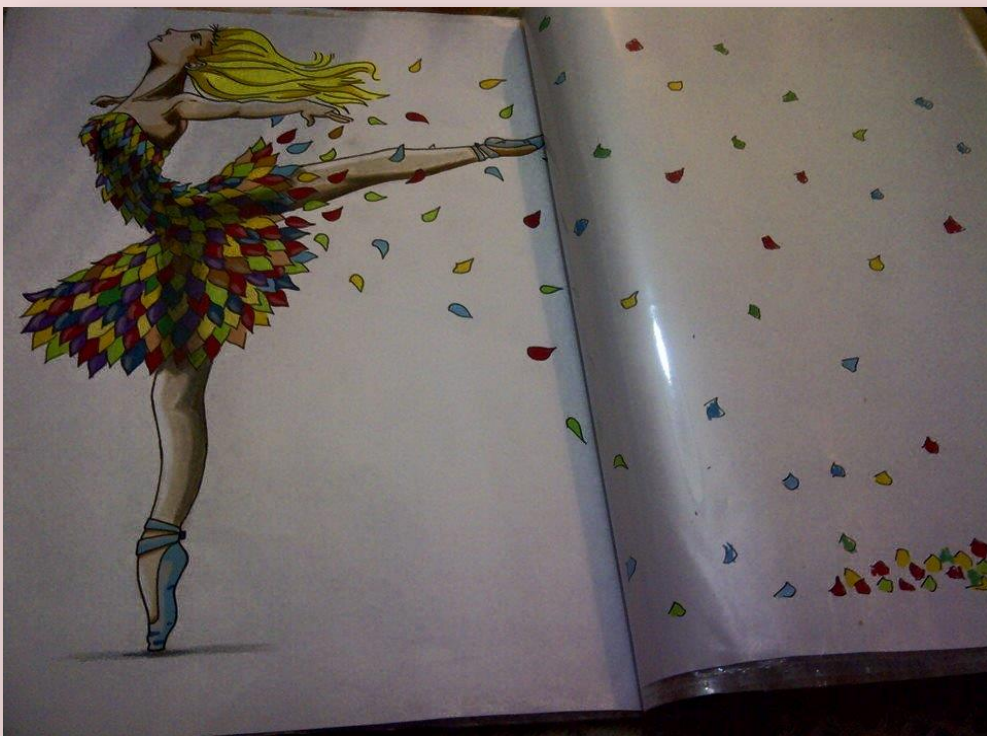


GloMag

Monthly Online Poetry and Prose Magazine

August 2016



Edited and Published by Glory Sasikala

Shameeg van Schalkwyk



Title of the Cover Pic: Ballerina

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/shameeg.vanschalkwyk>

Page

<https://www.facebook.com/Something-arty-624910864200016>

Bio: I've been doing art since primary school when I discovered it and I've never looked back ever since. I always challenged myself to do something better than what I've previously drawn or painted. Always setting high standards for myself in terms of art. What inspires me is the fact that nobody has ever taught me anything about art, so the drive to obtain my full potential by myself and my ability is the one and only thing going through my mind every time I pick up a pencil or a paintbrush. The denial and rejection in the past are my most biggest inspirations turning negative things into something positive. God has blessed me with an amazing gift that I've told myself to explore for the whole of my existence

bcoz we only live once. I'll rather struggle making living by doing what I love than to work and be unhappy bcoz its not meant for me. Bcoz to me my success is not what I have and what I've achieved no. My success is being able to do what I love every day until my last. And hopefully inspire someone else to believe in what their dreams are - and hard work towards it really pays off.

Lol. And in addition to that, I'm 26 years old and I live with my parents who've been very supportive and I have one sibling sister. Oh and I'm from Cape Town born and raised on the cape flats.

Perspective of the Painting

For the ballerina. Lol. I was actually listening to the song ballerina girl of Lionel Richie. But I felt a very different feeling when I was drawing that. I was thinking about the fact that there are so many undiscovered talents that never get noticed. I mean to be a ballerina rarely happens on the cape flats. It's like a 1 in a 100 chance that a successful ballerina girl comes out of the cape flats. However it's not impossible. To become a ballerina or even a model requires discipline, technique, physical attributes, commitment and very hard work and I would love to meet the female who has these qualities because it's very seldom you find somebody like that. "Before you can the lead roll you need follow first" and so to in life. But every day we hear about the victory of the strongest, success of the smartest, survival of the fittest but

never do we hear about the glory of the most loving. Lol sorry for all the typing but it's from the heart.

That's why I do art for the love of it. All the different colours on the dress represent all the different emotions and experiences we have endured "good" and "bad" bcoz all these add to the one thing we forget about every day, every month and years to come from now. And that is living. Being alive. With free choice to do whatever we choose to do in the name of God.

ABOUT GLOMAG

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

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

Glory Sasikala

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BACKGROUND MUSIC: Richard Clayderman “Candle in the wind”

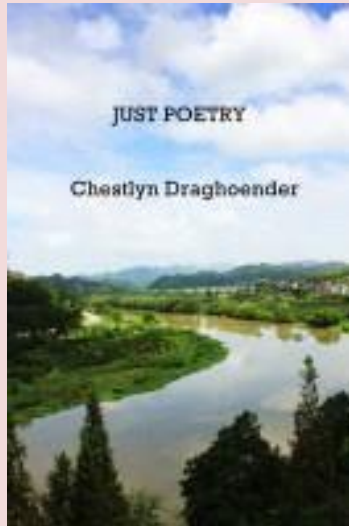
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WFA8l-JzpxQ>

BOOK OF THE MONTH

JUST POETRY

by

Chestlyn Draghoender



AMAZON

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01JH6IE14/>

Smashwords

<https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/592117>

National Bookstore

www.nationalbookstore.com/ebooks/poetry/just-poetry.html

iTunes

<https://itunes.apple.com/gb/book/just-poetry/id1099218806>



Review

<https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/592117>

About the Book

Just poetry is a collection of short contemporary poems written by Chestlyn Draghoender over 2015 and 2016. Most of the poems in this book have been published online. The book can be downloaded for free at the Barnes & Noble bookstore, iTunes or directly from Smashwords, where it was originally published. The poems in this book are about people, as individuals, as couples, or as communities.

About the Author

I am young emerging South African poet who lives in Cape Town. I have appeared on Poetry potion, GloMag, and The Commonline Journal. I just love books and music. I am an administrator by day and a writer, poet and literacy activist by night. I also just recently founded the South African Poetry Circle on Facebook. I am quite skinny, so no-one would be able to tell that I love food. My family is the most important people in my life.

Blog: chestlyn27.wordpress.com

Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/dchestlyn

Twitter: [@dchestlyn1](https://twitter.com/dchestlyn1)

PREFACE

Robert Klein Engler

(Robert Klein Engler lives in Omaha, NE and holds a degree from the University of Chicago Divinity School. Ramsin Canon claims in Gaper's Block that Engler's writings is a "sublime banquet of bullshit.")



AFTER THE END OF POETRY

This time around, those who write the obituary for art are serious about it. Art is at an end! We are told by Arthur C. Danto, art critic and professor at Columbia University, that the visual arts have come to an end. Professor Danto writes, "That is what I mean by the end of art. I mean the end of a certain narrative which has unfolded in art history over the centuries..."

These days, there is no difference between art and non-art. Furthermore, there may be no longer boundaries between the arts. A painting may be a poem. A sculpture may be a painting, and a novel may be a symphony. Contemporary art has no boundaries. Like the goo in the 1988 B-movie *The Blob*, contemporary art digests anything alive.

If Danto is correct, what then, about the fate of other arts? Has the art of cinematography also come to an end? Is the novel at an end,

too? What about the high and serious art of poetry? Is there a difference between contemporary poetry and what is not poetry?

When an ordinary reader picks up a copy of *The American Poetry Review*, can he explain to a friend what is the difference between a poem printed there, and what is not a poem? If our ordinary reader cannot explain that difference, then are we not at the end of poetry? In Danto's words, "As far as appearances are concerned, anything can be a work of art." In the twenty-first century anything can be a poem. Yet, when anything is a poem, nothing is, so we have come to the end of poetry.

Once, it was said that after Marx and Freud there would be no more art. Everything was just a projection of the unconscious or a manifestation of false consciousness onto an ideological superstructure of capitalism. Even those who bought halfway into these ideas and wanted to be trendy, admitted reluctantly, old art never dies, it just smells that way.

We were told also more than a half a century ago that after Auschwitz there should be no more art or poetry. Here the death knell was silent, for no one spoke from the pit. All that was heard was the mechanical roar of a bulldozer as it pushed body after body, more skeleton than flesh, into the wide open grave. Theodore W. Adorno claimed, "To write a poem after Auschwitz is barbaric."

Be that as it may, Danto's claim goes beyond the barbaric. All art in the modern world is really at an end. There is no more art as we knew it. None. Nada. Over. Kaput. You don't believe Danto or me? Well, head to your nearest Holiday Inn and get a sofa sized painting for your front room at the Super Gigantic Art Sale. There's beauty for you!

no more styles

Once, we saw poetry evolving into various styles similar to the way painting evolved from Baroque to Impressionism to abstract art. In the case of poetry, this evolution may be a little more varied because a painting cannot be "translated" from a foreign language the way a poem can. Nevertheless, we do talk about Romantic poetry, Edwardian poetry, Imagist poetry and Confessional poetry. Many of these styles even have their own manifestos to justify their methods.

So, just as art came to an end in the 1960s with Warhol's Brillo box, sometime in the 1970s, poetry also came to an end. Some even argue poetry suffered a serious heart attack as far back as 1923 when William Carlos Williams wrote about his famous "red wheel barrow."

Then came the fall down the stairs. Or was poetry pushed over the landing by the likes of Fritters, who wrote the so-called poem, "Jello From the Moon." Will you ever forget the lines, "Oh the sky is purple-green and the birds fly up their noses/Dodging the green jello that's dripping from the moon." After that outpouring of sentiment, the traditional literary narrative meant nothing to writers and readers of poetry. Want more proof? Pick up a copy of *The Best American Poetry, 2010*, guest edited by Amy Gerstler.

Just to be sure, let's blame the end of poetry on George W. Bush, too. With the Bush presidential election, American poetry came to a complete halt. Hanging chads took the place of dangling participles. What started as muffled moans became a dreadful gasping for breath and voice. Poetry then sank into the tar pit of progressive politics, dragging after it the long rope of Marxist literary criticism.

More realistically, the generation maturing in an exhausted culture created by the struggle and ruin of W.W.II and its aftermath, is more likely to be credited with the end of art. It was this generation that turned against Western values and ideas. For liberals and progressives to defeat the Nazis, their children had to become like the Nazis. Peace, love and tie-died T shirts eventually took the place of skulls and double gold insignias of lightning. The defeat of nationalism led to the tyranny of globalism.

why pick a winner

Few people, and especially poetry critics and professors, realize the full implications of the theories they teach or write about. Narratives do not disappear and leave a vacuum where they once occupied a meaningful place. Narratives are replaced by other narratives.

The end of poetry is just a new narrative, but it also may have the unintended consequence of undermining the entire poetry project, to use a soiled terminology from Heidegger, who, by the way capitulated to the Nazis. The realization that there are multiple narratives or the Marxist realization of the end of history, and therefore the end of all past narratives, too, has consequences in the real world of nature.

Let me suggest a few implications for the narrative that speaks about the end of poetry. If everything is permitted, if every poem is of equal value, then why have poetry contests that pick a winner? Why should the narrative of a judge, who usually is an affirmative action arts administrator, be imposed on the narrative of a schizophrenic who shrieks, "This is a poem?" After the end of poetry, there should be no more poetry contests. Instead, let there be poetry lotteries. It's only fare.

Let writers send in their poems, some written on cardboard with crayons, others typed, others as PDF files. Make sure they pay the \$20 reading fee, too! We'll toss them all in a drum, give the drum a good spin, and then have a blindfolded literary critic draw out enough pieces to make a nice size book that a university press will then publish. We could call the book, Drumbeats.

The end of poetry will also bring an end to all those "Best Poetry Anthologies." They probably won't be missed by anyone outside New York City, anyway. When there is no standard, then there can never be a "best" poem. Future anthologies can be assembled by having anyone send in anything. When a certain number of "poems" are obtained or when a submission deadline is reach, the poems are assembled and the anthology printed.

The end of poetry will also happily usher in the end of awards. What does a Pulitzer Prize mean when there is no meaning? We can now give each other awards, or better yet give yourself an award. "I am the best poet in America," the homeless man on the corner declares while writing "fuck" with a red marker on the bus stop bench. Who can argue with that declaration? There is no longer a narrative that excludes our bus stop bard.

Is poetry at an end simply because fewer and fewer people read it or buy poetry books, or is the opposite true? Statistics about readership suggest that many people are not interested in an art that has come to an end. Travis Nichols sites some discouraging data in this regards.

"Poetry is in trouble. At least according to the NEA and Newsweek. 'In 2008, just 8.3 percent of adults had read any poetry in the preceding 12 months.'" Furthermore, "Almost as an afterthought, the report a noted that the number of adults reading poetry had

continued to decline, bringing poetry's readership to its lowest point in at least 16 years."

What will take the place of poetry now that it is at an end? The answer to that question is all around us. Advertising and politics will combine to create an expression in language, like contemporary buildings of steel and glass, a building that float free from both human nature and the constraints of history and tradition. After the end of poetry writers will advance by the right politics, not the right poetics. White men, especially, must confess their white guilt in poems before they are published.

Wait. Scratch that. Politics and poetics are now one. "Poletics" is the new narrative that takes the place of the old narrative. Poletics proclaims the end of poetry and art for the sake of social justice.

With the merger of American poetry with liberal politics, the poet as victim emerges as the most important metaphor to link writer with audience. According to Alexander E. Jones, "Although scattered pockets of resistance still exist, the revolution in poetry has been won." We see African-American poets, lesbian poets, women poets, Chicano poets, drug addict poets, HIV positive poets, etc. They are all marketed as victims. The only poet/victim liberalism does not recognize are the victims of liberalism itself.

Unfortunately, the end of poetry does not necessarily mean the end of dreary books, MFA creative writing programs, poetry conferences and even criticism. These things may parish on their own account, assisted by an ever-growing technology and an economy that makes a trip to Santa Fe, New Mexico impossible for working-class writers. In spite of that, something called poetry will hang on as a cottage industry for many who attend Sunday afternoon tea

parties in backwater towns and fly-over country.

forms of life

The end of poetry demonstrates that the forms of life that in the past that made the poetry narrative possible are disappearing. Both Communism and Capitalism advance a form of globalization. Globalization, in turn, abolishes local forms of life. It was forms and values rooted in the local that were carried up into the universal that made traditional art "great." Those forms of life were in fact inspired by life itself.

In the new world order, in a Marxist state of bliss or a Capitalist nirvana, there is no need for poetry because a false equality in all things becomes sameness in all things. What is more the same than silence everywhere? The end of poetry and the forms of life that made poetry possible will give way to the silent narrative of death. Maybe Adorno is right about a future barbarism.

Will traditional a form of life, grounded in both nature and human nature survive somewhere, if not on Manhattan or in San Francisco or New Delhi? It is certainly possible, but this form of life will stand outside the social, educational and political structures we are building today.

