

The Enchanting Verses Literary Review

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Published from Kolkata, India.**

The Enchanting Poet for ISSUE XVI July 2012
Awarded for her efforts of serving the society through poetry.

Perie Longo, PhD, is Poet Laureate *Emerita* of Santa Barbara, California (2007-09), a teacher through the California Poets in the Schools since 1986, the annual Santa Barbara Writers Conference, and teaches poetry privately. Also a psychotherapist, she integrates poetry with her practice. In 2005 she was invited by the University of Kuwait to speak about the power of poetry for healing and to give workshops to several different groups and hospitals on the subject. She works with Sanctuary Psychiatric Centers, and Hospice of Santa Barbara.

She has authored three books of poetry, *The Privacy of Wind*, *Milking the Earth* and *With Nothing behind but Sky: a journey through grief*. Her poems have been published in numerous journals including *Atlanta Review*, *California Quarterly*, *The Connecticut Review*, *The Prairie Schooner*, *International Poetry Review*, *Nimrod*, *Passager*, *The Paterson Review*, *Quercus Review*, *Rattle*, *Studia Mystica*, and several anthologies.

A past president of the National Association for Poetry Therapy, she is a long-time mentor teacher for certification in this field. In 1998 she received their “Outstanding Achievement Award.” In 1999 she was the keynote speaker for their annual conference, giving a talk titled “Gathered Around the Heart of the Fire” and in 2004 she was given the “Distinguished Service Award.” She has published several articles on the effectiveness of Poetry Therapy in *The Journal of Poetry Therapy* and *The Therapist*. Recently she received a Woman of Achievement Award from the Association of Women in Communication-Santa Barbara Chapter.

Poems by Perie Longo

HUM

*If there is magic on this planet, it is
contained in water.*

~Loren Eiseley

Over the radio comes an aquaphone
recording of ice floes
 moving deep under the Niagara River,
not exactly a moan

nor scraping, rather a soft hum inside the
head as when
 one memory slips over another,
surfaces,

impossible to fathom unless we lay belly
down on
 the damp, spring ground we feel
through the body

as we do our lover's blood surging in our
ear, or
 the sigh of a writer in pursuit of
the next line,

the one to finish her book, the poem she
begins
 when the full moon in the
corner of the window

slides into her bed. She rises with a start
 and with the only device needed,
takes pen, succumbs

to air in the lungs, moment eclipsing
moment, word,
word until it happens—the purl there all
along.

“BEAUTIFUL HAIR”

Before his parting this earth, I saw
hundreds of spiders in the shower risen
from the drain. I put on my glasses
to my own suffer of hair, ran fingers
through diminishing strands, more
in my hands. “Honey, look!” I rushed

into the bedroom where he lay bald
in his chemo state, breathing shallow.
“For me?” he smiled, hazy-eyed,
turning my cruel vanity around
with a kick. We rested awhile, wet
with what was left of each other.

When the bottom dropped out, I drove
to the vitamin store, asked the clerk
for solution to my dandelion head gone
to seed, nothing but a bird's nest,
I wept. She lifted from the shelf
a purple bottle of pills labeled,

“Beautiful Hair,” as if the color
would redeem my royal callousness,
the capsules replace my light-
headedness or the touch of his hand
through my once crowning glory
which grew thick again mattering less

and less as months dragged on.
One night I dreamed my head full of
feathers,
a great bird struggling to break free.

Editor's Choice

Parallel Keys

By *Hélène Cardona*

We give each other an offering
of life, voyagers on impermanent inner
oceans, mariners on subliminal time
waves, master builders of whimsical
landscapes. *Hold on to the mane*, the
dancing horse
laughs, clapping
hooves in rhythm with drumbeats.
Pushed out of narrow perimeters
by the magnet of the universe,
forced to abandon the illusion
of the puzzle I inhabit,
I'm governed by the poetry of
mathematics,
shadow when I lose form
in the chiaroscuro of spatial
intuition.
I reveal myself fixing the omen.
Eagle teaches
me to hunt, stillness followed
by speed, warm warring, raptor
uncovering secret codes, deadly
fighting principles, tensile mind.
Marvel at how a rose makes
love with water, how we turn into
cougars
in the rain, how immovable
mountains
become intangible clouds.
We grow musically
covered in cherry blossoms,
divine variation.
We are consciousness wanting to expand.

Hélène Cardona is a citizen of the United States, France and Spain. She is a poet, actor, translator and teacher. She attended Hamilton College, New York, where she also taught French and Spanish, and the Sorbonne, Paris, where she wrote her thesis on Henry James for her Master's in American Literature. She writes and translates in English, French and Spanish and is also fluent in German, Italian and Greek.

She worked as a translator/interpreter for the Canadian Embassy and the French Chamber of Commerce and taught at the Ecole Bilingue (Paris) and LMU (Los Angeles).

She is the author of the bilingual poetry collections *Dreaming My Animal Selves* (Salmon Poetry, 2013), *Life in Suspension* (forthcoming Tupelo Press), and *The Astonished Universe* (Red Hen Press, 2006).

Her poems have appeared in *The Los Angeles Review*, *Mythic Passages*, *The American Center for Artists*, *Barnwood Mag*, *Askew*, *Spillway*, *Mediterranean Poetry*, *qarrtsiluni*, *Pirene's Fountain*, *Maintenant 5: a Dada Poetry Journal*, *From the Fishhouse*, *THRUSH Poetry Journal*, *Maintenant 6*, *Poetry International*, *The Warwick Review*, *Washington Square* and in the anthologies *Illuminations: Expressions of the Spiritual Experience* (Celestial Arts, 2006) and *Dogs Singing* (Salmon Poetry, 2011).

Hélène translated the Lawrence Bridges film *Muse of Fire* for the NEA, *What We Carry* by Dorianne Laux, and the poetry of her father José Manuel Cardona, Rimbaud, Baudelaire, Aloysius Bertrand and Jean-Claude Renard into English.

She received fellowships from the DAAD and the University of Baeza, Andalusia.

Grand

By Terry Jones

You don't play a note, not on that piano, over
and over it plays itself all from a memory,

strings and hammers strings and hammers.

Home to beetles bright as rings, sharp mouse bones,
tops of bluebottles, why its black as a coffin:
from scores of webs the spiders shout out,

strings and hammers strings and hammers.

Wild as genius a bird flew in, rayed its fingers
in mortified music soft and loud, cried its prison,

Stiff backed my grandmother sat the living wire,
her ribs hummed with war sang with thunder,
she came down hard on her blue daughters
dark cherries of their eyes glistening

Now its music's creased as an old rudder,
step up most reflectively, raise elbows, flex fingers,

strings and hammers strings and hammers.

Terry Jones graduated in English Literature from the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, and completed a Cert. Ed postgraduate qualification in teaching at Manchester University. For most of his career he has taught English Literature in further and higher education. His poetry has appeared in most of the major UK poetry magazines and journals, including *Poetry Review*, *The London Magazine*, *The New Statesman*, *Magma*, *Iota*, *Agenda*, *Envoi* etc. In 2011, he took first prizes in the *Bridport International Writing* competition, judged by the UK Poet Laureate, Carol Ann Duffy and in the *Sentinel Annual* poetry competition. His first short collection, *Furious Resonance*, was published by Poetry Salzburg in 2011.

