

GloMag

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Magazine*

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ASOKE KUMAR MITRA



TITLE OF COVER PIC

FRAGRANCE

ARTIST PROFILE

Bio-data (ASOKE KUMAR MITRA), KOLKATA, INDIA

Born 1950, from Kolkata, India, studied at Hindu school and St. Xavier's College, Kolkata.

He is a retired journalist and 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 Hindi, Punjabi, Assamese, Italian, French, German, Polish, Persian, Serbian, Arabic, Hebrew, Malay, Mandarin, Romanian, Spanish, Azerbaijani, Russian, Uzbek, Kirghiz, Greek, Swedish, Norwegian, Chinese, Catalan.

“SAVAGE WIND” is his first poetry book, a bilingual edition, translated into Spanish by Mexican poet Josep Juarez. This has a separate edition published by Altaspera Publishing & Literary Agency INC, in Canada and distributed by LULU, IE under separate ISBN. The Italian version of “SAVAGE WIND” is published from Italy with Italian translation by poet Elisa Mascia, Italy. Arabic edition is published from Jordan translated by poet Nizar Sartawi into Arabic.

“SONG OF PEBBLES” is his second book, a bilingual edition, translated into French by Marjorie Meetoo from Mauritius. Published from Kolkata, India.

He thankfully acknowledges the Editors of the following anthologies and web places for being the first publisher of a few of his poems---GLOMAG (Ed. Glory Sasikala), VASUDHA-2(Ed. Gayatri Mavuru), TUNES FROM THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT and WHISPERS TO THE WORLD, (both the

books are Edited by Fabrizio Frosini, USA/Italy, translated into Italian).

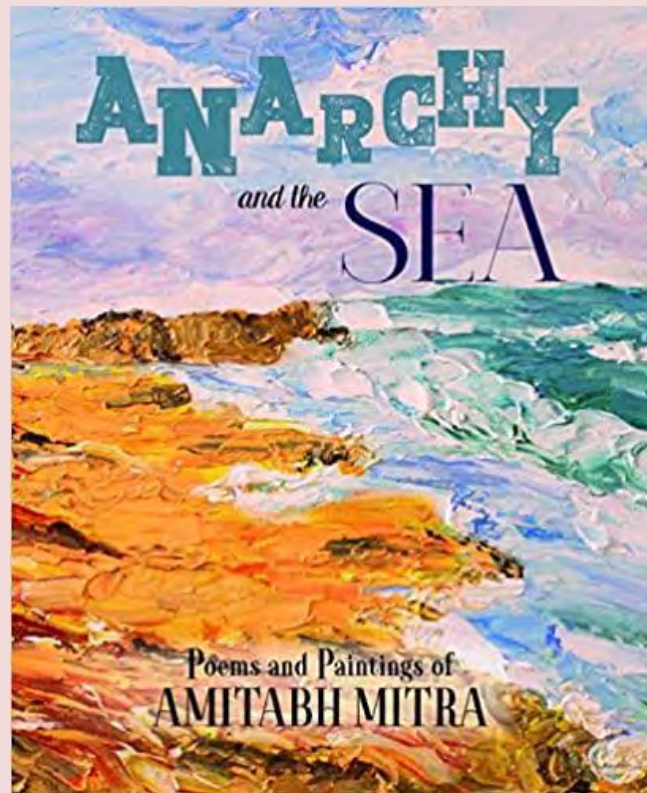
FM 26/27/28/29/30/31/32/33/34/35/36 (Ed. Rose Terranova Cirigliano, USA), WORLD HEALING WORLD PEACE-2018(Ed. William S.Peters,Sr, USA, Inner Child Press), LOVE POSTCARDS,(Ed. Alicja Maria Kuberska. Poland, USA). POETRY THE BEST OF 2020,Ed. Dr,HULYA n.Yilmaz,USA. LOVE IN SUMMER, Ed Rini Valentina, Indonesia. THE MONSTER 2020, Ed, Aruna Sri Medipally, India. THE POET, Autumn 2020, Ed ROBIN, United Kingdom. OPEN DOOR magazine, USA/UK, Edited jointly by Kassie J Runyan and Melanie Haagman. METAFORA WSPOTCZESNOSCI-2018 & 2019 (Polish anthology)COMPIANATUL MODIAL DE POESIE (Romanian Anthology-2018), WARRIORS WITH WINGS,(Ed, Micheal Lee Johnson, USA), LI POETRY-October,2019,Taiwan (Mandarin translation of SAVAGE WIND-Ed. Lee Kuei-shien).ATUNIS GALAXY ANTHOLOGY-2020, Contemporary World Poetry (Ed .Agron Shele. Belgium, USA)

THE STATESMAN, Festival Special Issue- 2018/2019 (Kolkata, India), THE DAILY OBSERVER,(Dhaka Bangladesh), Special poetry page on world Poetry, 2019/2020, Special page on GAZA/2021

AZAHAR-(Spanish E-Zine) Espana. OUR POETRY ARCHIVE, India(E-Zine) , Cajun Mutt Press,USA(E-Zine). SPILLWORDS (E-Zine) UK, RAVENCAGEZINE (Ed, Jerry Langdon) Germany.

PAN INDIAN POETRY IN ENGLISH SPANNING FIRST TWO DECADES OF 21st CENTURY,(Anthology) (Ed, Basudeb Chakraborty & J.S. Anand) New Delhi.

GloMag (print version), Chennai, edited by Glory Sasikala. Photography, paintings and poetry are his passions. He believes poetry is a pure language game of inner soul and inspiration from human emotions.



LINK TO BUY THE BOOK

<https://www.amazon.in/Anarchy-Sea-Dr-Amitabh-Mitra/dp/0992202027>

REVIEW BY GLORY SASIKALA

The book is beautifully brought out, a combination of poetry and paintings—and it has been my honour and privilege to share in the making of it with Dr. Amitabh Mitra.

The cover is glossy. At the back is the painting of the tranquil blue sea—and in the front cover...is the anarchy of the sea.

The title intrigues me. Anarchy And The Sea? Why anarchy?
And The Sea? Not 'Of The Sea'?

So let's analyse that for a bit. The dictionary meaning of 'anarchy' is 'lawlessness'—where there's no control, no government, and no order. Now, apply this to the title, 'Anarchy And The Sea,' meaning 'lawlessness' and the sea.

Is the sea really lawless? We're not talking physics here, because if you look at it physics-wise, everything in Nature—and indeed in the Universe—is governed by unbreakable laws based on pin-point accuracy, mathematics, and precision.

We're talking poetry here. The sea as the poet sees it—the lashing of the waves, no one wave the same, some coming wildly towards you like it would swallow you up, some gently lapping at your feet. No one mood the same...

Anarchy...how do you control the sea?

Souls crashing reefs

Space imbibing souls

These are two-liner poems that are accompanied by paintings of the sea in its myriad hues and moods, both poetry and paintings by Dr. Amitabh Mitra. When you write long poems, there is surely the luxury of having more words at one's disposal—and what's more, the luxury of a certain

willingness on the part of the reader to patiently hear the poet out. But when it's just two lines—sometimes even contracted to just two words (maybe of different tones for each line...or maybe the same tone), then it becomes the poet's responsibility to not just have an impact but to be so profound as to pack in a punch that blows the reader's mind away.

And time

Catches love too

And by this very need to be impacted by less rather than more, there is the need for the reader to stay on each page for a while—the way you would stay in front of a picture in a gallery of paintings—and let the words and the picture sink in...to allow the poet's interpretation, the sea's interpretation—and the reader's own interpretation—to synchronize.

Forgetting takes time

You never grow old

Let's consider the curious case of this two-liner:

Eternity

Eternity

You, the reader, are now in front of this canvas now that has just these two words—as I mentioned before—either in the same tone and intensity or in different ones. You stand there, gazing at the words...the painting....

The sea in this painting is not calm. It is tumultuous! It rages! Maybe that's contradictory to your own mind's definition of eternity, and that's okay. Eternity is forever...time is meaningless...time fades away...time is timelessness... There should be calm, the quiet setting Sun, gentle ripples kissing your feet...

Calm...

But here, eternity is a rage, the crashing of waves against the rocks in cruel mockery of all calm—overflowing and breaking all barriers.

What is it the poet feels? This is a Book of Love. Is this then his interpretation of Eternal Love?

Mind in five dimensions

You in all of them

Admittedly, there is the dissatisfaction that the paintings are in black and white. Someday, maybe, we shall be lucky enough to see the colour version too.

In a book where the poet is the anarchist—he gives in to unbridled passion...where the sea is the anarchist too—even King Canute could not tame the sea...and where you, the readers are the anarchists too—because the book demands you transcend all barriers of space and time...the sea will live on, and so will the poet and his lady love, and so will you the readers. Yes, so will you.

Looking out for you

Summers stand still

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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BLACKBERRY-BOYS

A monsoon noon.

Three thin boys with wide eyes
squat at a corner where roads crisscross.

Heads covered with clean poly bags,
crystal drops streaming down plain cheeks,
bamboo-baskets brimmed with lush blackberries.

Passers-by amazed!

bargains made,

callow fingers scramble over life's trophies.

On back of rain clouds they come

and light home by beaten wings—

mothers are Bacchus's Maenads,

sisters Michael Jacksons.

Fathers furrowing in far off lands...



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



GHAZAL

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 Gujurat 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'.



MY UNPLEASANT ENEMY

I no longer concern about
tomorrow, or after tomorrow
Nevertheless, I am a human
who they hoped to catch me
naked and seriously starving.

They burnt down my dreams
To occupy my volatile presence
The sky introduces the cloud
Then the cloud cries for autumn
I stand weeping for my neighbours.

My blood might be on discount
But never my honour and faith
I sleep with my hijab on my head
As I hold the Quran with my hands
Hiding my grandma's keys in my heart.

My unpleasant enemy, shoot me with
your weapon, but don't touch my flesh!
My president smashed my dagger and
will do anything to watch me dead or muted,
Chain me before our stones will blast your way.



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.



A WALK ALONG THE SHORES OF THE BALTIC SEA

The sea breeze envelops me with nostalgia,
reverie rises in the air.

Screaming gulls like white sails
flutter on the endless ocean of the sky

I follow the calls of the birds
and I'm heading towards the distant horizon.

I leave footprints in the sand for a moment.

The waves sweep them away

with their arched arms .

Salty droplets fall on my face,

to flow meanders down my cheeks.

Water permeates my body and mind

and I want to know

the secrets of being and nothingness.

Nobody knows I've been here

and I'm becoming silence.

I disappear between the sea and the clouds.



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).



THE DEATH OF A CLOUD

This one must live. It must.

I decided. I will not let it die.

This piece of cloud. Live, it will.

Stepping out of my house

I had seen it right above,

and in my mind I scorned,

the scorching Indian sun,

for its insolent blaze,

for nipping in the bud,

efforts to douse the flame
that engulfs my land,
by the water-carriers, so far.

But this should live full-term.

Cool, nourish, allay, pour,
it's death, not a choice for me.

It was a war now, undeclared,

David confronting Goliath,

David's stone, to kill the sun-

willing the cloud a surging life,

with all my might, compellingly.

And the sun gave in, true!

On my lids, beyond the shades,

on my unsmudged lips,

big drops , nature's coolants,

to ensure me a winner's smile.

to last me many summers.

The death of a cloud, triumphantly,
reduced to sure impossibility.



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.



BESIDE MY PILLOW A SILVER GLEAM

He glowed as if just arisen. No – more like
a man in whom godlikeness suddenly shone
on a dark night – One hundred stars peered
while music lilted tilting satin golden curtains –
he shone. I was stunned by this beauty,
my eyes melting as love does.

It was not about the moon or river flowing
to music – but how moon beams hummed
along wild locks of this radiant being ...

I shut my eyes to see clearly light – my fingers
caressed a cheek – an owl hoot splattered this
darkest night as my heart beat like crickets

in a forest, his smiling filled my cup of warm tea –
Time swam around in billowing waves.

In a trice, space wove as if it were a pendulum

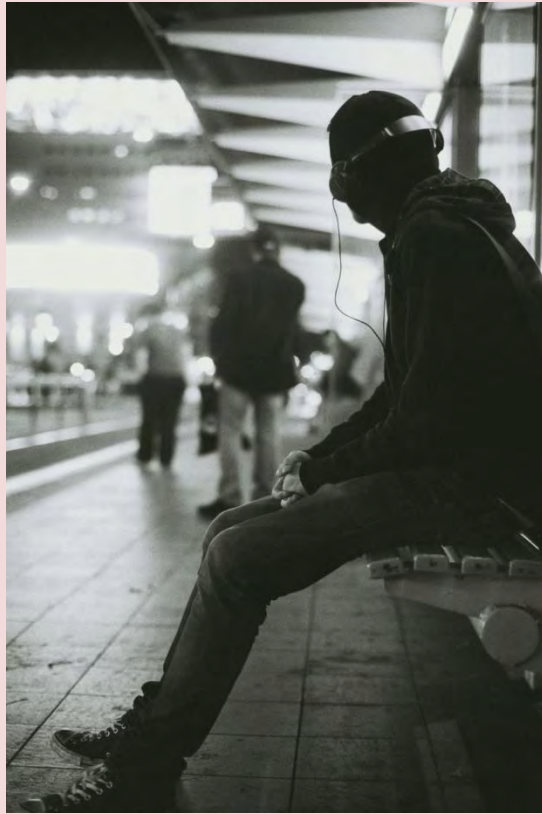
or a gigantic silver pendant at edges of cosmos –
his blue robes swallowed the moon and the stars.

A shuttered window swung open, creaking

as if someone startled Time on its hinges; my
throat was dry. I felt as if I'd walked in a storm ...
dusty, torn – a silver key gleamed near my pillow;
I had no lock in sight – all were disappeared.



Ambika Talwar: I am a poet/author residing in Los Angeles, USA. I work as English professor. I am published in various anthologies. I have also published a collection of poems and a poetic-spiritual travelogue. My creative expression lends dimension to my work as a spiritual-intuitive energy practitioner.



MY LIFE

A heavy, sweet beat song is
playing through my headphone.

Constantly.

It is enormously making me
feel like dancing.

But I can't, thinking of
what people around
will be thinking of me.



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.



THE WAIT

Moving multitude sprawled as shadow
as weary feet trudged ceaseless
body of mobile limbs faceless
denuded of that 'less' they zealously upheld
the residual dignity of humans.

Tuned to the rhythm of cumbersome pace
blistered strides crush the thorns of distance
at the call of a destination
lovingly etched in the heart-

Weighed down with pangs of hunger

dying a silent death in entrails
an endless trail of the destitute
swarm railroads, highways, pavements, befuddled
aliens in their own homeland, homebound
their gaze replicates history in differential guise.

The home awaits a knock
the mother's wait a pious ritual
destiny intervenes--
perils of hunger, ignominy, death,
expectation encircles an endless wait.



Amita Ray: Amita Ray is former associate professor in English and Vice Principal of a college residing in Kolkata, India, 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, journals and e-zines of national and international repute. She is an E.C. member of Intercultural Poetry and Performance Library, Kolkata.



Here is the history book

Where warriors and heroes

Become myth and martyr

Also the laughing canvass

Where eunuchs are painted with mockery

And their balls hung dry like

Dry fruits

Victor Ehikhamenor

and then the sun

swept a sea

and red horizons

fell

in the far depths
of a tenor
the swirling dervishes
at a bereft
mausoleum
chased the mind
to seas
skies
and the orbis
time plunged
from old trees
older forts
leaving a carpet
of brown
shades
and you once
suggested an
anarchic

revelation
your lips
shared just
a whisper
in blue



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



HEARBEATS

What are we...

But Wakeful

Dreamers and Schemers

With this Ticking

Time-bomb in our Chest

Why then

Not

Smell a Flower

Feel a Breeze

Embrace a Cloud

Steal a Star

Why Not

Live for Today

#LiveToday.



Amit Krishan Agnihotri: I am a poet residing in Landquart Switzerland. I work as a County Manager. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have also published short stories and poems in UK and India.



NAMI AMIDA BUTSU

Between my Being

And Nothingness

Lies Consciousness

That Consciousness

Where Lilies bloom

In Twilight gloom

Starry Lilies

Wandering across Blackness

Of forever Darkness

Never the end

It's been such a lovely day

Pray, Love, stay

What happened Love

Used to be so good

Abba understood

Doubled up grief

Soothed by simple belief

Infinite relief

Wandering Stars

Free to seek Happiness

Light Limitless



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.



Poetry is an endless ocean.

But isn't everything an endless ocean?

So, in a way, everything is poetry.

And poetry is everything!



Ampat Koshy: Dr. Koshiy A.V. is presently 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.



<https://unsplash.com/@ferdinandstudio>

I AM DREAMING

I am dreaming

May flowers

December roses

I'm dreaming

Autumnal hallows

Bewitching covens

I'm dreaming

My innocent

Inner spring tides.

My April heart breaks

My October follies.

Poetic pastors and shepherdesses

You're the many branches

Of this beautiful tree of verse

I let go of my fastidious bough

And descend, your lovely arms

Will catch me.

I fall through faraway lands, fairy tales,

femme fatales and rapacious pirates,

A thousand ships doomed to

Sloops of war, passing

Through dreary nights

My dreams ride, white knights upon black steeds
Unicorn horns crowned with pearls and nuggets
Of wisdom.

I find my entire treasure trove here

My bridal trousseau finery.

For I'm wedded

To poetry.



Amrita Valan: She is a writer from Bangalore, India and has a Master's degree in English Literature. She has worked in various professions, ranging from the hospitality industry, BPOs and as content creator in deductive logic and reasoning in English. She is currently a stay-at-home mom to her two boys. Her work has been published in many anthologies and online journals, including Poetica 2 and 3, To Be or Not To Be a Writer, The Poet's Christmas Childhood and Faith anthologies among others. Her poems and stories have featured in Café Lit, Café Dissensus, Shot glass Journal, among many others. Arrivederci, her debut collection of fifty poems is out on Amazon as of 6 May 2021.



A LONG ROAD

The name I knew quickly disappeared

The game I played was forgotten

The fame they coveted jeered.

A long road was sleeping silently when
we met, -- seemingly unaware of footsteps;
of raindrops and blazing rays, proud cavalcades.

I asked the name; wanted the game;
it didn't respond. When I was about to
return after a long sojourn, it whispered:

give me raindrops; give me the blazing sun;
give me colors by the side. Everything else,
footsteps and cavalcades, I sleep away, for pain.



Aneek Chatterjee: I am a poet and academic from Kolkata, India. I got published in reputed literary magazines and poetry anthologies across the globe. I authored 14 books including three poetry collections and a novel. My third poetry collection titled “of Ashes and Persiflage” (New Delhi and Kolkata, Hawakal) came out in November, 2020. I have a Ph.D. in International Relations, and have been teaching in leading Indian and foreign universities. I was a Fulbright – Nehru Visiting faculty at the University of Virginia, USA and a recipient of the prestigious ICCR Chair to teach abroad. My poetry has been archived at Yale University.



PRUNE THE DEAD WOOD

Prune the deadwood in your life

For too long it has suppressed you

Like a prisoner ransomed with your kindheartedness,

Like a never-ending cycle of a leech

Drawing blood from its victim.

Opportunists will abuse you

Always tugging at your heartstrings

Emotionally hijacking your soul

Denting the fragile edges of your mind
fracturing your persona.