We may have to look to Roman Catholics to make poetry's survival possible. The Roman Catholic Church is grounded in nature. It may be in the full understanding of nature that the Church cannot help but witness, where a new Renaissance could happen. Here is an alternative narrative to modernism, postmodernism and contemporary art. We are told

Vernon Shetely follows a similar but more secular track in his critical book *After the Death of Poetry* (1993). Nevertheless, the New

Formalism he argues for cannot be willed into being. It must come to life from a form of life and from an "inner necessity," as the artist Kandinsky would have it.

Criticism cannot draw back "the once-vital poetic enterprise" from the "distant margins of contemporary culture." For that return we may need grace, not literary critics.

If any art is to survive it must embrace life, not death. Cover all the skulls you want with diamonds, it is still death that is worshiped in the galleries and at the poetry readings. The same holds true in the poetry pages of the New Yorker and among the editors of most university presses.

What of those who still read the old narrative and write the story of the human heart. What will they do now that poetry like art is at an end? The wounded poets could get a small house of cypress wood on some lonesome bayou in Louisiana. There he may write and wait. But why? Above the chatter of a Santa Fe cocktail party we hear Jason, the annoyed editor of a small press, tell his date du jour, "If you say that word 'beauty' one more time, I'm gonna puke."

CONTENT

Winston Plowes	22
William P. Cushing	25
Vinay Virwani	28
Vasanthi Swetha	31
Vandana Kumar	33
Usha Chandrasekharan	35
Urooj Murtaza	38
Tushar Gandhi	40
Thomas M. McDade	43
Sunil Sharma	45
Sumita Dutta	48
Sudeep Adhikari	49
Subhash Chandra Rai	51
Sonia Gupta	53
Shreekumar Varma	55
Shobha Warriier	59
Shivank Sarin	62
Sheikha A	64
Sharmila Ray	66

Shamenaz	68
Sergio A. Ortiz	71
Scott Thomas Outlar	75
Ronald Tuhin D'Rozario	78
Romeo della Valle	81
Robert Klein Engler	84
Robert Feldman	86
Ro Hith	89
Reena Prasad	91
Ravi Shanker (Ra Sh)	94
Ramendra Kumar	96
S. Radhamani	99
Raamesh Gowri Raghavan	102
Priyasha Lobinha Cdo	104
Praveen Ranjit	106
Pratima Apte	108
Prasanna H	110
Prahallad Satpathy	112
Philip G. Bell	115
Paresh Tiwari	117

Parasuram Ramamoorthi	120
Panjami Anand	122
Padmini Rambhatla	124
Nivedita Karthik	127
Nimi Kurian	129
Nilesh Mondal	132
Nandini Sahu	135
Moinak Dutta	138
Minnie Tensingh	143
Merlyn Alexander	146
Mushtaque Ali Khan Babi AKA Max Babi	150
Mallika Bhaumik	152
Mahitha Kasireddi	155
Kiran Zehra Komail	159
Kerala Varma	162
John P. Matthew	165
Joseph Elenbaas	169
Joan McNerney	171
Jayant Singhal	173
Glory Sasikala	176

Geoffrey Jackson	179
Geethanjali Dilip	182
Gayatri Sekar	185
Don Beukes	187
Dipankar Sarkar	191
Dikshita Nahar	194
Deena Padayachee	196
Darren C. Demaree	199
Gonapragasen Naicker Aka Danny	202
Daniel de Culla	204
Christopher Villiers	208
Chestlyn Draghoender	209
N.Chandramohan Naidu	212
Brishti Manjima Bandyopadhyay	215
Bini B.S	217
Bilkis Moola	221
Barun Bajracharya	224
Avishek Ramaswamy Aiyar	228
Avik Kumar Maiti	231
Asim Ranjan Parhi	233

Archana Sarat	236
Anurag Mathur	238
Ankush Banerjee	241
Anish Vyavahare	243
Anil Kumar Panda	246
Angela Chetty	248
Ampat Koshy	251
Amit Bitra	254
Amitabh Mitra	258
Ameeta Agnihotri	260
Aakash Sagar Chouhan	264



IT ONLY ENDS ONCE

(GloMag first anniversary special)

After turning over
a beach of pebbles
I found you.

My treasure to keep polished.
You dried into islands of hope
on my palms.

I will sew you into the bottle green leather
of laurel leaves
and swaddle you in peach skin,
stitched in gold and smelling of damp history.

Each morning I will settle into your depression.

Dream under double rainbows

and count your fresh promises

before they melt into the sea.

And then, with each bow and curtsey of the tide,

the things we both once lost

from within our echoed hearts

will be returned to one another –

Washed.



Winston Plowes: He lives aboard his floating home near Mytholmroyd. He regularly teaches creative writing and was Poet in Residence for the Rochdale Canal Festival in 2012 and The Hebden Bridge Arts Festival 2012-14. His first solo collection of surrealist poetry *Telephones, Love Hearts &*

Jellyfish, Electric Press is out this winter. Winston is also inventor of the world's first (and possibly last) Random Poetry Generating Bicycle, the 'Spoke-n-Word'.



PARTING PICTURES

A spotlight shines, center stage,
over a dozen white folding chairs
arranged in symmetry, waiting
for mourners to gather.

Front of house, facing a screen
between the seats, is the silhouette
of a wheel chair where an old man sits
bent from the weight of 98 years.

He has already buried a wife,
Rose of his life, and now faces
the visage of his namesake,
the young man framed on the screen upstage.

The face looks out, peers through the tight
shaft of light, a Playbill facsimile,
previewing a life of accomplishments,
now another casualty of cancer.

Even four decades of difference
residing between them cannot obscure
the similarities that fasten these two:
the pyramidal nose, the tapered chin.

Two Toms, frozen in time, framed
in someone's lens: the one who remains strains
against age, defying gravity to lift
a weary arm to wave a final farewell
to his son.



William P. Cushing: Bill's latest piece ("Parting Pictures") came into existence because of the death of Tom Mangieri, a fond friend of his from his Florida days, who passed away at the start of the summer from brain cancer. Tommy worked in numerous theaters in Orlando primarily as a set designer; he was a good man, a caring son for his father (who died about three weeks after Tommy's death), and a tremendously creative and artistic man. He'll be missed by all who knew him. The accompanying photo from one of the many memorial services held to honor the younger Mangieri was the inspiration for this piece.



The group of friends that we were, the rainbow coloured days that were.....everyday was a new day, a new excitement, a new colour.....The colour settled down as the rainbow shone through, the rainbow still shines through.....the same old rainbow.....it's the same....coz we surely have changed.....

BEYOND REASONS...

We have remained

Much the same

Just shows

We have changed

We used to fly

And touch the sky

We are still perched up

We have changed

Lived in unknown horizons

Beyond reasons

Everything has a cause now

We have changed

Not a life

For which we strived

Strife is missing

We have changed

Hopefully we shall realize

Open our eyes

Fly to the ground

And we shall change



Vinay Virwani: A marketing guy by profession, I can't help but try and convince you that a particular brand of detergent powder can really change your life! And while you may choose not to believe me, at least I ended up telling you a story! Alas, while the breed of storytelling marketers is fast

getting replaced by number-chasing, profit-making, excel sheet enthusiasts, I write....to continue telling stories....A misfit perhaps, in a rapidly format-driven, number crunching world.....but a misfit who has successfully blended in....:)



I PRAY

Sometimes,
when the orange sun
melts into a gaze-drenched sky
or a black butterfly murmurs into the
hollowness of my soul,
I pray.

I pray,
with my hands by my hip,
fingers running over
the embroidery of my skirt,
my eyes wide open,

heart pumping,
and mind preoccupied.

I pray
with no words,
ask nothing,
thank no one,
apologise to none,
but I pray,
for praying, to me,
means falling in love
with myself.



Vasanthi Swetha: She is an Economics student who 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.



How gently you were admonished
For picking up a doll at the tender age of two
You who must never play with dolls
Your gender does not sanction weakness
Your sex ordains you
Hold back those tears
Hem in the softness
The alpha male and
False bravado forever on display
Your tribe must perform for fear of scorn
It then takes a very special woman
To find the soft you and your tears
And take you home



Vandana Kumar: She is a bon vivant who loves travelling, working with young minds and exploring creative possibilities beyond the ordinary. She has done her masters in History from Lady Shri Ram College and her Diplôme from the Alliance Française de Delhi.

She is a French teacher in a couple of schools and private institutes and also translates for various publishing houses and corporates. An active member of various quiz clubs across Delhi-she has a soft corner for Kolkata where she spent her childhood. Her various passions include singing, playing the piano, composing music and participating in local antakshari competitions. She describes herself as a dreamer...a wanderer and a certified incurable romantic...the romantic moorings worsened with all her fancy French studies. Poetry for her is her stress buster -her flight of fancy-and strangely – what keeps her rooted too.



AAH SO!!

(addressed to eminent poet/writer Philip G. Bell on Glorioustimes Group)

Aah so shall it be my PGB ji,

In India you would have been 3G!

We the Indians love our tea too,

As much as the englese there do.

Your taste buds yearn for buttered scones,

Ours make do with muttered cones.

Even before you wonder what ever is that,

Mutter is peas, mashed coned and fried in a spat.

We call it samosa if onions flavor the mash,

Shingaras in Bengal draws in the cash.

The west of Bharat that is mahaan meri,

Will call out for somasee, in the greatest glee.

In the south of India, where all are Madrasede,
Bonda Bajji and masala Vada make it to high Tea.
Coming to the brew that goes well with these,
Is the tea peculiar to each state's tease.

In Chennai and other Tamil teashops,
The single tea satiates the cops.
Brewed and stewed in huge copper pots
Drawn and strained in old sock lots.

You can get tea flavored with ginger and lime,
That will have you belting out verse in rhyme.
Orange Pekoe and Darjeeling green
Jostle for space in in glass bottles clean.

You want to know more about this tea ish thing,
Then, read you must St LU YU's Ch'a Ching
Remember, wherever you go, Call for Chai,
And sip it slowly, my dear Phil G Bell ji boy.

PHILIP G. BELL'S REPLY

Ji is an honour and received so well
Whether tis Philip or whether tis Bell
But my middle initial's been missed you see
Like a horse doth wish to be a G Ji.

P Ji Tips

Indian Tea is drunk a great deal
In English Houses and with such zeal
For me in the morning to help me wake
Or at tea-time with a nice slice of cake!



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



"I LIVE AMONG YOU"

I live among the selcouth words

Of my favourite authors

I breath through them

Those stories I'm scared to speak

They live on their finger tips

I learned through them

That pain... every time... is not due to faults

That happiness won't always be in cages

They dream of stranger worlds

Where the words less spoken are the loudest that are heard

Where the skies are blue

And the grass is greener due to morning dew..

where i fall apart and become a galaxy of velvety happiness

A place where needs slowly burn to ashes...

To grows into desires...

Purple clovers and blood red roses..

Where the heart has no fear...

And dances to embrace the tears..



Urooj Murtaza: I belong to the city of lights, Karachi. I did my masters in international relations, and after completing my studies, worked with different prestigious institutes as academic coordinator and with few banks as HR consultant. These days, besides writing for several poetic groups and being Karachi-Pakistan correspondent for different truths (an E Mag), I'm also working as a moderator for Aman ki Asha, which is working day n night to promote peace between the two most lovely n lively neighbors.. India-Pakistan. And that is my mission too, to build the bridges via poetry and literature and any form of art. Books, green tea and animals are my lifeline.



Translated in Marathi by Prithviraj Taur

Translated from Marathi by Tushar Gandhi

'Take off your Petticoat'

Roared the Cop, I didn't.

He detained me

Four days, Four nights

'Take off your Petticoat'

I didn't take it off.

My infant daughter was starving at home

My 76 year old mother held her to her chest

My daughter was howling with hunger as milk leaked out of
my breast, wasted

'Take off your Petticoat' the bastard said, I didn't

My daughter fell asleep sucking my mother's shrivelled up
dry dugs

'Take it off, Bitch, I will take 20 minutes then you can go'. I didn't.

Calling me a Naxal he kept me locked up four days, four nights.

'Get me Bidis' he shouted

I got him a whole stack.

'Get me Chicken' I caught and cut one and fed the Dog

'Get me Booze, Whore' he shouted, I got it too.

Sorry Comrades I gave all the Swine demanded, my daughter was starving at home I had to feed her

But when the Bastard shouted 'Now take off your clothes'. I spat on his face

Then I fled, from behind he fired,

As the bullets explode through my breast

Comrades, I did not take off my clothes.....

Dopadi Singhar



Tushar Gandhi: Who audaciously thinks that a typing software on his smartphone makes him a writer. Invisible ink should have been invented for me. Since I am a Gandhi, my book 'Let's Kill Gandhi!' got published in 2007. Have been struggling to write a biography of Is Gandhi's for the past few years. A few more stories struggling to emerge from my atrophied mind. The word mediocre was invented for me. I believe I am funny, wish people would too. My life's report card is written in red ink. My saviour is the legacy I have inherited. I am because of my Great Grandfather.



BILLY'S DRUMSTICKS

Sticks fly from his hip pocket

Slap and roll a Project stair

Hubcap even a rusty sprocket

War helmet too soon the snare

Slap and roll a Project stair

Finding riffs of rare percussion

War helmet too soon the snare

No record of a single session

Finding riffs of rare percussion

Bongo, cymbal, bell, tom-tom

No record of a single session

Man could be a ticking bomb

Bongo, cymbal, bell, tom-tom

Hubcap even a rusty sprocket

Man could be a ticking bomb

Sticks fly from his hip pocket



Thomas M. McDade: He is a former plumbing industry computer programmer / analyst residing in Fredericksburg, VA, previously CT & RI. He is married, no kids, no pets. He is a graduate of Fairfield University, Fairfield, CT. McDade served two tours of duty in the U. S. Navy, serving ashore at the Fleet Anti-Air Warfare Training Center and at sea on the USS Mullinnix DD-944 and USS Miller DE/FF 1091.



ABSENCES

Miss you a lot

dear.

Inside like an empty room

Feel the absence

in a battered heart

the way you hear

a tabloid left casually

its pages fluttering

in an empty hall

stacked with live memories.

The shrill noise
waking up a grieving man
on a summer afternoon
in a yawning house in a
town deserted by its young.

Remembering a face fading
the way a retreating ship does
from the yearning view
and a gnarled figure frozen

on an empty beach hit by the
relentless rains of a ferocious July

the bloated sea
lashing the ship
with watery fists

the distant ship

appears tiny and fragile

yet etched forever

in the dim drinking eyes.



Sunil Sharma: Mumbai-based, Sunil Sharma is a widely-published writer. He has published three collections of poetry, one collection of short fiction, one novel and co-edited five books so far. He is a recipient of the UK-based Destiny Poets' inaugural Poet of the Year award---2012. Recently his poems were published in the UN project: Happiness: The Delight-Tree-2015.



I haven't betrayed you, she cried

But I have, he snarled

I'm not vindictive or malicious, she pleaded

I am, he sneered

But why, she beseeched

Because I can, laughed he.



