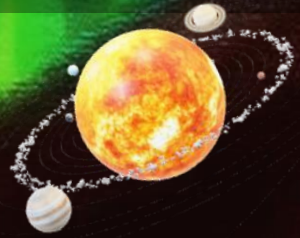


Brahmand: Voice of the Cosmos

E MAGAZINE FOR CREATIVE WRITING
A Literary Warrior Group Initiative



Red Carpet Stories
Javed Akhtar
Dr Nitish Bharadwaj

INAUGURAL ISSUE

**AUTUMN EDITION 2021
VOLUME I: ISSUE I**

Cover Painting by Aparajita Hazra

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EDITORIAL NOTE

Neelam Saxena Chandra

From the Editor's Desk

The Rainbow may be momentary, transient and fleeting,
But a soul connect is permanent we know,
In ancient times, people wrote with peacock feathers,
And turned fantasy into reality you know!
The Peacock Feathers designed artistically by the Lord,
Are like the stars placed perfectly on the Milky Way,
The Science of Universe certainly has a poetic side,
An artist could be the most articulate, they say!
Our peacock feathers are a tribute to Authors and Artists,
Who make our heart flutter and dance in the fairy land,
Here's our International Magazine *Brahmand: Voice of the Cosmos*,
Directed by the Creator's very hand!

Appropriateness of the Title *Brahmand: Voice of the Cosmos* and Vision

Our vision as the Editors of this Magazine is to unravel and awaken this beautifully formed creation. We all need to relish the warmth of the sun rising over the sand dunes. We need to celebrate the thousands of stars that scintillate on the Milky Way. We need to feel the gentle kiss of the ocean waves and listen to the rhythm of the falling rain. We need to pay a glowing tribute to the nature's spell, orbits of oxygen, trajectory of wind along winding roads, clouds of lace knitting the sky, mist moistening leaves, a rainbow tattoo arcing the navel of Heaven, the feet of flowers walking down the edge of a creek, the silvery white mountains, deep river gorges and a banquet of planets in space. We need to surrender to a force that is not only beautiful but powerful and supreme in myriad of ways. We look like puny little things amidst the Cosmos. Looking at the gargantuan *Brahmand*, we let go of all the shallow and superficial aspects of life. This is an enriching encounter with the divine. Especially in these turbulent times, there is a need to awaken the deep fountains of life from their dark, cold sleep. The peacock feathers that we are writing with, create hope where there might be none and despair where there is too much unrealistic happiness and a dire need for change.

We indeed have come a long way from where we were. Lives have gone through dramatic changes over the ages, but nonetheless, our connection with the *Brahmand* is eternal and immutable. At this point, Academicians, Researchers, Leaders Poets, Writers and Thinkers need to be questioned for our very existence on the planet. In an attempt to divert the current trajectory of 'progress' and 'development' towards a more sustainable and equitable future, this requires a more objective and critical thinking about our relationship and connection to the Cosmos.

EDITORIAL NOTE

The onus is on us to protect the Universe as the 21st century world of consumerism and fragile relationships has created a world of instant happiness, short-lived achievements, fake accomplishments, over ambitious ventures and thoughtless aspirations. It would be beneficial if we are better equipped with the knowledge to interact and deal with the Universe sensitively. Through this International Magazine, we need to connect with the people and communities around us through Art and Literature. Our vision is to combine critical thinking and academic rigour and look at our relationship with the Cosmos and pursue a collective change to living in a more sustainable, resilient, connected, harmonious and beautiful world that our ancient masters had imagined.

We are grateful to all the Contributors and reviewers who penned some deeply poignant poems for the Bilingual International Ezine. A special round of applause for all the Artists and Photographers who gave a Midas' touch to the magazine. ***Brahmand: Voice of the Cosmos***

Each poem and article printed in the Ezine has an aura that keeps the readers engulfed in the ubiquitous presence of the Cosmos. It will alienate them from teeming crowds into solitude. The photographs and paintings are simply exceptional for we viewers and patrons of art experience relentless isolation, secluded lands which compel us to give up our material attachments and progress towards eternity. Brahmand will transport the readers to a place where they would want to recline in the nature's amphitheatre. The Ezine would make them look afresh at themselves.

The Biannual Literary Ezine would be divided into two Seasons:

Brahmand Spring Edition

Brahmand Autumn Edition

Unveiling the Autumn Edition!

Hope you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed compiling and curating it...

May you experience bliss!

May you penetrate deeper and deeper into your soul and gaze in absolute wonder.

Warm Regards,

Executive Editor: Neelam Saxena Chandra

Ezine Designer: Dr. Pragya Bajpai

Coordinator: Dr. Purnima Kulkarni

Editorial Team (English)

Dr. Purnima Kulkarni

Dr. Pragya Bajpai

Ms. Waheeda Hussain

Editorial Team (Hindi)

Dr. Renu Mishra

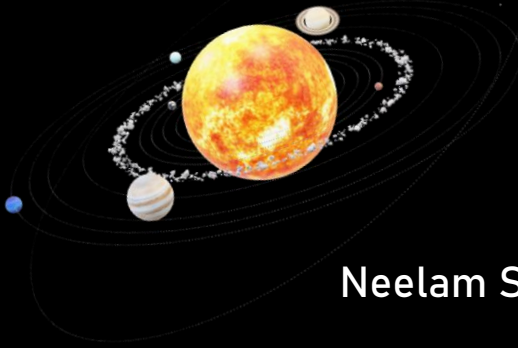
Ms. Nivedita Roy

Technical Expert: Shubham Jaiswal

BRAHMAND: VOICE OF THE COSMOS

THE MAGAZINE FOR CREATIVE WRITING
A LITERARY WARRIOR GROUP INITIATIVE

EDITORIAL TEAM



Neelam Saxena - Executive Editor

Magazine Designer - Dr. Pragya Bajpai
Magazine Coordinator - Dr. Purnima Kulkarni

EDITORIAL TEAM- ENGLISH



Dr. Purnima Kulkarni



Dr. Pragya Bajpai



Waheeda Husain

EDITORIAL TEAM- HINDI



Dr. Renu Mishra



Nivedita Roy



Technical Expert
Shubham Jaiswal

KRISHNA: THE DIVINE LOVER

By Dr. Satbir Chaddha



Melodious tunes of His magical flute
Float in the air in Vrindavana
Wrenching the hearts of the Gopis
Trembling the waters of the Yamuna
The ripples and silvery waves rhyming
With the notes of the esoteric rhapsody
Primordial 'ragas' of the primeval lover.

The sky meets the earth at the horizon,
As man and woman meet in unison.

The cosmos fills with spiritual love,
Love for the doe eyed 'Kanha' of the dark skin,
His love for the universe manifested
In His love for the Gopis, symbolic.
The female form dignifying
The love that is forever
Forever like the moon and stars.

The land, the branches of trees,
Birds and deer and the hare,
Are all entranced and awash,
With Divine music and love.

Now he is the mischievous Krishna
The adult of her child 'makhan chor'.
Stealing the raiment of his beloved
Who sway and swim in trance.
Submerged in the waters of his love,
In the cool moonlight of his charms,
Merged in powerful universal love.

The dance is not worldly, human eyes can neither see
nor discern,
The 'chaal' the 'tatkaar' and the 'chakkar'
Flow to the divine melody beats.
Knowing only the boundless depths of love,
As only chosen few devotees can learn.

The eternal lover perched on the tree,
Tapping on your flute in ecstasy,
Your smile benign and godly,
Forever you were, forever you'll be,
Krishna the Divine Lover.

Artist: Dr. Pragya Bajpai



MEMORIES

Dr. Paromita Mukherjeeojha

Dreams float like clouds
Within the shimmery eyes
The body wrapped in tricolour
The naked truth lies
Reminding nothing remains
Life is a blur
Today there would be eulogies
All newspaper singing praises
Tomorrow all that would remain
Are infinite bruises



Artist:
Dr. Paromita
Mukherjeeojha



Of a precious life lost
A husband who would no more
Raise a toast
A child who would
Have no more a father to boast
Few years hence
His forgotten valour
Might be raked up
In some obscure corner
Of newspapers
Life would go on
His sacrifice conveniently
Put in the backburner
All that would remain
Would be gossamer memories
To help the family
Get on with their lives gone awry.
We as an indebted nation
Can do better than this surely.



Painting by Geethanjali Dilip



IN LOVE WITH LIFE

Would love to be remembered as ~
A Being who held the whole world
in loving tenderness to her heart,
Looked at each Being, each flower
every blade of grass with wonder,
Who folded hands in gratitude
for the priceless gift of
each moment, each breath,
each acquaintance, each experience,
Welcomed, accepted and embraced
all that came her way –
joys - sorrows, smiles - tears, bliss - pain,
elation - depression, hope - fear, etc.,
Tasted life in all her sweet bitter flavors
Romanced the sky and wooed the clouds
Flirted with the wind and rejoiced in the rains
Hugged emptiness with the same passion
as she hugged her friends,
Sunk in the depths of despair as smoothly
as she floated in the heavens of bliss,
For the unknown PRESENCE
always held her in his invisible arms!

By Shashi Kothari



Artist: Fehmida Haider

FABRIC

By Megha Sood

Some people weave burlap into the fabric of our lives and some weave gold thread. Both contribute to make the whole picture beautiful and unique."

-Anonymous

Between the threads of reality
and threads of our vivid dreams
we weave our fabric of life
embellish it with our achievements
flaunting around with pride
And we don't want any stains on it
we want it pristine and pure
draped in the gossamer of our desires
we just want to live
one day more
But as time flies
the fabric is tugged and pulled part
at the edges
and seams seem to come out
no matter how much you save it

How much you avoid
there are people who will
weave love and passion on it
the silky-smooth touch
a touch of the cashmere
mixed with works of filigree
which wraps our souls
and gives it meaning
But my love,
don't you ever forget
there are some who
will leave an impression
resurrect and infuse your soul
When they embrace you with the
burlap of their life
a touch of their own.



Crochet Work by Dr. Aparajita Hazra

Naked always meant
something to hide
conceal,
to protect,
to be covered
under multiple layers
draped cautiously
away from the hungry hawk-
eyed
not be devoured
to be safely tucked
like a promise tucked in the
centre
of a palm of a sleeping child

Naked always meant
something to be away from
the voyeuristic eyes
away from the greed laden
senses
something which is pure
sublime, away from the prying
eyes

Naked always had a Seraphic
genteel touch
of a million cherubs
something to be
touched precariously

This silence feels too naked
carved between the folds of
my skin
and wedged between the
me and my loneliness
bereft of the words
screaming to be heard
This urgency of draping the
nakedness,
this hunger
perched on our mouths

Naked feels the silence
which needs to be heard
Naked are my thoughts
doused in the ephemeral passion
despised in equal measures

Naked is the language of the soul
waiting to be heard.

Krishna serenades to Radha

Language of the Soul

By Megha Sood





Artist: Anima Neelu Dey

Meera's Giridhar Gopala

By Omkar Manav

Giridhar Gopala guards Meera beneath His wings and keeps her defended and safe,

He rescues her from predators and hooligans who howl, growl, grate and chafe.

Meera is surrounded by Krishna's unparalleled love, care and divine Grace,

He offers His wealth of encouragement and never pulls her face into an ugly grimace.

Meera's Lord is powerful and protective, scintillating in her inward sight,

An understanding ally, constant support, the one who's triumphant in every fight.

He gives her unprecedented hope and courage, He is her doting companion so true,

When life suddenly throws a curveball at her, He gifts Her strength to paddle through.

He watches over Her as she moves around in parched deserts and guards her when she sleeps,

He's her doting parent, safe refuge, haven and pulsating heartbeat.

Yamuna meets Kali Yuga

By Dr. Purnima Kulkarni

Yamuna is tired of putting on a show.
The weariness inside her massively grows,
The blinding lights now sting her eyes, you know
At times she grows stagnant, reluctant to flow.

It's hard for her to put mascara on,
When inconsolable tears cause it to run,
Sometimes she suddenly runs out of breath,
Her sorrows never ended with Krishna's death.

The photographers hold their cameras steady,
They check on Yamuna to see if she's ready,
But she's too tired to film any show,
In Kali Yuga, she has lost her sparkle and glow.

Yamuna is sick of having to perform,
She weeps incessantly at the break of dawn,
She has given and forgiven everyone,
But feels sucked-dry, parched and now she's done.

She has nothing left inside her tank,
Krishna no more visits her bank;
She's weary, woeful, neglected and bored,
Taken for granted, bruised, hurt and torn.

Krishna hears her screams though she does not yell,
When she shares her woes, it hurts like hell!
He can feel her anguish and her numbing pain,
But in Kali Yuga, He will not descend again.

Compassionately, He offers her rest,
And tries to make her feel loved and blessed,
He inspires her to recall the Dwapar Yuga tunes,
To Holy work and Heaven's hues.

So, Yamuna flows and wipes her eyes,
For with Krishna's succour, she can rise.
She refuses to don the mere mortal clothes,
She has Krishna's armour and His righteous robes.

So, every day is a chance to shine,
Glory to this Goddess divine,
For in this world where life is a show,
Inside her, Krishna's Salvation grows!

Krishna gazes at Yamuna's twists, turns and tortuous curves,
He watches over people and their resonating glory,
Of conquering Yamuna, claiming her and maiming her,
Why doesn't he bring her to Goloka and end her tragic story?



Artist: Geethanjali Dilip

Notes:

Kali Yuga: The Present Yuga

Dwapar Yuga: The Yuga in which Krishna was born

Goloka: The world of cows and Krishna's Heaven

Elevation to Depression

Once upon a time I was head over heels in love with a Prince
Who would smell my cascading hair shampooed to keep the texture intact.
We would often go on a promenade in flower fields,
His sugar sweet utterances would leave an indelible impact.

My satin soft cheeks would rub across his moustaches,
His treacle of love spilt all over me,
Me, the love sick lass
went embracing him through the lengths and breadths
of the flower beds,
His romantic rhapsodies would overload my heart with glee.

I couldn't measure the depths and heights of my love,
It was like an echo or a euphonic sound of endlessness,
The four letters of LOVE were studded with shimmering stars
from one alphabet to another,
Our butterfly kisses were coated with restlessness.

He was my true soulmate and my love lorn lips are an evidence to that,
My glistening eyes heaped encomiums on him and waxed eloquent!
My confusion has turned into a coherence now,
Love and lust can never be equal, through the latter may be thrilling and piquant.

My lover was caught in lust's frenzied thoughts,
His complicated behaviour branched itself into multiple knots,
Now there is an abysmal hole inside me,
Unrequited love is like clumps of blood forming painful clots.

I cannot whisk away from the villainous moments gnashing their teeth,
As I listen to the rhythm of the rain through my window,
I am deprived of the Mountain Laurels which would bloom in clusters,
Now shocks of nostalgia graze in the meadows.

My life is like that of the tumultuous clouds,
Who cannot nullify the effects of a terror stricken thunderstorm,
A feeling of nothingness gapes at me from a distance,
Penning stanzas in dejection is now a regular norm.

My life after this heart break is like zig-saw pieces of a puzzle,
I keep embellishing and embroidering my soulmate's absence,
Crumpled into a wild memory that conjures up,
Clothed and Wrapped in the reminiscences of decadence.



Dr. Purnima Kulkarni



Photographer:
Neeharika Shembekar



The Spirit

By Devi Nagrani

For whose company does the soul descend?
On this earth in every birth?
And still leap from the hearth,
To the funeral pyre,
When the inner flame leaves the mortal frame?
Who comes here?
For whose company, who knows?
Yes! Knows he, only the "Nameless HE"
'Self-born' but never forlorn:
Because of his Evolution, his Leela
Creates a wonderful revolution, his consort 'Maya'.
The only company is 'He'
The Eternal Symphony to all life.
The sixth sense is only to know
This sweet essence in this worldly strife
In fire or mire, on earth or heaven,
He is all in all.



HEAL THE WORLD

By Jaipreet



Dear God, with folded hands and bent knees,
Request you to unlock the doors of happiness with your divine keys.

Exasperated with this ceaseless pandemic and humans fight,

Illuminate our paths of life with your cosmic light.

Obliterate those scars and cries of mourning,

We have understood your inkling, being this an ultimate warning.

Please accept our kind and pious prayers with utmost respect,

We have learned our lessons through deep introspect.

Let the atrocity of the sun penetrate and activate our numb senses,

And everyone nurtures each other across borders

irrespective of the synthetic fences.

Make us drench in the rain of your nectar,

You are indeed the supreme and our divine protector.



Let our envy, vanity, and greed shed like autumn leaves,

You have the power to rotate the wheels of life, we all believe.

Make this world a corona free place,

Where compassion and humanity are seen on everyone's face.

Where everyone truly loves their mother Earth,

And spread the message of love and mirth.

We are nothing without your hymns and words,

O'Lord, save us from the trap of this deadly virus and heal the world!

JOURNEY OF A POEM

By Jaipreet

A poem emanates from the ocean of heart,
And a poet keeps adding a medley in his idiosyncratic cart.

Crafted with idyllic and magical words,
Experiences are encapsulated from his real as well as surreal world.
Embellishes with a resplendent image to give a reverberating effect,

Every poet tries to make his/her poem look perfect.

With wings of copyright, it gets ready to fly,
In assorted literary forums along with rules to comply.

Sometimes it gets love, likes, comments,

And sometimes it melts people's hearts
and they publish it with inspiring compliments.

While some give their critical evaluation,

And others like to unfurl in different languages with its translation.

Sometimes it fails and sometimes it succeeds in competitions across borders,

It follows universal love and humanity devoid of any law and order.

The journey of a poem goes through a wave of emotions at every start,

But each poem always remains close to a poet's heart!



Bewitcher

By Farizaa Sabreen

Last night, beneath the sprawling inky sky
Wind was delicate, so was I
Reflection of palm trees created a sheer streak into pool
Water flaunted alone as a kaleidoscope.

I was lying idly on a deck chair,
Indulging myself into nocturnal tranquility
Ripples of water swept away contradiction of life
The place is my comfort zone, far from anxiety.

A sudden clack of shoes on a wooden deck made me amazed
There was a regal statue next to me
An ethereal presence of a classically chiseled face
With flair of cynical grace.

My heart penetrated by his sublime sight,
A bewitcher was all set to sparkle the night
Hide and seek of our eyes spoke thousands of words
Vibe of him captured me like a whorl of blizzards.

HOME

I could hear the splash-splash of oars around me,
my vision a myopic blur,
my eyes strain
to make out meaning in this madness.

Dread takes over.

I had been drawn gently through the brush,
dewy wetness brushing against my foot.

The heart was heavy
the mind fighting enigma
unable to be happy with going.

It had taken some coaxing
For me to take that first gingerly step
into the cold clammy water.

The heart was heavy, the mind fighting enigma—
ties too strong were hard to leave behind.

It seemed like eternity

I thought we would never stop.

Then I was raised, gently held by that warm touch.

Eyes strained, the mind fought
to make out my strange captor.

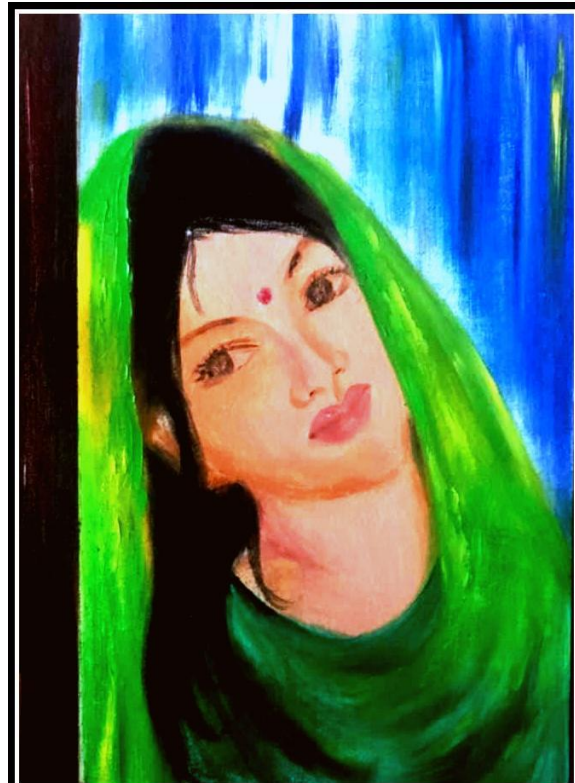
Then stumbling forth
blindly following my sole companion
we headed towards a light that slowly grew.
Iridescent now, the light silhouetted my sweet
Captor.

Recognition dawned over,
eyes awash with unbelieving hope
the mind leapt with joy
as He turned.

Krishna my Krishna
my Gopala
you came to take me Home
you kept your word
you did not let me down
like them in life.



Poet and Artist
Dr. Aparajita Hazra



Artist: Aparajita Hazra

The Sun Will Rise

By Nafisa Taksali

The flowers will bloom again
The leaves that have fallen in autumn
In spring they will spurt again
The sun will rise again.

The sky is yours, yours is the earth
You just need to know your worth
Give your wings the wind to fly
Come what may face it never deny
The dawn will smile again
The sun will rise again

Let your hope never die
For its the spark that makes you pious
The world is the court of almighty
Justice can never be biased
The faith will win again
The sun will rise again.



Artist: Fehmida Haider



Little Angel

By Gerlinde Staffer

A fractured soul on the edge of empathy,
A body full of rags tells the tale of misery.
How dare you discover the tears of God!
Why not lift the dark veil from your heart?

Observe the flowing same pulsating blood:
Isn't a little angel seeking to open his bud?
Water the flower with your golden intent,
Let your inner soft voice rise and be present.

You can earn only by kind act in this world!
So let your humanity for others be unfurled.
With warmth, happiness will fill up your soul
So never be indifferent to man's heavy toil.

Elements

All she wanted was affection and the
promise in his eyes.

He did not come.

So, she went back to the Moon,
And she transformed in the colours of
the sky.

She went back to the Sun
Which created her art.

She has become the Elements.



Yellow Sunlight

Rays of Sunlight play in the air,

Sing my song, awakening and stopping
that love from distance.

I become a witch, a nymph, a Goddess.

I am the wind which penetrates your
eyes and further on.

The song which promises life.