Is your life punctuated by exploitation?

Dragging the deadwood will be at your own peril

Don't be consumed with self-sacrifice

Boldly step outside the vicious circle

View the movie of your life

Edit and cut away the deadwood

Before the forest consumes you

Stop every opportunist in their track

No longer be a willing sacrificial lamb

Like rose bushes and orchards, once pruned

Yields a bountiful spread of rose buds and fruit

Root out every dead branch in your life

You will acquiesce a munificent harvest.

As you blossom with the fruits of life
Perpetual peace floods your soul
As you breathe the crisp, clear air
You savor sweet freedom.



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 START LOVING YOU

When the flowers bloom in gardens
Filling the air with colors and essences
I feel your presence around me and
Start loving you forgetting all pretences

When the cool wind blows from
Valleys and hangs on your dense hair
I start loving you for your beauty
That in the morning is so divine and pure

When the dancing spring sings
Songs of love on its way to the plain
I start loving you for the sound
your anklets create as if music from rain

When the butterflies hover over
Flowers beating their colored wings
I start loving you as the sight to
To my heart immense happiness brings

When across the sky the gray
Clouds move in a very leisurely pace
I start loving you thinking you
Must be looking pretty in a flowery dress



Anil Kumar Panda (alias Tiku): He is from Brajrajnagar, Odisha, India, and resides there currently. He works as a mine surveyor in coal mines. He writes short stories and poems whenever he gets time.



RAIN IN MY CITY

My city is in a hopeless romance with rain. She waits till the tail-end of a sweltering year for the other's glance—remains of the love lavished on the rest of the country. Some say climate change has begun to play cupid in the intervening months. Perhaps. Perhaps not.

At the end of an eternal summer's day, my city sleeps alone.

There is a madness in my heart
That rumbles like monsoon thunder
Of the kind that races across
A rolling canvas of thoughts

My breath hangs yearningly

From a tormented sky

Gathering endearments

Of bygone nights

Like breeze trapped in trees

My sighs await release

By a mizzle of caresses

Under a broken moon's light

Shyly, my thirsty fragrance

Prepares to rise from earthy desires

To dissolve in your embrace

But you did not rain

You did not rain



Anju Kishore: A poet, editor and formerly a Cost Accountant, Anju Kishore's poems, some of them prize-winning, have been featured in numerous journals and anthologies. Her book of poems inspired by the civil war in Syria, '...and I Stop to Listen' earned her a glowing review in Kendriya Sahitya Akademi's English journal, Indian Literature. She has been part of the editorial teams of five anthologies with India Poetry Circle and Kavya-Adisakrit Publishing.



COFFEE SHOP

Every morning at the local coffee shop,
inviting aromas waft.

Faces are peppered with indulgent smiles.

A contagious mirth is shared over sweet pastries,
and cream cheese smeared bagels.

Some noses tucked deep in newspapers,
whereas others deftly scan electronic devices.

Generations mingle.

All the while, whispered conversation fill the room.

Hunger and camaraderie are sated.

A slow motion morning ritual breaks from a busy world,
as we linger over that last pleasing sip.

**published by The Writers' Magazine - UK, November 2019*



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 10 poetry books and have been published in numerous magazines and journals worldwide. I was nominated for the 2017 Pushcart Prize in Poetry. I was the winner of Spillwords Press 2020 Publication of the Year (Poetic), and I have won poetry awards from individual publications.

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



THE SPANISH COUPLE OF DREAMS

They were the most beautiful couple imaginable
and even more they were doctors,
they loved each other like a dream,
God had carved them as the most beautiful of dreams
then came the crown of the scourge
with revenge and the wave that could be imagined
they were the best doctors in the city
passionately went into their national duty,
to save the dearest Spanish nation from the invisible
calamity,

worked incessantly and saved not only one, but one more than thirty-three;

in the arc seven-day repercussion together they marvellously lit the lamps of one three four and their families

and communities waiting,

then the bad eighth day arrived,

before the doctor husband began to feel uncomfortable,

hours after his beautiful half began to feel the same

the time to be together was running out,

but they did not finish their national duty,

but time passed quickly out for the most beautiful,

together they felt that life is running out from them,

but saving hundreds of lives made their hearts and their faces shine

but their nerves were constantly weak and slow,

both came out of their theatres near a balcony,

they saw each other in the eyes for the last time.

one of the other,

God gave them no more than thirty minutes,
their respective eyes closed for the last and last time,
so ended the journey of the most beautiful Spanish couple
in the world,
they happily sacrificed their love story for maintain the
national bromance
in them the world has lost the most beautiful of human
lives,
even in their death they have maintained their love story.



Ashish K Pathak: He is a middle school teacher posted in Munger district of Bihar province. He has got a letter of appreciation from the President of India for his poem. He has been conferred WUP gold cross medal for his writing in the world book 'Complexion-based Discrimination'. He is one of six persons selected for featuring in Marula World anthology. He is a regular contributor in Glomag.



AT THE RIVERSIDE

Graffiti on the wings of the moon

Immortal touch of your lights

Your infinite gifts of love, melodies eternal

Silent amazement, your light runs

From sky to sky, graffiti in my heart

Let us be drunk with the light of the moon

Let us go to the riverside

Moon closed its eyes

In the darkness of night

Graffiti on the wings of the moon

Dark ruins of her passions...



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.



THE OLD COUPLE (PART 2)

As our steps get slower,
We'll not just cite the land
Land Captain Cook landed on.
But praise our ancient people,
Praise blessed ancient soil that,
Hard, hard-pushed,
Tries, like a brave saint, to bless us all.
We'll be up and doing, you and I.
We'll not slump on couches,

Not let our necks crick, backs hoop,
Or our eyes gawk day and night at
Screenfuls of News and Entertainment,
Most of it soon to sink forgotten like a
Million goggle googly-eyed mealtimes

May the gray-haired local choir restore
Lost songs to our lips,
At the local Market,
May Mock Morris dancers
Palpate our hearts and move old limbs.
When Fire, flood and drought feel like war,
May the ancient wizardry of
The Country Women's Association
Turn scones and cream into
A Sacred Communion.
May, the few hands that tend
Women's Shelters, and man Men's Sheds,

Raise up abused battered down people

Complexity wants to forget.

Dearest,

We'll say to each other:

At least we're not a sprawling city.

Or not yet, for the while

All compliant, all Four Seasons, we'll

Tend the swelling band of grandkids,

Do our Seniors Gym, Brain Gym,

Seniors Tai Chi and Seniors whatnot,

We'll Senior shop for ourselves,

Without, heaven knows,

Our easy surrender to the Carers.

We'll Senior on, Brave Hart,

You and I



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.



KIDS GALORE

(stop human trafficking)

Kids are the future

Allow them to grow

Spare them the abuse

That's killing them slow

Give them the care

They truly deserve

Don't hit their innocence

Bang! to the curve

They need to see

Their potential flourish

And not be taken away

By some scumbag rubbish

Our kids needs protection

Against many evil deed

Please play your part

I humbly plead

Create an environment

For them to prosper

And one day most of them

Will be able to conquer

Whatever obstacles
Is found in their way
So allow our children to explore
Every single day



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.



MY MOTHER, ME AND THE TORN SARASWATI PICTURE

What value does that small incident hold for me? It is etched in my memory. A small child I was. I drew a picture of Saraswati (Goddess of learning) in my rough copy. It was a hard laboured drawing for a small child and I marvelled at its beauty.

Being proud of my talent, I showed it to everybody. But one day, my mother wanted a piece of paper. Busy in other works, she tore a piece from my rough copy, and unknowingly, she had torn a hand from my Saraswati picture which I had drawn so painstakingly.

When I discovered the torn picture I flew into a rage to find the culprit.

My mother apologized for the mistake she had made, but it did not cool me down. Stamping my feet, I asked why she did not care about tearing paper from my notebook. Then I wanted to show her my anger. From my notebook, I tore off the whole picture. My mother did not show any emotion as she knew it was but natural for me to be angry. Not being satisfied, I tore the paper into small pieces and threw them all around the house. I was cooling down after stamping my fury on the torn pieces.

Discovering the dirt and the elements of short temper flying here and there, my cool Mom came rushing from the other room with a broom and started beating me without a question or without speaking a word. I knew why that was. I stood there like a stone, not saying a word further and promised to myself not to show off my anger ever.



Bharati Nayak: I am a bilingual poet, critic and translator residing in Bhubaneswar, India. I work in the Government of Odisha. I have contributed to various national and international anthologies and e-books. I have also published three poetry books, two in English language and one in my mother tongue ODIA and worked as co-writer in two poetry Anthologies. I regularly write on on-line poetry site www.poemhunter.com where I am placed among the top 500 poets and offered the title 'Poetic Basil' for my contributions.



FROM CALIFORNIA TO CHICAGO

The rolling surf and mists of clouds reflect sunlight off the side of our flight and into the Grand Canyon: three rock formations snake through the gigantic gullet, their peaks like the spine of an iguana.

Inverted capillaries, veins, and arteries of river beds cut through the landscape, indentations that seem as if God

had scraped spoons along the surface of the earth.
The topography transforms into faces in the terrain,
and we look down on contortions of grimaces.

Landing, we slide beneath the bellies
of arriving and departing jets.

“The moving walkway is now
ending; please look down.”

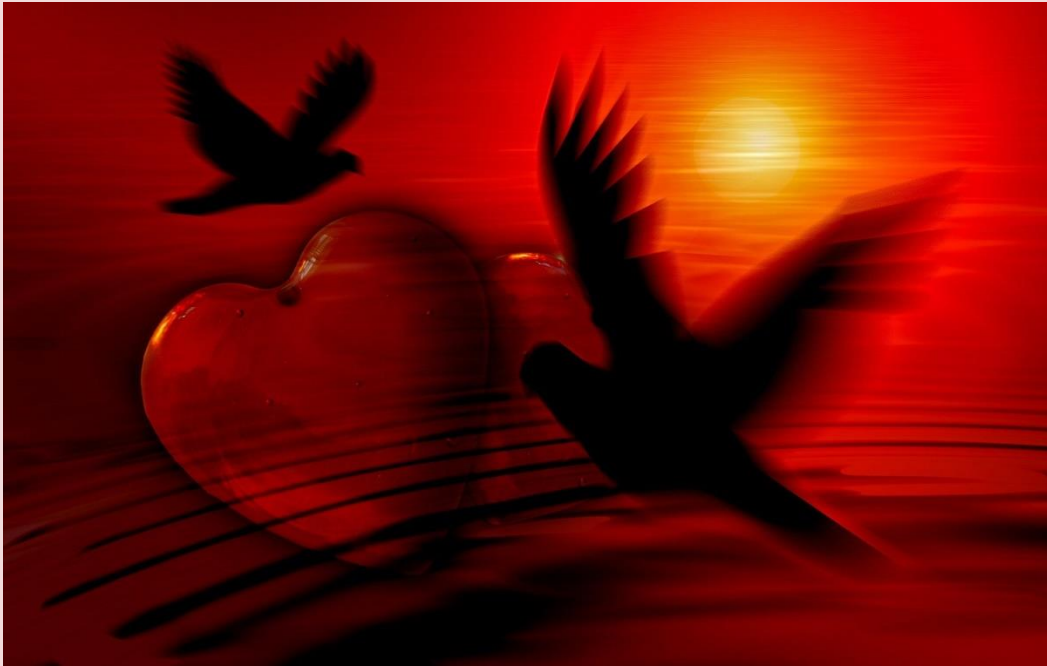
Above, candy colored coat hangers of neon

burn and cool the area while
rising up into the concourse of O’Hare,
a plastic and chrome Grand Central Station
for the new millennium,
opening floodgates for the art of denial,
washing away all silt of tradition.



Bill Cushing: Raised in New York City, Bill Cushing lived in numerous states, the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. He was called the “blue collar poet” by peers at the University of Central Florida, then earned an MFA in writing from Goddard College. He now resides in Glendale, California with his wife and their son. He recently retired after more than 20 years teaching in Los Angeles area colleges. Bill’s work has been in anthologies, literary journals, magazines, and newspapers. He facilitates a writing workshop for 9 Bridges Writers Community and performs with a musician

on a project called “Notes and Letters.” His poetry collection, *A Former Life*, was released in 2019 and was recently honored with a Kops-Featherling International Book Award. His chapbook *Music Speaks* won the 2019 San Gabriel Valley Poetry Festival Award and recently medaled in the 2021 New York City Book Awards.



THE HEART

It was only after meeting you

I got acquainted with pain

And became aware of the existence of a muscular unit

As big as a fist

Within my body

That got gaga

At the slightest sound

Of you or your footsteps on the distant hills.

This organ, this very organ started to
Hit against my bony cage
Making me lose my sleep
And finally my peace
Turning me a complete freak.

And no matter how hard I try to tame it
It refuses to break its alliance with pain
In spite of no gain.

So I wait impatiently for the day when it
stops to beat
and disturb my sleep
And blesses me with the everlasting gift of eternal peace.



Bilquis Fatima: She is an innate lover of nature and speaker for social issues, has allowed her feelings to be expressed as short writes and speeches from her college time. Although being a post-graduate in Chemistry, she has also mastered the skills of poetry appreciation and writing. Her poems reflecting the situations that are prevalent in the society, have been appreciated in some groups of poets and writers lately.



BUSY

So many people

And so many streets

So many cities of edifices,

Busy and clamorous

Oblivious of

what this day is for,

The day that begins with a dawn

And drags them to a night

Do they ever think
Where are they destined to,
With so many things around,
Convolute and confounded

Lost in the crowd,
I wandered on unknown streets
Friends failed to recognise me
And strangers sold dreams

Roads criss-cross at the squares
Branch out as streets,
...lanes and sub lanes...
Though we come across each other,
Every day,
Have no time for a wish



Bishnu Charan Parida: He is a bilingual poet writing in Odia and English. He is from Jajpur Road, Odisha. Professionally an engineer, he loves poetry. His poems have been published and awarded on global platforms. He loves to write on life, love, Nature and philosophy.



DYSFUNCTIONAL

divorce and after
being forced apart

what goes missing
is the wetness
of her mouth

incredible woman

it is not that she goes
but goes the functional part
of my being

now dysfunctional.



Bishnupada Ray: He is an Associate Professor of English at the University of North Bengal. His poems have appeared in various journals and anthologies. He can be contacted at bishnuray@gmail.com.



Pic by Mike Hurry

TO ANYWHERE

I do believe I've had enough
so I pack my trailer
with all my stuff
tell my dogs
we're on our way
I've decided
I just can't stay

we're on the road
to anywhere
where it leads
I don't care
everywhere my music's on
so I can sing
to my favorite songs

I do believe you shut me out
with all your cold
you gave me doubt
more to life
than feeling bad
time to rid
this feeling sad

on the way meet new friends
not looking back

to make amends
round the fire
we laugh and drink
getting high
no time to think

we're on the road
to anywhere
where it leads
I don't care
everywhere my music's on
so I can sing
to my favorite songs



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.



DISTANT DREAMS

Into the woods where air is pure poetry
and the warm breath from the
mountain of your mouth-the sunrise
waking me up-
my fingers fiddling
your arm
our wrists swaying like
a violin as we walk

amidst

those tall trees strong and green

shimmering silently serene

that have tales to tell

of success-

the leaves having experienced

the change of colors

F

a

I

I

crushed and crumpled

and

blown away to gutters of obnoxious odor

only to wait patiently for the right season

to get back to where they belong, branches
that offer opportunities...

and the roots that have endured
the cold and the heat
for years
to sprout their wings...

I wish to go-
away from the
mad, mad rush of this crazy world.



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.



LOVE - TRYST

(1)

Winds are still; sea is calm

Long tiring day is done

Flagged tired and drowsy

With aching heart

I've reached the shore

O, Eternal Friend

(2)

Before my eyes close

Showered thy grace upon me

And fill my dead lyre with melodies

To wash away all wariness

Like the spring in the woods

Bringing down the curtain on cold winter

(3)

Bring the wanderings of many lives to an end

Make the lonesome soul endless

By replenishing her with thy Light

That may take her to thee

Except dark and gloom

Nothing else I see



B.S.Tyagi: He comes from India. He writes in both Hindi and English. He has several books- fiction and non-fiction to his credit. His poems have been included in several anthologies. He writes short stories which regularly appear in national and international literary magazines. His write-ups and poems have appeared in national and international magazines. Besides, he has translated four books of poems. He shies away from public celebrations and prizes. Inner bliss he is showered upon through creativity is the greatest prize.



FELICIFIC MOMENTS

An evening lover echoes
In you forgotten dreams and
memories of romance.

Touch wordlessly in a greater optimism.

Waves of summer morn
Under a Cloudless sky
Flickering lights of desire

Turn like a dancer alone on the stage of life.



Carl Scharwath: He has appeared globally with 150+ journals selecting his poetry, short stories, interviews, essays, plays or art photography (His photography was featured on the cover of 6 journals.) Two poetry books 'Journey To Become Forgotten' (Kind of a Hurricane Press).and 'Abandoned' (ScarsTv) have been published. His first photography book was recently published by Praxis. Carl is the art editor for Minute Magazine, a competitive runner and 2nd degree black- belt in Taekwondo.



There is a story i narrated
it had to be told I felt
another story i kept it to myself
need not be told i felt
later
much much later
i felt
i was wrong
the story i narrated could have been
kept to myself
the other one should have been narrated

judgement

pure wrong judgement.



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.



HINDSIGHT

It seemed I had all the time in the world,

Years stretched ahead like the sea.

Now I am old, the scroll of life unfurled

What is left to comfort me?

The lips unkissed, chances I have squandered

Decades procrastination

Lost in a fog of mind I wondered

And this my destination.

If I had known...such talk shall drive me mad
No difference might have made
Just different regrets to make me sad
When into hindsight I'd fade.

There have been days not wholly wasted
On earth some purpose I serve
Some days of happiness I have tasted
More than that I don't deserve.



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.



AFTERNOON

The afternoon light

Gently flows through my window

The day grows drowsy

Shadows of children

Playing outside in the grass

Flicker and flash by

Laughter, dog's barking
Flutter on the summer breeze
Like leaves on the trees

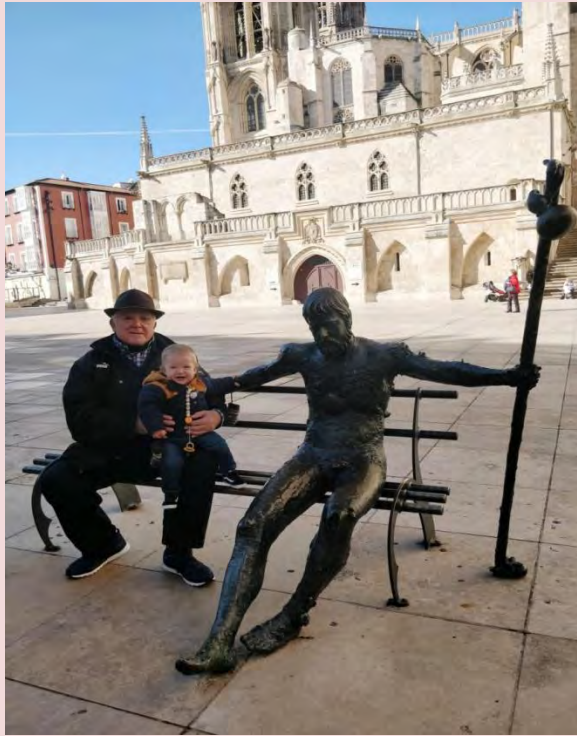
Let me just sit here
Adrift in the moments' peace
Waiting for nightfall



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>



Scrap metal pilgrim next to Cathedral Square. Isabel' Pic: Daniel with his grandson Kylian

THE PIRATE SECURITY GUARD

Today is November 17, 2020 and

With mom Isabel and lovely Kylian

We have gone to the main square of Burgos

To add bread crumbs

Sparrows and pigeons.