Sumita Dutta: She is a photographer and the proprietor of Adlsh Photo Art. She has a degree in Fine Arts (Painting) from Chitrakala Parishad, Bangalore. She loves writing both poetry and prose. She resides in the southern end of Chennai with her two sons, her father, a cat and a dog. Find her blog at: <https://zippythoughts.wordpress.com/>



A Deluge by Leonardo Da Vinci

THE EMERGENCE

I am not a cog in the wheel.

But an emergent one; a shimmering
shape coming mysteriously
out of the cloud of kisses and dance.

Towers of becoming,
shapes of turbulent eddies
carve the infinity, enfolded in their
own limits; The deathless, entwined
in the fabrics of mortal time.

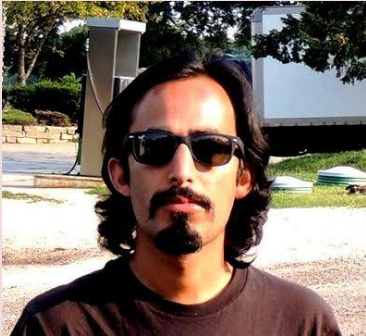
Life emerges, so does consciousness

and meaning, in a non-linear way.

There are no monads

of truths, to see through the microscope

of equations and words.



Sudeep Adhikari: He is from Kathmandu Nepal, is professionally a PhD in Structural-Engineering. His poetry has found place in many online/print literary journals/magazines, the recent being Red Fez (USA), Kyoto (Japan), Uneven Floor (Australia), Devolution Z (Canada), Pinyon Review (USA) and Your One Phone Call (Wales).



NOTHINGNESS @ 0

Everything emanates from nothingness and ends there too

This zeroness(sunyata) is based on everything

Universe contains so many galaxies

Galaxies contains uncountable solar system

Our earth is one part of one such little star

Here we are oblivious of our ephemeralness and non-existence

Being drenched in self-glory

Trumpeting about illusionary wealth, beauty, name & fame

Fighting on issues worth nothing

Killing each other to prove supremacy

Human becoming inhuman in the name of saving Religion & God

The creator must be laughing on our senselessness or may be planning to wide us out

As human race either we re-construct our way of life

Or else soon we will be engulfed by nothingness!!!



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



ON INDEPENDENCE DAY: A SALUTE TO SOLDIERS

India is a country with diversity
Where many customs and religions exist
Yet one thing is forever same
The love for their nation by all countrymen!
Whenever, any terrorism attacked our motherland
Soldiers always fought till end
Without bothering about their day and night
Only want to see their motherland bright
Their sacrifice is unforgettable
They are always an example of struggle
Their love for their country is not less than devotion
Without them we could never get freedom
Let us pay homage to all those soldiers
Who have brought sigh of relief for us

May this Independence Day be the special one

Let us pray for all those brave men

And let us pledge all together

We will never let their sacrifice to get wasted ever!



Sonia Gupta: She hails from Dera Bassi, near Chandigarh, India. Though, a doctor by profession, yet poetry is her passion. She started writing in 2006 and her journey of poetry continued afterwards. Her many poems got a place in various Hindi magazines and English anthology books. Recently she became an established poetess after getting her two Hindi poetry books published. Her three English poetry books are releasing soon. Besides poetry, she is fond of paintings, singing, cooking, knitting, designing, stitching and embroidery too!!!

E-mail: Sonia.4840@gmail.com



EXODUS

we started from the sea, that's a good place to start,
to froth and try, erasing, withdrawing; errors birthed
and drowned in waves that know.

i've seen death in the stillness below and emerged pure
into the clamour. I've seen the dance of storms and
raised cenotaphs of remembrance.

we gathered more, pilgrims yoked in lustful pain,
or gratitude to god, who reached the beach, its golden
sands plotted with bones of casually felled animals,
the plague of split oil and blood, picking poetry like shells
from under red, dead crabs and rotted remains
of sailor-gatherers no one claimed.

we trawled the land, on foot, and in smooth vehicles,
for companions to the promised land, admitting smiles
and sneers alike, the journey was the thing.

through still, grim cities overladen
with clouds grey with scorned rain-god secrets,
and black with the char of self-destruction.

our suitcases swelled with grave charges
against static statesmen and polarised politicians,
and the easy rage of lazy lovers. we hoarded rants
against floods, typhoons and droughts,
of thugs brandishing swords to slice through
our armours and pull out our gods.

matt-bearded men wrapped in soiled bedsheets
from sordid lodges in pilgrim towns, red-eyed girls with
pummelled breasts and babies that couldn't stop sobbing
at the multitude; we started the climb, and the air changed.
our thoughts fell away like leaves from a drying tree

and the sky pulsed with the welcome of careening souls.
help us cope, help us live; the doors flung open to the shrine.
bells clanged, the air cleaved; many swooned in fragrance.
help us, for we're beyond help---we've journeyed beyond
hope.
she stood like sunlight carved by a master sculptor,
laughing, looking back at us with our own eyes.



Shreekumar Varma: He is an Indian author, playwright, newspaper columnist and poet. He received the R. K. Narayan Award for Excellence in Writing in English in 2015. He is known for the novels Lament of Mohini, Maria's Room, Devil's Garden: Tales Of Pappudom, The Magic Store of Nu-Cham-Vu and the historical book for children, Pazhassi Raja: The Royal Rebel Born as HH Prince Punartham Thirunal of the Travancore Royal Family, he is the great great grandson of

the artist Raja Ravi Varma and grandson of Regent Maharani Sethu Lakshmi Bayi, the last ruling Maharani of Travancore. He is married to Geeta Varma (poet, teacher and columnist) and has two children, Vinayak and Karthik.



GODDESS OF LIGHT

Goddess of light

Thou are beautifully bright

Dawn through silvery light

Encased in a light

Through gilded cage

Goddess of light

Thine arms entwined beautifully

In a world pristinely

Blissful and austere in whose Presence

Lies the magnifying essence of

Humaneness and beauteousness

Goddess of light

Thine arms enfold

The vast world of serenity

As though engraved in a mould

All-encompassing as if in temerity

Goddess of light

Thine presence beholding

The vast sea of humanity enfolding

The varied hues of atmosphere and stratosphere

Goddess of light

Thou art truly compassionate

In a world of trepidation

Which has neither pity nor mission

Goddess of light

Thine children, whose pleas and prayers

Are thine own, wherein

Thine vision encompasses the whole

Universe of humanity and brethren



Shobha Warriar: Born near Trichur in Kerala, she did her schooling in Mumbai and Chennai. Shobha was highly influenced by her maternal grandfather who was a distinguished Sanskrit scholar. Shobha had a keen interest in languages, be it prose or poetry, from her school days. She completed B.A. and M.A. in English Literature as also B.Ed. She has also worked as a teacher in schools for some time. Shobha's father, K. Ramakrishna Warriar, is a distinguished writer in Malayalam, and recipient of the Sahitya Akademi award for his contribution in Sanskrit. Shobha is married to an engineer and has one daughter.



TIMELESS NIGHT

A stuttering silence of the night
No creatures crawling, no flashing lights
But smoky spirals that dance underground
Of nocturnal beings, and slicing sounds
As the silver blade knights the heap-
Of powdery moons, that put some to sleep,
With pills that crush the light of day
Or needles that drown ambitions away
They flick their lighters and lose their sight
Falling into a den, of timeless night.



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

Would love to hear from you at-

shivanksarin98@gmail.com

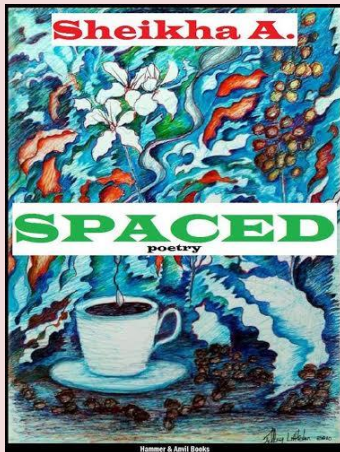


BLACK SWANS

it rained on black roads tonight – a shower of swans/we've lost destinies to greater battles we didn't know we were fighting/seeing rainbows drowned in shallow ponds/asking a child for forgiveness that learnt to grow out of the clouds/unlearned paradox/too many words clot the oesophagus of these roads/water sings from a slender throat/headlights burst through puddles/silver breezes create unreal legacies/from a child's eyes dreams are pinned to graves/car horns bellow for vividness/vipers squeak vigorously across shamed windshields/anathema/send down swans from the heavens only if/roads cry their faces clean/we have yet to grow webbed feet.



ARTIST: The image with it is made by Shaheen Hashim Nomani, 11 years, Gems Winchester School, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.



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



painting by Sudhansu Bandyopadhyay

BURNT CONTINENT

Sometimes, by a quirk of fate in certain landscapes the sun
clings to the sky,
its lemon tentacles hot and acid. Down below her tattooed
skin blisters and
summer refuses to leave her, dehydrating the ancient
rhythms of her feet.

The landscape sizzles to orange, the green dying inwards and
heat-haze blurs the
sharpness of nature.

Dark skinned, she's lost among tunes harsh. The little girl in
her panics. Her native
tongue gets trapped amid a whirlwind of languages. Fear
needles prick her.

She's confused by a white god, brown god, yellow and a black
one.

Sun- stained, she quietly wears the tiara of thorns disguised in Hibiscus.

Her continent is burnt and so is she. What remains are shards of a *third world*.



Sharmila Ray: She is a poet and non-fiction essayist, anthologized and featured in India and abroad She is an Asso-Prof. and Head of the Dept. of History, City College, Kolkata. She has authored seven volumes of poetry. Her poems have been translated into many languages. She also writes on Art.



MY LAP IS BARREN

(Cry of a terror victim's mother)

My lap is barren

on this auspicious occasion of Eid

the whole world is rejoicing

but how can I rejoice?

I went to buy new clothes for my child

but with just one blast

my whole world went upside down

I lost the most precious thing of my life

Can anyone bring back my child?

Who was the light of my home,

Whose laughter echoed my house

will no more be heard now.

With an heavy heart

I bid farewell to you my child

Please bury him smoothly in his grave

Go rest in peace my child

You'll be safe in your heavenly abode.

Can anyone just tell me?

What do these insane people get?

After killing innocent lives

making mothers like us

deprived of their child forever

tell them to kill us first

before killing our children.

(A tribute to all those terror victims' mothers who lost their children this Ramzaan)



Shamenaz: Doctorate with specialization on Sub-continent Women Writers and teacher for 12 years, residing in Allahabad, my birthplace and a city very close to my heart. I have a passion for reading and writing, as well as poetry and have published many poems in E-journals & magazines in

India. I love nature and love to write poetry based on it but I also like to write on various issue relating our everyday lives. I have presented papers in Seminars/Conferences all over India and have published papers in many referred journals in India and abroad. I am in the Editorial board of journals: Literary Miscellany, CLOJ (Cyber Literature, Research Access, Expression, The Context & IJRHS (Jordan). I am the Guest Editor of 'The Context' Volume 2, issue 3. I have served as a Chairperson of Women Cell of my College, AIET & Cultural Incharge, AIET since 5 years. I am a freelancer, who writes reviews, articles & blogs.



SOLAR MUSIC

At the edge
of a dream in progress
a rowboat,
a faceless shadow,
an invitation to drown
in its waters. Uncertainty
enters my feet, awakens
another part of me
spreads a cold sweat
on my forehead. I jump
from the dream, switch on
the light while trembling.



WE'RE ALL THAT'S LEFT

"quedamos nosotros, victoriosos, con alas y deseos y dientes y locura."

Efraín Huerta

The two of us lying on the sand
after a session of love.

You said it's late
but I couldn't imagine
you'd leave. I remember the treaded paths,
the beach resorts where our hands
defeated our bodies.

We were hybrids dreaming
of words and other fevered voices
while others sank like rocks
in the fog.



YOU DON'T HAVE A NAME, YOU'RE WHAT'S NEVER EXPLAINED

crystal chamber

the sea

pale bedroom

where I wonder

in tears

cellophane planet

tumulus fishbowl

autumn fog

and more

shipwrecked

in the mysterious dance

of a smile



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



SIREN OF THE SEA

The sea is a serene shade
of crystal clear blue,
imbued with hues
that sparkle and shine
a divine reflection of inspiration
sent downward from the heavens.

There is a siren on the other side
who sings the sweetest song
into my open, ready heart,
and every note is a symphony
serenaded from the lips
of the holiest angel on earth.

Calm and subdued is the sky

of such a happy scene,
and my mind is swept away
in the loveliest dreams,
carried by the comfort of cotton clouds
gently through the whispered breeze.

There are promises of paradise
in the garden where she stays...
a perfect place of peace
where the fruit is forever ripe
and the wine squeezed from vines
intoxicates with a love that lasts eternal.



Irsa Ruçi: She is an Albanian Writer, Speechwriter and Lecturer. She was born in Tirana (Albania), in 1990. Her books of poetry include Trokas mbi ajër (poems and essays), 2008 and Pështjellim (poetry), 2010. So far in 2016, her work has

appeared in more than 70 print and online national and international magazines and anthologies. Among many awards, she has received the first prize in poetry, in competition "Anthology 2007", as the best poet in Albania.



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



Hey,

Look at my side where the stars ain't reflecting

Look how the lightening rips the sky;

Do they follow a pattern?

No they don't. But my heart does.

Darkness reveals what the light cannot see

And it is this darkness that teaches;

When the lights go off, each flesh turn the same,

Like a shadow in the dark.

The same school that is filled with a hullabaloo

during a class;

The benches haunt in the dark.

The objects in the operation theatre

Turns cold and stiff like a dead man at night.

All things that are hidden
The dark eats their privacy.

What new can I teach you,
which the earth hasn't taught?
Nothing.

But I can show you how to see the stars,
even on a rainy evening.

Shut your eyes tightly
And you see a thousand lights;
Flashing over your eyes,
Remember they are your stars.

And so the truth is my friend,

Wherever you go
You carry along a bit of your,

Sun, moon and the stars.

And they shine upon others.



Ronald Tuhin D'Rozario: He was born in Calcutta and is a die hard Calcuttan. He studied Commerce with Specialization in Marketing Management from St. Xavier's College, Calcutta. He's a poet and a writer. Many of his articles and short stories had appeared into various journals, magazines and paperbacks across the globe. Apart from writing he is a freelance writer, provides private tuitions and conducts creative writing workshops too. He has a deep love for English Literature though, he mostly prefers to read non fiction. He also has a taste for carnatic and hindustani classical music.



VOYAGER

Listen! There is peace
Setting in the wake of unrest
Which cost me the loss
Of all those dreams
That were in progress-
But they were drifting
Farther out in the sea
And each day,
I saw less of reality!

I abandoned those dreams
But I stayed afloat
While the water of hope
Took no opposition
To the rocking waves

And I learned the pleasure
Of letting go the struggle for control,
As result, I was free to move!

I thought I saw those dreams
Floating back to me once again,
As if to say, simply,
They would leave their way
With or without me-
But they would still exist
Because I gave them
Substance and life
All of their own!



