

World Poetry Tree

An Anthology for Hope, Love, and Peace



EXPO
2020
DUBAI
UAE

Edition

Created by Adel Khozam

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Thanks and Appreciation

We thank Her Excellency Noura bint Mohammed Al Kaabi Minister of Culture and Youth of the United Arab Emirates, for supporting and sponsoring the (World Poetry Tree) project and encouraging the team to innovate. We also appreciate the great concern of the Ministry of Culture and Youth to support the cultural initiatives offered by UAE nationals and enable them to achieve their cultural ambitions at the international level. Because of this support, we were able to attract the largest number of international poetry names in a single book published by the UAE, the country that values hope, love and peace during the Dubai Expo 2020 with the participation of 192 countries around the world.

World Poetry Tree team



Voice Of World Poetry Tree

These poems come together with the voices of poets from all over the world to celebrate the values of love, hope and peace. They are communicated through this digital anthology at an important time and history of humanity, that is the return of life to normal after the Covid-19 pandemic shook the world and imposed isolation on people and distanced them from each other.

The first goal of this anthology is to re-build bridges between the poets of the world and to establish the presence of poetry in our lives that is renewing our souls. The coming together of 192 countries from all over the world at the Expo 2020 in Dubai is the most important event in the world, announcing the decline of the global epidemic and the Earth's recovery from the disease. In this exhibition, literature, art and music are back to their rightful place in people's hearts. These countries display their cultures, arts and future innovations in one place on the land of the UAE.

Poetry is the river that quenches the trees of love, hope, beauty, and peace. The poems we have collected from the poets of the world here go on to celebrate life as a renewed horizon that always holds hope. Poets with great experiences and important influence in this anthology are our guests of honor. The rest of the poets from all over the world who are participating with us are also our guests of pride. All poems and names here have been the focus of our great interest in building a transcendent poetic vision that belongs to the future. In the end, our goal is that poetry leaves a mark on history by saying its word at this moment in time. The poets of the world left their fingerprints here, and said their beautiful words of loving life, the Earth, and people.

Poetry has a real power to make a difference, although this change is not visible. If, as nations and peoples, we want to build societies that are united and loving, we must first begin by feeding the true root of meaning and values, which is poetry. Nothing but poetry can shake and renew old, firm convictions.

The worlds and horizons that are generated within the poetic text are the gates through which one can enter a future that is clearer in understanding and contemplation, and thus grant the ability to build a state of a high language of understanding between human beings. Those who read this anthology can touch the one universal spirit on which poets agree. There is an implicit agreement among them to elevate the idea of hope, even when they talk about war or death, and to sanctify the idea of love, even in the saddest of poems. It is the poetry we present here, written in the tongue of all peoples as if it were written in one language and with one heart.

Unlike other encyclopedic books, we did not want to arrange names in this anthology alphabetically or by country or age. Here we build *The World Poetry Tree* where branches and leaves overlap, so we created a different style and distributed poets and poems on different branches, taking into account that each branch carries different variations of poets, poems and countries, so there is no particular arrangement, but overlap and interaction of all with everyone.

I would like to address all my friends of the poets from all over the world, who shared with me their poems and letters to make this work a success. To the translators of these poems, who allowed the poets to send them to us, and to the photographers and friends who welcomed the invitation and also invited their friends to participate. The challenge has been great, especially as we targeted the big poetic names of literary achievement and recipients of international awards in poetry. I would also like thank my family members, my wife Dr. Heyam Abdul Hamid and my son Hamdan, who have worked on text reviews and editing materials, and my daughter Mona, the real coordinator of this work, and my daughter Manal, who designed the cover and the internal direction of the book.

Thanks for the poetry and thank you to everyone.

