

ISSN 2347-632X



**GJPP**

**VerbalART**

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

A Peer-Reviewed Print Journal

**Vol.- 7, Issue - 1**  
**April - June 2023**

**Chief Editor:**

**Dr VIVEKANAND JHA**

**Associate Editor:**

**Dr RAJNISH MISHRA**

**Review Editor:**

**Dr CHANDRA SHEKHAR DUBEY**

**Assistant Editor:**

**Prof. SHASHANK NADKARNI**



**AUTHORS P R E S S**

Publishers of Creative & Scholarly Books

ISSN 2347-632X

# VerbalArt

A Global Journal Devoted to  
**Poets and Poetry**

**Volume 7 ♦ Issue 1 ♦ Apr-June 2023**

Chief Editor

**Dr. Vivekanand Jha**

Associate Editor

**Dr. Rajnish Mishra**

Review Editor

**Dr. Chandra Shekhar Dubey**

Assistant Editor

**Prof. Shashank Nadkarni**



**AUTHORS P R E S S**

**Worldwide Circulation through Authorspress Global Network**

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

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

Website: [www.authorspressbooks.com](http://www.authorspressbooks.com)

**VERBALART**

*A Global Journal Devoted to Poets and Poetry*

(Volume 7, Issue 1, Apr-June 2023)

**ISSN 2347-632X**

Copyright © Chief Editor

Disclaimer

*VerbalArt* retains the right to use the accepted work in future online or print anthologies, as well as in the online archives. All other rights remain with the author. The journal will not be liable in any way for any sort of copyright infringements.

# CONTENTS

## POETRY

1. **Amtheyst**  
Conversation with the Devil 7
2. **Andrew Scott**  
Away From Here 8
3. **Anna Banasiak**  
The Waves 9
4. **Avdhesh Jha**  
Urban Culture and Value 10
5. **Barbra Nightingale**  
My Brother's Knife 12
6. **Beverly Matherne**  
Haiku Poems 13
7. **Colin James**  
The Local Arrives Screaming Metal Brakes on Metal Rails 14
8. **Daniel Thomas Moran**  
Falling in Love, Again 15
9. **Daniel Thomas Moran**  
To a Man Who Was My Father 16
10. **Duane Vorhees**  
Tell Me. Are You Sure? 17
11. **Gary Beck**  
Solution 18
12. **H.L. Dowless**  
Born A Traveling Man 19

<b>13. J.T. Whitehead</b>	
From “The Second Book of Job”	21
<b>14. J.T. Whitehead</b>	
From “The Second Book of Job”	22
<b>15. John Grey</b>	
The One Who Remembers	23
<b>16. Joseph Hart</b>	
Maxx	24
<b>17. K.V. Raghupathi</b>	
Learning	25
<b>18. Karla Linn Merrifield</b>	
First Friday in February	26
<b>19. Les Wicks</b>	
A Plan	27
<b>20. Les Wicks</b>	
Apologies	28
<b>21. Mahathi</b>	
I Wait With Smiles	29
<b>22. Marc Isaac Potter</b>	
Regret	30
<b>23. Michael Lee Johnson</b>	
<i>Bowl of Black Petunias</i>	31
<b>24. Mithil Jha</b>	
Right or Wrong	32
<b>25. Nels Hanson</b>	
The Shadow	33
<b>26. Ngo Binh Anh Khoa</b>	
The River that Once Was	34
<b>27. Ngo Binh Anh Khoa</b>	
Revival	35

Contents	Page 5
28. <b>Noel King</b> Matriarch	36
29. <b>Parinita Ratnaparkhi</b> The Rainy Season	37
30. <b>Patricia Nikolova</b> No Darkness	38
31. <b>Peter J. Dellolio</b> Scrambling Antique	39
32. <b>Prasanta Kumar Panda</b> A Memorable Question on Mother	40
33. <b>Rakesh Bhartiya</b> Toxic Men and Women	41
34. <b>Rakesh Bhartiya</b> My Best Friend	42
35. <b>Rick Hartwell</b> Granddaughter's Bad Hair Day	43
36. <b>Robert L. Martin</b> My Seat in the Sky	44
37. <b>Robert L. Martin</b> Chameleon Clouds	45
38. <b>Roger G. Singer</b> Resurrected	46
39. <b>Ron Samul</b> Dreams of Icarus	47
40. <b>Saloni Kaul</b> Celebrations all on in Earnest	49
41. <b>Saloni Kaul</b> Converse all Along	50
42. <b>Sam Smith</b> Mock Sonnet 34	51

<b>43. Sarah Das Gupta</b>	
The Unquiet Grave	52
<b>44. Sean Beckett</b>	
After a Funerary Inscription	53
<b>45. Tony Curtis</b>	
Last walk at Lydstep	54
<b>BOOK REVIEWS</b>	
1. Songs of Immortality: A Hymn to Humanity	56
<b>Abu Siddik</b>	
<b>CONTRIBUTORS</b>	62

## POETRY

AMTHEYST

### Conversation with the Devil

cross-legged on the Victorian velvet chair  
in awe of high ceilings and swirling chandeliers  
made me flash back to mother's music jewel box  
that lifted open to a pirouetting princess ballerina

the intricate design of the Persian art that layered  
the accent wall had brought a halo of tranquillity  
to the stodgy aristocrat air like a mandala in a temple

suave in his Attolini suit with a 1930's demure  
gold cufflinks engraved with the letter D but  
he left me wondering why the hands on his  
waistcoat pocket watch had not move past three?

lingering between the living and the dead  
I rejected the priest's hell renunciations as  
highly inappropriate for this was not the time  
to start making enemies, overwhelmed with  
curiosity I stared into his silver fox eyes and  
asked "so, what are you offering?"

the clock ticked from three, I chose heavens peace  
but I will always remember that conversation

**ANDREW SCOTT**

**Away From Here**

See the conflicted look in your eyes.  
What to do next, follow the head  
or let the heart lead the way.  
Emotions can cloud everything.

You see that you want to leave  
the place you are in now.  
Unhappiness lines your eyes.

No one to talk too, to truly share  
those feelings and aspirations  
locked away for a tomorrow  
that may be never seen.

I am not a saviour, a simple man  
with an open heart, hand  
that is willing to share with you  
and give with all my spirit.

A chance is all we need  
to have our own time  
in a place away from here.

## **ANNA BANASIAK**

### **The Waves**

I'm watching  
Slow string of time  
Going into non-existence  
of the rhythm of the ocean into the future of the past  
my thoughts drift away there  
where the word became body  
my soul soars high  
darkness  
absorbs fears and anxieties  
I close my eyes  
only the echo of God is heard  
among the waves

**AVDHESH JHA**

## **Urban Culture and Value**

With the growing needs and the limited capacity of the cities,  
It is the increase in the proportion of people and manipulation;  
The culture with existence of capitalism and readiness to do or die;  
Unaltruistic; urban culture is the culture of unlimited limitation.

With the culture of technology, it is adding to the concentrations of power,  
With government capitals, corporate headquarters and the high profile;  
With economic culture and the only culture of investment and returns,  
Weird; urban culture is the culture of position and power in a while.

With innovation and technological advent, it is culture of new opportunities;  
It is the culture of adding to life style with networking; branding and adaptation;  
With entertainment; outing; organising; creating norms and its unadherence;  
Beyond understanding; urban culture is the culture of shorts and imitation.

With strength in extravagance; carelessness and social networking;  
The unprofessional professionalism, it is lack of indemnity and humanity;  
Prone to risk; it is being unnatural and individualistic; the culture of mask;  
The culture of who cares; Urban culture is the culture of lack of serenity.