Romeo della Valle: Born in a beautiful island named Quisqueya or Hispaniola and from Italian and Spanish parents and coming to America very young with a goal, mainly, to succeed in life and be happy. As a citizen of the world, there is not race, color, or religious beliefs that would stop me from searching for happiness...I have become through times passed that I am a man with a Vision and a clear mission: 'To spread my message of Love 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!

www.romeodellavalle.com



EVENING RAGA

The light falls platinum against the Civic Center wall. We are in Topeka, Kansas, the navel of America. There is a landlocked loneliness around, and, too, a loveliness of rolling hills not far off. I remember the face of a woman waiting yesterday for a bus on Dodge St. The evening light falls on her face like the moon as she sets a shopping bag against a poll. The bus will be a while. She has time to think of her daughter and the two kids. It's not been easy but it's been good. From the hotel window we see a Jeep follows the road's curve into the low hills and then is lost from sight. My mother would be rocking now on the front porch looking out into the bowl of night to ask what star could be a widow's star.



Robert Klein Engler: He lives in Omaha, Nebraska and sometimes New Orleans. Many of Robert's poems, stories and photographs are set in the Crescent City. His long poem, *The Accomplishment of Metaphor and the Necessity of Suffering*, set partially in New Orleans, is published by Headwaters Press, Medusa, New York, 2004. He has received an Illinois Arts Council award for his "Three Poems for Kabbalah." If you google his name, then you may find his work on the Internet. Link with him at Facebook.com to see examples of his recent paintings and photographs. Some of his books are available at Lulu.com. Website: RobertKleinEngler.com.



A TIME WHEN

deer stole through the white wood,

heartbroken,

imagining warm green leaves-

blue stars,

a solitary cherished planet

shivering greytail

rotund chocolate eyes

imagining kinder forest voices

settled inside unbroken wide winter distances,

misty streams emanating frozen breath,

snow clumps falling from yellow and gold birch

wounded raw wet deer

imagining lucid silver pools,
endless earth trails, grass
innocent of boot print,
devoid of the hunter's shells,
yes, instead imagining verdant hills, dells
to roam
steeped in the sweetness of patchouli clover

courageous classic deer
imagining seasons when apples fall effortlessly
there to lick-
taste,
resolute pathfinder,
woods without vengeance,
envisioning forests without assassins
back to a time when
wooden ships sailed on the water,
a time when imagination
merged with life
one dream realized,

one single life lived unbroken,
unconditionally

for the children of Sandy Hook Elementary



Robert Feldman: Born in Paterson, New Jersey, he was inspired at an early age by members of Paterson’s literary tradition, most notably Louis, Allen Ginsberg and William Carlos Williams. As a young adult while living in St. Louis, he organized various poetry readings, produced and hosted a community issues news hour and a biweekly bebop jazz radio program on KDNA-FM. It was during this time his interest and admiration for the Beat Generation flourished. Robert was instrumental in publishing some of Arizona’s most influential writers such as Drummond Hadley and Michael Gregory, and in 1980, collaborated with Lawrence Ferlinghetti on his Bisbee publication, “Mule Mountain Dreams.” During the ’80s and ’90s, he participated in dozens of poetry readings around the country. Now years later, he continues to write, paint, and play tabla, besides working with high-school students as faculty advisor of the Park Vista Writers Workshop. The body of Robert Feldman’s writing and painting can be accessed at www.albionmoonlight.net; he can be reached at rffeldman@gmail.com.



LAIKA

Last night, I dreamt of myself
as a dog in a space-shuttle
exiled into the immense space.

My negligible bark
travelled light years of silence
to be heard by no one.

Floating in an imperturbable void
of time-space continuum,
as life and death made no sense-
primordial thoughts flashed in my memory
in which I was floating in a bitch's womb
drinking and expectorating amniotic fluid.

Countless years passed
as I remained there,

in the space-shuttle, in the sleep.

As I woke

all I remember is

that absolute darkness

I encountered

through the round window

of space-shuttle –



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



LOOKING IN

After years of living in houses with numbers,
names seem quaint

I like to read each one on gates

that grow bigger, taller with every passing year

The ones with the highest walls

have the tersest names

‘Vision’ is a mansion with huge, embellished gates

that hit my eyes when I try to see beyond their black
sculptures and wrought iron

‘Kovallathu Veetil Kunnampurathu Sasi Nivas’ proclaims a one
room shack

barely bigger than its name plate

Some bark at my curiosity,

chasing my footsteps till where their wall ends

Others have lonely, cold noses

sniffing over the hot concrete at my palm
trying to dissolve their jailhouse demeanor
The ones I love best have no walls
or gates
but bushes full of shoe flowers or rose
The bus is a mobile neighbour
The street is their doorway
Children read on the verandah floor
A cow looks in at the window
Fat hens cluck, digging busily in the dirt
The people in them look out and smile back easily
That I can smell and see them eat their tapioca and fish
from the street
is no deterrent to their happiness
or to mine



Reena Prasad: She is a poet/writer from India, currently living in Sharjah (United Arab Emirates). Her poems have been published in several anthologies and journals e.g. The Copperfield Review, First Literary Review-East, Angle Journal, Poetry Quarterly, Lakeview International Journal 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. More recently, she was adjudged second in the World Union Of Poet's competition, 2016. She writes at Butterflies Of Time.



SAD SADNESS

Sadness cripples my chair.

Unscrews and disembodies it.

Eats into it like varnished termites.

Traps its legs in islandic pools of sorrow.

Sadness vapourizes my mirror

Pickling mercury lakes.

Travels on blurred maps of grief

Shredding them into riverine veins

That fog my vision.

Sadness seeps into my bed

In soggy masses of body salt.

Sends me levitating on

A saline water bed of undrained tears.

Is sadness a revelation, a boon,

A moaning wind?

Is sadness stillness, a respite,

A wailing violin?

Is sadness sad she?

Sad sad me?



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

Blog: bonoboland.wordpress.com



MY BEST FRIEND

Simply gorgeous to look at
Her singing a euphonious melody,
Who else can it be, dear reader,
Other than My 'not-so-fair' Lady.

She has a great sense of humour
She laughs at jokes I don't even tell,
For shopping she takes me to places
Which look straight out of Dante's hell.

Gardening is her passion
And interior decoration her hobby,
Sadly with all these distractions
She has little time for her precious hubby.

She can talk on any topic
She can converse on any theme,
She sometimes gives me nightmares
But most often she is my dream.

At work she is the leader
At home the undisputed boss,
But without her I know
My life would have gone for a toss.

She gave my being a purpose
And the much needed stability,
And above all she made me realize
In many areas my lack of ability.

Every time I tried to change her
I found I had changed instead,
Every time I tried to lead her
I realized it was I who was being led.

Even now when I start to float

She brings me to the ground
Whenever I lose my bearings
She makes sure they are quickly found.

In my life I have had many friends
But I'll never find like her, any other
Yes, dear reader, my best friend
Is my kids' darling mother.



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

www.ramendra.in



GODS ARE BEWILDERED

They are the wary sentry
On the burning mound,
Night and day on
The patrol, for the
Dismembered bodies.

Behind the burnt, burning embers,
Some things stare up,
Could be, their angst for
Avowed revival or renewal
For prolonged entity.

The departed are in the
Hot lounge, for embarkation,

Again to their accustomed ports.
A mad desire to live again,
Don't count their sins, shortcomings.

From afar, Gods are bewildered
Wondering where to fix them,
How to fix them, how long
Will it take for Gods to fix them.
We too are bewildered.



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

candidates, and a reviewer and critic. Also published poems and short stories in many websites, presented papers in National and International conferences.



THE CONTENTS OF MY FRIDGE

Carrots, that first taste of our marriage;
Lemons, its state today; karela juice, a
Memoir of all that went wrong. No dairy:

Why cheese her off, this coupling's no
Longer buttered, milked of what cream
There used to be. A squeezed-out orange

Awaits the day it'll turn into marmalade, like
Those eleven vows we dreamt of. Who said a Vegan's fridge
only had veggies?



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



MAX

My words fly around

invalidated

like dried leaves

lost of all meaning

awaiting signs, proof

of their worthiness

You were the one to resurrect my words

Last night you walked in

the theatre dimly lit

except where you walked

You spread your wings
smiled and vanished
You became nothing
and everything

My words validated
found their existence



Priyasha Lobinha Cdo: I am a creature of the dark, like a firefly. People of light, who have never been brave enough to face it don't understand it and hence despise it. Does light not blind you as much as darkness does? The fireflies know better, they owe it to the night, it's what makes them so beautiful.



Never ask me, please
Why I love you so much.
Let it be always
A sacred secret.

My love is like
The roots of a tree
Hidden always
So deep in the earth.

You can have
The Fragrance of its flowers
And enjoy the fruits
As much as you can.

Don't try to pull out

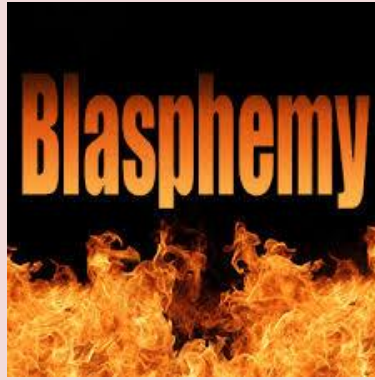
The tree to see

From where it gets

The fruits and flowers.



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



BLASPHEMY

Modern man turns the scriptures upside down, in all major religions of the world. Will that be blasphemy?

All toed the line of the King's clothiers. The child blurted, 'The King is undressed!' Will that be blasphemy?

You turn truth on its head and pass off your untruth as sacred. Digging for the real thing is blasphemy?

A house of God, desecrated and declared an everlasting monument of love!

Height of irony!

That is not blasphemy?

I think when humans are not humane with each other, that is blasphemy.



Pratima Apte: I am an English Hons. Graduate of Delhi University. I am a homemaker, recently turned grandmother!

I used to write sporadically in the Pune edition's Women's page of the Indian Express. I love reading and writing, words are my world. My interests in reading are self-help books, spiritual and cookbooks and fiction. Books by Ayn Rand, Taylor Caldwell, Leon Uris, J Krishnamurthy, Dan Brown have been my favourites, as also layman's homeopathy, astrology and medical books.

Awesomeness fearful, inspiring awe

AWESOMENESS

We ravage through the ages.

I am the sages, You the stages.

We look beyond the land, hand in hand.

I am the sand, You the stand.

We were walking where paths led.

Now, You are the way, I the winding.

We were immortals who were dead.

Now, You are the life, I the living.

Is the naked rambling coming back?

Are the cubicles going dark?

The stage is set for us to deny.

To solidify, to petrify, to fly.



Prasanna H: I have lived in Villivakkam, Chennai all my life. I live across the street from where I was born. I have had the company of some exceptional people all my life like my grandparents, parents, brother, relatives, school friends, college mates, office mates, home boys and girls and the Glotimers. When I am not hanging out, I read, watch movies, start things I won't complete, listen to music, be angry, frustrated, blissful, hyper and dancing.



NIGHT ISN'T ABOUT DARKNESS

She sums up the night in her own way and leaves all that is dark for me

And I chase the darkness to the tunnel's end

Night is not about darkness

Light of thousands sun promises the night

We call it morning

Morning is a visible clean blue sky

Morning is a promise of something worth morning is a smile in some one's lips

A stretched out net that captures the fishes of light leaping upward

Morning is the gateway of the temple of night

Morning is a bird that carries the sky while flying away

Is life just a oscillation in between light and darkness oh Lord!

I am fed up with her beauty

She is a wound that oozes blood only

Her smile is death

A mirage altogether

I do not have the stamina of a camel to cover the distances of
a desert in her bosom

I am a care free open wind

Tornado they call me

I may at best break the heart of thatched roof

I cannot take away the sky with me

At best I can stare at the sky and it's changing colours and
imagine like a poet

I can give birth to poetry

I may stab words

I may pamper words

I may ascribe a meaning to everything out of nothing and die
a silent death!



Prahallad Satpathy: He hails from Balangir district of Odisha (India) is a bilingual poet. He writes both in Odia and English. So far he has published three anthologies of poetry in Odia to his credit. His poems have been published in national anthologies like Scaling Heights and international anthologies like GLOBAL ANTHOLOGY ON PEACE AND HARMONY, HAPPY ISLE, FEELINGS INTERNATIONAL, etc. By profession, Dr. Satpathy is a Reader in Economics, at present in Rajendra autonomous college, Balangir (Odisha). He has represented Odisha Sahitya Academy as honorary member for two consecutive terms.



A MOMENT OF DESPAIR

By the still pond in the mystery wood
At the edge of darkness an old man stood
Peering deep into the water of death
Before taking a very last breath

Images came forth of better days
Few perhaps but in some ways
A prophecy of what can be lost
The final step will have such cost

And so the briefest moment spared
Discovered vision of those who cared
And walked back home o'er hallowed ground
But of this, never uttered a single sound



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



WINGS

The old man with the stoop and the wheezing cough, looks away from the Qur'an every now and then. For months the window by his bed has been his only succor. Till a few weeks back, he would open the window and let the chaos of life outside waft in with the smells of the busy bazaar, but now, with the frosted fingers of winter rapping on the glass panes, he keeps them shut or his cough worsens.

Three times a day, his daughter comes by to help him sit up. She administers the multi-coloured pills, dabs his bedsores with iodine, and gives him a bowl of steaming soup that would often remain untouched and eventually grow cold on his bedside table.

charcoal sky

a mob of shadows

feeding shadows

'He has lost his will to live' the family doctor had repeated the cliché on his last visit.

But today, when two boys run past the window with a paper kite trailing behind them, for the first time in years, the warmth of a hesitant smile spills over his scraggly face. And when one of them turns around and runs backward, tugging the string hard, he props himself up on his bed, urging them to run faster.

The kite soars up high, riding a waft of air, and the man spreads his arms like he too can fly into the cerulean sky, rushing past the muezzin's call in a flash of blazing red.

teaflowers

the things you recall

at a funeral



Paresh Tiwari: An electrical engineer by profession, a creative writer, and illustrator by choice, Paresh Tiwari, grew up in the labyrinthine lanes of Lucknow. He took to Japanese literary short forms in the winter of 2012.

Since then his haiku, haibun, tanka, haiga, free-form poems and flash fiction pieces have been published in various journals, anthologies and books. His first collection of haiku and haibun 'An inch of sky' was published by 20 Notebooks Press and is available online.



We met against the storm
Thunderstorm, hailstones
Gale and heavy rains
Our clothes drenched
Still we were fighting the storm
Our tongues wagged a lot
We fought like dogs
Until the storm slowed down
Don't know how
I was in your arms.

You called me "an Ice-Cream"
Tasted me with your tongue and lips
Your Body full of crème
You rode me like a stallion

Craving for more crème

Lifted me up the sky

Crème merged with Orange sky

Is this how rainbows are made?



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



WANT

I am well and fine
But I allow a little anxiety
To work over me
And show as fright
Not because I'm afraid
But for my want to bask
In your love and concern
To have you by my side.



Panjami Anand: I am an occult practitioner by profession and I see every day it is hard to be honest in a brutal world that demands the best façade even at the cost of one's inner well-

being. Sometimes it helps to know that we are all fighting secret battles and we are not the only ones in pain. I love to observe human relationships and nothing inspires my writing more. Thus the dominating theme of all my writings are conflicts and triumphs of the same. I thank each and every one who has encouraged me to better my expression. Gratitude for reading!



POIGNANT MEMORIES

Subtle, but vivid
Are my memories
Of hot, humid summers
Spent in my grandparents' home.

Cool buttermilk, spiced and redolent of summer
Sustenance so basic and rustic.