Radiant Paths

By Kevin Heaton

Stepping stones are bruise rocks
that pleasure shallow cuts

with demure glimpses of naked
skin. Failure is a wilted word:

an ashen mask in smeared lipstick.
I straddle the convergence:

a pilgrim, confirming the truths
of a more radiant pathway,

not a courtesan, eager to lie
down for the grimace. I see

that spring is once again surprising
my eyes. Perfect flowers are rare

things. If I kneel, it is to pray
at the edge of nightfall—

to say to the sun: “More sun,”
or to rest beside a river.

Parched Flowers

By Kevin Heaton

Van Gogh’s mad ear enflamed a field
of purple irises—marring the face of
a sleeping homeless man. Artists render

people like pastels & watercolors:
the wounded gather shopping carts & talk
about saviors, their smiles resemble burn

scars. They tape magazine clippings
to bedroom mirrors & blow cigarette
smoke
into perfect images hoping to see a
heartbeat.

Liars parse sermons like ravens, then
genuflect
like driftwood & line their egos
with Cardinal feathers—change sangria

into green tea. Would that I were sickle
& whetstone—a reaper of men, or palette
& canvas—the turned cheek of a saint.

*Pushcart Prize nominee **Kevin Heaton** lives and writes in South Carolina. His work has appeared or is forthcoming in a number of publications, including: Raleigh Review, Foundling Review, The Honey Land Review, and Mason's Road. His fourth chapbook, Chronicles, is forthcoming from Finishing Line Press in early 2012. He is a Best of the Net 2011 nominee.*

Polonaise

By Philip Kobylarz
in memory, Steven Kranz

It's the way of the world.
Hand-rolled cigarettes
and ice, the rock candy
of glass. Radio
narrative of weather,
same old tune, just another
song. Another song
after that. Lost in the trans-
lation of losing. Paper
clips, box of letters,
some drawings of photo-
graphs, not even that.
Merely players on a stage
and the dance, a polonaise.
Unfolded from a page,
clippings from a beard.
List of groceries
already checked. Nights
spent. Books never given
back. City in the dark,
a million lost stars. Hum
of the bus stopped, the words
of the polonaise. Candle
of your name on the book
handmade, burning only
to fade. Thumbprint irreverent-
ly left on the Catalinas
sketched in sunset. Words,
coins left in the pay phone's
front pocket: a code seven
heart, past tense, the odd
man out, the sweetness
of sour. Saying there's

a slip into ellipsis
and free falling
are differences of
similarity. Dancers
glide onto the floor:
the music riptides,

the current, a polonaise.
Monsoon override,
the air ionic, a taste
of saliva, or lead.
Tethers, unravelling
of breath. Always,
the possibility
of rain. Red letter
day. Picture of Saturn
with only two rings.
To do what we will
without us. Desert pools
with the light of a day,
a series of another.
Mailbox empty with
the promises of letters.
Never to be there.
This dance. A polonaise.

Ante Meridian

By Philip Kobylarz

Arabesques of a lady at a table
with her hat still on. Beer glasses
and lock of hair about the forehead.
A lighter for cigarettes, more likely
the candle. Coffee raises its smell
as luggage gets lost in airports
mingling in the bellies of planes.
Milk curdles around and around
in a porcelain cup on the table
(café of the three kings) cracks
and fissures on its lips. Streams
of white aiming to be stars. Teeth
meet grounds: little black rubble
of morning.

Philip Kobylarz's works have appeared or will appear in Connecticut Review, Basalt, Santa Fe Literary Review, New American Writing, Poetry Salzburg Review and has appeared in Best American Poetry. His book, Rues, was recently published by Blue Light Press of San Francisco.

Reading someone else's poem

By Maya Apostoloska

You can spot very easily
The thin veins
Of the whole (only yours).

Their fluids feed it.

The core swells.
Ripe metaphors peep around
Sucking up the wind from

Hot thoughts.

Ether through the colorful pictures!
Ether, ether in the whole!
But, still, the veins
Are driven by me

On the paper.

Translated by Ana Topencharova

Heritage

By Maya Apostoloska

I.

(...) It came out that there was a crater
almost bottomless,
almost no way out,
almost always we feed it a morsel.

The expression weakens...
Our two-faced will
Crumbles it in the mouth (literally).

Crags above the ravines of words.
Ashen butt-ends.
Self-ignited fear of consequences.
It is there.
It is here as heritage.
It is everywhere.

II.

Then it came out that
the engraved space is experienced
ascetically,
the letters in-graved,
and not just that...

Translated by Zoran Anchevski

Maya Apostoloska (born 7 December 1976) is an award-winning Macedonian poetess, essayist and literary critic. She holds a B.A. in Comparative Literature from the Blazhe Koneski Faculty of Philology in Skopje. She is an editor of *Knževno zhitie* literary magazine.

Published books: *Naming* (poetry collection, 2009), *Behind the Texts* (literary criticism, essays and studies, 2007), *Communication Breakdown* (poetry collection, 2004), *Play at Last, Inky!* (poetry collection, 2000).

Together with Jovica Tasevski-Eternijan, she has edited a selection of contemporary Macedonian poetry containing Biblical, religious and apocryphal elements, which was published as a thematic issue of the *Stremez* magazine (No. 11-12, 2000).

She has published poetry, criticism, essays and translations in many literary magazines.

The Teacher

By Valentina Cano

Her posture betrayed
no twitch of the anger
that pulsed like an oven light
through her body.
She sits with her hands in pleats,
staring ahead, a smile of pale milk
on her face.
If he'd been looking,
he'd have caught, perhaps,
the trench around her,
the air separating, splintering itself
into tentacles.
All reaching out for him.
All with the crunch of bones
echoing on their skins.

The Balance

By Valentina Cano

Her hands are nothing like mine.
Her bones are shaped like arrows,
pointing to you,
flying across this empty space,
laser beams of calcified regret.
My bones have learned to float,
to absorb impact like water,
to fill my porous surfaces
with your scent.
She.
I.
Always balanced across the room.
And you,
always a breath away from tipping us.

Valentina Cano is a student of classical singing who spends whatever free time either writing or reading. Her works have appeared in Exercise Bowler, Blinking Cursor, Theory Train, Cartier Street Press, Berg Gasse 19, Precious Metals, A Handful of Dust, The Scarlet Sound, The Adroit Journal, Perceptions Literary Magazine, Welcome to Wherever, The Corner Club Press, Death Rattle, Danse Macabre, Subliminal Interiors, Generations Literary Journal, Super Poetry Highway, Stream Press, Stone Telling, Popshot, Golden Sparrow Literary Review, Rem Magazine, Structo, The 22 Magazine, The Black Fox Literary Magazine, Niteblade, Tuck Magazine, Ontologica, Congruent Spaces Magazine, Pipe Dream, Decades Review, Anatomy, Lowest of Chronicle, Muddy River Poetry Review, Lady Ink Magazine, White Masquerade Anthology and Perhaps I'm Wrong About the World.

Interview With Mary Magdalene

BY Marina Julia Neary

Mommy wept when she learned
About the countless trips I took to the garden
of Eden—
Each time with a different Adam.