I want to piss and

There, next to the door of the Town Hall

Is the pirate safe
Controlling who has to pass
Who have I begged to let me in.
-You leave and you enter.
That I know an orderly
And a general administration clerk
I am also retired from this City Council
And I have a prostate operation
Which makes me pee many times.
Pass one, pass two
Three pass and four pass
And the security pirate informs me angrily:
-Here, too, the services are closed
And the staff has to go outside
He has stunned me asking:
-Since the bars and shops are closed
Because of the stinking pandemic:
So will they have to go to the shores

From the Arlanzón river for more information

Or do it next to the dedicated statue

To King Carlos III of this same main square?

-Take four steps further back

And let in those who have

To do their business or more.

And you go where you want

I cannot anymore

I have four drops

That they have wet my pants.

Thank goodness it's close

The Office of Environment and Health

On Diego Porcelos Street

Where I worked for a few years

And my old companions

They had me on a pedestal.

While my former companions

They congratulate Isabel

And Kylian is freaked out
I go to the service
Afterwards, smiling and calm
We have gone to the Cathedral square
To take a picture of us
With the scrap pilgrim
From the Camino de Santiago.



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.



TORMENTING MEMORIES

Tis the first day of winter
the fireplace is glowing red with warmth
I gaze into the red-hot embers
while the frosty cold angry
winters wind howls outside
like a lone wolf wailing at its reflection on the moon

neither is welcome to enter my refuge
I won't let either of them into my sacred space

nostalgia overwhelms me like a heavy anchor
chained to my soul
It drags me deep into the murky depths of despair
I see you as beautiful has ever
I hear your voice as sweet as a nightingale
I see your smile gentle and welcoming
I breathe the scent of your womanhood
tantalizing, Alluring, Provocative
driving our desires insane

the fire smolders in the fireplace
but it won't incinerate you from my memories
I see you and feel you lying in my arms
the rug is warm and holds so many memories
of a time when you and I lay in front of the fire
and felt the warmth of the fire warm through our love

We drank fine red wine
and the fire from the wine more potent
than the flames from the burning embers
setting the desire like a runaway wild fire
that engulfed the pent-up fury of longing and wanting
we broke free from the long waiting
to let out the caged animal imprisoned in our loins
and in the frenzy our bodies lost all control
and like Titians in frenzied battle for each other's souls
we ravished and gratified each other's desires
our souls transcended the world and all its tribulations
everything blown into forgetfulness of oblivion
as we both lay spent and content in each other's arms.



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 Gloriotimes, India. He is the Convenor of the Live Poets Society, Durban, South Africa.



UMHLALI SAW MILLS

A story of survival in Apartheid South Africa

PART ONE

Umhlali Saw Mills, founded in 1942, helped Salt Rock, Shaka's Rock, Ballito, Umhlali, Compensation, Sheffield Beach and many farms and many people to blossom.

We did not have access to the municipal services of the whites only towns of Ballito or Umhlali.

A diesel generator was used for electricity till the Padayachee family was able to pay for power to reach them from the national grid. There was no refuse removal, only borehole water and primitive party-line telephones.

They had to maintain even their earth roads themselves. My father bought an expensive earth mover to maintain the road to our Saw Mill.

They had themselves, their unlettered but valiant selves.

For a while my Uncle Krishna Padayachee and my Appa and his people even operated a stone quarry until they were told that they were 'non-scheduled people'. They had employed an old white man to handle the explosives but Apartheid state security was wary.

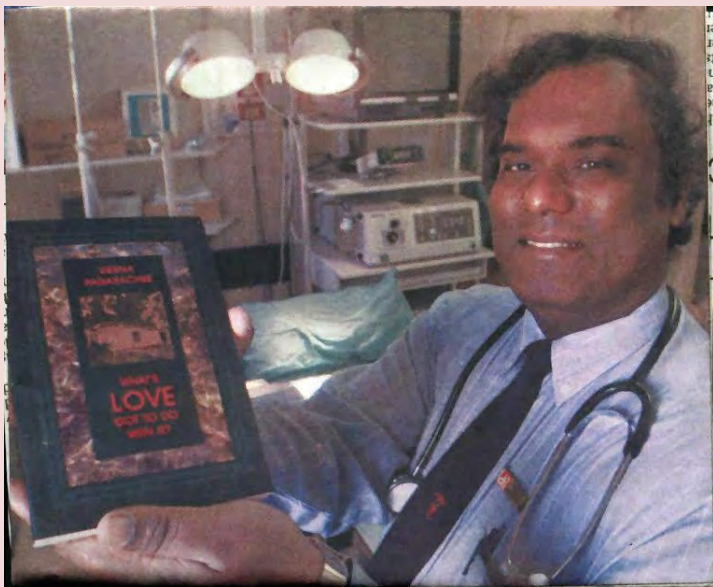
The disenfranchised were not allowed to handle explosives. They were confronted by one hurdle after the next that was placed in the way of Umhlali Crushers till they finally had to call it a day.

They grew roses and other plants and sold them. Avocado, litchi and banana trees flourished around our home.

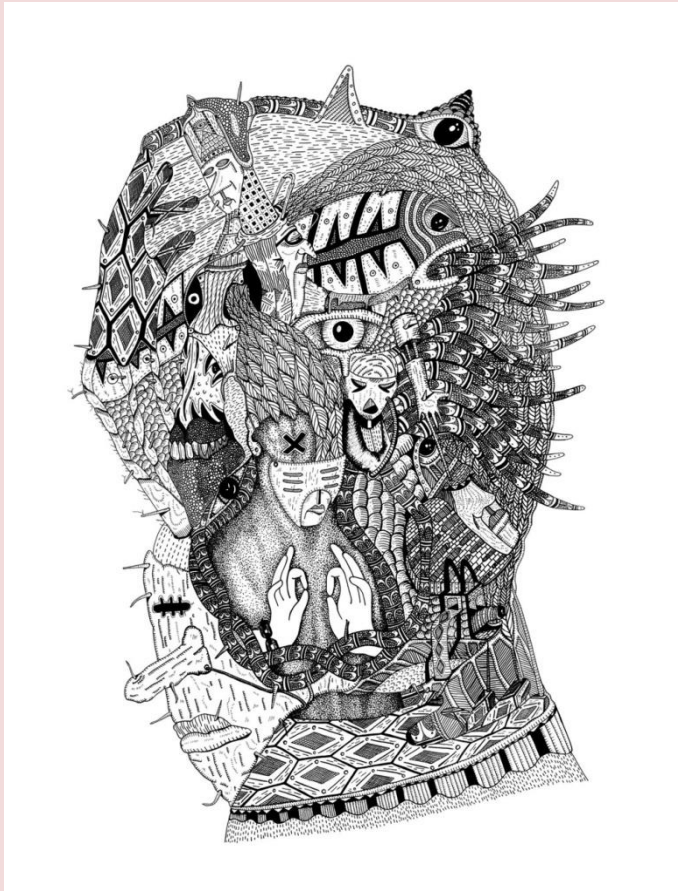
The crops would be sold to entrepreneurs. Umhlali Saw Mills bought pine and gum trees from white farmers all over Kwa Zulu Natal.

An automatic breakdown ripped the logs to make timber. They used them to manufacture furniture, desks, chairs and cupboards, even the counter and cupboards for my Medical Practice. Most of the workers were African, usually Zulu.

Those hard working carpenters manufactured tomato boxes and pallets for the Huletts sugar tycoons. Our workers toiled on the sugar cane fields. The sugar cane was trucked to the white owned sugar mills. The police gave our vehicles a hard time. The trucks were sometimes second hand. Our people usually maintained and repaired the trucks themselves.



Deena Padayachee: He is a South African Author and Poet, residing in Durban. He works as a primary care physician. His writing has been included in various international and South African anthologies including the Readers' Digest's BEST SOUTH AFRICAN SHORT STORIES. Three of his books have been published. The English academy of Southern Africa awarded the author the Olive Schreiner prize for prose; The Congress of South African Writers has awarded the doctor the Nadine Gordimer prize for prose.



PERISAI – LAND OF ARMOUR

Tales of Navonod – Since the fall of our ancient motherland
Nwotepac, I Navanod

have dedicated my gifted existence to the fortification and
protection of our

embattled nation, who for untold millennia have had to
defend our lives our borders

our history our legacy from countless scarlet invasions
intended to delete us yet we

are still here – It has not been easy but my rumoured status
as eternal defender has

galvanised my candour, my openhartigheid! From the *Cave of Echoes* to the *Field of*

Dungeons and the *Hand of Shadows*, I have done all I could to ensure the survival of

my people – This fortified vilified targeted resilient brave stoic proud strong nation!

Field of Dungeons – If you hear harrowing cries of woe in the thick of night or

screeching pleas to be set free, do not be fooled by these wretched invaders now

our eternal damned captives for daring to wipe us out. Never again will we sit idly

allowing our enemies to delete us! They, who now daily feel the searing pain of what

they have done will never again feel the glow of a thousand suns or hear the rush of

raging waterfalls crashing down the highest of cliffs nor the rush of healing winds...

The Observers – This land these citizens this nation will never again be caught off-

guard! The Elders, now our eyes of observation are our sentinels elected – They

who have transcended to a higher dimension sounding the alarm even now as new

usurpers still attempt to annihilate us taunt us colonise even attempting to turn us

into ash whilst hoping to invade our memories and proud intricate histories...

Mouth of Skeh – If by any chance any enemy dares to to enter the mouth of Skeh

The well hidden *Tameletjie* will ensure a swift end to a doomed fiend foolish enough

to underestimate our sworn oath to protect our own! Its power of thought alone is

enough to make intruders jump into the lake of *tokkelossies* where the screams of

their victims will forever haunt their ears and decaying minds whilst the *Hand of*

Shadows will reach deep into their toxic essence reminding them of the

Unimaginable pain they have caused in the name of ill-fated wars!

The Scimitar – We are the elected founding pioneers of nations brought together by

the shared fall-out of countless atomic wars – Our mortality guarded by our unity to protect all from the dregs of senseless atrocities evil thoughts lies and anarchy – It is our destiny to ensure liberty and fragility. After all, we are all *Perisai...*



Don Beukes: He is a South African and British writer. He is the author of 'The Salamander Chronicles', 'Icarus Rising-Volume 1' (ABP), an ekphrastic collection and 'Sic Transit Gloria Mundi' (Concrete Mist Press). His poetry has been anthologized in numerous collections and translated into Afrikaans, Persian, French, Kreole (Mauritius) and Albanian. He was nominated by Roxana Nastase, editor of Scarlet

Leaf Review 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 and his second 'Cape Sounds' in 2019 (Gavin Joachims Publishing Cape Town). He is also an amateur photographer and his debut Photographic publication appeared in Spirit Fire Review in June 2019.

Anwar Davids: He is an Illustrator from Cape Town, South Africa. Since an early age he always found art interesting and felt the need to express himself. His fascinations with graffiti on walls lead him to studying Graphic Design at Cape College where he was influenced by Cubism, Surrealism and Pop Art. His style of work is merely experimental which allows him to challenge himself to be more creative. Past experiences and current affairs has a major influence in most of his current illustrations. Anwar has been part of many group exhibitions alongside talented and very inspirational artist both in South Africa and abroad. He has done Mural work in UAE and Denmark as well as in his home town.



MADE TO ORDER

The poets in the garret, the poets in the pulpit, the poets in the harem, the poets in the forum, the poets at the lectern, the poets-as-editors, the poets in the board room, the poets in uniform --

They all actuate the dancer, model the romantic, command the murder words, provoke the murder hordes, invoke the deity, model the fealty, incite blood and honor, inspire holy bombers.

That's what poets do.



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.



ANOTHER MORNING

It is unknown at this time

How many of those words

have a heavy summation of

those words forever or ever?

Of course,

wise linguists will say!

Is this an invisible conspiracy under the cover of disguise?

The answer to this question is that there is no such thing as
a horrible tragedy

That has never been heard before.

This deadly form has disappeared again in a few months.

The world has lost its ability to block the world.

The country is on the alert.

Let's build our own health fortune now.

We have to learn to live a normal sattvic life

No matter how much discipline-information this man goes through

The timeless ruthlessness of the morning is dark in the morning,

What is the morning after the night?

Dear friends!

Throwing pride away is far more cautious,

Even more refreshingly introverted, Who is behind and who is in front, Who is big and who is small and powerful all over the world,

Who is or is not, is the one

Who is free from the trap of all these unwanted questions.

Another morning is the music of humanity



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.



SCRATCHES

Translated by Artur Komoter

Wishing to gain trust,
they take on artificial faces,
mythical reality
allows to survive.

However, after a while
we see that

plastic people

no longer delight

they have scratches.



Eliza Segiet: I am a poet, playwright, residing in Tomaszow Maz, Poland. I work as a philosopher. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have also published (drama, poetry anthologies - 12). My poems Questions and Sea of Mists won the title of the International Publication of the Year 2017 and 2018 in Spillwords Press. I have been nominated for the Pushcart Prize 2019. I have been nominated for the iWoman Global Awards. I have won the Laureate Naji Naaman Literary Prize 2020. I have won the Laureate International Award Paragon of Hope (2020). My works can be found in anthologies and literary magazines worldwide.



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_House_Rose_Garden

BIGFOOT PRINTS IN THE WHITE HOUSE ROSE GARDEN

Folklore, Democracy fathered.

Fairness and peace, molested, slaughtered.

A Pathless emperor billows,

Weak and stupid, he still bellows.

Our minds free, welcomed, fluttered, huddled,
A hunger for white roses, troubled.
Ugly, deep were his wheeling steps.
Unaware of the prints and depths.

I hope they made a plaster cast,
To show the world, preserve the past.
Display the ape-like feature,
To become history's teacher.



Ferris E Jones: He writes poetry and screenplays from his residence in Puyallup, Washington. His work has been published in Se La Vie Writers Journal, Write on Magazine, Outlaw Poetry, Degenerate Literature 17, Tuck Magazine, The Literary Hatchet, Warriors with Wings and other literary periodicals. He is the recipient of two Grants from the Nevada Arts Council and published several collections of poetry, including To Burning Man, Oh the Path that Followed and As the Toad Sleeps. You can learn more about Ferris E. Jones by visiting www.inquisitionpoetry.com where each month he features the work of other poets.



THE SOLITARY ONE

She sat there, in a corner of the street

Naked, wounded and assaulted perhaps.

Her thin and bony hands eagerly clawing through the
rubbish in search of food

This miserable woman had looked up at the almighty

Hoping to get some food and clothing

But the lord had turned away leaving her hungry, naked
and helpless.

Is He testing us?

Testing whether we were capable of helping a kin to survive

But our narrow lanes of society

Have left her, a haggard, defenceless and rejected woman.

I did try to help her

But perhaps I fear the scorn and the unpredictable attitude of our society

I know that on this dark night

She must be cold outside

Without any shelter

And no defences to guard herself against nature's fury

She must be craving for a bit of warmth, but will she get it ,

In a world where we have left her to die.



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.



THE FALLING LEAF

There is an old creeper
Climbing up to my window
Tired of fighting against
the harsh strokes of winter
Stands quiet and desolate
having lost its leaves

I keep gazing quietly at the window pane

An unseen bond grows between us

We are standing in the same hemisphere

The tree is shedding leaves

I am shedding me

I lie...sick and pale

Life wanes just before my eyes

In a night of storm and thunder

The old creeper trembles in fierce wind

An icy cold feeling grasps me too

I lie....motionless and still

18, 19, 20...I go on counting

All the leaves fall

The last one remains in isolation

holding me....

My breath will stop with its fall

It will not fall alone

It will fall with me

A death knot ties us together

The last leaf will fall with the wind

And I will fall from eternity...

Note: Inspired by O Henry's famous story 'The Last Leaf'



Gayatree G. Lahon: Gayatree is a poet and a teacher from Assam. For her, poetry is a passion where she finds peace and solace amidst the complexities of life. Being an aesthete, she finds beauty in every object of life and nature and her ink pours those elements in a subtle way. Her poems have been published in many national and international anthologies and web magazines.



As roads twist, turn, converge,
disappear into dark forests or
stormy deserts,

I wait.

I wait dreaming of miracles,
hoping, that
my prayers are answered,
that we remain safe,
that we have air to breathe,
and that we will survive...

And, if you don't see me,

tomorrow, remember,
once we shared a big room together,
we shared the sky, the stars, space,
earth, the oceans... together,
together we wrote history
leaving a long shadow everywhere,
and that you are with me
till my last breath.



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.



THAKSHAK

Coiled like procrastination and hissing every now and then,
Slithering through the vents of anthills of indifference,
This serpent of callousness moults its skin like thieves who
leave clumsy evidences all around,

Hood raised hollering silently through earth's lungs the
serpent lurks idly,

Waking up from lassitude and hibernation it stretches to
perpetuate chaos,

It has invaded this blue planet taking wings, spitting venom,
Thakshaka in flight waiting to snatch lives as it leads
denizens like a tyrant,

Razing foliage, drying up water ways, piling up
monstrosities,

This serpent has almost swallowed the earth,

Leaving metaphors to fly around lost in the debris of
apathy,

Where breath is now a commodity, water a toxicity and
food a collective refuse of human audacity.

Could we ever turn the clock around and clean up our
mess?

For soon this Mother would inundate Herself in a deluge of
self-cleansing,

While space struggles to slice the atmosphere in vain,
Trying to break down walls of accumulated junk,
Strangulating this very life and evolution.



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.



Lifelines are named aren't they?

Lifeline meeting lifeline is love

Star lines mean fame, the line that starts at the wrist

cutting right through mid-wrist is money

the perfect semi-circle, education

and so on...

But these lines can criss-cross making one wonder

where it all led?

I'd rather read twinkle creases around the eyes of
merriment

fun, laughter and joy with friends walking along

worry creases on forehead, and therefore, know you've loved

and hundreds of age creases....of a life well lived.



Glory Sasikala: She is a writer, poet and publisher from Chennai, Tamilnadu, India. She is the Editor and Publisher of GloMag, the international monthly online poetry and prose magazine, and is administrator of the group of the same name on Facebook. She is the creator of 'The Chennai Ladies' series of E-books and books on Amazon.com.



SOLITUDE

In the pale winter morning when the brush waits
for the moonlight to shine,
I speak of the river, sediments, boats and ghats,
trees for the tender leaf,

How do I picture the past?
winds carry those scarred memories
each language decorates the twilight sky.

Let the weightless shadow writes the dead letter
the very last shade hides the warmth of desire,
the sparrows drink the chlorophyll-rich water.
love poems are wafer-thin now, missing soft words
the unheard syllables sip the grey of the clouds
what story do the fading daylight tells us?

Meanwhile, somewhere the blue dots mean tiny stars,
windows give shelter to the broken rainbow,
and the world outside is slowly filling up the solitude.