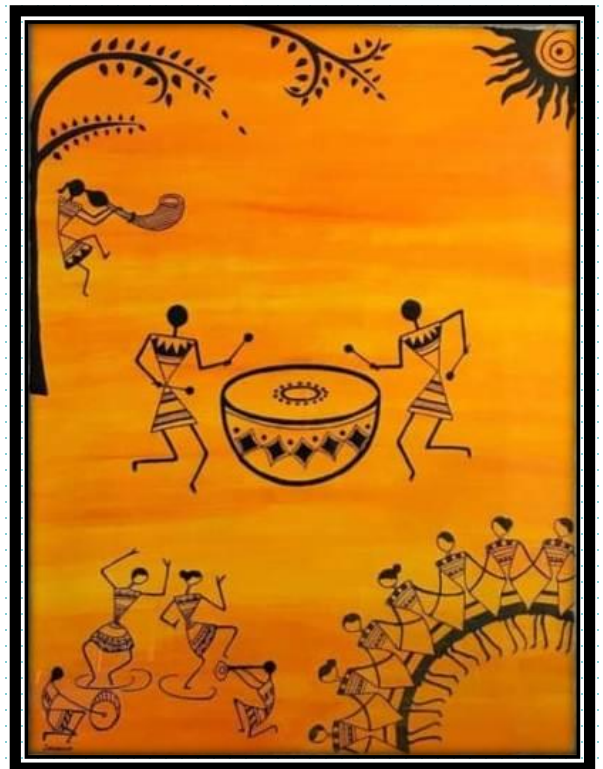
New colours for your soul.

Yellow sunlight.



Lotus Star

Just before dawn
I stare at the sky
And the cloudy pearls
I dream the dream of combining
water and fire.
The Yin and Yang.
Principles of life.
Here is what. I become.
The Universe unfold, the lotus
within me.
And there
In the skies I am born again
A star.



Artist: Adhishree Bhawe

LET'S BEGIN WITH A COMMA



Poornima Rao



Do not pamper your boys
And neglect your girls
We need to put a full stop
Let's begin with a comma

Do not slight the mother
Kid gaze cameras are on
We need to put a full stop
Let's begin with a comma

Lower that raised hand
Your son is carefully watching
We need to put a full stop
Let's begin with a comma

Do not disturb the studying Rani
Let Raja make tea and do the
dishes
We need to put a full stop
Let's begin with a comm

Girls are not objects of desire
Let your son know that right
We need to put a full stop
Let's begin with a comma

Do not shame the victim
Hang the pervert rapist
We need to put a full stop
We need to put a FULL STOP



THE PILLAR



By Pushpa Anand

Fathers don't share their sorrows
They keep it inside the queer like arrows.
They don't cry openly
They sob inwardly.

We call them a strong man at home
He lets us feel so till he is in his tomb.
We demand things as though he is our ATM
forever
He silently waits for his salary but doesn't say
words like never.

He manages to bring all the joy
Forgetting that once he was a naughty boy.
Responsibilities have made him grim
Otherwise, he was also smart and trim.

He never shows that he is sad
He lies a little more on the broken old cot
It's time we realise something is
Troubling him or what.

Still, he says everything is fine
And we can find out his diet when he dines
Little he will eat and wash his hands
Worried about selling off his lands...

Fees, bills, all financial troubles
But promises that it will vanish like a bubble.
Everything appears to us fine
But his eyes would have lost their lustre and
shine.

He keeps running the race of life
Trying to keep happy his kids and wife.
He keeps bracing up for the next fight
But ensures that everything at home is right.

On every member he keeps a watch quietly
He always wants his family to run smoothly.
A keen observer of his son's habits and outing
And on his daughter never doubting
But on both he will keep an eye
For him both are apples of his eye.

Medicines for all he will take care
But his sugar and BP who will take care?

This hero of every house is an UNSUNG HERO I tell
you
Without him many families suffer I tell you.

Every year Fathers' Day is celebrated
A cake cut and candles blown
But he still worries... why spend so much
and frowns in low tone!
He is like that. Made like that. I bet.
A father is a father!
None can replace this hero!

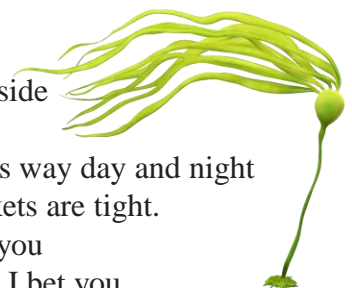
He will be there in your thoughts ever guiding every
time.
This hero will be cherished every moment every time.

A grand salute to this busy bee
Every house has this silent humming bee.
Honestly a lot of patience goes into playing this part
Being a father is not easy, jokes apart...

New shoes. New phone he knows not at all
When his children grow up
He shares it all.
His shopping for Diwali comes the last or forgotten
always
Still, he is happy with the previous year's shirt anyways.

Sometimes he needs to be strict
All the same
Mother always scares her kids with his name
So unnecessarily this hero sometimes gets defamed I tell
you
But is happy inside that everyone is now under his
control he shows you.

Like a jackfruit hard from outside
But sweet from inside.
This hero unendingly plods his way day and night
Even when he knows his pockets are tight.
I salute the spirit in him I tell you
He is like a fence to the house I bet you.



Lying cosy and huddled in a sack of amniotic fluid, I often heard you sing
The lullabies you hummed, with your love and warmth did ring
But little did I know how much pain you forbore
For bringing me into this world what all you had to endure

Society's norms compelled you to snap your maternal ties
Abandoning me to my harsh lot your heart must have cried
Broken hearted you bade this cruel world adieu
And left me with the memories of your lullabies few.

At each step those dim memories resonate in my veins
This life without your soothing touch is an unbearable pain
My heart searches for you in all possible alleys
My ears crave to hear your soothing lullabies.

One night under the moonlit sky,
a drop of tear rolled down my eye
Suddenly your voice echoed in my ears,
as though to wipe my tears

Telling me you will send your lullabies to me
In the music of the nightingale cooing merrily
In the murmur of the rivers flowing endlessly
In the echoes of the mountains standing tall in their majesty

The chirping birds, the rustling leaves,
the blowing winds and the whispering trees
From now on will my messengers be
to carry my lullabies from heavens to thee!



I Miss Your Lullaby

By Seema Jain

Far away in another world
Where I can fly freely like a bird
Where I can sail on waves and waft on a breeze
Where life is an eternal song to sing as I please

Where I feel like a leaf or a tender petal
A spring in my steps and a tune on my lips
A carefree dance to a divine rhythm
Where none views me through this society's prism

Where none stops me from taking birth
None puts tethers on my flight and worth
Where none views me as a plaything for pleasure
Where I can explore my inner treasure

Where I am not being cast in fixed moulds
Where none else the key to my happiness holds
Where I can search for my own ecstasy
In spiritual depths or my heart's mystery

Where I can forget about the pain all around
Else how can I seek solace in empty sounds?
Where I can unburden the servitude of centuries
Where I can script my own destiny

Where chains are broken and nectar flows
And my entire being with divinity glows.
Oh Lord! Let me bathe in such fervour
That this ecstatic delight is my daily wear.

Ecstasy

By Seema Jain

Photographer: Prahmarsh Bajpai

© PRAHARSH'S PHOTOGRAPHY

Youngest of the seven brothers, Lal; a simple boy,
Being the youngest he was an apple of everybody's eye!
Tall, lean figured lad, he has always been an evolved soul
a soul made to perfection,
His impeccable way of life, never needed an introduction.
He grew up, now married to a smart woman,
A sweet small family with three kids was woven.
They say, time flies.

Lal - An Untold Story

His nest was empty, even before he realized.

By Richa Shrivastava

Days went by and so did the years,
His family grew with Grandsons and Granddaughters.
That long bony face was covered with wrinkles
and the thick shiny hair had now turned silver.
He was growing weak, he was now bed-ridden
the love of his life, his wife was sick.



And the day came, when he was left alone as his wife departed
leaving tears in his eyes, I saw him breaking down,
a sight, so unknown!

Still there was a hope in his eyes, his children were by his side,
Kids took turns to visit him fortnightly
spending a day or two then getting back, get busy!
He always waited for a call and a surprise visit
without a reason.

But soon came the realization
he was more of a responsibility than a Parent
And he made a cocoon around himself,
cutting off from all the expectations!
Now he sits with his fragile frame of body,
amidst his plants in the garden as he waits.



A day will arrive, when his soul would be set free as a butterfly.
The old soul is in search of a suitable end to unfold.

GRAND DAUGHTER'S AGONY

By Sarahana Bajpai



You are my favourite country tale,
Warmth in the freezing hail,
Ship without a destination that sails,
Plenty of time to offer without fail!

Dadi, I dream of your long silver hair,
Nani, days without your lively company,
I can't bear,
Baba, I miss your stories, the ones like
The Turtle and the Hare,
Nana, I can't wait to eat the Samosas
that you bring home with concern and care!

I love you all just the same,
When will end this covid game?
I also prayed with candle flame.
I want to see you soon again.

Till then, I sit back and cherish the good old days,
And hope to get back the phase!



The grey clouds remind me of you,
As it slowly brings rain with melancholic hue,
The rain becomes egoistic,
And as it's close to too much, it's no more romantic,
The drops land on the window ledge,
From the open edge,
I see and feel only anger,
As I sit and try to turn you into a stranger,
My lips are dry, my eyes are wet,
The floor is cold just like my heart,
still desperate, unable to forget.
My mind has finally caught control,
My heart and soul
have agreed to follow.
I won't sulk or cry in a corner,
I am ready to leave behind my horror.



MOVING ON

Humans Vs Demonides

By Anthony Mondal

Prelude/Introduction:

The cosmic laborers have taken over Planet Earth

The cosmic laborers of Planet Demonide

Earth, God's favourite planet is now a demonide colony.

God weeps over His creation and his captive human children.

The rule of Demonides have forced God's children into exile.

God's children, they roam in wilderness shedding tears

Shedding tears at the sad plight of Planet Earth.

And Earth, God's beautiful planet used to be

A place of bountiful nature, fruit flowers and melodies sweet

An eternal spring playground, for the Humans and Divines to meet

Now is a prison made of steel, bricks and concrete

Where the demonide dictates and the humans weep.

Music Arts and literature they all have been banned

People pursuing Arts declared insanelly mad.

And their glossy appearances, on beautiful maidens have cast a spell

Rescue we must our beautiful maidens from their shiny cell

Everything that glitters, to the demonides eye appear like gold.

By hook and crook, it must be bought and sold

And they build and rebuild and build some more

Till their soul hardens and suffer no more.

Cacophony of noises the demonides adore

While Silence- they can't tolerate.

And to contemplate things beyond this material world

Well, that is just too difficult for them to comprehend.

Artist:

Dr.Paromita Mukherjeejha



Mean arrogant overbearing and fools
Like a plague they have descended on the Human schools
By the brute force crushed, broken and torn apart
Defeated and humiliated is the sensitive human plant
Exploit, abuse and tyranny rampant
The demonides willing to kill the soul's music triumphant.

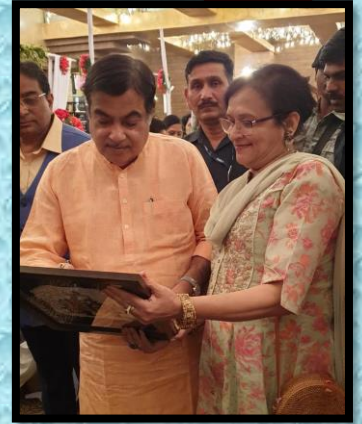
Glorious Nature, fleeing in terror with her silent feet
Endlessly harassed and traumatized by their relentless pursuit
Not a moment's peace, not even a little rest
And she weeps and mourns, remembering her pristine days

Where have friendship and joyous feasts have vanished?
Where is the celebration that was promised?
Dark days indeed have fallen upon Earth
Gloom reigns supreme, while misery boldly marches on
Yonder you hear the blood thirsty war cry of the demonides
To join their evil ways, for surely would be a spiritual suicide

And yet Hope still faintly beats her drum
Band together O Humans if you hear Her drum
Truth stands patiently by the way side
His luminous robe my mortal eyes blind
Have ye Faith, have ye Courage O Humans
Your glorious days on Earth is about to begin
And certainly, the day is near when the demonides will fall
Victory to Thee, Victory to Humans, Victory to your oppressed Soul



Artist:
Fehmida Haider



Artist: Fehmida Haider

THE BOAT



I
and
the blue
sea the bond
is as beautiful as
could be it helps me
float, it helps me sail in
stormy weather and in gust
and gale. There is romance and
there is adventure as I keep moving
hither and thither. The unknown is so mysterious, strange and amazing
It gives me a new enthusiasm, zest and zing. The vastness and enormity
of the deep sea makes me ruminant and brood of the titanic eternity
I want to touch the horizon someday though it seems impossible
I somehow feel I shall find my way. Are you ready to sail
with me? I will be too delighted to have you join me.

By Neelam Saxena Chandra



THE DASHAVATAR

By Geethanjali Dilip

The Dashavatar of Lord Vishnu rendered in free verse most humbly attempted by this devotee of Krishna ...my Ishta

1. MATSYA

My beloved, You would swim, a giant fish,
Amazingly at ease, to show that sea is the salt of life,
To loom a truth simple that water is Your source,
Stunningly beautiful Your Shree to Salvage from demonic propensities,
Yesterday, today and tomorrow You merge to shoonya,
Adore You will I in Your timeless zone!



2. KOORMA

Kosha unseen, knowing we are children of Your Nila, the blue Planet,
Opulent splendour holding the disc of expanding Time,
Overdrive of cosmic din encapsulated in a conch shell as the resonant Om,
Radiant in Your light we anchor on Your shell of Existence,
Merged in duality You created us to realize we are apart from You,
Astutely You churn life to purify our silt of inadvertent sin too!

3. VARAHA

Veritable witness residing in our heart and Soul,
A mere dot we beseech You to appear,
Respite You bestow if only we understood,
Antagonizing filth you will uproot Evil,
Haunt You will, the intimidating wild boar, malign to chase,
Adore You I will, Bhavaraha the sustainer of Your dream!!



4. NARASIMHA

Narayana Omnipresent who burst through the pillar of Ego,
Adroitly proving that faith sets sail to salvation,
Redeemer of Prahallada who saw You through his foetal ears,
Annihilator of Hiranyakshan self-absorbed in himself,
Simha You appeared hidden in the Ultimate Purusha,
Heavens and all of creation shook with Your angry roar,
Appeased by Your divine feminine Lakshmi as the child stood awed by the faith
You invested in him!



5. VAMANA

Victorious Vikrama who conquered the three worlds,
A dwarf auspicious of knowledge divine You trod,
Magnificently leveling swollen pride of mistaken identity,
Answer to deluded charitable King Bali of netherworlds,
who surrendered to Your benevolence,
Nihilists !! Look in awe now at every miracle that manifests,
Ad infinitum He incarnates self - effulgence dispelling in the nadir of ignorance!



6. PARSHRAMA

Parshu claimed from Lord Shiva, perils to axe with Your infallible stroke of justice,
Action personified as the son obedient of Jamadagni and Renuka Devi,
Red and angry, the immortal Chiranjeevi You still exist,
Subtle in Your ways to punish the " might is right " misnomer,
Humungous slayer of human soldiers who coveted the Holy cow Kamadhenu,
Royalty brought down to its knees as twenty-one times you razed,
Atman of a fiery wrath that crusades against the unjust,
Mother You brought back to life imploring Your earthly father Jamadagni,
Anon to witness, creator of Kalaripayattu,
Coach You will the dark one riding the white horse of the dark age Of Kali!



7. RAMA

Resplendent Sun who descended to be merely human,
Allegiance to keep Your word in loyalty, a boon to humanity,
Master of the senses who conquers all banality,
Adore You will I Rama, the beautiful face who wedded Sita, Earth Incarnate!



8. BALRAM

Bestowed balance with the strength to sustain this cosmic manifestation,
Adi Sesha the coiled bed of the intellect,
Lord Vishnu reclines on You
watching His dream unfold,
Restoring fertility to Mother Earth You shield Her with Your plough,
Ardent adorer of Your companion Krishna,
Mace Your weapon do you yield, a right hand to shoulder Your duty to Him!



9. KRISHNA

Kaleidoscope of living colours that attract,
Rasa Leela charmer, Enjoyer ultimate beyond the carnal pleasures,
Intimately in conjugal love with Radha Rani in Eternal transcendental love,
Sanctification of this weary soul You grant on uttering Your Holy name,
Harbinger of all that is auspicious through contentment,
Name Divine that melts the nectar in the articulate tongue,
Ardent teacher of Karma, life's lessons You profess through Your exemplary countenance!



10. KALKI

Kali Yug the dark age that dulls the intellect and soul,
Armoured You ride the horse, with the sword to slice the malignant malady,
Lord of death to redeem death of Life,
Kindling the soul to be aware of Your wrath when trespassing laws of existence,
Instiller of truth that You exist in all and all of it exists in You.



The Year 2020 or 420

By Rasika Gogte

You crowned our country,
But never knew that the crown could be so ugly.

We dreamt each day to be joyful,
But each day proved to be a dooms day.

You took away our sunshine,
And left us choiceless.

When the deadly crown tested positive,

Our mental state got haywire.

You were undoubtedly ruthless,

For you took away our loved ones,

And left us with a void.

Our priceless children could also feel your
nightmares.

We humans are socially tamed animals.

But distancing and masking bullied us.

We knew that life is not a bed of roses,
And you proved it to be completely thorny.

Our physical activities were at stake,
But we strained and trained our mindsets

To be at our best

We hope to drive you away,

And bid you a good bye.

We wish to build the world a home and furnish it
with love.

I'd like to hold it in my arms and tug it in my heart.

I'd like to teach the world to sing,

In perfect harmony, peace and glory.



Artist:

Mayuresh Shirolkar



Brahmand: Voice of the Cosmos, Vol 1, Issue 1

DOCTOR

By Anjali Srivastava

Clad in a white apron and stethoscope smartly,
Hurriedly rushing from room to room and floor to floor,
Listening to all the patients in a cool manner,
Talking about treatment and nothing anymore!

All the leaves lapse, they cannot afford to relax,
Sometimes they are blamed for creating wealth,
But in fact, they forget all the enjoyment and fun,
They care for the patients and ignore their own health!

They suggest others to take a nutritious diet,
But few people know, doctors skip their meals,
When they examine and treat a number of patients,
Hunger and thirst, doctors also feel!

They wish to spend good time at home,
With their family, kids, spouse and old parents,
But their duties are tough and demanding,
Their days and nights are devoted to the patients!

Many a times patients consult at the worst stage,
Hiding facts due to their ignorance,
Doctors try their best and the patients recover,
Else they face people's undue arrogance!

I appreciate the dedication of honest doctors,
It should be understood by each and every one,
Medicine is not a career, but a penance,
So, kindly respect doctors and the medical profession!



Photographer: Neeharika Shembekar



Mythology is a science
not something we studied
these myths were carved into our minds
and the truth was buried
but the spirit was never gone , it is yet to be discovered
this is the story of a woman whose beauty was covered

Her beauty was unparalleled , regal and strong
she was confident with her words
she could prove the innocent wrong
She had her own reputation
she wasn't just somebody's daughter
But these myths mistreated her
like her feelings didn't matter

She was adored by everyone who came her way
she could control them with her elegance
she could leave any man astray
She was a sight for sore eyes
They say "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder"
she was praised even by the gods
but the goddesses felt something colder

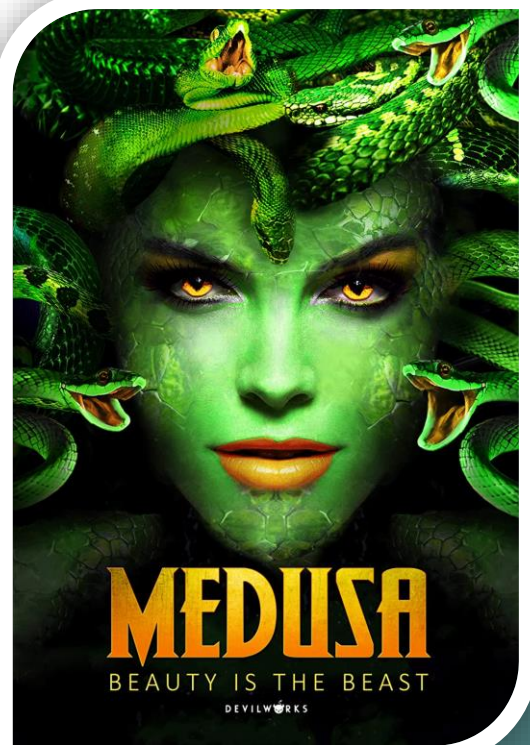
They were drowned in jealousy
so they ordered her demolition
they wanted her to be forgotten
under any unfeasible condition
So they defamed her
where she deserved hymns
They made her the villain,
and said her intentions were grim

Her eyes shined like stars
they had a light of their own
But the myths said they gave scars
That her gaze could turn you to stone
They said her skin had scales
she was uglier than a toad
Hair nothing but snakes
with red eyes that glowed

So they wrote unabashed, in the great odyssey
and the truth locked up in a chest without a key
She was so daunting that they had her beheaded
and in the folklore , this deception was embedded
But now we know they did injustice to her soul
This is the story of Medusa
and the men she turned to stone.

Myths

Ananya Kumar
Age: 13, Class: IX
Chickar International School





The earth breathes heavily, blood turns cold, lips blue
wondering if something you can do to rescue.

The chest pains in melancholy
sitting all alone praying for magic and mercy
in the warzone on the alert.

The Victorian blue eyes are teary, vision blurred.

The secret silent sobs echo behind the blanket of ozone layer,
the bosom of the air is drowned in the ocean of despair,
Between heavy rains of tears and hot-headedness,
It tries to maintain sanity while resisting the weight of stress
The butterflies in the belly are threatened and feel choked and distressed

Sharp eyed vultures up above restlessly cry for help
as the brazen progress is unstoppable
turning the home into hell

The nerves of fallen trees begin to freeze,
As the dirty dance of death, breaks the knees
and ribs of land
and stops the breathless breeze.