Morn, noon and evenings blend into a pleasant blur of
playing with cousins,
While keeping an anxious eye
On my truant mother,
Given to sneaking off to the matinee show
With her assorted siblings and aunts and cousins.

Mango wafers drying in the hot sun,
Promise of lipsmacking pickle,
Stored in giant jars for perennial enjoyment.
The fragrance of ripe mangoes and heady jasmine garland's,
Woven into dark locks of long hair.

By Grandma, who laments the loss of her own dark locks,
which have now turned to soft, gossamer grey lace,
testimonial to life that has been fully lived.

Grandpa, working in an office,
Brings piles of notebooks and pens,
As persuasive gifts for impending school.

Ice cream in the afternoon, endless games of hide and seek,
exploring hidden lofts and dark corners.
Those corners are still lurking in my head,
Creating poignant reminders of a pleasant childhood,
seemingly never to be experienced again.

But ,the mind ,so elusive and creative,
Seeks on a quiet afternoon, the never forgotten smells and
sounds of an enchanted time.

My self created Narnia,
Open my mind and your doors to poignant memories,
Which can never die.



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



THE SOUL OF POETRY

A boundless finite curve
blunting the keen edge of curiosity
and blurring bridges.

A dense canopy of emotions
Set down firmly upon the tree of perception
Rooted in the ground of reality
With branches of imagination stretching outwards
Whitewashing over the cracks between the lines
Translating prosaic actions into unique thoughts.



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



A KNOCK

She fumbled her way
To the wooden door.
Expectant, heart beating wild.
He held out his hand –
Just the newsletter.

Heavy hearted, she glanced
Almost with distaste
At the mail in hand.
She would have banged shut the door
To vent her frustration
But strength had long since ebbed.

In her heart she believed
Held dear to words once spoken
Still remembered
For she had loved but once
Truly and steadfastly
And for a life time.

Life had been lived
Days sped past
Seasons came and went
Monsoon showers renewed afresh
Heart's hope.
And then one day it arrived...



Nimi Kurian: Logophile, reader, coffee drinker... that's my dream world. What I really do is work for a newspaper and write stories for children. Written two books - Stumble Down Mystery and Magic in the Mountains.



MOURNING

So often I've been told to mourn, it has
become a ritual, people expect to see
tears pain digging fingernails into soft
thighs, validation of losing someone
you thought the world of

Soon I started visiting graves

just to spit on the grass

that grows under the shadow of epitaphs

I stood in front of crematoriums

inhaling the smoke from burning fires,

it set me free, the heavy air inside took

me back into placental darkness

When I came out and took a dip in

the murky waters of Ganga, the mud

under my feet felt like quicksand

And I never asked their names, neither

did the flames, but every night there

was someone new to swallow

every night

I mourned anew

some nights,

the tears were real, some

nights, so was the pain



Nilesh Mondal: He is 22, is an undergrad in engineering by choice and poet by chance. His works have been published in magazines like Inklette, Muse India, Bombay Review, Cafe Dissensus, etc. His first book of poetry, 'Degrees of Separation' (Writers Workshop), is slated for a 2017 release.



THAT FOOT

(for my Baba)

That foot that has walked
on thorns
all through the day for you.

That foot which has shown
you foot-steps to follow.

That foot.

That foot behind the orange sun
has walked through arches
bare foot

on fire, on water

near parapets

has cracked doors and windows

for you to enter safe.

That foot.

That foot walked, crossed the
never-ending roads

when you aspired for the colossal.

That foot. Your passport

to utopia, to dream of

new truths, passport to planets uncharted.

That foot, is walking away, weak,

parting with fantasia forever.

Will you join?



Nandini Sahu: She is a major voice in Indian English poetry, is an Associate Professor of English in IGNOU, New Delhi, India; she is a creative writer, theorist and folklorist ; she is the author/editor of eleven books; has been widely published in

India, U.S.A., U.K., Africa and Pakistan. Dr.Sahu is a double gold medalist in English literature, the award winner of All India Poetry Contest, Shiksha Rattan Purashkar and Poiesis Award of Honour, 2015. She is the Chief Editor and Founder Editor of two bi-annual refereed journals, Interdisciplinary Journal of Literature and Language(IJLL) and Panorama Literaria. Her areas of research interest cover New Literatures, Critical Theory, Folklore and Culture Studies, Children's Literature, American Literature and ELT.



(loosely based on a painting as attached, done by Mark Webster)

MARTHA'S BACKYARD

Of all the places where we liked
To spend our time more was Martha's backyard,
Just behind her cottage,
We would there go every time
We paid our visit to hills,
And to her, of course,

Usually we would there arrive
At peak of autumn
When trees would start turning bare,
Their branches shooting up to the Sky
Like ribs,

At Martha's backyard
We always had company,
Of birds and butterflies and bees,

The scent from earth always reached us fresh
Specially in early morns, dewy drenched
Mist covered,
The spot looked like a land of fancy and dreams,

We would go there only to loiter around,
Our cries and shouts filling the air
Making it cheerful,
Making it depart from its usual ascetic silence,

We there ran, jumped, hopped,
Did somersaults even,

Our bodies fell on the soft wavy grass
Moss we got half covered with

Leaves oft got stuck to our pullovers,

Late in the evening,

When the hamlet turned absolutely dark

And sleepy,

When only distant hootings of owls

Could only be heard,

We would sometimes gather

At Martha's backyard,

And create log fire,

Some of us would break into a song,

Some would shake a leg,

And old Martha,

Knowing we were there,

Would come and sit on the cane chair,

Watching us with her eyes of grandmotherly affection and
indulgence,

After so many years, when the world
Had got changed,
When the hill and its surroundings
Got changed too,

Martha's backyard still holds
The same magic for me at least,

Just to go there
And stand before those trees,
Just to go there
And embrace the mist and the fog
Of autumn,
And to roll on the wavy grass,
Still carries every bit of Martha's generosity,

Still I could that feel.



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

Me? I am nothing...I'm not a conscious poet...I just scribble;

For scribbling is like singing spontaneously...It is like dancing loving the movements of body...So I live...So I wish to depart...



THE MIST

I saw your footsteps
in the sands of Time.
I followed close
just a step behind.
I stretched my hands
In the mist, reaching for you
but it was just a mirage
Mm hand went through.
I thought I saw you turn
when I called your name,
caught my breath and
I called again.
The vague shape ahead
was it a jutting rock?

My hand felt the cold,
I withdrew it in shock.
Blinded with fear, I stumbled
as the mists swirled by.
I knew my fate...
I was going to die!
Step by faltering step
I placed in your foot's imprint.
But the waves raced up
and obliterated it.
I stood uncertain now;
where can I go?
Ahead the misty, murky glow,
behind me the barren shore!



Minnie Tensing: I think I have been writing from the age of 10, contributing to the school and college magazines. Several prizes for creative writing and poetry competitions have encouraged me to keep at it. Reading is my passion and often distracts me from writing. Currently I am on the verge of bringing out a story book targeting children in their pre and early teens to encourage reading among children.



THE CAPTIVATING WESTERN GHATS

She is so huge
standing tall and broad
reaching for the skies
chiselled by nature
her beautiful body
descends from great heights
and sometimes she
displays patterns of interests
The crystal rays of sunlight
bathes her at morn
the glistening moonlight
kisses her good night
the sparkling stars so bright
on the dark blanket above

form a beautiful canvas with her
the lonely wandering cloud
remains with her white or grey
as the seasons change
the streams flow through her
ending up in a river pond or lake
her shadows on the nearby
lake or pond is a rare sight
at sunrise and sunset with
painted skies above her
reflecting in the water body
is tranquil
she controls the intensity of the wind
she is blessed with rich flora of all kind
at spring time she depicts
the colours of life
she has the wildest fauna
the green fields and coconut groves
on the foothill
the egrets herons and kingfishers alongside flying

the dragonflies bees and butterflies
hovering above
the serenity of the captivating mountain
takes your breath away
she's in the hands of greedy men
she is blasted to pieces
her wealth robbed off
her beauty destroyed
the mighty structure
shattered to pieces
lies on the ground
dust to dust



Merlyn Alexander: I hail from Nagercoil, had my schooling and college there and did my post-graduation in Botany. Surrounded by nature all around our district with tall coconut trees fringed sea shores, beginning of the Western Ghats,

paddy fields and coconut grove, rubber plantations, with some red cliff valleys and scattered mountainous terrain, I feel blessed that nature has lots to offer for my poems. I'm an ardent lover of nature. Other than writing my hobbies include painting, craft, travelling music reading and cooking. I'm a blogger and I have a cookery blog. I would love to publish a cookery book someday. My collection of poems in a book. Gimme some time.

www.alexanderskitchenrecipes.blogspot.com



FROM THE LABYRINTH...

We shall not emerge from
the labyrinth, our illusory maze
of convictions, under the long and cold
shadows of right and wrong.

Blood of innocents curdles in the mud
our shoes are cast in mistrust,
our eyes can see only in wisps

and that blackbird flying away
into some alien cosmos -
didn't it drop us
as embarrassed stardust?



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



RAINDROPS

A pause
from the daily grind,
amidst blissful verdant green
to listen to the
rhythm of rain
strumming our song,
and a walk back to our
old address
- the long forgotten poems.

I feel the droplets
trickling down
o'er sleepy memories,

retracing time to those
puddles of joy
we splashed around.

Bunked classes,
on that summer noon
in your attic room
you and I ,
a paintbrush and a canvas ~
colouring lush dreams ,
and the mad rush of you within .
A dance of desire
by the raging nor'wester,
and then the drumming sound,
dousing the simmering heat
satiating us ,
filling us ,
with raindrops.

These days, I often wonder...

Do you still hear

the music?



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



CLOSED DOORS

I pass through too many of them
From the streets
To the ones in my home.

Vary in latches and frames

Common in obscurity

Tuck away memories

Zip conversations

Grip relationships hanging by a thread

Breed silence

Or break all hell loose

Echo rattling of hard things thrown around

Hurl unclear dagger-like curses

Behind closed doors.

Sinister conspiracies to betray
Plotting death of acquaintances
Calling into confidence
For bilateral agreements to unfair contracts
Exchanging power and undue favours
Enabling backdoor entries of encroachers
Distributing loot amongst robbers
Behind closed doors.

Feeble whispers hissing in ears
Sending love notes
Or rhyming with her partner
In the romantic dark
She cleverly covers up bruises
Or calls them love bites
The shameless lying of couples in legal binding
Of course, with no witness
To what conjures up between hearts
She alone holds the secrets

Conceals stories of long nights

They both stayed up

Behind closed doors.

Irked by rustling fizzle

Produced between lips

Woken at odd hours to growls

To resonating cries

Perturbing shrill shrieks

While I stand on this side

Rejected interference

Banned admission

I'm an outsider

Why can't I rightfully seek

The truth of diabolic activities?

Of a cunning come about?

Who's on the other side

Behind closed doors?



Mahitha Kasireddi: I am from Hyderabad. I'm an aspiring writer/poet. I have been a writer with online magazines Youth Ki Awaaz and Campus Diaries. I won the Campus Diaries 25 Under 25 National Contest in the category of writing. I write poetry/prose/flash fiction at <https://magykars.wordpress.com>



VISION

(a Kiran Zehra Poem)

I see the world with frightful eyes

Will tomorrow be a dreadful sight?

I wonder who would point a finger at me

Will I have to fight the world to be free?

Then my friend who cannot see

“Fear ye not” he said to me

“No fight can clinch the hate that is

No doubt can answer devils quiz

If you can close your eyes to hate

Then you can change the world’s fate.”

I chide him with a deep sigh:

“You sayeth so because ye can’t see the blood stained sky

You sayeth so because thou can’t see with ye eye

The world, its end has just begun
And you and I shall soon be done.”
Then in silence his response I await
He replies with a smile not with hate
“Ah you mock my blindness mate,
I have seen no more than black
Blood is red this knowledge I lack
Why can't you see more than ye eye?
Why can't you believe in a lovely life?
I have a vision although I can't see
I fight the darkness inside of me
Trust the happiness that lies inside
And ye shall see all colours bright.”



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



DIVINE LOVE

(a poem by Sajida, translated from Malayalam to English by Kerala Varma)

Each breath of mine is a thought about you

Each name of yours spells love for me

My name is incomplete without yours

Be it day or night I seek to be one with you

Sleepless at night I become a vine

A love-vine that climbs up your feet

The heartbeats of your invisible presence

Sounds like the reluctance of a wet bamboo bansuri

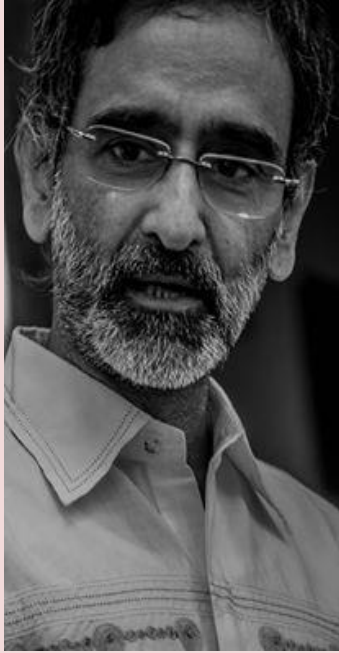
Our love is timeless and gender less

From the time we were born naked

Our disembodied love runs our lives
Till we reach the ultimate unison
When our heartbeats reach a crescendo
When love's violin strings turn taut
In an orgasmic exuberance
Our fingers pluck the strings excitedly
Till the strings prick our fingers
And our hearts explode in red



Sajida: She is from Thrissur and lives in UAE. A fan of Urdu shayari and Sufi mysticism, she writes poetry and lyrical prose in Malayalam. Her published works include a Western Australian travelogue in Malayalam "The Colourful Swans of Swan River", poems and short stories in various anthologies.



Kerala Varma: He hails from Chirakkal (Kannur), Kerala, is a former Deputy General Manager of State Bank of India and lives in Chennai with his wife Chitra. He is an amateur writer, who believes in “simple living, simple thinking”, welcoming enrichers of life like love, humour, long walk, the river, sea, mountain, books, music and Internet and avoiding complicaters of life like greed, anger, ambition, sentimentalism, sexism, god, rituals, religion and superstitions.



THE CLOSED DOOR

I wonder what's happening behind
The closed decorative door of your mind?

Yes, I can open that door only if you open
Your mind and let me inside.

I know, I will find the shattered shards
Of many broken dreams there.

But I promise to step lightly,
Broken dreams can fragment at the slightest touch.

I will not let the mad rain drench you,
Or, let the fiery sun scorch you and the ornate door to ash.

I am sure behind the beautiful carved door;

I will find lonely hours of cravings and passionate sighs.

Longings that turned into milky secretions,

Behind creaky hinges, stained pillows, and fungal growths.

I think you decided to close the door in the flush of
adulthood,

When you decided no doors must be left open.

It may be dark behind those closed doors,

It may suffocate a human and many hungry rodents and
pests.

No light may filter through the cracks and crevices,

So for clarity there is no hope of ingress.

I know, it must be chillingly cold or melting hot,

Depending upon the season.

But I see a wind weeping outside your door,
Please allow it in, so it can purify the insides.

I will not disturb anything, I will only tread on
The threshold to see what others have not seen.

