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# VerbalART

A Global Journal Devoted to  
**POETS AND POETRY**

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**Volume - 5, Issue - 2**

**Oct - Dec 2021**

Chief Editor:

**Dr VIVEKANAND JHA**

Associate Editor:

**Dr RAJNISH MISHRA**

Review Editor:

**Dr CHANDRA SHEKHAR DUBEY**

Assistant Editor:

**Prof. SHASHANK NADKARNI**



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Assistant Editor

**Prof. Shashank Nadkarni**



**AUTHORS P R E S S**

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Q-2A Hauz Khas Enclave, New Delhi-110 016

E-mail: [authorspressgroup@gmail.com](mailto:authorspressgroup@gmail.com)

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**VERBALART**

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## POETRY

ALAN GARVEY

### Grandfather

My grandfather worked his life as a blacksmith,  
hard of hand though I never met the fellow.  
My hands are soft and gentle, smooth with  
Fairy Liquid, though at small kids I bellow.

My grandfather wrought red-hot iron,  
horseshoes, jailer's gates, right-angled forms.  
I'm more in touch with MacNeice and Byron,  
duck-down quilts and silken lingerie forlorn.

My grandfather spent his sweat in a blazing forge,  
hammered out a cross to crown an obelisk.  
I pin my wife to a queen-size bed, a purge  
of semen crowns a milk-white ass, onanistic.

My grandfather lived a world apart but he  
bequeathed a love of history and literature  
through books, skipping a generation to me,  
a forge's dark yet open door my golden aperture.

## ALAN GARVEY

### Valentine

I had dreams of indulging my cravings,  
immersed in archipelagos of lace,  
face deep in seas of pvc and satin, saving  
myself for you, and later. This is the place

where dreams become muscle and curve made real,  
where we close the door and all outside  
stops, is silent, and through moves nocturnal  
all is still. World shrinks to the size of our bed.

But here am I, the only tail I'm chasing  
is that of a dust bunny just out of reach  
where I'm buried under our bed, pacing  
my breaths in and out of the mess – Love, teach

me the life-lesson I most need to learn,  
wishes should not be granted but earned.

## ALAN GARVEY

### Clean

I wash my hands until I am sure they are clean.  
I scrub with soap and nail, gliding my fingers  
through make-believe bars of each other,  
rinsing away all they used to contain.

I wish I could say your scent still haunts  
my fingertips for they linger before my nose  
like fronds waving back and forth in a breeze  
and I'm still trying to capture your scent  
but all's lost and what remains is memory  
or glimpse of Xanadu, or more distant lands.

Letting go, they say, is one of life's greatest risks  
but one stands to reap the greatest of gains.  
I open my hands, they fall into shapes of you,  
a breath escapes these lips, bearing your name.

## GANGCHEEL

### Voices

a fallen leaf in a desert  
once asked me why I write,  
how I pick my pen up,  
on nights where it's so much  
easier to just let the cold  
freeze my hands?  
I said that I write to  
keep the voices in my head,  
away from the one in my heart,  
I write because I have to,  
and if I didn't,  
all the words would  
burst out of me,  
I write because I have no other choice,  
no other pillar to rely on,  
no shoulder to rest my head,  
as I cry my eyes out,  
when the pain rips apart my chest.  
just my torn notebook,  
and a broken pen.  
it's rather simple,  
but hard to explain,  
I write because if I didn't,  
my midnight pangs of hate,  
would take my life,  
there's so many words,

so many thoughts, in my brain  
that I have to write,  
because I know no other way,  
because the voices would make me go  
insane.

## GANGCHEEL

### **Eyes so beautiful, they make you want to cry**

I feel like a small gypsy boy every time I look into their eyes,  
lost in the ripples of the sunset, and the dark green foliage,  
like a traveller searching for water in a seemingly endless desert.  
eyes brighter than a summer day's sun,  
full of mystery that entices me into a deep slumber.  
I hope I'm awakened by the touch of those soft lips on mine,  
I hope I wake up from my trance, I hope I regain  
unconsciousness,  
and stare right into those dark beautiful eyes looking right at me.  
eyes so beautiful, they make you want to cry,  
the warmth of the winter sun on your back,  
and a few warm kisses to make your heart fly.  
as if the deep dark trenches of the treacherous pacific ocean,  
sailors lose their way amidst those beautiful brown eyes,  
I paddle my boat, and I sail right into,  
the terrifying beauty of you.  
beauty that is not supposed to exist in mere mortal realms,  
beauty that illuminates rather than extinguishing,  
beauty that makes you cry in wonder,  
beauty that harbours arrogant revolutions.  
honey drops melting into the distant sunset,  
over a lonely, deserted seashore,  
with just the two of us,  
and an orange sun against a purple sky.

## **ANDREW SCOTT**

### **The Whispering Wind**

Life can feel that there is no direction.  
Pushing, pulling in a confusing state.  
Find my spirit there constantly,  
hitting a crossroads in the path.  
Looking all around to take the next steps.

During these conflicted times  
must remember to close my eyes,  
try to clear the internal voices  
that are racing in and out of my body.

The air around me  
will point to the safest choice  
where there will be hardship  
however, that is the path  
that my soul is to take.

All that is needed  
is to let all of me  
listen to the whispering wind.



## **ANDREW SCOTT**

### **A Simpler Time**

The heart yearns for the simpler time.  
An era where a smile between two  
while walking, holding hands was love.

Words and thoughts have complicated  
so much in each other's minds.  
Over thinking actions by each other.  
When during a simpler time.  
What you did is what you meant.

Relationships are constantly questioned.  
Mistrust seems to be the main feeling  
due to people of the past with bad intentions.  
There was a time when motives were transparent.  
Those were the days of simpler times  
when a hand was given for help.

The world is stressed and broken.  
Air is full of anger and pretend  
there was a time when  
this did not exist or thought of.  
A smile was natural and not forced.  
That was a simpler time,  
A time we all dream of.

## **ARNO BOHLMMEIJER**

### **All ready for next time**

No panic buying,  
only this antidote?

If worlds end or close,  
we ask heaven or earth:

“Will you let us receive –  
per week or year – a poem,  
song, play and novel, please?”

To note each word thoughtfully,  
to arrange and share them, all fair.

Could a line slip through a barred pane  
of the Care Home, where someone cannot  
remember the day or frequent visitor’s name?

On the street birds and people are singing intently  
for those unable to leave or enter, or find any answers.

## **ARNO BOHLMMEIJER**

### **Too trusting or in crazy faith**

You don't have to tell me,  
only the minute it matters.

I know: life is meant to be,  
for whatever vital reasons,  
as good things were on time.

Even "too late" will need to be.

Why then immensely frightened?  
You'll let me know how it all ends,  
or when something begins, and such.

So clearly there is no need for this fear?  
You see: within long nothing will be wrong.

## **AVDHESH JHA**

### **That is You**

That which is liked by the mind is called care,  
But the one who resides in the care, that is you;  
That what enlightens the mind is called feeling,  
But the one who adds to the feeling, that is only you.

That which passes unknowingly is called time,  
But the one who adds to the time, that is you;  
That what is found accidentally is called fortune,  
But the one who meets as fortune, that is only you.

That which adds to the flowers is called fragrance,  
But the one who adds to the fragrance, that is you;  
That what ensures our existence is called life,  
But the one adds to the life, that is only you.

That which keeps living and loving is called heart,  
But the one who adds to my heart, that is you;  
That what beats softly and gently is called heartbeat,  
But the one who remains the beat of my heart, that is only you.

## **AVDHESH JHA**

### **She**

Always loved by my eyes,  
She is that precious natural gift;  
That what seduces my mind,  
She is that fragrance;  
That what rules my heart,  
She is that lovely dream;  
The one who lets me live;  
She is my one such love.

## **BISHNUPADA RAY**

### **After Evil**

after evil, no forgiveness  
only an angst cramps the heart  
in the large hadron collider  
of my poetic imagination  
I run my goddamn particle  
for a one-time flash of creativity  
but some ghost particle is released  
and the experiment goes wrong  
in the lonely tunnel I sit alone  
no pure light emanates  
I cannot shake off the dread  
of not writing anything and perish  
I see some mushroom glow  
will-o-wisp of my verse land  
glowing at the end of the tunnel  
and instigating my restless soul  
to continue to search for the flash  
of random and shadowy creativity.

to form presence-absence  
a third-world syndrome  
as things go up the ladder  
by an evolutionary pull  
the poems become a root  
to remain underground.

## **BISHNUPADA RAY**

### **Laziness**

while leaving me  
she probably thought  
I would be a destitute  
and cry like a baby  
to erase the dash  
between two words  
and turn into a hyphen  
all the while I saw  
the flicker of insanity  
in the fateful game  
of presence-absence  
lurking in the gap  
between two worlds  
of the warm bed  
on a chilly night  
that after every poem  
I struggled to woo  
I lapsed into laziness.

## **BRUCE MEYER**

### **Hay Ride**

At the end of the day,  
we haul bushels of apples  
to the pungent cider shed,

some tumbling to rot  
where the trail jostles,  
and others kicked along

the rutted path by boys  
pretending to play soccer.  
In the high afternoon,

when sunlight hides  
in the tall bare fingers  
that reach for the sun,

the ripe ones dangle  
making tempted foxes  
of us as we fail

to grasp the best of them.  
An old horse, blinkered,  
plods the path blindly

the way an ancient king  
could not bear beholding  
what fortune gave and broke,



sway-backed in flies  
and tired of hauling,  
stops, stands stock-still,

and longs to share  
a shred of patient wisdom  
from tracing a futile path,

going nowhere despite  
a desire to lead and not follow,  
the freedom of barn swallows.

Life borrows from tragedy.  
The wheels run downhill,  
pushing the old horse forward.

At the end of the day,  
all journeys circle back  
and we toss our cores away.

## **BRUCE MEYER**

### **A Villanelle on Dying**

Some say the topic is morbid  
if not off-limits and they are  
not completely wrong. We avoid

the truth of the inevitable, candid  
as it may seem, always there,  
and yes the topic is morbid,

the elephant in the mausoleum that did  
extraordinarily well. The affair,  
neither completely wrong nor devoid

of truth: who wouldn't want to be rid  
of it,? Who doesn't want to care –  
some say the topic is morbid –

maybe someone will blow the lid  
off the truth to that nowhere  
some are wrong, completely devoid.

of life. You read the script and outdid  
yourself with such dramatic flair,  
some insist the topic is morbid.  
Let them. They want me annoyed.