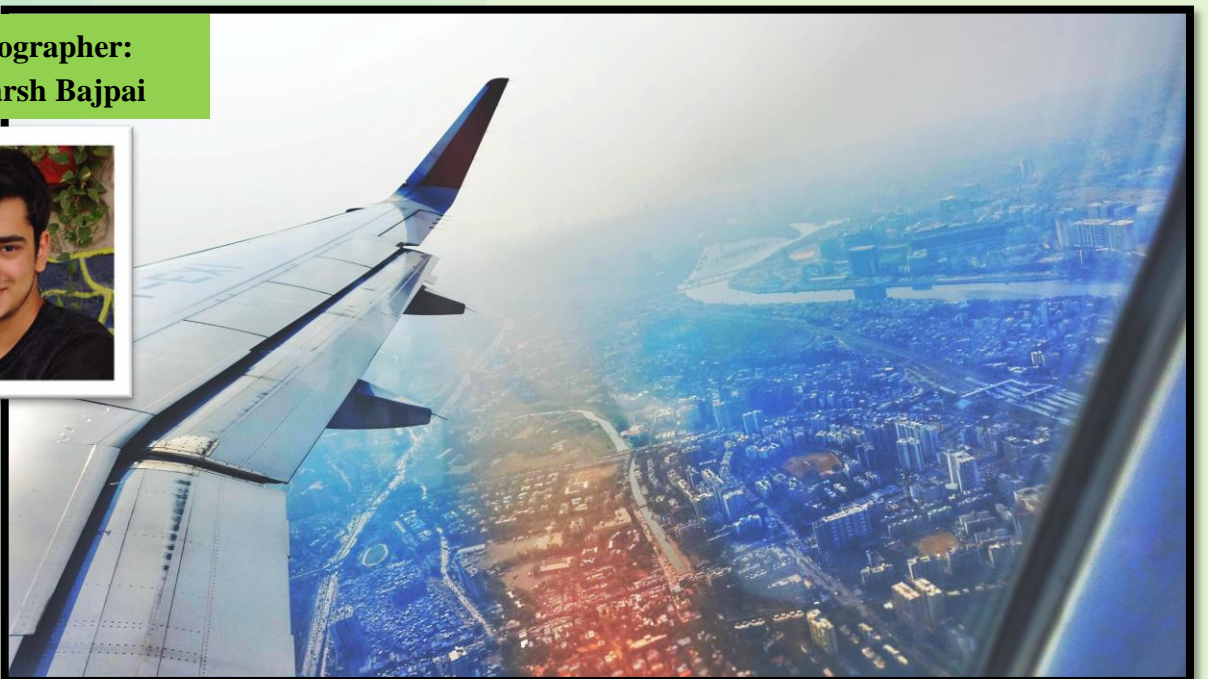
When the essence of existence lay bare and cast down,
the destroyed glory of God mourns the fate of global town.

THE EARTH

By Dr. Pragya Bajpai



Photographer:
Praharsh Bajpai



It's Monsoon

Shanti Bhushan Roy

Indian Filmmaker, Cinematographer

Sun shines softly
As if it's on my loft
The Toy car goes
Vroom
I am stuck
In my room

Thunder and lightning
Scare me ...
For My cat its frightening
My dog's endless barks
As if it has seen sharks..

I love to sit by my window
Soaking in the play of light
and shadow
Having my cup of tea
Forgetting where I left my keys...

Everyone is in their nest
Birds, Monkeys, Squirrels
The trees sway to the gentle wind...
Leaves fall and touch the earth

Drops of water trickle down
Desires melt and break
all shackles
Divine oneness of souls

Dancing of hearts
Engulf the sheets
My heart soars
As our eyes meet

Poets paint pink
Colours, Nature and Emotions
have infinite link to..
Our love, our togetherness

The storm within has transformed..
Let it all flow
Just keep your glow
Let's have marshmallows

O my beloved!
hold me close and sing
I could go weak
On my knees...

Sparkling and Shining
Behind cloud doors
I miss the moon
Is it monsoon
Yes it is monsoon!



Photographer: Praharsh Bajpai

Photographer: Praharsh Bajpai

I won't let go
Of myself
Music of my soul
It's precious

I won't give up
my freedom
To sing
To love
To be human

Darkness
Threat
Violence
Gun
Beard
Turban
Have no solace

Opium tonic
Makes minds
Tick
How can they
Ban Music

They forget
To be human
How can they
Kill anyone

They can't take
My soul
My goal
My dream
As I scream
In pain
Without gain

I won't give up
My music
They have
no logic
It's tragic

Soul will long for
freedom
I will always be
in the Ring
I will always
Sing!!



I will always Sing
By Shanti Bhushan Roy
Indian Filmmaker, Cinematographer

A Short Story

Hiroshima

Waheeda Hussain



It was a beautiful summer morning, with clear blue sky. The girl relished the summer season as it was time for festivals. Soon the streets were to be decorated with glittering lamps. And the thought of vibrant and colourful processions with hundreds of people dancing, chanting and shouting made Yassa excited. She loved the colourful floats (Omekashi) and she enjoyed eating snacks from the food stalls lined up on the streets.

Today she was super excited as it was her 10th birthday and her mother had stitched a bright pink kimono for her which reminded her of Sakura festival in spring. Her father had bought matching zori sandals and tabi socks from the market. They lived a little far from the hustle and bustle of the city. Their wooden house with tile roof was lined on the banks of Otagawa river.

Yassa washed herself and wore her new birthday kimono. Then the family sat down for breakfast. Her mother had made steamed rice, miso soup and Tsukemono (Japanese pickle).

As soon as they began to eat, the ground began to rumble. Her mother took her hand and dragged her outside. A mushroom cloud billowed into the sky and everything turned white and she fell unconscious. When she opened her eyes, there were charred bodies around her and her pink kimono was now black with soot. There was smoke and debris everywhere. "The little boy" had engulfed and darkened forever the future of the little girl. She sat alone shattered near her mother's charred body.



BECOMING BY MICHELLE OBAMA

Dr. Maitreyee Joshi

"Becoming" by Michelle Obama was not my instinctive choice, but I saw it flashed across the social media so often that I could not suppress my curiosity and got hold of it on Audible.

On audible, it's a big book extending to 17 plus hours of listening, read by Michelle Obama herself.

The book is a memoir of Michelle Obama as she recounts her "becoming" from her childhood at Euclid Avenue in the south side of Chicago to the eight years in the White House as the First Lady during President Barack Obama's tenure.

Becoming takes you on a narrative journey of Michelle Robinson, experiencing and imbibing the middle class, humble values as she grew up in the Euclid Avenue of Southside Chicago. She describes herself as a competitive kindergartner, who made the class teacher take a retest for her because she was not able to get the coveted grade.

Her ambition to be better than any average student continued until she became a lawyer from Harvard Law School. After she graduated she worked in a law firm where Barack Obama was 3 years her Junior, though he was senior to her in age.

When she married Barack Obama, she felt for the first time that she needed to "make a swerve" as she describes it, and decided to pursue a job and career apart from being a lawyer. Her new job consisted of increasing citizen engagement with the Chicago city hospital.

As she was struggling to run a household with two growing daughters and a demanding job, Barack Obama had already become a senator and had decided to run for the President's post.

When she shifted to The White House as a First Lady, the old question which she had been asking herself, " Am I good enough?", surfaced again.

In the White House, when she asked Hillary Clinton for advice, she was told not to try to be involved in her husband's job as a President, since according to her, the American people did not approve of it much.

Michelle Obama in the White House, planted a kitchen garden, the produce from which was used in the White House kitchen; started a countrywide move to change the menu of big chains of hotels to be less in sugar, salt and oil. The movement included the menus of the school canteens also.

She started a fitness drive all over America and also had informal meetings with teenage schoolgirls in the White House to discuss their career plans and future choices. She became an ambassador of girls education.

Through all of this, she stuck to her humble middle-class values and passionately put them forward. She never lost sight of the basics and the down to earth in bringing up her two lovely daughters, Malia and Sasha.

She bares it all when she tells how in spite of every privilege of being a First lady and the daughters of the President of America, they lived under constant political glare, a threat to their lives from everywhere and anywhere, and the stress of public life.

She does not forget to remember and mention each of her friends, who supported her through the whole journey, especially her gang of girls wherever she went throughout her life. According to Michelle Obama, women friends have forever been her support systems

Michelle Obama, a black woman from Chicago comes across as a candid First Lady and she becomes a role model for every young, hard-working girl who dares to dream.



Author and Artist: Dr. Aparna Pradhan

Architect of The Sarvajanik Ganeshotsav



Ganesh Chaturthi also known as “Vinayak Chaturthi” is one of the most spectacular festivals in India. Hindus not only across the country but all over the world celebrate the 10 day long festival with great enthusiasm. Ganesh Chaturthi becomes a joyful moment for all Hindus. This is the festival when lord comes home to bless devotees. Lord Ganesh is considered harbinger of good times and the Hindus believe that worshipping Lord Ganesh during the festival brings good luck and prosperity to the family.

The festival is held to commemorate the birth anniversary of Lord Ganesh. Born on the fourth day (Chaturthi) of the bright fortnight of Bhadrapada, Lord Ganesh also called “Pratham Devata” by His devotees is foremost amongst all Gods. All Hindu rituals begin with an invocation to this deity. OM SHRI GANESHAAYA NAMAHA – the four letter mantra is enchanted to begin the prayer to Lord Ganesh to seek his blessings before starting a new venture.

While Ganesh Chaturthi has been celebrated in Indian homes from times immemorial. The present day public celebration has a very interesting history and it is difficult to believe that the festival in its current form is just over a century old.

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaja, the founder of Maratha Empire started the Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations in the 16th century after Mughal- Maratha wars to promote culture and nationalism. The festival assumed the nature of a major public event rather than remaining confined to individual homes. Peshwas family deity being Lord Ganesh; the festival was celebrated with lot of enthusiasm during the rule of Peshwas. The festival lost its state patronage with the fall of Peshwas.

Ganesh festival once again became a private family celebration during the British Raj. the British government had banned public and political gatherings for more than twenty people but they exempted religious assembly for prayers at mosque on Fridays. This blocked the public gatherings of Hindus because the Hindu religion did not mandate weekly gatherings for praying.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak, an Indian nationalist, a social reformer and one of the stalwarts of India's freedom movements, decided to use religion to inculcate a feeling of unity among masses through a festive fervour. He observed that Lord Ganesh was the most beloved God of Hindus and was worshipped by all classes of people. He realized Ganesh's idol was the best way to bond people and to bridge the gap between Brahmins and non-Brahmins.

The idea of celebrating Ganesh Utsav publicly captivated Tilak when Ganesh idol was publicly placed by Bhausahab Laxman Javale in Pune in 1892. Tilak popularised Ganesh Chaturthi as a National festival to unite all social classes and circumvent the British colonial law on large public gatherings. It was in fact one of the strongest movements to evoke nationalism and had the potential to arouse the public. The idea of celebrating Ganesh Utsav publicly captivated the common man.

“Sarvajanic Ganeshotsav” – the public celebration of Ganesh festival was started by Tilak in 1893. He transformed the annual domestic Ganesh Chaturthi festival into a large well organised public event. Large clay idols of Ganesh were installed in pavilions. He established the practice of submerging the idols installed at public celebration on the 10th day of the festivity.

The first and the oldest mandal ‘Keshavi Naik Chawl Sarvajanic Ganeshotsav’ was set up at Girgaum in 1893. Soon the spirit of festivity spread like a wildfire. Mandals were set up in every nook and corner of Bombay. People from different religions gathered to celebrate the festival. The streets were turned into venues for 10 day long festivity.

Architect of The Sarvajanik Ganeshotsav- Dr. Aparna Pradhan

This brilliant political move by Tilak served dual purpose – firstly, it served a meeting place for common people of all castes and communities at a time when public gatherings were forbidden by the British Empire. Secondly, it united Hindus irrespective of their castes and ignited the fire of patriotism to silently aid the freedom struggle. He revived the patriotic spirit amongst the masses. It served as a public forum for mass communication.

During the ten day festivity debates, plays, concerts, folk dances, intellectual discourses etc. were organised and people from all castes and communities participated whole-heartedly in these activities. Speeches by national leaders both Hindus and Muslims and briefings by Tilak himself on these forums aroused awakening in the masses to protest against British rule and fight for Swaraj.

The present day ‘Sarvajanik Ganeshotsav’ is a continuation of Bal Gangadhar Tilak’s version of Ganesh Chaturthi. It is celebrated not only in Maharashtra but also in other states with great enthusiasm. The oldest Ganapati pandal at Girgaum, Mumbai sticks to its old tradition of celebrating the festival even today. They do not use loud speakers or dhol-tasha. They still order two and a half feet Ganesh idol for the festival every year from the same sculptor family for the last four generations.

The preparations of the modern day festival start months in advance. Huge pandal are erected and colourful beautiful idols are installed both at homes and in Sarvajanik Ganesh Pandal. Many pandal are now installing eco-friendly idols to curb pollution. Ganesha idols are placed on a raised platform. The priest invokes life into the idol amidst chanting of mantras. Sixteen rituals known as Shodacha-Upachaara Puja (worship by 16 offerings) involved in the puja are followed religiously. Mantras are chanted and aarti is performed. Prasad is offered to all the devotees after aarti.

During the festival time the idols are worshipped every day and thousands of people visit these pandal. According to Hindu scriptures, prayers should be offered to Lord Ganesha and Ganesha mantras should be chanted on Ganesha Chaturthi day to seek His blessings. Devotional songs, folk songs and traditional dances and drum beats are a part of the rituals.

Thousands of people come to bid farewell to the Lord. On the day of immersion the statues are carried on decorated floats. Devotional song, dance and drum beats add charm to the procession and immersion of the idols. The idols are immersed amidst loud sounds of ‘Ganapati Maharaj ki Jai’. The festival comes to an end with a plea to the lord to return back the next year with chants of ‘Ganapati Bappa Morya, pudcha varshi laukar ya (Hail Lord Ganesh, return again next year).

“MAY LORD GANESH SHOWER HIS BLESSINGS ON YOU”

HAPPY GANESH CHATURTHI



Artist: Anima Neelu Dey

ARJUNA'S MOJO

Ravi Velluri

“O Janardana! What pleasure will we derive from killing the sons of Dhritarashtra? Although they are criminals, sin alone will be our lot if we kill them.”

Fourteen-year-old Arjuna read out a passage from the *Bhagvad Gita* to his grandfather who was seated on a wheel chair. The grandfather listened to the passage endearingly and smiled.

“Do you know the meaning of this passage?” Narayan Singh asked his grandson. Arjuna wore a quizzical look on his face. He had migrated from reading Harry Potter and sci-fi to ancient Indian epics goaded by his grandfather, much to his consternation.

Over the last six months, every night before going to bed, this was the routine. The young boy read out a chapter of C Rajagopalachari’s *Ramayana* or *Mahabharata*, and at times some passages of the *Song Celestial* to his grandfather.

The stripling youngster was endowed with several talents. He was proficient in his studies, especially the sciences and mathematics. The teenager was a mellifluous singer and a reasonably talented cricketer. The multi-faceted youngster, was extremely shy by nature. Arjuna’s mother was however always supportive of her son and goaded him to showcase his talents. But the youngster just lacked the pluck to perform in dramatics, music competitions, participate in sports or even whisper in the class. The fourteen-year-old lived in a world of stage fright. He was perennially fighting the demons in his mind. The talented youngster earned the epithet of *bookworm* in school on account of his diffident nature.

There was a new entrant to Arjuna’s class 10-B in the form of charming and glamorous Draupadi. Soon she became the cynosure of all class 10 students. Arjuna too nursed a secret desire to befriend Draupadi, but could not muster adequate courage as he grappled with his negative thoughts. Draupadi realized that Arjuna was the smartest of them all, and made overtures. His inability to respond to her, gave her the impression that he was spurning her.

She assumed that Arjuna was haughty and arrogant. In order to settle the scores, she became pally with Karan of 10-C, an equally talented student, though of an indifferent pedigree and not a Rajput like her. Of course, this did not deter their bonding, perhaps more because Draupadi's endeavour was to spite Arjuna. Arjuna was aghast and he shed tears in solitude as the only girl he nursed feelings towards had forsaken him.

Kunti, Arjuna's mother was aware about the psychological condition of her son as was her father-in-law Narayan Singh. Kunti hailed from the princely family of Bikaner and lived the life of a princess in her childhood and youth. She was chosen by her parents to serve the family guru, Swami Durvasa Sharma. This she performed with devotion and distinction until her marriage to Pandu Singh. Tragically, she had had a troubled relationship with her maverick husband Pandu Singh, worsened by his roving eye. He was fond of going on *shikars* or hunting expeditions pretty often. The couple squabbled incessantly and this impacted the mind of young Arjuna. The youngster simmered with anger given this atmosphere at home.

To make things worse, Pandu Singh was in a live-in relationship with Madri Roy Singh of Cooch Behar. As a child, he could not quite comprehend as to why his parents did not live together. He realised that there was something amiss and his father would be away for days from the family. His mother shed copious tears in solitude. Even when her husband made brief appearances in the household, it brought only misery to his mother. Arjuna could not comprehend the developments but developed a deep animus towards his father.

When Arjuna was nine, the family received the news that Pandu and Madri had met their nemesis when the cottage they occupied was torched by some local tribals. They were affronted that the presence of the outsider who did not respect their ways was destroying their cultural moorings and traditions. Young Arjuna, his mother Kunti and grandfather Narayan were devastated with the news. Arjuna further retreated into his shell. He became an absolute introvert.

"We need to extricate Arjuna from this cesspool," Kunti said to her father-in-law.

"From today let Arjuna spend one hour with me every night before going to bed. I will metamorphose his personality. He will become robust and brawny," the patriarch of the family was to tell his daughter-in-law.

Then began the classes to inculcate valour through the study of ancient epics of India.

"O Arjuna! He who thus knows the nature of my divine birth and action, he is not born again when he dies, but attains me. Many, purified through the meditation of knowledge, have immersed themselves, in me and sought refuge in me, discarding attachment, fear and anger."

Narayan Singh recited this epochal passage from *Bhagvad Gita* to his grandson.

He continued further.

"O son of Kunti, whatever you don't wish to do because of delusion, you will have to undertake in spite of that, because you are tied down by your natural duty. O Arjuna, God is established in the hearts of all beings and, through maya, makes all beings whirl, as if they are mounted on machines."

Narayan Singh stood up from his wheel chair.

As if on cue, Kunti Singh played B.R Chopra's talismanic tele serial Mahabharata where Lord Krishna was displaying his *Vishwarup*.

Arjuna Singh felt shivers in his body. He was emboldened after listening to the *Bhagvad Gita* over a period of eighteen days, listening to the eighteen chapters and witnessing the majestic form of Lord Krishna. He picked up his guitar and decided to participate in the upcoming competition in school.

His grandfather gave him a slip of paper and made him promise to read the contents only next day in school. After filing his nomination for the competition, Arjuna opened the piece of paper and was shocked.

Yet another bombshell hit him.

Karan was his elder brother. He was the son of his mother and Guru Durvasa Sharma.

But today Arjuna had rediscovered his mojo. Much like Arjuna of Mahabharata had picked up his *Gandiva* and was ready to face the world headlong, the young boy was a transformed personality reading the epics at the feet of his grandfather. Narayan Singh recited this epochal passage from *Bhagvad Gita* to his grandson.

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English-translation of the Sanskrit Upadeshamala Verses

Translated by : Ganesh Rajamani Iyer

S. No. / Upadeshamala Shloka Title / 'Taatsparya' – Meaning (in English) :



1. Maataa Shatruhu Pitaa Vairii :

Own Parents (Mother and Father) seem like enemies
to the Child (Boy), who has not been educated;
He is a misfit in an assembly (august gathering),
just like a Crane would be, in the midst of Swans.

2. Sukhaarthii chet tyajedvidyaam :

A pleasure-seeker should give up on Knowledge,
A student (seeker of Knowledge) should give-up pleasures;
How can a pleasure-seeker gain Knowledge?,
and from whence pleasures, for a (true) student?

3. Aachaaryaat Paadamaadatte :

A student acquires Knowledge in the following manner :

One-fourth received from **the Teacher**,
one-fourth using **his/her own intellect**,
one-fourth vide **interaction with Class-mates**,
and the remaining one-fourth **in the course of time**.

4. Svagruhe Pujiyate Murkhaha :

Even a fool is viewed with regard, in his own home;
a rich man receives adulation, in his own village;
a King is worshipped in his own Kingdom;
only *a Vidwaan (learned man) is truly respected everywhere.*

5. Janitaa Chopanetaa Cha :

The following five are regarded as father-figures :

Own Father; Spiritual Father;
the Knowledge-giver;
the provider of food/means of livelihood;
and the remover of fears.

6. Gurupatni Raajapatni :

The following five are regarded as 'Mothers' / Maternal-figures :

**Guru's wife; King's wife;
Elder brother's wife;
Wife's mother, and own mother.**

7. Satyam Maata Pitaa Gnaanam :

The following six are my relatives :

**Truth is my Mother, Wisdom my Father;
Virtue my Brother, Kindness my Friend;
Peace my Wife, and Patience my Child (Son).**

8. 'Khalaha(k) Karoti Durvruttam' :

*The consequences or effects of evil deeds, done by wicked men,
are certainly felt by noble / sagely men;*

Ravana took away (abducted) Sita,
but it was the Ocean whose smooth flow was affected!
(due to the 'Setubandhanam'/bridge).

9. 'Yatha Paropakareshu, Nityam Jagarti Sajjana ha' :

**Just as a good man is always awake, for doing good to others; so is a bad man
always awake, for doing harm to others.**

10. 'Shlokardhena Pravashyaami' :

*The essence contained in crores of books can be told in half-a-shloka; doing good to
others results in Punya, whereas doing harm to others results in Paapa.*

11. Gacchann Papiiliko yaati :

*Whereas a moving ant can travel even hundreds of yojanas;
a stationary Garuda does not move even a single step.*

Photographer:
Neeharika Shembekar



12. Udyogaha(kh) khalu kartavyaha :

To obtain the fruits/expected results, one must, indeed, make efforts like a cat, which drinks milk, daily, even though it has no access to cows, right from the time of its birth.

13. Ekasya Karma Samvikshaya :

Upon observing a mis-deed being carried out, others also follow-suit, in doing the same blameable-act; *People are prone to doing as others do (being blind-followers), instead of caring for the truth/seeking the truth.*

14. “Sampado Mahataameva”:

Only great people experience the extremities - great prosperity or great adversity; only the moon waxes and wanes, whereas the stars do not change at all.

15. “Krushhato Naasti Durbhiksham”:

The farmer does not experience any scarcity of household provisions; **the person who prays** does not sin; **the silent-person** does not quarrel; and **the ever-alert/wakeful person** does not experience fear.

Source of the original Shlokas in Samskrit : Samskrita Baladarshaha :

or the 'Infant Reader' : published by **R. S. Vadhyar & Sons, Palakkad.**

Note : Nobody knows who are the authors of these timeless, wonderful Upadeshamala Shlokas (*literal meaning of Upadeshamala : A Garland of good sayings/advice !*); these have been passed on, since time immemorial, by the 'Shruti & Smruti' paddhati / Oral-traditions of our ancient land : **Bharat-varsha**, situated in 'Jambu-dweepa' ! :-)



Photographer: Nikita Saxena

When the mirror of life breaks, it leaves you devastated. You only see your bleeding wounds; you ponder over why it was broken and you hear the reverberations of your grieving heart. However, what you fail to notice is the light emanating from each splinter. Let that light reach your heart and let it glow with happiness. With the strength of that light, a renewed mirror can appear miraculously and give you the courage to let your grief pass.

"Splinters of a Broken Mirror" is a collection of fifty poems written by Limca Book of Records Holder, Neelam Saxena, that make you aware of that inner strength.