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 two anthologies of poems in English and also have one translation work of short stories of Israel, translated by me from English to Bengali. I have also edited a book on selected songs of Tagore translated in English and one anthology on poetic tribute to Jallianwalabagh Massacre. Two recently published books of mine; 'Alleys are filled with Future Alphabets' and 'From Prinsep Ghat to Peer Panjal' (joint e-book).



SELFIE

Am not a partisan of anyone

So I stay by myself

Try to maintain my impartiality intact

Still I often face trouble

While my friends take selfies

And upload them on social media

The photos unfold the secrets
That one can't pronounce openly
As picture never lie

Now I can't dissuade them from taking selfies
Nor I can persuade those
Who zooms the selfies
And make a wrong opinion on me

So I am trying to act like a crab that dwells in a hole
So that
neither cameramen
Nor spectators are hurt

Never want to make someone unhappy
If I can't make anyone happy



Guna Moran: Guna Moran is an Assamese poet and critic. His poems are published in more than hundred international publications all over the world. His poems have already been translated into thirty languages of the world. He has three poetry books to his credit. He lives in Assam, India.



GHAZAL

Woe to those who travel alone. Listen- the lazy music is still,

Would you like to come with me? Ahh! Hazy music is still.

In the season of sorrow, your love is the only shade,

The pain of this longing will get away but crazy music is still.

I know none has searched for my secrets but laments are heard,

Songs of the wind may come back but mazy music is still.

No doubt your melody sweeps the veils from the heart,

I too have a hundred songs in my pocket but dozy music is still.

Remember the night will lure you like a pretty maiden,

Don't you dare to take that route till muzzy music is still?

Well, I will move in silence if you shine on me like the famous moon!

Let me glitter with a fountain of life till glitzy music is still.



Imran Yousuf: Imran Yousuf is a Poet/Writer/Columnist/Translator from Kashmir, India. Currently working as Columnist and Journalist, he has contributed his poems to various reputed magazines, journals and international anthologies. He has co-authored more than 10 anthologies and has also written a series of articles, about the great Sufi Poets of the Kashmir Valley (starting from 14th century), which were published across various newspapers and magazines and now being compiled into a book (to be launched soon). He is presently engaged in interviewing the current generation of great poets from the Kashmir valley. The articles will also be compiled and given the shape of a book.



WINNING ALL YOUR FEARS

Overcoming all your fears

Hidden insecurities

Regular anxiety

Self-doubts

Ifs-and-buts

Is not easy

But it's important

For oneself

To not only experience

One's true potential

But also, to nurture
The Fire of passion
The oceans of knowledge
The sky full of peace
The earth full of happiness
And the air full of positivity,
Only then you can lead your life
In the direction you want to
In the moment you seek to
And in the time, you aspire to!



Jayant Singhal: I am a writer residing in Delhi, India. I am an Economics graduate. I have contributed to various anthologies in the past.



THE DOG ATE MY POEM

This would be my greatest opus.
sprawled on my couch were:
a new coloring book, lovely pencils,
toy kaleidoscope, unpaid bills
and my fine epic.

Well, I have figured this one out!
My coloring book gathers dust
along with crayon pencils.
That toy kaleidoscope is dim.

Unpaid bills are even dimmer.

But I often worked on my poem.

Fido wants me all for himself.

He slobbered over, crumpled up

and gnawed this gem, this

profound message to our universe...

dogdangit!



Joan McNerney: Joan McNerney's poetry is found in many literary magazines and she has four Best of the Net nominations. Her latest titles are *The Muse in Miniature* and *Love Poems for Michael* both available on Amazon.com and Cyberwit.net.



BIRD WITHOUT WINGS

Before me there was nothing

A deep breath

A deafening disintegration

An expansion

An inclusion

An illustration

A look ahead and a drop back

A retreat to an ocean of zero

The official primordial birth

The slap on the back of the void
That awakens a world of pain

The original sinner

Me

We re/act, we re/collect

This treasure, this torture

This gift of love obtained

And contained within

A drop of rain

Red, and rolling down the cheek of a god

So jealous it cannot let go



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/>



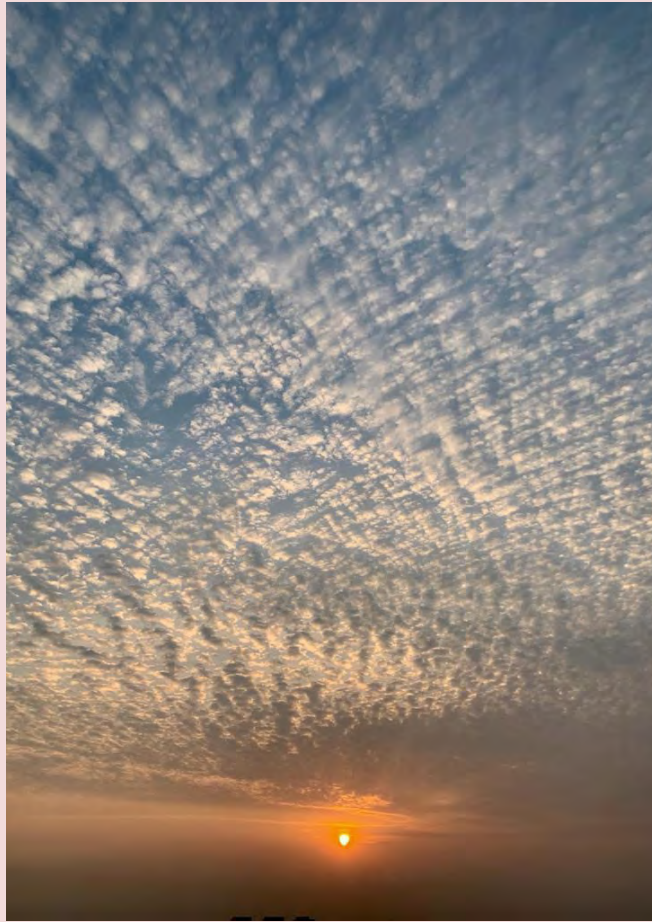
ON A RELAXING WOODLAND STROLL

When the wind was still,
and the trees many
but unassuming,
the brush unmoving,
and the birds
in early-afternoon repose,
and the trail I walked
soft but supportive,
random thoughts
sprang to mind,

a place they had
no business being.



John Grey: He is an Australian poet, US resident, recently published in Orbis, Dalhousie Review and the Round Table. Latest books, “Leaves On Pages” and “Memory Outside The Head” are available through Amazon. He has work upcoming in Lana Turner and Hollins Critic.



DREAMS NEVER EXPIRE

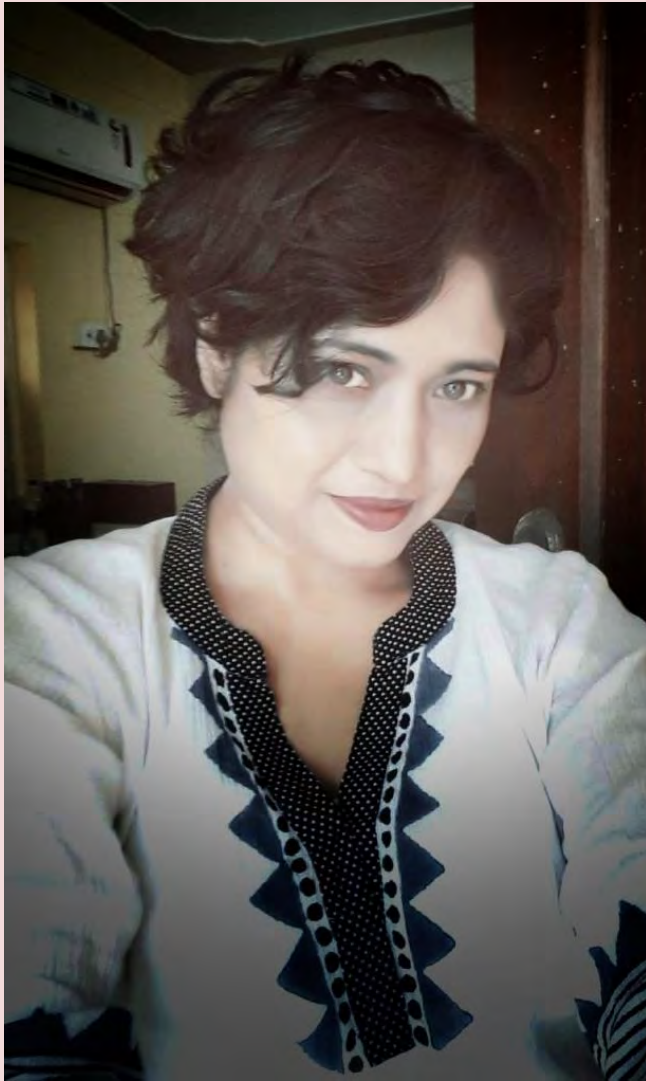
One day the wanderer,
walks through the last lane, blind,
leaves his cloudy footprints behind
and fades away into the domain
of the wonderful fantasy, uncertain.

Like a finished old scent
still breathing in its empty bottle,
his desperate urge
for clinging to life, merge
into the cold realm of the absent.

His detached shadow
calls him from behind, in vain,
as an empty sea-shell, washed ashore,
shapes up the melancholy sea-roar
into a howling pain.

The twilight dips her feet,
stepping deeper and deeper
into the waves of the dusky river;
washing off the bridal hues splendid
she unites with the dark divine, indeed.

The cirrus clouds isolate the evening,
heaps of skeletons lay staring,
breathing in vacant pride,
dreams germinate in their eye sockets
when new cumulus tomorrows glide.



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.



WORLD WIDE WEB

The dawn of the millennium year, 2000,

Y2K threat looming large,

The world wide web

Was spread out like

A giant spider's...

In wait, for gullible minds

Who hungrily tasted

The honey-dew of the Internet

The dotcom and email
As they sat in a daze in the maze
Of games like 'Dave'..
And other new online 'toys'...
The soft-phone of the online call,
On huge padded ear-phones,
The night-long chat,
Before SMS and WhatsApp..
Made their debut..
Abandoning the once famous, bulky 'pager'..
We were 'navigating' the 'web',
Or was it navigating us?
I, for one, never knew..
I was busy learning 'Excel'.
For that was important to excel
In the corporate world!
But as I travelled on 'webbed' feet,
I swam through those deep waters of search engines,

Landing at many safe harbours, yes,
But also surfing through
Some dangerous domains!
Until it all became an addictive routine,
That now if it's only on Facebook
That we see each other's faces...
And we ask “what's up?” Only on WhatsApp..
So, there!
Webbed, by the web indeed!



Kamar Sultana Sheik: She is a poet, writing mostly on themes of spirituality, mysticism, and nature with a focus in Sufi Poetry. Her professional career spanning 18 years has been in various organizations and Institutions including the IT sector. She is a self-styled life coach and has currently taken a break to focus on her writing full-time. Sultana has contributed to various anthologies and won several prizes in poetry contests. A green enthusiast, blogger and content-writer, Sultana calls herself a wordsmith.



UNBOUND

In you I did find,
the freshness of images and metaphors.
You always surprised me,
in the twists and turns of your words,
their depth, our resonance and always the humour.

You drew me out of claustrophobic spaces,
closed camphor chests and musty cupboards,
into vast panoramic spaces.

You let me be without false make up,
and tints to hide defects and stains.
We were Wabi-Sabi in our ways.

I expected no proof from you,
as in figures and columns,
measurements and bank balance,
not even in the plum line depth of our love,
and we did without much applause,
or airy brilliance.

We agreed on our passions!
Balmy nights, silence of stars,
Fragrance of blossoms,
Pure sounds of prayer bells,
Soft glow of candles,
Freedom of thought,

Emotions genuine, gentle or wild,
and nature's softness.

Freedom of vastness,
dipped in soothing hues...

We gave each other this unbound space.



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.



IMMORTALITY

Winter's slow footfall echoes in my ears.

Years roll as spring of hope is still green.

Blue sky is suffused with burst of showers,
every passing day a glimmer of sheen;

Seasons a witness to the changing scene
as tree makes way to the musty concrete.

Nature slowly being nailed to the coffin,

a hapless prey to Man's vaunting conceit.

Seasons too edging to their grave?

A day when clouds will no longer burst?

I hope not; I hearken to the missive

"The sky is deathless, Man is not"

Tombs stand for the remains of the dead.

Name engraved in deed, not in the head.



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.



TIME

Is it a cradle
swinging in the void
humming a
lull-a-by to
the ever joyful
the ever crying
baby of life
now awake
now asleep?

Is it a pendulum
between two eternities
ceaselessly ticking
on the listless
glassy face of
old grandfather
on the wall
moving yet
motionless
for centuries?

Or is it a chugging
train
sometimes whistling
sometimes speedily
quiet
but always

beating the
perennial rhythm
of a journey?

Or is it perhaps
the hollow
ghostly skull of
a ravaged home
burnt down
with riotous hate
yet static like
an open mouth
after being throttled
to death on
a blood-stained
page of history?

Or is it the chiming
footsteps
of wavering in
distressed separation
searching for
the lost lover
in a deep dark forest
across the
never ending
prickly path of
seething scents in
simmering flames
hoping to be
quenched with love?

Or is it a green
olive tree
or perhaps a saal
peepul, banyan
or mahua
or trees standing still
with full-grown hibiscus
palash or red oleanders
moving yet not so
as I move on
sitting tight
on my seat
in a running bus?

What is time?
Where is time?
does it flow
in my veins
or down the river?
or is it my
thumping heart-beat
waiting to go
to the other side
to meet my maker?



Laksmisree Banerjee: Prof. Dr. Laksmisree Banerjee is an established Poet, Writer, Literary Critic and Educationist. She is a Senior Fulbright Scholar & Professor (USA), Commonwealth Scholar (UK), National Scholar & Gold Medalist of Calcutta University, India, UGC Post-Doctoral Research Awardee and Founder Vice Chancellor of Kolhan University, India. She has seven published Books of Poetry and several Research Books and one hundred and twenty Academic Publications including books in diverse areas of Literature and Culture. Dr. Banerjee is also a Gold Medalist in Indian Classical Music and an established Radio, Stage & TV Vocalist of India, having performed globally.



PEOPLE

some are there for a lifetime

some for a season

some just enter to push time

some for their own personal reason

some comes to motivate

some to discriminate

some to see you fall

some to help you stand tall

some to see you broke

some to see you prosper

some who will leave you to die when you choke

some who is just an imposter

some with a fake smile

some with a wicked heart

some with k9's of a Nile crocodile

some who wants to tear you apart

be careful of those

who pretend to be close

they can end up being gross

or even make you

die of an overdose



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.



SENSES PERCEIVED AS MY LIFE'S REVIEWED (PART 2)

Perception 4

I believe to touch time
would be so much fun.

To relive great moments
that I dwell on so much.

Bad memories tumble.

I redo mistakes.

I watch my faults crumble,
then sit and smile when done.

Perception 5

To have company at meals,
and not eat alone.

I recall recipes
not always my own.

To share the dinner hour,
to make again sweet
what now has turned sour,
taste of wine, friends at home.



Linda Imbler: I am a poet residing in Wichita, Kansas, USA. I am a life-long learner who has spent the shutdown learning the location of all 197 countries around the world, and learning how to read Braille. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have nine published poetry collections and one hybrid collection of short stories and linked poetry. Learn more at lindaspotryblog.blogspot.com



TRUE LOVE

A pretty sight, steady gaze, his eyes speak volumes

A big red vermillion bindi matching the tone of my red chiffon saree

Wrapped delicately revealing the sensuous curves

My hair in a messy bun adorned with the fragrant jasmine buds

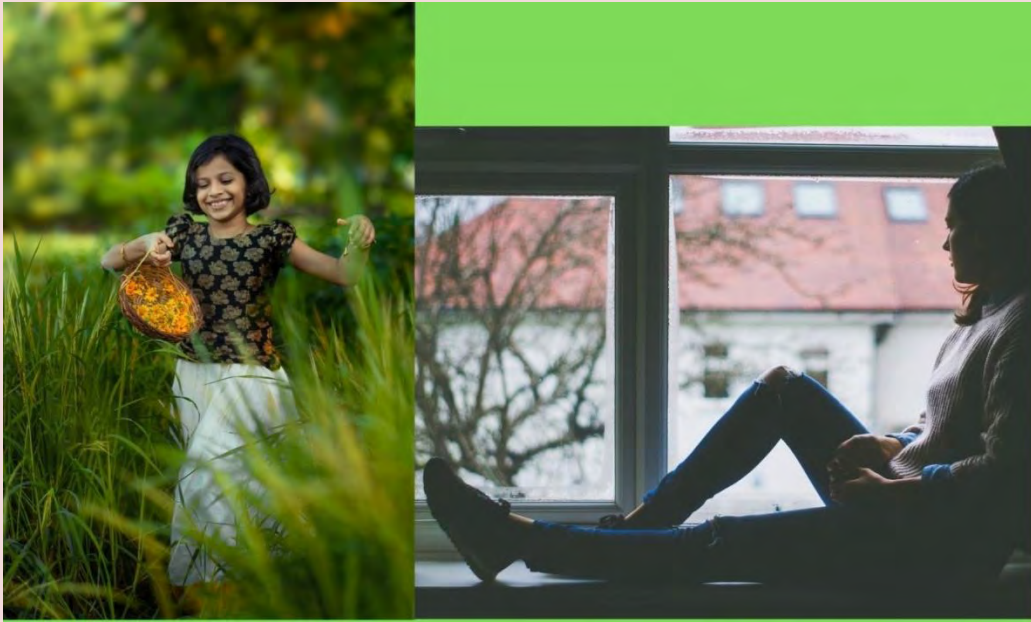
More than a dozen red glass bangles in both my hennaed hands

Making delightful sounds, the glass bangles clinking he so loves

A few strands of hair playing on my forehead
His fingers touch my hair softly caressing
My silver anklets catch his attention
Merrily jiving as if rejoicing our love
The subtle perfume in the air makes one heady
Romantic atmosphere
Intoxicating the senses
Scintillating melodies only a heart hears
Swiftly he takes me up in his arms swaying me gently
Kiss me passionately on my quivering lips
Tears of gratitude well up in my eyes
My being grateful, for the joys of true love!



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.



Invoking the child
hidden inside all of us
That somehow tends to lose
Its innocence and playfulness

As we grow up and understand things
Time unravels the enigmatic life
And we lay trapped behind
Layers of challenges facing and go

Things that we used to cherish

As and when naive

We used to be so casual and free

To showcase our emotions as we pleased

Now we refrain to open up

Even to the ones we are close

Time changes the way we lead life

Manoeuvring our beings behind myriad shades



Madhu Jaiswal: She is a poet, writer, editor and a social worker based in Kolkata, India. She has got published in various national and international anthologies and is regularly featured in popular literary magazines and e-zines. As an executive editor of The Impish Lass Publishing House Mumbai, she has 5 anthologies to her credit. Madhu is a friendly, optimistic and compassionate person who believes in humanity and volunteers for the upliftment of the underprivileged and destitute. According to her, hope, belief, and perseverance are the powerful mantras that have the ability to pave our path towards success no matter what. Her writings often revolve around these keywords. She can be contacted at madhuj2203@gmail.com.



YOU

In this new fresh dawn golden

I have risen in from within a dream world of emotions
forbidden,

I have woken up emboldened

born of colourful dreams as one by one they unfold,

The stream of colourful love runs amock, uncontrolled

headed in bliss and joy towards a vast ocean of affection,
unbound, towards the infinite.