The culture of affaire, feebleness, unhealthy competition and comparison;  
Being needy and shabby within but luxurious, lazy, lavish life style and alike;  
It is the need of autonomy; the culture of drinking, smoking and fake cheers;  
Amusing and abusing; Urban culture is the culture of life based on others like.

Being dissolute, impatient, nuclear, hypocrite; insensitive for others and self;  
Star gazing, unaffluent, difference in action and words and show-off is urban value;  
Liability, flaneurity, controversy, tinselry, self-absorbed is wealthy urban value,  
Receptive and deceptive; The life of fake world is the urban culture and value.

## **BARBRA NIGHTINGALE**

### **My Brother's Knife**

is made of exotic wood from Africa.  
It must be oiled, buffed to a savannah glow,  
never machine washed, always by hand.

My brother's knife is made for chopping,  
slicing almost transparent onions and cucumbers.  
Even tomatoes, it's that sharp.

My brother's knife has not yet harmed me,  
but its potential is exponential  
to the thinness of my skin.

My brother's knife is mine, given as a gift.  
It does not have a thirst for blood,  
the violence of rivets or honing the blade forgotten.

My brother's knife has no intention  
of hurting you, but if you come at me,  
this knife will mess you up.

## **BEVERLY MATHERNE**

### **Haiku Poems**

#### **Poem 1**

In my garden in summer  
what I thought falling blossoms  
was snow.

#### **Poem 2**

In summer sunset  
tiger Lilies  
ignite.

#### **Poem 3**

Along snow bank  
beneath broken ice  
daylilies long for sun.

#### **Poem 4**

Meadow of trillium  
along M-28. Red  
bloom ablaze.

**COLIN JAMES**

**The Local Arrives Screaming  
Metal Brakes on Metal Rails**

I booked a romantic getaway  
at an exotic spa.  
Your husband followed us  
like an imperative.  
Left little signs  
that he was around.  
Chewing gum wrappers  
and matchsticks with erections.  
Found it difficult to concentrate  
gawking through the jealousies.

## **DANIEL THOMAS MORAN**

### **Falling in Love, Again**

Romance is a package,  
neatly wrapped to  
conceal its contents.  
It leaves us to judgements,  
on but only the face of it.

Lovers ever wishing to be  
all lovers might wish for,  
We struggle in dimmed light  
to make out its features.

They say that soulmates  
are found, not in the wilds  
of distant shores and skies,  
But in the places within the  
longing limits of heart's reach.

Yet, we will swim in the scents,  
Harken to all the syrupy songs  
of newborn love and longings,  
Dancing the dances of angels.

Until comes the certain evening,  
when we can focus clearly, within  
the penumbras and withering light,  
understanding it is time, again,  
to go.

**DANIEL THOMAS MORAN**

**To a Man Who Was My Father**

**28 April 2019**

The day they  
buried you,  
I stayed away,  
in a place safe  
and far removed.

That morning, I  
went out to wander,  
among the lenient slopes,  
which cradle a place  
that is my home.

It was that time, to  
remove the leaves that  
had succumbed last fall,  
collect the twigs shaken  
loose by the callous winds  
of a long winter.

Such sweet drudgery  
is essential, to unfasten  
the useless past, and clear  
for spring's children,  
a path to the sky.

## **DUANE VORHEES**

### **Tell Me. Are You Sure?**

I wonder if once half our limbs were wings, like a fowl,  
or if they all had thumbs once. Or is that only now?

The asker wants to know.

Do we see us in mirrors, or need a fluoroscope?

Are lovers on the level or are they on a slope?

This doubter wants to know.

Was Tigris always Tigris or once was it Paradise?

Was Jesus a carpenter or always just a christ?

This skeptic wants to know.

Are the answers on the internet? Or in ourselves?

Or should I communicate with oracles and elves?

This searcher wants to know.

We learn through maturity? But ages are cages....

Or from these ancient books of fingered, faded pages?

Don't we all want to know?

## **GARY BECK**

### **Solution**

Social Engineering  
is a skilled activity  
that can manipulate the news,  
present fake facts as truth,  
deceive the passive public  
into believing the big lie,  
and completely fool us  
so we don't know what's real.  
Yet it can be a tool  
to help us get along  
with bosses, managers,  
in personal relations.  
So it is up to us  
to learn what is,  
perceive what isn't  
always trying our best  
to improve our condition.

**H.L. DOWLESS****Born A Traveling Man**

I was born a traveling man,  
But now I'm having thoughts of settling down,  
I've hung out on golden sand,  
I've drifted all around.  
In many a stream for gold I've panned,  
I've moved from town to town.  
I've rolled to get away from the police,  
I've been from sea to shining sea.

I'm thinking more of finding a small house  
Somewhere on the edge of some town.  
Maybe I can drive an airport shuttle bus  
Hauling other drifters around.  
Then I can labor from day to day,  
Having what I need,  
Until I've been there twenty years  
And I finally make it into the grave,  
Then such shall at long last be the end  
Of this traveling man's history.

I grew up being mother nature's child,  
Taking my game, fish, and fruit from the earth.  
I dwelt in the backwoods for quite a while,  
I suppose knowing this is good for what it's worth.  
I've worked at least a hundred jobs,  
Moving from town to town.  
The clothes on my back is all I've got,  
But I'm wealthy in the many unique experiences I've found.

Now I'm tired and sixty years old,  
I only want to rest,  
No longer can I tolerate the heat and cold,  
Nor can I pass any arduous test.  
This little house not far from the sea  
I've found,  
Is the perfect one for me.  
I can find my grits and coffee here in town,  
Or stop at the small shop on front street,  
Where life proceeds without much sound.

**J. T. WHITEHEAD**

**From “The Second Book of Job”**

**LVIII**

One Job watched the snowflakes fall, innocent enough, being delicate, “pure as snow,” angelic, fluttering, living soon-spent lives, returning to Earth. He said, “I know, I know,” as if speaking to them. “I fall, and I’m looking to find a new home, too.”

He shoveled the driveway. He shoveled all he could. The sidewalk, even. You *know* . . . you know how it is, like solving a puzzle all night, in a zone, focused, forgetful.

He’d lost a lot, but not life. Now snowfall, symbolizing dirt at a burial, was something he fought, until out of breath, never quite knowing he fought against death.

**J.T. WHITEHEAD**

**From “The Second Book of Job”**

**XVIII**

One *Job* had faith, another had the Law, another a Spirit that did not show. A Higher Power is not enough, though. Consider the life of Vincent van Gogh, and then again, maybe it is enough just to believe. What then becomes the stuff on which Life itself depends? One’s own gaze, canvass, a pair of shoes, sunflowers?

Grace is not something one captures with the brush. And it took a telescope to confirm  
the firmament’s spinning and swirling rush of life light years  
away.

*Job* grew un-firm.

*Job* hungered. Lost his ear. Grew paranoid. Lost his mind.

But he *saw* life in the void.

**JOHN GREY**

**The One Who Remembers**

She's the last one alive who remembers.  
Her hair is grey and shining.  
And her skin is barely wrinkled,  
a rose-pink that's also petal-soft.  
She gets around with help of a walker  
but her mind requires no assistance.  
She remembers. And her lilting voice  
speaks of long ago as if it's happening now.  
Photographs can't take me back in time  
but she can.  
And my own recall stops somewhere  
in the middle of my first school year.  
With her assistance, I can work my  
way back from there,  
down branches of the family tree,  
right to those outer layers of the trunk.  
Thanks to her memory,  
I've added some history to mine.  
When her tongue finally goes mute,  
the stories will still resonate.  
I will be the one who remembers  
that she remembered.