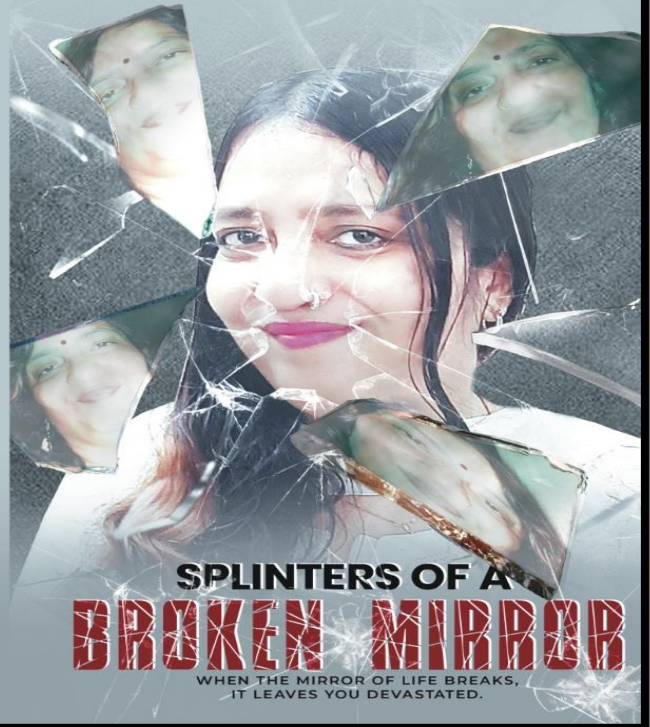


Neelam Saxena Chandra, a 1992 batch IRSEE officer, has authored 5 novels, 1 novella and 7 short story collections, 32 poetry collections and 14 children's books. She holds a record with the Limca Book of Records -2015 for being the Author having the highest number of publications in a year in English and Hindi. She has won II prize in a poetry contest organized by American Embassy and in a National poetry contest organized by Poetry Council of India, 2016. She has received Sohanlal Dwivedi Puraskar for children's literature by Maharashtra state Hindi Sahitya Akademi for the year 2018, Humanity International Women Achiever Awards 2018, Bharat Nirman Literary award in 2017, Premchand award by Ministry of Railways, Rabindranath Tagore International Poetry award, Soninder Samman, Freedom award by Radio city for Lyrics along with other awards and honors. She was listed in Forbes as one among 78 most popular authors in the country in 2014.

Neelam Saxena Chandra suffers from an incurable passion of writing poetry and fiction
Millennium Post

NEELAM SAXENA CHANDRA

SPLINTERS OF A BROKEN MIRROR



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Book Review: Splinters of a Broken Mirror

By Dr. Purnima Kulkarni

Friends, this Pandemic has been a difficult, anxiety-provoking and a financially compromised period, but at least it was populated by some super fine literature and as Litterateurs, we took our silver linings wherever we could.

My hallowed duty as a literary artist is to take a look at Neelam Saxena Chandra's latest Anthology, *Splinters of a Broken Mirror*. Tears were spilled, feelings were hurt and the poems were re-read before interviewing the Poetess on Red Carpet Stories.

We all know that poetry is extremely subjective. This is not a poetry book, but a box which includes human stains, mistakes, noise, profound expressions of grief, grappling, vivid images, resilience and a number of invisible photographs which flashed in my inward eye. It's highly original, and, if I'm being fair, it bears an enormous emotional weight despite carrying a few scattered words. Feelings are complicated and so is poetry. But the best part is, most of the poems end on a note of reconciliation.

Neelam Saxena's writing moves quickly, with a constantly changing rhythm and a centre in motion, and the resulting poems are buoyant, often playful, as they cover a wide gamut of emotions: desire to violence, from women empowerment to spirituality. She has a prodigious ability to experiment with form and syntax.

This incredible collection makes her a spokeswoman of poetry. Her act of writing poetry is perpetually and necessarily expansive. Language urges her to wander into a place that offers her ripples of laughter and a few cathartic tears. She sounds vulnerable in ways that she may not have anticipated, but the vulnerability that she claims isn't the whole story. She has managed to gather all the splinters of a broken mirror and created an Anthology with it. Her work does not stay in the realm of the abstract - much of the collection lingers on the relationships that make up our lives on Earth, the poignancy of grief, and its existence on a scale, both personal and planetary. She is one of those rare and exceptional writers who can seamlessly blend the personal and the mythic to create shimmering gems that are both joyous and horrifying, tender and brutal, intimate and sweeping.

Truly the most brilliant and affecting poetry collection I've read during the pandemic. Neelam Saxena compels us to read many of her poems through the lens of her complicated—loving, melancholic and at times blatantly troubling, yet interesting and engaging relationship with life. It is a must read during these overwhelmingly unpredictable times about fearing the unknowable.

The book is artful, beautiful, sometimes funny, subtle when subtlety is required, razor sharp when that better suits her needs. It investigates memory and identity, self-doubt and self-expression. The realization at the end of this book sits heavily upon the heart: What follows is a poetic document of such revelatory force that it can be clubbed as a lament, testimony, and celebration, depending upon the reader response.

Neelam Saxena's language is dense and disquietingly beautiful in its diction. Yet beneath her bewitching language, lies the pain: and it all seems so effortless. This is a book that, even just from its title will haunt the readers. It is one of those rare poetry books that is near-universally praised by poets, but which also captures the attention of even fair-weather friends of poetry. A must read not only because of the content of the work but also because of its rhythmic insistence. It is a book of unapologetic wandering and unapologetic reflection. It is all the more beautiful for how it invites its readers to wander with it.

Why do we ever pick up a book of poetry if we had our hearts broken again and again? Well, the book inspires us to pick up those broken pieces of heart and recreate a newer self. Saxena leaves the reader standing on the edge of a cliff, holding our hearts in her hand. Her endings are perfectly sharpened blades brandishing the last blow, after a slow rhythmic build. Neelam Saxena poises her readers on a tightrope and knows just when to shake. And it is in being punctured and shaken that we enter a place of stillness where we, the readers, can begin to grapple with pain, memory, trauma, on an individual and communal scale.

Kavita Ki कक्षा

On the Spot Poetry Writing Contest

By Nivedita Roy

The contest was conceived and hosted by Nivedita Roy on Neelam Saxena's page for 4 Saturdays consecutively, starting from June 26 till July 17th. The adrenaline rush was natural as it was a first of its kind on the page!

Rules were announced during the show.

Words / topics were given on the spot. Contestants were given 10 minutes to write their piece. Then they had the task of reciting their poems on air.

Winners were announced at the end of each show.

Details of the show:

26th June Session 1 - on the spot Hindi poetry competition (live)

topic was

Main achambhit ho jaati hoon / मैं अचंभित हो जाती हूँ

Harpreet Kaur - winner of the contest created a brilliant poem with a message which impressed the judge Dr Renu Misra.

Second place was won by Alka Nigam and Sarita Tripathi ! Ashu Ratra's sporting spirit won her the third position.

3rd July session 2 - on the spot English poetry writing competition (live)

Topic - If I knew then what I know now

Neelam Saxena as the judge enacted a forgetful person and brought lot of fun and positive energy to the session

Ritika S. won the first prize here with an impressive and dramatic recital.

Seema Jain won the second place and Shail Raghuvanshi got the third position.

10th July Session 3 - on the spot Hindi/Urdu shayari competition (live)

Topic - Unn lamhon se guzaarish hai/ उन लम्हों से गुज़ारिश है

The winner here was Ajay Verma

Second place was captured by Sunil Joshi and third was by Surekha Sahu.

Anoop Pandey as a judge was very precise and particular about his criteria and made a great decision. He meticulously created a rubric to give his feedback to each contestant.

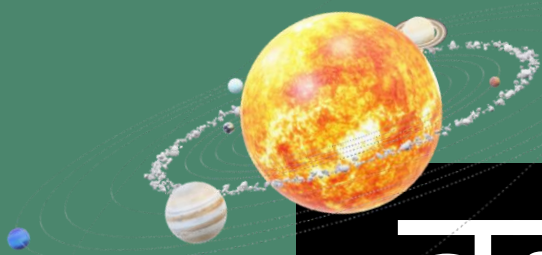
17th July Session 4 - a grand finale evening with all 3 winners from each show was full of vibrancy and mixed bag of recitals. The purpose was to felicitate the winners and end the series on a high note with more poetry reverberating on NS page.

The contestants were amazing during group sessions and they brought in a bag full of enthusiasm and talent to the show.

The judges were very meticulous and had a tough job to do. They recited a poem each while the contestants were on the task.

Prasoon, the designer and fondly called the poster boy was instrumental in preparation of posters for shows each week and certificates for winners.

As the host of the show Nivedita Roy had an amazing experience. She has many memories of the contestants abiding with rules yet keeping the atmosphere full of camaraderie and mutual support.

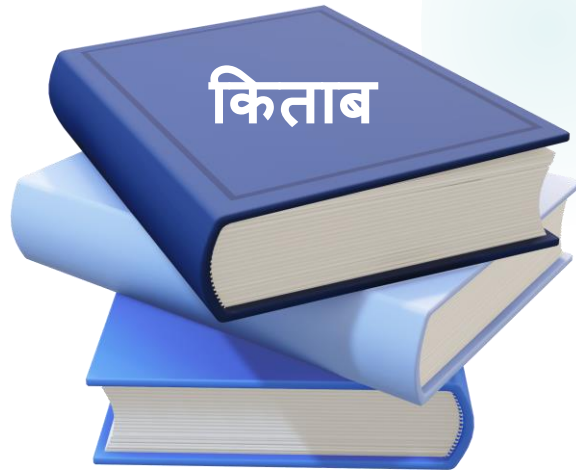


ब्रह्माण्ड

हिन्दी



ब्रजेश सिंह



एक मुसलसल सी किताब सा जीता हूँ मैं

भरी-भरी है, खाली भी है
हर दिन एक नये सफ़हे पर कुछ लिखती है
कुछ सफ़हे इतने रंगीं कि जैसे इन्द्रधनुष से
कुछ शफ़ाक, कुछ धुँधले से भी....
अधलिखे, भरे, कुछ मुड़े हुये भी
जबसे उतरी है बाज़ार में,
भाग रही है....

मीलों चलकर, रातों जगकर
खारा-मीठा-सादा चखकर
एक हाथ से दूजे में, फिर तीजे, चौथे....
कहीं कभी कोई रख भी लेता है संभालकर
कुछ दिन उसकी भी होकर रह लेती है
अपने घर आने को बेकरार सी लगती है अब
कितने क्रिस्से, कितने माज़ी, ना जाने कितने
अफ़साने
तह कर के रख लेती है
लम्हा लम्हा उतर रही है ज़िल्द,
आजकल सीता हूँ मैं

एक मुसलसल सी किताब सा जीता हूँ मैं ।



वो सब कुछ लुटाए बैठी है

लेफ्टिनेंट कर्नल सलिल जैन

बचपन में कहा था एक बार, भूख लगी है
वो है कि आज भी थाली सजाए बैठी है ।
रात में कहा था एक बार, डर लगता है
वो है कि आज भी नीड़ उड़ाये बैठी है ।
धूप में कहा था एक बार, प्यास लगी है,
वो है कि आज भी गागर बहाये बैठी है ।
बसंत में कहा था एक बार, फूल चाहिए,
वो है कि आज भी बागीचा खिलाए बैठी है ।
जिद्द में कहा था एक बार, खिलौना चाहिए,
वो है कि आज भी हाट लगाए बैठी है ।
जोश में कहा था एक बार, तेरी रक्षा करूँगा,
वो है कि आज भी राखी सजाए बैठी है ।
लड़कपन में कहा था एक बार, प्यार है,
वो है कि आज भी दिल लगाए बैठी है ।
जवानी में कहा था एक बार, कुबूल है,
वो है कि आज भी सिंदूर लगाए बैठी है ।
बुढ़ापे में कहा था एक बार, अँधेरा है,
वो है कि आज भी चिराग जलाये बैठी है ।
वो माँ है, बहन है , बीवी है , बेटी है ,
वो है कि आज भी सब कुछ लुटाए बैठी है।



Artist: Aparajita Hazra



रूह को खोजने वाले

अंजली श्रीवास्तव

भटकती फिरती थी मैं, गाँव -गाँव, शहर -शहर
कहां -कहां नहीं भटकी मैं, कौन गली, कौन डगर
याद ये भी नहीं कि किससे पूछा,किसको मिली
पूछती फिरती थी उसे, मैं तो बस जिस जिससे मिली

जाने कितने जन्म बीते उसे ढूँढ- ढूँढ यहां- वहां
जाने कितनी बार मैं क्या- क्या न बनी कहां- कहां
जाने कितनों की संतान,कितनों की बनी बाप- माँ
हर बार कोई रूप धरा नया, जन्म लिया जहां -जहां

कोई योगी,साधू या सूफी ऐसा कभी मिला नहीं
रूह को खोजने वाले को राह जो दिखाए सही
एक दिन मेरे कानों में जैसे कोई देववाणी गई
तू अंश है उसी ईश्वर का, स्वयं को क्यों ढूँढ रही ?



Artist

Fehmida Haider



Artist: Fehmida Haider

वो मिट्टी था चिनाबों की खालिस हिंदुस्तानी,
दर्प से तना चेहरा खाँटी माटी की उजास लिये....

जिस भी किरदार में चाहे पानी सा उतर जाए,
जान भर दे कहानियों के किताबी कैरेक्टर में....

बात कह दे तो बस यूँ लगे के ब्रह्म वाक्य है,
दिलो दिमाग के रास्ते लफ़्ज़ रूह को छू जाएँ....

सवाल पूछतीं निगाहें मशाल की बेबस चीखें,
बक गोपी की या कराह देवदास की आह....

कौन कंबख्त है जो जीने के लिये पीता है कहे
तो किस पारो का दिल न चीर दे ऐसी तड़प....

जब भी मिलिये इन किरदारों से आवाक् हो बैठिये,
अगर सलीम बन के माँग ले तो जान दे कई....

दिलीप कुमार, तुम एक नहीं थे, तुम कहीं नहीं गये,
तुम आस पास ही हो, हम सब में थोड़े ज़िंदा....

खुशनसीब हैं हम कि तुमने हमारे दौर में साँसें बाँटी,
यूसुफ़ बड़े अजीज थे तुम, बड़े अजीज हो तुम....

दिलीप कुमार

अनूप कुमार पांडेय



बड़ी मुश्किल में है
ये देश।
बढ़े हैं आम जनो
के क्लेश।
है जीना हुआ
बड़ा मुहाल...!
बड़ा ही बुरा
हुआ है हाल...!
सुनो ना
तुम्हारी बड़ी ज़रूरत है...!

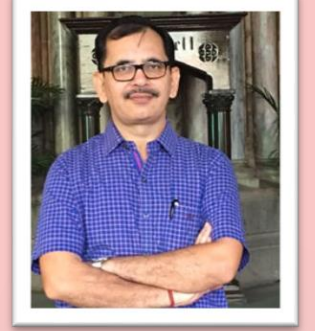
तुमने तो घूमें हैं
कई देश...!!!
और परखे हैं
कई परिवेश...!!!
देखकर भाँप लेते हो
नब्ज़ भी नाप लेते हो।
सुनो ना
तुम्हारी बड़ी ज़रूरत है...!

दवा भी हैं
दुआ भी है
हालाँकि कि थोड़ी
कम ले, फिर हैं।
लेकिन ...जाने क्या है बात...!
असर दोनों में
कम ले, फिर है।
सुनो ना
तुम्हारी बड़ी ज़रूरत है...!

मियाँ दरवेश सुनो ना ...

फ़िज़ा में काले साये हैं
डराते हैं
जो आ आ के।
हवा में ज़हर फैला है
मरे हैं
लोग साँस ले के।
समझ पर
लग गये ताले।
आके कोई
इन्हें सम्हाले।
सुनो ना
तुम्हारी बड़ी ज़रूरत है...!

लोग अच्छे
भले थे कल,
जान से आज जाते हैं...!
जान को छीनने
साये आह
दबे पाँव आते हैं...!
कोई मंतर
ज़रा फूँको..!
शिफ़ा कोई ज़रा
पढ़ दो...!
सुनो ना
तुम्हारी बड़ी ज़रूरत है...!



अनूप कुमार पांडेय

तुम्हारे बोल जादू हैं
कोई मिसरी
सी घुलती है...!
तुम्हारे इकतारे की धुन
रब के दिल
में बसती है...!
तुम्हारी आमद मरहम है
तुम से रहमत बरसती है...!
ज़रा सा
अपनी फ़ितरत से
हमें भी सुकून दे दो ना...!
सुनो ना
तुम्हारी बड़ी ज़रूरत है...!

मियाँ दरवेश
सुनो ना
तुम्हारी बड़ी ज़रूरत है...!

तेरा श्याम कहलाऊं

Artist: Geethanjali Dilip

सुनील जोशी

जो तुम हो साथ
तो मैं आस बन जाऊं
जो बन जाओ तुम राधा
में तेरा श्याम कहलाऊं

मुझे है अभिमान तुम पर
यह कैसे मैं बतलाऊं
हृदय की बेसुधी को
कैसे तुम तक मैं पहुँचाऊं
जो बन जाओ तुम राधा
में तेरा श्याम कहलाऊं

अब चाह नहीं दूजी
कि बिन तेरे सहारा हो
जो सफर करो तुम कश्ती से
तो मैं पतवार बन जाऊं
जो बन जाओ तुम राधा
में तेरा श्याम कहलाऊं



मुझे विश्वास है तुम पर
जो समझो तो मैं बतलाऊं
जो चलो तुम हंस के रथ पर
में तेरा सारथी बन जाऊं
जो बन जाओ तुम राधा
में तेरा श्याम कहलाऊं

नहीं है चाह कोई और
कि मैं अब और क्या पाऊं
हृदय की गूँज सुन राधा
कि मैं तुझ में ही खो जाऊं
जो बन जाओ तुम राधा
में तेरा श्याम कह लाऊं

मैं साथ रहा हूं मौन

मैं साथ रहा हूं मौन हे केशव,
मुझे साथ लेना तुम,
जग के इस भारी बियावान में,
मुझे थाम लेना तुम।
मेरी क्या अस्तित्व प्रभु,
मुझ में तुम ही तुम हो प्रति पल,
मैं तुममें अंगीकृत होकर,
नीचे था तो ले लें क्षणभर,
गहरा जल है भक्ति तेरी,
भव पार लगा देना तुम,
फिर वही योग का गीतामृत,
बस मुझे पिला देना तुम।
तुम ही तो कहते मर कर भी
कोई भी नहीं मरता,
सारे जीवों का अंश तुम्हारे,
मन में ही रहता।
मेरी भी आत्म ज्योति का दीपक,
कर दया बाल देना तुम,
मैं भी तुममें रम जाऊं प्रभु,
कुछ ऐसा कर देना तुम।
तू नाव न बन इतना बल दे,
भवसागर पार तो कर लूँ,
इस महासमर की तृष्णा में,
मैं जीत तो हासिल कर लूँ।
हे नाग नथैया मेरे उर के,
नाग नाथ देना तुम,
मुरलीधर मोर मुकुटधारी,
मृदु तान सुना देना तुम।
क्या ही वह सुंदर रूप विलक्षण,
अदभुत दिखता होगा,
निश्चय ही अर्जुन के दृग में
उस क्षण भूमडल होगा।
मैं विस्मित हूं वह सुखद स्वप्न,
कभी मुझे दिखा देना तुम,
फिर चाहे जीवन भर मुझको,
नेत्रहीन कर देना तुम।



पूनम पाण्डेय

अपने ही अपनों के न रहे

वादों की शैया पर लेटे,
यह भीष्म पितामह सोच रहे,
गृहकलह का यह परिणाम हुआ,
अपने ही अपनों के न रहें।
कुंती भी खड़ी सिसकती है,
अपने प्रारब्ध पर रोती है,
कैसे हालात बने,
अपने ही अपनों के न रहे।
अब धर्मराज भी कहते हैं,
हम लुटा के सब कुछ बैठे हैं,
सत्ता पर कौन करे शासन,
अपने ही अपनों के न रहे।
इस राज्य का वैभव व्यर्थ हुआ,
पा लेने का क्या अर्थ हुआ,
अधिकारी इसका कौन बने,
अपने ही अपनों के न रहे।
अर्जुन के आंसू आंखों में,
बिखरे परिजनों की यादों में,
विजयी कब कौन हुआ जग में,
अपने ही अपनों के न रहे।
मुस्काते हैं तब कृष्ण खड़े,
सतोष की है कर्मजोर जड़ें,
भाई - चारे की हत्या से,
अपने ही अपनों के न रहे।
जब धर्म रसातल में गिरता,
कोई न किसी का है होता,
सोचो तब कौन सुखी होगा,
अपने ही अपनों के न रहे।

हे जगतनाथ, जगतपिता

कंचन मनचंदा

तुम कृपानिधान, तुम कृपासिंधु
पीत वस्त्र तुम धारणकर्ता
तुम हो सबके पालनकर्ता

फिर न जाने जगत में क्यों है इतना हड़कंप मचता
जीवन मृत्यु के इस खेल में तुम ही सबके दुख को हरता।

तुम्हारी शरण में जो आ जाए

उसको तुम आनंद से भरता

तुम हो दीनबंधु, दीनों के दयाल,

है कृष्णा, तुम इस जगत के महान कलाकार

तुम्हारे श्री नयन हैं कमल समान

तुम्हारे मुख की वाणी देती है संसार को वेदों का ज्ञान।

शरणागत की तुम छत्रछाया

दे दे अपने चरणों की कृपा

एक धूल का कण जिसकी मैं बनाऊं माला।



Artist:
Fehmida Haider

श्रृंगार

हरप्रीत कौर

रूत ने किया अनोखा श्रृंगार,
इसको भी है ,जाने किसका इंतज़ार,
खिल रहे गुल महकी है कलियां
देखिए जनाब ये है मौसम-ए-बहार।

ये काले घुमड़ते घन सुहाने,
गौरी का काजल से लागे,
बिजली चमकी बादल में
पायलिया की झंकार लागे।

हरियाली की चुनरिया लिए
रुप सुहाना लागे,
ललाट पर स्वर्णिम आभा लिए
चमकता निशाचर लागे।

सुरभित मनोरम सा समां
महकती इत्र सी वो अप्सरा,
ओस की बूंदें, पत्तियों का गहना
ज्यों झुमके ,कंगना संग तन सजा।

खादी

Anupam Ramesh Kinger



में खादी हूँ
देखो मैं तुम्हारी माँ सी हूँ
में खादी हूँ
में गर्मी में शीतल
के जैसे ममता का आँचल
सर्दी में गर्म चा सी हूँ
में खादी हूँ
हिमालय से गंगा सागर तक
में ही हूँ सतरंगी इंद्रधनुष
सागर की लहरों सी छू जाती हूँ
में खादी हूँ
गांधी की पुकार में मैं हूँ
लाला जी की ललकार में मैं हूँ
हर शहीद को ओढ़ाई जाती हूँ
में खादी हूँ
मेरे प्रेम की सूती डोरी में
बँध गए आज़ादी के मतवाले सभी
स्वावलंबी चरखे पर काती जाती हूँ
में खादी हूँ
इतिहास में थी और आज मैं हूँ
में सदा से भारतीय समाज में हूँ
तुम्हारी पहचान तुम्हारा परचम तुम्हारी आज़ादी हूँ
में खादी हूँ
में कलश भी हूँ मैं सजदा भी
में ही गुरुद्वारों का हलवा भी
थी सखी और साथी हूँ
में खादी हूँ।
माँ की ही तरह ना भुला देना मुझको कहीं
कभी लिखना कभी पढ़ना कभी बुनना मुझको भी
इस मिट्टी की आशीष हूँ मैं
इस हवा सी सीधी सादी हूँ
में खादी हूँ
में खादी हूँ

Artist and Photographer:
Neeharika Shembekar

हर ले, फिर बम बम बम बम लहरी,

सारे जग के बाबा तुम प्रहरी।।

हर ले, फिर बम....