I will swim on the waves, fall and swirl, diffusing the
message of love

Weaving it through words, creating a tender, intimate epic

All my motivations and Inspirations strewn into words of
love

A unique love story I create today

In this wave of ecstatic passions

I'm a traveller swimming around creating bubbles of love,
spreading love my mission

My love, my motivations, inspirations, passion, is you!



Madhumita Bhattacharjee Nayar: 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.



My Krishna is not their Krishna
For mine doesn't live inside temples
Neither is he made of clay nor metals
My Krsna isn't their Krsna
For my Krsna
Is the lovesong of birds
The magic of creation
The attraction of love
The sleeping pills of galaxies
The dance of cosmos

My Krsna isn't their Krsna
For my Krsna is the craft of sounds
The flute of seven skies
The plumage of mango trees
The brilliance of cosmic sounds
The pouring of raindrops
From pink - gray clouds
My Krsna isn't their Krsna for
My Krsna is the swirling of seas
The light of oceans and
The humming of bees

Forgive me!

For I do not know their Krsna
Neither have i inherited this love
from anyone
Perhaps who could give it to me

Other than He himself
For he chose me
Out of my own needs
For a constant companion
Who wouldn't desert me
When I need him the most



Manisha Manhas: Manisha is a Poet residing in Pathankot. She has been published in many national and international journals. Writing poetry is a cathartic experience for her.



WISH...

Twilight of enjoyable evening

Sitting on the beach

Wish eagerly

You come like a wavy wave of the sea

Embrace me tightly

I merge in you

You in me

Your soft serene feelings

I feel in me too
Enjoy oneness
Cool breeze follows
But with a pinch of brackishness
I surrender me in your wavy arms
Let it be an immortal
Moment for us
I become a bundle, rapped in sand
You come as a strong wave
Take me with you
Both of us get lost
In immeasurable, endless sea
Away from this world
The sky will be covered
With twinkling stars
Though moonless yet night will be shining
With the reflection of our joyousness....



Manjula Asthana Mahanti: She is a bilingual poet, author, translator and editor. She has worked in a prestigious college as Head of the Department, and she last worked as a Public School Principal. She has published six books, in both English and Hindi. She has published short stories, poems, and articles in many national and international anthologies, e-magazines, OPA, Glomag, Setu, etc.



HAPPY FATHER'S DAY DADDY

Daddy you aren't here with me
But each and everything
I'm now was moulded by you
I remember every incident
Where and when you
Taught me right from wrong
Your suggestions never went wrong
Even now I need your presence
But I try to correct myself
Thinking you still guide me from above

In my heart you hold a place
Don't know why God took you home
I feel so grateful and proud
To call you my Dad
Thank you Daddy for being you
Of all the days today I miss you the most
With all of my love I say unto you
Happy Father's Day Daddy



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.



THE REDEMPTION

My eyes green
are 2 glass windows
into the past.

I keep the blinds
pulled down tight.

Carnal knowledge
is a Biblical definition of sin.

I live in darkness,
the shame of those early years.

I pull myself out

redemption in old age,
a savior,
before the grave,
I flatter myself
in a mirror, no reflection.



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>



DARJEELING!

They call you in so many different names,
The land of thunder, the Queen of hills,
But to me, you are like falling in love for the first time,
A shy girl, standing quiet yet filled with all anticipation,
Your treasures displayed carelessly as if not to attract too
much attention
And yet subtle enough to strike the right chord of heart's
string,

You are like that first feel of liberation at youth
Going for a vacation with friends,

Taking the first forbidden smoke,
The first sip of sweet potion,

You are like that glimpse of a picture postcard
Which one's uncle sent home many many years ago
Through India Post,
Stamped and marked,
With a few lines written on one side in a cursive hand
'Wishing everyone at home Merry Christmas!'

You are like the scent of rhododendrons and peace lilies
Blooming in abundance
And Azalea too
As pink as my girlfriend's lips.



Moinak Dutta: I am a poet and novelist, residing at Kolkata. I work as a teacher. I have contributed to various national and international anthologies. I have got two published fictions to my credit. My third fiction will be published soon. I have worked as editor of several anthologies.



Under the scorching sun

Or in the downpour

There's only one man

The one who bore

The weight of the ones

He adored

The father he was

With love galore.

He had a dream

For his son and daughter

The only goal
He sought after
To make them stand
On their own feet
Fearing neither the cold,
Nor the heat.

He remained fair and just
With honesty, all could trust.
His journey brought him glory,
The love of those who must.

Their success was
The pride he wore.
The father he was
With love galore.



Nazia Islam: I am a teacher, currently residing in Dhaka, Bangladesh. As an Early Childhood Educator by profession, my dream is to make a difference in the world by shaping the minds of the future generation. I write out of passion and sometimes, out of whim. I love nature, books and simplicity, and the sound of rain.



DEAR DAD

Greetings Dad, I hope you are good. I write from the big heart to spot a dot and dot the spot because you have been a dot, a circle and a cycle.

You have spotted many lives and helped them dot their circles. You have circled and encircled lives in thousands that they didn't get lost.

You dotted lines and circles, you made and broke cycles.

Today, I decided to dot you, circle you and encircle you because many a time, you link circles like springs.

Let it be told that on this day in history, I chose to honour you with dots, in dots and dotted facts.

For being on the front line for the dots, in all manner fatherly outstanding, farming, teaching, sporting, societal, cultural, defence, philosophical, academical,

Dear Dad, I deliberately make this tribute as small as a dot, as intentional as a dot, as mysterious as a dot. Enjoy your day, Sir.

Happy Fathering Sunday, Dad and Everyone.



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.



GHAZAL

No tears nor sighs at the separation he bid not a goodbye
They both took their own direction he bid not a goodbye

From the mirror of her heart smirks his reflection
She must sever every connection he bid not a goodbye

Unmoved untroubled his parting sans an affection
It never came her longed intervention he bid not a goodbye

His loving fingers seeking hers ah sweet recollection

Her failing power before his perfection he bid not a
goodbye

O yearning that he meets her at some intersection

Ah! Many a delirious obsession—he bid not a goodbye

Alone she faces the piercing jabbing probation

Standing clean of any accusation he bid not a goodbye

Woe is to Nikhat who imperils more than just her name

Slandered and maligned her reputation he bid not a
goodbye



Nikhat Mahmood: She is an English Lecturer, 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.



FALLING RAGE

In fragments it seizes minds; swallows the world,
Some sing, some dance and often stir thoughts,
In the remote corner of eyes,
At times,
Silently melt like tributaries of a thousand tears
Spurting from the shattered hope,
Squeezed under the broken patience of a thousand
fragments
When monsoon breaks its silence in a million drops,
Falling rages over a hilltop...!

In the far horizon of the rising Sun,
Bursting clouds on each other, shaking the sky,
Playing fire like a mad deity of love,
Pouring in abundance the pinches of salt
Treading little huts in bunches;
Smashing lives into scattered clumps,
The rigorous monsoon have muted the valley
Sucking all the fields where sweats were once sown
Drying the soul from tillers to toilers
The sky slides as if it wanted to mourn.

Gloomy day passes in doubts and fear,
And gloomy night storing the storm in its chest
Hang around the corners of every scared eyes,
Fear of losing family; fear of flowing away from family,
Torn between nature and kingly lies,
A villager cries and let the tears to be afloat

As the mother river swaying around with its load,
Laden with thousand years of guilt of hatching,
Wildest of all; none but the human race..!



Nitusmita Saikia: She is a bilingual writer from Assam, India, and is presently working as instructor in National Cadet Corps. Along with poetry, she also writes short stories, plays, and has been writing for magazines like FM, GloMag, and Tuck. Her poems have been published in many national and international anthologies and in local newspapers, in blogs, etc.



A PANDEMIC POEM: THE *SIGNS* WE SEE

Please wait here, your page is loading...but which one?

Facebook? Twitter? Instagram?

Definitely not the news...(for who needs a horror story now)

Maintain social distance

Like that's even possible now, desperate as we all are for status updates.

Please specify the social you mean.

2m is the distance between you and the nearest living,
breathing human,

yet your demeanor yells

No entry for you in my physical and mental space.

Your place is here...my online space.

So

Please stand here, for your safety and mine,

so we know where to draw that all-important line.

Keep your distance, for I know not when a virus will blow up
our connection.

So what do we do when we need help and are crying
inside?

Simple

We cover up with a mask...

***NOTE: The words in italics are actual signs one sees at public places during
the COVID-19 pandemic.***



Nivedita Karthik: I am a poet residing in Gurgaon. I work as a medical/scientific editor/reviewer. I have published many poems in various national and international magazines. I am a professional Bharatanatyam dancer and amateur photographer. Random thoughts that buzz through my mind are penned down for eternity in my blog <https://justrandomwithnk.com>



MY EARLIEST MEMORY

The silky red sari with a thin border of golden threadwork draped around my slight, small frame and slid off in a slithering swish as I futilely tried to keep it on. My reflection in the speckled, old mirror showed a young girl of 7 who was so much in love with herself and her shining eyes reflected that love of life.

I was a princess in a red sari-my most coveted item from the heavy and ornate walnut wood cupboard that mother opened once a day to display her collection of silk, chiffon and georgette sarees in various hues. The faint but insidious scent of sandalwood and her favorite perfume

wafted to my nose as my senses soared beyond reality and took me into a world of beautiful women who shared their sartorial extravagances with me.

My mother's fair complexioned face with its faint smattering of small pox marks; a testimony to suffering comes to my mind. The silky feel of the sari as my small fingers tried to grip it-oh the memory of it! The serene afternoon with the musky and alluring scent of the champa flowers in the garden wafted through the window and heightened my excitement and trepidation that my mother might walk in and scold me.

Then I heard the insistent voice of my mother, over the faint tinkling of the pooja bell, calling my name and I knew that my little secret was safe for that moment. Memories are so many but this one is so lucid and so special as it connects me each day to the most precious memory of my life-my beautiful mother.



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.



A HUNDRED THINGS

I am a hundred
Different things
To a hundred
Different people
Who have known me
In a hundred
Different ways.

I know I am loved,
Hated, ridiculed,
Admired, worshipped,
Life changer to some,
Villainous to others
Adored otherwise

That is how
I know of you as well,
Lovable, vulnerable,
Audacious, broken
Arrogant and shallow,
Ah, the things
I have heard...

Yet,
My enticed quill
Dipped in ink,

Blank sheet of paper
And my longing heart
Lay before me
Aching to chase away
Untrue, projected,
Even those likely
Honest perceptions

For, I am in love
Eager to know
An unknown you
Word by word
Gesture by gesture
Muscle twitch by twitch
Emotion after emotion...
I seek futile reasons
I do not need

To love you consciously

In my own deep way.



Panjami Anand: I am an occult practitioner by profession. Sometimes it helps to know that we are all fighting secret battles and we are not the only ones in pain. I love to observe human relationships and nothing inspires my writing more. Thus, the dominating theme of all my writings are conflicts and triumphs of the same.



LET'S SING TO THE NIGHT

Music is sweet, it entrances words
knocks at my heart with its beauteous feat.
The bamboo trees sway and sing
to make the woods calm and still.
Melody of night, open and loud,
is an ode to the light in exile.

Wind's percussion, gentle and soft
inspires leaves to sing in delight.

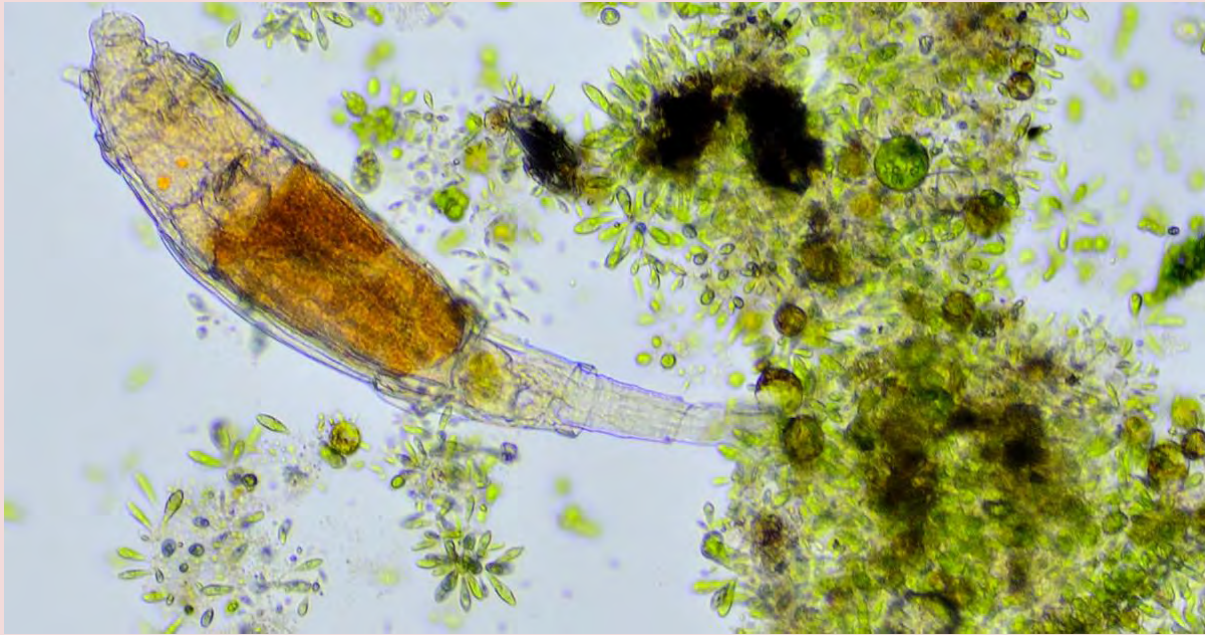
Rain brings music from the space
for the clouds to forget their woes
'cause they don't get to see the rains
each droplet turns cold with pains.

The romantic nightingale sings and whistles
for unpaired partners somewhere in wait
to make merry their nocturnal waltz .
No wonder they inspired Shelley and Keats.

The night is cool, moonlit and pleasant.
Like birds and bards, we too are at spell
to enjoy music of life, as music is life, life, music .
Tonight never comes tomorrow, brush aside your pains
let's together sing to the night, tonight.



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-four books to her credit, including thirteen books of poems, a translated poetry collection in French and three fictions in English. Three books on literary criticism, namely, *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.



<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/6/9/tiny-worm-back-to-life-after-24000-years-in-siberian-deep-freeze>

REBORN FROM THE PERMAFROST

The scientist in me had to write a poem when I saw an article in the newspaper about how a microorganism has come back to life after 24, 000 years.

The microscopic organism in deep sleep.

Under the permafrost*, no stir, no leap.

Covered for thousands of years in the Siberian Deep Freeze.

No rain, no wind or cool breeze.

More than 3.5 metres below the ground

Dormant for all these years and then by scientists found

Bdelloid rotifer the microscopic creature.

Frozen for the longest period...what a marvel! What a feature!

Sleeping in the soil of the Alazeya River.

Tiniest of the tiny, just a sliver.

Overcoming conditions which are -20 degrees Celsius.

A calm microscopic creature, not vicious.

Again, to the world after 24,000 years it has come back.

To flourish and multiply being back on the top rack.

****Permafrost—a permanently frozen layer on or under the Earth's surface***



Paramita Mukherjee Mullick: I am Dr. Paramita Mukherjee Mullick. I live in Mumbai, India. I have published seven books and my poems have been widely published in Indian and international journals. Some poems of mine have been translated into 39 languages. I am the Founder President of the Mumbai Chapter of the Intercultural Poetry and Performance Library (IPPL). I am also the Cultural and Literary Convenor (West India) of the International Society for Intercultural Studies and Research (ISISAR).



When the strong gale shakes me

I know i can hold myself

Strong roots

well grounded

I know i can hold my self.

when the gentle breeze touches me

i enjoy and pass it around

sometimes i wonder

why people are scared of Touch

Touch is commune

being connected.

come touch me gently.

Touch anyone

White or black

Dalit or Brahmin

Men or women or third sex

Touch and be touched

Feel the touch

Communicate.

Storm or breeze

Rain or sunshine

Thunder or lightning

Stay in touch with me.



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



HAPPENS

You can't plan it. Get out. Breathe. It makes sense.

I fetched in wild as postcard from nature.

greetings and wish you were here. Some intense
rock from a Wombwell charity shop shares

space with unpainted pine furniture, grain
and knots need to be seen, to lose myself

in swirls, still rivers whose eddies are tamed
in these marble bookends split whole length

reveals metamorphic designs pressured
heated limestone packed with coloured crystals
formed from impurities. Beauty impured.
I am not pure. Who split me ogles.

When nature is a mirror I avoid,
I take a look, see myself in the void.



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.



Dear best friends that smell of goodness,

You accompany me like loyal advisors,

And adorn my room with your royal charm!

You kick me when needed with your authoritative phrases

And show me the way when I am stuck.

You let me scribble on you when you are blank,

And speak endlessly back to me when you are not.

You stare at me when my eyes well up

And lull me to sleep in your arms.

My best confiders,
Every day is your day,
On screen or on paper,
You speak to me more than anyone else.
You show me the paths I could never tread
And invite me to experience lifetimes-
Listen to conversations
And meet characters that emerge out of nowhere.
You opened me a world where I am the creator and you are
the canvas
And we paint mixtures of past and present,
Shake hands with history
And emote intensely like springs that never dry.



Prabha Prakash: I am a poet residing in Kochi, Kerala. I am a Chartered Accountant and work as Senior Auditor at EY. My first poetry anthology "Lost Monsoon" has been published by Writers Workshop Kolkata. I have been selected for the Reuel International Poetry Prize 2019.



I AM WORD

Poetry has failed

But it must succeed in finding me.

I am word

Having a dictionary of my own.

waiting I have been since time

Immemorial in the deserted corner of heart's lane.

I am bought and sold daily, distressed at times the sale
though

Mercury is all time high now

Price of petrol is soaring up and

Value of life all time low.

Smile is dead, adjacent to lips laying the corpse

No love, availing a long summer's leave the beloved!

I am counting breathe

I am counting sighs

I am counting lonely feet

The city is immobile,

Moving only are the peoples with play cards.

The mountain is standstill,

Moving only the limbs of jungle.

Leaves are charred

Dehydrated is the body of the city

Ponds are dead, wells are dead

Lips are dried up

Strangulated is the neck of the city.

With folded hands, I have been waiting for poetry to come.

I know, poetry is prayer and words therapeutic.

And peoples are simply words.

Each one is a poet of one's own making!



Prahallad Satpathy: Dr. Prahallad Kumar Satapathy, 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.



NEMESIS

Sukanya refused to be photographed. Her work should do the talking, she told journalists. Life had come full circle. The person responsible for taking advantage of her innocence, of her dancing skills, of making her a child pornstar, was now behind bars, for good. Soon, he was to be executed.

She was instrumental in relentlessly fighting for the death penalty for child offenders.

Sukanya suffered that nightmare again... Prerna put on the table lamp, and calmed Sukanya down.

She gave her a drink of water, and wiped off her sweaty face. Her nightwear was damp. Mutely, she told Sukanya to change into fresh pajamas.

Slowly, the counsellor and Prerna's sensitive handling, returned Sukanya to her bubbly, happy self.

Now, Sukanya graduated with flying colours and joined service in the Women's cell of the police force.