## **BRUCE MEYER**

### **Birds Look at the World as if They Don't Fly**

Because they never look at you directly  
they remind me of someone in love,  
the drive that sends a sparrow at a window,

the intensity that lives by guesswork  
and opens its wing and never ceases  
to amaze the startled, passionate soul

with its ability to see what isn't there.  
Isn't this the secret behind all devotion,  
that power to perceive the imperceptible,

the gift that knows it is more than a gift,  
the painful self-assurance that love  
and birds serve the same purpose.

They rise. They fly. They know the air  
Is waiting for them to learn how the world  
devours itself and refuses to be held down.

And both sit in the palm of the hand  
when they are being fed with crumbs  
because love asks for nothing more

the fragments of what others leave behind,  
full of grace and gracefulness if a loaf  
leaves secrets of how it lives on air.

Come live with me and greet the dawn.  
Be my sunrise as I nest within your arms.  
Teach the blue of a clear and cloudless sky.

## DANIEL THOMAS MORAN

### Determination

I am determined.  
Today will not  
be the day when  
I lose my mind.  
Despite  
flames and floods.  
Winds whipping waves.  
Brazen brutes  
and invented truths.  
Bells no longer chiming  
and the hours despising.

I need to find  
a spider I can watch  
for two hours,  
A breeze that comes  
and then goes.  
I need some reminder,  
my place there beside her,  
A horizon that's wider,  
Over a river that knows.

This world is  
a miserable place when  
viewed from a distance.  
Fear and foreboding  
prevail by insistence.

Life challenged by ghosts.  
I am determined.  
Today will not  
be the day when  
I lose my mind.  
I cannot speak  
for tomorrow.

## **DANIEL THOMAS MORAN**

### **Ode on Introversion**

Philosophers of antiquity  
have propounded down through the ages.

As have wisemen, prophets and oracles,  
Bodhisattvas, sybils and sages.

Our inscrutable humanity,  
has perplexed them and astounded.

Head Shrinkers, soothsayers and gurus,  
all confessed they were confounded.

There is one true truth to be embraced,  
If we can clear life's junk and see things.

Human beings are best enjoined,  
to avoid other human beings.

**DIANALEE VELIE****The Toy Shop**

Listen to me, all of you,  
we only have the hours  
between midnight and 4 AM  
to come alive and I am tired  
of all this strife. Life is too short.

I am Chatty Cathy, your new president,  
having taken over when Old King Cole  
resigned due to old age and a touch  
of dementia. These are my new mandates:

From now on the wooden soldiers  
will have to take down their red-block  
blockade and stop marching into mayhem  
against the GI Joes and their blue, Lego  
barricade. This ridiculous fighting over  
shelf space must stop. As the purple  
peacemakers say, we are all part  
of this same childish, petulant, toy world.

The Madame Alexander dolls  
have formed a coalition with the Barbies  
and we intend to withhold any contact  
with the male toys. It worked  
for Aristophanes in his play, Lysistrata,  
and it will be enforced here until  
all this warring stops and peace  
once again settles into the Toy Shop  
when the *door is locked up tight*  
*and everything is quiet for the night.*



## **DIANA LEE VELIE**

### **Dante's Wife**

My name is Gemma di Manetto Donati.  
I am Dante's wife, secured to him  
at age nine, my turn now to be super chatty.

He only had eyes that would never dim  
for Beatrice who barely gave him a glance,  
for her alone his hair he kept trim.

He lived his life in a total trance  
writing about her purity and goodness  
while never giving me a chance

to appear in his poems as the enchantress.  
No, I was his domestic slave and whore  
scrubbing, washing and cleaning up his mess.

While delicate Beatrice did nary a chore,  
her name is known both far and wide.  
So please hear mine and I do implore,

spread my identity on every hillside  
and share this canto, this tale of mine,  
behind Beatrice's skirts, I shall no longer hide.

## **DJ TYRER**

### **A Soul Perplexed**

A soul perplexed by sin, sets out seeking answers  
Traveling secret paths, through haunts so very strange  
And trackless wilderness, and far beyond they range  
But gurus are liars, incurious chancers

A soul perplexed by sin, feels cruelly tormented  
Bound by chains of ennui, weighted down by their grief  
Unable to escape, lacking any relief  
Trapped by darkening thoughts, becoming demented

A soul perplexed by sin, deeper into night falls  
Sinks into dark despair, a deep slough of despond  
Seeks to exile itself, cast itself far beyond  
Refusing to repent, ignores the angels' calls

## **DJ TYRER**

### **Wanderers**

Trackless sands shifting  
Horizon appears timeless  
Lines drawn on a map  
Wanderers told not to cross  
History slams to a halt

## **DRAGICA OHASHI**

### **Morning Dawn**

Dew colored green fields  
The clear sky of my homeland  
They were once multicolored rainbow from the wings of angels  
Memories as a silent river  
In the verse you start recording songs  
Sounding from afar  
Like a lullaby for mermaids and nymphs  
Who seem to be playing chess under the statue of the winner  
Heroes without names as pillars of centuries  
In the foundations of genes they never disappear.

## **DRAGICA OHASHI**

### **I Am Possible**

I can do a lot more  
If you open your eyes wide  
You see my wings flying  
I am an equal child  
I play fair and I don't cheat  
We are faster than some unmotivated birds  
Our messages are the voice of peace  
We wish everyone joy and you accept us with empathy  
A disabled artist can draw manga  
Didn't Homer invent epic works without sight?  
Do not exclude us from society and government  
Disabled people can give their opinion now  
I am on a planet where we all have a chance and our place!

**FRANK JOUSSEN**

**Love/More**

LOVE

My children my wife my neighbour  
my everyone who hadn't left before  
left me like you did you had to  
but dad since you died I've picked  
a fight I have lost my temper I've  
flown into a rage time and again  
there's no apology really that's not  
what I'm saying all I'm saying is  
that since you left I've only wanted

MORE

## **GARY BECK**

### **Art is Nigh**

A beautiful Monet  
sold at auction one night  
for 101 million dollars,  
a lot of money  
for a pile of hay.  
The next night  
a stainless steel rabbit sculpture  
sold for 91 million dollars,  
a lot of money  
for a dumb bunny.  
These collectibles  
obviously heralding  
the continuing confusion  
of material humanism.

**GERARD SARNAT****Anicca**

“Everything changes and nothing lasts forever.”  
The Buddha

Born 11 days after the end of World War II,  
I’m a Jew whose parents raised me to hate Germany  
(maybe you too?), not to buy their nifty cars  
or travel there except when sent for one very painful  
tour during high school to get imprinted on  
Dachau horrors so that we would never ever forget.

However, gradually Gesundheit Sarnatzsky  
relented, most notably allowing our firstborn child  
that cute silver Volkswagen bug she craved.  
Fast forward to Deutschland 6 years ago, learning’d  
made amends by on treating Israel as favored  
nation: Berlin became sabras’\* destination of choice.

Which shift in attitude was cemented strolling  
its streets with a high school classmate ex-pat, sitting  
down to eat sausages, drink beers, even smoke  
weed openly on park benches next to seeming similar  
pleasant Volk; since then admittedly shockingly  
hard ass Gerard Sarnat’s developed veritable soft spot.

Now watching Russia beginning to cluster fuck  
Ukraine – having been brought up to abhor citizens  
facilitated Nazis killing million+ my brethren –



somehow, I've morphed to admire heroic resistance  
leading to altering fam's original humanitarian  
donations only for fellow Jews to all people suffering.

Today daughter volunteers at NGO side-by-side Ukrainian-  
Americans.

\* a Jewish person born in Israel

## GERARD SARNAT

### Wisdom of Crowds

After an increasingly horrific week  
or so now, it seems that Putin's underlings  
won't speak truth to power.

Soured on watching strategic Ukrainian  
cities go up in flames, I turn to distracting  
myself in our rickety kitchen.

Hordes of ants have taken over all surfaces  
presumably looking for both food and water  
during another parched winter.

Just for fun, you squeeze drops of sanitizer  
out of big bottle leftover from the misguided  
1<sup>st</sup> COVID wave CDC advice.

Each glob does disorient handful of pests  
for a short time 'til some way they figure how  
to redirect large expedition forces.

Trial 'n error, never discouraged/deterred  
top of 2PM PST hour as humans tune into CNN  
social insects overwhelm us.

Unlike Kherson's citizenry, Gerry surrenders.

## HARRIS COVERLEY

### Vampire

I am the great  
    And the terrible  
I am the light before the dawn  
And the dark before the night  
I am the weight on your chest  
And the lightness in your head  
I am the weakness in your legs  
And the torpor of your arms  
I am the drip of the kitchen tap  
And the cold feeling on your shoulder  
I am the crinkle of bedclothes  
And the squeak of the floorboard  
I am the sigh of your lover  
And the groan of your mother  
I am the rattle of the car engine  
And the fuzz of the bathroom bulb

I am Dread  
And I am Doom

Feel me  
And try to ignore me

But you will return to my altar  
And feed in compulsion

You are the slave of your drives  
And I am the God of your Fear

Worship  
And suffer...

## **HARRIS COVERLEY**

### **Heal**

Heal  
Like the touch of your thumb  
On the back of my hand

Heel  
Like what I rammed into sands  
To stop myself from slipping

Heal  
Like that one look you gave  
From across a packed room

Heel  
To the dogs of love  
Biting at my arse

**JAMES G. PIATT**

## **The Immobility of Silence and Death**

Uncaring people stood abandoned  
For their absence of humanity,  
Their minds containing  
Unrelenting woes  
Climbing through  
Dark cobwebbed misgivings.

The clanging of rusting time  
Echoing between gaps in sanity  
Awakened their hopelessness, and  
Like memories lost in an  
Unrestrained universe,  
Particles of time misused  
Became trapped inside their minds

An abandoned cemetery held all the  
Unkept promises of the uncaring people,  
And as demons laughed and leered  
Their memories of reality  
Vanished into the deafening din of fear  
that echoed behind a rusting iron door  
In the abandoned mausoleum.

Clanging odors of rotted flowers  
filled the minds of the uncaring  
people, and... then as they  
Floated in their illusions of life, they  
Found themselves in the immobility  
Of silence, and then death.