शिव महिमा

कुमार विशु



कैलाशपति अवघड़दानी,
सारी दुनिया में महादानी,
डमडम डमडम डमरू बाजे,
छमछम छमछम भोला नाचें,
निकला संस्कृत के अनंत सूत्र,
ध्वनि गूँज ऊठा बमबम लहरी।।

हर ले, फिर बम....

बन नीलकण्ठ विषपान किए,
जग को शिव जीवनदान दिए,
अड़भंगी अंग भभूत लगा,
माथे पर जिसके चन्द्र सजा,
मस्त मलंग महेश मेरे,
बोले जग जय बम बम लहरी।।

हर ले, फिर बम....

हे! देवेश्वर मम् पाप हरो,
हे! दुःखदलन संताप हरो,
नित्यानन्दस्वरूप दरश दीजै,
विश्वनाथ महेश कृपा कीजै,
जटाजूट में गंगा खेल रही,
अवतरित धरा पर गंगलहरी।।

हर ले, फिर बम....

कल्याणस्वरूप अजन्मा हो,
अनादि अनन्त सुधर्मा हो,
पालन संहार तुम्हीं से है,
अद्वैतस्वरूप जगत में है,
हे! काशीश्वर अज्ञान हरो,
सचराचर जग गाता बमबम।।

हर हर बम....

कन्दर्पदलन हे! शिवशंकर,
हे! शम्भूत्रिशुलिन् माहेश्वर,
कर धारे त्रिशूल हे गौरीपते,
लिंगात्मस्वरूप चिदानंदमूर्ते,
हे! पार्वतीप्राणवल्लभाय,
दो अभयदान बोले मन बमबम।।

हर ले, फिर बम....

गुणहीन मलीन हूँ शरण तेरे,
बलहीन पतित जीवन मेरे,
हे! पापविमोचन पाप हरो,
दास का शिव उद्धार करो,
ज्ञानामृत पान करा शम्भो,
जपता हरपल हर ले, फिर बमबम।।

हर ले, फिर बम....

दिन - रात, हर वक़्त, आए यही ख़्याल,
क्यों हो गए हैं हमारे श्रमिक सब बेहाल।

जिन्होंने संवारा हमारा घर और संसार,
आज पड़े हैं सड़क किनारे वो निढाल।

रोटी और पानी को हो रहे हैं मोहताज,
कौन है इनकी परेशानियों का ज़िम्मेदार।

सभी तरफ़ चर्चा है इनकी ही जोरदार,
टीवी, अख़बार बता रहे इनका ही हाल।

सभी ग्रुप में यह चर्चा का विषय है ख़ास,
ऐसा करना था, पर यह क्यों नहीं किया।

पहले सोचना था, पर चूक गई सरकार,
हल्ला बोल रहे हैं जनता और पत्रकार।

श्रमिकों से नहीं था जिन्हें कोई भी सरोकार,
उठा ली उन्होंने भी अपनी जिह्वा से तलवार।

नहीं सोचा खुद भी है इसके कुछ ज़िम्मेदार,
बात करके ले रहे हैं वह अपना पल्ला झाड़।



बेहाल श्रमिक

सुरेखा साहू

काश होते देश के नागरिक भी थोड़े ज़िम्मेदार,
तो न होती इतनी मुसीबत इन श्रमिकों को
बेकार।

कुछ कर रही सरकार, थोड़ा छूटा इस बार,
उस कमी को, चलो पूरा करें हम मिलकर।

आओ करें उनके कुछ सपनें अब साकार,
बनाएं श्रमिकों का भी जीवन कुछ खुशहाल।

रात-दिन, सर्दी - गर्मी कठिन परिश्रम कर,
हमारे जीवन में लाते हैं जो खुशियां हज़ार।

अब कुछ कहने से पहले करके दिखाना है,
कुछ थोड़ा बस अपनी हैसियत से करना है।

चलो मिलाएं अब इन्हें भी इनके परिवार से,
करें कम कुछ मुश्किलें इनके भी जीवन से।

खुशियों से जीने का इनका भी है अधिकार,
तभी हो पायेगा हमारा जीवन कुछ साकार।



Artist: Ankita Doshi

क्यूँ पसारुं मैं हाथ
किसी और के आगे,
जब मेरा मोहन
मुझे अपनी गोद में थामे।
जब लगता है
कि कुछ अधूरा रह गया।
तभी चलती है ठंडी सी हवा
और ये क्या,
सहसा मेरा श्याम मुझसे
फिर से कुछ मेरे कानों में कह
गया।

कहा है देवकीनंदन ने
" ऐ बावरी ! क्यूँ ढूंढती है तू
यूँ सारे जग में मुझे
तू कब जानेगी कि तेरा कृष्ण
तेरे ही मन में है बसे।"
मेरे नयनों में बसी है छवि
मेरे कमलनयन की।
जिसकी मुरली में है शक्ति
नव कलरव, नव सृजन की।
है कान्हा मेरा दयानिधि
अनंत, अजेय और अपराजित।
मैं ही क्या, ये सृष्टि सारी
मेरे द्वारकाधीश पर है आश्रित।

कृष्ण वंदना

Sulakkshana Mishra

हे नारायण! हे परमपिता !
लेकर अपने हाथों में
करो कल्याण हे पद्महस्ता।
हम अनाथ हैं तुम बिन
तुम ही हो हमारे पालनहारे
हमारे प्यारे मनमोहन।
बस हम पर अपनी कृपा बनाये रखना
हे पार्थसारथी !
थाम के जीवन डोर मेरी
बन जाना इस रण में मेरा सारथी
मुझे भँवर से बचाए रखना।
हे सर्वेश्वर, सर्वपालक
हे जगदीश, जानेश्वर
हो सर्वज्ञाता तुम
हम अदना से बालक।
कृपा दृष्टि तुम रखना हमपर
पार कराना ये भवसागर
बजा के मुरली, हे मुरलीधर।

एक डोर है तीन रंग की, बंधन में जिसने बांधा है,
एक मदारी सभी अनाड़ी, जन्म का नाता है ।

किसी की चाहत लाल रंग है तो कोई मांगे पीला,
माता भी खुश है देकर, जिसको जो भी भाता है ।

खुद ही तो उलझाता है, खुद ही वो सुलझाता है,
लाल, पीले, नीले रंग भी खुद ही तो अपनाता है ।

बंधन-मुक्ति
रवीन्द्र

खेल सतत ये चलने वाला, बंधन से अद्भुत नाता है,
धागे तीनों उलझे रहते हैं, अनुपात बदलता जाता है ।

किसने ये संसार रचा है, कौन पिता और माता है,
आने जाने का मकसद भी, कौन यहां बतलाता है ।

जीवन का है चक्र अनोखा, समझ कहां ये आता है,
जिसने छोड़ा खुद सुलझाना, मुक्त वही हो जाता है ।



Artist:

Anima Neelu Dey

इख्तियार

Dr. Renu Mishra

लान में झरता हरसिंगार हो
क्यारी में कँटीला गुलाब हो
कोयल गाए अमराइयों पर
नूर ए सहर का आगाज़ हो

चाँद गिरफ्त में हो मेरी
आँगन में तारों भरी छाँव हो
घटाएँ झूम कर जब बरसें
बादलों पर बस मेरा इख्तियार हो

झरने की कल कल हो
फूलों की वादी हो
पवन संगीत छेड़े
खुशबू की राहें हो

रुबरू तू हो मेरे
धड़कनों का शोर हो
लबों पर पहरे हों
सुरीली आँखों से बात हो

बात नहीं है सिर्फ़ ख्वाहिशों की
ख्वाबों पर भी इख्तेयार हो
तुझको तमन्ना हो बस मेरी
आँखों में बस मेरा इंतज़ार हो



जीवन एक रंगमंच है और हम हैं इसकी कठपुतलियां
कई रूप यह दे, कई किरदार यह चुने हर बार नया एक जाल यह बुने
हर दिन नया कुछ यह दिखलाए

आगे बढ़ने को मन फिर ललचाए
हर मौके पर यह बहलाए

कल और बेहतर होगा यह भी समझाए
जादू है इसकी उंगलियों में

जीवन एक मृगतृष्णा है
ऋचा श्रीवास्तव

जब जी चाहे, हमें नचाए
रोज़ सुबेरे उठकर सोचू कि मंज़िल बहुत करीब है
पर वो हाँथ हिला कर मुझे जताए कि दिल्ली अभी दूर है
देखते ही देखते वक़्त गज़रता जाता है
आँखों पर बढ़ती उम्र की धुंध जमती जाती है और सासों पर भी ज़ोर कुछ
बढ़ जाता है

अब मिला कि तब मिला, मन मसोस कर ही रह जाता है
मंज़िल पाने की चाह में, मन भी थक कर चूर हो जाता है
जीवन के आखिरी पड़ाव पर हैं सांसे कहती हैं अब ज़िद्द छोड़ भी दो भला
क्यों न समझा तू यह बात कभी
कि 'जीवन एक मृगतृष्णा है भला इससे कौन है बचा।

Artist: Dr. Renu Mishra



कौन छाया यूं बादल सा मेरे वजूद पे,
कि फ़िज़ा इतनी सुहानी हो गई है।
पर्वतों के पीछे से आवाज़ देता है मुझे कौन,
कि मेरी रूह दौड़ पड़ती है !!!

Dr. Renu Mishra

एक टुकड़ा आसमान मेरे खिड़की से
अपनी संपूर्ण विशालता लिए

रेखांकित चौकोर सीमा से
असीमता की झलक दिखाते हुए

द्रवित मेरे चंचल मन को
मौन की महिमा समझाते हुए

नित उठती, बनती- बिगड़ती भाव तरंगों को
अपनी शून्यता में भरते हुए

रूप रंग की अभ्यस्त आँखों को
निराकार का दर्शन कराते हुए

संसारी कोलाहल से सुन्न कानों को
अनाहत नाद सुनाते हुए

प्रकृति से निर्मित मेरे स्थूल तन में
चेतना का सूक्ष्म संचार करते हुए

मन, बुद्धि से पार ले जाकर
आत्मा का साक्षात्कार कराते हुए

शून्य में तकते मैं भी शून्य हो जाऊँ
निराकार, निर्गुण, परब्रह्म बन जाऊँ।



नन्हा सा, प्यारा सा
चाँद का टुकड़ा हूँ मैं
होंगे दाग तो होंगे

शीतल एक मुखड़ा हूँ मैं,

अपनी कोई ज्योत नहीं

उसी की ज्योत से दमकती हूँ मैं

उसकी कृपा पाकर

उसकी प्रीत से सजती हूँ मैं

दिनों-दिन उन्मेष मेरा बढ़ता ही जाए
दिनों -दिन कलायें मेरी निखरती ही जाये
शीतलता का तेज बढ़ता ही जाये
रूप-यौवन निखरता ही जाये,

प्रीत की अगन दिल में लिये

दिनों-दिन संवरती चली जाती मैं,

बनकर पूर्णिमा फिर,

अपने पूरे शबाब पर,

आसमान पर दुल्हन बन उतरती मैं

टिमटिमाते तारों की सखियों बीच

झिलमिल-झिलमिल जगमगाती मैं

नैनों में इंतज़ार ~ प्रभु प्रीतम का

होठों पर यह फ़रियाद लिये पुकारती मैं

वर लें मुझे, अपना लें मुझे

अपने में समेट ले मुझे

आसमान से मैं गुम हो जाऊँ

अंधेरों में विलीन (निर्वाण) हो जाऊँ



घोंसला

रुपाली कक्कड़ सिंह

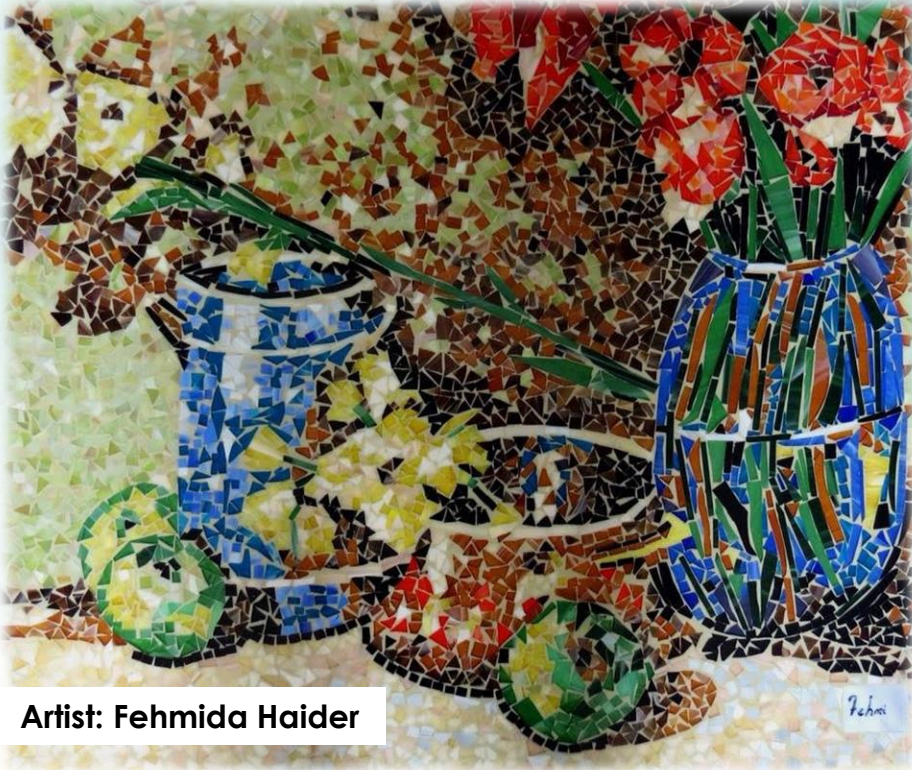
एक बात बताऊँ, जब घर हमारा बना उसका निवास।
बात उन कुछ महीनों पहले की है, जो कि है बहुत ही खास।
आए हम सपरिवार, बसाने अपना नया आवास।
कुछ समय बाद जब देखा बालकनी में अनायास,
पाया एक कबूतर का घोंसला, खिड़की के पास,
खुश थी बिटिया भी उनको देखकर अपने आसपास,
रोज लाती कबूतर अपनी चोंच में तिनका तिनका घास,
बसाया उसने भी वहीं था अपना बसेरा,
बढ़ाने संतति को उसने डाले अंडे चार,
बैठी रहती और देती रहती उनको उष्मावास,
उनकी करती रहती थी वह देखभाल,
हम भी खुश हो रख रहे थे, उसका ख्याल।
फिर एक दिन वह भी आया, जब उसने,
घास फूस के झरोखे से अपने बच्चों का मुख था दिखलाया,
तब चला पता कि उसका भरोसा है हमने पाया।
लेकिन एक दिन....देखा....तो ...क्या!
सिखा रही थी वह चूजों को उड़ने के गुर
सीख रहे थे वे भी उड़ना दूर-दूर,
उड़ा ले गई है वह अपने बच्चों को भी दूर आकाश,
और रह गए स्तब्ध, जैसे हों, बहुत कुछ हारे, और उदास,
सोच रहे हम दोनों, मन ही मन हो मौन,
बिटिया भी हमारी, कब रह पाएगी हमारे साथ,
उड़ जायेगी वह भी बिन पंख एक दिन,
छूने, पाने, बसाने अपना एक अलग जहाँ।

साड़ियों की गोष्ठी

Pushpa Singh

रंग बिरंगी
मनपसंद मेरी प्यारी
सिल्क, सूती, बनारसी, चंदेरी
कोटा, कांजीवरम,
मटका और पोचमपल्ली
सभी साड़ियां मिलकर
कर रहीं थीं गोष्ठी
गोलमेज़ के इर्द-गिर्द
सज धज के थीं वे बैठी
मुझको नहीं की थी सम्मिलित
मेरा बैठना था वर्जित
विषय था "बंद अलमारियों में ऊबन"
सब मुंह फुलाए पड़ी थीं
गुस्से में लाल हुई थीं

कह रही थीं
न प्रयोग करती न आगे का संयोजन
जाने क्या है इनका प्रयोजन
समय जो बदला बदल गए वस्त्र
साड़ियों की खूबसूरती हुई शिकस्त
यह घुमक्कड़ साड़ियां अड़ी हुई थीं
निकलने को तैयार खड़ी थीं
कुछ जा निकली कामवाली संग
कुछ को उमड़ा दादी का प्यार
देख कर मैं हुई स्तब्ध
मेरी होकर मुझसे षड्यंत्र
बड़े प्यार से सभी साड़ियों को
थोड़ा समझाया
थोड़ा बहलाया
स्निग्ध स्पर्श और
गले लगाया
इसी बहाने हुई सफाई
अलट पलट कर
कार्बोलिक गोली डाली।



Artist: Fehmida Haider

पांचाली की पुकार

एस ऋतिका

"ओ कृष्ण कन्हैया, तू है कहां
इस जग में मेरा कोई न बचा
पांचाली जिनकी थी कहलाई
उन्होंने आज आबरू मेरी लुटाई

जुए के व्यसन में ऐसा क्या खोए
सब कुछ जब हारा, हार ये न माने
खुद को समर्पित कर बनी थी अर्धांगिनी
आज वही, किसी मामूली वस्तु सी बिकी

ओ कान्हा, किया क्या इन शब्दों का दुत्कार
सुनी न तूने लज्जित इस तन की पुकार?"

"मेरी प्यारी द्रौपदी,
सभागृह के दहलीज पर था खड़ा
युधिष्ठिर के शब्दों से मैं था बंधा
'जुआ खेलते, कान्हा मुझको न देखे
जब तक न ले नाम, कक्ष में प्रवेश न करे'

अब जाकर तूने मुझको पुकारा
लज्जित तन को असीम वस्त्र से ढांका"

"ओ कान्हा तुझको शत नमन
चतुरता से तेरी विध्वंस हुआ ये चीरहरण"

Artist: Geethanjali Dilip



गीता सार

एस ऋतिका



ओ कान्हा,

नश्वर इस काया को दिया क्यों विवेक!
डटा धर्म की व्याख्या में, भरा सदेह।
पशु पक्षियों को है ज्ञात, उनका धर्म?
अज्ञात ही प्रतिबद्ध प्रकृति के नियमों से

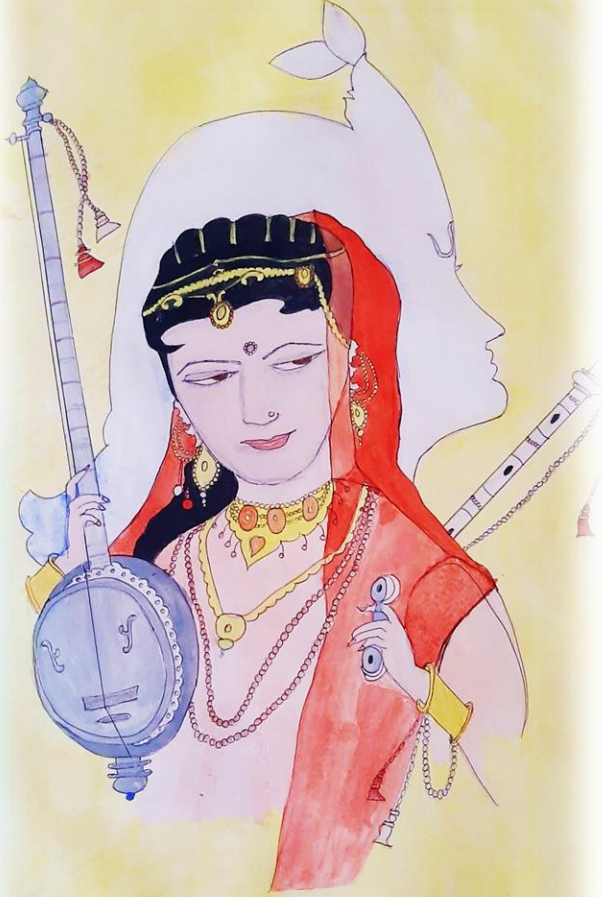
अगर क्षत्रिय का धर्म रक्षा
अहिंसा अपना, इस धर्म से कई राजा मुंह फेरे
उस कर्म से लाखों निर्दोषों के प्राण बचे
तो इस युग के अशमेध में लाखों बेमौत मरे
कान्हा अब, ये बता दे, अधर्म किसे कहें।

जो सरहद पे डटा, क्या बस उसका धर्म लड़ना?
पर तय कौन करे, सरहद की लकीर कहां
घर के चहु ओर खींची रेखा, अंदर रह रक्षा करे
वो अहिंसक सैनानी, या कायर कहलाए?

गीता पढ़ भी इस चित को आराम नहीं

ओ कान्हा,

अनबूझे सवालों के उत्तर है भी या नहीं।।



Artist: Nikhil Saxena



Artist: Fehmida Haider

मेरी अलमारी! गरिमा सूदन



मेरी अलमारी थोड़ी-सी अल्हड़, थोड़ी सयानी !
 अनदेखा करो इसे तो करती मनमानी।
 कितना भी सहेजो, संभालो, संवारो,
 इसकी यह बुरी आदत पुरानी ।
 कुछ दिन रहेगी संभली हुई ऐसे,
 डाँट खाए बच्चे चुपचाप हौं जैसे !
 रंग बिरंगे, हल्के-भारी कपड़े निराले,
 ऊपर-नीचे परतों पर रखे हौं सारे।
 थोड़े दिन चलती अपनी निगरानी,
 सँवरी है ऐसे जैसे राजा की रानी!
 फिर होता शुरू खेल इसका पुराना,
 जैसे उबड़ - खाबड़ रास्ते पर चलती गाड़ी पुरानी।
 अनदेखा करो इसे तो करती मनमानी !
 मेरी अलमारी थोड़ी सी अल्हड़, थोड़ी सयानी !
 माँ , मासी, बुआ और चाची की अलमारी याद आती,
 फिर मैं हो जाती हूँ शर्म से पानी-पानी !
 उनकी सिखाईं बातें पुरानी,
 सहेजो, संभालो अपनी 'निशानी'!
 कि लग जाती हूँ मैं उसको निखारने,
 दूर करती हूँ अपनी यह आदत पुरानी !
 अनदेखा करो इसे तो करती मनमानी !
 मेरी अलमारी थोड़ी-सी अल्हड़, थोड़ी सयानी !