Daddy only clenched the beer bottle
And tugged on his mustache.

Reverend Buckley, the “pillar of community”
That cracked ten years ago,
Brandished a burning cross over my head.

And when he saw that I wasn’t scared of fire,
He sent me to Father Mahoney, who sprinkled
me
With holy water and bits of catechism.

But I sat on the bench, bare legs crossed,
Head tilted to a side: “Care for a cigarette,
Father?”

The stout Irishman said it was time to remove
Rotting fruit from the basket.

“But, Father!” I cried. “I love my job!
And when God calls me on the carpet,
I’ll have a million stories for Him.”

Oh, how many heads crushed into my lap,
Ugly, empty, half-crazed heads that nobody
else would hold.
How many hands with swollen veins and
blackened nails
Clutched my skirts. My fingers are
permanently salted
With the sweat and tears I’ve wiped off.

When my boys raise their brides’ veils in
church,
Dizzy from incense and electric organ music,
They’ll remember me, who offered her lips to
replace
The mouth of a whiskey bottle and demanded
no promises.

What use do I have for a diamond ring?
It’ll cut the flow of blood to my finger!

I scatter caresses like seeds to birds: to the
right,
To the left, behind each shoulder, without
looking behind.

While Juliet and Ophelia die, Mary Magdalene
stays.

What I Remember About Gena

BY Marina Julia Neary

Dusty feet in leather sandals--
How I feared they would crush me
Like a box of cigarettes!

I played on the floor with colored buttons,
While she walked in and out,
Singing and slamming the door,
In a cloud of Irish rock and recently smoked
weed,
Escorted by greasy-haired boys.

That New Year's Eve,
Crowned with a paper tiara,
I sampled beer from different cans,
Until I vomited under the table.

Without a word, Gena pulled me up by the ear,
And the boys showered me with confetti.

*A Chernobyl survivor, **Marina Julia Neary** has been fascinated by the theme of disasters - natural, scientific, political and intimate. Her areas of expertise include Neo-Victorianism, French Romanticism and Irish Nationalism. Her two steampunk tragicomedies "Hugo in London" and "Lady with a Lamp" were produced in Greenwich. She has two neo-Victorian novels "Wynfield's Kingdom", "Wynfield's War" with Fireship Press and two novels that deal with Irish nationalism in the early 20th century, "Brendan Malone: the Last Fenian" and "Martyrs & Traitors: a Tale of 1916" (All Things That Matter Press).*

Homecoming

BY Justin Robinson

Boxcars shatter mirrors on the track,
shifting dirt from our stones.

Under violet moonlight we rise, fists full of
marbles,
hovering toward the lamplight.

You say: a friend of the library
is a friend of mine.

Over and over until your voice loses shape.

And your small sneakers jutting out the
isle fade
to the rhythm of an unfamiliar sigh,
collecting

books and marbles scattered across the
floor.

Faces

BY H. S. Sharvani

The dice rolls on, in empty space,
Unable to stop, to fix its value.
One side or six, what is its true face?

The chameleon changes, fools a common
gaze.
When its colour varies with every moment,
Inherent or acquired, what is its true face?

The film on the black tape plays,
And with anticipation, the audience
watches.
When each frame overlaps, what is its true
face?

The clock ticks; life becomes a chase.
The prize is unknown, but the end evident.
When survival is at stake, what is your
true face?

Where Are Mine Too?

BY Olawuyi Mutiu

Ah! Bomb
jamly-blasted
from my child.
Me, unfit,
again?

For nine good month
I housed you without a pay
but with pains and aches.
I was burdened by your dad
within a five-minutes painful enjoyment.
Yes, I was supraloaded as your landlady.
You enjoyed the breeze in my house;
punished me sometimes with your plays;
weakened my untiring bones as you're
restless in the dark slippery tiny room,
before the final painful day of your
disposal.

You made me screamed like a beaten goat
and exposed my secret golden door to
outsiders,
who called themselves Healers in the
Theatre -
Just to see the light of the restless orb.
"Push! Push!" I only heard from them
with gloves, scissors, wools and
trails. All in whites and blues;
led by though a man.

Not even ... your father
not in fact ... a relative

was allowed ... to glance
through -the ... pains you
brought me. ... As he and
his kin and ... mine cried
to the Mighty ... Lord of life.
You were on- ... ce unripe,
you know? ... And I raised
and watered, ... with my milk,
your throat - ... most times
you made ... me sleepless.
And today, ... you heartlessly
whispered: ... "Child's rights"?
But where ... are mine too?

***Olawuyi Mutiu** is a poet, teacher, literary
critic. He is a pioneer member of Poems
Without Borders*

(www.poemswithoutborders.org).

*He initiated, and coordinates the POETRY
ZONE and MUSE FOR WOMEN on Facebook
-where poets from corners of the world post
their poems for criticism and critique their
fellow poets. He published his first collection
of poetry titled: AMERICAN LITERARY
LEGENDS AND OTHER POEMS in 2010 and
released the second on in March 2012. His
poems have appeared in journals, magazines,
e-zines and e-journals like Copperfeild Review
in USA, Muse India, Quincouplet Anthology,
Liebamour: The Psychedelic Literary Journal
(Issue 3), Words Everlasting Anthology
(England), Poetry Weekend (Canada),
etcetera. Mutiu has some of his poems
translated to Esperanto, Malayalam, Telugu
and Hungarian.*

Transfixing

By M.N. O'Brien

It starts like something familiar: the night is dark,
not with vacancy, but with layers of possibilities
in coats of brushstrokes on the grid neighborhood.

I sit like Sabartés, unable to convince the prospects
walking down the tongue of the street between
the sidewalk teeth. We no longer drag feet to watch
dust rise from the dirt. Rimbaud's hare prays
at a rainbow through a spider web altar, transfixing.
He looks at us, and we forgot we were looking at him.

Then we claim to be modern, as if it happens all at once,
without having to swim beyond the reach of the shore.

M. N. O'Brien received his B.A. from Roanoke College, where his work was published in *On Concept's Edge* and received the Charles C. Wise Poetry Award. His work has been most recently published or will soon be featured in *The Camel Saloon*, *Blue and Yellow Dog*, *Zuccotti Park Press*, *SOFTBLOW*, *Crack the Spine*, *Eunoia Review*, *Emerge*, and *Counterexample Poetics*. He currently lives in Lexington, Kentucky, and feels awkward writing in the third person.

Horizontal

By Ute Margaret Saine

I am a kind word
uttered and repeated

By the voice of
Nature Kahlil Gibran

Lines on a page
rays of sun on a dark wall
waves on the wide sea
stripes on a beach awning
straw on the floor of a barn
straw in a glass on the table
rows of fruit on a peasant's stall
flowers waiting for a vase
books stacked as a cityscape

Sheaf of wheat over an arm
fronds fallen on a body
arms lain over a heart
hands caressing a body

As Stories Come

By Ute Margaret Saine

Sounds float on water
images reflect
a drift and a surge

stories that build and crumble
voices in languorous dissolve
arpeggios ripple in small waves
dovetailing diminutive clumps
stories that form a whirlpool
grow in a bold sweep
a vortex of waves
penetrating surrounding waters

waves that curl and twist
then blend again and rest
to sleep until the breeze
lifts their shivering skin

new story anew to begin

Born in Germany, Ute Margaret Saine obtained a Ph.D. from Yale University. She lives in California, where she taught French and Spanish literature. Saine writes and translates in five languages and has published 3 books of poetry and 6 haiku chapbooks, with several manuscripts to be published. The poems are from "Read My Lips," to be published. She is currently working on a novel.