**JAMES G. PIATT**

## **The Change in the Wintry Season**

The first light of the stars reflect memories as they flicker in the sky like Chinese lanterns. The whiteness of the land seen outside the window of our library as we sit near the warmth of flames in the hearth reading poems, awakens long past images. In the midst of winter's outgoing hours of coldness and sodden earth, our thoughts are suspended between icy poetic metaphors and warm iambs that walk between the day's heat that melts the ice on eaves, and the windless cold that reflects sad faces in the ice in ditches of frozen moisture. The cords of winter, which bound our spirits to the dark hours of the wintry season, are loosening, and amidst the softening of the land, we find ourselves smelling the aroma of dark loam, and change. We observe tiny rose buds blooming, tree leaves budding, and smell the earthy fragrances of wet soil floating in the air. All of these visions and scents are the echoes of new life causing our minds to awaken to spring, where the presence of multitude of colors appear, and where our eyes and mouths see and taste the sweet breath of the aromatic scents of a spring garden laden with vegetables and flowers: Even if this tender blossoming of beauty, scent and color was the end of our journey, it would suffice.

**JAMES MULHERN****The Nest**

I imagine you looking at the robins' nest  
in the Maple outside your bedroom window.  
You can't see the blue eggs, but you watch  
the male bring his partner dry grass and twigs.  
He offers dirt, too, dipped in a birdbath  
or garnered from a swampy spot at the yard's edge.  
The female cements the nest,  
protecting her brood of four or five.

Sometimes you stare at your body cast,  
a remnant of your spinal surgery,  
but most hours you watch the tree,  
the birds, the clouds, and the sky.  
The days pass slowly, but at the two-week mark,  
you see tips of yellow mouths,  
like tulips or other flowers  
you used to smell in the lawn beyond.

You think of the day your hardened mold  
cracks open and you walk outside.  
How you will look upward, smiling widely,  
scanning the blue and clouds and sun,  
hoping to glimpse a fledgling,  
or any free bird, flying far across the sky.  
Where it travels is not your concern.  
Your joy is that it does.



## JAMES MULHERN

### Simply Silly

You sit in the cafeteria corner,  
oblivious to the old teacher watching you.  
Too busy avoiding eye contact with peers,  
fingertips white from pressing so hard  
against the open book you're not reading.

As if this ritual would prevent the cool kids  
from looking and laughing at your expense.  
You want to be invisible because you feel  
unlikeable and unimportant.  
You think, *Why would anyone talk to me?*

Someday, when you're truly reading  
and the book is full of poetry,  
I hope you chance upon this page  
to discover that a gray-haired teacher  
cared about you many years ago.

Know that you were never insignificant,  
the cool kids were simply silly,  
and you mattered much to him.

**JAMES MULHERN****Turbulence**

The twenty-something blonde offered  
to lift my suitcase to the overhead compartment.  
The thin boy with glasses said he'd push my cart  
of groceries if I wanted help to the car.  
The high school girl behind the glass  
passed a senior ticket without my asking.  
My principal inquired, "When will you be retiring?"  
My neighbor (close in years) has cancer.  
My doctor said men my age have difficulty peeing.

I've taught stories about rites of passage my whole career  
—a first kiss, the first date, marriage, and children.  
When the young woman looked at my gray hair  
and offered to lift my luggage,  
I thought of these *other* rites,  
and the Last Rites, too.

As the plane rose through the clouds, I felt turbulence.  
Outside the rain-pattered window was solid blackness.  
I saw an old man. I knew what was behind me.  
I knew what lay ahead.

How odd that an act of kindness made me think so much.  
When we landed, the suitcase seemed heavier.  
My exit was clear.

## **JEVIN LEE ALBUQUERQUE**

### **Coyotes**

We can't help what we are  
Only travel on one's path  
Or deviate into the dark

Where your spirit dehydrates  
Wilts in the heat  
Or follow pain  
Into the fire

Thirst

Each step a blessing, into the void  
With authority  
Avoid authority

Walk light, pack light  
Listen to the moon

**JEVIN LEE ALBUQUERQUE**

**The Knot**

I will marry an Iguana

Patterned, perfect for change

bed-sandy-eyes

Rock balcony                  sip

prickly-pear-cactus

Scatter, insects  
in our splendor

**JOHN GREY**

**Old Bridge**

The old bridge faint behind mist,  
I'm discovering its framework,  
a little here, a little there,  
as the light burns through,  
a bronze shimmer,  
a rusty interlude,  
and the far bank like that  
burning bush from the Bible.

Early morning,  
the day works against  
the lingering effects of liquid,  
that cold steam  
rising from the river,  
that the new sun slowly starves.

I love this feel of the world,  
and myself, both sorting ourselves out,  
little by little,  
assuming the clarity we swear by,  
the world in its breadth,  
my mind like an old bridge,  
its fog burning off,  
a thought on one side  
now safely crossing to the other.

## JOHN GREY

### You're Leaving Home

You're on your way  
and no one knows when you'll be back.

Your mother slips money in your pocket,  
and advice into your ear.

Your father wishes he were going with you,  
to keep you safe.

But you've reached an age  
where family is more circumstance than destiny.

You want to be on your own,  
doing what they do not know you do.

You still admit to loving them.  
But you're willing to love from afar.

So off you go, growing with the road ahead  
but dissolving in your wake.

Your mother tends to her garden.  
Your father watches the news.

But nothing growing can replace you.  
And the news is too impersonal by half.

**JOHN GREY**

**Washing Dishes**

It came to me  
when I was rinsing  
a plate in the sink,

that my lover had left me  
for another guy

and that no amount  
of self-recrimination  
could change a damn thing

She was hot for someone else  
and I was hardly  
attentive, caring guy of the year.

I'd seen him sniffing around her  
like the proverbial dog in heat.  
I was more of that other cliched dog  
the one in the manger.  
But why should I share  
when I can just easily lose it all?

I went for the heavy duty scourer  
and scrubbed the next plate  
like I was rubbing the skin off somebody.

And when I ran water down  
its chastened surface,  
you've never seen trash  
so eager to slip down the plug hole.

It came to me  
that washing dishes  
was the very thing  
that she used to do.

A guy not only steals my woman  
he replaces her with me.



**KEN ANDERSON****Guilt and Innocence**

Nix-child, you have joined the tree wraiths  
in the dam's dark reservoir. Our pale beam calls your name, you  
who are lost  
in the deep forest  
far  
from the dim voice. Like hope, weeds slough  
from the black mud. Branches macerate. You mime, guilty only  
of a game  
of hide and seek, both pure and corrupting there.  
Tonight, you will wash your hands  
in the lake, and Death will turn them over twice. We count  
to ten  
in hours, lower a diver, sound the soundless nightmare  
of your fairy tale.

**KEN ANDERSON****The Nurse**

Sunlight licks the windowpane,  
like a flame, but cannot thaw us, numb  
with private cold— the plastic-covered couches glazed  
with ice, locked  
in the floor's frozen lake.

Like the last leaves, paint flecks  
from the brittle, branch-like cracks  
in the wall— the stains, or laden clouds, lead gray.

A patient, curled  
in a corner, sleeps and wheezes, dreaming the womb.

One grunts and stuffs her livid mouth  
with fingers, breasts, and bones.

One thinks she is invisible, folded  
into the luminous epiphany  
of her meds.

A pair undress and dress each other, dolls.

One stands  
at attention, her face oscillating  
like a fan. She plays the part  
of goshawk. I, the nurse.

My heart, like glasses, hones a winter scene.

## LEIGH HARRISON

### The Art of Poetry

(after Elizabeth Bishop)

The art of poetry is hard to learn  
unless there's music singing in your heart,  
unless you're willing to use words that burn,

and never give a damn what writer's earn,  
and never cease to write after you start  
The art of poetry is hard to learn

but not if you remember: Let words churn,  
excite verbs into nouns, tear their limbs apart!  
Unless you're willing to use words that burn,

that weave against the night a sweet nocturne,  
that brave the flood, upset the apple-cart,  
the art of poetry is hard to learn.

Let words be stars! Beneath your feet, discern  
where language carves a path no one can chart.  
Unless you're willing to use words that burn

a man is but a man, a fern – a fern –  
(unless they're fiddleheads, and he's Decartes...)  
The art of poetry is hard to learn  
unless you're willing to use words that burn.

## LEIGH HARRISON

### What We Come to Write

The poem struggles to escape the confines  
of its cocoon. Memory lurks, a hovering angel,  
over its shoulder, rose-lipped like dawn.

Spiderweb dreams disperse,  
wisps evanescent as dandelion seeds,  
drifting. Beneath a meadowlark's song  
a soft prayer floats. The poem grasps  
at the buoyant prayer, flourishing  
its fragile night wings, listening  
to forest melodies, water music.  
Under tissue-thin dun mothwings,  
the poem gathers dew.

Leaping a series of turtle shells,  
the poem wonders: What does it mean  
to be a poem – or a man, a woman,  
a hummingbird, the wind, a leaf?  
Do salt tears dream of waterfalls?  
Do fireflies confess to distant stars?  
Neither answers nor closure comes...

The poem remains incomplete;  
the pen in our determined hands  
falls away, like sand in an hourglass,

waterdrops that spill into the sea.  
Each poem becomes a Buddhist sutra  
whispered in the blue-black night,  
a pebble on an endless shingle,  
freckles on a child's upturned face.

Nothing breaks the haunting silence  
but our measured breathing, in and out.  
The poem has vanished like sails  
skimming over evanescent horizons.

Written on stones, on fugitive wind and on water,  
reflected in moonlight in each other's eyes,  
our lives are the poems we have come to write.