Photographer: Nikita Saxena

Picture by Praharsh Bajpai



क़ब्रिस्तान का चौकीदार और उसकी भूतनी *बिजुरिया*...

By Chaturvedas:

Dr. Renu Mishra, Dr. Aparna Pradhan, Anoop Pandey and Dr. Purnima

हवा साँय ले, फिर चल रही थी। तारों भरी चाँदनी रात थी। सफ़ेद चाँदनी ठंडी अकेली ..दूर ले, फिर तक फैली हुई ...शमशान में दो तीन चिंताएँ हल्के ले, फिर जल रहीं थीं और यहाँ दुखी राम मुक़द्दम का मन भी सुलग रहा था। अचानक पीपल के पेड़ पर लटका उल्टा चमगादड़ चीख पड़ा और उसके साथ दूसरा फिर तीसरा भी वातावरण और डरावना हो उठा। दुखी राम ने सराहने रखें कंबल की तह ठीक की और पीपल की ओर देखा ...ये अकेली रात काटे नहीं कटती ...जब से दुखिया गई हैरसोई, रात दिन सब उजड़ गये। पता नहीं मर के भूतनी न बन गई हो। अगर बन भी गई हो तो हे ...भोले बाबा ...भूतनी बनी दुखिया को ही भेज दो ...इ अकेला पन कुछ तो कम होगा। हालाँकि दुखीराम का नाम सुखी राम था पर क़ब्रिस्तान की रखवाले करते जब लोग अपने परिजनों को रोते हुए विदा करते तो भोंदू सुखी राम सगे रिश्तेदारों से भी ज़ोर ले, फिर से बुक्का फाड़ के कोने लगता ...बस लोगों ने सुखी राम का नाम बदल कर दुखी राम रख दिया। फिर सुखीराम भी अपना असली नाम भुला कर दुखी राम ही हो गया। अलबत्ता बाप कहीं अंग्रेज ओवर सियर के पास था सो बाप के नाम के साथ पूरा नाम दुखीराम मुक़द्दम पड़ गया।

बस दुखी को तकलीफ तब हुई जब शादी के बाद दुखीराम की मेहरारू को भी लोग उसके असली नाम बिजुरिया कहने लगे। दुखीराम ने जीवन भर इस बात का विरोध किया। बहरहाल न लोग माने न दुखीराम। ये अलग बात है बिजुरिया से झगड़ते समय। दुखीराम खुद बिजुरिया को दुखिया बोलता था।

दुखिया बुढ़ापे का सहारा ना बनी चौथे बार माँ बनने के पहले ही सरग सिधार गई।

उधर दुखिया मरने के बाद जब भूत बनी तो उसी पेड़ पर उल्टा लटकी अपनी सास को देख भयभीत हो गयी। हाय राम अम्माँ हियाँ भीवह अपनी किस्मत को कोसने लगी कि हाय मरने के बाद भी चैन नहीं मिला। यहाँ दुखिया चट्ट से निकली वहाँ पट्ट से दुखिया की अम्माँ भी संसार छोड़ दी केवल एक ही रात का फरक रहा। उधर उसकी सास जी दुखिया को देख मुस्कुराई कि चलो फिर इसको सताने का मौका मिला। दुखिया अब और भी दुखी हो गई कि इससे अच्छा तो दुखी राम ही था।

वह वापस दुखी राम के पास वापस लौटने का उपाय सोचने लगी। वह दुखी राम के दिमाग में घुस उससे भगवान जी से प्रार्थना करवाने लगी कि मुझे वापस धरती पर भेज दिया जाए। दुखी राम अनायास दुखिया के वशीभूत हो शिव जी को मनाने लगा कि दुखिया को वापस भेज दो, वो बहुत अच्छी थी

हालाँकि दुखिया को मालूम था ऐसा है नहीं। पर मरता क्या न करता डायन सास से तो मरकहा पति ही भला। सो बिनती भोलेबाबा से पूरे मन से की दुखिया ने।

और मज़े की बात ये कि वहीं पास में एक ब्रम्हराक्षस रहते थे वे दुखीराम की प्रार्थना से परसन्न हो गये। आखिर शमशान भयों उनका घर ही था। फिर शमशान का चौकीदार भी उनका अपना ही हुआ न। ब्रम्हराक्षस यानी बरम बाबा ने कहा ' सोच लो दुखी राम। कल तो तुम कह रहे थे अच्छा हुआ बाला टली। आज अचानक उसकी याद में तड़प रहे हो या यूँ ही !' "अरे नहीं बरम महाराज, मैं बहुत अकेला पड़ गया हूँ। थोड़ी देर को ही सही उसे भेज दो। कम से कम ये रात तो चैन से कट जाएगी। तन्हाई में मन घबरा रहा है " उसका ये कहना था कि दुखिया हाथ में बेलन लिए हाज़िर हो गई। "अरे दुखिया कैसी हो ? तुम्हारे बिना दिल नहीं लगता। आओ कुछ देर मेरे पास बैठो। कुछ प्यार से बातें करते हैं "

दुखिया ने कटकटा के दुखी राम के बाल पकड़ लिये उसे हवा में उठा लिया और हवा में टांग कर बेलन से पिटाई करना शुरू कर दिया।

हाय मर गया..... मुझे नीचे उतारो आखिर क्यों कर रही हो ये सब ? मुझे मार क्यों रही हो ? मैंने तो तुम को बहुत प्यार किया था। बताओ आखिर क्या हुआ है?

दुखिया बोली - "तुम जानते नहीं कि क्या बात है अरे अपनी माँ को इतनी जल्दी क्यों मरने दिया। डाइन बन कर इसी पीपल पर आ बसी है। सुबह शाम नाश्ता खाना पीना बनाने का हुक्म देती है। ज़रा सा आराम करो तो पैर दबाने को कहती है। तुम से मेरा सुख चैन न देखा गया। उसका अच्छा इलाज कर ज़िंदा क्यों नहीं रखा?"

अब तक दुखिया मस्ती में आ चुकी थी। वो खुश हो कर गाने लगी -

"मेरा चैन वैन सब उजड़ा

ज़ालिम नज़र मिला ले तू"

अचानक बरम बाबा फिर से परगट हो गये कहने लगेदुखिया अभी मरी नहीं है...अभी भी ज़िंदा है। जब तुम लोग उसे शमशान में चुडैल और मरा समझ के छोड़ आए थेतो मैंने ही नंदी जी को रिक्वेस्ट कर के महामृत्युंजय मंत्र का पाठ करा के उसे ज़िंदा करा दिया था।

ये सुनते ही दुखिया ने दुखीराम की आँख में मिर्ची झोंक दी। दुखीराम बिलबिला उठा और रोते चीखते बोला -

क़ब्रिस्तान का चौकीदार और उसकी भूतनी *बिजुरिया*...

पिरभू...पिरभू...अरे इस कलमुंही ...मनहूस औरत को लाज नहीं आती ...अरे मार डाला रे!!!!

दुखिया तुरंत पीपल के पेड़ पर जाकर उल्टी लटक गई और किलकिलाने लगीइल्ले ले बु हूँ ...इल्ले ले बु हूँ ...और पतली टहनियाँ तोड़ के उसकी रस्सी बना के टेंमपेरी अंधे दुखीराम की पिटाई चालू कर दी!!

दुखीराम आँख मलते बरम बाबा से बोला - किस जनम का बदला ले रहे हो प्रभु? अरे ये धर्मपत्नी नहीं करमजली है। इसने मेरे माँ बाप को भी सताया सड़ा केला खिलाती थी। उन्हें टूटी तीन टांग की कुर्सी पर बिठाती थी।पुराने खटमलों वाले बिस्तर पर सुलाती थी।इसे आप अगले जन्म में भूतनी ही बनाये रखना। ये पथभ्रष्ट और चरित्र हीन भी है। पड़ोसी गुड्डू रंगीला के साथ मैंने इसे रंगे हाथों पकड़ा था।

बरम बाबा ने पूँछा - तुम पड़ोसी के घर क्या करने गये थे।

दुखी राम बोला - “पड़ोसी के पास एक कुत्ती थी शेरनी नाम की उसी को रोटी खिलाने जाता था।”

ये सुनकर दुखिया बहुत क्रोधित हो उठी बोली - “शिव शंभो... हे बरम बाबा ज़रा इससे पूँछिये तो ...वो कुत्ती चार पैरों वाली थी या दो पैर वाली।”

बरम बाबा गुस्से से बोले - “सच बता मूर्ख वरना। I will call Bhasmasur ...वो तुझे इमीडियेटली भस्म कर देगा।”

दुखिया डर से काँपने लगा। तभी बाजू वाले क़ब्रिस्तान का चौकी दार आ गया बोला - “ बरम बाबा दुखिया के सारे पड़ोसी रेबीज से मर गये उनका अंतिम संस्कार कौन करेगा। प्रभु दुखी राम को एक मौक़ा और दे दो।”

इतने में दुखीराम ने बाईं तरफ़ करवट बदली और दाहिनी लात कलुआ कुत्ते की गर्दन पर पड़ी, जो ठंड के मारे दुखीराम से चिपट के सो रहा था। कलुआकेंकेंकें करके चीख उठा साथ ही दुखीराम भी नींद से जाग के चिल्लाने लगा हर...हर...हुडुप ...हुडुप...हुडुप...भाग साले। यहाँ कुत्ता भागा वहाँ दुखीराम का सपना टूटा और जान में जान आई।

न वहाँ दुखिया थी न भोले महाराज। दुखीराम हाथ जोड़कर आसमान की तरफ़ सर उठा के बोले - भोले बाबा आप जो करते हो अच्छा ही करते हो।

दुखीराम ने मुँह पर पानी के छींटे मारे और गाने लगा -

“मेरा चैन वैन सब लूटा

ज़ालिम नज़र मिला ले”

मैराइटल रेप (Marital Rape)

अलका निगम

लफ़्ज़ों की पोटली

लखनऊ

"दी अपने अंदर के सच को बाहर आने दो,वर्ना ये जलकुंभी

बन तुम्हारे मन के जलाशय को दूषित कर देगा।"

तुम कहना क्या चाहती हो रिया....???"

आईने में खुद को निहारती सिया ने अपनी छोटी बहन से पूछा।

"दी आखिर कब तक तुम अपनी खण्ड होती गृहस्थी को रफू करती रहोगी??.....,कब तक अपनी मुस्कुराहट के पैबन्द से इस तार हो चुके रिश्ते को एक कामदनी की चूनर बना लोगों के बीच ओढ़ती रहोगी???"

"अरे वाह!तू तो पूरी कवयित्री हो गयी छोटी....."

सिया एक फीकी सी हँसी के साथ बोली और ऋतुराज का लाया नया सेट पहनने लगी।

"दी सच बताना तुम्हें ये सेट पहन के कैसा लग रहा है???"

सिया ने खुद को आईने में देख,यूँ लगा जैसे गले में कोई विषधर लिपटा हो,उसने सिहर के आँखें बंद कर लीं। अचानक रात का वाक्या ज़हन में घूम गया.....

"बुखार से जिस्म तप रहा था उसका पर ऋतुराज को तो बस उसकी देह से नेह था।

उसके लाख मना करने के बाद भी.....

"क्या सोच रही हो दी,तुम्हारी गर्दन पे पड़े निशान बता रहे हैं कि....."

"बस कर रिया.....वो मुझसे प्यार करते हैं,इसीलिए....."

वो अपनी बात पूरी भी न कर पाई थी कि रिया ने टोक दिया...."दी कितना झूट बोलोगी खुद से....।

"तुम जीजाजी के लिए सिर्फ एक सेक्स स्लेव बन के रह गयी हो,जिन्हें सिर्फ तुम्हारी देह से नेह है न कि मन से....तुम्हारा मन हो या ना हो.....,तुम्हारे जिस्म में ताक़त हो या न हो.....,उन्हें सिर्फ अपनी मर्जी करनी होती है।""जानती हो कानून की भाषा में इसे मैरिटल रेप कहते हैं,ये कानूनन जुर्म है....और ये जो तुम्हारे मंहंगे मंहंगे तोहफे हैं न....दरअसल ये हर्जाना है तुम्हारी पीड़ा का।"सिया निःशब्द थी,आज पहली बार किसी ने उसके मन को न सिर्फ छुआ था बल्कि झिंझोड़ा भी था।

इससे पहले जब भी उसने दबी जुबान में अपनी सास से बोला तो उन्होंने उल्टा झिड़क दिया ये कहके कि...."किस्मत वाली हो जो ऐसा प्यार लुटाने वाला पति मिला,कितने तोहफे देता है तुम्हें और तुम हो कि उसे खुश नहीं रख सकतीं,किसी और के पास चला गया तो बैठी रह जाओगी हाँथ मलते।"

यहाँ तक कि माँ ने भी यही समझाया कि...."पति है वो उसका और उसका हक़ है तुम्हारी देह पे.....,खुद भी खुश रह और उसे भी खुश रखे इसी में गृहस्थी की भलाई है।"

"दी कहाँ खो गई",रिया ने उसे झिंझोड़ा।

ऋतुराज की इसी आदत की वजह से उसे अपने दोनों बच्चों को होस्टल में डालना पड़ा क्योंकि उसे बच्चों का बीच में रहना पसंद नहीं था अपने और सिया दोनों के बीच।

मैराइटल रेप (Marital Rape)

यहाँ तक कि होस्टल से घर आने पर भी वो बच्चों के पास नहीं लेट सकती थी।

अलका निगम

रोज़ रोज़ की इस शारीरिक और मानसिक प्रताड़ना से वो त्रस्त हो चुकी थी।

आखिर जैसे तैसे शादी की दसवीं सालगिरह की दावत खत्म हुई....वो पूरी तरह से निढाल हो गयी थी,मानो किसी ने जिस्म को निचोड़ दिया हो।

आज उसका मन किया बच्चों के साथ सोने का,पर ऋतुराज को बर्दाश्त कहाँ....., लगभग घसीटते हुए वो उसे कमरे में ले आया.....,वो लगभग गिड़गिड़ाती हुई बोली,"प्लीज़ आज मुझे छोड़ दो",पर वो नहीं माना।

थक चुकी थी वह इस रोज़ रोज़ की ज़िल्लत से और अपने उधड़ते जिस्म से।

न जाने कहाँ से उसके ताक़त आ गयी और उसने ऋतुराज को धक्का दे दिया, वो शायद इनके लिए तैयार नहीं था,इसलिए ज़ोर से गिर पड़ा। वो जल्दी से कमरे के बाहर निकली और दरवाजा बाहर से बंद कर लिया।

अंदर से ऋतुराज चिल्ला रहा था पर उसने नहीं खोला।अचानक शोर सुन बच्चे, रिया,उसकी सास व माँ भी आ गईं।

सास जो सब कुछ समझ चुकी थीं मुँह बना कर बोली,"अरे आज काहे की आफ़त आज तो शादी की सालगिरह है फिर उसने इतना महंगा सेट भी तो तुझे लाकर दिया है।"...

"बस माँजी, मैं कोई वैश्या नहीं हूँ जो एक तोहफे के बदले अपना जिस्म उनके हवाले कर दे ,पत्नी हूँ उनकी....अब और बर्दाश्त नहीं होता मुझसे।"ये कहके वो फ़ोन करने लगी।

"अरी किसको फ़ोन कर रही हो"....सास चिल्ला के बोली।

"पुलिस को"बेहद ठंडे पर द्रढ़ स्वर में वो बोली"।

"क्या ???इस बात के लिए तू पुलिस को बुलायेगी??...क्या।कहेगी की तेरा पति तुझसे सम्बन्ध बनाना चाहता है और तुझे पसन्द नहीं?...भला इसमें पुलिस क्या करेगी?"

"ये तो पुलिस ही बताएगी आँटी",रिया बोली। अगले कुछ दिन सिया के लिए बेहद कष्टप्रद थे।

इन चंद दिनों में न सिर्फ़ उसे लोगों की सवालिया नज़रे झेलनी पड़ी बल्कि लोगों की हँसी का पात्र भी बनना पड़ा

क्योंकि आज भी समाज में एक पत्नी की इच्छा का कोई महत्व नहीं है,पति को ये हक़ है कि वो उससे शारीरिक संबंध बना ले,फिर चाहे पत्नी का मन हो या न हो।

रिया हर पल उसके साथ खड़ी रही और आख़िरकार उसे ऋतुराज से तलाक़ मिल गया।

दुनिया चाहे उसे जो समझे या कहे पर आज वो अपने इस फैसले से खुश है,उसके दोनों बच्चे भी अब उसके पास हैं।

ये एक सही निर्णय था जो उसने वक़्त रहते लिया था।

यँ तो जिन्दगी खुद ही एक किस्सा है,
पर कुछ कहानियाँ ऐसी भी होती हैं,
जो दिल को छू लेती हैं।

नीलम अपनी कलम से ऐसी कहानियाँ लिखती हैं कि उनकी गहरी छाप आपके दिल-ओ-दिमाग पर पड़ती है और वो कई दिनों तक आपके मन को सोचने को मजबूर कर देती हैं। “रंग भरा तोहफा” कहानी संग्रह लिम्का बुक ऑफ़ रिकॉर्ड होल्डर नीलम सक्सेना चंद्रा द्वारा लिखित चौदह कहानियों का संग्रह है जो आम जिन्दगी से सम्बन्ध रखता है। कुछ कहानियों को पढ़कर आप मुस्करा उठेंगे, कुछ से आपकी आँखें सजल हो उठेंगी और कुछ कहानियों को पढ़कर दिल दहल जाएगा। जिन्दगी के विभिन्न रंगों से रंगा है यह कहानियों का यह इन्द्रधनुषीय तोहफा, जिसका नाम ही है “रंग भरा तोहफा”।

नीलम की खासियत यह है कि उनके फ्रिक्शन अंत तक पाठकों को बांधे रखने में सफल होते हैं।

— त्रेनिक जागरण

नीलम ९० के बाद के साहित्यिक परिदृश्य में एक जाना पहचाना नाम है।

— अमर उजाला

नीलम ने कलम को पेशन बनाकर अपने खयालों के बुलहलों को ऐसा पिरया कि फोर्ब्स मैगज़ीन सहित लिम्का बुक में दर्ज हो गया।

— त्रेनिक भास्कर



रंग भरा तोहफा

नीलम सक्सेना चंद्रा

रंग भरा तोहफा

एवं अन्य कहानियाँ...



नीलम सक्सेना चंद्रा

पुस्तक समीक्षा
निवेदिता राँय



“रंग भरा तोहफा”, यह पुस्तक मशहूर लेखिका नीलम सक्सेना द्वारा लिखित 14 लघु कथाओं का संग्रह है।

नीलम सक्सेना चंद्रा एक इंजीनियर हैं व कविताएँ एवं कहानियाँ लिखना आपका शौक है। आपकी 2000 से अधिक रचनाएँ विभिन्न राष्ट्रीय एवं अंतरराष्ट्रीय पत्रिकाओं में प्रकाशित हो चुकी हैं। आपके पांच उपन्यास, एक उपन्यासिका, सात कहानी संग्रह, बत्तीस काव्य संग्रह व चौदह बच्चों की पुस्तकें प्रकाशित हो चुकी हैं। आपको विभिन्न पुरस्कारों से सुशोभित किया गया है, जैसे अमेरिकन एम्बेसी द्वारा आयोजित काव्य प्रतियोगिता में गुलज़ार जी द्वारा पुरस्कार, रबिन्द्रनाथ टैगोर अंतर्राष्ट्रीय काव्य पुरस्कार २०१४, रेल मंत्रालय द्वारा प्रेमचंद पुरस्कार, चिल्ड्रेन ट्रस्ट द्वारा पुरस्कार, पोएट्री सोसाइटी ऑफ़ इंडिया द्वारा काव्य प्रतियोगिता २०१७ में द्वितीय पुरस्कार, महाराष्ट्र राज्य हिंदी साहित्य अकादमी द्वारा सोहनलाल द्विवेदी पुरस्कार, हयूमैनिटी अन्तराष्ट्रीय वीमेन एचीवर अवार्ड २०१८, भारत निर्माण लिटरेरी अवार्ड पुरस्कार इत्यादि। इनके द्वारा लिखे गीत 'मेरे साजन सुन' को रेडियो सिटी द्वारा फ्रीडम पुरस्कार इत्यादि।

आपके कार्य को सराहते हुए एक वर्ष में सबसे अधिक पुस्तक प्रकाशन हेतु लिम्का बुक ऑफ़रिकॉर्ड द्वारा इन्हें मान्यता मिली है। वैसे ही लिम्का बुक ऑफ़ रिकॉर्ड, मिरेकल वर्ल्ड रिकार्ड तथा इंडिया बुक ऑफ़ रिकॉर्ड द्वारा आपको व आपकी पुत्री सिमरन को प्रथम माँ-पुत्री द्वारा प्रकाशित पुस्तक का खिताब दिया गया है। नीलम को फ़ोर्ब्स मैगज़ीन द्वारा २०१४ के देश के अठहत्तर प्रख्यात लेखकों में नामित किया गया है।

प्रत्येक कहानी अपने आप में एक नायाब तोहफ़ा है। यह आपको भावनाओं के उस सफ़र पर ले जाता है जो हम में से अधिकांश लोग अपने जीवन में किसी न किसी समय से गुजरे हैं। अपंग युवा का मानसिक तनाव, कार्यालय के माहौल में खुद को सहेजती युवा, भोली लड़कियों की दुर्दशा या एक सौतेली माँ जो वास्तव में एक अद्भुत माँ है, सभी को वास्तविक रूप से कैद किया गया है। फिर दूसरी ओर टूटे हुए रिश्तों पर कहानियाँ हैं लेकिन एक सकारात्मक नोट पर समाप्त होती हैं।

माता-पिता और बच्चे, भाई-बहन, दोस्त, शादीशुदा जोड़े और कई अन्य लोगों के संबंधों के संदर्भ में प्रत्येक कहानी अत्यधिक प्रभावित करती है। सामान्य जीवन से जुड़ी बारीकियों को ध्यान में रखते हुए लेखिका ने कहानियों का संयोजन किया है। सुंदर अभिव्यक्ति, भाषा की सरलता के कारण इन कहानियों से जुड़ना और इन का भाव समझना इतना आसान है। मेरा पसंदीदा अवशेष होशियारी है।