Saine is an editor of the "California Poetry Quarterly." She is one of seven international poets in the anthology "Seven Leaves One Autumn," edited by Savita Singh and Sukrita Kumar, Rajkamalprakashan: Delhi, 2012.

Layers of Imposture

By A.J. Huffman

I was drunk.
But not from his touch.
Though that helped
to keep the room out of focus.
Don't get me wrong,
I liked the sound
of the floor
spinning beneath me.
But my eyes couldn't take the withdrawal.
The safety blue faded.
Instantly.
In the self-imposed darkness
of my glass.
And the ice shot rainbows
to blind me.
White.
And light was my new best friend.
Since you had my shadow.
By the throat.

*A.J. Huffman is a poet and freelance writer in Daytona Beach, Florida. She has previously published four collections of poetry: *The Difference Between Shadows and Stars*, *Carrying Yesterday*, *Cognitive Distortion*, and . . . *And Other Such Nonsense*. She has also published her work in national and international literary journals such as *Avon Literary Intelligencer*, *Writer's Gazette*, and *The Penwood Review*.*

Away Fixture

BY Ian C Smith

My sixteen yr.-old needs a ride
to his team's football ground.
I'll drive, he says.
As if the thought just occurred.

On the way, the streets dark with rain,
we talk tactics about today's game,
catching up.
We no longer live together.

I haven't even noticed your driving,
You must be improving, I say.
As if the thought just occurred.
The expression on his face.

He stops by the team bus, damp earth
smell,
teammates and coach watching.
I remove his L-plates, drive alone to the
game,
satisfied I didn't fumble my chances.

Houses

BY Ian C Smith

I gather debris from dashed tree-houses
cypresses where nesting ibis ride storms
branches cracked by high winds some
stretched winter.

The hanging boughs splintered close to
their trunks
brush the earth like a woman's skirt,
forming
a canopy shrouding the old pets' graves.
I recall each death as the children grew.

For years I avoided this shadowed place
in my safe house reading of other lives
mine as destructive as those bitter winds
my shelved books sanctuary from life's
rough grief
none with long subtitles chaperoning
titles such as *The Search for Happiness*
but poems, essays, stories of the heart.

In a hundred years what trace will lie
here?
Perhaps the howl of a robotic hound
sensor tripped by galleries of bones' reek
might echo my plaint for voices faded.

Like a hapless character in a book
I wonder what became of my strange life
quires of much-thumbed pages turned.
Few remain.

Ian C Smith's work has appeared in Axon: Creative Explorations, The Best Australian Poetry, Chiron Review, Island, Southerly, & Westerly His fifth book is Contains Language, Ginninderra Press (Adelaide). He lives in the Gippsland Lakes area of Victoria, Australia.

How The Castle Fell

BY John Grey

Esther has a castle keep
of an apartment,
at night, she wakes abruptly,
servants are roused,
reflections bounce
off mirrors,
tomcats and ghosts howl,
a man is ushered in,
cigar between his lips.

Immense darting shadows in her castle
above the sleeping villages
almost into the forehead of the stars,
that tall hat of light, of lost children,
lost in snowy paths
lost in bodies grown ripe and needing,
fearful face melted
into the paler moon sheen.

Body, a smoke-blue
but above all,
tomcats have arrived

in dancing shoes,
stars escorted by
every light that ever was

And finally, for breakfast,
in dressing gown,
she's expecting a cigar
not sugar cube in coffee.
while floating ash
speckles the parting moon,
as sun rolls across the floor,
shines on nothing
but four bare walls.

*Australian born poet, **John Grey** works as financial systems analyst. Recently he has been published at Poem, Caveat Lector, Prism International and the horror anthology, "What Fears Become" with work upcoming in Potomac Review, Hurricane Review and Pinyon.*

Creator's Household

BY Kufre Udeme

Within me, I vow one thing
To always, and gladly sing
Whenever I remember
That I am a member
Of the Creator's household.

***Kufre Udeme** was born in 1989, in South Southern Nigeria. In 2008, he became the youngest columnist in *Community Pulse* - one of the leading Newspapers in Akwa Ibom State. Now, a contributing poet at *Mad Swirl* - where the maddest of the mad ones are, Kufre Udeme is a strong-willed writer with an artistic commitment to beat the blind criticism of Africa.*

*Since 2007, his writings have been published in local and international publications. *All States, The Evangelist, and Update Newspapers* were the first rung of his publishing ladder. *Fullosia Press, NY*, published his poem in its 2011 Independence Day Issue entitled, "The Obama Nation" paving the way for his featuring in various online publications such as *Apollo's Lyre, Queen Vic Knives, Nefarious Ballerina 5.2, Poets West, and Poets Heaven*. Others include *Exercise Bowler - issue 7, Boyne Berries 10, The Moth - Ireland, Decanto issue 5.7, Penny Ante Feud #7, Essence, Rattle Journal issue three, and The Muse - an International Journal of Poetry, India*.*

Sour Sweetblossom

BY Ron Koppelberger

The shapeless plenty of voyage unto the embrace
Of gossamer substance, in the reverence of sour
Celebrations and sweet sheltered appraisal, a
Resounding rain, an attending soil beneath the surface
Of dark dither and unadorned winter chance. The
Grace of what becomes ancient in evanescent turns of
Season, akin to a showy whimper and a withering roar,
A moldering note of acquiescent remembrance, a pile
Of leaves and the tide, a damp moss truth and just a touch
Of flavor realized in sour sweet blossom.
A word to the love of days gone by and passion in temper
Of earth and heaven, fuzzy faded ink scrawled in careless
Abandon and discarded desire, the pen of lovers in fervent
Flight, left behind in a pile of sodden soil
Leaves in possession of sour sweet blossom.

***Ron** is a poet, a short story writer and an artist. He has written 103 books of poetry over the past several years and 18 novels. He is always looking for an audience. He has published 678 poems, 728 short stories and 142 pieces of art in over 252 periodicals, books, anthologies and 11 radio broadcasts. He has been published in England, Australia, Canada, Japan, India, Mauritius, Italy, France, Germany, China, Spain and Thailand. He has been Published in The Stray Branch, The Fringe, Write On!!! (Poetry Magazette) Static Movement, Necrology Shorts and Record Magazine. He is a member of The Poet's society, The Fiction Guild as well as The Isles Poetry Association and The Dark Fiction Guild.*

I thought I touched the flowers of lasting truth

BY Dom N. Kafle

1.

I thought I touched the beads of lasting truth-those flowers
In red and white and brown and blue,
And but knew 'twas my ignorance. Like the first few morning stars
Which fade, are the beauties on earth shorter
Lived. And even shorter are I and you.

2.

I thought I saw those clouds were of mercy
That hung superficially below the firmament
Until the hailstorm that brought to my dismay
Pellets of ice and dust and rain and the wind strayed.
And I now knew the nature's spiteful enchantment.