## **JOSEPH HART**

### **Maxx**

When the little kitten  
Sticks his nose into my nostril,  
Bites my ear  
Or sleeps against my chest -  
I think there is a God  
Or maybe love  
Or maybe something.  
But what's the use?  
We're aging anyway.

## **K. V. RAGHUPATHI**

### **Learning**

I watched my mom in stitched saree  
cook when I was a school-going.  
Only by watching and doing  
can you learn and grow,  
she told me before burning firewood.

Years later  
separated from home  
I stumbled  
when I cooked,  
but mom's words in my ears  
ringed like temple bells.

Now I make my own  
to differentiate from others  
every item, and eat  
sharing partly with my visitors  
the birds and squirrels  
that frequented my house.

**KARLA LINN MERRIFIELD**

**First Friday in February**

Ten songs to no one later  
a blushing first-quarter moon  
dips below the mangroves  
as rapid-fire fireworks closed the rodeo

Ten elegies for no one later  
Venus and Mars reflect in ripples  
on a slow tidal river otherwise invisible  
as muffler-free dragsters scream

Ten dreams of no-one-I-know later  
Orion and Cassiopeia shine their stories  
across the Milky Sea to our solar system  
as tonight's ten sirens slaughter ten secrets

## LES WICKS

### A Plan

Tobias will build a forest  
for the wallabies to graze  
for him to raze.  
He is the world to himself... a symphony.  
Pipes wheeze up,  
strings fret about within their housing,  
orchestras of glut have no choice.  
They will all get out again  
cuddle & infect a whole new audience.

Crash music, a hat of horrendous hymns  
seven deadly viruses  
as the ocean rises to take a bow.  
We beg Tobias to give us more  
*that* has been the answer for centuries  
& repetitive behaviour is the hallmark  
of robust mental health (?)  
plus a great (if one-tracked) memory.

## LES WICKS

### Apologies

Avoided every exercise  
until I shuffled like a lego volcano.  
Now I stretch & twitch 'till  
I wake up or sleep.  
All my beloved drugs gave me up.

Someone said take silence instead –  
let the gyruses mellow, even out.  
Discovered my voice had fallen to a croak.  
Told one's voice is just muscle & intent  
*use it or lose it.*  
So I train, dialogue with the lords. *No!*

## **MAHATHI**

### **I Wait With Smiles**

Into my dreams he comes and hugs me tight.  
When I awake, he slips into my heart.  
He flashes like a star at dim twilight  
and at midnight dips like a meteor hot.

On moonless nights while walking all alone  
pensive; deep dwelling in his thoughts, I feel  
his hands around my waist... smell his cologne  
and sense his slowly grasping bosom steel.

I ask the glow'ng fireflies, beseech the deer  
and beg the owls standing on sandy mound  
whether they saw my beau, afar or near  
and eavesdrop for his silent footsteps' sound.

He's miles away, I know behind my piles  
of muse. I feign poise veiling fading smiles.

## MARC ISAAC POTTER

### Regret

The sadness, agitation,  
Regret -  
There is rape in your future.

Yes, it is extremely creepy for  
Me to say so.

My wife went to a women's retreat,  
(There is a rape in your future)

One all retreat leader asked the room.  
*"How many of you have NOT been sexually assaulted in some way?"*

In the room of about 150 women,  
2 women raised their hands.  
(This is a true occurrence - it really happened)

My wife and I have 5 daughters,  
There is a rape in our future,  
More than 1  
More than 2  
I am crying over the pancakes  
As our girls come out of their  
Bunk beds for breakfast.

**MICHAEL LEE JOHNSON**

***Bowl of Black Petunias***

If you must leave me, please  
leave me for something special,  
like a beautiful bowl of black petunias –  
for when the memories leak  
and cracks appear  
and old memories fade,  
flowers rebuff bloom,  
sidewalks fester weeds  
and we both lie down  
separately from each other  
for the very last time.

## **MITHIL JHA**

### **Right or Wrong**

With perspectives being situational,  
Doubtful is absoluteness of truth;  
For every enemy there is a friend,  
And in every enemy there is a friend;  
For every enmity there is a reason,  
And for each time there is a season;  
For each vice there is a virtue and  
In every wicked there is a wise;  
Being two sides of the coin, both,  
The good and bad sail together;  
Only fact is the perspective,  
The situation and observation;  
Just as 6 from one side  
Remains 9 from other side;  
As well, the fictitious direction  
And the idea of our existence.

## **NELS HANSON**

### **The Shadow**

Out of office and ready  
to move on for  
some other kingdom  
in the morning light  
Confucius cast a shadow  
across a yellow field of  
flowering yarrow and  
the next day and years  
after that the shadow  
remains, each day a little  
darker but still silent as  
a ghost about to speak.

**NGO BINH ANH KHOA**

**The River that Once Was**

What used to be a humming beast  
That slithered near the town,  
Within whose hue of sun-soaked blue,  
The fishes swam around,  
Is now a silenced, barren corpse,  
Of water all devoid,  
With cans of tuna tossed away  
Stuck to the land, destroyed.

## **NGO BINH ANH KHOA**

### **Revival**

A burned-out phoenix  
from out its ashen remnants  
regains the heavens—  
the way my racing heart soars  
the first time your lips touch mine.

## **NOEL KING**

### **Matriarch**

My oldest was born on the 14<sup>th</sup> of October,  
I ring him that day.

My second came out on January 4<sup>th</sup>,  
I call him every year.

My third arrived the last day of December,  
she's usually here for New Year.

My fourth was a tough one, in heat, July 15<sup>th</sup>, my sister,  
their aunt helped, took to the beach with one, two and three.

My fifth was a still-birth, 12<sup>th</sup> February. We called her Valerie,  
I take her flowers on that date.

My other children have children  
these days, and I must recall their birthdays

and sometimes, sometimes but not always,  
they remember mine on December 25<sup>th</sup>.

**PARINITA RATNAPARKHI**

**The Rainy Season**

The Rainy season,  
Drizzling water  
Drops of rain,  
For seeds, the drops of life  
For water bodies, the time to rejuvenate.

The rainy season,  
Drizzling water  
Drops of rain,  
For saplings, the hopes to grow  
For creatures and creations, the time to delve.

The rainy season,  
Drizzling water  
Drops of rain,  
For Earth, Ahh! The cycle of season,  
For life, the cycles of colors and shades.

The rainy season,  
Drizzling water  
Drops of rain,  
For existence, the essential phenomenon  
For God, the phenomenon of art, beauty and expression.

**PATRICIA NIKOLOVA**

**No Darkness**

lately i think of you as i sit by the riverbank  
but there is no river

you and i salute the trees in the forest  
but there is no forest

then we feed our bread to birds  
but there is no bread

then happily we're back home  
but there is no home

then we hold our little child  
but there is no child

seated then, we dine on words  
without a thing to say

then in the gloom our shadows merge  
without any darkness

without darkness

no darkness  
there's none

**PETER J. DELLOLIO**

**Scrambling Antique**

Scrambling antique fetid baked *Now, Voyager!*  
I go into a blissful trance when I am on a beach.  
Gladiator briefcase not very nocturnal penguins riot.  
The silence of the night is mystical.

**PRASANTA KUMAR PANDA**

**A Memorable Question on Mother**

When you were there  
We always felt  
You loved us more than you're capable of.

Nights were short  
As you'd see us as soon as possible for you in dawn.  
Days were short  
As you'd wish we're home at the end of the day.

Keeping us as we should have been as your children was more  
than a ask.  
Yet did we ever try to keep you in place you deserved when you  
were there;  
And now when you are no more to say anything about it as  
consolation!