Adel Khozam

World Poetry Tree Creator

World Poetry Tree

Anthology for Hope, Love and Peace

Expo Dubai 2020 Edition

The largest poetic initiative in the history of World Expos. For the first time, an anthology of poetry is presented, in which more than 400 of the world's leading poets participate, some of whom are nominees for the Nobel Prize for Literature, directors of international poetry festivals, and supervisors of pages, magazines and poetry sites in all continents of the world, who present their poems for the meanings of hope, love and peace in a post-pandemic world. It is the gathering of more than 192 countries to present their art, culture, and innovations on the land of the United Arab Emirates through Dubai Expo 2020. The theme is "Connecting Minds, Creating the Future".

The initiative aims to record the presence of global poetry in all World Expos, starting with the Dubai Expo 2020. There will be other copies of the World Poetry Tree that will be issued from the upcoming Expos in Osaka, Japan, in the year 2025 and beyond. As the Dubai Expo presents leading singers, artists and performers from all over the world, this E-book will add poets to the mix, to be in the heart of the world's largest events and to gather the global poetry voices in one song.

The World Poetry Tree is created and presented by the poet Adel Khozam, one of the most prominent poetic names in the Emirates, who has published 15 Books in poetry, novels, philosophy, and more, and has recently won the Tulliola International Prize for Poetry from Italy.

The anthology is issued in a digital version and copies of it will be donated to libraries and universities around the world to achieve its greater goal: to build bridges between world poets and consolidate the presence of poetry in forums and international events.

The World Poetry Tree consists of 12 branches, each branch bearing an independent title and a special colour design, and each branch includes about 32 poets from around the world distributed according to the topics of their poems, creating a state of harmony in the distribution of paragraphs and chapters of the anthology.

Expo 2020 is a World Expo, currently hosted by Dubai in the United Arab Emirates from 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022. Originally scheduled for 20 October 2020 to 10 April 2021, it was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this, organisers kept the name Expo 2020 for marketing and branding purposes. The Bureau International des Expositions (BIE) general assembly in Paris named Dubai as the host on 27 November 2013.

A huge thank you for everyone who made this project a reality.

WPT Team

Contents

A

<u>Abboud Aljabiri</u>	899
<u>Abdelghani Rahmani</u>	990
<u>Abdeljawad El Aoufir</u>	734
<u>Abdukakhor Kosim</u>	809
<u>Abdul Hadi Sadoun</u>	291
<u>Abdulla Issa</u>	590
<u>Abdullah Al Balushi</u>	576
<u>Abhay K.</u>	603
<u>Abol Froushan</u>	558
<u>Abreu Paxe</u>	846
<u>Achim Wagner</u>	963
<u>Adeeba Shahid</u>	
<u>Talukder</u>	284
<u>Adel Khozam</u>	835
<u>Adele Desideri</u>	701
<u>Adiela Akoo</u>	625
<u>Adjei Agyei-Baah</u>	353
<u>Adnan Al-Sayegh</u>	526
<u>Ahmed Al Asam</u>	797
<u>Ahmed Almulla</u>	70
<u>Ahmed Raffa'a</u>	263
<u>Ahmed Sweilam</u>	41
<u>Aicha Bassry</u>	678
<u>Aída Acosta</u>	897
<u>Akano Yotsuba</u>	778
<u>Akshin Aliiev</u>	871
<u>Alan Britt</u>	441
<u>Aleimu Tebeje Ayele</u>	152
<u>Alenka Zorman</u>	472
<u>Ales Mustar</u>	967
<u>Alexandra Ivoylova</u>	220
<u>Alexey Kalakutin</u>	694
<u>Ali A. Kanaan</u>	259
<u>Ali Abukhattab</u>	648
<u>Ali Alhazmi</u>	462
<u>Ali Hussein Al-Failakawi</u>	543
<u>Ali Jaffar AlAllaq</u>	66
<u>Ali Shalkuhi</u>	800
<u>Alice M. Sun-Cua</u>	314
<u>Alicja Maria Kuberska</u>	889



