their way
with memories of days long gone lingering in their heart
till their dying day.



Sri N Srivatsa: I was born and brought up in Madras of yore and moved to New Delhi in 1978. I am a Physics graduate who spent more time dabbling in fine arts before a career in banking. I have been singing with the Madras Youth Choir for almost half a century. I worked both behind and on-stage in Tamil, English and Hindi productions of Arangam, Yatrik and Madras Players. I have been pursuing translation of good poetry from Tamil to English and vice versa plus a few in Hindi as a passion. Over the years, my poetry has been featured on television, various magazines and in an anthology of poems for children. Four volumes of Tamil poems, including two this year, by four different poets translated by “moi”s have been published.



Natural Cycle © by Carol Leigh

NOTE:

Poem to be read in its entirety,
poem to be read as bold words only, and
poem to be read as non-bold words only.
There are three poems in this one poem.

A TRINITY OF POEMS

(Three Poems in One Poem)

My beloved shrouded
dead to me

buried in the past

yet I still see her bones and feathers

still see her ghost in everything

in the mechanical heart of an electron orbiting

in the shimmering light of a dewdrop quivering

in the sad pearl of a tear veiled

in the perfumed sea of a rose garden blushing

in the perpetual motion of the stars whirling above me

in the open eye of a dead dove dreaming

I see the theory of everything

I see the infinite and eternal God

her memory once bittersweet

now salt in an open wound

burns like the fire of desire

no circling around my funeral pyre

time to extinguish love's flame
the stars so cold have spoken so loud

her shadow dancing in my light
we enter and exit each other without touching
the simple is the most complex

the universe
an endoplasmic reticulum
a transport system to heaven

my mind de composing
my thoughts only protein synthesis
my genius and my madness
share the same broken wings ~

NOTE:

Poem to be read in its entirety,
poem to be read as bold words only, and

poem to be read as non-bold words only.

There are three poems in this one poem.



Stefan Bohdan: Stefan Bohdan lives in Orlando, Florida USA. He is retired from the architectural/engineering/construction world. He now spends his time writing poems and novels. His English poems have been published in multiple books, anthologies, journals, newspapers, e-zines and translated into many languages. He also writes reviews for poetry books. He is internationally published and has collaborated with poets, translators and artists from around the world. He is the founder of Third Eye Butterfly Press.



LEAVE PILES

I throw the leave piles above my head.

I jump on them like a childhood bed.

My brother hid in them and jumped out.

You should have heard my screams and shouts.

Dad just made us re-rake.

I don't care I feel I'm on vacation break.



Stephen Goetz: I'm a poet from Lincoln City, Oregon, USA. My poems have been published online in poetry groups. I have received awards from Motivational Strips and affiliate groups. I have been published for the first time in an anthology book. I'm a regular contributor to GLOMAG, an anthology published in India.



She was different

Her eyes viewed the difference

Her words made the difference

In the expansive vista

In the wide arena

She was the difference

Differently abled

They viewed her differently too

Specially...



Sudeshna Mukherjee: Sudeshna Mukherjee's poems deal with varied human nature. A keen observer, she chronicles the happenings around her and writes with a tinge of humour. 'Meanderings of the Mind' and 'Mélange' are her published collections of poems. She loves 'words' and loves to play with them.



LET ME LIVE THIS MOMENT

What I have is—this moment
I must exult in ecstasy
indulge in mirth and happiness
before time fleets and calls it a day

My pristine demeanor
is a monumental alabaster
for many a poetic soul
I am the muse and their invocation

The galaxy of stars on the sprawling expanse
is my playmate
I often play with it the hide and seek game
It is a joyride for me
negotiating dark clouds, indolent turns and tall mountains
no impediment halts my soaring spirit
I embody both...
fun and mood of contemplation in right earnest

I am the night queen
bloom and exude aura as per my heart's content
from full to half then to waning status
I entirely live, each ounce of breath
for, who knows...
tomorrow, darkness may engulf my being and soul.



Sujata Dash: Sujata Dash is a poet from Bhubaneswar, Odisha. She is a retired banker. She has one published poetry anthology (More than Mere-a bunch of poems by Authorspress) to her credit. She is a singer, avid lover of Nature. She regularly contributes to anthologies worldwide.