What we're now and what you did for us to be us now  
Makes sense to us now.  
But what happened to you then we could not know.

When you're no more;  
We remember you,  
But can we say  
We remember you more than we are capable of!

**RAKESH BHARTIYA****Toxic Men and Women**

One may be as harmful as carbon dioxide  
Another may be as dangerous as carbon monoxide  
No scientific data of world would reflect that  
No social survey anywhere could reveal that  
Year after year, everywhere, all such toxic men and women  
Full of bad conduct, bad behaviour and bad intention  
Suffocate and even kill lot many good men and women

All within the four walls of home or work-place  
They exist, roam, conspire and cunningly operate  
They rob good men and women of peace and happiness  
They are the source of much of their unhappiness  
Year after year, everywhere, these toxic men and women  
Suffocate and even kill lot many good men and women  
The symptoms of heart-attack, hypertension etc. are illusory  
Innocent and good people are actually killed by toxic men and women

O wise men with impressive degrees in science or sociology!  
Do accept your limitations on not recognizing this criminology  
All your data, studies, research etc. are just imperfect  
Your theories do not reflect this branch of criminology  
Open your eyes! Come out of your air conditioned chambers!  
Look at the disturbing truth within homes and work-places  
Year after year, everywhere, these toxic men and women  
Suffocate and even kill lot many good men and women.

## **RAKESH BHARTIYA**

### **My Best Friend**

You can't be really blamed if you can't correctly guess  
After all, that type of concentration is difficult in this mess  
It keeps me grounded well, very very close to reality  
It helps me in assessing my life in its totality  
Amongst all shouts of praise driven by selfish interests  
It whispers in my ears the futility of those noises  
It travels with me when I am climbing the hill upbeat  
It also travels with me while I go down in an insulting retreat  
Finally, let me introduce to you my best friend named Pain  
So persistent, so consistent and ever so present friend Pain.

**RICK HARTWELL****Granddaughter's Bad Hair Day**

Again, the family seems embalmed by rain;  
not a funeral, just frozen inertia. Gray day,  
lowering clouds, sheets of rain beating  
staccato rhythms on the roof and leaving  
river runnels on the window panes.

Sidewalk smell of rain insinuates itself  
through the door, opened as the granddaughter  
readies herself for the dash to the car,  
disclaiming loudly of the disaster that will befall  
her extended, braided hair and befoul her makeup.

An hour of preparation, ruined in a moment;  
she will add these to the reasons to hate school.  
I tell her that some like their women spritzed,  
but she doesn't find this funny at all as  
her face becomes streaked with rain,

as if she were crying, and the windows  
in the neighborhood appear like the eyes of  
leering faces mocking her teenage humiliation;  
just another Monday to start the new week and  
anger the minor gods of emerging adolescence.

**ROBERT L. MARTIN**

**My Seat in the Sky**

With my arms reaching up over head,  
I can feel the clouds sleeping in their bed.  
I can smell their sweet breath so fresh aloft,  
Up through the effervescent air so soft.

I can see winding meadows below so clear  
From my lofted chair with heaven so near.  
I can see the trees as if they're my children,  
And the dark forests as if they're my friend.

I can see rising rivers as if they're a brook,  
A behemoth as a sheep with a timid look,  
A hurricane as a sea of slow revolving pearls,  
Or a tornado whittled down to a gentle whirl.

Mother Nature is amidst  
The taming of the tempest,  
From where I can see  
From my seat in the sky.

**ROBERT L. MARTIN**

## **Chameleon Clouds**

Clouds change from the rising sun  
into the sunset from their day on the run,  
and colors bleed into colors  
like chameleons just like their shifting mothers.

Nature's a painter with an iridescent eye  
at the easel looking out at the inconsistent sky,  
the moving waves of the drifting clouds  
and the colors they keep as they stop to browse.

Beauty is in the sunrise as the day begins  
and in the sunset according to earthly disciplines.  
She changes colors that enchant the heart  
and keeps the rage from coming apart.

Clouds are like chameleons with colors that shift.  
They float up above the hills and forever drift.  
They are like a kaleidoscope that never settles down,  
changing colors and keeping off the ground.

I looked to the sky this morning and lo behold  
a purple cloud that changed to gold.  
And then the sun moved in a westward direction.  
Then it turned red before the sun kissed the ocean.  
Then the cloud turned black beyond my sight  
and became a mystery of the cryptic night.  
Yes there is magic in the skies there is.

## **ROGER G. SINGER**

### **Resurrected**

you gave me voice  
under a ceiling  
of stars  
where I spoke  
the breath  
of your name  
onto the waves  
nearby  
as we sat  
beneath a  
flooded moonlight

where I always  
see you

## **RON SAMUL**

### **Dreams of Icarus**

I told you  
the sun was absent  
in my dream sky.

Without opening your eyes,  
you said, "That's okay,  
you're just different."

I've dreamt of whales  
breaching upon rocks,  
dying in low moans,

Of apocalyptic skies  
refined in pixelating hell fire.  
We all choked in the plume.

In scenes without the sun  
everyone knows what happened  
in dreams they weren't in.

If I can stay,  
tease out why  
I dream dim dreams,

I might attempt  
something beautiful,  
something conspired,

And act on a deceit  
that will finally  
crack the ceiling.

Rising up in the murk, I razor cut  
a hole in my subconscious  
to give those sad fantasists illumination.

I won't survive, slashing and stabbing,  
recoiling back and landing sullied and broken,  
in a ray of sunlight, so long denied.

I will look up, as the crowd gathers to hear  
my last words, "That's the sun."  
They will look sad and say, "We know."

**SALONI KAUL****Celebrations all on in Earnest**

In each and every lifetime there appears that phase  
When all your yearnings get granted like matters drilled,  
Your far-flung dreams realised in minutest days,  
Your impossibly distant whims and fancies all fulfilled.  
Then towering tallest mountains all say 'yes',  
Red blue stars grant boons in a silvery twinkle,  
Even coral pink sandy deserts with happiness acquiesce  
And all the firmaments above benediction sprinkle.  
Inaudibly they then agree with all you have to say  
As though they've never once opposed or contradicted you,  
Not once, not twice, all turned their back the other way,  
Believe me, this that happens all at once is all true!  
Forget forgive the past misgivings when this moment lands,  
For only celebrations galore are in store for you right where you stand.

## **SALONI KAUL**

### **Converse all Along**

In moments all tender inalienable  
Draw me incontrovertibly aside  
Away from company where vulnerable  
Joys sorrows out of thought and usage here reside  
As inconspicuously we both talk  
In indeterminate unassailable seclusion  
To easily arrive taut as a tight-rope walk  
At these linked inextricably threaded indisputable conclusions.

Allure me on to those highest of planes in fable  
Effectually alone unparalleled  
And audibly say all the lofty things ineffable,  
Decorously already all feasible, hand-shelled  
In manner reasonably acceptable  
To the total reserved exclusion laudable  
Of all else.

**SAM SMITH**

**Mock Sonnet 34**

On night shift I recognised their voices in their snores.  
The makeshift rehab unit was three terrace houses  
knocked together, sets of stairs kept either end and  
making it difficult to monitor. I'd listen from  
the office below to footsteps above shuffling and  
creaking to the lavatory, its whooshing flush  
and the cistern's gurgling refill, shuffle and creak  
back, bedroom door clicking closed. On that mixed  
unit I'd re-listen. And to be certain I'd go up one set  
of stairs, take a quiet walk through the long corridor,  
come down the other stairs. Wasn't only the few women  
my concern: while in the world outside men having sex  
with men was now tolerated, in there, given all their  
vulnerability, any pairing could be seen as exploitation.