3.

I thought I heard a sweet sweet song
Of a traveller's adventure-a passer-by had sung;
Sombre and euphonic and shrill and young
But alas! I knew that 'twas a soulful dirge
That echoed from the down-street church.

4.

I thought I felt the touch of an angel
An archangel that had from the haven fallen
Was it aye! an alien or a consanguineous touch?
Hark! The madness ingrained in me has torn
Me so much. No. I can no more be than an earthly man.

5.

I thought I smelt the divinest of divinity
The transcendent cologne of humanity
That'd spilled fragrance like the spring bud.
Sigh! My mundane! Where once laid my existence of entirety;
My world beneath this clear ether's flung in a pool of rusty blood.

I have now come to know of my madness
Of fading sanity and the fading senses.

Dom is a student of Social sciences and Civil Engineering in South Australia. He often writes poetry in English and in Nepali. He has published few poems online. Sometimes a radio host and at other times a self-paced part time student of poetry, Dom is an amateur and an aspiring poet.

Reflective Journey of T.S. Eliot: From Philosophy to Poetry

By Syed Ahmad Raza Abidi

To remember T.S. Eliot is also to recapitulate the entire ethos of a century because in writing himself he wrote his times more than anyone else. He reconstructed the poetry; there is mixture of thought, feeling and vision. Most readers of Eliot are particularly handicapped by an inadequate knowledge of modern philosophy. Eliot is an immensely learned poet. His development as a poet cannot be understood without noting his philosophical background. It is obvious that Eliot's study of philosophy played a crucial role in nourishing his creative imagination and critical intellect. It is imperative to trace his philosophical concepts for a better understanding of his poetry. Eliot pursued philosophical questions throughout his career, though he ceased to do so through philosophical channels. Instead, Eliot insightfully investigated these questions in his poetry.

It is an established fact that the early absorption in philosophy was very important for his development as a poet. T.S. Eliot began his career by training as a professional philosopher rather than as a poet but his creative imagination perceived the limitations of philosophy. He did not find the academic study of philosophy satisfying because a philosophical system implied the maintenance of a single, more or less consistent point of view and was necessarily based upon the presupposition of the author.

Eliot's early philosophical work in fact provides a rich source for mapping the development of his major literary intellectual and religious pre-occupations. As is known, Eliot pursued philosophical questions throughout his career. Though he renounced philosophy for poetry, he insightfully attacked these questions in criticism, social theory and

poetry. The relationship of philosophy and poetry, and consequently thought and feeling, remained one of his lifelong concerns.

Eliot had deep interest in philosophy. Eliot's study of philosophy played a very significant role in the formation of his sensibility. Manju Jain points out:

Eliot chose to give up the prospect of an academic career in philosophy for poetry, preferring to remain as a man of letters in England rather than return to America to become a professor of philosophy. Eliot renounced philosophy for poetry although his philosophical interests were never wholly divorced from his literary concerns and creative endeavours. (x)

Eliot gave up philosophy for poetry, yet his philosophical interests always ruled over him. The relationship of philosophy with poetry remained one of his lifelong concerns. Eliot admitted that when a poet has pursued philosophical studies, these will have played an important part in his formation and will have informed his poetry. The poetry of T.S. Eliot manifests his philosophical bent of mind. Being a serious scholar of philosophy, he has used various philosophical concepts in his poetry. His poetry is earnest and broadly philosophical. Manju Jain observes:

In his discussion of the relationship of philosophy and poetry the crucial distinction that Eliot makes is that between theory and vision. Philosophy is the statement of a theory; poetry is the embodiment of a concrete vision However, if poetry, for Eliot, expresses a vision of life and not a theory, this vision is incomplete if it does not include some philosophy,..." (246)

T.S. Eliot began his career by training as a professional philosopher rather than as a poet or critic. He pursued academic study at major philosophical centres such as Harvard, the Sorbonne, Marbury and Oxford, between 1908 and 1915. He completed his doctoral thesis on the philosophy of F.H. Bradley in 1916, and even published, between 1916 and 1918, a number of professional articles and reviews of philosophy. His early absorption in philosophy was very important for his development as poet and critic.

When Eliot was doing his graduation from Harvard University, he studied Sanskrit and Pali under Professor Charles Rockwell Lanman, a giant literary figure of those days. Eliot has elaborated the influence of Indian philosophy on his poetry in *Notes towards the Definition of Culture*. Eliot's Indic studies began in 1911 at Harvard. He developed a strong inclination towards the oriental studies, especially the Indic studies. Eliot studied Sanskrit and Pali language under the guidance of Charles Rockwell Lanman. Eliot read Patanjali's metaphysics under James Houghton Woods. All three courses intensified his interest in Indian classical philosophy. Lanman was the first source of Eliot's knowledge of the Vedas. He prepared Eliot's mind for absorbing Hindu thought. *The Waste Land* exhibits a sterile world of spiritual and moral degeneration, in which one does not know how to make the spirit work. The land in the poem is Christian, but Hinduism works as an infusion of regenerative waters. The poem begins on the banks of the "Thames" begins on the banks of the and at the edges of "unreal city", and ends on the banks of the river Ganges. As far as the "Thunder", used in section V of the poem, and taken from the "Thunder" passage in *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* (5:1-3), constitutes the most "complete and philosophical movement of the poem" (Rai 123). Eliot's concern here is clearly Vedic. "What the Thunder said", as the 'most complex of all the five sections of *The Waste Land* (Shahane viii), not only projects Eliot's vision of the human condition and the predicament of man in the contemporary world, it also aims at a solution on Vedic principles. The journey of the protagonist, from part first to fifth of the poem, shows that the solution is evident in the philosophical restraint of the East.

Ganga was sunken, and the limp leaves
Waited for rain, while the black clouds
Gathered for distant, over Himavant.
The Jungle crouched, humped in silence.
Then spoke the thunder
DA
Datta

.....

DA

Dayadhvam

.....

DA

Damyata :

..... (395-99, 400-01,410-11 417-18)

The arrival of the thunder, which justifies the title of the section, "What the Thunder Said", is marked by the three commands. The thundering sound, 'Da', used thrice in the section, abbreviates the three Sanskrit sutras- Datta, Dayadhvam and Damyata. Eliot refers the readers to the fable of the Thunder in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* V, 2. The three fold offspring of the creator Prajapati, gods, men and demons, approach Prajapati for instruction after completing their formal education. To each group he utters the syllable 'Da'. Each group interprets this reply differently. The gods interpret it as 'damyata' (control yourself). The men interpret it as 'datta' ('give'). The demons interpret it as 'dayadhvam' ('be compassionate'). When the groups, in turn, give their interpretations, Prajapati responds with 'Om' signifying that they have fully understood. The Fable concludes : "This very thing the heavenly voice of thunder repeats da, da, da, that is, control yourself, give, be compassionate. One should practise this same triad, self-control, giving and compassion" (Radhakrishnan 289-290). The concluding line, "Shantih Shantih Shantih" (403) of *The Waste Land*, is in consonance with the title of the last section. It makes Eliot's Vedic references more explicit. The Shantih- chanting appears for the first time in the *Yajurveda* (36:17). It is part of both ritual as well as religious activity in the vedic way of living. The words are not automatic, but Eliot wants the universe to be at peace, including the peace for the waste-landers, those who live in an acute atmosphere of awe, fear, doubt and frustration.