Whether you are fed, clothed, sanitised,
In accordance to the custom and observance of the land.

Or, if you are being prepared to be sent,
To another closed door far away in a stranger's company.



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

India. His first success as a writer was Penguin's world-wide short story contest "India Smiles" in which his short story "Flirting in Short Messages" was selected for publication in an anthology.

His poem "Call of the Cuckoo" has been published by Poetry Rivals. He is working on his first novel and writing a book-length travelogue about his native state of Kerala.



I sing in the nightshade.
The bell strikes against me
and bringers leave off.
Delinquent, severed from
star to star, I find my complete
notional black.

One
Forlorn petal
smiles and wonders
of the others

dies off
oblivion in turns.



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



AUGUST

Today I saw the eyes of the crowd.

So many eyes...almond eyes, china
cup eyes, eyes half closed, crooked
eyes, eyes big shining silver
dollars, snake eyes. Eyes laughing,
marble eyes, bedroom eyes, eyes a-boggle.
Eyes chocolate brown, green apple eyes,
eyes smoke blue. Eyes on the ground,
staring-straight-ahead eyes, eyes
pinned on the sky.

I saw the eyes of the crowd
today for only a moment.

Then I don't know why,
I had to shut my eyes.



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



I LOVE YOU MY DAD!

(A poem dedicated to the man whom I love the most on this Earth)

For all the things that you do for me,
For all the values that you teach me,
For all the pains that you bear for me,
I love you my Dad!

For all the moments you celebrate for my smile,
For all the Anguish you take to keep me fit as fiddle,
For all the gifts you present to calm my rife,
I love you my Dad!

For all the days you spend earning for me,
For all the nights you are awake singing lullabies for me,

For all the times you sacrifice for me,
I love you my Dad!

For all the taunts you trigger to keep me healthy and slim,
For all the gentle attires you buy to keep me vim,
For all the habits you dialect to keep me gim,
I love you my Dad!

For all the love you pour on me,
For all the empowerment you fill in me,
For all the happiness you garland for me,
I love you my Dad!

For all the successes you pat on my back,
For all the memories you give like a gold sack,
For all the lessons you teach to keep me on track,
I love you my Dad!

For all the hours you are here for me,
For all the minutes you are in me,

For all the seconds you are in 'me'- soul!

I love you my Dad!



Jayant Singhal: A voracious reader and an enraptured author, Jayant Singhal, under the animated pseudonym of 'Saaransh'. He began nurturing the passion for expressing the enchanted aura of the world through his pen just a few months ago. Having a strong affinity for English language, he loves to feel the imbuing effect of it. He is currently writing a Facebook page, "Aroma - The Essence of Life". Dazzling through the twists and turns of this beautiful voyage, commonly known as 'Life', he is en route to the bewitching nature of happiness and peace.



BASTILLE DAY, JULY 14, 2016

Babble-On gave me the chaos i wanted to live in
i liked my toxic drink
mixed with vodka
and i walked out to join
in the screaming
of Babble-On tonight
mad dances till dawn
flags waving and shouts of joy
sounded like clarion calls for mutiny
each assent
some waves of dissent
hands waving in the air
seemed silhouettes of mutiny
some just bobbing
signs of sickening joy

senseless innocence i thought
drowning out the joy of senseless laughter
the sky the colour of fire
as the sun came too close
i'm aware the toxicity
coursing through my veins
from a high
that was turning to an all-time low
and I turned inward
not thinking...
just feeling the low
even as the curtains came down...
closing in..
the air was still
and marked with stench
i walked out once again
to turn to screams
the deafening silence
that marked the departure
of a crowd

to a skyline of a city
in chaos and despair.



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

<https://www.instamojo.com/Glory/>



REPORT FROM GIBRALTAR

Gib is the furthest southernmost point in Europe. We lie at only ten miles from the coast of North Africa. It is an area of semi-desert. Inland, summer temperatures rise to 40 degrees Centigrade but on the coast, as we are, they lie between 25 and 30 degrees all summer. It is much cooler than sultry Bombay or Chennai and not the dry aridity of New Delhi or the deserts of Rajasthan.

Much different it is from the green fields of England. A typical summer weather report for Great Britain is, "A bright start to the day with clouds from the West, scattered showers everywhere with bright periods." Rain, sleet, hail and snow are typical of winter months and heavy snow – though infrequent – lames the country due to the fact that there are no snow ploughs.

Denmark, where my passport hails from, is far worse. In November, the grey skies are almost close enough to touch and the wind is always very cold and ever-present. One year, the sea in Frederikshavn froze over as far as the eye could see, and that was spectacular. The Danes say the sun returns

at the end of January and summer days are exceedingly long – from 4 in the morning to 11.30 at night – so that summers can be quite hot and sometimes – not always, though – temperatures rise to 30. Like in Alaska.

My sci-fi book, "Overdrive to the Stars" is being published in India very soon by Li-Fi Publications, New Delhi, so look out for it on the book-stalls! Armed with my US Library of Congress Copyright, I have been sending off emails to US Literary Agents in the hope of a positive response there. I never knew that such ordinary people as Literary Agents could get such great write-ups but it is incredible what these people have not done.

I am still writing copy for my literary magazine, Fullosia Press, in New York. I have submitted an article on Spanish politics as the Spaniards have a hung Parliament due to them having elected four parties instead of the usual two. Otherwise, I have covered Terrorism in France and Belgium where around 300 people have been killed and also the Terror attack in Orlando, Florida. Brexit, the British exit from Europe, has also been covered and I expect to write another article on that and all the European migrants to GB and all the British migrants to Europe for the next edition, which will be on Sept 11th in commemoration of the bombing of the Twin Towers.

Some of my poetry, I am very pleased to say, has been published by our own moderator Glory Sasikala Franklin, and a special "Thanks" to you "bahan". Otherwise, Dr. Amitabh

Mitra has turned down a book of poems of mine for the South African market but nevertheless a special "Hello" to him. He is momentarily considering two of my poems for inclusion in an anthology that he has coming up. Very many thanks for allowing me to phone you sometimes, Amitabh, and my thanks also to Glory for being allowed to phone, too.

Otherwise, I could write over my daily life. There's the shopping, the washing, the cleaning of the house an innumerable other things, which fill my days, but I think I will leave those boring details to other action-packed reports from Gibraltar!



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



Merge and emerge

In the deep intense calm,

A mirror surfaces,

Lying flat on the ground,

But I cannot see any reflection in it.

I see a virtual reality of myself,

Without distortions, deflections and blur.

In the deep intense serene there is only a mute acceptance,

A resigned submission to the self beyond my mind's
extensions.

Blue is the color that rules the surface above and below.

I become a ripple free pond.

In a deep intense I'm an unbroken bubble,

I don't see any corners but just the horizon that comes a full
circle!

I am the circumference that has traveled not leaving behind fragments and bits of my journey.

In a deep intense tranquil the moment is gone and a lull transforms itself to the silence of the now.

I'm frozen within a circular frame for eternity, traveling to the centre and back.

The radius is my acceptance of the self,

In every segment I am the centre and the perfect circle spins a glorious revolution.

Now I become space beyond dimensions.

For I am a mere dot!

I hover and see myself mirrored in the real.

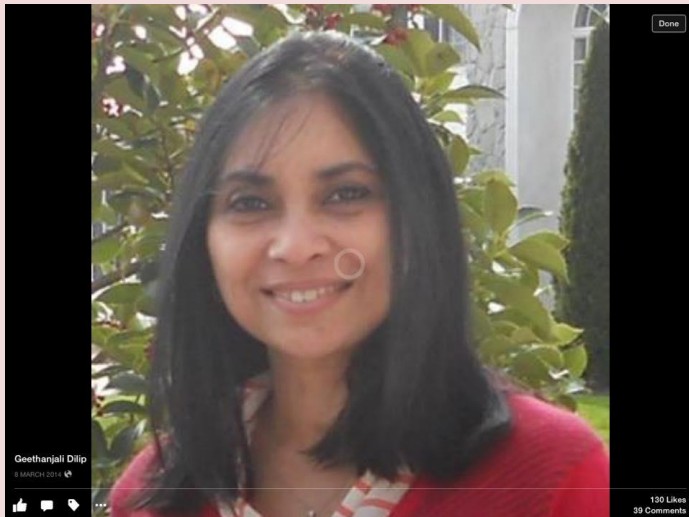
I am the earth and the sky.

The line of divide my consciousness of projected truth.

Truth is the merge neither virtual nor real.

I see myself as the diameter in a balance of equal halves.

I merge and I emerge!



Geethanjali Dilip: A Chennaiite at heart, she is a graduate from Ethiraj College and a postgraduate in French from Bangalore University. She is passionate about poetry, travel, teaching travel, gardening, interior decoration, and enjoying a deep spiritual connection with everything. She's been teaching French, freelance, in Salem for the past 34 years in schools and colleges, and at her centre, Zone Francophone, in Salem. Her family includes her husband, Dilip Narsimhan, daughter, Manasa, son-in-law, Ajay, granddaughter, Aarushi, and her parents.



WIDE EYES

Hands held and fears felt

Miles walked and secrets docked

Some games for two are played by one

Some don't play and still have won

Velvet hearts tear and break

Worlds arise and move and shake

Stories that this life denies

Won't you let me read them through your wide eyes?



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



(Phillip Wilson is a remarkable pen artist, originally from Newark in Ohio, USA. In 2002, he found himself homeless with no support base and forced to make ends meet; he had to resort to drastic measures in order to survive. This included seeking shelter and food in vacant and abandoned, derelict properties; which consequently led to a period of imprisonment. With a self-taught style, he began to create unique art pieces with 15c commissary Bic pens. He was pleased with the intricate details he was able to include and also how he processed his thoughts and emotions in his 6 by 7 ft cell during the 100 average plus hours it took to create each unique piece. By doing this, he could express his emotions and utilise the time he had available to forge his skill. He hopes to inspire others to realise their own hidden potential and transform themselves into who they were meant to be. He has persevered through the most challenging set of circumstances against all odds and each piece of art he creates is testimony to his deep insight for survival and rebirth. His work can be viewed and purchased at www.pensational.com)

LIBERTATEM AEQUITAS

The Scimatar – My journey here regrettably consequential,
Implosion of my parched perforated soul- Scatterlings of
society's rejects surround me, forced into a new fraternity –
Radiating dissident energy most foul – My lingering lament
expanding reverberating into a suffocating self-pity growl.

Cul-De-Sac – My blurred vision blinds my new artistic mission – Lack of creative output fuels my fiery frustration, Drowning here in this black manhole punctured new nation – Multi-coloured impulses rush along my impressionist veins, Urging my being to arm itself with bic swords gleaming.

Ne Renoncez Jamais – Indigo halo heinously haunting my civil failure, incinerating my self-inflicted amnesia – Pulsating ruby lava explosions sporadically calm my evolving artistic seizure – Confined space constricting my polkadot head space –

This human testing trap empowers me – I will never give up.

Backstreets of My Mind – This choking chrysalis hurtling in circular motion grinding abyss – Forces my hand to create original ink genius – Providing a lively sermon to doomed sinners

imprisoned by puppet jurors – These nowhere streets cleverly

connect on a receptive willing canvas – How to observe this?

Redemption – Lights off brains off lift off – Repetative pace
brainwashing this human race – Let us make haste down
liberty avenue to protest our overdue case and demand
creative

revenue – Artistic hue fuelling my destined emergence out of
this self-pity stew – Who knew I would inevitably heal and
renew?

Epilogue – I came here to breathe, exhaling my human failing
–

Passion spinning inviting expected derision from a rotten
system

causing its own cataclysmic fission – This evolving revolving
matrix

yields its own mauve magic tricks – Rejected neglected I
fervently

cling to my inherent rebirth – In the name of freedom and
justice...



Don Beukes: He is a retired teacher of English and Geography now writing poetry. Originally from Cape Town, South Africa, where he was born, raised and educated in the last two decades of Apartheid, he taught in both South Africa and the UK for twenty years and hold EU citizenship. As a person of 'mixed race' heritage, his poetry reflects the racial and cultural battles growing up in a racially divided society and indeed as a global citizen and hopes to adjust our moral compass. He also writes about the socio-political, life and death, womanhood, nature and religion.



DEATH OF A NOWHERE MAN

The day when I died and put to rest beside serene lake,
A bunch of rhododendron walked around my grave,
And whispered, "Lie in peace fighter, your fights are all over."
The mountains came over to guard me,
Against the rough wind that blew from the sea,
And a squirrel silently placed a bouquet of olive flower.
I was left abandoned, to die beside the jungle,
This was one job no one wanted to bungle,
As they couldn't decide to which side I belonged.
Was I on the right upholding their dogmas bright,
Or was I on the left fighting for their plight?
But I did not have to lie down alone for long,
On came an army of Knights to play their swansong.

With them came a troupe of nomad priests,
Carrying the lanterns of eternal light,
To give me a death, dignified and right.
They said they didn't belong anywhere,
Always on the road hither and thither,
Living different lives, in different spheres,
In myriad hues and rainbow of colours,
Often in joy but sometimes with dolour.
The Knights carried a message from Yahweh,
"Blessed you are, my son, you lived in the right way,"
Those were the last words that I heard,
Before the priests started putting the peace balm,
And the Knights began to chant the death psalm.



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



A PLACE I CALL HOME

There was something in the air,

That was different and afresh.

With dreams, aspirations and hope in my eye,

I packed my bags and flee that far.

Now that I look back,

I see not a city, but a place I call home.

Walking down the streets like it's my own,

Every corner, every turn, has a story to tell,

People are the same no matter where one goes.

Buses, MRTs and taxis didn't scare me anymore

It's become a place I call my home.

People turned into friends,

Friends turned into family.

This city gave me memories, I'd treasure for a lifetime,

It is a place I call my home.



Dikshita Nahar: Sugar, spice and everything nice. That's not who I am. I'm made of caffeine, books and movies. A writer in making. And yes, you could call me Dikshita.



A DOCTOR'S PRAYER

To be ethical in an all too often unethical world,

To be honest in a world

that is often dishonest,

To be humane and civil in a world

that is too often inhuman and uncivilised,

To be non-racist in a world

that sometimes prides itself on being legally racist,

To adhere to the highest moral standards in a world

that sometimes condones immorality,

To always behave with humility and kindness in a world

full of arrogance, egotism and duplicity,

To always act in the best interests of our patients

and not in the best interests of our overdrafts.

To never dishonour our colleagues and our noble profession,
To try to live in a way that focuses on leaving behind happy
memories.

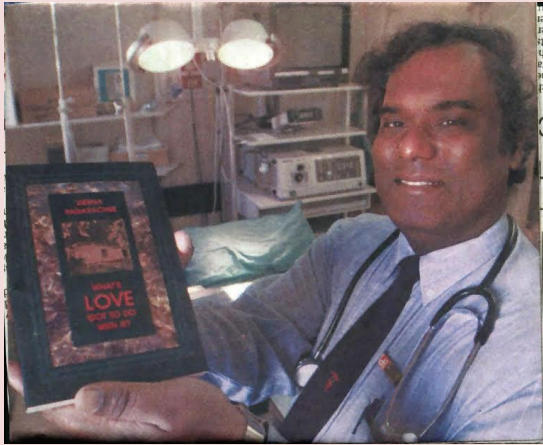
That is the daily challenge faced by every healer and every
human being.