<u>Alireza Abiz</u>	662
<u>Álvaro Maio</u>	594
<u>Álvaro Mata Guillé</u>	403
<u>Amal Alsahlawi</u>	931
<u>Aminur Rahman</u>	92
<u>Amm-Margaret</u>	434
<u>Amy De La Haye</u>	863
<u>Anandarup Nayek</u>	902
<u>André Cruchaga</u>	224
<u>Andrea Inglesi</u>	409
<u>Andrei Sen-Senkov</u>	493
<u>Angelos Sofocleous</u>	569
<u>Anil Kumar Panda</u>	723
<u>Anna Cates</u>	204
<u>Anne Casey</u>	918
<u>Antje Stehn</u>	829
<u>Aprilia Zank</u>	529
<u>Arsyad Indradi</u>	197
<u>Ashur Etwebi</u>	229
<u>Attila F. Balázs</u>	555
<u>Austin. A. Joseph</u>	938
<u>Ayo Ayoola-Amale</u>	427
<u>Aysa Jhorna</u>	666
<u>Azam Abidov</u>	86
<u>Azmy Abdelwahab</u>	523

B

<u>B M Jamal Hossain</u>	973
<u>Ban'ya Natsuishi</u>	79
<u>Bassam Jwohur</u>	909
<u>Bassma Shaikho</u>	765
<u>Bengt Berg</u>	785
<u>Beppe Costa</u>	509
<u>Berta Ramirez Galan</u>	773
<u>Bhishma Upreti</u>	680
<u>Bina Sarkar Ellias</u>	437
<u>Biplab Majee</u>	273
<u>Borche Panov</u>	253
<u>Brajesh Singh</u>	480

<u>Brane Mozetič</u>	634
<u>Brian Kirk</u>	578
<u>Brian Turner</u>	601
<u>Bronislava Volková</u>	879

C

<u>Carlos Viegas</u>	828
<u>Carlos Vitale</u>	161
<u>Casimiro de Brito</u>	806
<u>Catherine Graham</u>	580
<u>Chad Norman</u>	668
<u>Chandra Gurung</u>	565
<u>Charbel Dagher</u>	201
<u>Charles York</u>	495
<u>Chen Hsiu-chen</u>	708
<u>Chen Xianfa</u>	983
<u>Christine De Luca</u>	68
<u>Christopher Kelen</u>	623
<u>Chrys Salt</u>	588
<u>Cindy Lynn Brown</u>	760
<u>Claudia Piccinno</u>	18
<u>Colin Carberry</u>	488
<u>Conceição Lima</u>	882
<u>Consuelo Hernandez</u>	133
<u>Cristiana de Marchi</u>	571
<u>Cristina Penalva Pastor</u>	904

D

<u>Damir Janjalić</u>	261
<u>Daniel Bănulescu</u>	705
<u>Daniela Andonovska</u>	940
<u>David Eggleton</u>	341
<u>Deepti Gupta</u>	154
<u>Dimitris P. Kraniotis</u>	671
<u>Dinesh P. Chapagain</u>	223
<u>Dinos Siotis</u>	203
<u>Dmitry Mizgulin</u>	277
<u>Driss Allouch</u>	490
<u>Dustin Pickering</u>	622



<u>Ed Ahern</u>	744
<u>Eduard Harents</u>	959
<u>El-Khidr Choudar</u>	118
<u>Eldar Akhadov</u>	988
<u>Elena Liliana Popescu</u>	188
<u>Elisabetta Bagli</u>	814
<u>Eliza Segiet</u>	641
<u>Elmar Kuiper</u>	89
<u>Emna Louzyr</u>	643
<u>Ertuğrul ErdoĞan</u>	518
<u>Eugenia Sánchez Nieto</u>	293
<u>Eva Petropoulou Lianoy</u>	374