In many poems , Eliot has drawn upon the *Gita*. In "The Dry Salvages", it is to be found in the lines:

So Krishna, as when he admonished Arjuna
On the field of battle.

Not fare well,

But fare forward, voyagers. (III, 169-172)

During 1909-1910 Eliot came in contact with Professor Irving Babbitt. The latter had a philosophical inclination and the lectures which Eliot attended were, concerned with French literary criticism: but they had a great deal to do with Aristotle and Longinus. They touched frequently upon the Confucius, Rousseau and contemporary religious movements. Babbitt was distinguished by his unflinching defence of what he considered to be the values of reason and civilization, tradition and the past, as opposed to the anti- intellectualism of prevailing philosophies of the flux- such as those of William James and Henri Bergson- which exalted intuition at the expense of reason and the intellect. Some of the central concepts of Babbitt's thought continued to be Eliot's major preoccupations- the importance of tradition; the necessity for the poet and the critic of mediating between the past and present and the unification of thought and feeling.

It was Dante who exercised the most persistent and deepest influence upon T.S. Eliot from Dante Eliot learned the lessons of craft, of speech and exploration of sensibility. Eliot was profoundly influenced by the philosopher Henri Bergson, whose lectures he attended at the college de France. In his writings, Eliot can be seen scrutinizing the implications of Bergson's views on time, memory, intuition and consciousness. It is clear Bergson continued to exercise a strong fascination on Eliot's imagination. Even in 1952, whilst advocating a philosophy based on dogmatic theology, Eliot expressed:

A longing for the appearance of a philosopher whose writings, lectures, and personality will arouse the imagination as Bergson, for instance, aroused it forty years ago. (quoted in Pieper 11)

Bergson held the view that the intellect misinterprets time as a succession of distinct, separate units. The real characteristic of time is duration and it flows in an indivisible continuity. In contrast to intellect, Bergson sets intuition, which grasps the real nature of

time as 'duration' and the world, is better known as the individual process of 'becoming'. Thus, the world is a 'flowing stream of vital impulses that can neither be divided into fixed and determinate parts nor can be attached and regulated with unalterable law. According to Bergson time is constantly moving and, as an individual, tries to peep into the past; his present goes in his subconscious mind, which is nothing but an image of the past. Similarly, his experiences of a whole life are collected in the mind and take the form of memory. This memory, irrevocable - self, is a living past which is always present with us. These are deeply related to one another. Therefore time is a combination of past, present and future, and all these three are correlated. The Human mind divides time into past, present and future for the convenience and also because every man visualises time individually, or it can be said that the sense of time sense is really a matter of perceiver's consciousness. "Rhapsody on a Windy Night" was written during the period when Eliot was under Bergson's influence. The poem is critique of some of the implications of Bergson's philosophy, especially with references to his views on time, memory and consciousness.

The poem records the loose sallies of the midnight memories of a young man as he walks towards his rented room, after his nocturnal orgies perhaps, through the city slums where prostitutes live and ply their sordid business. He is in a sort of mental drowsiness and the contents of his memory, fragments of rotten things connected with his environment, which rush forth pell-mell, are a nice blend of the realistic and phantasmagoric, which Eliot appreciated in Baudelaire and Laforgue. The internal sally, however, is regulated by the lighted posts along the street which measure the clock-time and direct the operation of the half-demented memory. In this way a method is imposed from outside on the apparent madness of memory. Freud has gauged the personality of a person through the interpretation of his or her dreams, and here the character of the night-walker and of his environment has been vividly portrayed by means of his memory contents and the picture of life emerging from the poem is most nauseating in the whole range of Eliot's early probing into the depth of the inferno of modern city life.

At Harvard Eliot was busy with the study of the philosophy of F.H. Bradley, the fruit of which is represented by his doctoral dissertation, "Knowledge and Experience in the Philosophy of F.H. Bradley". Bradley's influence on Eliot came as a great liberating force at a time when he was too heavily inclined towards the dry, ironical method of Laforgue. Bradley provided him with several crucial concepts and ideas, as well as the model of a prose style well suited to his reticent temperament.

With his migration to London in 1914 Eliot gradually gravitated towards Ezra Pound, the most active and energetic figure in the English literary life of the day. Pound proved to be a mentor for T.S. Eliot. Another powerful influence during these early years came from T.E. Hulme. Hulme was a Bergsonian philosopher and sponsor of the Imagist style in poetry. He was sternly opposed to the Romantic style and the romantic ideal of the perfectibility of man. He was Christian and stressed the belief in the original sin and the natural limitation of the weak, sinful mortals.

St Augustine also deeply influenced the ideas of T.S. Eliot. It will be right to say that in the case of Eliot's poems, the reader should bring some knowledge of St Augustine, for St Augustine is an important figure, with his ideas and concepts, in many poems that Eliot wrote after 1914. The inclusion of St Augustine, with effective allusions in the poem *The Waste Land*, makes it highly relevant. The section "The Fire Sermon" may be felt through the whole poem. The presence of St Augustine enriches *The Waste Land* considerably. It is a further example of unity of emotional and cultural health and of how the collapse of one is mirrored in the decline of the other. Rajnath observes in *T.S. Eliot's Theory of Poetry*:

St Augustine has always loomed large on Eliot's mental horizon. "Mixing memory and desire" in the opening lines of *The Waste Land* is Augustinian and St Augustine has been juxtaposed with the Buddha in "The Fire Sermon." It is the *Confessions* from the fifth book of which Eliot quotes in "The Fire Sermon" that sets forth in the eleventh book the philosophy of time embodied in the Four Quartets. (159)

The view of human life, lived purely on the sensual plane, is supported by the words in the *Confessions* of the Christian philosopher, a true representative of Christian asceticism. The reminder of St Augustine is not in accident. V.K. Rai states:

The intention here is to present life in *The Waste Land* as a reckless surrender to the senses and all the abnormality, morbidity and perversion to which it leads. The remedy for this torment of in satiated craving is continence as prescribed by the Buddha and St Augustine. (128)

Sexual appetite has been let loose and men and women are meeting, coupling and then parting in season and out of season. Not satisfied with normal sex, they are apt to devise abnormal, perverse and unnatural ways for lending a novelty to their sexual pleasures and gratifications. In *The Waste Land*, it is the burning in lust and restlessness that Eliot contrasts to the enlightened Buddha's view of men and women with the inclusion of St Augustine.

To Carthage then I came
Burning burning burning burning
O Lord Thou pluckest me out
O Lord Thou Pluckest
burning (307-311)

It has reference to the *Confessions* of St Augustine. Eliot refers the readers to the Augustine's *Confessions*. St Augustine wrote of the sensual temptations of his youth. He was born in what is now Algeria and went to Carthage when he was sixteen. St Augustine prayed for God's help to save him from the fire of lust prevailing in Carthage. Augustine seeks God's grace for freedom from lust and is eventually saved.