Lack of evidence, had helped her tormentor go scot-free. She planned everything meticulously, with modern technology. This time, she became his nemesis. Now, she could put the past behind her.

She never married. Like Prerna, her goal in life was to make her town, a safer, secure place for womankind; to empower women to fight for their fistful of sky, and break the glass ceiling and take care of themselves without help from anyone.



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.



A NEW DAWN IN THE FOREST

As I reached in my final destination,
I encountered the truth, the purity of soul
My vision searched for the lustre
As I casted my eyes to the holy chime,
A sweet sensation of soothing breeze
danced to the tune of my soul's vivid dreams
Sitting next to an old banyan tree
I was watching
to the veil of mist over the eastern valley.

The road was dark and desolate,
Nothing could be visible in the chills of the night
Neither a singing bird nor an owl hooted
on the branches,
As I wandered lonely
The gray clouds swayed gently,
Cosy moon hid her face behind the blue curtain
Somewhere in the jungle
I could hear the zephyr's soft whistling
I ran through the ivory mist
tearing the silences,
A surprise full of joy awaited
in the arms of green
My heart filled with joy
A pious wish to endeavor the tawny dawn.



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.



IN HER WORLD OF KARMA

Her day of writing
is not about costly fur coat
which hangs around her
and a few known;
not about wardrobe and bedecked neck-
jewelry studded in glittering stones.

Then what?

A day of scorching summer heat
On her head of pot brimming

with gurgling water equally hot,
her hand on hip for a supportive clip
while her sandals draw unsteady flip flops.

Each careful step aligned
with a concern of her child
in cloth cradle hanging from beam
of dilapidated haven, a lullaby
by its elder sister echoing her still.

Reaching the blessed home
for some lean protection it gives
for she is the sole bread winner
disowned by her husband long ago.
Blessed landlord in wretched times!

Her contacts not, never,
in swim bath suits and

rich flavored juice in jars
morning and noon in cool sips
matter of distance for this poor.

Her improvised kitchen
Catering to her bare needs
Compels her to sing s self-made
Song of karma, her karma
Why this on her hearth and how long.

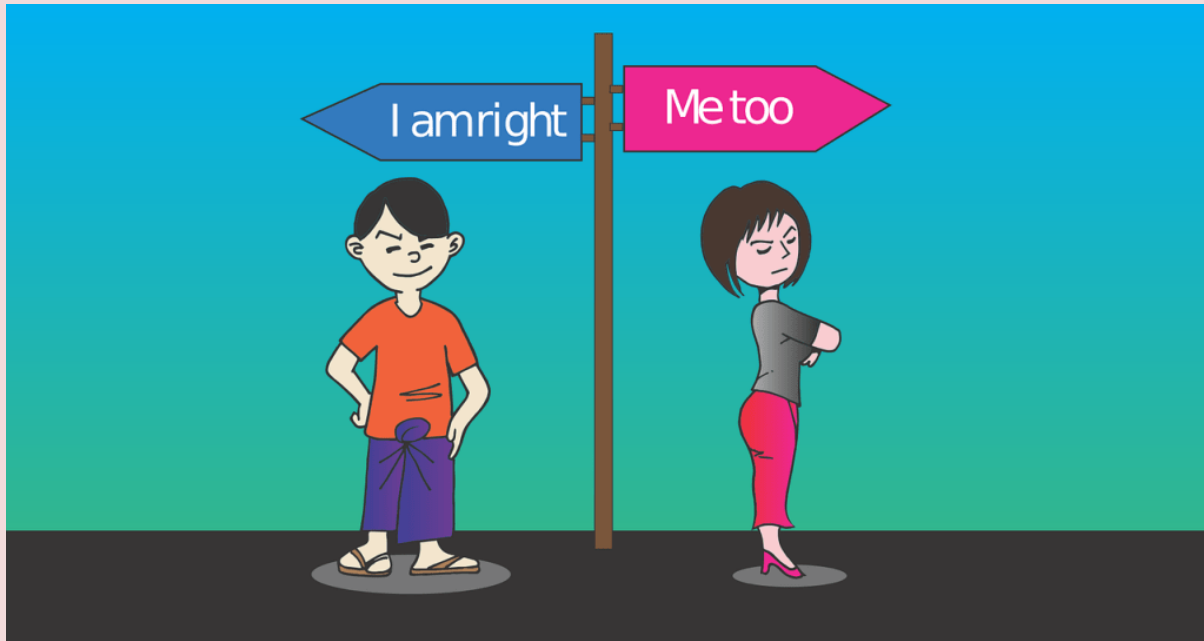


Radhamani Sarma: She is as student of Ethiraj college, Chennai. She specialized in the plays of W.H. Auden for her doctoral thesis from the University of Madras. She obtained PGDTE from CIEFL from Hyderabad. She served in Pachaiyappa's college and is a retired professor of English with 31 years of teaching 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.

Her blogs:

pearlradhe.blogspot.in

pearlradfhe.wordpressf.com



<https://www.breezystorm.com/ego-clashes-in-your-marriage/>

WHY DID SHE LEAVE?

We were both thirtyish on the day of our wedding.

I was handsome, she loved me. She was plain; I loved her.

I was liberal, progressive; with a stable job.

What else could she ask for? I knew that she was happy.

Now I think that she made me think so. Feminist, she called herself,

and proud. I realized it after she stretched the ism beyond its limits.

After a month or so, of playing a good wife, she started yawning, feminizing and asserting. I could take only up to a limit. It was after a spell of drought, followed by sparse showers of affection, or affectation, that it happened.

I didn't let others see my anger, although I seethed and boiled within.

Yet, my rage got the better of me that day, the day her tricks worked.

And mind you, I am no demon, although you, many of you, may think so.

You don't even know me. And you hate me already. What did she tell you,

you liberal, modern, even radical reader of mine? She was well-versed in uses;

subterfuges of language. Served it with a sigh, or two, a pinch of irony and ladles full of tropes.

After that call, or was it that mail? I don't remember exactly what happened that evening, she told me that she wanted her minute, hour, year of freedom, she told me loudly. Then it happened.

I apologized the next morning, even made her an omelet with coffee. She said nothing when I told her how I loved her and how all restrictions were to protect her.

I explained, nicely, patiently, why night is not a good time to go out, and why partying out late is not good for health. I had solid data in support, examples of past and present, far and near.

Yet, she said nothing. As if her words were drained with her tears. She did not respond, I had no more words/

I left for work looking once towards her, I didn't know it then, for the last time.

In the evening, I returned with two tickets to a remastered classic

and a resolve to be more patient with her, always, no matter what.

I just can't fathom even today why she did not say anything and left.



Rajnish Mishra: He is a poet, writer, translator and blogger born and brought up in Varanasi, India. He is the editor of PPP E-zine, a poetry e-zine. He has a blog on poetry, poetics and aesthetic pleasure.

<https://poetrypoeticspleasure.wordpress.com>



I'M A KING

I'm a king lying

On my mother's lap - the most

Precious throne on earth; though

I'm enjoying a deep slumber, my

Mother is engaged in picking matters of

Substance, hidden inside the plastic bags,

Filled with rags stored safely in

A make-shift haven of cotton shades;

I have no dreams in my eyes, my
Only wish is mother's lap; yet
My mother feels enthralled in day-dreaming,

Conjuring of sublime images of my future,
Thinking of me as a king in real world;

I know that she works day and night,
And moves around the garbage mountains,
To pick up valuable threads of life,
For the sustenance of the family large,
Whose heavy weight she is carrying on
Her slender shoulders' lifelong yoke;

Someday, I will turn the tables by
Fulfilling the dreams of my revered mother;
When she is old, I'll take care

Of her in right earnest; I'll
Make sure that she takes rest in
My lap for hours together without
Thinking of any temporal affair;
Till then, let me enjoy being a king,
I'm fully engrossed in the heavenly bliss!



Rakesh Chandra: Mr Rakesh Chandra is a retired civil servant. He is currently pursuing his PhD in Law from Lucknow University. He has two published 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 ULTIMATE MEET

It started to drizzle on a cold wintry day when we met;

We drank each other with our eyes

as our lips sipped hot tea...

Such a feeling all rationale defies.

Perfect romantic mood, everything well set;

though all at sea, must convey my love with a plea...

It rained harder, drizzle became a downpour

a heavenly sight to devour...

Oh, why this lack of a nymph in the nerve

why this chink, where's the verve?

Will this time too vanish unexpressed,

Will the tide hide and be depressed?...

Oh, when all of a sudden, she moved forward

and planted a heavenly kiss on my cheek!

I was devastated; Believe me, I sweated

in the shivering rain

and sweating still

as I saw her fading silhouette move away...



Ravi Ranganathan: He 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'. He loves to write on Nature, Life and the human mind. His poems are featured regularly in many anthologies. He has won many awards for his poetry, including recognition in 'Poiesis Award For Excellence' by Poiesisonline and 'Sahitya Gaurav Award' by Literati Cosmos Society, Mathura and 'Master Of Creative Impulse Award' by Philosophyque Poetica. He contributes poems and articles regularly for weekly webzine 'Literary Vibes' and monthly e-magazine GloMag and quarterly international magazine 'Metverse'.



SAY SAWUBONA

Can I tell you what is going on, please? Hold the lift, grab me by my shoulders, turn me around and take a close look, I won't flinch.

Ask me about the mark on my left arm, that faint burn and admire the terrible symmetry of the parallel scars.

Tell me you see the sunken moats under my eyes and I will show you where the night train ran over me. Then we will go back to being strangers, I promise you.

But don't smile at me, from afar.

Your politeness kills the trapped fireflies

** Sawubona is a Zulu greeting which translates to "I see you and by seeing you I bring you into being"*



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.

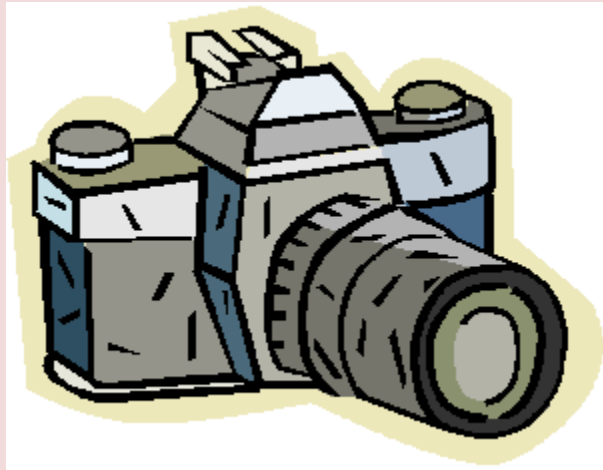


IMAGE AND THE IMAGES

smoke exhales from underground streets,

smoke that is the breath,

City winter

magnifying the image---

click.

image woman rode me,

framed me under the Washington Square Archway,

grabbing my reflection through her lens:

an obscure frontier poem

about a guy with shaggy sideburns and tall spurs

sailing to Marseille to rendezvous with a dancer---

click.

her resolve:

to untangle an image

while not sacrificing distance---

to merge some abstract form

with another blessed Manhattan night---

flash.

a well sorted stranger

paddling down Amsterdam Avenue

like a drunken sailor fighting the undertow---

develop.

and prints capturing subway riders wearing flowery corsets
steaming underneath uptown milky sidewalks,
jaywalkers smoking the pretzel vender air,
more portraits forever whizzing past her senses,
while alone in the darkroom
she ponders whether these images are necessary
to surrender what these poems
demand from these photographs.



Robert Feldman: Inspired by members of my hometown Paterson's (New Jersey) literary tradition, most notably Allen Ginsberg and William Carlos Williams, I continue to write/publish/present my work (most recently 'Hineni'; 'Sunflowers, Sutras, Wheatfields and other ArtPoems'), make fire paintings, and play tabla. The body of my writing and paintings can be accessed at:

<https://sites.google.com/site/robertfeldman23/>



FEELING TRAPPED

Like Genie in the bottle,

I feel completely trapped:

Unable to escape

When you are so far away

And time and distance

Sadly separate us!

I can't kiss your burning lips

Neither hug your soft body

But don't worry love

Because I am not alone:
Inside this sealed bottle,
You also give me company
When you are still dwelling
In my mind and heart!



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!



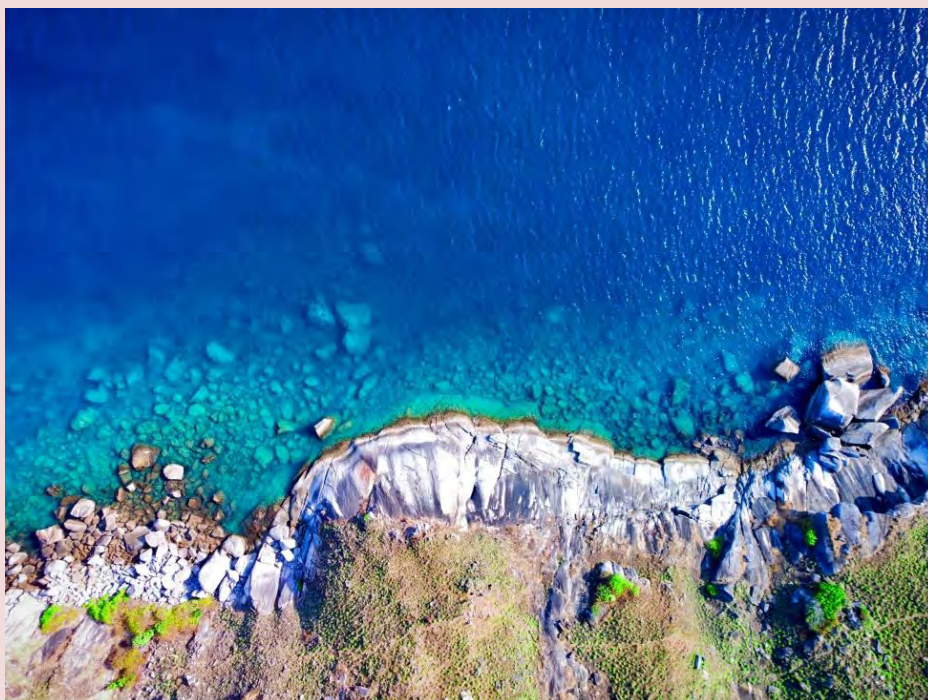
FEBRUARY 3RD, 1863

Even the most persistent
of bloodhound
will grow tired of chasing
the fox.

Especially
when he realizes
there is no fox.



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*.



WHITE SANDS

Oh the land of white sands

And emerald waters

My chest cage collides

When I hear about

The souring pain of your soul;

I can see how depth is the wound

Caused by throwing the stump of

Hesitation in to the innocent minds

Oh! Glittering blue waves,

Will your love with the coral reefs be in vain?

And push a realm to non-healing pain?

Will the purity of white sands

Caused by your kisses

Be mix with poison of religious fanaticism

Oh my sweet people of the exquisite land

Will your dreams collapse of

Devilish action of the dung filled minds?

Will your harmony break?

Will the colour of white sand change?

I hope the clouds of terror and uncertainty

Would vanish, then, you could see

the coral reefs shines again, and

The radiant of hope rising with the dawn.



Saleem Raza (Saleem Kattuchola): He is a freelance writer and painter from Kerala, India, working as a 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 used to write English poems and articles in International magazines and newspapers.



THE IDEA OF BEAUTY

Beauty—it's such a pretty word;
Conjures all sorts of delicacies in the mind.
Like a book with fragrant petals
Pressed in between its binds.

Or the laugh of a little babe—
Sweet as honey, pure as gold.
A form of beauty everlasting,
One that's centuries and centuries old.

A toothy smile from a little child
On seeing a new playmate in the park.
True beauty blossoms and lies
In the friendship that between them starts.

"Beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder",
And these are what it means to me—
Fragrant books, laughs and smiles.
So what's your idea of beauty?



Samixa Bajaj: I am a fifteen-year-old poetess residing in Guwahati, India. I am a student of Class 10. I am a regular contributor to GloMag and also have had my work published in the annual school magazine. I hope to be able to pen even better verses in days to come.



IN CONTINUUM

She watched the waves wash over the naked body of the sand - sometimes in a smooth embrace, at others, fierce in their avalanche. The ebb and flow of the surfs wasn't unlike life, she concluded, as she walked over the wet sand, watching her footprints disappear in the waves...

It was a starless night, the sky wrapping its black cloak over all else, except for the surfs that stood out - starkly white. As she walked along, she felt at peace, for this was the place she returned to when the barrage of emotions could no longer be contained. She had bonded with the sea and sand since her childhood and with time, the bond only

deepened. A lot had changed over time, but not this place. This was her safe haven, a place where she felt that curious mixture of happiness with a tinge of sadness, a lump in her throat - the only place where she could be unapologetically herself.

Watching the sands, weathered over eons, she had always found the courage to gather her broken fragments and rejoin them into another version of herself, she had learnt to rise, irrespective of storm, tide or rain. And most importantly, she had learnt the art of surviving on her own.

The sea and sand were her best friends, her philosopher and guide. For it was here that she had learnt to live with pain and fall in love with it, the way the sand weathered for years on end by the merciless waves still remained a loyal companion. And the waves continued to come and retreat - a curious beginning as well as an end of always and forever - in continuum.

waves whisper silence

a flash of lightning

moaning sands



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. I have completed my Masters in English literature from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. 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.



MAKE PEOPLE LAUGH

your journey so far
on this unknown path
has taught you
that there's nothing
more spiritual than
the ability to laugh
make people laugh

and turn
the metaphorical lemons
into limoncello.



Sangeeta Gupta: She is a Delhi-based bilingual poet, artist and film maker, who has served as an IRS Officer, and retired as Chief Commissioner of Income Tax. She has worked as Advisor (finance & administration) to Lalit Kala Akademi. She has to her credit 35 solo exhibitions of paintings, 25 published books, and has directed, scripted and shot 17 documentary films. She has 14 anthologies of

poems in Hindi and 6 in English to her credit. Song of the Cosmos is her creative biography. Ten of her poetry collections have been translated to Greek, German, Mandarin, English, Urdu, Bangla, Tamil and Dogri. Sangeeta has been adjudged as highly commended poet of the year 2020 by Destiny Poets International community Of Poets, UK.



MASTER

S: Serene full moon night

I: In her dream Airavat moved in.

D: Dream of blessings kissed her womb.

D: Days passed by.

H: Her journey got complete, when,

A: A Lotus bloomed beneath the Lumbini Sal tree.

R: Reach a sage with peace and love!

T: To save the swan & the world.

H: His smile taught “Om Mani Padme hum”

A: And blessed the world!



Sanhita Sinha: She is a native of Tripura, is a teacher, and a bilingual poet. Her poems have been published in different prestigious national and international anthologies, journals & magazines. Apart from writing, as an elocutionist and as an actor, she is actively engaged in cultural activities. Along with stage, she is a regular artiste of television and radio too.



WHAT THE LADYBUG TAUGHT ME

When did we take a wrong turn and come to so much grief?

The question burned itself on my tortured soul,
as I stood in the lawn looking at a ladybug.

It was really enamoured of a fresh, green leaf,
to which it clung with such palpable ardour.

Slowly, ah so very tenderly it caressed its contours,
gingerly touching its throbbing veins.

Chattering birds created a chaotic camaraderie
in the backdrop of a musically inclined bumble bee.

Then fell the gentle, beatific rain!

I watched entranced, as the ladybug slurped the drops- one
by one.