**SARAH DAS GUPTA**

**The Unquiet Grave**

Beneath the green there is no rest,  
The fields of whispering grass  
    he hears no more.

Seasons with drifting snow,  
    Or burning suns  
Springs of bursting buds and early blooms  
    he sees no more.

His garden neglected, gone to seed,  
    his wine undrunk.

**SEAN BECKETT**

**After a Funerary Inscription**

WHAT A SON SHOULD DO FOR A FATHER  
THE FATHER DID FOR THE SON

Well on my way to getting us both lost,  
Dad gently suggests that I use my phone.  
He's right. I've been betrayed, again, by mossed  
liars hiding behind their own stiff cones--  
these cedars have no shame. And Dad pretends,  
when I explain, again, for the fourth time,  
my current life plan as our new trail wends,  
bends, and warps every way but a straight line,  
that it is news to him. Encouraging  
me with quiet, listening ears that I,  
forgetfulness aside, could flourish in  
life. Even if I can't read a map right.  
We find the parking lot; he drives us home.  
I continue telling him things he knows.

## TONY CURTIS

### Last walk at Lydstep

The village is locked-down  
but only I can tell tonight, I'm the only  
witness to the dark, still lane and the closed pub.  
From across the fields I can hear the sea.

Lights glow in a few homes, but the swings  
and tennis nets at Celtic Haven Holidays  
are slack and unused, the freshly painted  
houses and stable blocks will be empty this season.

The place had been a turkey farm which supplied the *QE2*  
and my mother; each Christmas for two decades  
she'd drive up to us with a bird on the back seat.  
Mum died years back and the house sale's going through.

Eleven years ago to the week, Withybush Hospital,  
in her ninety-first year. As it should be.  
Her heart gave out as ours dare not do  
with the hospitals full to breaking now.

So many stars tonight in a perfect, black sky  
that brings light from dead worlds and past times.  
And stars at my feet – the first flush of wild garlic  
with its fresh stink of sweet/sour breath

announcing the cruelest month.  
My aunt Annie, the Pembrokeshire charmer,  
would have been out foraging and wrenching them up  
to gather the bulbs for potions and cures.

Warts, agues and women's troubles: for pennies  
she ministered to family and neighbours.  
A farm girl before the First War, the plague of 'Nineteen,  
then an ex-soldier's wife, a smallholding near Kilgetty.

There's the Plough, Orion's Belt, the North Star,  
and countless others I don't recognise.  
No winking lights from the transatlantic planes,  
now we are shrinking into ourselves, cancelled flights,

the world curling back into itself  
for safety, and in fear.  
This is the reckoning point, the date,  
all manner of events and lives will be defined by this year.

Though the fields at the back of us are newly ploughed,  
a flurry of gulls and crows jabbing at the fresh worms;  
this afternoon there were hens let loose and scattered  
across the empty road. One perched on our wall.

This county's a long way from anywhere,  
and closed to visitors now: the police run checks.  
Our Headland's been an Iron Age promontory fort,  
a narrow strip to defend with the sea at your back.

In the war mum's friend Reg had held a rope  
over the edge near Whitesheet Rock above the crashing sea  
for school mates to raid the crevice nests for gulls' eggs.  
'Big and rich, but tasting of fish. Still, we was so hungry.'

## BOOK REVIEWS

### 1

## **Songs of Immortality: A Hymn to Humanity**

**ABU SIDDIK**

*(Songs of Immortality* | A Collection of Poems | Hemanta Pramanik | Authorspress, New Delhi, 2020 | ISBN: 978-93-90459-93-3 | Page: 114 | INR: 295 | \$ 25)

Hemanta Pramanik is a widely published bilingual poet, short story writer, editor and translator from West Bengal, India. His keenness of observation, his sympathy for the working masses, his lucid language, and his belief in humanity and the “multi-ethnic diversity” of India (“Intolerance” 52) make his debut collection of poems, *Songs of Immortality* a pleasing experience. It is his silent protest against the current culture of money, the market, media, and sex. Dr Katta Rajamouly in his Foreword rightly said, “This collection reflects the truth that he has a sensitive heart to evince his concerns for society through the medium of creative writing” (10).

His collection has altogether 70 poems of plural taste and dimension. The book is dedicated to “all the working-class people of this world.” In the Preface, the poet says:

*Songs of Immortality* are the songs of eternal labour of the working-class people on this earth....people of the lower

strata of society, the poor, the oppressed, the downtrodden, the exploited, the discriminated, the backward and the marginal still endeavour to relish the taste and flavour of happiness in life out of their day-night slavery and diligence....they are the wheels of civilization and the backbone of mankind. Their works in the farming lands, the industrial areas, in mines, in construction sites, in transportation systems, shops and workshops and even in contracted slavery in domestic houses and mansions bring no tears in the eyes of the rich and the powerful....my heartfelt musings on them are really a tribute to their lives and relentless service to humanity.

The poet has said all that needs to be said. His cause, his moral vision, his sympathy for the underdogs, his pains and hopes in a rapidly changing India where the gap between the hoarders of wealth and the millions of Indians who are living on a paltry income is ever widening, make him a poet of harsh reality. A casual look at any of his poems makes one realise that he is not writing for pleasure-seekers. His poetry speaks – speaks for the toiling men, women, and children – speaks for “Truth against lies”, “Warning any danger distant”, “Illuminating the world thoughts/ As do the bright sunrays,” (“Poet” 82).

### **On Nature**

He has categorised the poems into four broad areas – Nature, Mankind, Love and Almighty. His 13 ‘nature’ poems strongly appeal to our five senses. Seasonal vagaries and their effect on people’s moods, the sky, the moon, the rain, the flora and fauna of Bengal villages, and festivals of Bengal have been keenly observed and portrayed with his customary ease and grace. His lines, “When Nature is playful with rains,/ Water flows through earth’s pores and veins,/ Greenery follows here and there/ With others we have joys to share.” (“Nature in Rain” 31) are a source of joy for the elderly and the children alike. His imagery, “The large Simul tree beside the way/ Standing alone like a

maid,/ Being robed in flowers unnumbered/ To welcome Spring” (“The Beauty I Admire” 37) or, his portrayal of the Autumn, “What a fantastic sight/ of the sun’s dazzling light!/ Reflected on the blue sky,/ heaps of cottons fly/ above the trees’ headlines,” (“Autumn” 36) or, his capture of an evening scene, “This time the vermillion glow in the west/ Hiding our nearest star beyond the horizon,/ Tired wings in groups come back to nest in haste.” (“Evening Bliss” 33) – all are so dear to the nature-lovers. We find a Wordsworthian sensibility, Keatsian beauty, a Blakeian song of innocence in this section.