A SON'S SOLILOQUY

I fed my mom yesterday

She is too weak to move with freedom.

Made a paste of the rice though to feed her,

She got vexed and the dish had been overturned by her.

Opined no intention to have meal,

I tried to make fill up her hunger still.

And finally I gasped within a short while,
But I can still recall those days when she tolerated my
wickedness all day long with a smile.

Even at midnight or any time of my uneasiness,
I would rush beyond her reach, and without being annoyed
placed me on her lap with happiness.

So ungrateful I am!

No patience I have probably,

Panting within a short time

And I blamed myself as an ungrateful son of a loving mom
surely.



Sujata Paul: She is a trilingual poetess residing in Tripura. By profession, she is a teacher. She is a Founder of Creative Tripura. She has published three poetry books. She has been published in special anthologies. She has been conferred Sahitya Academy Award, 2020 by Gujrat Sahitya Academy in collaboration with the #MotivationalStrips, Literoma Nari Samman Award, 2020, Most Influential Women Award, 2020 by The Spirit Mania, and the Literary Excellence Award by Suryodaya Literary Foundation, 2020.



Aneet and Siddhant

AND EVER AFTER

Dedicated to my son and his wife, the newlyweds

Balmy breezes rippled
swaying palms reveled celebrated
swirling, twirling, youth bursting
into bouquets of joys !!
A pair of bulbuls,

mates for life, trilled melodies,
two fragrant rosebuds blushed
sipping starry spring
fountains in the other's eyes,
ecstasy danced, swirled, twirled,
youth burst
into bouquets of joys !!
Love's magic was in the air
heavens descended,
showering gold and silver
of Divine blessings
of love,
of faith,
of trust,
respect, understanding
infinite togetherness.
The hour was auspicious
as flames of devotion

melled two hearts

bond for lives ever after !!!

12th November, '21



Sunil Kaushal: Dr. Sunil Kaushal, an awarded author, a gynecologist, trilingual writer, translated into French, German, and Greek, has been honoured nationally and internationally with many awards. The Nissim Award given by Nissim Ltd., awarded by The Significant League (International); the Enchanting Muse and Fellow of the Regal World of Scribes Award, by The Pentasi B Poetree Group; Literary Brigadier by StoryMirror; Stickypins

bestowed her with the title of Quillmaster; the Women Achiever's Award 2019 by Literoma. Featured in the Limca Book of Records as part of the Amravati Poetic Prism 2018. Her poems find a place in The Golden Book of World Records. Winner at YoAlfaaz. She was awarded Best Lioness President, Asia. She is a Gold medalist in Dramatics. Her varied interests and hobbies keep her in love with life and active at 76, yoga being the fuel.



STEPS, FRIENDLY!

Somebody walks, along with them
on the boulevards, drives and sidewalks
of Brampton, Ontario,
every day, on their walks, in a new city.

Somebody whose steps are
heard clearly on the broad roads
full of the automobiles and few
pedestrians—steps, friendly.

Look back—nobody!

Yet the steps sound persistent, gentle, familiar.

There!

The wind-blown batch of the

dry and anemic leaves, on the cold asphalt,

like a pair of the long-lost pals

breathless, come

rushing, eyes beaming,

with open arms!

Strange!

Is it not?



Sunil Sharma: Sunil Sharma, a writer-freelance-academic from Mumbai, India, has published 22 books, solo and joint. He edits Setu