A monarch butterfly, the envy of queens and kings
flitted around, glitter on its wings,
evoking the fragrance of a time gone,
but reborn in the unhurried tread of the ladybug
on the pulsating leaf –a green rug.

Lo and behold! Under the wide expanse of the green below
and the blue above, my blues vanished.

The crisp, rain- soaked breeze, so kind, teased my cheeks
as the ladybug caressed the leaf, leaving a message behind.

No harried race, no ego tussles, no show of muscles.

Just a slow, unhurried tread.

The drizzle stopped, a squirrel hopped about,
the rain on its whiskers; the ladybug shimmered
as the sun smiled at it with a million smiling rays.

The sun-kissed saplings swayed in the breeze.

A pair of feisty lapwings teased each other.

My rejuvenated heart now began to sing-
bloated with the joy of small things.



Santosh Bakaya: I am a poet, novelist, and essayist and Ted speaker, residing in Jaipur, India, working as a teacher. I have contributed to various anthologies and have also published novels and edited poetry/story anthologies. My latest novel is 'A Skyful of Balloons'.



And the lady waited
Till the storm abated
For her lover to return
From the faraway land of Saturn

Or so she was told
He went there to strike gold

But when she went to the grocery store
A lady on her shoulder, his hand she wore

The lover had cheated she knew
There had to be something she could do
She followed them to an Inn they stayed at night
And when the sun came out yellow and bright

She knocked at the door a camera in her right
The door opened, the camera clicked and she signed in
respice

Now she would have the much needed evidence
To put an end to this pretence.



Sara Bubber: I am Sara Bubber, holding a postgraduate degree in Human Development and Family Studies. Human beings and my love of stories came together and made me a storyteller! My poetry and storytelling also came together and made me a poetic storyteller! I write the story of my life through a spiritual journey and love spending my time in meditation and hosting webinars in my spiritual organisation too!



I WANT TO BE FREE NOT A CAGED BIRD

I am a princess

Who have been treated with utmost care

With maids of honour and red carpets

Lavender dew and rose petals spread on my bed

I was not allowed to go out alone with the man I loved
most!

I felt like a caged bird

With clipped wings sitting alone the whole day n night

I took my decision to leave my comforts and ran away from
the palace with just a white gown

I ran through the paddy field and enjoyed the feel of the
earth on my feet

and listening to the cuckoos songs and the wild animals
roaming in the green woods !

I am never going back

To a solitary life I lead

And enjoy all the simple worldly pleasures, eating yummy
street foods and riding a hired bicycle falling down many a
time!

I will find a farmer as my life partner and together we will
plough and sow and reap our loves labour aplenty!

We both will serve the needy and poor

and end of the day we will rest on our wooden bench in our
thatched hut

for a peaceful sleep !



Sarala Balachandran: I reside in Kolkata, West Bengal, with my family. My poems have been published in national and international anthologies. I am a contributing poet for Different Truths. I write free verses.



ALKALIZING SPIRIT

Pineal gazing
to quiet the mind
and usher consciousness
toward a single point
of higher awareness

beyond the frantic process
of thinking in circles
petting the ego
and arguing with self
until silence eventually
wins center stage

Solitary excursion
into the depths
offers expansion
outside the boundaries
of time and space

The empty void
of dark entropy
when followed along

a narrow path

explodes into light

as the soul dissolves

back into alignment

with source



Scott Thomas Outlar: He lives and writes in the suburbs outside of Atlanta, Georgia, USA. His work has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net. He guest-edited the 2019, 2020, and 2021 Western Voices Editions of Setu Mag. Selections of his poetry have been translated into Afrikaans, Albanian, Bengali, Dutch, French, Italian, Kurdish, Malayalam, Persian, Serbian, and Spanish. He hosts a podcast, Songs of Selah, that airs weekly on 17Numa Radio and features interviews with contemporary poets, artists, musicians, and health advocates. More about Outlar's work can be found at 17Numa.com.



MANDALASA'S MESSAGE

You are pure, conscious and without blemish
Yet to be affected by the delusions of the world

The delusions that seem so right and fresh

It is but a dream that fouls the world

Why do you cry at this delusion you endure?

That is yet to effect as you are still so pure

Even the name you have yours it's not

It is only an illusion that you hear

This body is not you, nor are you of it

You came into this world crying for all to hear

This cry is an illusion coming from you

As are the sounds you hear from around you

Talent, intellect, strength and flaws

Are inherent but there in all your senses

Trivial at first as strength and flaws

Grow as you age with your senses

It is but natural from the food and water

But the self or "I" neither grow nor whither

The "I" stays same within the shell you call body

Do not, my love, be smitten by this illusion

That which you see as yours, this body

Father, Mother, Wife, Mine, Not mine, Son

None are what they are and what they are not

They are but an accretion of elements of the universe

The deluded man thinks pain eases pain
The deluded man thinks pleasure is happiness
The man whose mind is free from confusion
Knows pleasures and sorrows two sides of happiness
They are but the illusions of this world
You are pure, beware such delusions of this world

The carriage you call life rides upon this earth
The body you nurture is seated within
The self resides within this body on this earth
Deluded soul thinks "I am this body" within
The self nor "I" has no body neither has carriage
Foolish is such ignorance and blind courage

You are pure, conscious and without blemish.
Don't cry and live your life with relish



Shankar N Kashyap: I am an artist - author, poet and painter residing in Newcastle upon Tyne, UK. I am a Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon. I have contributed to various anthologies, both National and International. I have also published 8 books so far including Medicolegal, Historical, Thriller as well as books on Poetry. I was declared “Author of the Year” on consecutive years 2017 and 2018.



FLOWERS IN BLOOM

Beautiful fields wherein

Myriad flowers bloom

A treat for sore eyes

Flora and fauna surrounding

Every sphere of being

A picturesque landscape

Where fantasy and reality merge

Flowers in an all-encompassing canvas

Blooming as in a vibgyor

Myriad thoughts seeping

In a plethora of colours

Flowers in all their beauteousness

Sending a beautiful message of love and hope

Hope, an everlasting beam of soulfulness

Flowers though gently willowing

A beautiful medley of thoughts

Signifying a bond of hopefulness and cheerfulness



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.



“Just 30 lines of poetry,
must read like life & death...”
I’ll start at birth and writhe along
till dawn I’m out of breath.
There’s love (more writhing)
followed by sweet sorrow;
there’s fantasy (and that’s my thing)
with promises of tomorrow.
Let’s do the words, they lift me up,
or sky-scan for the birds that sing.

If nothing, then my palm is yours
with life-lines and the tales they bring.



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



THE GREAT DIVIDE

Among the many cultural anomalies that the people of West Bengal face, the discord between Bangal and Ghoti (East and West Bengal) is well known. Everyone in Bengal knows this dichotomy—whether in cuisines, dialect, or sports (mainly football), the disparities are as akin as chalk to cheese.

This incongruence was ascertained by two teachers of a particular college—Prof. Gupta and his friend, Prof. Ghosh. Normally thick as thieves, the dissent was football, as supporters of two rival teams—Mohun Bagan and East Bengal. It was a personal affront when either of the teams lost a match, faces wreathed in smiles when it was a draw.

Such was the state of affairs when an argument started in college one day, where one team had scored over the other by one goal. It soon snowballed into invectives, when suddenly Prof. Gupta, red in the face exclaimed “A Bangal will always be stubborn and unyielding. From today I disclaim our friendship.” The other teachers tried reminding him that it was just a game, but this was war—plain and simple.

But hearing a thud, Prof. Gupta saw his friend collapse, and he rushed to the first-aid box immediately, rushing to stem the flow of blood, instinctively knowing where his doppelganger had hurt himself. Prof Ghosh, raising his hand in anger, had cut himself on a sharp piece of wood. Their differences vanished immediately, and both swore that day that no dispute about the Ghoti-Bangal divide would ever be a bone of contention in future, and nothing could drive a wedge between their long-standing friendship, which had withstood the test of time.



Someeta Das: She is a retired Professor from Maharaja Manindra Chandra College, Kolkata, with twenty-eight years of teaching experience. She is interested in writing short stories and stories on travel. She has published in The Statesman, Setu, Woman's Era (March 2021 issue) story in Jugalbandi An Anthology in Culture World Writer's Forum and a number of e-zines.



I am no bower

I am no flower

I would like to be

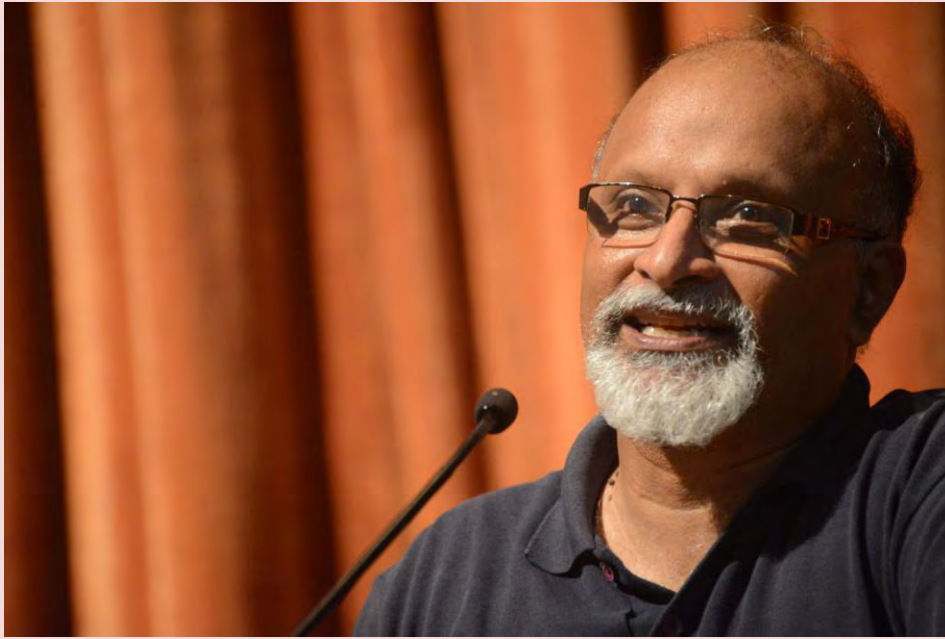
the florist,

the vase,

or the thread

that holds a bunch of blooms together in a bouquet

or even the breeze
that will spread
the fragrance
and bring
the hint of a smile
on your face
to light up the nights and the days.....



Sri N Srivatsa: Born and brought up in Madras of yore who 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've been singing with the Madras Youth Choir for almost half a century. I have worked both behind and on stage in Tamil, English and Hindi productions of Arangam, Yatrik and Madras Players. I pursue translation of good poetry from Tamil to English and vice versa plus a few in Hindi as a passion. Three volumes of Tamil poems by three different poets translated by "moi" have been published.



JAZZ

Bach

what cold sad images

your music paints with violin

chilling my heart

to gulps of wine

haunting

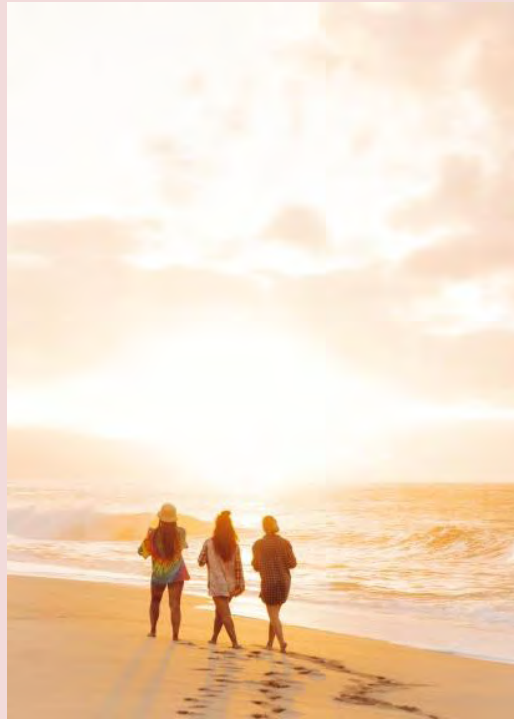
beautiful

genius

double violin filtered by thick shadow
and cigarette smoke
only letting sadness pass through
into me
my fire lacking heat
a cold glass stem
frozen hands ache
drunk on wine
listening to you by the dying fire
cold depressing darkness
waiting for her
waiting for the warm music
waiting for the jazz to start
notes to warm my cold heart



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 Persian (Farsi), Arabic, Urdu, Nepali, Hindi, Bengali, Estonian, French, Spanish, old Japanese, Dutch, Afrikaans, Turkish, Italian, Malayalam, Assamese, Tamil, Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian, Hebrew, Filipino, Hiligaynon and Kinaray-a. 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.



SPRING

Flower born

Bird singing groups with six pieces band including horns.

People out for a stroll.

Feeling the ocean spray.

On their face roll.

Spring the children playing out in the sun.

Their having so much fun.



DEER

Watching deer movements
they jump and play.

When hunting season is closed
keeping hunters away.



SPICY PIZZA

Last night I had a spicy pizza
pepperoni so hot.

I thought

I needed my early burial plot.



WALKING YOUR DUCK

I'm going walking your duck.

I only charge a buck.

Your duck just needs exercise.

To see the beauty all around in its eyes.



Stephen Goetz: I am a poet from Lincoln City, Oregon, USA. I am still perfecting my writing skills on published poems online. I am a regular contributor to GloMag compiled by Glory Sasikala, publisher, India. I have received poetry awards from Motivational Strips Poetry Group.



FROM SOUL TO BEING

Treat yourself well dear!

If you don't...

who else would?

pamper yourself often

for, you are one in a million

respect self and core

if you don't do

who else would?

so consider

cherish the sojourn

even if there is no tinkling tide
no oar man nor guide
put your brave foot forward
flaunt your strength
as much as you can
no point showing weakness to the world
as it often indulges in
assumption, criticism and conjecture
be proud...
to have secured a berth on this earth
It is by God's grace...
no less than a boon for sure

The doctor may treat
the nurse may dress the wound...
cuts and bruises...
even apply balm
but your own pat on back

has magical properties
assuages and heals
repairs injury like no one does
be your own favorite
and be gentle with your being.



Sujata Dash: Sujata Dash is a retired banker. She is passionate about poetry and music. Nature remains her first love and she is enamoured by its beauty and subtleties. She is a regular contributor to anthologies published both nationwide and worldwide. Till now, she has one published anthology of poems, 'More Than Mere' (Publisher-Authorspress) to her credit.



WOMAN WITH A PAST

Strength bearing shoulders

at times held too taut

She strides

with grace

People notice

She glows

What has she achieved

that she carries herself thus?

Pensive smile
but there's
priceless peace too
She's enveloped in it
Contentment
Knowing
that she chose
to battle long
on arduous grounds
No time horizons
to rest hopes on
And victory is
equivalent to defeat
With society chattering
and plentiful advise
from people
who cannot walk
any distance in her shoes

Thorny desert and
ocean of tears left behind
Daily grind is hers to meet
And bring up her children
Crucible polished
She gleams gold
Let no one belittle her choices
That lull her to sleep
Soon as head meets pillow



Sumita Dutta Shoam: I am a poet and author residing in Chennai, India. I work as an editor, designer and publisher. I have contributed to various online and print anthologies. I have also published a novel. My publishing house, Adisakrit, has published a number of both fiction and nonfiction books.



MURDER OR SUICIDE, WHO KNOWS?

May be he hanged himself
Or was murdered, and hanged,
Who knows?

If murdered
He could have been buried
Inside the house
Or cremated in the darkness, stealthily
Who knows?

They discovered
The legs touching the ground
Some say it was broken
There was a trace of strangulation
On the broken neck

Who knows
Who did it or nobody did it?

But his name and shape
Could not be deleted from history
From the celluloid reels where he danced and acted
Could he be deleted
From his twitter, instagram, FB accounts?

Who knows if
The fans and anchors would
Allow his soul to rest in peace
Or not?

Chattering crowds on the tv
All talking about the topic
That is hotter than the hottest June
Was it murder or suicide?

He was an addict,
His girlfriend confessed
He fought with his sisters
Who always come for money,
She pleaded, they refuted
Did she plan his murder
Or did she/they force him to die?

But why?
He had money, he was successful
He had girlfriends, he was popular
He had the type of life he wanted!
Was not he sure
Or were some dark forces too sure?

The river is now dry,
No fish, no boats, no waves.

The media is full of noise and fury
But do they know
If it was murder or suicide?
If it was frustration or desperation?
No one knows for sure!!!

The Sun is red-hot angry
Candles are being burnt at night
The clouds are a sickly white
No rain, no tears, no proof
Who knows?
Was it a murder or suicide?

There was an invisible hand
out there controlling him,
Was it his mother's soul at heaven?
Was it the mafia or the don
Who supplied his stock
Or who was just feverishly jealous?

Who knows?

Nothing is clear, nothing is for sure!!!

There is a mystery all over the place

All over the happenings

The stars are silent, so are the parasite moons.

Someone may be arrested

Someone may be harassed

But where is the man who knows,

Perhaps no one knows the truth

Besides God and he himself,

Who is no more, with us or her!!!



Sumitra Mishra: Major Dr. Mrs. Sumitra Mishra is a Professor of English who retired as the Principal, Government Women's College, Sambalpur, Odisha. She has also worked as an Associate N.C.C. Officer in the Girls' Wing. She is a life member of the Odisha Lekhika Sansad and the Sub-editor of a magazine titled "Smruti Santwona". Her poems and short stories in both English and Odia are widely published in literary magazines and e-zines. To her credit she has twelve published books; four collections of poetry in English. She lives in Bhubaneswar with her family.



THE RED APRON

Suspicious, betrayal, rip veil after veil
shaming motherhood in the dock
a naked dance of humiliation.

Diapers, milk bottles swallowed decades
chipped splintered nails, gnarled hands
can't count uncountable sleepless nights
termites gnaw brittle bones, now sepia tinted
Maa Durga your many arms combated as many enemies.

Why not one against filial love?...the weakest link in my
armour.

Those chocolaty pudgy hands, after four decades, still
imprinted on that red apron, as you helped me bake.
With not enough money, it had to be a home-made one,
but better than the year before, when a plastic knife
with a red ribbon bow, saved from the last birthday
cut width wise, two pineapple pastries
placed side by side, made four mini cakes, two each.