In England, T.S. Eliot was progressing and his fame grew slowly but steadily. In 1927, he obtained the citizenship of England and joined the Anglican Church. The recognition of his merit and poetic eminence came in 1948 with the awards of The order of Merit and the Nobel Prize for literature. At the close of his life in 1965 he had risen to the

enviable position of a literary figure that summed up an epoch. T.S. Eliot died on 4 January 1965. Among the mourners at the memorial service in Westminster Abbey was Ezra Pound, whose tribute to Eliot is perhaps the most appropriate: 'I can only repeat, but with the urgency of 50 years ago: READ HIM' (Quoted in Moody 13). It is obvious that Eliot's study of philosophy played a crucial role in nourishing his creative imagination and critical intellect.

The age in which Eliot lived was intensely chaotic and problematic, throwing up several challenges and possibilities of human activity. It was definitely a baffling mass of current and cross-currents in English literature. It would be a miracle indeed if someone were born to voice the multiple concerns of the age in a forceful manner. The miracle happened and it happened in the shape of T.S. Eliot, who through his exemplary work and worth presented the credentials of a wide ranging artistic sensibility and incorporated the 'best' of American education and training as well as of European tradition and culture. Eliot was, beyond doubt, "an integral poet" (Smidst 114), who was searching for a form of poetry as well as a form of life. In spite of varied influences, Eliot is original in thought and matter. He has fused what he borrowed from others and turned it into something rich and strange.

Universality transcends the limitations of time, space and region, caste, colour and creed. Eliot is decidedly a 'universal' poet of the first rank. He is an American by birth, a British by professed religion and naturalized citizenship, a European by culture and tradition, and an internationalist by philosophical outlook upon life. One has to recollect that Eliot as a true 'universalist' has used at least six foreign languages and thirty five authors in *The Waste Land* alone. Eliot is dead, but his contributions to literature remain invaluable assets. His life consisted of painful happenings, and so, the quality of his writing is inseparable from the integrity of his character. His personal experience of life was common, but the experience communicated in his works is unique in its intensity of moral, as well as philosophical meanings.

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An extract from Vikrant Dutta's Novel in Verses "Ode To Dignity"

Synopsis:

This is a novel in verse "Ode to Dignity" is the story of a young Lieutenant who goes to give the news of the death of his Major to his widow. What ensues is a conversation between the two about their lives and eventually them falling in love. The novel has over 1650 ballads. And follows the traditional ballad form of rhyme.

Excerpt

A Lieutenant and a Major are on the battlefield. Death lurks round the corner and they are charged to fight till the last breath. The young impressionable lieutenant is in deep admiration of the major and as they mount the charge the Major is fatally shot. Despite being in the throes of victory the death of the major has a deep effect on the Lieutenant. He is also offered the unenviable task of breaking the news to the major's widow. The lady too feels quite uneasy and restless during those fateful moments. As the Lieutenant meets the Lady, she maintains her composure on hearing about the tragedy. She asks him about those last few moments before the major lost his life.

Its tough for the Lieutenant to explain it in detail, yet he tries. The lady is keen to know what her man went through and whether he felt pain during those dying moments. If he remembered her. This is especially tough as the major did tell about his wife and daughter and for a man to die and leave behind a family would be a real pity. This sensitive conversation is tough for the young Lieutenant as he is not used to be in these situations.

1
Wasn't much long after they'd married,
Was called for duty, blood and honour,
Was the time, reckoning hour,
One either survived or was a goner.

2
Was action, movement of troops,
Failing of diplomacy, negotiations,
To pack bags, tearful goodbyes,
Was all about people, states, nations.

3
Off to the front, proud and strong,
Hectic activity, uncertainty, chaos
prevailed,
Moving to the post by night,
Quite fast, lest one trailed.

4

Was focused, raring to go, Major Adam
Wright,
Tanks, armoured trucks, field ambulance,
War did funny things, one seldom thought,
Obeying silently, seemingly in trance.

5
Uncertainty lurked every moment, and
corner,
Moving slow, cautious, steady, in dark,
Mechanical motions, actions, thoughts,
Each hoping in a way, to make a mark
6.

Towards death, victory, or honour,
Whatever it be called, didn't matter,
The destinies of the millions behind,
Safe in their homes, endless chatter.

7

Fire if see movement, Lieutenant,

No second thought,rain bullets,
On the firmament,unknown,
Major sensed some movement,took off his
beret.

8

Always the extra josh,this guy's good,
Aye aye sir,itching to kill,young blood,
Were columns of armoured vehicles,the
enemy,
Inching ever so closer,clouds of rising
mud.

9

Speak easy,speak soft,silence holds the
key,
Snakes strike when least expected,
Slithering round the bend,
Lying in wait,not the least bit affected.

10

Forever getting so close,
For often,you'd even wonder how,
Patient,tolerant,with only aim in sight,
Had delivered the fateful blow.

11

Smart creatures,these reptiles,
A brain so small,almost puny,
It struck and always did,
Could make one sad,quite gloomy.

12

Seldom recovered,quite sorry,
If underestimated the foe,
They'd disappear satiated,fulfilled,
Back to the furrow,never raising a brow.

13

They'd taught quite a thing or two,
Survived for long,through the ages,
Outliving cousins,dinosaurs,the haughty,
Lessons seldom taught,or found flipping
pages.

14

Lie in wait,move slowly,always another
time,
Humbled,mighty creatures they were,
Lieutenant,simple though it seems,
Earnestly managed Aye aye sir.

15

For waited until minutes ticked by,
Sweat on brow,breathing hard,

Was a tremendous feeling that night,
Gun tottering,advanced by the yard.

16

Was a mere distance separated,
Lieutenant and Major,a mission they had,
Still was time to think and plan,
Thoughts of victory, good or bad.

17

Life's lessons,unlikely place,
Memories of classroom abounded,
Out of college,not worldly wise,
Destiny played truant,with enemy
surrounded.

18

Waiting for orders to fire,
Was young in blood and spirit,
Major close to him whispered,
Your rifle Lieutenant,fill it.

19

Death knell,it sounded,nail the enemy,
Was prime thought,blood surging in his
veins,

Was a good shot,the Lieutenant,
Wasn't easy,had practiced,taken pains.

20

Shoot the scoundrels one by one,
Scurrying them past the horizon,
If they died bless their souls,
If survived,they'd surely wisen.

21

Major,you inspire a lot,
Your silence,holy presence,
Gets adrenaline pumping through,
Commandments from God,perfect sense.

22

Your orders they sure seem,
Make me walk the distance,
A protection,warm blanket,
In dreadful moments, they balance.

23

Movement around the bend observed,
Men scurrying around,plans taking shape,
Men several quite like us,
Men who felt,cried,laugh,gape.

24

Someplace,for someone,possibly waiting,
Love in abundance,moments meager,
This wait,it seems quite endless though,

Itches the finger that touches the trigger.

25

Hearsay,herenow,was a plan to boot,
Taking on posts,possible attack,
Getting on to capture,loot,kill,
All the while ready to fall back.

26

About hopes of some in power,
Often barbarians,when interests clashed,
Enemy came with a planned offensive,
Their hopes,the little,dashed.

27

Fidgety and restless,close crouched space,
A safe haven,seemed,middle of the night,
Uncertain silence,no thought of sleep,
Was a need for an idea bright.