इस लघु कहानी संग्रह को अवश्य पढ़ें।



डॉ. रेणु मिश्रा

सामाजिक, सांस्कृतिक एवं साहित्यिक गतिविधियों में सक्रिय, कोशल एनिवर्सिटी एवं कविता डॉ. रेणु मिश्रा स्वयंसेवक शब्द की पूर्व प्रणया पत्र चुकी हैं। इन्होंने लखनऊ विश्वविद्यालय से रसायन शास्त्र में पी.एच.डी की डिग्री हासिल की तदुपरान्त कई महाविद्यालयों एवं विद्यालयों में अध्यापन कार्य किया। मलेशिया में भी वे रसायनशास्त्र की प्रशिक्षण के रूप में कार्यरत रही। कविताएं दिव्यना इनका पेशन हैं और अब तक इनकी अनेक कवितायें, देश विदेश की विभिन्न पत्र-पत्रिकाओं में प्रकाशित हो चुकी हैं। इनके पसंद से भी अधिक साझा संकलन भी प्रकाशित हो चुके हैं। इनके अपने स्वतंत्र पुस्तक के रूप में तीन काव्य-संग्रह, **भ्रम के मनके, फ़ासों के खरिदे एवं बनाफूल** हैं जो पाठकों द्वारा काफी पसंद किए गए। प्रत्येक संग्रह में विभिन्न विषयों पर लिखी गयीं जो से अधिक कविताएँ हैं।

डॉ. रेणु मिश्रा को साहित्य के क्षेत्र में योगदान देने के लिए विभिन्न संस्थाओं द्वारा समय समय पर कई सम्मानों से सम्मानित एवं प्रोत्साहित किया गया है जिनमें से काव्य सरिता पुरस्कार WordSmiths Extraordinary Award, Global Literary Society द्वारा Pride of India-2019 सम्मान के अलावा Best Poetry Recitation Award आदि हैं। भाषा सहोदरी, शब्द, रस से बना बनारस द्वारा भी इनकी रचनाओं को सम्मानित किया गया है। आमजन अंतरराष्ट्रीय साहित्यिक संस्था द्वारा 8 मार्च 2020 को अंतरराष्ट्रीय महिला दिवस के अवसर पर नयी दिल्ली में Pride of Women Award-2019 एवं जयपुर की साहित्यिक संस्था द्वारा Women's National Award, 2020 से भी नवाजा गया है।

डॉ. रेणु मिश्रा मुद्रगांव पीएटी क्लब की संस्थापक भी हैं जो देश विदेश के विभिन्न लेखकों एवं कवियों को विभिन्न भाषाओं में अपनी कृतियों को सबके सामने प्रस्तुत करने का सचन मुहैया कराती हैं तथा साहित्य की सतत सेवा में प्रयासरत हैं।



पुस्तक समीक्षा
सरिता त्रिपाठी

आज मैं डॉ० रेणु मिश्रा की पुस्तक "दो टुक" काव्य-संग्रह के बारे में अपना विचार प्रस्तुत कर रही हूँ, जो कि मुझे डॉ मिश्रा द्वारा स्वहस्ताक्षरित प्राप्त हुई है।

तो शुरुवात मैं आवरण से करना चाहूँगी जो बहुत ही सुन्दर कलेवर से अलंकृत है, लेखिका जैसा कि विदित है एक कुशल चित्रकार हैं और उन्ही की चित्रकारी मुख्य पृष्ठ पर चार चाँद लगा रही है।

तो मैं लेखक का परिचय आप सब की जिज्ञासा के लिए छोड़ कर अगले पड़ाव पर चलती हूँ। तो जैसा कि इसके शीर्षक से विदित है यह काव्य संग्रह बस दो पंक्तियों में लेखिका की कही बात को संपूर्णता प्रदान करने में सक्षम है। इस पुस्तक में २६ अध्याय हैं अर्थात पंक्तियों को इन २६ भिन्न शीर्षक के अन्तर्गत समाहित किया गया है। यह पुस्तक ९६ पृष्ठ की है और एक बहुत ही बेहतरीन संकलन है जिसमें लेखिका ने अपने विचारों को स्पष्ट रूप से प्रस्तुत किया है।

अलफ़ाजों में कैद कर कुछ सुकून मैंने रखा है शीर्षक में उनकी बीस रचनाएँ हैं जिसमें मुझे यह बहुत पसन्द आयी

मैं रहती हूँ अपने शब्दों में

तुम अपने अर्थों में मुझे न ढूँढो

क्या पंक्ति है बेशक मेरे शब्द का अर्थ तुम्हारे लिए कुछ और हो सकता है, पर मेरी लेखनी मेरे ही विचार हैं और उसे मैं ही बेहतर समझा सकती हूँ। ईश्वर शीर्षक के अन्तर्गत उनकी २४ रचनाएँ हैं और मैं पहली ही पंक्ति पर अटक गयी

'उसकी पूजा सब करें, क्या रावण क्या राम'

तो ईश्वर सबका है सबके लिए बराबर है पर अगर सत्य को अपनायेंगे तो ईश्वर हमारा साथ देगा। मुकाम शीर्षक के अन्तर्गत इनकी १०९ रचनाएँ हैं और इनकी अंतिम रचना इनके व्यक्तित्व को बयाँ करती है

'हिसाबों में मैं पक्की थी

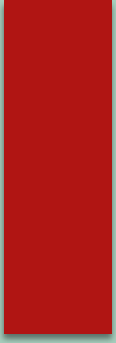
पर जिन्दगी कभी मेरे हिसाब से नहीं चली

केमिस्ट्री में पारंगत थी

पर किसी से मेरी केमिस्ट्री नहीं मिली'

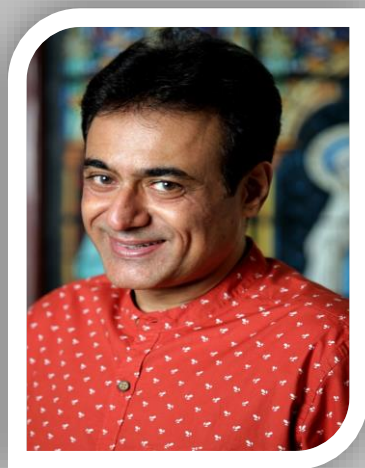
इस पुस्तक के सफल प्रकाशन के लिए मेरी ओर से डॉ. रेणु मिश्रा को बहुत बहुत हार्दिक बधाई एवं शुभकामनाएँ।

तो दोस्तों देर किस बात की आप भी पढ़िये इनकी एक से बढ़कर एक पंक्तियाँ इनकी किताब "दो टुक" से आज ही मंगाइये।



Brahmand: Voice of the Cosmos

RED CARPET STORIES



Dr. Nitish Bharadwaj

Red Carpet Stories

Dr. Purnima Kulkarni

Starting off sans Godfather in the Industry, the Veteran Actor, Dr. Nitish Bharadwaj spent two scores of his life learning, unlearning and re - learning the nuances of Theatre and Cinema. In the latest Indian Web Series, *Samantar 1 and 2*, Bharadwaj singed the screen with his cultured, sophisticated and classy portrayal as Sudarshan Chakrapani. Between the pandemic, multiple lockdowns, all kinds of political upheaval and shutting down of multiplexes, only some meaningful storytelling on the OTT Platforms could be our comfort blanket. Lakhs of Nitishians are drawn towards this feel - good character called Sudarshan Chakrapani who has made them smile and brought a few cathartic tears along the way. One must watch *Samantar 2* only for Sudarshan Chakrapani's heart-thumping romance, soaring singalongs and attention - grabbing scenes. The Thespian has left the viewers astonished with his histrionics and natural, authentic and non - violent acting. In his latest tweet, he mentioned that he owes his poise in performances to Veteran actors, the late Shri. Dilip Kumar and Guru Dutt Saab. In his tweets, Bharadwaj has also shown his odium towards the use of abusive language. The Actor adheres to the same principle in his reel life.

Sudarshan Chakrapani (Dr. Nitish Bharadwaj) plays a foil to Kumar Mahajan (Swapnil Joshi) whose dialogues are replete with cuss words, foul invective and bestiality. Joshi's role in *Samantar 2* is likely to rile up the modest minded folks who sincerely feel that Web series are distorting all moral values and making a mincemeat of love and romance. It is high time that we introduce a regulatory mechanism for OTT platforms or else we will be compelled to live in a morally depraved society. Through his clean role in *Samantar 2*, he has managed to retain the integrity of Indian Web Series.

Let us look at Nitish's journey as an eclectic Actor and observe his work which has been consistently transcendent.

Nitish debuted in a landmark Hindi film, *Trishagni* which was based on Sharadindu Bandopadhyay's historical short story, Moru O Sangho and inspired by Buddha's fire sermon (Agni Upadesh.) The Actor is greatly indebted to the esteemed Cinematographer, the late Rajan Kothari who introduced him to his FTII batchmate Shubhankar Ghosh, the son of a skilled and consummate Bengali Writer and Film Maker, Nabendu Ghosh. Nitish's fans raised a proud cackle when the Nabendu Ghosh classic was screened at the Kolkata Film Festival. *Trishagni* does not look like Nitish's debut film at all as he acted like a star with a massive cinematic experience. He did not use Prosthetics for the film and went completely bald for his role as Nirvan.

Dr. Nitish Bharadwaj

Red Carpet Stories

Dr. Purnima Kulkarni

Bharadwaj rose to fame with B.R. Chopra's Magnum Opus *Mahabharat* where he played the supreme personality of the Godhead and got pedestalized with the croons of *Jai Shri Krishna!* As a character, his legendary role as Krishna was multi - dimensional and we saw his tongue in cheek banter adding verve and energy to the dialogues penned by Dr. Rahi Masoom Raza.

In 1991, Nitish's Malayalam fans cried a stream of tears as he warmed the ventricles of their hearts by his subtle performance in *Njan Gandharvan*. The fans went dizzy, lauding their Gandharvan, flew over him, curveting and diving all around him, shrieking with joy. Nitish's inbuilt aura of nobility was instrumental in making Gandharvan look extraordinary.

Padmarajan shot the intimate scenes aesthetically, unlike the Web Series of today. There is one shocking scene in *Njan Gandharvan*, where Devan (Nitish) gets into a departmental store and beats up a pack of ruffians black and blue. For a while, we wonder whether it is the same actor who played the role of Krishna in *Mahabharat*. This is where Padmarajan tried to break the stereotype and offered him a role which was well – rounded and challenging. In the same film, Nitish was seen flaunting his knowledge as a Vet as he helped Bhama (Suparna Anand) dissect a frog in her Anatomy Class. The narrative leaves no space for an Antagonist other than Gandharvan's own destiny penalizing and traumatizing him. The supernatural elements are interestingly woven — the gush of a wild wind that signals his arrival, the bark of a tree that emits blood to forecast the brutalities that await him, the paranormal being losing his voice and regaining it back after seven days and nights of lashes over his body. Gandharvan should not be missed by Nitish Bharadwaj fans.

The Actor left an indelible impression on our minds with the *Vamana Avatara* (a dwarf) and bewildered us all with his portrayal as *Parshuram* (hunter) in *Vishnu Purana* whose anger rises like a tumultuous tidal wave as he enters the Monarch's chambers with his *Vidyudabhi* axe. Veteran Actress Hema Malini failed to recognize Nitish in the Parshuram Avatar where he set the screen ablaze with a role that demanded aggression and a high pitched, hoarse voice. Soon after impersonating the cantankerous Parshuram, he took a massive leap and played the role of *Maryada Purshottam* Ram that demanded composure and equipoise.

As Director of *Pitruroon*, Nitish Bharadwaj was the captain of the ship, involved in every aspect of the film. He has very cleverly, adroitly and dexterously handled the plot to generate interest in the screenplay from alpha to omega. What amazing storytelling and impeccable screenplay writing! You would believe you are inside the movie itself feeling and smelling and experiencing everything as the story unfolds.

Dr. Nitish Bharadwaj

Red Carpet Stories

Dr. Purnima Kulkarni

As a Director, Nitish treats the space itself like a character. He gives it a physiology, sociology and a psychology. He has a huge hand in it, along with the actors who inhabit those characters. We feel for it even more the second time we watch it. Tanuja, for us is the best on screen with Nitish at the helm.

We absolutely love the improvised nature of certain scenes. Each and every actor has been very well cast and Konkan looks gorgeous the way it has been filmed. The choice of shots, the shot division, the edit of the film, are all lovely. Through *Pitruroon*, Nitish gave the Marathi industry, a rhythm, style, grace of movement and the art of converting a film into poetry. He believes in amalgamating Cinema and Literature. The enigmatic human appeared as an Indigo farmer in Gowarikar's *Mohenjo Daro*. Gowarikar portrayed Durjan (Nitish Bharadwaj) as a coward who saves his skin out of trepidation and sends his own brother to the gallows. He is emotional but timid and eccentric.

Thereafter in 2018, Nitish played a tyrant father to Sara Ali Khan in *Kedarnath* and gave us a glimpse of Lord Shiva's *Tandav* through his power house performance. The dialogue: "*Nahi ho sakta ye sangam, chaahе pralay hi kyon na aa jaaye*" went viral on social media and became popular with the millennials. His anger, his rage has such intensity that it leaves you bewildered. Nitish has proved that even a supporting role in a film can be so influential! Nitish shared an excellent rapport with the lead actor of *Kedarnath*, Sushant Singh Rajput who merged with the elements and left an empty void, never to be filled.

Nitish made his Web Series debut with *Samantar 1* and once again, dealt with human emotions with a divine name, Sudarshan Chakrapani. A character who has ridden through a myriad of temperatures, insane battles and turbulent roads. Chakrapani's depiction can take jabs at the practice of Astrology and Superstition. Watch out for his expressions when he warns Kumar Mahajan in the confrontation scene. "*Ya dairyan madhe karma aahe majha!*"

Director Satish Rajiwade paid acute attention to Nitish's character detailing in *Samantar*. His dialogue delivery in the series is phenomenal and the Veteran actor manages to create an impact, despite inadequate screen space in Season 1. Chakrapani has a distinctive voice and an interesting point of view. Chakrapani's role supersedes Kumar Mahajan in many respects.

In *Samantar 2*, you will meet the iconic Actor's real - life persona merging with reel life as he is spotted photographing nature. The audience gets a sudden jolt when he shares the screen with Sundara (Tamhankar, an absolute rustic villager) but manages to provide some comic relief after terror - stricken scenes featuring Kumar Mahajan. Watch him out as he sings "*Chehra hai ya chand khila hai*" in his own mellifluous voice and then leaves us absolutely amused in the drunk scene.

Artist: Geethanjali Dilip



Dr. Nitish Bharadwaj

Red Carpet Stories

Dr. Purnima Kulkarni

Chakrapani exerts a sweet, kind and benevolent behaviour. He is deferential towards the Astrologer (Jayant Sawarkar) unlike Kumar Mahajan who raves and rants at him like a lunatic. Chakrapani is calm, while Mahajan is tempestuous. The former is sensitive while the latter is eccentric. This contrast between the two makes the story riveting and engaging. One mustn't miss out on Nitish's impeccable histrionics and vicious laughter in the *Warkari* scene and of course the Jail scene. The concluding scene is jaw dropping and deserves his fans' approbation and applause. Each time Bharadwaj has played *Krishna* on screen or stage, he has added a new flavour to it. Once again through *Samantar 2*, Bharadwaj has given us a cinephile friendly role which is going to stay with us for a long time. He has imbued it with intensity, an astounding narrative momentum, sensitivity and fascinating enigma.

Nitish's fans would certainly appreciate his defiance and setting of certain benchmarks and red flag zones for the succeeding generations. The Thespian has often spoken about the importance of Spiritual Awareness for Organizational Excellence through his videos. He has often reiterated the shloka from the Bhagavad Gita,

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः।
स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते (Chapter3, Verse 21)

How many Actors are able to internalize this in their reel lives?

The great actions performed by Nitish Bharadwaj will make the followers lead by his example.

In future, Nitish will take up roles which fire him up. He has a directorial venture in the pipeline and we are waiting for his Film with bated breath.

Dr. Purnima Kulkarni

(Red Carpet Stories)



अनूप पाण्डेय
दिनांक २० फ़रवरी २०२० , मुंबई

एकदम सच कहा है गालिब ने ये वो शायर हैं जो दिल, दिमाग से रास्ता तय करते रूह में उतर जाते हैं। ये देश, काल, नस्ल की सीमाओं से परे किसी और ही ज़ोन में पैदा होते हैं, ये अपनी रचनाओं में अमर हो के जीते हैं और पोयट्री के आसमान पर सदा के लिए तारे की तरह चमकते रहते हैं। क्या खूब हो कि ऐसे किसी शायर से रूबरू मुलाक़ात होती।और मेरी मुलाक़ात ऐसी ही शख्सियत से हुईइस दौर के चंद सबसे मक़बूल शायरों में से एक जावेद अख़्तर साहब के साथ ज़िंदगी के कुछ घंटे गुज़ारने का मौक़ा मिला.....और मौक़ा भी क्या खूब मिला.....ये जावेद साहब के लिए बस यूँ ही आई गई बात होगी लेकिन मेरे लिये....मेरे लिये तो मनमांगी मुराद।

सफ़र जीवन का हो या फिर ट्रेन का... सफ़र बरसों में फैला हो... या महज़ कुछ मीलों या चंद घंटों में समायाये सफ़र कुछ के वास्ते अमूल्य और कुछ के लिये बस तय हो जाता है। फिर सफ़र तो सफ़र है जनाब....बस गुज़र ही जाता है । इस बार की कोल्हापुर की ट्रेन यात्रा का जावेद अख़्तर साहब के साथ सफ़र मेरे लिये बेहद रोचक बन गया और निश्चित रूप से यादगार भी।

.....तो हुआ यूँ कि इस महीने का रूटीन नाइट इन्स्पेक्शन पूना से सतारा के बीच, महालक्ष्मी एक्सप्रेस से करना था। अतः फ़रवरी १९ तारीख को रिज़र्वेशन कराया गया कोल्हापुर जाने का और एक दिन बाद २० तारीख को वापस आने का। जाते वक्त एसी डब्बे के बी केबिन में ऊपर की बर्थ थी। बैठते वक्त पाया कि नीचे वाली बर्थ पर एक दोहरे बदन वाले सज्जन मेरे सहयात्री हैं। सामान्य शिष्टाचार का आदान प्रदान कूपे में घुसते ही हो गया। वे शायद भूखे रहे होंगे इसलिये मेरे सीट पर बैठने के पूर्व ही वे अपने डिनर में तन्मयता से व्यस्त हो गये। मुझसे भी शालीनता वश उन्होंने खाने के लिए पूंछा किंतु मैं अपना डिनर घर से ही खाकर चला था, अतः उनका धन्यवाद कर मैं भी नये जमाने के शगल यानि अपने मोबाइल फ़ोन में व्यस्त हो गया।

अनूप पाण्डेय

दिनांक २० फ़रवरी २०२०, मुंबई

इसी बीच घर से पत्नी का फ़ोन आ गया कि बड़े पुत्र महाशय एसीडिटी के मारे बेहाल हैं और उल्टियाँ वगैरह कर रहे हैं। मैंने फ़ोन पर पुत्र महोदय की क्लास ले डाली और कड़े शब्दों में खानपान और दिनचर्या पर भाषण दे डाला। ख़ास तौर पर शाम का भोजन हल्का और जल्दी कर लेने की हिदायत के साथ अपनी बात समाप्त की। इससे अनभिज्ञ कि हमारे सहयात्री महोदय किस क्रिस्म का भोजन ग्रहण कर रहे हैं। यहाँ मेरा लेक्चर ख़त्म हुआ वहाँ वे भोजनोपरान्त अपने हाथ पोंछ रहे थे। जब नज़रें मिलीं तो वे हल्के से मुस्कुराए और बोले सर माफ़ कीजिए मैं वही सब खा रहा था, जिसे आप फ़ोन पर न खाने के बारे में हिदायतें दे रहे थे। अब शर्मिंदगी महसूस करने की मेरी बारी थी बिना ये देखे कि वे सज्जन चिकन बिरयानी, तंदूरी रोटियाँ इत्यादि खा रहे थे। मैं इसके ही विरुद्ध पुत्र महोदय को हल्के खाने की शिक्षा दे रहा था। मैंने क्षमायाचना की और इस बात को महत्व न देने को कहा। वे भी मनोविनोदी भाव से ही अपनी बात कह रहे थे, इसलिये बात हँसी में टल गई। अभी तक ये पता न चला था कि वे सज्जन कौन हैं, ये तो अगले दिन जब उन्होंने ही बताया कि वे **महात्मा गांधी के पौत्र तुषार गांधी** हैं तब पता चला। बड़ा संकोच रहा अपने बड़बोले पन का और परिवेश से अनभिज्ञ हो अपने दृढ़ उद्बोधन का।

इसी बीच अन्य एक सहयात्री ने जावेद अख़्तर साहब का नाम लिया। तब मुझे समझ में आया कि बाजू वाली ए केबिन में जो भीड़ थी ज़रूर वहाँ जावेद साहब ही होंगे। उनसे मिलने की अपनी भी बलवती इच्छा को मैंने किसी तरह दबा दिया कि क्यूँ किसी इतनी मशहूर शख़्सियत को बेवजह सताया जाए। सो हम बिना किसी प्रबल प्रयास के शैय्यानशीन हो गये। अलबत्ता सोने के पूर्व लघुनिवृत्ति हेतु कॉरिडोर में निकले तो जावेद साहब भी अपनी केबिन से निकलते नज़र आये मैं उन्हें सर की जुंबिश से विश करके एक तरफ़ रास्ता देकर खड़ा हो गया वे भी शुक्रिया कह के बाजू से गुजर गये। ये मलाल फिर उभर आया कि मैं इतनी मशहूर शख़्सियत से बात नहीं कर पा रहा हूँ। ख़ैर अलसुबह कॉरिडोर में उनसे एक बार और सामना हुआ ...तब जब जावेद साहब गलती से हमारी केबिन की तरफ़ आ गये थे और फिर माफ़ी दरयाफ़्त करते हुए अपनी केबिन की ओर चले गये। तब मन में एक विचार आया कि जल्द ही उनसे मुलाक़ात नियति कराने वाली है। हालाँकि कि ये पता नहीं कि कब पर ऐसा विचार मन में आया ज़रूर।

रात में मैंने अपना फ़ुटप्लेट इंस्पेक्शन किया, सुबह माँ महालक्ष्मी के दर्शन किये, कोलहापुर यार्ड का निरीक्षण किया और दोपहर तक अपने सरकारी कार्यों से फ़ारिग हो गया। और फिर बीस तारीख़ की शाम को हल्का खाना रेस्टहाऊस में ही निबटा कर चल पड़ा पुनः ट्रेन पकडने। इस बार मेरी ए केबिन में ऊपर की बर्थ थी। कॉरिडोर में कदम रखते ही पाँच सात लोगों के पीछे तुषार जी से नज़रें मिलीं और सुखद आश्चर्य के साथ मैंने हाँक लगा दी - “अरे वाह सर आप भी आज ही वापस मुंबई रवाना हो रहे हैं।” वे भी हँस कर बोले - “जी हाँ हम भी चल रहे हैं।”