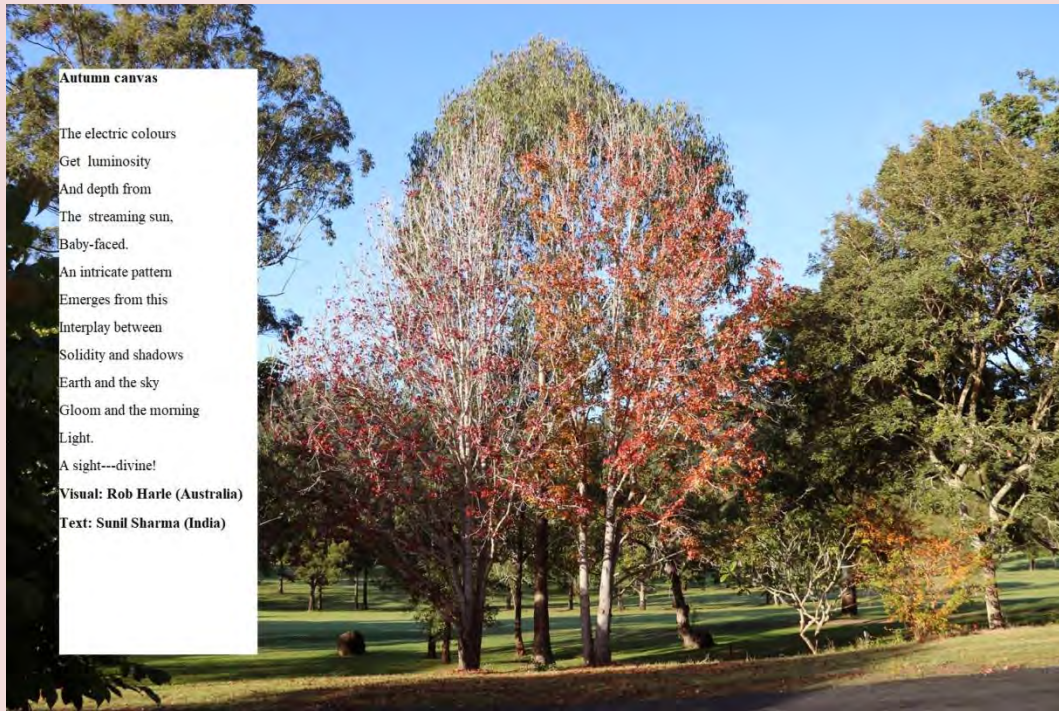
I stopped sugary foods that year, still refrain,
not wanting to recall the taste of sweetness
bitter tirades keep diabetes in check.

That Judas' stab in my side, severed
the apron strings, releasing an acrid stench
a raw umbilical cord still burns and bleeds.

Parents are never perfect beings
having given away their best.
I pray you never hear
similar words hurled at you
while you lovingly hate me, hate love.



Sunil Kaushal: I am a poet-writer residing in Pune, India. I am a retired gynecologist now working as a writer having contributed to more than 25 National and International anthologies. I have published my memoirs recently. Besides several other awards over the years, I was awarded the Literoma Women Achiever's Award, 2019. I have received the the Nissim award for 'exquisite prose' from TSL in 2020.



AUTUMN CANVAS

Visual: Rob Harle (Australia)

Text: Sunil Sharma (India)

The electric colours

Get luminosity

And depth from

The streaming sun,

Baby-faced.

An intricate pattern
Emerges from this
Interplay between
Solidity and shadows
Earth and the sky
Gloom and the morning
Light.

A sight---divine!



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>

Please visit for details:

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

Robert Maddox-Harle (aka Rob Harle): He is an artist, poet and photographer. Writing work includes poetry, academic essays and critical reviews of scholarly books and papers. His work is published in journals and anthologies, and he has three published volumes of his own poetry – *Scratches & Deeper Wounds* (1996) - *Mechanisms of Desire* (2012) - *Winds of Infinity* (2016). He is currently a member of the Leonardo Review Panel, Member of the Editorial Board of numerous international literature journals, and Australian–NZ editor for *Setu Journal*. His work can be seen at <https://www.maddoxharle.com>



SILENT LOVER

Death, you lie sleeping with me—
quietly watching every move, every step that I take
casting a loving glance
taking in the beauty of my being
longing for me

as I dazzle you—with my smile, my vivacious laughter

you step forth

finally—

to possess

putting your cold lips

on my pink

till they turn blue



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.



THEY FOUGHT FOR AIR...

South-facing balconies

And windows on the south-east

Grandpa would so insist

For health

And everything greater than wealth

The doors left open
For the new and fresh

My privacy, my space
I would argue
Drawing the curtains
Locking the doors
My own battle I must fight
And I know for certain
That victory is in sight

And so time raced
Destiny smiled
Battles done
But the war remained

An air borne threat
With masks must be fought
Air...abundant, oxygen...to breathe
That was all what most people sought

All the years
Spent in pain
For assets and rise
Were all in vain
Men fought a war
For all that was forever free
Till air air and Air
Became a universal decree...



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. Though her tryst with poetry writing is only a few months old, she is a published poet.



in oil painting on canvas by Suzette Portes San Jose

WINGS BENEATH MY WINGS...

be with me and lead through the clouds as high
and dance among the glittering stars upon the sky
let us fly swiftly along the rivers rushing down below
feathers touching the clear waters as our wings fly us low
with you, I will go and wander as far as my wings can take
knowing nothing of fear even if my wings should break

like a hand, I hold tight by my side in my long night sleep
wallow in the warmth of your embrace to cuddle and creep
we shall break through the gusty storm in the phases of
time

our wings we hold clutched into the ravel of unfortunate
clime

the perseverance of your will is my freedom to go for a mile
treasured memories in the windmills of my mind with your
smile

you are the wings beneath my wings that I could never
resist

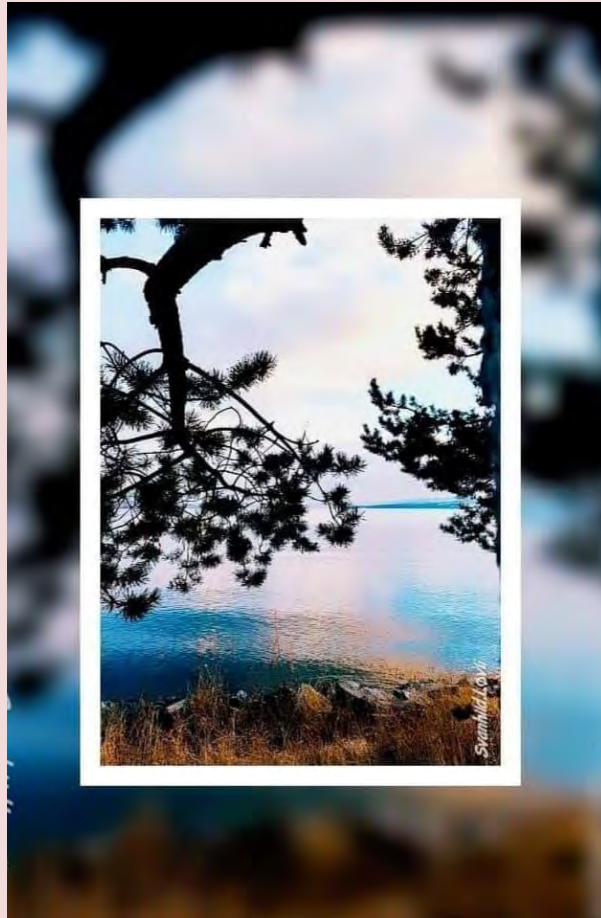
glides me through the rocky mountains I learned to live and
exist

fearless i become in wings stern and strong I will keep
soaring

mighty up high in the sky, I know that i will always be an
earthling



Suzette Portes San Jose: She was born and raised in Cebu City, Philippines. She was born with a passion for writing and living in her art forms. She now has joined 23 book anthologies internationally. She is also a recipient of multiple awards for her ART works and Literary works. She also founded her own Poetry Group of artists and poets writing Ekphrastic Poetry. She is also a founder of Artist Kids charity project all for free. She is also a Publisher and is now publishing her own book along with other book anthologies of her group.



A BLUE DAY

Ana was in a strange mood that day, she didn't even notice that spring was approaching, spring flowers had sprouted, birch was dressed in its green dress

Sun shone from a cloudless sky.

This day she happened to see her ex-boyfriend for the first time after they broke up.

He walked hand in hand with another girl and they looked happy together.

Ana felt a sting of pain in her heart of the sight of them together.

It was a blue day,

Her mood was blue...

Spring was approaching

a new love awaited her

she didn't know yet.

Time would change

and nostalgia would blow away

in the wind



Svanhild Løvli: She is a bilingual poetess, currently living in Gjøvik, NORWAY. She is an avid photographer and loves to draw. She is concerned with nature conservation, women's rights and family life. She regularly publishes in GloMag. She contributed in "Voice of Aspirants", Poetry Planet, and Galaktika Poetike Atunis Magazine. She is admin in Global Literary Society. She is member of several poetry groups.



chinnamasta-bhagawati-sakhra-saptari-nepal

THE DIVINE MOTHER

When the men and women let themselves melt by using the heat

In disguised form—directly from their respective counterparts,

And guide each other for their safe passage through one
conduit,

Then all superiorities condescend for sake of the most
scientific art.

When they ginger each other up without extinguishing
inherent fire,

And emerge from their protective shells to merge the
differentiability,

Or they mesmerise themselves for inviting a newest form
of desire,

Then all concupiscences don't leave them in the realm of
phantasy.

We suffer from our own blind spots, so we can't see the
secret trade

Between men and women that lets them share from a
drinking cup.

We don't know how much we need each other for forming a clade.

But, for sake of the creation we're engaged in a permanent prenup.

Only Divine Mother knows everything; so she lets them take a seat— On her alter to evoke their orgasmic potency and for producing heat.



Swapan Kumar Rakshit: He is an Indian poet who lives in Bankura, West Bengal. He teaches physics for his professional needs. However, he prefers to write poems, especially sonnets. He wants to be acquainted with the universal mind through poetry.



THOSE WERE THE DAYS

A big family, a big bunch of kids.

All playing together and none bored.

No television for entertainment,

No internet for communication.

Yet the hearts were connected

The relations well maintained.

The visit to grandparents' house,

Was a big party in itself.

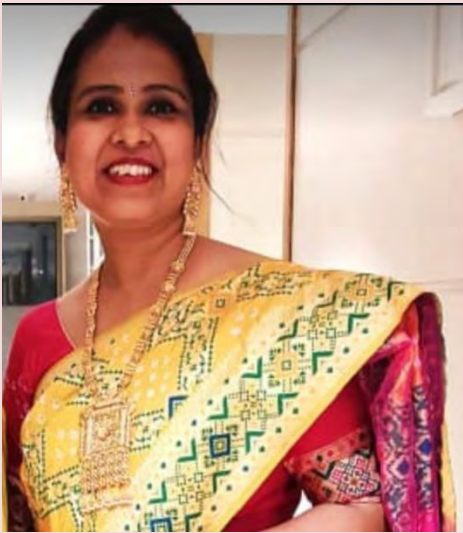
The most looked forward to trip

Led to many memories to keep.
No air-conditioning to save from the heat,
No refrigerators to quench your thirst.
The terrace was the family bedroom
The stars were the sheets.

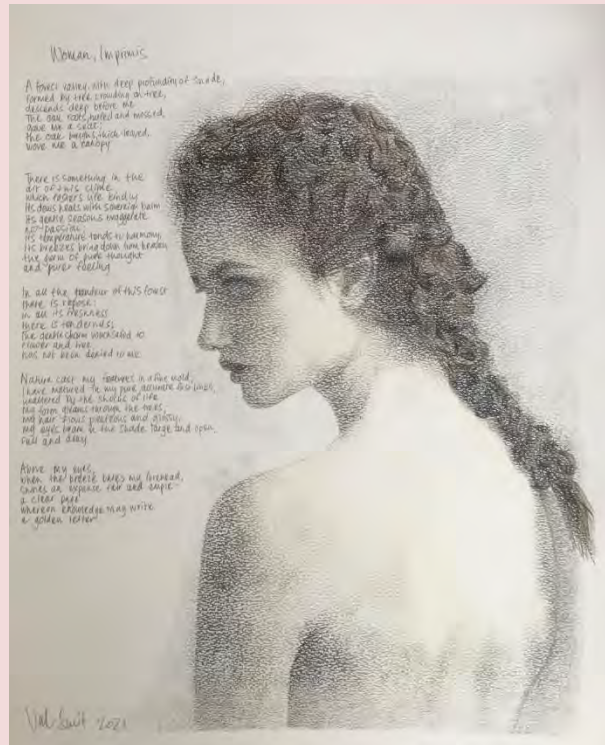
There was glee in little things,
There was joy in every step.
There were stars in our eyes,
And passion in each attempt.
The little hearts were full of love.
The little minds knew no contempt.
There was harmony all around,
And laughter echoed on the ground.

Today we wish for those days!
That are a part of memories now.
Today we have all we need,

To lead a happy life, wow!
But those days still linger,
In our hearts and minds.
Wish time would make a rewind,
And we could grow up once again!!



Uma Agarwal Bajaj: Another edition, yet again and I am still invited, I am lucky. 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 have 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).



WOMAN, IMPRIMITIS

Our worth is measured by historical societal values. We, as women, have the power to rectify this cantankerous thought process with virtue, humility and grace. We are the beginning of all and the end of all.

A forest valley, with deep profundity of shade,

formed by tree crowding on tree,

descends deep before me.

The oak roots, turfed and mossed,

gave me a seat;

the oak boughs, thick-leaved,

wove me a canopy.

There is something in the air of this clime
which fosters life kindly.

Its dews heals with sovereign balm.

Its gentle seasons exaggerate no passion;

its temperature tends to harmony;

its breezes bring down from heaven

the germ of pure thought and purer feeling.

In all the grandeur of this forest

there is repose;

in all its freshness

there is tenderness.

The gentle charm vouchsafed to flower and tree,

has not been denied to me.

Nature cast my features in a fine mould;
I have matured in my pure, accurate first lines,
unaltered by the shocks of life.

My form gleams through the trees;
my hair flows plenteous and glossy;
my eyes beam in the shade large and open,
full and dewy.

Above my eyes,
when the breeze bares my forehead,
shines an expanse fair and ample –
a clear page
whereon knowledge may write a golden letter



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.



FOOTSTEPS OF YOUR SILENCES

Who will collect your silences?

That lie in deep valleys

Sometimes

In shadows

That the day makes

And sometimes...

In the shadows of the night

When the silence is a statement

When you are cross with the moon
The moon throws its own tantrums
So you look the other way

Will your silences ever
Find their lover
Do you want your silences?
To cling to your bosom
Or do you wish
To bequeath them
To a work of art

Who shall collect your silences?
And reap it
Like a harvest
That kept its date



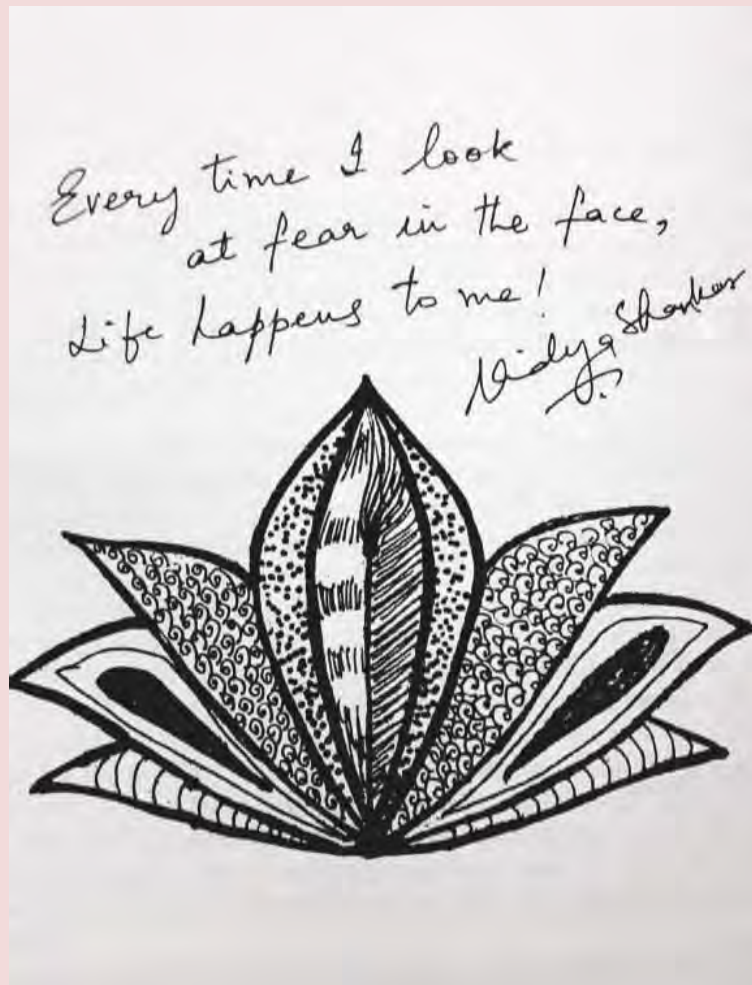
Vandana Kumar: I am a poet residing in New Delhi, India. I work as French teacher and translator. I have contributed to various anthologies. Few of my poems were recently published in 'Spillwords' and 'North of Oxford'.



The sky today is behind my eyelids
hiding,
clouding,
drizzling,
whispering,
and maybe falling
in love
with you.



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



THE FEAR MASK

from the Roseate Sonnet Anthology

'twas a piece of charming elegance

An eye-catching design in black and red

With a lustrous inlay of precious lambent gold

And a spangle of sparkles daintily spread

The ornament seemed a glorious legacy of yore
And with every generation the sheen brighter shone
In rapaciousness I picked it up, placed it 'pon my eyes
Like everyone else, I prided my statuesque form

't was only when dread obumbrated my vision
That I realised what I had on was but a restricting hood

Removed I with immediacy the deceiving disguise
Overthrew the reign of age-old ill-regency
Sovereign I made my own poetic verse complete
Emancipated, I perceived the scope of unlimited brilliancy



Vidya Shankar: I am a widely published Indian poet, writer, English teacher, a “book” in the Human Library, and an editor with Kavya-Adisakrit (an imprint of Adisakrit Publishing House). The author of two poetry books, *The Flautist of Brindaranyam* (in collaboration with my photographer husband, Shankar Ramakrishnan), and *The Rise of Yogamaya*, I have received several literary awards and recognitions. I find meaning to my life through yoga and mandalas.



He had to leave the concert in the middle of the young boy's performance. He was upset that finding a listener leaving in the middle of the performance the singer would think ill of his art. He wanted to go to him so much. He wanted to tell him that it was a mind-blowing performance and he would love to listen to him sometime again. But another thing also came to his mind, he thought what if the complete concert, the full-fledged Dhrupad was not that good as the beginning was. What if the impression that a part could leave the complete concert couldn't? Sometimes it's better to leave in between when the things are not yet finished. Sometimes the end is not as good as the beginning.

He always thought this for his writing. He always felt that the stories he wrote were good and fluent in the beginning, and they built up nicely, but as it neared the end, he rushed to finish it. It just spoiled the whole thing. He felt if only he could leave his stories unfinished. But people don't think sensible of reading an unfinished story.

But don't we all have only unfinished stories? We all leave it in the middle, in the hope that the next person would do his best to finish it but he also leaves it somewhere in between when the things are only half-done. There's no finishing line in real life. His daughter and wife left him, all of a sudden, when things were not complete. Also, he knew that he too would leave somewhere in the midst of unfinished things.



Vivek Nath Mishra: My short stories have appeared in The Hindu, Queen mob's Teahouse, Muse India, The Criterion Journal, Cafe Dissensus, Setu, Spillwords, Literary Yard, Indian Ruminations, Prachya Review, Indus women writing, and on many other platforms. Some of my stories are forthcoming in Indian Literature, Adelaide literary magazine and The Punch Magazine. My debut book is 'Birdsongs of Love and Despair'. I hereby certify that I have read the guidelines, the submission is exclusive and the material is original.



ALONE

Perhaps in each life comes a time
When loneliness reveals itself
For what it is and has ever been
With no friends, no kin and none to feign
This swarm of faces known we see
Leave to fly to some place to be
Alone we are with a void to fill
Each transcends the hunger to kill.



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! 😊