### **On Mankind**

Burning and cross-cutting issues of child labour, migratory mass, dehumanization and objectification of women, sorrows of our elderly citizens, terrorism, falsity and cunningness of our race, masks we wear in our public and private dealings, intolerance, violence, riots, rapes, the barbarity of machine age, etc. have found a befitting place in the section. His depiction of “the pale faces of humanity”, the poor, “The guinea pigs they are/ in the labs of greed,/ from the eagles’ clutches/ never they be freed.” (“The Poor” 49), his anxiety for the migratory workers “Wandering the pale faces of humanity,/ From arid deserts to lush plains”, “Life beating in hungry stomach”, “Trudging legs on endless miles” (“Migration a Curse” 51), his worries on “fraud, unrest, disharmony” (“Intolerance” 52), his thoughts on rape, “They are the inhumans./ How many Nirbhayas could/ In exchange in their lives/ Satisfy their ungratified lust!” (Who Deflower Women” 57), his stand against patriarchy, “You see me a woman,/ not as a human./ Come out of patriarchy.... We are complementary.” (Woman also Human” 59), his views on modern-day parenting, “New-born is weaned,/ service the rival./ Mothers pursues identity/ keeping children in crèches” (“Trends” 61), his pains in watching “the soil marked with/ bloody footprints of war,/ in garden and park, playground and

school” where “Terror strangles a child” (“Endangered Childhood” 62), his compassion for the elderly, “Old age resembles a yellow leaf/ among the green, tender leaves/ yet to fall on the ground.” (“Old Age” 64), his musings on death and doomsday, “A ‘last day’ appears/ in everyone’s life,/ to sleep forever” (“Last Day” 68), his lines on the memory of his mother’s death, “After her incineration I envision/ Her presence in soil, air and water,” (“Memory her Name” 80), his love for the little ones and his cry against the war and destruction, “justice and peace desired/ war-play not required/ let this world of ours be/ of little boys ever free.” (“Little Boy” 78) make him a poet who is deeply immersed in the everyday reality of the world. The poet sees the myriad ugly and violent faces of the world, and he records his pains and helplessness, “the final journey exceptional/ Unnoticed and unsung/ Life fallen as a yellow leaf” (“Funeral of a Lay Man” 71). The poems in this section deserve special attention. Poet’s anger, frustration, boldness and bitterness mark the texture of each of his 38 poems. In numerical consideration, poems under this section outnumber the poems included in the rest three sections. The message is clear. He is not an escapist who remains blind to the raging issues of the world. He is a concerned poet who writes not for aesthetic pleasure, but for a cause – his commitment to champion the greater cause of humanity.

### **On Love and the Almighty**

“Love” section with 11 poems and the “Almighty” section with 8 poems, however, heal the poet’s wounds. “Love, the panacea for life, in the turmoil/ Helps us survive in a world devoid of faith,” and his advice to people of all religions not to seek gods in sacred houses, such as, temple, mosque or churches only, “To realize Him is simple/ Close your eyes and look into the heart”, (“Realisation” 113), fills poet’s anguished heart with love, hope, and renewed claims of universal humanity. His world is

inclusive and tolerant, “I wish a humanitarian great being kind/  
to races and creeds, also tolerant and glad, in days of intolerance  
to love and bind/ on earth all human beings born of flesh and  
blood/ as saviour new who would redeem mankind/ from sins  
by tiding love as sweeps a flood.” (“When the Saviour Redeems  
Mankind” 108). The poet is a believer who believes in the  
healing power of the almighty god, whose ways are merciful to  
all. Odds are there, but they will pass, so the poet believes. Thus,  
the songs churning the dire distress of the world conclude with a  
happy note for humanity. Let us dream, for we know if dreams  
die, life is a barren field.

### **Commentary**

Pramanik’s *Songs of Immortality* reminds me of William Blake’s  
1794 book, *Songs of Innocence and Experience* which shows two  
contrary states of a human soul. It also reminds me of William  
Wordsworth’s 1807 “Ode: Intimations of Immortality from  
Recollections of Early Childhood” where the poet sings,  
“Thanks to the human heart by which we live,/ Thanks to its  
tenderness, its joys, and fears,/ To me the meanest flower that  
blows can give/ Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.”  
Blake has created his moral vision out of established  
Christianity. Wordsworth has found bliss in the trinity of Man,  
Nature and God. Pramanik sees and records the wrongs around  
him, and finds solace in the ways of the almighty god. He is far  
away from the thoughts of the existentialists and absurdists like  
Franz Kafka, Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, Samuel Beckett,  
Donald Barthelme, and Eugène Ionesco, to name only a few,  
who find no meaning in life, who believe in a godless world  
where there is no essence for existence.

The poet could have been more careful and thrifty in his  
choice of diction and usage of words. He could have profitably  
used internal rhyme, alliteration and other rhetorical devices to  
lend a sing-song appeal to the poems which are, in fact, “songs”

of immortality. However, because of his innate belief in humanity and his sympathy for the underdogs that are imprinted into the texture of his poems, the collection deserves a wide readership. In an increasingly violent world, it needs to be proactively read.

## CONTRIBUTORS

1. **Abu Siddik** teaches at Plassey College, Nadia, West Bengal, India. He loves to write poem, short story and article on the struggle and resilience of the Indian marginalised communities, the underdogs, the outcasts. He has 12 books. Website: [www.abusiddik.com](http://www.abusiddik.com)
2. **Amtheyst** is a poet from South Africa.
3. **Andrew Scott** is a native of Fredericton, NB. During his time as an active poet, Andrew Scott has taken the time to speak in front of classrooms, judge poetry competitions, and have over 200 hundred writings published worldwide in such publications as *The Art of Being Human*, *Battered Shadows* and *The Broken Ones*. Andrew Scott has published multiple poetry books, *Snake with A Flower*, *The Phoenix Has Risen*, *The Path*, *The Storm Is Coming*, *Whispers of the Calm*, *Searching* and *Letter To You*, a novella, *Redemption Avenue* and a book of photography, *Through My Eyes*. *A Walk Through Time* is Andrew Scott's second book of photography. To contact Andrew, Email: [andrewscott.scott@gmail.com](mailto:andrewscott.scott@gmail.com). Website: <http://andrewmScott.com>
4. **Anna Banasiak**, poet, writer, occupational therapist. Her poems have been published in USA, UK, Australia, Canada, India, Africa, Japan, China, Cuba, Israel. She has won many poetry competitions. She loves helping people through art therapy. Email: [banama7@wp.pl](mailto:banama7@wp.pl)
5. **Avdhesh Jha**, an author, poet, teacher and observer, is professor and principal, Waymade College of Education and Dean, Faculty of Education, CVM University, Vallabh

Vidyanagar, Gujarat. He is doctorate in Education and Post Graduate in Mathematics & Education, with 20 years of rich and varied experience in Education industry. He has guided, mentored and supervised numerous research scholars. He is founder and chief editor of 'Voice of Research' – a journal in social science, humanities and technology. He has got nine books published on various subjects, through reputed national and international publishers in Hindi, Gujarati and English. He has so far published about 27 research papers and research articles with national and international journals. He has presented about 25 papers at international, national and state level conference/seminars. He has delivered more than 20 lectures abroad as an invited guest, and more than 70 lectures at international, national, state level conferences, seminars, workshops etc. He is awarded with CHAROTTAR GAURAV, BHARAT EXCELLENCE.

6. **Barbra Nightingale's** poems have appeared in many journals and anthologies, such as *Rattle*, *Limp Wrist*, *Universal Oneness*, *The Liberal Media Made Me Do It* (Anthology), *Narrative Magazine* (nominated for a Pushcart), *Gargoyle*, *Barrow Street*, *The Georgetown Review*, *CRIT Journal*, *Jet Fuel*, *The Apalachee Review*, *Calyx*, *Kalliope*, *Many Mountains Moving*, *Birmingham Review*, *Chattahoochee Review*. Her most recent books of poetry include: *Spells & Other Ways of Flying* (Kelsay Books, 2019), *Two Voices, One Past*, Yellow Jacket Press (runner up in chapbook contest, 2010) and *Geometry of Dreams* (2009), Word Tech Editions, Ohio. She is an Associate Editor with the South Florida Poetry Journal.
7. **Beverly Matherne**, the 2023 and 2024 Poet Laureate of Michigan's Upper Peninsula (in The United States), is the author of seven books of poetry. Her latest title, *Love Potions, Teas, Incantations*, is from Harvard Square Press, 2023. She is professor emerita of English at Northern Michigan

University, where she served as director of the Master of Fine Arts program in English and poetry editor of *Passages North* literary magazine. Her work has received four Pushcart nominations and seven first-place prizes, including the Hackney Literary Award for Poetry.