अनूप पाण्डेय
दिनांक २० फ़रवरी २०२० , मुंबई

केबिन में कदम रखते ही मैं खुशी के मारे उछल ही तो पड़ा सामने लोअर बर्थ पर जावेद साहब हाथ बांधे नमूदार थे।मैंने हाथ जोड़कर नमस्कार की और अपनी खुशी का इज़हार भी किया। बातों का सिलसिला कब कैसे चल निकला पता ही न चला।गाड़ी के चलते तक जावेद साहब और तुषार जी को छोड़ने आये लोगों का ताँता लगा रहा। इसी बीच स्टेशन मास्टर और टी ई महोदय ने भी जावेद साहब के साथ एक तस्वीर लेने का इज़हार किया जिसे जावेद साहब ने सहर्ष स्वीकार कर लिया हूँ इनकी तस्वीर लेने का ज़िम्मा मैंने स्वतः ही ले लिया और फिर स्वयं की तस्वीर भी उन से खिंचवा ली।वैसे इसी मंतव्य से मैंने उनकी तस्वीर खिंची भी थी।

गाड़ी के चलते ही बातों का सिलसिला भी तेज़ी से चल निकला।तुषार जी ने ही जावेद साहब को बताया कि मैं भी सुबह ही मुंबई से कोल्हापुर आया था और अब साथ ही लौट रहा हूँ। बातों से पता चला ये दोनों महाशय स्वर्गीय गोविंद पानसरे साहब की पुण्यतिथि पर आयोजित कार्यक्रम में हिस्सा लेने आए थे।

बातें फिर चल निकलीं -

जावेद साहब ने पूछा - “आप कहाँ के रहने वाले हैं”।

मैंने कहा - सर पुस्तैनी रुप से तो मैं इलाहाबाद से हूँ लेकिन पैदा और पला बढा मध्यप्रदेश में हूँ।

जावेद साहब- मध्यप्रदेश में कहाँ से।

मैं- जी भोपाल के पास एक छोटा सा क़स्बा है बीना बस वहीं से।

जावेद साहब- अरे भाई मैं जानता हूँ। मैंने भोपाल से ही अपनी पढ़ाई की है और मैं ग्वालियर भी रहा हूँ।

मैं -अरे वाह सर मैं भी दो साल ग्वालियर में रहा हूँ और मेरा बड़ा बेटा भी नहीं पैदा हुआ है।

जावेद साहब- भई हमारे अब्बा का बड़ा बेटा भी वहीं पैदा हुआ था।

एकदम संजीदा लहजे में बोल के जनाब चुप हो गये। जब हमारी समझ में बात आई तो हम चारों लोग ठठा के हंस पड़े।इस वक्त केबिन में मैं, तुषारजी, जावेद साहब और उनका सहायक किशोर चार लोग ही थे।

बीच में लोग आ कर फ़ोटो खिंचवाते और बातों में व्यवधान भी डालते रहे। जावेद साहब सहर्ष अनुमति भी देते रहे।ये लाज़िमी भी है अब जावेद साहब पर उनके खुद के हक़ के साथ सामान्य जन का हक़ भी तो है, सो इतने विनय पूर्ण अनुरोधों को टाल पाना नामुमकिन था। लोगों के चेहरों पर फ़ोटो खिंचाते वक्त और उसके बाद का आव्हाद देखते ही बन रहा था।

क्रमशः

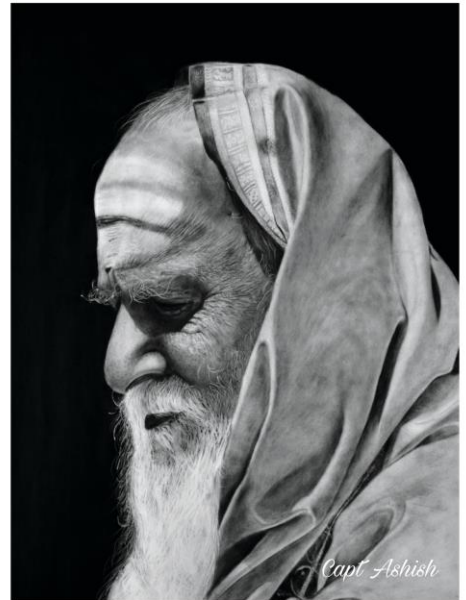
PHOTO GALLERY

Photographer: Nikita Saxena



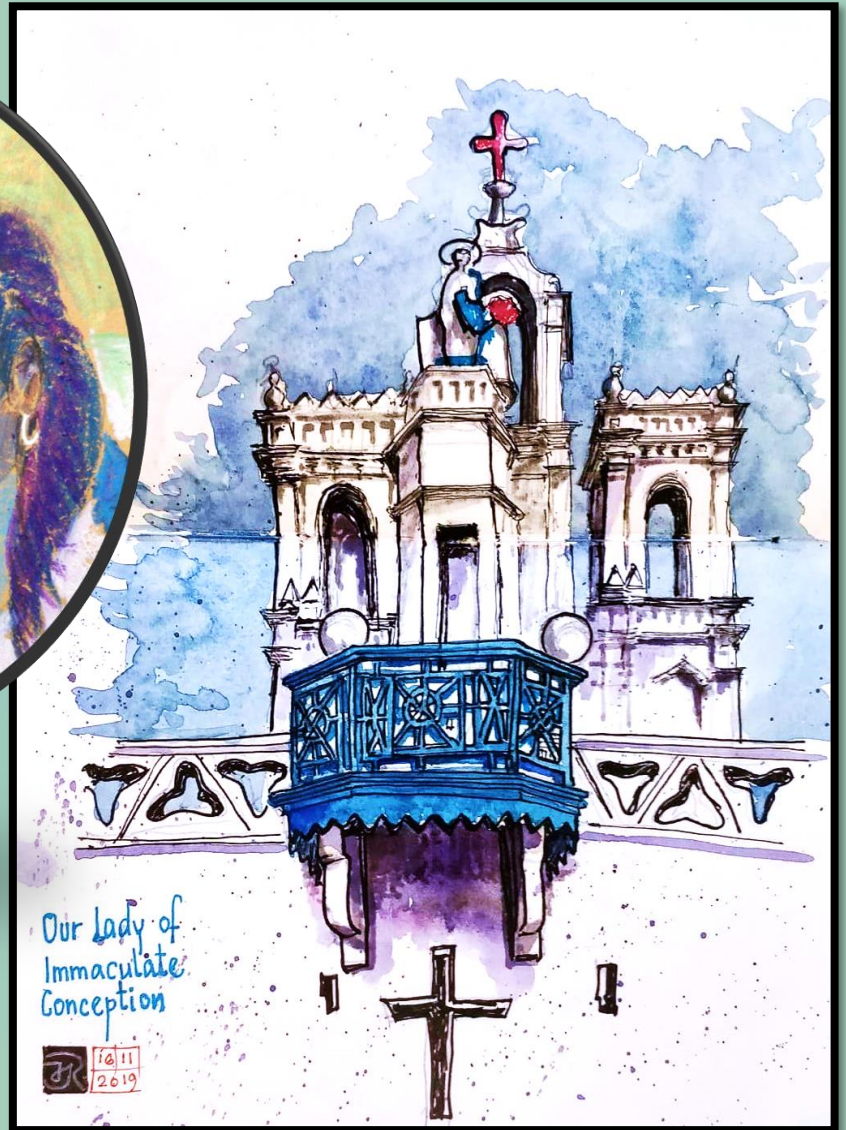


Artist: Capt. Ashish Pannase

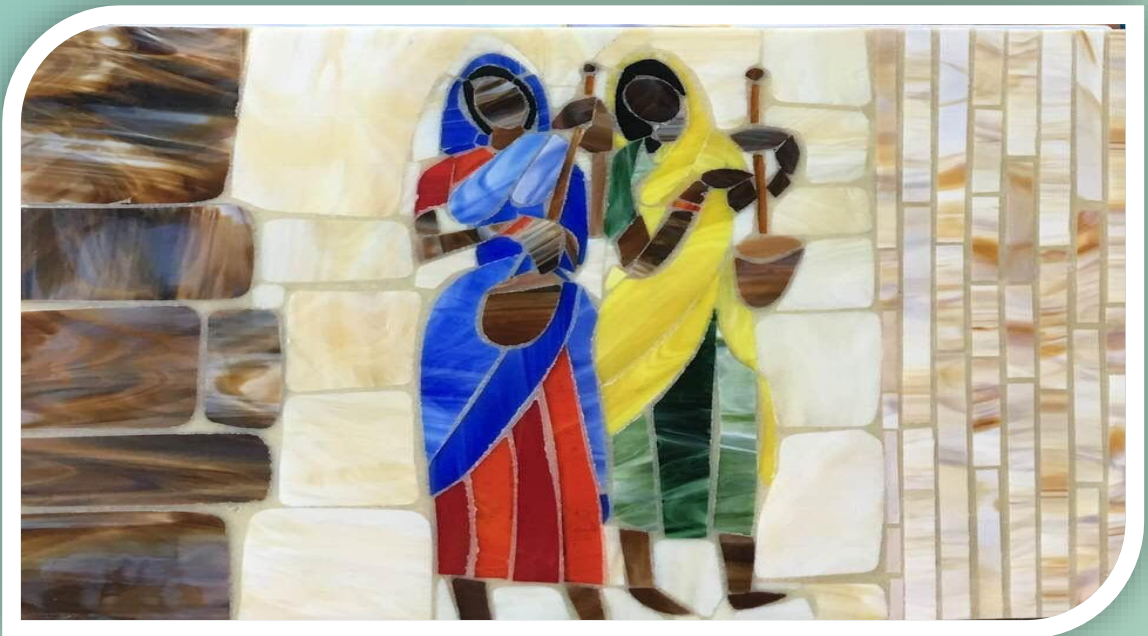
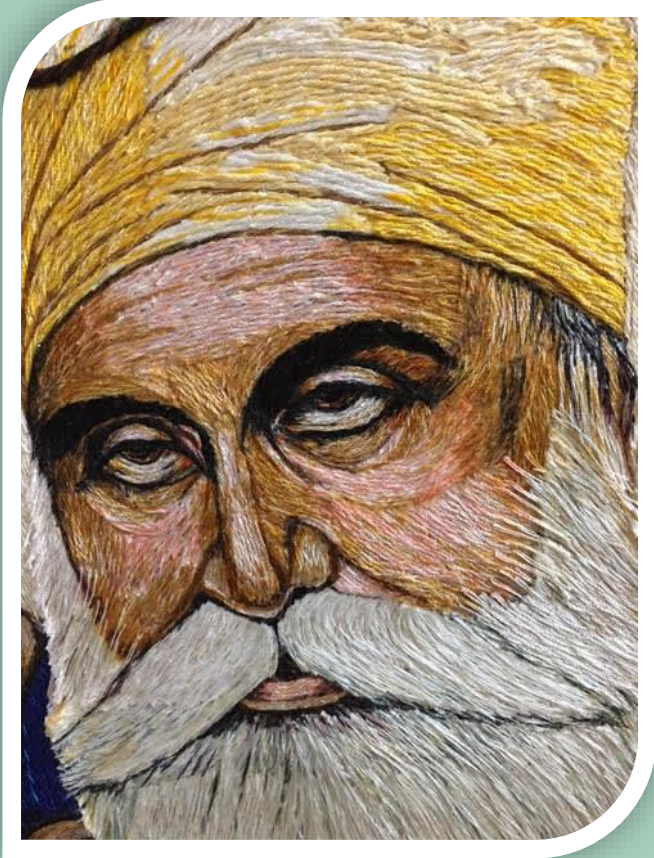




Artist
Mayuresh Shirolkar



Artist: Famida Haider



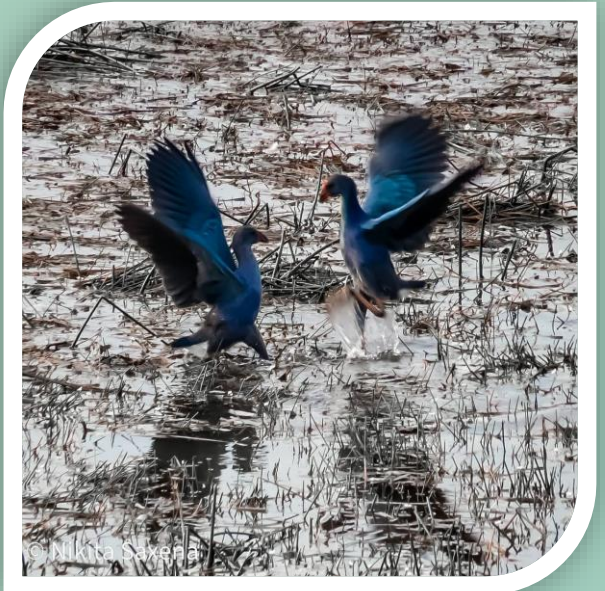
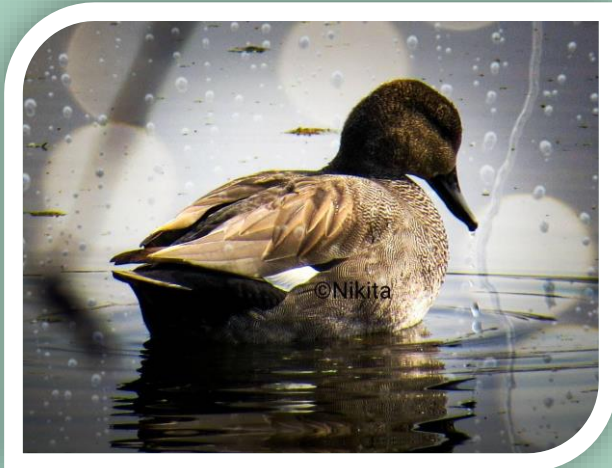
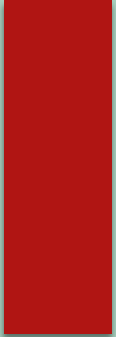


Photographer:
Prahmarsh Bajpai



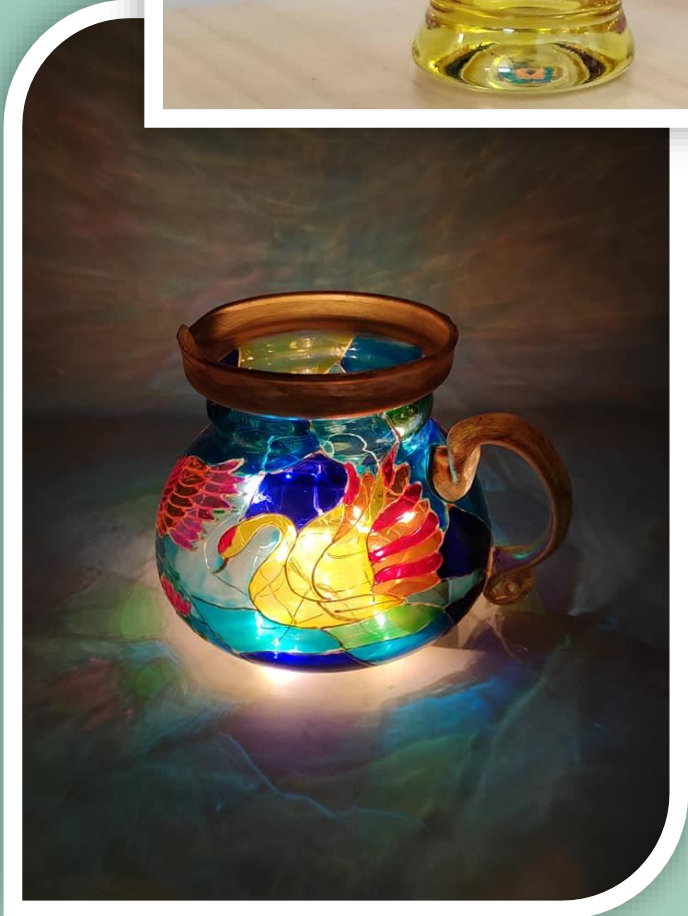


Photographer:
Nikita Saxena





Artist and Photographer:
Neeharika Shembekar

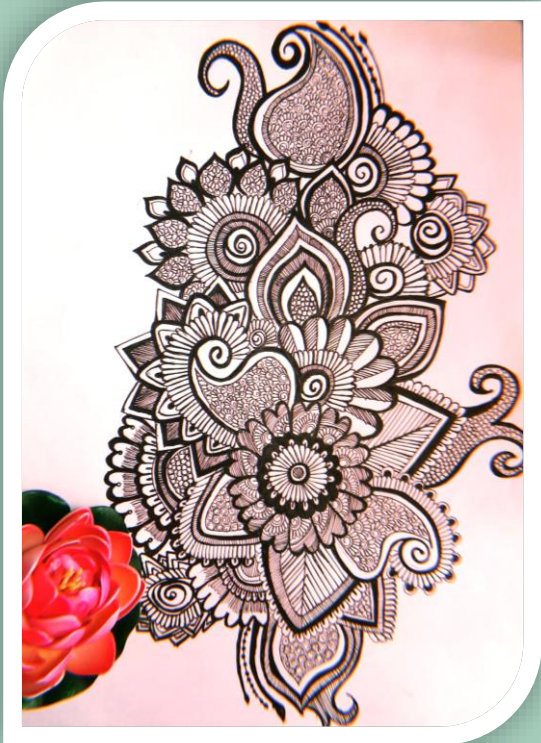




Artist: Dr. Aparajita Hazra



Artist:
Needhi Jinde



Artist: Flames of Love by Mary Anne Zammit

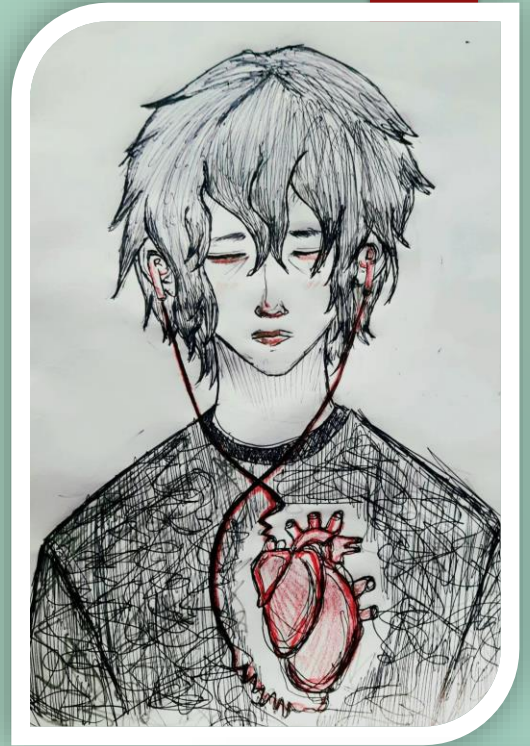
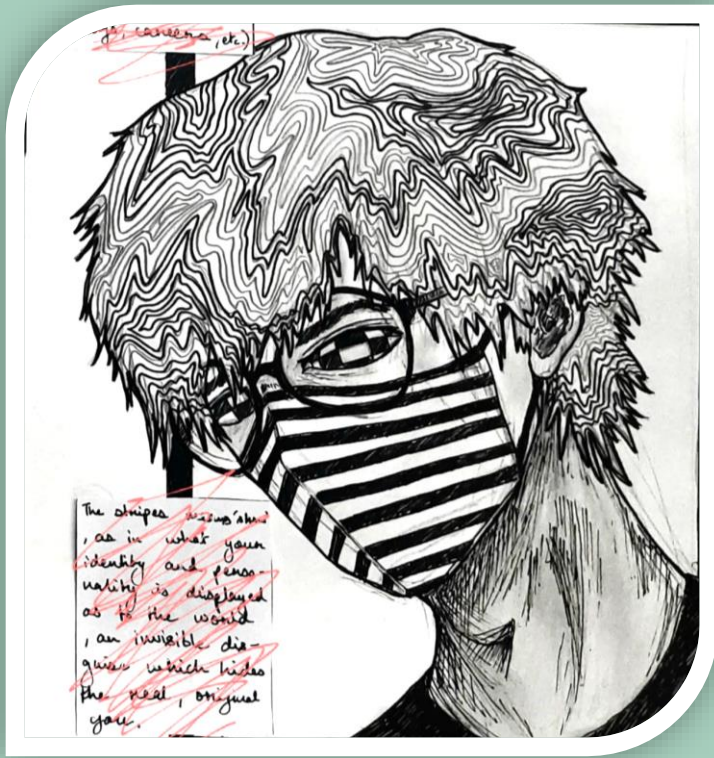


Artist: Dr. Hemangi Abhyankar

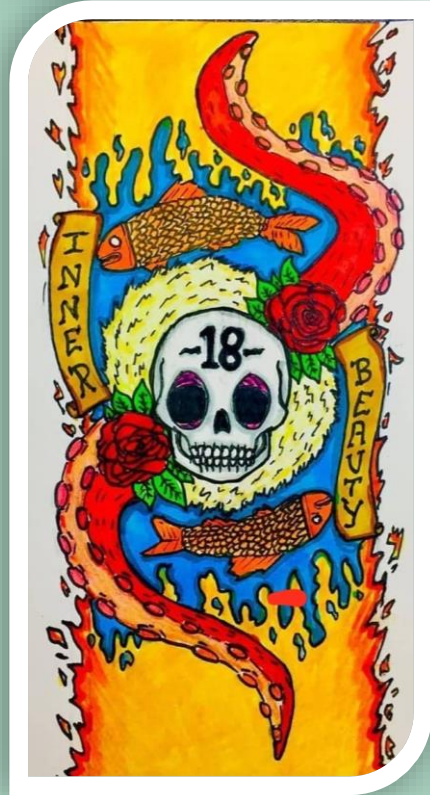


Artist: Ritu Bhatnagar





Artist: Ketav Singh



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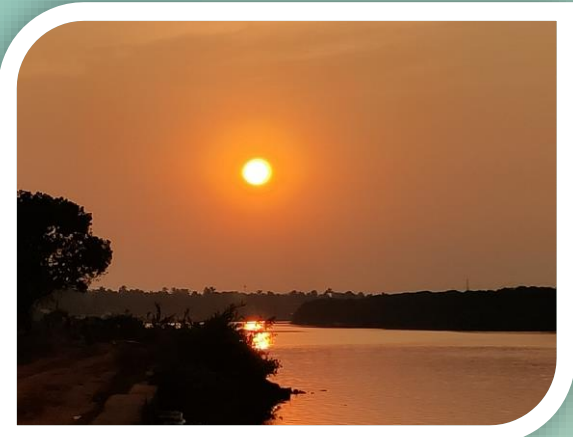
Artist: Ninad Dhanorkar



Photographer: Nikita Saxena



Photographer:
Dr. Purnima Kulkarni



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THE END