**M SHAMSUR RABB KHAN****Definitions**

O Gloria, I do agree, heart and soul  
You are fair, only fair, not foul;  
If woman is submission, man power;  
The more men press, the more she would shower;  
If age is wisdom, beauty is vision;  
That misleads wisdom in search of reason  
If black is inferior, white is sublime  
One has to suffer and die in prime  
If patriotism a belief, treachery sin  
Many more patriots are treacherous to win  
If culture is power, people bigot  
Hegemony goes to fire gun shot  
If identity is mark, others terror  
You see the mirror and make an error  
If religion is a way, all are right  
That refutes others wrong to be upright

## **M SHAMSUR RABB KHAN**

### **Reincarnation**

When your razor-edged sword sat  
upon my neck, your fiery eyes hurled fire  
into my brave soul, the body shaking  
out of fright, shouting men in circle  
many of them dancing with fury  
spitting hatred, their violent culture  
made me know the meaning of terror  
through holy slogans, strange madness  
abuses, smacks, taunts, and kicks  
but then, you sliced my ribs twice  
from where blood, not Eve, gushed forth  
my pain was your pleasure, the fanatic mind  
the crazy laughter, I slumped to the knees  
like the gladiator, your head held high  
like coward jackals, in crowd you kill  
in silence you rob, in court you twist  
in government you deceive, among people  
you lie, at home you plan, on road you shout  
I weep you whistle, I cry you laugh  
and then, the last stab through the abdomen  
and the blackness before the eyes, stars moving  
planets shake to connect with me, and I turn  
full of blood, with dying eyes, I announce:  
“in the next birth I will be an incarnation of Ram  
and kill all of you, the sons of Ravana”; and they  
laugh like devils, the children of demons.

## MELANIE FLORES

### Opal Dusk

Sun sets in the west  
birdsong is a background lullaby.  
Pinks weave with blues  
that mingle with amber.  
The opal dusk summons  
creatures of the night –  
the dark side of life.

Golden owl eyes  
illuminate the darkness.  
Masked scavengers  
hunt and cavort.  
The fragrance of a  
pristine alabaster moonflower  
tantalizes a foraging moth.

Dreams flourish  
as the ghosts of the day fade.  
Silence grows  
and breathing slows.  
Shadowy streets hum  
with hidden life in the opal dusk,  
until the moon owns the sky.



## MELANIE FLORES

### Hope

Trapped in a chasm  
between yesterday and tomorrow --  
past transgressions  
meander and menace.  
Fears of a finite future  
torment and tease.  
The fragile thread of hope  
quivers,  
verges on breaking.  
Yet like a taut spider's web  
it persists,  
glistening with morning dew  
basking in the warm sun.

**MICHAEL KESHIGIAN****Narration**

The other men,  
in their ostentatious outfits,  
attempted to entice her  
with idle bravado, drinks or a dance.  
He watched as they huddled around her,  
competing for her attention  
with intense glances  
which said much more than hello.  
He bid his time in a corner,  
where smoke filled air stained his eyes.  
Far from the embattled contestants.  
he wrote on a pad,  
describing her voice and beauty,  
thoughts he knew  
he would one day read to her  
when they were perfected  
and courage allowed him  
to rouse her from the customary  
into the extraordinary ardor of his verse.  
He would be the different one,  
the flushed eccentric  
with common clothes  
and a black notebook,  
thick with words  
she had never heard before.

He would be the charming misfit  
who, in a warm summer breeze,  
on the edge of night,  
will capture her affection with a narrative  
it took so many nights to contrive.

**MICHAEL KESHIGIAN****The Need for Words**

A pumpkin sits in the garden,  
the wind and rain  
etch its surface,  
but it has little to say  
as is the habit of the rock in the creek  
over which water constantly pours,  
all day, every day.  
But wind and water  
incite the roar of syllables  
from the mind of man,  
syllables which formulate  
words that mollify  
the currents of water and air  
and respond to the infinite moments  
of incomprehension,  
helping him manage  
complexities with sweet expressions  
and observations  
that placate his brain  
so the flow from the dam  
is measured, mindful  
and maintained in the oratories,  
books and cyber representations  
his syntax constructs  
to slowly, carefully, and selectively  
define his existence.

## **MICHAEL LEE JOHNSON**

### **Poetry Man**

I'm the poetry man, understand?  
Dance, dance, dance to the crystals of night,  
healing crystals detox nightmares, night tremors.  
Death still comes in the shadow of grief,  
hides beneath this blanket of time,  
in the heat, in the cold.  
Hold my hand on this journey  
you won't be the first, but  
you may be the last.  
You and I so many avenues,  
ventures & turns, so many years together  
one bad incident, violence, unexpected,  
one punch, all lights dim out.

**MICHAEL LEE JOHNSON****Keyboard**

Keyboard dancing, poet-writer,  
old bold, ribbons are worn out,  
type keys bent out of shape.  
40 wpm, high school,  
Smith Corona 220 electric ultimately  
gave out, carrying case, lost key.  
No typewriter repairman anymore.  
It is this media, new age apps,  
for internet dreams, forged nightmares,  
nothing can go wrong, right?  
Cagey, I prefer my Covid-19 shots  
completed one at a time.  
Unfinished poems can wait,  
hang start-up like Jesus  
ragged on that wooden cross,  
revise a few lines at a time;  
near the end, complete to finish.  
I will touch my way out of this life;  
as Elton John says,  
“like a candle in the wind.”  
I will be at my keyboard late at night  
that moment I pass, my fingertips stop.

## **MINI BABU**

### **At What Place Women Are Yet to Sigh**

My fascinations,  
at all times were  
for the newly built homes,  
with no records  
of women's lives  
lived in,  
at what place,  
the rains contain  
no tinge of salt  
and at what place  
women are yet to sigh.

The used houses  
that hold drawn out records  
of travels inwards  
have at no time  
occupied me  
for the reason that  
I know the lives  
lived in,  
in the unredeemed recesses  
of these homes  
and the sighs and  
whimpers  
those take along  
with vapours  
to salt the clouds.

## **MINI BABU**

### **Growing Old**

As I shut the door  
for my workplace,  
frivolous questions  
keep popping up,  
did I brush my teeth?  
I run my tongue over my teeth,  
soon after,  
with little delay  
look down,  
have I put on my pants?

Are these the means  
to growing old?  
You consider afterthoughts?  
You demand freedom from doubts?

These days,  
I make a chart of  
things to be done,  
in the pretense of  
designing a day.



## **NATALIA FERNÁNDEZ DÍAZ-CABAL**

### **Afghan Women**

A bunch of women  
walking to nowhere  
giving birth to the right word  
to the true logos

The exact sense of the things

Eyes behind bars.  
Bars that are masks.  
Masks that are faces.  
Faces that are traces.  
Traces that are silence.  
Silence that means nowhere.

Pain is a short word  
For a long journey  
A light word  
For a heavy stone in the heart.

**NATALIA FERNÁNDEZ DÍAZ-CABAL**

**Put A Leash**

Put a leash and a muzzle on your rage.  
Take a walk with it through the park.  
Let it frolic with other rages  
bigger or smaller,  
let it excrete the remains of its poison.  
It may return docile back home,  
no leash and no muzzle,  
licking strangers' hands.

**NELS HANSON****Night Sail**

In my well-known poems I often  
placed a lonely boat, failed counselor  
sailing into exile, unmoving stars  
above single canvas, moonlit ripples  
lines of remembered verse. Tonight  
I steer that skiff, sailing alone, new  
river past scattered lights along dim  
shore. The great heron I captured  
once shrieks like a loon to paralyze  
the heart. In my only basket there  
really is only one last bag of wine.  
A cloud blocks my constellation,  
the sign my hero's fate dwindles.  
I should scatter torn pages from  
my book, finally reaching the sea  
the paper armada. If I knew a song  
like the heron's I'd cry it. A star  
falls with its white trail another  
writes in the poem I live in now.

**NIELS HAV**

**Collective Agreements**

In the mornings I prefer to write.  
In the afternoons I prefer to read interesting books  
or go for a walk.  
In the evenings I am with my family.  
Night shifts are not for me.  
Find someone else.

Translated by P.K. Brask & Patrick Friesen

**NIELS HAV**

**Forcefully**

Joys evaporate  
and everything disappears  
in a scurry.

But give me,  
give me –  
oh, yes, give me again  
a gulp  
of the wildest  
happiness  
straight into my heart  
muscle!

Translated by P.K. Brask & Patrick Friesen

## **NILAMADHAB KAR**

### **Undress**

You take so much time  
To undress...

Impatiently I wait  
Feeling the heaviness  
You carry  
Then you stop,  
And cover up  
With smiles, and lies

I see the pattern, but  
I don't have the keys  
To open you up! To dissect

Why do you hide?  
Under those smiles  
Veils you do not need  
And what?  
What do you hide?

There is nothing mine  
That's not yours  
Even my secrets  
Now you know me more  
Than myself

I feel so naked before you  
But you wrap yourself  
With anything, everything  
Dark nights, rainbows  
And emotions!

One day, maybe one day  
Within a suffocating embrace  
You will feel it,  
There is nothing, that  
You can't confide within me,  
Nothing you need to bury  
Within yourself

That day maybe, that day  
You will, take your time and  
Undress

**NILAMADHAB KAR**

**Your Happiness**

I am so happy  
That you allow us  
To do all those things  
That make us happy

Even if sometimes  
They are not exactly  
What you would've liked  
Us to do

Seeing us happy,  
I realise, is  
Your happiness



## **PARINITA RATNAPARKHI**

### **Wishes**

With the birds and its enchanting chirping,  
With the nature and its glorious beauty and  
With the Sun and its magnificent sunshine,  
This day revealing the song by the nature  
Welcomes for the JOYOUS AND BLISSFUL life,  
All the Nature and Grace coming to you,  
with their hand in your hand, each step along with you,  
holding YOU graciously and leading you forward, paving your  
way.

**PRAMOD RASTOGI****Homage to the Light**

O Sprawling light, I envy you  
And the speed at which gallop  
The stallions of the sun's chariot,  
Flooding each pore of the air  
In the space between the earth  
And the sky with your glow.

You reach out to us mellow  
And cold in intensity low,  
Bringing comfort to our souls,  
Before the sun points up,  
Calling on you to gather intensity  
As it moves towards its zenith.

You carry your favor to the day.  
The gardener's heart jumps in joy,  
Seeing blooms lift his garden's sway.  
Children play under the bright sun  
And fishermen sing songs of fortune  
As their boats head into the sea.

The catch is on until you dim the show.  
The boats head back to the shore  
As the sun dips slowly under the horizon  
To surround the earth in a soft glow,  
Making looks turn towards the sky  
In delight at the beauty of your show.

You are so discreet in the daytime,  
Yet you flow in to make it brighten.  
Dusk has fallen and night is awake.  
Invisible but still at work are you,  
Pumping the light out that had  
Mushroomed the earth in the day.

O Light, I hail you for what you are.  
You are a poet's spirited dream  
Lighting his way out of his woes.  
You bless us with your constant caress,  
Your claws never leave their mark.  
Life is until your flame no longer burns.