<http://www.setumag.com/p/setu-home.html>

<http://www.dr.sunilsharma.blogspot.in/>



I am no Joan of Arc

Fighting holy wars or wearing the mantle of a saint

I have no truck with religious places

I am my god

I am my own goddess

I am not out to flog dead horses

I am the arc onto my sacrum*

Building me a stable foundation

Weaving nerves and sinews

Garnering peace between

Reason and Passion on a triangular battlefield

I am my own holy bread

I am my own wine

I am no Judas

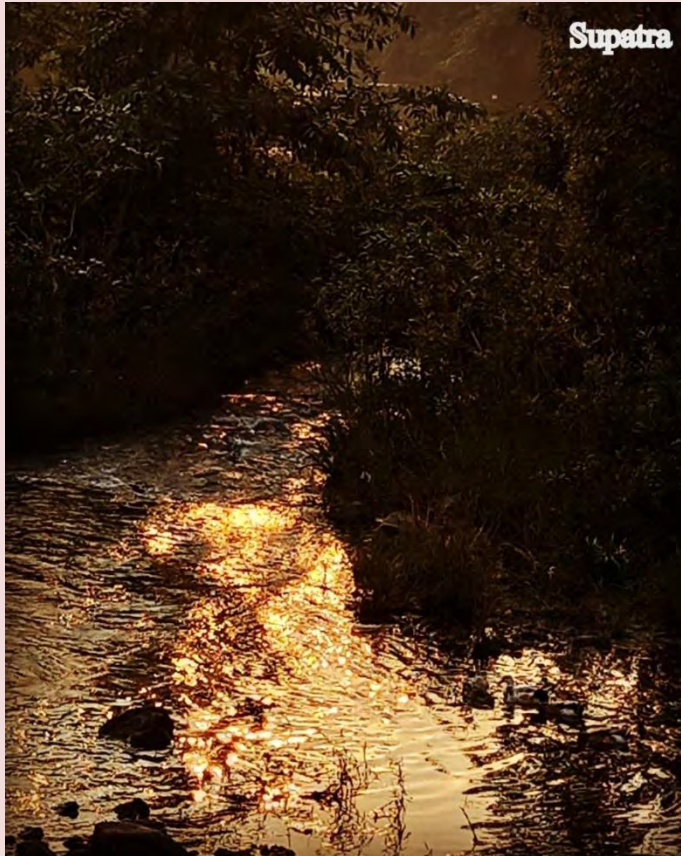
I am no Jesus

I am that space which hangs in between!

Note: Sacrum is the triangular bone at the base of the spine. In ancient times it was called the 'holy bone'.



Sunita Singh: She is a bi-lingual poet and writer, writing in English and Hindi. Her poems feature in Indian and International Anthologies and e-magazines. Many of her poems have won awards on on-line forums like Kaafiya, Poetry Planet, The Significant League etc. A few of her Hindi poems have also been turned into lyrics for private albums. She is an active member of Katha Kathan, a forum for reviving Indian languages. She lives in Delhi and is fond of travelling, music, reading. She finds inspiration from nature.



PROMISES...

Will we meet when you depart
No not really...but we could talk
When you need me
O'er the phone on my number
Across wires and waves
Across light years...

Words...

Merely echoes now

The voice fainter

Time...

When the summer breeze

Whispered to swaying palms

The gushing waters

Rippled and murmured

To the strewn pebbles

And ebbing waves

Always returned

In every drop of water

In every grain of soil

She felt...

The voice

The music

The story

Around

Within...



Supatra Sen: Dr. Supatra Sen, currently Associate Professor in a reputed Kolkata college is a veteran academician, teaching and researching in the fields of Botany and Environment. Her international books, papers and reviews are chiefly in her professional subject. She has edited several UGC funded ISBN volumes and is also the founder and Chief Editor of an ISSN peer-reviewed multi-disciplinary academic journal 'Harvest' since 2016. Her tryst with poetry writing began in 2020 during the global pandemic and in October 2021 her poetry anthology 'My Autumn Sonata' was published.



BECAUSE OF THE SEASON

Autumn - the remarkable season

New life awaits under a multi-coloured carpet

Leaves in yellow, burgunder red and amber

An enchanting, rich cloak protects Mother Earth.

The mist looks like a cotton duvet

floating over the landscape.

Raindrops falling down from a steel-grey sky

Changes await for you, for me, for all of us

Looking back

when time still was young and promising.

Ask ourselves if we harvest what we sow.

Looking forward to tomorrow with

expectations and wonder

What will the future bring?

Hopefully many more adventures

Something old, something new

Blue...

The most important time is still here and now

Mindful, because time sails away

Like a kite in the wind...

Time is not waiting

Hovering thoughts, hovering thoughts

The reason must be the season



Svanhild Løvli: Svanhild Løvli is a bilingual Poetess, currently residing in Gjøvik, Norway. She is a freelance translator and in her spare time she also loves to draw and photograph. She is concerned with family life, nature conservation and gender equality. She is a regular contributor to GloMag. She is published in anthologies like Autunis Poetry, Poetry Planet and Antologia Serbia (2021). Her poems have been translated into Polish, Swedish, Italian, Serbian and Hindi.