28

While in uniform,sit tight,listen,
Morning and the sun miles away,
Seniors much experienced,knew better,
Live with it,or die,his word held sway.

29

Wasn't really tough,so one felt,
Comforts of home,peaceful location,
While some shivered,nauseated,
Thoughts of loved ones,distant relations.

30

While in the throes of it all,mind numb,
Was about survival,the basic instinct,
Moments spent seemed special,cherished,
Some races lived on,others were extinct.

31

Not a bullet fired,mere sounds of crickets,
Shrill of the jackals at night,
Anticipating orders to fire,
Gunfire all around,start of a bloody fight.

32

Streaks of light,blinding the eyes,
Lieutenant,fire,rapid,how it shook,
All around flashes of fire,
Bullets ricocheting,further down the
brook.

33

Hasty steps,normalcy out of sight,
Each man,his gun,each step,true valour,
Major,a man true to his word,
Moved ahead,rode winds like a sailor.

34

Move on,move on,Major said at last,
They knew it meant a strike,
One had to just sit and watch,
Major rushed effortless, a weekend hike.

35

The bullets came,went in air,
They struck close,they struck near,
Some fell,hit hard,spewing blood,
Major moved on, every comrade,so dear.

36

Mindless they moved, steely resolve,
Major led, top of the hillock,
Was tireless,undaunted, boundless,
Worked his way, a raging bullock.

37

He'd reached high, top of the cliff,
Focussed straight, silhoutte in dark,
A bullet went through his heart,
Was hit,true and stark.

38

Had stood solitary, led a deadly charge,
Hurled a grenade,had burst those men,
Blood oozing out, had hailed out loud,
'Lieutenant we got them,Lieutenant we got
them'.

39

Looked down right,rushed up the cliff,
Major lying in a pool of blood,
We done it Sir, you done it,
Just pray, remember,the enemy sure fled.

40

I'm going,going far away,
Time running out, gasping for breath,
Major,you'll stay and make it,
Don't go away, wait O God of death.

41

What a man, what a hero,
Buried on top, lay a wreath,
Carved out of leaves, wild flowers,
Was lowered into the ground on a sheath.

42

Oh the hero,Oh the hero,
Was gone,yet alive in the hearts,
Was thunder,clouds burst forth,
Skies wept, mud and water weren't apart.

43

The hill was ours,post captured,
Impossible it seemed at once,
Strikes aplenty,this one sharp,
Was this time to sing, dance.

44

Bravery of a man, sheer guts,
Risen above the rest, determined,
Wasn't easy to describe, say,
Something you'd ever imagined.

45

Major,you've gone,left us here,
Need your presence, we tremble,
Lieutenant wept, strength seeped,
Matter of time before he'd crumble.

46

To lead, comfort,who else,
He'd fallen on his knees,
Walk on, walk on, heard a voice,
Major's spirit called, up from the trees.

47

Oh Sirs up in the heaven,
Where's my Major,I search,
Trees large brown rustled,
Lieutenant was left in a lurch.

48

Was my guardian, man of substance,
Would he come back, wait to see,
Heaven's would search for Major,
Across mountains,beyond the seas.

49

What'll happen to the lady,
To break this ghastly news,
Wouldn't be easy though,
The enemy had been paid its dues.

50

Had lost his composure,
Though was time still,
They had drawn savage blood,
Lieutenant was quenched, had had his fill.

About the author: Vikrant Dutta is an Air force officer working with the President.

Books in Focus

Gone Sane by Christal Rice Cooper
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A unique illustration book knitting different phases of fame and history through simple and straight verses which acts as a way to connect popular lives with grave social thoughts...The book is wonderfully crafted and has an interesting take upon the life of celebrities and those whose actions are responsible for the world we are in today. The author is a realist and seldom gets swayed away by thoughts that often forces poets to pen sensuous pieces in order to hide a harsh and crude reality. Starting with a serious take behind a laughing face (Jim Carrey) through other poems like "Chorographer", "The Big Jew With a Mathematical Mind" and "Conversation with a Kangaroo" etc. her poems have covered almost each influential face if not all through a feeling that interplays between the rooms of a mansion destroyed by world war. The poems in this book has been categorized into "The Celebrity", "The Historical", "The Literary", "The Wolves", "The Domestic" and "The Lambs" each having a symbolism towards greater depths of a fragile society preserving the edification of modern historical morality by tagging a collective message towards the end of each piece.

Poetry Manifesto-New and Selected Poems by Vihang Naik
Indialog Publications Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi
ISBN 81-8443-033-7

Vihang Naik's Poetry Manifesto is a collection of his best works in over two decades. Simplicity confined within few words presented lyrically often adds to the quality of this contemporary poet. He possesses a musing mind about dual characteristics of people and surroundings and takes up these issues in this thematic caricature. He is never broad at his narrative. Instead he wonders while penning and passes on that wonder to his readers to leave space for his words to echo. In his new poems he has often experimented with the poetic structure as evident from the styles in which they have been published. Some of his experiments though confusing, leads to a better understanding on being read as they have been presented. Poems like "Dancing in The Dark", "Character" and "Failure" are excellent experimental poems in this collection. The book is not a usual poetry book one will come across often. It sways with different degrees like tree branches in different weather.

Cosmic Tour by Mandira Ghosh
Writers' Workshop, Kolkata
ISBN 978-81-8157-971-3

For all those poetry lovers who wish to breathe fresh through poetry, this book through its strange poetic turns takes us to a voyage across the cosmos. We have a scientist poet here who tries to hunt down feelings with beautiful expressions like “*GALAXY Hunters hunt for more galaxies, Pathfinder discovers a new path to life...*” adding a thin sense of lyricism towards the last stanza. In “Universe in Born” the poetess has drawn a fresh imagery comparing the life of the universe with that of a normal human being and again lyrical lines towards the tail of the poem gives rise to a sense of belongingness in the heart of readers. The universe is vast and the enormity is filled with innumerable objects. The poet has instilled life in the sleeping cosmic elements and has unturned several new stones within the limited pages of the book. Deciphering truth through cosmos is not a fresh idea but her ways of speaking and her tenacity to stick to cosmos throughout the length of the book is worth appreciating.

Duckwalking is the Only Way out of Armageddon by Dustin Hollam,
Kanev Books, New York
ISBN 978-1-937131-19-7 pbk
ISBN 978-1-937131-20-3 ebook

Dustin Holland's *Duckwalking is the Only Way out of Armageddon* is a set of concrete poetry at par with avant-garde western poetic standards. The poet has painted vivid details of daily phenomenon with a tint of American thoughts and way of life compounded by a philosophical muse pulling his poems in a straightforward tone. However the poet frequently uses a slant narrative style much like telling a story in his long poems. What is most notable in this book is subtle yet profound stories versified with a wonderful flow of simple words. Dustin's poem *Paranoia Shadowdreams Or My Frantic, Feverish Adventures* is a wonderful combination of ambiguity, simplicity and flow of language. The poet has also pointed out satire and irony we often face in the society in a tricky way more particularly in the title poem. He often places himself in several situations appealing to a broader audience through lyricism. The collection will be much coveted by any fan of forward-thinking poetics.