## **PRAMOD RASTOGI**

### **Mind's Tribulations**

No bed of roses is our mind.  
It is also no bed of thorns.  
Unskilled is the spiteful mind  
Unable to separate thorns  
From rose petals.

Is the mind a bed of petals  
With a sprinkle of sharp thorns?  
Or, does a soft cover of petals  
Lie on the mind's bed of thorns?  
Petals and thorns are bonded.

A rose flower in a vase of glass  
Looks good with its long thorns.  
So, too, the sharply pointed thorns  
Look pleasing with their rose.  
One is not whole without the other.

A bed of roses has its despair.  
Never in full repose is the mind  
As it looks for a thorn  
And gets discomfort in return.  
A single thorn has a large network.

A bed of thorns has its share of joy.  
The mind looks out for a mirage,  
Hunts for a petal in its sea of thorns,

And finds in it its ounce of vinegar.  
A single petal has a fragrance deep.

Life must meet a foray of ambitions  
To accord its melodies with the mind,  
Lying amid the notes of joy and despair,  
Both being parts inseparable of the other.  
It is rare to find them playing solo for long.

**PRAMOD RASTOGI****A Creator of Fairy Tales**

A joyless creator of nimble fairy tales,  
I have never lived any of them.  
Often I wonder what this life of mine is for.  
Though the tales I write sell like pancakes,  
All inspirations forsake my life  
When it is time for me to live my fairy tale.

While writing a luminous fairy tale,  
Passion would stir as I ate sugar and drank lemon juice.  
While sugar made my diabetes churn  
And juice made my stomach squirm,  
None would summon a sparking thought  
That would thrust me to live my fairy tale.

The moon danced and stars sang in my fairy tales.  
All angels had wings, and flowers winked,  
And the heavens opened to all in love,  
Yet, the trails in life through which I passed  
On the prowl were wolves ready to pounce,  
And starless nights teased shadows in my tales.

I wonder what has sealed my fate not to lead a fairy-tale  
Life. I have pondered wandering in caverns in my prose  
Without ever offering me the role of a spicy maid.  
Would it be vain to sell tales I have never lived  
And watch people rejoice under the falling rain?  
My hands work on the keyboard to weave my tales.

## REES NIELSEN

### Bangalore

At moonset  
there's a commotion in the compound  
stumble out of the bungalow  
over by the papaya  
there's a rustling in the bushes  
as if teeming with some nocturnal menace  
and who knows  
maybe a cobra slithering somewhere  
suddenly this huge fruit bat,  
big as a crow,  
flaps across the saffron moon

Yes sahib,  
India waits  
patiently  
at the bend in the road  
refusing to curdle the thick curry of sleep  
concocting the dream that unravels each morning  
when you open your eyes  
and tell me your story  
this day more than any other

(Fruit bat silhouette  
across the rabbit  
that is the transcendent Hindu moon)

**REES NIELSEN****Varnarsi Station**

Varnarsi train station three in the morning,  
we stood there with our bags on the platform,  
kicking the chill out of our boots  
and this vendor walks over with a tray of clay cups  
filled with warm milk and sugar  
I threw down three cups one after the other  
confident that by noon  
I would see something  
I'd never seen before

Some months later I sat on a pile of burlap sacks  
in the Calcutta train terminal  
a caravan of soldiers rumbled in  
they were armed and looked serious  
I was reading Notes from a Sea Diary by Nelson Algren  
which I had discovered in a tiny book stall  
somewhere in the who knows where of Central India  
as I sat there on these sacks reading the Algren  
I suddenly realized my ass was on fire  
as if I had suddenly come down  
with some exotic tropical disease  
and I jumped up, slapping my jeans  
like a man who had unwittingly sat on an ant pile  
upon inspection,  
those sacks,  
stock full of dried chili peppers



## RENÉ VAN DER KLOOSTER

### A Declaration

*I solemnly declare:*

I have a small ego

*or*

I am proud that I  
dare to declare  
that I have a small ego

*and*

I am proud that I  
carefully anticipated your refutation  
that I have the smallest ego

*subsequently*

*I add quietly*

*unexpected*

*the apotheosis:*

I am proud that my  
ego and my pride  
side by side  
subside



## **RICHARD MARVIN TIBERIUS (TAI) GROVE**

### **Brimming**

Our sweet month of May  
brings gorgeous white lilacs  
laden draped, heavy  
with mythical splendor  
of a virgin bride's gown  
brimming,  
transformed  
into the expectation  
of eternal love!

**ROBERT L. MARTIN**

**Black Sun Down**

The black sun stripped naked  
of its flamboyant costume  
with its yellow glowing that  
paraded across the firmament  
and marched to the drums of the day,  
lost its luster into the evening  
with its fading into a deep orange,  
its chameleonic adaptation  
to the surroundings  
that bled into the faces of the clouds  
and ignited them with its torches  
before it turned black and dove  
into the enigmatic sea.

Down, down, down, and further down  
it swam with the fishes thru' the seaweed,  
rubbing against the barnacles  
on the broken ships.  
Then down it went inside  
The Sheolian temples  
and broke bread with the macabre,  
singing hymns in praise  
to the Prince of Darkness.

Then it swam further upon its journey  
and saw the cloudy rays of heaven above  
through the murky waters,

motioning it to follow heaven's  
pathway for the dawning of the day,  
to don its yellow flamboyant costume  
and start its journey across the firmament  
on a mission of goodwill,  
the same as it did the day before.  
But what if it never did that again?

**ROBERT L. MARTIN**

**Olympic Ballade**

Two lovers on skates,  
music weavers weaving into one,  
one dream, one ballade, one sunset,  
one rhapsody, one song, one space,  
soaring, upward lifting,  
smooth landings  
with the arms of music enveloping,  
guiding, holding, caressing,  
placing love lyrics inside the  
ears of their hearts made into one,

cutting edges in the rigid ice,  
bending it with teary rhapsodies,  
melting it with a heated passion,  
making circles and moons and stars  
in the face of the fluid floor,

the threads of passion entwining,  
moving in and out of each other,  
Olympic lovers in their loving,  
reaching inside with fervid scopes,  
beholding the beauty of the music,  
letting it fill their hearts,  
letting it move their limbs,  
letting it reach down to the skates,  
moving them to the pulse of the music  
in proud submission

to music's authority,  
the music Gods sitting  
upon their thrones,  
sending them on a journey,  
empowering them to reach the  
summit of their Olympic dream.

Hail to the two of them  
made into one with each other.

## ROBERT NISBET

### Red Sky in the Morning

Red sky at night, shepherd's delight,  
Red sky in the morning, shepherd's warning.  
Country proverb

Our family does weddings.  
When Rosalie married, first time round,  
and the cars assembled for the drive,  
it was in fact a lovely sunrise  
and I (twelve, in the back seat) shut up  
about red skies and rhymes and mornings,  
but the Family Think Tank got to work  
and Auntie Martha, the respected one,  
declared that sky to be a harbinger.  
*A portent, for so many happy years ahead.*  
But we, the younger girls and we two boys,  
we'd seen his photos, always called him  
*the man with the snakeskin smile.*

Her second wedding was just ten years on.  
We, loudly festive, celebratory,  
knew Elfed for a good, kind man. There were  
no portents I can think of on that January day,  
just a mixture of sleet and primroses.  
The gritting lorries had been out the night before.



## ROBERT NISBET

### Concentric

The greyhound's nose is quivering, shuddering,  
as she scents the Common before her, the run  
she's starting, circles, rings of ecstasy, raced  
around the grass's long green furlongs.

The footballer the boys call Tan Man (the name  
is part-derisive, he postures on summer beaches)  
is gazing at Saturday's pitch. He's been switched  
to the centre of midfield and they'll see him then,  
spreading the ball to left, to right, to the wings,  
running rings round Fishguard Sports.

Kevin is in the saddle, mowing the grass, circling  
the Common's swathes, then moving inwards,  
the cut-grass smell now potent and ubiquitous.

Diane's just past bereavement now  
and now she finds the Common helps,  
the enclosedness of it all,  
ringed in by the recollected.

## **ROGER G. SINGER**

### **Dream Journey**

the aroma of alone  
encourages  
breathing to slip  
below the surface,  
beyond the bedsheets  
of thoughts  
and a pillow full  
of whispered words

burdens relax  
as echoes  
and rising tides  
lead to the  
doorway of dreams

layers of vapors  
begin to gather  
under familiar stars,  
expectant and waiting  
for you to enter

## **ROGER G. SINGER**

### **Eyes Closed**

what's more difficult,  
living within  
or living without?

when it's the wrong voice  
on the other side of the table,  
or the hand absent of the heart  
once connected to

or the touch,  
soft,  
the sincere connection  
under sun and moon

and the kiss,  
like the first one,  
eyes closed

## **S L PEERAN**

### **Make Life Smooth**

We all need crutches for support mentally.  
To make us strong to walk with uprightness.  
To bear the burdens of stormy life.  
To seek assurances, to ward off our fears.

The roots have to be strong to face “toofans”  
Torpedoes, tsunamis, lightning and thunder  
To face droughts, famine, hunger and pain  
With courage, inner strength, poise, dignity.

Firm feet, foresight, great planning.  
The graph has to keep moving up and up.  
Avoid being at sea and in blues.  
Maintain healthy diet, good routine.

At every step life places hurdles  
But strong faith in Unknown enlightens mind.

## **SANDIP SAHA**

### **Artistic Autumn**

It is autumn, clouds have disappeared  
clear blue sky, bright sunshine  
free of pollution, rain has washed all dusts  
reducing solid particles content in air.

All trees have become colorful  
red, yellow and brown leaves  
of them are so pleasant to our eyes  
as if brides have completed their makeup.

But no, they are not getting married  
it is a time of fall when all leaves depart  
just as to save chastity from Muslim invaders  
Rajput wives used to dress with colorful attires  
like a beautiful bride before jumping into fire.

The trees pay homage to their dear leaves  
who fed them all the year from sun-light  
by decorating them with marvelous colors  
before they go for the last journey to sleep  
in the lap of mother earth making a carpet.

## **SANDIP SAHA**

### **Devious**

Long ago when you were alone  
even time was not with you  
I came forward to give you solace  
broke your monotony from which  
you wanted to flee forever,  
suddenly you erupted so violently  
that it has produced today's peril  
sufferings of all relentless unavoidable  
yes, it was I who gave you company  
have you forgotten all that you owe to me?