LIFE

The exotic journey called life
Is in itself a ferocious hurricane.

Roaring through life's lanes
Squeezing through emotional bylanes.

Smashing to bits the weaker souls
Washing away the beautiful kohls.

One needs to become an oak
To stand against the destructive onslaught.

To rise above the whirlwind

To find a newer shore.

To gather the bits once again

To build oneself a beautiful haven.

For you live once

And you die once.

You need to build a temperament

To ensure that life is merriment!



Uma Agarwal Bajaj: I can't believe that I have been contributing to Glomag for over a year now! When Glory di first sent an invite I was not sure if I would be able to live up to her expectations. But her trust in me has really made my pen a little creative. I am a Company Secretary by qualification, a homemaker by choice(since the last 20 years) and a budding businesswoman. Having been occupied with family and kids, I recently realised that I have the ability to pen some of my thoughts. I write both in English and Hindi and hope to be better myself with each passing day. I read fiction, whenever I get some time. Apart from this I love to cook and have a fascination for gardening(in my balcony).



ILLUSIONS

The air chilled at sunsets,
the ground crisped;
a hoar frost insidiously stole
over growing grass and unfolding bud

Superannuated wood-giants
clad in bright shrouds of ivy
shook its leaves;
a scattering of leaves
fell to the ground

There they settled
with perfect composure
to await dissolution
Shadows had melted their masses
into one huge obscurity

Among the folded wings of the hills;
no sounds save the cry of a bird
seeking some lonelier tree

Darkness covered
the wrinkled skin of the turf
enveloping the solitary thorn tree
and the empty nest at its foot

The earth was a waste of shadow;
withered,

brittle,

false

Are you part of the disillusioned? The melted masses shadowed into obscurity? Which social contract are you bound by? Have you granted yourself permission to think your own thoughts and live your own life independently of the noise created by religious, social and political chaos?

Rousseau's notions about natural human kindness and the emotional foundations of ethics still furnish the core of today's moral outlook, and much of modern political philosophy likewise builds on the foundation of Rousseau's On Social Contract (1762).



Val Smit: Val Smit is a South African artist and poet based in Cape Town. She writes ekphrastic poetry per artwork created and uses various media in portraying images that she feels fitting to deliver the message of the words she pens down. She focuses on the inner turmoil experienced by our disconnectedness from nature and each other. Her work has been published in various online journals including GloMag India, The Chachalaca Review, The West Review, The Raconteur Review, Literary Garland and Valiant Scribe.



A SUNFLOWER WRITES TO A RAINBOW

I just got out of bath

My petals are still moist

With your smell

And touch

I am in no real hurry

To dry myself

Let me face the skies

You can look my way as well

I won't waste time and blush

It isn't every day
You pass my way
Drench me in your colors
All seven of them
Let me savor
An ancient desire
For a long lost rainbow

First Published in the anthology 'Soul Shores' in October 2021



Vandana Kumar: Vandana Kumar is a Middle School French teacher in New Delhi, India. An educator with over 20 years of experience, she is also a French translator and recruitment consultant. Her poems have been published in various national and international journals and websites like 'Glomag' 'Mad Swirl', Philadelphia based 'North of Oxford', UK based 'Destiny Poets', 'Lothlorien Poetry Journal', Greater London based 'The Piker Press', 'Madras Courier' etc. She has featured in anthologies like Houston, Texas based – 'Harbinger Asylum', US based 'Kali Project' of Indie Blu(e) Publishing etc. She has been part of two projects of the World literature series on Post- modern voices and critical thought. She also writes articles on cinema that have appeared on websites and journals like 'Just-cinema', 'Daily Eye', 'The Free Press Journal', Boloji.com and The Artamour.



O THE BLUES!

Pirouette around little pots of paint

Dip, dip, dip the brush

Into yellow emulsion

Splash, splash, splash on canvas

Shake the hips

Dab into the green

Not the dark, the leafy

Dribble the paint

Run some strokes

Stem and bine

Twining climb

Skip and frisk

Cha cha cha

Now the blue

Now the blue

Flick and swipe

Swirl and twirl

Twirl and swirl

Flick and swipe

There I am

My blues away!

But what are these?

Blue flowers!

I created them!

...

I, God!?