8. **Colin James** has a book of poems, *Resisting Probability*, from Sagging Meniscus Press. He lives in Massachusetts.
9. **Daniel Thomas Moran**, born in New York City in 1957, is the author of fourteen collections of poetry. "In the Kingdom of Autumn", was published by Salmon Poetry in Ireland in 2020, who also published his previous collection, "A Shed for Wood" in 2014. He has had some four hundred poems published in close to twenty different countries. In 2005, he was appointed Poet Laureate by The Legislature of Suffolk County, New York. His collected papers are being archived by The Dept. of Special Collections at Stony Brook University. He is a retired Clinical Assistant Professor from Boston University's School of Dental Medicine, where he delivered the Commencement Address in 2011. He is Arts Editor for *The Humanist* magazine in Washington, DC.
10. **Roger G. Singer**, Poet Laureate Emeritus, Connecticut Coalition of Poets Laureate.
11. **Duane Vorhees** is an American poet living in Thailand. He is the author of *Heaven, Memories Are Linked Like Oases*, *The Many Loves Of Duane Vorhees*, and *Gift: God Runs Through All These Rooms*.
12. **Gary Beck** has spent most of his adult life as a theater director and worked as an art dealer when he couldn't earn a living in the theater. He has also been a tennis pro, a ditch digger and a salvage diver. His original plays and translations of Moliere, Aristophanes and Sophocles have been produced Off Broadway. His poetry, fiction and essays have appeared

in hundreds of literary magazines and his published books include 38 poetry collections, 14 novels, 4 short story collections, 1 collection of essays and 7 books of plays. Gary lives in New York City.

13. **H.L. Dowless**, a national & international academic/ ESL Instructor, has been a writer for over thirty years. His latest publications have been two books of nonfiction with Algora Publishing, a fictional novel by Atmosphere Press, and fictional publications with combo e-zines and print magazines; *Leaves Of Ink*, *CC&D Magazine*, a novel with Atmosphere press, *Short Story Lovers*, *The Fear Of Monkeys*, and *Frontier Tales*. He recently signed three contracts with Pen it Publications. The author has enjoyed a lifetime of outdoor activities from big game hunting, camping, fishing, and trapping, to archaeological field work in various exotic locations. What he enjoys most of all is meeting freedom loving, interesting creative people, who are also regular dedicated fans of his publications.
14. **J.T. Whitehead** was Editor in Chief of *So It Goes: The Literary Journal of the Kurt Vonnegut Memorial Library*, briefly, for issues 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6. He is a *Pushcart Prize*-nominated short story author, a *Pushcart Prize*-nominated poet, and was winner of the *Margaret Randall Poetry Prize* in 2015 (published in *Mas Tequila Review*). Whitehead has published over 325 poems in over 125 literary journals, including *The Lilliput Review*, *Slipstream*, *Left Curve*, *The Broadkill Review*, *Home Planet News*, *The Iconoclast*, *Poetry Hotel*, *Book XI*, *Gargoyle*, and *The New York Quarterly*. His book *The Table of the Elements* was nominated for the *National Book Award* in 2015. Whitehead lives in Indianapolis with his two sons, Daniel and Joseph.
15. **John Grey** is an Australian poet, US resident, recently published in *Stand*, *Washington Square Review* and

Sheepshead Review. Latest books, “Between Two Fires”, “Covert” and “Memory Outside The Head” are available through Amazon. Work upcoming in the McNeese Review, Santa Fe Literary Review and California Quarterly.

16. **Joseph Hart** has a BA. He has had poems published in small magazines and was twice nominated for a Pushcart. A chapbook he wrote entitled “Indian Poems” was published by Kelsay Books. And several collections of poems (including “Idle Fancies” and “Ghosts, Sleep & Oceans”) were published by Cyberwit.net. His favorite poet is Keats.
17. **K.V. Raghupathi**, a former academic, poet, novelist, short story writer, book reviewer, and critic, has been writing for four decades and has to the date thirteen poetry collections, two short story collections, two novels, eight critical works, and over forty book reviews. Recipient of several national awards for his creativity, he lives in Tirupati and can be reached at [drkvraghupathi9@gmail.com](mailto:drkvraghupathi9@gmail.com)
18. **Karla Linn Merrifield** has had 1000+ poems appear in dozens of journals and anthologies. She has 16 books to her credit. Following her 2018 *Psyche’s Scroll* (Poetry Box Select) is the full-length book *Athabaskan Fractal: Poems of the Far North* from Cirque Press. Her newest poetry collection, *My Body the Guitar*, nominated for the 2022 National Book Award, was inspired by famous guitarists and their guitars and published by Before Your Quiet Eyes Publications Holograph Series (Rochester, NY). She is a frequent contributor to *The Songs of Eretz Poetry Review*. Web site: <https://www.karalinnmerrifield.org>
19. **Les Wicks**: Over 45 years Wicks has performed widely across the globe. Published in over 400 different magazines, anthologies & newspapers across 36 countries in 15 languages. Conducts workshops & runs Meuse Press which

focuses on poetry outreach projects like poetry on buses & poetry published on the surface of a river. His 15<sup>th</sup> book of poetry is *Time Taken – New & Selected* (Puncher & Wattmann, 2022).

20. **Mahathi** was once a lawyer in Nellore and later an officer in Central Industries ministry. He retired from service in 2014. So far his poetry was published as 6 collections and 4 epic long poems. His poems were published in a number of print journals of India, US and Canada.
21. **Marc Isaac Potter** (we/they/them) ... is a differently-abled writer living in the SF Bay Area. Marc's interests include blogging by email and Zen. They have been published in *Fiery Scribe Review*, *Feral A Journal of Poetry and Art*, *Poetic Sun Poetry*, and *Provenance Journal*.
22. **Michael Lee Johnson** lived ten years in Canada during the Vietnam era. Today he is a poet in the greater Chicagoland area, IL. He has 293 YouTube poetry videos. Michael Lee Johnson is an internationally published poet in 44 countries, a song lyricist, has several published poetry books, has been nominated for 6 Pushcart Prize awards, and 6 Best of the Net nominations. He is editor-in-chief of 3 poetry anthologies, all available on Amazon, and has several poetry books and chapbooks. He has over 473 published poems. Michael is the administrator of 6 Facebook Poetry groups. Member Illinois State Poetry Society: <http://www.illinoispoets.org/>.
23. **Mithil Jha** is a young writer with a strong inclination towards language and literature. He is currently pursuing his education at Acadia University, Wolf Ville, Nova Scotia, Canada. He has a great passion for lore and learning and is immensely motivated with the write-ups of the classical and dynamic writers, the traditional and contemporary situations, issues and environment.