E

<u>Fahredin Shehu</u>	172
<u>Faruk Buzhala</u>	282
<u>Fazil Jamili</u>	621
<u>Fernando Alonso</u>	338
<u>Fernando Rendón</u>	16
<u>Fethi Sassi</u>	316
<u>Fidel Sbeity</u>	887
<u>Francis kurkiewicz</u>	111
<u>Francis Otole</u>	636
<u>Francisc Edmund Balogh</u>	582
<u>Francisco Muñoz Soler</u>	699
<u>Franco Buffoni</u>	227

F

<u>Gabriel Chávez Casazola</u>	752
<u>Gaqo Apostoli</u>	460
<u>Gémino H. Abad</u>	788
<u>George M. Momogos</u>	521
<u>Germain Droogenbrodt</u>	344
<u>Gerry Loose</u>	822
<u>Gianfranco Aurilio</u>	782
<u>Gino Leineweber</u>	675
<u>Gorka Lasa</u>	615
<u>Greta Ambrazaitė</u>	232
<u>Guanyu Chen</u>	279



H

<u>Hamda Khamis</u>	368
<u>Hamdi Meça</u>	606
<u>Hameed Qassim</u>	711
<u>Hamid Larbi</u>	732
<u>Hannie Rouweler</u>	562
<u>Hanyong Jeong</u>	192
<u>Hashem Shafiq</u>	364
<u>Hassan Al Matrooshi</u>	303
<u>Hassan Hejazi</u>	964
<u>Hassan Najmi</u>	108
<u>Hebert Abimorad</u>	458
<u>Henry Alexander</u>	
<u>Gómez</u>	838
<u>Hilal Al Hajiri</u>	237
<u>Hilal Karahan</u>	742
<u>Homero Carvalho</u>	447
<u>Honey Novick</u>	401
<u>Hugo Alberto Costa</u>	120
<u>Huguette Bertrand</u>	149
<u>Hussein Habasch</u>	326



I

<u>Ian Duhig</u>	281
<u>Ibrahim Almulla</u>	716
<u>Inger-Mari Aikio</u>	97
<u>Ioan Es. Pop</u>	310
<u>Ismael Diadié Haidara</u>	673
<u>Issa Hassan Al-Yasiri</u>	482
<u>Ivanka Yankova</u>	886



J

<u>Jahangir Alam Rustom</u>	841
<u>Jameela Nishat</u>	82
<u>James Tian</u>	466
<u>Jana Orlová</u>	143
<u>Janette Ayachi</u>	851
<u>Jawdat Fakhreddine</u>	136
<u>Jenny Dejager</u>	749
<u>Jenny Lewis</u>	103
<u>Jerusha Kananu Marete</u>	175
<u>Jill Magi</u>	411
<u>John Ennis</u>	629



<u>John O'Donoghue</u>	665
<u>Jona Burghardt</u>	914
<u>Jordi Doce</u>	502
<u>Jordi Valls</u>	312
<u>Jorge Alberto</u>	
<u>Giallorenzi</u>	363
<u>Jorge Etcheverry</u>	952
<u>Jorge Palma</u>	720
<u>José Muchnik</u>	560
<u>Joseph Spence</u>	653
<u>Joshua Obisesan</u>	213
<u>Julio Pavanetti</u>	945
<u>Juljana Mehmeti</u>	942
<u>Jüri Talvet</u>	915
<u>Justo Jorge Padrón</u>	255

K

<u>K. Satchidanandan</u>	762
<u>Kadhem Khanjar</u>	802
<u>Kajal Ahmad</u>	470
<u>Kama Sywor Kamanda</u>	59
<u>Katarina Saric</u>	950
<u>Katherine Medina</u>	
<u>Rondón</u>	382
<u>Kathrina Susanna Tati</u>	235
<u>Keamogetsi Joseph</u>	
<u>Molapong</u>	697
<u>Kenneth Maswabi</u>	251
<u>Kentaro Yokoyama</u>	446
<u>Kerry Shawn Keys</u>	318
<u>Keshab Sigdel</u>	74
<u>Khalid Albudoor</u>	275
<u>Khazal Al Majidi</u>	158
<u>Khulood Al Mualla</u>	244
<u>Kimiko Nakanaga</u>	360
<u>Krishna Prasai</u>	307
<u>Kujtim Morina</u>	376
<u>Kwazi Ndlangisa</u>	387