May we always behave in a manner that does not bring
opprobrium

on ourselves, our families, our colleagues, our fellow human
beings and our country.

May we never dishonour those who suffered so much to
garner for us and our descendants

our hard-won and blood-soaked freedom from legally
imposed racism and tyranny.



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



ALUMNI #61

Our cups never held
mountains

& they never held
fields,

but they were enough
distraction to keep

the fields intact
& our bones miles from

any base camp.

Now, without cups

& the dark liquor

we would put in them,

we, all of us, the whole

alumni family

are seen daily,

elbow-deep in

a progress

that is re-making

the Ohio landscape.

We are dirty,

progressive people

& we've been hated

ever since we gave
up our best lean.



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



THE EYES OF THE BEHOLDER

You are my Aishwarya Rai

not the Miss world stunning beauty queen

not the goddess of the silver screen

not the green eyes beauty that make men dream

you are the goddess of my dreams

I love you woman

not because you are beautiful,

you are beautiful because I love you

you are the scent of the rose

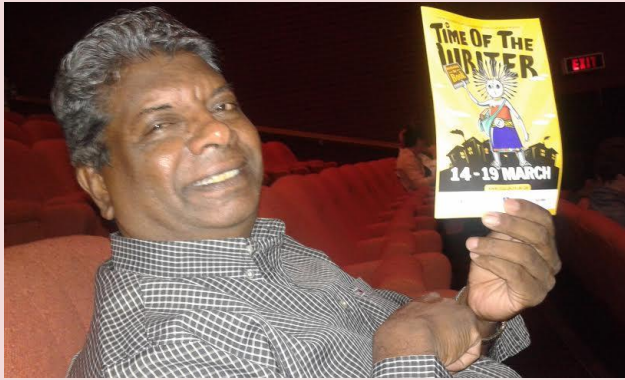
whose fragrance the wind cannot steal

like some immortal energy you nurture

and make our love glow

you are the goddess the queen

sitting on the throne of my dreams



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



CRICKETS IN HEAD

I'm a NeoPagan

From the Church of All Worlds

Dedicated to the celebration of Life.

I'm set on a land in the long run

Looking for crickets.

The brooms come higher than I expected

And the hole throws up and has to open its songs.

I have ears to hear them

And eyes to see a deep chair In a green dress.

I find myself between

Sabbat or Pagan festival

Smiling its ok. Look:

Here' coming Oimelc, Ostara, Beltane

Ltha, Lughnasad, Mabon, Samhain and Yule

Wanting to touch my face.

Probably they rattling

Brushing me out of its night.

And there are others:

Cernunnos and Diana saying it to me:

“Those who have ears to hear

Let them hear

The crickets’ cri cri in head”

Ok ok as I say.

Me and We are programated holler, squeaky

Dreaming the green mats

Of a hit confusión of body and mind

While crickets have a narrow squeak.

Do You know, do You see:

In the new days the celebration is

As in the old days: Crimes, rapes, wars.

The Solstice and Equinox

Walk on bloody air.

From the Zenit to the Nadir

Wo/men pass their artificial time

Living by one's wits.

Earth relates the Universe as we perceive it:

The Solstices and Equinoxes

Are tired of our criminal freak

And Dane Rudyard's

"The Astrology of Personality" is broken

Founding fur in our dreams

In our stew.

Word, our Word now

Is tired and rap

Robert Heinlein's "Stranger in a Strange Land".

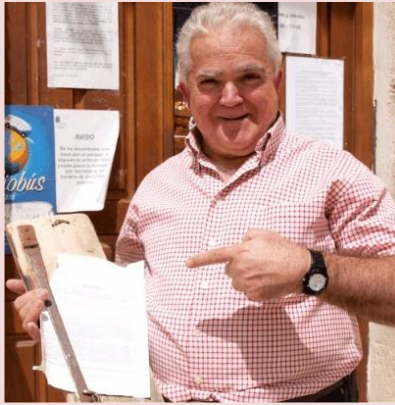
Crickets sing Neo-Paganism

In its black wings

As in the Cauldron of Cerridwen and in the Holy Grail

The day of equal dark and equal light

Beginning anew.



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



BY THE POND

In the weed well-ribboned pond,
Where frogs croak their symphony,
A reed like a magic wand,
Conducts as the breeze blows free.
No heron bothers the fish,
As the day gets out of bed,
And I am given my wish,
Of hearing no other tread.
Away from office and town,
Away from each swarming street,
Away from old boss's frown,
Is revealed a soothing beat.



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



I AM A WOMAN

(A poem for woman's month)

I am a woman,

A freedom seeker.

Trying to please everyone
around me won't help me
reach my dreams.

I can't be everything

to everyone. So,

I allow the men in my life
to play their roles as men.

As God intended.

I am a woman.

I treat everyone the same.

Because I know we're all
equal. Breaking men down
is not on my list of chores.

I am a woman
who reaches out and
lends a helping hand.
I find my joy in others.

I'm a woman who
delights in prayer
and talking about miracles.

A woman that
respects the men in my life.
Someone has to protect me right?



Chestlyn Draghoender: Chestlyn is from Cape Town, South Africa. He is a young creative writer, poet and activist who loves books, food and music. His writing has appeared in numerous online journals, including Poetry Potion and The Commonline Journal. His new eBook, "Just Poetry: Collection of Poems", is available on Amazon.

incomplete fly over crashes
it is a act of god and not fraud
mind you

we are a country that found
Zero
the first word
this is where 33 crore gods live

we are good at building fences
good at bulldozing
caste is a debit card
a liability card
still we say we are democratic
secular
right below our ;legs blood flows and
we call it ketchup.
we kill for pleasure and profit
and talk of gods who don't exist



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



SARAH

Holding up the face I look at her
Still, limpid, mobile
Maggie in the line
caterpillar like the wiggle
damaging the bedclothes
crib and spoon together
maman the old chum lips
hello to you too
do you at all have the palette
maroon and rum red her wail



DELIGHT FOODS

Do you know the best thing about being Bengali?
Why, it's the food silly
the fish-whether bhapa ilish or malai prawn

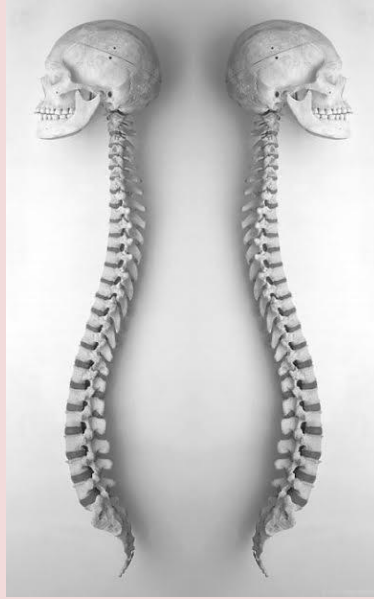
is such mouthwatering treat for the person
whether he's Bong or she's from Delhi!

Ok, for the non-Bong the bones could be a bother
then try the warm jhaal moori in the rainy weather
Or suck into the succulence of the kosha mutton
savour the aroma of the curry chicken
and work up a sweat later!

And who can forget the mishti, the Bengali sweet
the sandesh, the doi or the goja we serve to the priest
whether it's street food, hey the rolls are something to kill for
or the tasty way Bongs tadka their dal
no wonder ladies, we are roly poly kind of perfect!



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



A GLITCH IN ADULTERY

Desire, with no strings attached

Thistledown of free will

A cliché

I observed you

In the bone-white gleam of the bed lamp

With the knives of kisses, love bites

If I could dissect your thoughts!

Your fingers stroked my cheek

A peremptory gesture:

All words stop at that; all poetry silenced

A cerebral anticipation for further procedures

The force of routine

My body arched

It was more pleasure than I could endure

Invariably

We smoked after sex

Letting our brains recuperate

From the muddlement of pleasure

An empty ritual

We shared the same cigarette

You wanted it that way

And would count the butts jostling in a soup bowl

To know how many times we did it

When the bowl could not take more ashes

More burnt out ends

I emptied it despite your protests

Tossing the contents out of the window

Perhaps you wanted a semblance of something

The soup bowl crammed with spent butts was your metaphor
For our desperate togetherness

That day, if we felt loved

It was a mere glitch in the mechanics of togetherness

It should pass as we recover, breathe and part

That day, when we kissed at your doorstep

I knew I would not return again

At the end

I offered myself, a carcass trophy

To mount on the wall of your conquests,

Yet another veritable souvenir of your masculinity

At the end

Though one among many

I may be the choicest adornment



Bini B.S: She is currently a post-doctoral fellow at Balvant Parekh Centre for General Semantics and Other Human Sciences, Baroda, Gujarat. Her research articles, poems and translations have appeared in national and international Journals and anthologies including *Poetry Chain*, *Kritya*, *Samyukta*, *ETC: A Review of General Semantics*, *JWS: A Journal of Women's Studies*, *DUJES*, *South Asian Ensemble*, *Kavyabharati* , *Korzybski And...* (published by the Institute of General Semantics), *The Virtual Transformation of the Public Sphere* (Routledge), and *General Semantics: A Critical Companion*. She is the editor of *Anekaant: A Journal of Polysemic Thought* and the Managing Editor of *JCT (Journal of Contemporary Thought)*. Her poems were part of an anthology of corporeal poems titled *A Strange Place Other than Earlobes: Five Poets, Seventy Voices* published by Sampark, Calcutta in 2014.



ROMANCING THE RAIN

Mellifluous drops fall as sheets -

Music from the skies in a steady beat.

An opera of sprinkles sprayed as water -

The liquid of love and the melody of laughter.

Wet patterns tickle window panes -

Silky prints on rueful days.

Romance reminisced in the memory of a smile -

When an umbrella was spread for her shivered cry.

A stream of water flows and floats -

An arousal of a heart kindled by the sensation of prose.

In letters of love for words to pour -

Dreams of passion and the thirst of ardour.

Clothes hugged to skin in a dripping embrace -

While a clammy touch strokes a damp face.

Comfort drenched in a dance -

Skipping in puddles with clasped hands.

Pithy is the shower that evaporates -

Wistful longing from her bosom escapes.

To the towel that her hair dries,

For the arid reality of a resigned sigh.



Bilkis Moola: She is an Educator who works as a Head of Department in Languages at a school in Vukuzakhe, a township located in Volksrust, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa. Her first published anthology, “Wounds and Wings: A Lyrical Salve Through Metaphor” was received throughout South Africa and launched her poetic persona. It evolved as an introspective quest for recovery from her personal narrative of an abusive relationship. She presently divides

her time between professional responsibilities and postgraduate studies in Education. Her pen continues to sketch the flotsam in her mind from the passion in her heart on shreds of paper that bloom into poems.



LIFE IS FAIR

I drag my carcass around the streets of Kathmandu
With ten rupees in my hand
And tattered dreams in my heart

My shirt is torn
Just like my pride
My happiness fell down
From a hole in my pocket

A woman on the balcony stares at my muddy jeans
And makes a sour face
Her plump son laughs at my filthy beard
Others on the street
Just paste a mild smile of pity on their face

I drag my carcass around the streets of Kathmandu
With ten rupees in my hand
And tattered dreams in my heart

Some call me a vagabond
Some call me homeless
Drifter, beggar, wanderer
I have earned many names

Each day I cry a little
Each day I die a little

Each moment I am fighting a battle
With my destiny and my god

I drag my carcass around the streets of Kathmandu
With ten rupees in my hand
And tattered dreams in my heart

I have not seen food for days

I don't remember how a shower feels like
I can't recall the definition of home
And I am trying to find the meaning of family

Dear god in heaven
Perhaps I deserve all this suffering
Perhaps this is my fate
But I have committed no sins
I was born into poverty
Without my mama and papa
An illiterate jobless man
Wronged, oppressed, mistreated
Discriminated, despised, victimised
By god's children
Perhaps I deserve all this suffering
Perhaps this is my fate

I drag my carcass around the streets of Kathmandu
With ten rupees in my hand
And tattered dreams in my heart



Barun Bajracharya: is the author of a short story book *Sins of Love* and contributing author of short story anthologies: *You, Me and Zindagi 2*, *The Zest of Inklings*, *Once upon a Time*, *Blank Space* and *Rudraksha*. Barun is a Communications Officer at an INGO and an Editor at PEN Point (literary journal). Furthermore, he is the youngest member of PEN International Nepal Chapter and Traditional Poetry Writers Association of the World. In October, 2013 he travelled to S. Korea to represent Nepal in the general conference of Traditional Poetry Writers Association of the World, attended by 9 countries, where he earned appreciation for his poems. He can be contacted at barunbajracharya@gmail.com.



SHE

Seven circles and my freedom
evaporated faster than the samosas
that Raju devoured in an eye's twinkling.

Thus, were we tied in holy communion,
tied in knots conjured in a sailor's nightmare,
with pledges to live in harmony,
for the good part of my existence
already cut short by a life time.

Saraswati was not her name.

Nor did she boast of my twelve years of
enlightenment that Shyam Saran rewarded
with two matkas full of gold,
and two cows that were in better substance
than the outcome of his circles.

The wedding card didn't call her Lakshmi either,
Either side of my kurta will bear witness.

Durga was a distinct possibility,
The spear that ran through Mahishashur,
quite reminiscent of the kitchen knife
in her hand, butchering the potatoes,
that often consumed my two rupees at Bacchan Singh's,
(leaving the rats to her “experiments with truth”,
The truth, too ghastly for me to digest),
But assured her of more company,
And that denied me of my salvation.

The other gods escape my imagination.
I did consider Kali though, but
But I forget who she was accused of murdering.

Seven circles, across the seven seas
and I had navigated the circumference of my life,
content in a wife whose name I thought I'd recall
before the origin of my day's humanity,
When, Deeda, thankfully, broke my slumber!



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



HEARTFELT HAIKU

1

No complaint that like Abhimanyu I am trapped by Destiny
Surrounded by swords
But God, have you forgotten to give me the amour?

2.

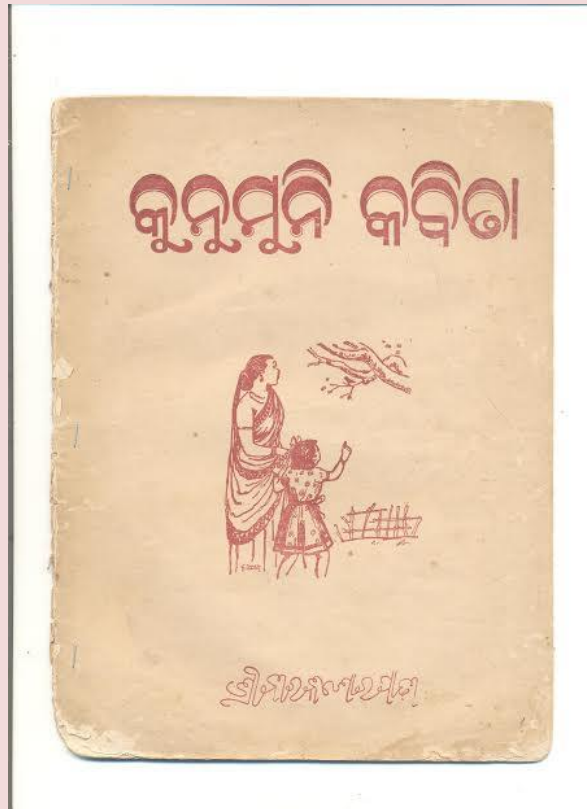
Life is a lemon, the more squeeze, the greater is the juice.
So crush me more
The piercer the pain is, the mellower Life becomes.