Vidya Shankar: I am a widely published Indian poet, writer, editor, blogger, English teacher, a “book” in the Human Library, and mandala art instructor. The author of two poetry books, I have received several literary awards and recognitions. One of my poems has been published in the first ever Yearbook of Indian Poetry in English, 2020-21. I have been featured in a unique coffee table book, ‘50 Inspiring Women boys and girls should read about, Chennai Edition’. I find meaning to my life through yoga and mandalas.



A MISSING PHOTOGRAPH

A morning lost in reflection

And small talk, where answers

Are offered before questions are asked - -

Where ancient anecdotes draw blank faces

Through unvaried retelling - -

Your voice guides me to a room

Filled with cobwebbed memories

And dead spiders - -

You stare at me

Through a beam of dust
Young and framed
Six feet above the ground - -
There is no smile on your face:
Annoyed by your mother's refusal to let
You wear that long skirt
You had designed and stitched yourself
"Protecting" you, you said, from the overfriendly
Photographer's sepia-toned gaze - -
I must now liberate you from this glass cell
And let you out on your last parole
To visit your parents and your husband
Residing, dear mother, in the timeless family album.



Vijay Nair: I retired as Associate Professor, Department of English, Government Victoria College Palakkad, Kerala. I taught English Language and Literature in various colleges for 31 years. My Ph.D. thesis was on the plays of Wole Soyinka. I was awarded the Reuel International Prize for Writing & Literature in the year 2016. I was the ‘Critic of the Year’ in 2016, 2017 & 2018 at Destiny Poets, UK and was also adjudged the ‘Poet of the Year’ in 2018 by the same poetry group. I have been fortunate to have had my poems nominated on 8 occasions as ‘Poem of the Month’ at Poets, Artists Unplugged. Three of my poems have been included in the PG syllabus of BBMK University, Dhanbad. My short stories have appeared in Dynami Zois [Virasat] and The Road Taken [Impish Lass].



INHIBITION

You want to know what stops me

From being raw, brutal and bitterly honest?

The world I inhabit. What else, sweetie?!

They teach you illusions to believe in.

There are people out there whom I would love to skin alive

Some whose eyes would make beautiful marbles

As I roll them across the table to you

Or even quarter them medieval style.

The ones who prey on guileless children

I can't do it, right? Wishful thinking.

I know I have company the world over

So much for evolution.

They sell you mirages of goodness.

We are a failure as a species.

Then there are those who have been mean to me

Why, you ask.

Well, for the simple reason that I'm a woman

It irks them that I live like one of them, the other of the species

I'm not submissive enough

I'm not demure enough

I'm not woman enough

I have talons and fangs. Fire is my blood

I laugh, I dream, I love

I walk in the disguise of an epitome

For freedom is what I breathe

I like to keep them fooled

I give them enough rope to hang themselves with

If this is inhibition, I'm okay with it

For at the end of the day, freedom is what I breathe
And sometimes the adversary is not worth the effort of the
kill.



Vineetha Mekkoth: She is a poet, writer, translator and editor from Calicut, Kerala. She works as Assistant State Tax Officer in the State GST Department. She has been translating for the Kerala Sahitya Academy since 2014 and has also contributed articles for the Malayalam Literary Survey, a quarterly brought out by the academy. She has published poems and short stories in various anthologies. She is co-editor of two anthologies. Her debut poetry collection 'Ashtavakra and Other Poems' was published in August 2017 which is available on Amazon.



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434

We often bear a number that bears a role
Upon the mundane life we live each day
Such was the case back in my alma mater
434 for me was not just a number to respond to
It was me in a different shape with three digits
So many memories surrounding this mere number
Some too fond to forget, some too sad to recall
That constant vigilance for the teacher to come down
To call out this aloud to see me stand in awe

Overwhelmed by the pedantic figure and its presence
On days I was absent it carried a red mark beside
With some ticks that made me much of what I am
Somehow the number stands apart in that it will
Outlive this mortal me and will still survive with past glory
In a dusty file in a dark room announcing my being.



Zulfiqar Parvez: He is the Head of Academic Affairs cum English Language Teacher at Tanzimul Ummah International Tahfiz School, Dhaka. He has done his Honours and Masters in English Language and Literature from the University of Rajshahi.



ciao! 😊