L

<u>Laurentiu Bădicioiu</u>	239
<u>Layeba Humanity</u>	638
<u>Layla Alsayed</u>	324

<u>Lee Kuei-shien</u>	268
<u>Les Wicks</u>	126
<u>Lidia Chiarelli</u>	609
<u>Lidija Dimkovska</u>	924
<u>Lilia Racheva</u>	494
<u>Lilia Velichko</u>	770
<u>Lola Koundakjian</u>	129
<u>Luan Rama</u>	114
<u>Luca Benassi</u>	147
<u>Lucia Cupertino</u>	911
<u>Luz María López</u>	646

M

<u>Magie Vijay-Kumar</u>	396
<u>Mahmood Qurani</u>	444
<u>Mahnaz Badihan</u>	378
<u>Mai Van Phan</u>	726
<u>Maisoon Saqr</u>	105
<u>Maki Starfield</u>	656
<u>Malachi Edwin</u>	
<u>Vethamani</u>	592
<u>Malathi Maithri</u>	347
<u>Manju Kanchuli Tiwari</u>	936
<u>Mara Adamitz Scrupe</u>	768
<u>Marco Cinque</u>	775
<u>María Chapp</u>	332
<u>Maria Grech Ganado</u>	926
<u>Marion de Vos-Hoekstra</u>	419
<u>Mark Saba</u>	552
<u>Marlene Pasini</u>	167
<u>Marlene Villatoro</u>	422
<u>Mary Anne Zammit</u>	866
<u>Mary O'donnell</u>	52
<u>Massimo Morasso</u>	907
<u>Menna Elfyn</u>	32
<u>Miao-Yi Tu</u>	892
<u>Michael Rothenberg</u>	14
<u>Mimoza Ahmeti</u>	298
<u>Ming Di</u>	140
<u>Minko Taney</u>	131
<u>Mirela Necula</u>	180
<u>Mirian da Silva Cavalcanti</u>	585
<u>Moez Majed</u>	248



<u>Mohammad Al-Domaini</u>	215
<u>Moises Pascual Perez</u>	807
<u>Momen Samir</u>	689
<u>Mounir El Idrissi</u>	933
<u>Muhsin Al-Ramli</u>	209
<u>Muhsine Arda</u>	473

N

<u>Nadejda Kostadinova</u>	362
<u>Nahid Kabiri</u>	218
<u>Naida Mujkic</u>	811
<u>Nashmi Muhanna</u>	169
<u>Natalia Golovatyuk</u>	183
<u>Natalia Ivanovna-Kharlampyeva</u>	357
<u>Neal Whitman</u>	485
<u>Neşe Yaşın</u>	876
<u>Ngozi Olivia Osuoha</u>	305
<u>Nicole Cage</u>	791
<u>Nils Chr. Moe Repstad</u>	178
<u>Nujoom Alghanem</u>	84
<u>Nurduran Duman</u>	366



O

<u>Oleksandra Babiychuk</u>	729
<u>Osama Esber</u>	430
<u>Oscar Saavedra-villarroel</u>	624
<u>Oulaya Drissi El Bouzaidi</u>	536



P

<u>P.J. Reed</u>	196
<u>Paolo Ruffilli</u>	104
<u>Partha Sarkar</u>	468
<u>Patrick Williamson</u>	895
<u>Paul Casey</u>	804
<u>Pavol Janik</u>	383
<u>Pedro Licona</u>	545
<u>Peter Boyle</u>	868