On the contrary, you make tall claims  
you think yourself all in all  
fear is not there in your vocabulary  
you can do whatever you want  
you actually are doing all nonsense  
deviously riding a mad horse  
to unknown destination  
you may not be able to choose  
still, I am with you to help  
but you are so adamant!

You are unbeatable  
as you have all weapons  
to make others' life hell  
but now I have decided  
I shall no more be with you

what can you do to me?  
Your evil power can only kill me  
as a drop of water evaporates from sea  
becomes clouds and floats to go far away  
I also will vanish but fall as rain drops again.

## SARAH BROWN WEITZMAN

### Until the Next One

Later it amazed me  
that I couldn't remember  
what first caught my interest.

I followed her  
to discover what was possible  
but she was annoyingly reserved

at first, a mystery that held me  
up though promising  
to reveal herself.

Nights I lie with her  
or tell the truth  
working her over

and over until she gave herself  
completely. Even then I couldn't  
stay away from her.

She seemed perfect.  
But in the morning  
when I looked at her again

she disappointed me.  
Though now  
there is nothing



more to say. Yet,  
I can't break the involvement.  
It goes on

and on until the luscious,  
loving next one's  
coming.

**SARAH BROWN WEITZMAN**

**January & Blocked**

Gray month of stint and lag.  
Weed garden month  
of counting up losses  
and what was left unsaid.

Shriveled and dried up  
everything's the same  
shade of brown and  
nothing's written down.

In the park the lake's opaque  
as a cataract above a sky  
faded like over-washed jeans  
and blank as the page.

January's stalled,  
dragging its thirty-one days  
into the long wait  
to remember green

or something fresh  
that needs to be said.

## **STANLEY H. BARKAN**

### **Shabbos**

Friday, 16 July 2021

We are very lucky, my wife and I.  
We have two children, a girl and a boy.

And we have five grandchildren,  
now that our daughter & son  
have grown and married and are parents,  
all living nearby in the same town.

Tonight we are celebrating two birthdays,  
two days in advance of Sunday, 18 July.  
One of these is for the 16th of our first grandson,  
Jeremy Benjamin Barkan.  
The other is for the 17th of our second granddaughter,  
Natasha Rose Clarke.

It's Shabbos, so it's a triple joyous time.

But Sunday, the actual birthday, is coincident with Tisha B'Av,  
one of the saddest days in the Jewish calendar.  
Two temples were destroyed on this day—the first  
in 586 CE, and the second in 70 CE.  
And it also marks the time when Jews were exiled  
from England in the 13th century and Spain in the 15th.  
And there were other awful occurrences that happened on this  
day.

So with this Sunday being both a birthday for our grandson  
Jeremy  
and granddaughter Natasha, we'll just have to mix  
the bitter with the sweet, the sweet with the bitter,  
this Shabbos evening.

We have a choice: We choose the sweet.

We do not know when we'll have another such occasion.  
But, for now, we revel in  
the lighting of the candles,  
the motze on the challah,  
the kiddush with the wine,  
and the blessings:  
for Jeremy to be like Ephraim & Menashe  
and Natasha to be like Sarah & Rebecca, Leah & Rachel.

Baruch HaShem!

**UTE CARSON****Old Age, A Privilege?**

Many yearn to reach fourscore  
but not all are granted the privilege.  
Others, burdened by the will of fate,  
would rather shake the yoke of years.  
Yet, some are destined to be  
the good Samaritans of age,  
reaching out, helping, consoling.  
There is another beneficial calling,  
when the old become storytellers.  
They morph into magicians  
who keep the past alive.  
With the miraculous wand of memory  
they conjure bygone experiences  
and—abracadabra--former events return  
as stories clad in multicolored dream-cloaks.

## UTE CARSON

### **Flooded with Love**

Like the tide my love rolls toward shore  
where my dear ones live.  
I want to lift them onto my cresting waves,  
have them inhale healing waters,  
their pores sponged with salty spray,  
protected by my elemental powers.  
But they scurry away, shake themselves,  
and let the sunrays dry them.  
Enough! they protest.  
So I ebb and form a lagoon around their feet,  
sprinkle them lightly with my ocean fingers.  
They recognize me with friendly indulgence  
from their tender years  
before continuing on their way.  
I retreat to the white foamy surges under a violet sky  
and wait for a time when,  
after many moons have risen,  
they will call for me to come back toward shore.

**WILLIAM CONELLY****Rocks***in the Utah Badlands*

Schooling on a steeply rutted road,  
jeep jockeys hear their cohort shout the common  
lessons: don't rev; don't just explode  
across the troughs; settle; let your tires grip  
the angled granite. That's the gamesmanship  
in climbing: strength spent slant. Avoid the marl  
and slate catch-all's, the scree of axe-head shards.

❖❖❖

Immersed in daylight's holding pool, a draught  
of smooth, translucent stones appears as water  
kept in handfuls – flawless runnels caught  
mid-flow and cupped. The find confounds an eye  
expecting wasteland raised into blank sky,  
but glints of blue and orange confirm feldspar –  
new moon and sunstones, there for any finder.

## BOOK REVIEW

### Review of Chandra Shekhar Dubey's Poetry Collection, *The Door and the World*

U ATREYA SARMA

The Door and the World | A Collection of Poems | Chandra Shekhar Dubey | Authors  
Press (2020) | ISBN 978-93-90155-55-2 | pp 84 | ₹ 295 / \$ 15

**Chandra Shekhar Dubey** is gifted with “*elegance of expression and justness of thought*” as Vivekanand Jha rightly observes (Blurb). The door of Dubey's inquisitive, observant and harmonious poetic mind and heart opens out into a vast world comprising – beauties of Nature, perspective of poetry, family and social values, contemporary situations, social angst, flights of fancy, romantic resonances, the alchemy of divinity and spirituality, sundry reflections – with a divine hymn both to set out and wind up, as is the classic Indian norm.

Dedicated to Prof Ajit Kumar Mishra who guided the poet's “hustle, drive and dream”, *The Door and the World* with its poemstakes “you through vignettes and the colours of life in their myriad shades... with a social awakening and philosophical musings” (‘Preface’).

In this world of uncertainties, ups and downs, stresses and strains – meditation and spiritual practices help us cope with them with a spirit of equipoise and also energise us. That's why the sapient poet sings, “*You are hidden yet manifested | In all lives floating in this cosmic ocean... | With your healing showers of light | Ignite the spiritual flames bright within me*” (‘Healing Prayer’).



Revitalised with the meditation, he gets ready to speak out the voice of the muse within his mind and heart, *“I translate your silent whispers | into sounds of words, | rhythms of thoughts mundane and sublime”* (‘Silent Muse’).

The poesy thus springing out is apt to tickle one with tender romantic desires and feelings that have the seeds of creativity. *“Buds aroused by morning dews | Open erotic petals | to seductive bees”* (‘Desire’). The happiness that results from the fulfilment of desires, in most cases, sparks off a chain of further desires unless one practises salubrious self-restraint. *“Happiness arises as bubbles from water | to pop up, to flicker and to burst | into the oblivion of everlasting desire”* (‘Happiness’).

*“...while young lovers sink in arms | in hieroglyphic shadows”* (‘Marina Beach’) and lose themselves in an insular dreamland of bliss, the situation around them could turn into a tsunami leaving everyone in a speechless shock. Materialises then a sagely person, since every cloud has a silver lining, to tell a story to the dazed ones and wake them up to the situation. *“There lived an old, lanky monk | In the city of Wuhan. | He had a staff and a piped gourd pitcher | hanging down his hump. | Once a man called Cring Pring | walked down his esoteric den.”* It sets out hilariously like a children’s story, and the last quarter of the story says, *“All countries boasting of power and pelf | tumbled down to its deadly tress”* and by now you must have guessed what it is about, that is ‘Corona’s Ghost.’ And it ignites a ripple effect where even a kind *“touch”* could threaten to be fatal. *“Shifted the paradigms | Meaning of life. | Where ‘to touch’ means | to kill or get killed”* (‘Covid-19’).

And the pandemic spill-out has choked many a migrant labourer forcing them to take a U-turn. *“We moved from our imaginary homes | for our homes which we left, | to keep our home and hearth alive. | We cried for help in void | in a heartless city we made | with our sweating hands and faltering |*

feet burning our dreams into | lustre of their homes” (‘Migrant Labours’). Yet, conscious of their duty to their families which can’t survive but for the labour of the earning members, the labourers heroically struggle to find a way out. “The roads are long and arduous | but we have to keep our promises” (‘Migrant Labours’).

Mother is the one who gives utmost solace during such pathetic throes. And they deserve a tribute as under, as Chandra Shekhar Dubey pays to his mother. “*My mother was my great teacher | who taught me to be brave | amidst storms of life like a mountain. | She was an epitome of courage in the | face of hostile circumstances, | a living source of our all inspirations. | Fed on milk of stories from the scriptures, | we grew to learn our lessons in morality*” (‘To my Mother’).

Affectionate gratefulness to a mother should run in the blood of the children, it should not degenerate into a token gesture by limiting it to a particular day like the Mother’s Day as vended by the Western faddists where family values have almost evaporated and already adversely affected even our own time-tested Indian mores. The Gregorian calendar is more than full with these sundry dates. After all, in the Indic wisdom, we have the anniversaries that are performed earnestly and piously. That’s why poet Dubey sneers, “*Freezing on a Day? | Mother makes her presence felt every moment | Wrapped in days and years*” (‘Mother’s Day’).

In the recent times we have been witnessing many an ersatz agitation and protest at the drop of a hat by vested and discredited interests in their bid to overthrow the democratically elected government with no concrete or justifiable reasons, and for them any stick is good to beat the government with. Their only job is mud-slinging and spread of unrest and hatred be it the luxurious yearlong farmers’ agitation or the vicious and motivated protests against the CAA (Citizenship Amendment

Act) et al. And, “*There is a fallen Faustus in each of them, | who sells his soul for a platter of | biryani and [a] five hundred note | bleeding the country*” (‘CAA Protest’). But these protestors fall silent on the plight of the persecuted and displaced Hindus of Kashmir and the horrible lynching of three Hindu saints at Gadchinchle, a village in the Palghar district of Maharashtra in April 2020, as if it is a crime to be a Hindu in their only homeland in the world(‘Palghar Lynching’).