24. **Nels Hanson** has worked as a farmer, teacher and editor. His books can be found on Amazon.
25. **Ngo Binh Anh Khoa** is a teacher of English in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. In his free time, he enjoys daydreaming and writing speculative poetry for entertainment. His poems have appeared in Weirdbook, Star\*Line, Spectral Realms, and other venues. He can be found on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/khoa.ngo.5059/>.
26. **Noel King** was born and lives in Tralee, Co Kerry. His poetry collections are *Prophesying the Past*, (Salmon, 2010), *The Stern Wave* (Salmon, 2013) and *Sons* (Salmon, 2015) and *Alternative Beginnings, Early Poems* (Kite Modern Poetry Series, 2022). He has edited more than fifty books of work by others (Doghouse Books, 2003-2013) and was poetry editor of *Revival Literary Journal* (Limerick Writers' Centre) in 2012/13. A short story collection, *The Key Signature & Other Stories* was published by Liberties Press in 2017. [www.noelking.ie](http://www.noelking.ie)
27. **Parinita Ratnaparkhi** awarded with UGC-NET/Junior Research Fellowship and 21<sup>st</sup> R. S. Tomar Best Researcher Award 2018 bears the passion for research, academics and creativity. With several publications including papers and book chapters, she is a reviewer, analyst, author, poet, and critic.
28. **Patricia Nikolova** (1979, Sofia) is a Bulgarian poet, writer, literary and theater critic, essayist and translator from English, Russian and other languages. She has been awarded the 1999 "Dora Gabe" National Book Award for female poetry, as well as other distinctions, nominations and prizes. Patricia Nikolova has published five books of verse. Her works have been translated in English, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Polish, Russian, Serbian, Armenian,

Hebrew, Ladino etc. Her poetry has been successfully presented at international book fairs and literary forums, and she has participated in various international poetry anthologies. In the period 2003-2008 she worked as a full-time editor in *Rodna Rech* Literary Magazine and the Children's Book House at the Ministry of Education and Science. Patricia works in a prestigious literary magazine *Contemporary*, where she leads a critical column on poetry. She is a member of the International P.E.N. Center.

29. **Peter J. Dellolio** wrote and directed various short films, including James Joyce's short story *Counterparts* which he adapted into a screenplay. *Counterparts* was screened at national and international film festivals. A freelance writer, Peter has published many 250-1000 word articles on the arts, film, dance, sculpture, architecture, and culture, as well as fiction, poetry, one-act plays, and critical essays on art, film, and photography. His poetry and fiction have appeared in various literary magazines, including *Antenna*, *Aero-Sun Times*, *Bogus Review*, *Pen-Dec Press*, *Both Sides Now*, *Cross Cultural Communications/Bridging The Waters Volume II*, and *The Mascara Literary Review*.
30. **Prasanta Kumar Panda** is a faculty of Indian Institute of Technology (BHU), Varanasi. He has the distinction of publishing specialized papers in diverse areas of Professional Communication, Technical Writing, Literary Theory and Creative Writing. He is also an honorary Editor in Chief of *Nuances: A journal of Humanistic Enquiry* (ISSN-2395-0943). His name also figures in the advisory board of *Platform: A Bi-Lingual Magazine Based on Literature and Culture* (ISSN- 2347-5242) and in the editorial board of *IOSR Journals of Humanities and Social Sciences* (International Organization of Scientific Research). He also writes poems in English and has two volumes to his credit, titled: *Confused Confessions* and *A*

*Blueprint of Retrospections*. He has published around fifty poems in different journals of repute.

31. **Rakesh Bhartiya** (Born on 28 July 1954 in Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh, India) did his graduation in Electrical Engineering and then joined a public sector bank. He left the bank job to join Government of India after clearing the Civil Services Examination and retired as Joint Secretary. After that he was adviser in the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights for three years. Currently he is a full-time writer. He writes in two languages, English and Hindi. Rakesh Bhartiya has six collections of short stories, two novels, two collections of poems, two travelogues and three collections of articles on social, cultural and spiritual issues to his credit. He co-edited a literary quarterly 'Pashyanti' for three years.
32. **Rick Hartwell** is a retired middle school teacher (remember the hormonally-challenged?) living in California with his wife of forty-seven years, Sally (upon whom he is emotionally, physically, and spiritually dependent), two grown children, a daughter-in-law, two granddaughters, and fifteen cats! Like Blake, Thoreau and Merton, he believes that the instant contains eternity.
33. **Robert L. Martin's** poetry has appeared in Verbal Art and Phenomenal Literature previously. He has written four full length poetry books; *Wings of Inspiration*, *Rhymes of the Joke Machine*, *The Air Almighty*, and *Martin's World*, all published by Cyberwit.net. from Allahabad, India, All the books are available on Amazon and some in Barnes and Noble book stores. He also wrote two chapbooks. Mr. Martin's poetry has also appeared in many more anthology books, online publications, and journals. Some of the other publications are; "Poets' Espresso", "Mad Swirl." and "The Belt and Beyond." He also won two "Faith & Hope" poetry awards.

His inspiration comes from the writings of Kahlil Gibran and Pablo Neruda.

34. **Ron Samul** Ron Samul is New England based novelist and poet. His fiction has appeared in *Liturgical Credo*, *Outside In Magazine*, *SNReview*, *Inquiring News*, *Library Journal*, *DiveIN* and other online media. His novel *The Staff* was shortlisted in 2017 *Del Sol Press First Novel Press*, and was an International Book Award finalist in 2019. The Staff is available in print and ebook format.
35. **Saloni Kaul**, author and poet, was first published at the age of ten and has stayed in print since on four continents. As critic and columnist Saloni has enjoyed forty five years of being published. Saloni Kaul's first volume, a fifty poem collection was published in the USA in 2009. Subsequent volumes include *Universal One* and *Essentials All*. Saloni Kaul is also an accomplished broadcaster, writer-producer-presenter with innumerable documentaries and features to her credit.
36. **Sam Smith** is editor of **The Journal** (once '*of Contemporary Anglo-Scandinavian Poetry*'). Author of several novels and collections of poetry - <http://samsmithbooks.weebly.com> - he presently lives in Blaengarw, South Wales, and blogs here - <https://thesamsmithcom.wordpress.com/>
37. **Sarah Das Gupta** is a retired school teacher in Cambridge, UK. Her work has appeared in magazines published in US, UK, Canada, India, Mauritius, Croatia.
38. **Sean Beckett** is a poet and performer living in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, Canada. A recent Robert Pinsky Global Fellow, he has performed or published on four continents.

39. **Tony Curtis** was Wales's first Professor of Poetry. He has published eleven collections and has won the National Poetry Competition and the Cholmondeley Award. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. His first novel *Darkness in the City of Light* was shortlisted for the Paul Torday Prize by the Society of Authors in 2023. [www.tonycurtispoet.com](http://www.tonycurtispoet.com)

# GJPP



**AUTHORS PRESS**  
Publishers of Creative & Scholarly Books



## VerbalART

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

A Peer-Reviewed Print Journal

ISSN 2347-632X

Volume - 7, Issue - 1 | April – June 2023

### Statement of ownership and other particulars about GJPP

Place of Publication	:	Q-2A, Hauz Khas Enclave, Annexe Block, First Floor, New Delhi - 110 016 India
Periodicity of Publication	:	<b>Bi-annual</b>
Printed by	:	Authorspress
Published by	:	Authorspress
Chief Editor	:	<b>Dr. Vivekanand Jha</b>
Nationality	:	Indian
Managing Editor	:	<b>Mr. Sudarshan Kcherry</b>
Address	:	Authorspress, Q-2A, Hauz Khas Enclave, Annexe Block, First Floor, New Delhi - 110 016 (India)
Website	:	<b><a href="http://www.verbalart.in">www.verbalart.in</a></b> <b><a href="http://www.authorspressbooks.com">www.authorspressbooks.com</a></b>
Email	:	<a href="mailto:editor@phenomenalliterature.com">editor@phenomenalliterature.com</a> <a href="mailto:editor@verbalart.in">editor@verbalart.in</a>

Queries regarding subscriptions and any financial matters should be addressed to  
**[authorspressgroup@gmail.com](mailto:authorspressgroup@gmail.com)**