<u>Peter Robinson</u>	27
<u>Peter Semolič</u>	505
<u>Peter V. Dugan</u>	854
<u>Piergiorgio Viti</u>	476
<u>Poul Lynggaard</u>	
<u>Damgaard</u>	144
<u>Pragya Bajpai</u>	406
<u>Pravamayee Samantaray</u>	905

Q

<u>Qassim Haddad</u>	29
<u>Qiao Hao</u>	599
<u>Quito Nicolaas</u>	531

R

<u>Raghavan Atholi</u>	736
<u>Rahim Karimov</u>	371
<u>Rania Angelakoudi</u>	456
<u>Ranjana Sharan</u>	515
<u>Rati Saxena</u>	24
<u>Renato Sandoval</u>	95
<u>Reshma Ramesh</u>	659
<u>Rethabile Masilo</u>	289
<u>Ricardo Rojas Ayrala</u>	207
<u>Rira Abbasi</u>	639
<u>Robab Moheb</u>	62
<u>Rodaan Al Galidi</u>	686
<u>Ron Riddell</u>	20
<u>Ron Winkler</u>	295
<u>Rosabelle Illes</u>	644
<u>Rozalie Hirs</u>	186
<u>Rudra Acharya</u>	534
<u>Ruxandra Cesereanu</u>	354

S

<u>Sabrina De Canio</u>	425
<u>Saif Al Rahbi</u>	49
<u>Saki Inui</u>	329
<u>Salah Boussrif</u>	612
<u>Sama Essa</u>	873
<u>Samantha Barendson</u>	513



<u>Samira Negrouche</u>	619
<u>Samo Kreutz</u>	548
<u>Santhan Haridasan</u>	499
<u>Satish Saxena</u>	265
<u>Sayumi Kamakura</u>	226
<u>Seeta Maya Rai</u>	985
<u>Shabbirhusein K</u>	
<u>Jamnagerwalla</u>	969
<u>Shadab Hashmi</u>	650
<u>Shahid Abbas</u>	957
<u>Shaip Emerllahu</u>	692
<u>Shakhawat Tipu</u>	302
<u>Shanta Acharya</u>	567
<u>Shen Youjun</u>	718
<u>Sherzod Artikov</u>	857
<u>Shihab Ghanem</u>	392
<u>Shoichiro Iwakiri</u>	542
<u>Shota Iatashvili</u>	713
<u>Shrouk Hammoud</u>	414
<u>Siamir Marulafau</u>	205
<u>Silvija Butković</u>	76
<u>Smitha Sehgal</u>	817
<u>Sotirios Pastakas</u>	758
<u>Stefania Di Leo</u>	922
<u>Stephen Juhō Comee</u>	351
<u>Stoianka Boianva</u>	399
<u>Subhadip Majumdar</u>	416
<u>Suchismita Ghoshal</u>	211
<u>Sudhakar Gaidhani</u>	320
<u>Sue Hubbard</u>	540
<u>Sue Zhu</u>	756
<u>Sukrita paul kumar</u>	738
<u>Sungrye Han</u>	46
<u>Suresh Nooranad</u>	285
<u>Suzanne Hayasaki</u>	389
<u>Svetlana Gritsenko</u>	947

T

<u>Tahar Bekri</u>	746
<u>Tang Chengmao</u>	948
<u>Taniya Chakraborty</u>	982
<u>Tanja Ajtic</u>	848
<u>Tanja Bakić</u>	971
<u>Tarana Turan Rahimli</u>	123

<u>Tarek Eltayeb</u>	549
<u>Tareq Samin</u>	980
<u>Tendo Taijin</u>	826
<u>Thorvald Berthelsen</u>	632
<u>Tian Yuan</u>	511
<u>Tincuța Bernevic</u>	961
<u>Tobias Burghardt</u>	80
<u>Touria Majdouline</u>	451
<u>Toyomi Iwawaki-Riebel</u>	288
<u>Tran Phuong</u>	833
<u>Tuğrul Tanyol</u>	35