Every responsible citizen having the interests of the country at heart and rooted in Indic wisdom should turn into a soldier to neutralise the deleterious and anarchic proclivities in the society if the uniqueness of our Indic values and wisdom is to be sustained with its ultimate aim of universal harmony. Coming to the soldiers whether at the borders or within, see what they assert, “*Playing with bullets, | bombs and tank | Is a ritual of living | Without fear of death | ... | We live to die, | and die to live | in the eternity of | our love for the country*” (‘A Soldier’).

Any amount of gratitude to our selfless, valiant warriors would only be too little, for otherwise we could be wallowing in a morass of thralldom.

## CONTRIBUTORS

1. **Alan Garvey's** fourth collection of poetry, *In the Wake of Her Light*, was published at the end of last year by Lapwing Publications. A poem of his was placed second in the Gregory O'Donoghue International Poetry Competition 2017. His work has appeared in numerous magazines and anthologies.
2. **Andrew Scott** is a native of Fredericton, NB. During his time as an active poet, Andrew Scott has taken the time to speak in front of classrooms, judge poetry competitions, and have over 200 hundred writings published worldwide in such publications as *The Art of Being Human*, *Battered Shadows* and *The Broken Ones*. Andrew Scott has published multiple poetry books and one book of photography. *Redemption Avenue* is his first novella.
3. **Arno Bohlmeijer**, humble winner of a PEN America Grant 2021, poet and novelist, writing in English and Dutch, published in 5 countries – US: Houghton Mifflin, a dozen renowned Journals and Reviews, 2019 – 2022, and in *Universal Oneness: An Anthology of Magnum Opus Poems from around the World*, 2019. [www.arnobohlmeijer.com](http://www.arnobohlmeijer.com)
4. **Avdhesh Jha**, an author, poet, teacher and observer, is a strong critic with an inclination towards societal development. Presently he works with EDI of India. With ten doctoral scholars, being awarded the doctorate degree, the guide and mentor to Ph.D. aspirants, has presented several papers on different topics at national and international seminars. He has written about more than 200 poetries in English and Hindi. Associated with institutes of national repute, he has organised seminars and workshops

and delivered talks and lectures at various seminars, workshops etc. He is awarded with CHAROTTAR GAURAV and BHARAT EXCELLENCE.

5. **Bishnupada Ray** is an Associate Professor of English at the University of North Bengal. His poems have appeared in various journals and anthologies.
6. **Bruce Meyer** is the author of 69 books of poetry, short stories, flash fiction, and non-fiction. A story for this year's Edinburgh Flash Fiction Prize received the Editor's Commendation from over 3000 flash stories. His poems and stories have won or been shortlisted for numerous national and international prizes.
7. **Daniel Thomas Moran**, born in New York City in 1957, is the author of fifteen collections of poetry. "In the Kingdom of Autumn", was published by Salmon Poetry in Ireland in 2020. He has had some four hundred poems published in close to twenty different countries. In 2005, he was appointed Poet Laureate by The Legislature of Suffolk County, New York. His collected papers are being archived by The Dept. of Special Collections at Stony Brook University. He is a retired Clinical Assistant Professor from Boston University's School of Dental Medicine, where he delivered the Commencement Address in 2011. He is Arts Editor for The Humanist magazine in Washington, DC. He and his wife Karen live in Webster, New Hampshire.
8. **Dianalee Velie** is the Poet Laureate of Newbury, New Hampshire where she lives and writes. She has taught poetry, memoir, and short story at universities and colleges in New York, Connecticut and New Hampshire and in private workshops throughout the United States, Canada and Europe. Her award-winning poetry and short stories have been published in hundreds of literary journals and many have been translated into Italian. Her play, *Mama Says*, was directed by Daniel Quinn in a staged reading in New York City. She is the author of six books of poetry and

a collection of short stories. She is a member of the National League of American Pen Women, the New England Poetry Club, the International Woman Writers Guild, the New Hampshire Poetry Society and founder of the John Hay Poetry Society.

9. **DJ Tyrer** is the person behind *Atlantean Publishing*, editor of *View From Atlantis* and the *5-7-5 Haiku Journal* webzines, and has been published in issues of *Genre: Urban Arts*, *Haiku Journal*, *Poetry Quarterly*, *Three Line Poetry*, and *Tigershark*, and online at *A New Ulster*, *Enchanted Conversation*, *Library Love Letter*, *Morphrog*, *Plato's Cave* and *Poetry Pacific*, as well as releasing several chapbooks, including the critically acclaimed *Our Story*. The e-chapbook *One Vision* is available from Tigershark Publishing's website. *Super Trump* and *A Wuhan Whodunnit* are available to download from the Atlantean Publishing website. DJ Tyrer's website is at <https://djtyrer.blogspot.co.uk/>
10. **Dragica Ohashi** is a poetry writer. She teaches English, sings English nursery rhymes, chants & songs with children, reads books and creates education materials and illustrations. Published Poetry Book "Peace Harmony" 2019, India. Ohashi participated in many festivals and art projects for children and her poetry is included in anthologies.
11. **Frank Jousen** is a German teacher and writer, member of a one-world group. His publications include two selections of his poetry, one of them being a bilingual collaboration with Romanian poet Ana Cicio. He has co-edited two international anthologies of poetry/fiction in India and one of short stories in Germany. His poems and short stories have also been published in a variety of literary magazines and anthologies in India, Australia, G.B., the Republic of Ireland, Germany, Romania, Malta, the U.S.A., Canada, India, China, Thailand and Japan; some of them have been translated into German, Romanian, Hindi and Chinese.



12. **Gangcheel** is from Calcutta, West Bengal. Writing has been his passion. He mostly writes poems, articles, and short stories. He writes under his penname “gangcheel”.
13. **Gary Beck** has spent most of his adult life as a the alter director and worked as an art dealer when he couldn’t earn a living in the eater. He has also been a tennis pro, a ditch digger and a salvage diver. His original plays and translations of Moliere, Aristophanes and Sophocles have been produced Off Broadway. His poetry, fiction and essays have appeared in hundreds of literary magazines and his published books include 34 poetry collections, 14 novels, 3 short story collections, 1 collection of essays and 5 books of plays. Gary lives in New York City.
14. **Gerard Sarnat** won San Francisco Poetry’s 2020 Contest, the Poetry in the Arts First Place Award plus the Dorfman Prize, and has been nominated for handfuls of 2021 and previous Pushcarts plus Best of the Net Awards. Gerry is widely published and a Harvard-trained physician who’s built and staffed clinics for the marginalized as well as a Stanford professor and healthcare CEO. Currently he is devoting energy/ resources to deal with climate justice, and serves on Climate Action Now’s board. Gerry’s been married since 1969 with three kids plus six grandsons, and is looking forward to potential future granddaughters.
15. **Harris Coverley** has had verse published in *Polu Texni*, *California Quarterly*, *Star\*Line*, *Spectral Realms*, *Corvus Review*, *Ariel Chart*, *Tales from the Moonlit Path*, *Danse Macabre*, *Once Upon A Crocodile*, *The Rye Whiskey Review*, *5-7-5 Haiku Journal*, and many others. A former Rhysling Award nominee, he lives in Manchester, England.
16. **James G. Piatt**, a retired Professor and octogenarian earned his doctorate from BYU, and his BS and MA from California State Polytechnic University, SLO. He is a Best of Web nominee and three time Pushcart nominee and has had four poetry books “The Silent Pond,” (2012), “Ancient

Rhythms,” (2014), “LIGHT,” (2016), and “Solace Between the Lines,” (2019), over 1560 poems, five novels and 35 short stories published worldwide in over 250 publications.

17. **James Mulhern**’s writing has appeared in literary journals over one hundred and fifty times and has been recognized with many awards. In 2015, Mr. Mulhern was granted a writing fellowship to Oxford University. That same year, a story was longlisted for the *Fish Short Story Prize*. In 2017, he was nominated for a *Pushcart Prize*. His novel, *Give Them Unquiet Dreams*, is a *Kirkus Reviews Best Book of 2019*. He was shortlisted for the *Aesthetica Creative Writing Award 2021* for his poetry. Recently, two of his novels were Finalists for the United Kingdom’s *Wishing Shelf Book Awards*.
18. **Jevin Lee Albuquerque** grew up in California, on the local pier in Santa Cruz, fishing for striped bass. He evolved into a fly fisherman, obsessed with trout and steelhead. In a former life, he was a professional soccer player. He has a degree in Latin American Studies from UCLA. Recent publications include *Confrontation Magazine*, *Monterey Poetry Review*, *VerbalArt* and *Phenomenal Literature*.
19. **John Grey** is an Australian poet, US resident, recently published in *Sheepshead Review*, *Stand*, *Poetry Salzburg Review* and *Hollins Critic*. Latest books, “Leaves On Pages” “Memory Outside The Head” and “Guest Of Myself” are available through Amazon. Work upcoming in *Ellipsis*, *Blueline* and *International Poetry Review*.
20. **Ken Anderson** was a finalist in the 2021 Saints and Sinners poetry contest. His novel *Sea Change: An Example of the Pleasure Principle* was a finalist for the 2012 Ferro-Grumley Award and an Independent Publisher Editor’s Choice. His novel *Someone Bought the House on the Island* was a finalist in the Independent Publisher Book Awards. A stage adaptation won the Saints and Sinners Playwriting Contest and premiered May 2, 2008, at the Marigny Theater in New Orleans.



21. **Leigh Harrison** is an American poet, writer, essayist, musician, artist, and teacher. Her books include, *From A to Zeus* (poems with Biblical or Mythological themes) and *Finding Sermons in Stones* (poems about Nature or the four seasons); her music CDs, include “Leigh Harrison / Eclectic Chanteuse” and “Oh, Wow!” (both released by SongCrew Music). Listen to sample songs/poems on her website: [www.leighharrison.com](http://www.leighharrison.com)
22. **M Shamsur Rabb Khan** is Assistant Professor of English literature with 24 years of teaching experience in India and abroad. He has written 9 books, scores of research papers and articles for journals, magazines and newspapers. His creative works have been published in *The Statesman*, *The Pioneer*, *Business Standard*, *Muse India*, *The Phenomenal Literature*, *Verbal Art*, *The Children Book Trust*, and many websites. His novel is due to be published soon.
23. **Melanie Flores** is a Toronto-born writer, editor, poet and poetry judge. Her award-winning work has been described as provocative and has appeared online, in print journals, and in various international and national anthologies. Melanie is an editor for Montreal-based *Subterranean Blue Poetry*. Her poem “Nameless” will appear in the “(M)othering Anthology” published by Inanna Publications (Spring 2022). Melanie has been a member of the League of Canadian Poets since 2017 and a member of The Writer’s Guild of Canada since 2021. Visit her websites [www.melanieflores.net](http://www.melanieflores.net) and [www.mdfcommsvcs.com](http://www.mdfcommsvcs.com) to see her work and learn more.
24. **Michael Keshigian** is the author of 14 poetry collections his latest, *What To Do With Intangibles*, published by [Cyberwit.net](http://Cyberwit.net). Most recent poems have appeared in *Muddy River Review*, *Bluepepper*, *Smoky Quartz*, *San Pedro River Review*, *Tipton Poetry Journal*. Published in numerous national and international journals, he has 7 Pushcart Prize and 2 Best of the Net nominations.