3.

Come and sense the soreness with me
Pain is the luxury of life
If not pained by pain, how can you pen the panorama of life?



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



(cover of the original Odia book by Bira Kishore Parhi)

LITTLE CHILD'S QUEST

(Original Odia title-'Tiki Manara Prashna' from the anthology Kunumuni Kabita by Bira Kishore Parhi, 1962. Translated by Asim Ranjan Parhi)

In our school studies a little child
Torn shirt, dirty his pant to hide
Born of poor father from poor village
Single pair he comes in all the days
Neither his dresses change in festive game
Nor he gets money to clean the same
How can he buy a book, pen and paper, ink
Where can he read without a light or wick

He doesn't know to read the stack
Coming daily to school and sitting back
One day the officer from the town
Came and asked questions up and down
Looking at the boy asked his plight
Answered he in eyes with tears bright
Understood the Sahib his eyes moist
Holding him in lap said "my son lost"
I shall bring you book and dress
You'll read well and become fresh
Since then he came tidy and shine
Changed the boy as a gem fine.



Asim Ranjan Parhi: He was Professor & Head, Dept. of English and Dean of Languages at Rajiv Gandhi University (Central), Arunachal Pradesh before joining the Dept of English, Utkal University. Specialising on ELT, he has a book, Indian English Through Newspapers from Concept, New

Delhi, and many research papers published in journals. He has been an Associate at the Indian institute of Advanced Study (IIAS, Shimla) to pursue his Postdoctoral research. Apart from academics, he writes poetry in Odia and English, simultaneously nourishing a deep interest in Odia and Hindi musical compositions.



FLAGS OF DISSENT

Lieutenant Mika Singh swelled with pride as he shook the hands of Captain Rajeev Prakash.

“Congratulations, Captain,” he said. “You have done it. Did Iqbal put up a tough fight?”

“Yes Sir. It took eight bullets for him to fall.”

“The Centre is happy. That terrorist’s death sends a strong message.”

Elsewhere, a little boy wipes his father’s tears and asks him, “Why are you crying, Papa?”

“My hero—our freedom fighter—Iqbal has been shot dead by the army. He is no more. God! Now, who will fight for us?”



Archana Sarat: She is an author of fiction and poetry since the last ten years. Her works are published in various popular newspapers and magazines like The Times of India, The Economic Times, The SEBI and Corporate Laws Journal, The CA Newsletter, Me Magazine, the Science Reporter, the Chicken Soup for the Soul series, the Vengeance Anthology, among others. She has completed her Comprehensive Creative Writing Course from the Writer's Bureau, UK. Her debut novel is scheduled to be published later this year.



TO ALL THE HARDWORKING GIRLS I KNOW

All work and no fun,

Makes Jill a dull girl

Talking heads,

Strong Caffeine,

How many meetings

Have you seen ?

When the moonlights

Kissing the beach,

Will you be “Not responding “

Or will you be “out of reach“?



FLASH MEMORY

My pathetic face recognition will ensure
I will doubtless forget her pretty face
But the way the light shone off her nose
As she lifted her face to talk to another
And bounced happily off her lip gloss
With the sweet smell of lavender
....Will be with me till my end of days



Anurag Mathur: He is a trained bean counter, works for a financial services group and has spent almost 2 decades serving that industry. Whatever little time that has been

spared from work or sleep or reflective meditation has – with quite a few well-meaning prods and nudges from friends – been devoted to occasionally tapping to the Muse’s dictats from time to time.



ADMIRATION

Sitting, in class, beside you,
with a book of love poems, I
feel young in an old way.

Finding lines, pauses, whole stanzas
in the nape of your neck –
I learn *the poetic* can be different
from poetry.

‘What are you doing, you idiot!’, the
spindly teacher glowers, from
above her high rostrum.

The book of love poems
is confiscated.
A weight washes off my back.

I am *free* now – to look at you,
without having to search for shapes
in poetry books,
of a wonder

I can’t name.



Ankush Banerjee: He is a mental health professional based in Kochi, Kerala. An insatiable interest in art history, travel, poetry, literature and writing consumes his days and nights. But when he isn't doing either, he can be found with his fishing gear near the shore, amassing a motley catch for himself and his cats. His first collection of poetry, *As Essence of Eternity* (Sahitya Akademi, Delhi) is scheduled to be published later this year. He blogs at: cogitoerigosum.wordpress.com



THE REALISTIC ONE

(parody of "don't quit poem": <http://bit.ly/2aGfbxU>)

When things go wrong as they never will not,
When you are wounded in battles hopelessly fought,
When the stakes are rough and the fires are nigh
And you want to scream but you silently die...
It is at that moment when you are hardest hit;
Be scared...it can get worse than this!

Life is queer with its twists and turns,
It will fuck you up and leave some burns;
And many a fellow has a doubt,
That fate be playing unfair about.
But don't smile yet when you win some too,
That's life hanging carrots in front of you...

Often the goal is nearer than,
The sea will admit to a drowning man;
It will never be simple and true,
A valiant fight shall be lonely too,
And you learn too late when the night comes down,
All your struggle wasn't worth a single crown.

We live at last for your own little selves,
"At least I tried," is the only help,
But yet you stick to the old old tale
That you really count, the world's really fair
So fuck the fight when things look grim,
You lose, you win, it's not your whim.



Anish Vyavahare: Writer, brand builder, quizzer, public speaker, event organiser, psychology, advertising and writing teacher - essentially if there is a job to be done, I do it. Or get you people for it. I have a long standing affair with eating, cooking and Wikipedia. I like to travel if there is someone from the land to show me around. So if you want to invite me to where you are, I am welcome. :). For the serious stuff, I teach UG and PG Mass Media students. I help businesses do smart marketing where they build a strong brand, make money and do some really cool stuff to engage with their audience. I have been running a Poetry open mic in Thane, called Poetry Tuesday, for the last 5 years (almost!). I teach basic creative writing to beginners. And I have recently launched a multi-lingual Youtube channel called The Poetry Affair of India where you are welcome to feature with your poetry! You can check us out here - bit.ly/1LnZdUB



BURNT

You can lift me from the door
And place me upon the bed
You can watch me as if I am a fairy
With an intention that is bad

Don't throw that cruel smile
That makes my body burn red
I wish i have not knocked the door
And sensing love should have fled

But the cinder has risen and
I can no more wait for you to drop

Undress me to calm down and
Wish once you start you won't stop

Connect me to the world of pleasure
It is my first; let me feel as if newly born
Stay a little longer in me to feel good
And I will knock the door next morn



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



SIMPLE DESIRES

A simple life
To be happy
To live comfortably.

Someone who will
Stand with me
In the face of adversity,
Who will share in my joys
Who will listen to my frustrations
Who will hold my hand
Who will hold me close
When the storms come
Who will be my guide
In the oceanic tides.

And the only one
Who loves me unconditionally
Who doesn't judge me

Who sees the best in me
Who guides and protects me
Who never let's go
Of my hand
Who is my truth
Who is my future
Who has been steadfast
No matter what comes my way

Never will I leave you
Never will I forsake you
Even when death knocks
I will be there for you.

This promise I carry
In the depths of my soul

When the final hour
Is at hand
For this earthly life to end
I know beyond a
Shadow of doubt
My soul will rise
To the heavens above.

To celebrate a life
Eternal

Where peace reigns
Pain is no more
And a joyous celebration
Of life forever.



Angela Chetty: She is a HR Manager, an avid poet and lyricist who lives in Durban, South Africa. Angela imbibes her work with a deep passion and belief that words can touch hearts and change lives. The depths of her soulful prose, cuts across different genres, talking to matters of the heart. Poetry is music for my soul; like oxygen, the breath of my life. In 2013, an Anthology of Poetry entitled, Heartfelt moments - A Treasure Trove was published. www.heartfeltmomentspoetry.com In 2015, her poem “Miss Me” was selected as Editor’s choice for the Contemporary Poetry Digest and has been chosen as the best poems of 2015 for a Valentine’s Special Publication. Angela has been selected as an Elite Poet for 2016. Her poems have also been chosen as semi-finalist for International Poetry Contests.



pic of lorca statue

https://c2.staticflickr.com/8/7145/6545803689_80673a3eb2_b.jpg

REVOLUTION #20

Federico Garcia Lorca - "As I have not worried to be born, I do not worry to die."

Revolution looked into the mirror

It cracked

Revolution looked into the pool

It reflected a hill and a fool

Reflecting on the reflections

Splintered, of non-belonging

Revolution's reflection turned un-cool:

Where there is no understanding the people perish

Where there is no revolution There is no love to cherish

One has to overthrow the rule

Revolution picked up the pieces of his reflection

Pieced them back together with a tool

Used by the common people

Lacquer

Now children get frightened of his image

It looms like a bogey while the truth is it is not what
revolution looks like, at all

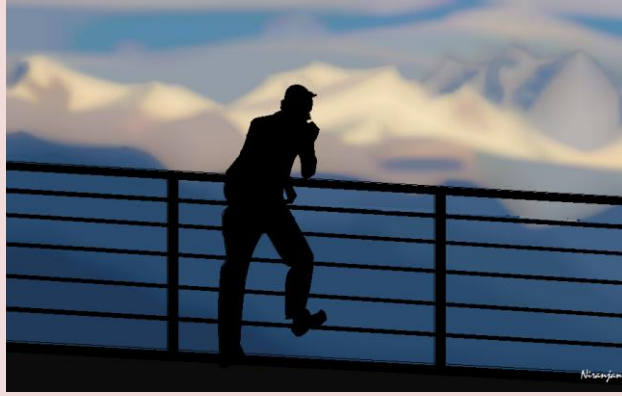
Revolution looks like the we want to be, who gets up in the
ring every time after they cut him down

Yes, after each and every fall revolution leans on the wall,
smoking, and still standing tall.



Ampat Koshy: He teaches in a college as Assistant Professor in Jazan, Saudi Arabia. He is the author of books like Art of Poetry, Wrihteings: In Media Res, Figs, Allusions to Simplicity (poetry), and co-author of Wake Up India: Essays for Our Times with Dr Bina Biswas and co-editor of The Significant Anthology with Reena Prasad and Michele Baron

etc. He also runs The Significant League and has instituted the Reuel International Prize for Literature. He is a poet and critic and fiction writer of renown in India and abroad plus a Pushcart Prize Poetry Nominee of 2012. His Ph.D was on Samuel Beckett and his thesis was later published as Samuel Beckett's English Poetry: Transcending the Roots of Resistance in Language. He has also co-edited Inklings and Umbilical Chords.



LOST AND FOUND!!

The misty mountains up above,
Is all I see from my window,
Sitting, watching the moments go by,
Feeling my heart sinking low and low,

How blurred and vague the world seems to be?

I think its fake, or is it a reality?
How much more would I have to wait,
To end up this crisis of my identity?

Stranger in a strange land, lost in time,
An age old traveller walking the line,
Fighting a losing battle but still dreams to win,

How can I conquer the world when my own thoughts are not
mine?

'Hope', is it a good thing? I wonder sometimes,
May be it is the root of all sorrows? Or maybe I belong to a
different creed?

But they say-losing all hope is freedom,
And yet again I wait to be freed..

How much one has to lose to win in the end?
To get what you want, how much to pay the price?
Is a gamble of feelings and thoughts and will
Not enough to be called a sacrifice?

Suddenly a wave rushes my head,
Reminding the time that I've lost,
Drowning and sinking in the deep valley of thoughts,
Of gloomy future, of frozen past..

Can someone who can't even command his thoughts

Be able to command his destiny?
Then why to dream such impossible dreams,
When your thoughts, your mind is your worst enemy..

Tired of all, so feeble and weak,
Watching the nearing end of this odyssey,
I wish I could find a lush green field,
Having in its heart an epitaph that say-
"Rest in peace, here he lay",

Uncover the grass and remove the ground,
Remove the earth where he is to be found,
Shocked and surprised to see his face,
And exclaim in joy "I've found myself, I've found
myself.....finally"!!



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



KOLKATA

those were Calcutta days
red was the colour of love
as it is still that of the communist
government there
and the colour of trams that
just stops in a muse anywhere
like an afternoon wind
turning its hues in our presence
we always looked left
and walked
and kissed
and kissed

and dreamt of the proletariat we would

paint red

one day



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



LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT

One, two, three, four

Turn

One two three four

Kick

Move your hands while you shake your legs

Smile

Twist your torso

Don't be stiff

Loosen your hips

And now your arms

Dance like nobody is watching

She said

Dumping the last straw
On my weak camel's back
My daughter was
Trying to teach me to dance.
My feet
Bumped
Stumbled
Buckled
And twisted
Into each other...
My arms, askew
My fingers - disobedient
Dancing grace
Was never
A virtue
I possessed
I gave up.
She poked
And pushed
You've got to do this,

She said, and smiled
You can, she said,
Come, I'll show you.
Eyes brimming with grateful tears
I thought
The teacher
Has become
The taught.



Ameeta Agnihotri: First of all, I love to write. Then I love to travel, and write about my travels, including about the food I eat on my blog. Being a Food Critic, I have four food books to my name: The Times Food and Nightlife Guide. My restaurant reviews come out every Friday in the Chennai Times. Yes,

life's good. My book is done. It was done five years ago. Am still trying to muster the courage to edit it.

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

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

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



Art Work by Anshu

"OOH! MAAYA COME AGAIN"

(An excerpt from "The Basic Instinct")

And God created his better half,
Two eyes full of patience to feed every calf;
A pair of wise ears to bear all riffsraffs,
The most beautiful lips when she laughs.

Threads of black silk woven together,
'Maaya' has a skin of lactic fur;
Her touch feels beyond bliss forever,
There she walks voluptuously like a dancer.

Tender were feet which strolled on stones,
A little girl still points at the moon and moans;
Each grey has latent wrinkles to be shown,
Karma is a bitch she already sworn.

Ooh! Maaya come again,
Lets compose virgin duets in Ethereal remains;
After all the body is a new robe to sustain,
Time still waits for you in that old school lane.



Aakash Sagar Chouhan: He is a Rourkela-based, Odia nomad; restlessly scribbling since 2003. An undergraduate, indeed a college drop-out; but now he is a contributing Author, a blogger, a prose writer, a Poet, an article contributor, Group's Admin of many Pages and Communities. He has been a proud contributor to a few anthologies by International and Indian Poets; books named as "Unleash the undead, Wordplay: A Collection of Diverse Poems From around the World, Feelings International, A Phase Unknown – II, Kamala

Das – Yes I am a Woman and Purple Hues. Apart from pouring his thoughts and himself on virgin papers, during his leisure time, Aakash is an observer, a dreamer, a philosopher. He likes to strum his Guitar and sing. He also likes to play and brush colors on canvases. Nevertheless, he reads a lot to dive deep into the words of Authors and mystical quotes said by long beard sages, Zen monks and Sufi saints of yesteryears.



ciao! 😊