U

<u>Umid Neccari</u>	334
---------------------	-----

V

<u>Vadim Terekhin</u>	38
<u>Vasyl Makhno</u>	976
<u>Vesna Mundishevska</u>	683

W

<u>Wadih Saadeh</u>	55
<u>Wang Fa</u>	801
<u>Wansoo Kim</u>	630
<u>Welmer Gonzalez</u>	860
<u>Winston Morales</u>	
<u>Chavarro</u>	627
<u>Wu Ching-Fa</u>	478
<u>Wu Ming-Chuan</u>	611

X

<u>Xanthi Hondrou-Hill</u>	539
<u>Xu Chunfang</u>	574

Y

<u>Yeşim Ağaoglu</u>	241
<u>Yolanda Felicita</u>	
<u>Rodríguez Toledo</u>	336
<u>Yosuke Tanaka</u>	498



<u>Yuri Zambrano</u>	820
<u>Yusuf Kadel</u>	929

Z

<u>Zahir Al Ghafri</u>	164
<u>Zakia Al Essa</u>	597
<u>Zakia El Marmouk</u>	779
<u>Zhang Zhi</u>	99
<u>Zhivka Baltadzhieva</u>	844
<u>Zhou Duanzhuang</u>	330
<u>Zlata Golyzhbina</u>	270
<u>Zlatka Timenova</u>	618
<u>Zoran Doderovic</u>	966
<u>Zvonko Taneski</u>	794



BRANCH

1

**TRAVELLING
WORDS**



THE FURY OF THE IMPERFECT METAPHOR

Michael Rothenberg
United States

In the corner crashing snowflakes diminish.
The show of floating windows down the street.

The attitude of dreams and thunder gaining height
in the blue paradox of a universe that simply is.

Angels and unicorns crowd the hypothesis.
What minds, what matters, what melts.

The green glass adorned with pussy willows.
New mark of lovers on a tree older than Rome.

Hunger of leaves blown sideways against the ruins.
Auburn wings in the calamity of stardust.

*December 12, 2020
First Published in Poetry East*



WRECKING CREW AFTER PARKLAND

We came with a wrecking crew

And wrecked ourselves

Which wrecked the world

We marched with blades of iron

Prayed in crushing things

And gave ourselves a static silence

We claimed the earth with dirty bombs

And all the living turned to suffering

And we were strangers here

We sanctified a cultural robbery

Drunk with calamity and guns

And blew our lungs wide open

We stormed a diaphanous future

Hailing armour piercing bullets

Murdered children at their lessons

We came with a wrecking crew

And wrecked ourselves

Which wrecked the world

And we were none the wiser.

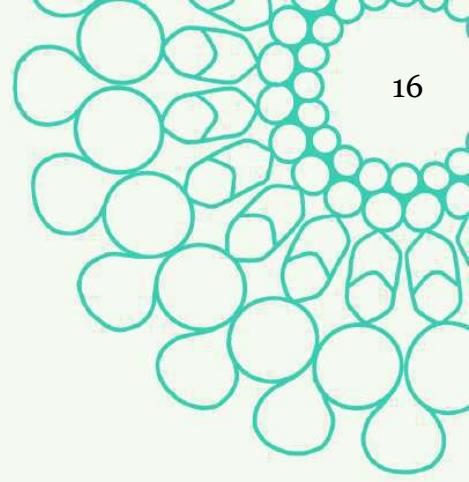
March 22, 2017

About Michael Rothenberg

Michael Rothenberg is editor and publisher of bigbridge.org, co-founder of Poets in Need, a non-profit assisting poets in crisis, and co-founder of 100 thousand Poets for Change. He has published over 20 books of poetry. His most recent books include Drawing the Shade (Dos Madres Press), Wake Up and Dream, (MadHat Press), The Pillars (Quaranzine Press) and I Murdered Elvis (Alien Buddha Press). In 2022, In Memory of a Banyan Tree, Poems of the Outside World, 1985-2020 will be published by Lost Horse Press, and Wildflowers for The Bullies will be published by FlowerSong Press. Rothenberg lives in Tallahassee where he is Florida State University Libraries Poet in Residence.