25. **Michael Lee Johnson** lived ten years in Canada, Vietnam era. Today he is a poet in the greater Chicagoland area, IL. Published in 42 countries; 244 YouTube poetry videos. Michael Lee Johnson is an internationally published poet in 43 countries, several published poetry books, nominated for 3 Pushcart Prize awards and 5 Best of the Net nominations. He is editor-in-chief of 3 poetry anthologies, all available on Amazon, and has several poetry books and chapbooks. He has over 536 published poems. Michael is the administrator of 6 Facebook Poetry groups. Member Illinois State Poetry Society: <http://www.illinoispoets.org/>.
26. **Mini Babu** is working as Associate Professor of English with the Dept. of Collegiate Education, Govt. of Kerala and now working at BJM Govt. College, Chavara, Kollam. Her poems have featured in anthologies, journals and magazines. Her collections of poems are Kaleidoscope (2020), Shorelines (2021) and Memory Cells (2022). Her co-edited collection of poems is Meraki (2021).
27. **Natalia Fernández Díaz-Cabal**, born in Suria (Spain). Professor of International and Intercultural Communication & Intercultural negotiation and resolution of conflicts at the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona and at the University of New Haven in Barcelona. Ph.D. in Philosophy of Science and in Linguistics. Translator of 9 languages. Poet since she was a child. Writer, author of several books and articles on language, media, history of translation, history of diseases, and intercultural/ international communication.
28. **Nels Hanson** grew up on a small farm in the San Joaquin Valley of California and has worked as a farmer, teacher and contract writer/editor. His fiction received the San Francisco Foundation's James D. Phelan Award and Pushcart nominations in 2010, 2012, 2014 and 2016, and poems received a 2014 Pushcart nomination, Sharkpack Review's 2014 Prospero Prize, and 2015 and 2016 Best of the Net nominations.

29. **Niels Hav** is a Danish poet, his books have been translated into Portuguese, Arabic, Turkish, Dutch, and Farsi. He has travelled widely in Europe, Asia, Africa, North and South America.
30. **Nilamadhab Kar** MD, DPM, DNB, MRC Psych, writes poetry, and occasionally stories and short essays, in English and Odia. His poems have been published in magazines and anthologies in USA, UK, and India. He has published three poetry books (*Tama Paain* in Odia, selected poems; *Reverberation* and *Tomorrow's Morning Sun* – translated poetry anthologies). He has edited a few literary magazines, currently edits *Srujan: The Creativity Journal*, and is on the editorial board of a few journals. He is a psychiatrist; besides clinical work he is actively involved in clinical research and charity.
31. **Parinita Ratnaparkhi** awarded with UGC-NET/Junior Research Fellowship and 21<sup>st</sup>R. S. Tomar Best Researcher Award 2018 bears the passion for research, academics and creativity. With several publications including papers and book chapters, she is a reviewer, analyst, author, poet, and critic and extends her services as an Assistant Professor at Waymade College of Education, Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat.
32. **Pramod Rastogi** is an Emeritus Professor at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (EPFL) in Lausanne, Switzerland. He is a Member of the Swiss Academy of Engineering Sciences. He is the 2014 recipient of the SPIE Dennis Gabor Award. He is currently a guest Professor at the IIT Gandhinagar, India. His poems have been accepted in *Indian Literature*, *Borderless journal*, *Muse India*, etc.
33. **Rees Nielsen** spent 35 years farming stone fruit and grapes with his cousins on 175 acres of San Joaquin Valley loam. He has published fiction, poetry and visual arts over the span of these years. He is 70 years old.

34. **René van der Klooster** is multifaceted. Besides an author of poetry, prose and plays (in Dutch and English), he practices visual arts, including drawing, painting and sculpting, moreover, formerly he worked as an architect and in that capacity he is currently designing lamps. The writing and the arts mainly originate from a vast dream world, a certain grip on the subconsciousness and frequent mystical experiences. [www.renevanderklooster.com](http://www.renevanderklooster.com)
35. **Richard Marvin Tiberius (Tai) Grove** – known to friends as Tai, 1953, Hamilton born, lives in Presqu'ile Provincial Park in Ontario, Canada, where he and his wife, Kim, run a B&B. He is a photographer, writer, editor, publisher. His paintings and photographs are in over 30 corporate collections across Canada. He has 16 titles to his name. More than any other Canadian Photographer his images have been used as book cover art. Find his Writer's Blog at: <https://richardgrovewriter.wordpress.com/>
36. **Robert L. Martin's** poetry has appeared in Verbal Art and Phenomenal Literature previously. He has written four full length poetry books; *Wings of Inspiration*, *Rhymes of the Joke Machine*, *The Air Almighty*, and *Martin's World*, all published by Cyberwit.net. from Allahabad, India, All the books are available on Amazon and some in Barnes and Noble book stores. He also wrote two chapbooks. Mr. Martin's poetry has also appeared in many more anthology books, online publications, and journals. Some of the other publications are; "Poets' Espresso", "Mad Swirl." and "The Belt and Beyond." He also won two "Faith & Hope" poetry awards. His inspiration comes from the writings of Kahlil Gibran and Pablo Neruda.
37. **Robert Nisbet** is a Welsh poet whose work has appeared widely in Britain and the USA. He won the Prole Pamphlet Competition in 2017 with *Robeson, Fitzgerald and Other Heroes*. In the USA he has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize four times in the last three years.

38. **Roger G. Singer**, Poet Laureate Emeritus, Connecticut Coalition of Poets Laureate.
39. **S L Peeran** (b 1950) has completed eighteen volumes of poems in English besides works in prose, short stories and books on Sufism and Sufi Wisdom. Peeran's works have been favorably reviewed by many Poet Critics. He has won Literary Prize 2017 of 'Naji Naaman' of Lebanon besides many in India. His work is well received and reviewed in India and abroad. He can be reached @ [slpeeran@gmail.com](mailto:slpeeran@gmail.com) Visit [www.slpeeran.com](http://www.slpeeran.com) to read all his works.
40. **Sandip Saha** from India won award and became finalist in poetry contests in USA. He published three poetry collections including "Trial of God", "Loving women" by amazon, 2021, one poetry chapbook, "Toast for women", Oxford, UK, 2021 and 97 poems in 33 journals in five countries including India, USA, UK.
41. **Sarah Brown Weitzman** was a National Endowment for the Arts Fellow in Poetry and twice nominated for the Pushcart Poetry Prize as well as a Finalist for the Academy of American Poets' Walt Whitman First Book Award Contest. Her poems have been published in hundreds of journals and anthologies. *AMOROTICA* is her fifth book.
42. **Stanley H. Barkan**, editor/publisher of Cross-Cultural Communications, which in 2020 is celebrating its 50th Anniversary with 500 books in print, and as many broadsides and postcards and audio-visual productions in 60 languages (ranging from Arabic to Yiddish). CCC has also hosted numerous literary events throughout the United States and in many parts of the world (Argentina, Bulgaria, Poland, Puerto Rico, Sicily, Wales), at such locations in New York as the International Center, Poets House, the Yale Club, and the Dag Hammarskjöld Auditorium of the United Nations. His own work has been published in 29 poetry editions, many bilingual, including Armenian,

Bulgarian, Chinese, Dutch, Farsi/Persian, Italian, Romanian, Russian, Sicilian, Spanish. Also, in 2017, he was awarded the Homer European Medal of Poetry & Art. Barkan lives with his wife in Merrick, Long Island, where his son and daughter and five grandchildren also reside. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stanley H. Barkan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stanley_H._Barkan)

43. **U Atreya Sarma**, from Hyderabad, is a poet, freelance editor, book-reviewer and translator. A number of his poems and writings (articles, editorials, reviews, forewords, translations) mostly in English and some in Telugu – have appeared in various print/online media and anthologies. He is Chief Editor of the *Muse India* e-journal and also its Contributing Editor for Telugu Literature. His collection of English poems, *Sunny Rain-n-Snow* made it to the three poetry collections shortlisted for the Cochin Litfest Poetry Prize 2019. He has 19 books to his credit as editor, collaborator, or translator. He has received several literary awards. [atreyasarma@gmail.com](mailto:atreyasarma@gmail.com)
44. **Ute Carson** published her first prose piece in 1977. *Colt Tailing*, a 2004 novel, was a finalist for the Peter Taylor Book Award. Carson's story "The Fall" won Outrider Press's Grand Prize and appeared in its short story and poetry anthology *A Walk through My Garden*, 2007. Her poems have appeared in numerous journals and magazines in the US and abroad. Carson's poetry was featured on the televised *Spoken Word Showcase* 2009, 2010, 2011, Channel Austin. The poem "A Tangled Nest of Moments" placed second in the Eleventh International Poetry Competition 2012. Her collection of poems *My Gift to Life* was nominated for the 2015 Pushcart Award Prize. She received the *Ovidiu-Bektore Literary Award 2018* from the Anticus Multicultural Association in Constanta, Romania. In 2018 she was nominated a second time for the Pushcart Award Prize by the PlainView Press and a third time by the Yellow Arrow Press in 2021. [www.utecarson.com](http://www.utecarson.com)



45. **William Conelly**, after military service, took a master's in literature from UC Santa Barbara. Unrelated work in research and composition followed before he returned to academia in 2000. Able Muse sells a book of his early verse under the title *Uncontested Grounds*, and it may be reviewed at their website or via Amazon. Retired from teaching as a dual citizen, Conelly resides with his wife in the West Midlands town of Warwick, England.

# GJPP



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