WAR IS PEACE



Fernando Rendón
Colombia

To the grave we go not, we go not to fear or to pain.

This bluest of regions will not be forgotten, let us not return now.

Red times passed by, green times flew by, hope belongs to the past.

Millions of us form the body of light.

At the doors of another civilisation that sings among us, the species will die, the species will be born, suffer no more.

This bomb is dismantled, the huge highway is enlarged, we pick each other up, complete each other.

Each century is a moon once the eagle of time is vanquished.



CONVERGENCE

Lying like logs, our red bark wrinkled, we are as buffaloes who, rotting, melt on the green meadow.

But due to an inexplicable random act, lying like mushrooms on the grass, we explore all the millennia, flee from prehistoric beasts, fight all the wars, are millions of beings stretching under the arc of eternity, while dragon and yearning fight in the clouds.

The sun calls us and to hesitate is to die. *Fly, fly, beanteous swan of desire, everything can be achieved.*

Walking on the white dew, remove your shoes: the age of man is that of his gaze upon the legendary forest.

About Fernando Rendon

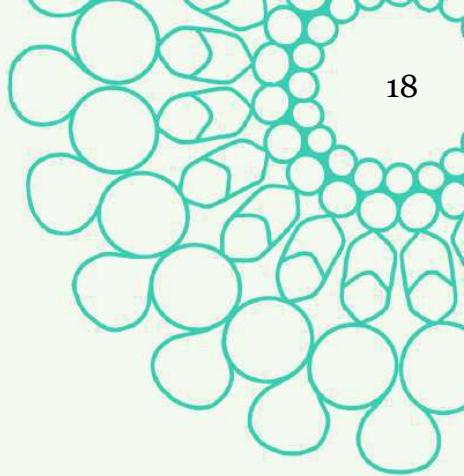
Fernando has published several works including: *Contrahistoria*, *Los motivos del salmón*, and *Piedra de la memoria*. His poetry books have been published in various countries such as Vietnam Albania and Venezuela. Fernando coordinates the World Poetry Movement (WPM), is the director of International Poetry Festival of Medellin since 1991, and of Magazine Prometeo, since 1982. The Foundation Right Livelihood Award has decided to grant the 2006 Alternative Nobel Prize to the International Poetry Festival of Medellin, “*for showing how creativity, beauty, free expression and community can flourish amongst and overcome even deeply entrenched fear and violence*”.



THE COURAGE OF THE LOSERS

Claudia Piccinno
Italy

He has big eyes... Ismael
a parched mouth Ikrahm,
a ringing voice Aziz.
They are far from the train
of the wind
the English Kindertransport
when the war afflicted Europe.
They are the kids on the way
The innocent eyes of today,
the lambs sacrificed to the cross
by land and by sea
those we see parading at the tv news
we the servants of Charon,
we "the civilians"
we hostages of indifference,
victims and possibly accomplices
of a similar addiction.
We are on the edge of the path
crowded with outstretched hands,
we... we are motionless
with our hidden little arms
that do not essay
to offer any help.
He has big eyes... Ismael



a parched mouth Ikrahm,
 a ringing voice Aziz.
 Din of bombs
 in their memories,
 at the foot sores
 chilblains and hands.
 The baton of the guards
 spares no one,
 It is worse than the swing
 of the tides,
 It seems the hunger of sharks.
 Poverty, famine, epidemics.
 Ismael, Ikrahm, Aziz;
 To go, to stay, to come back
 The civilised Europe has invented
 a deadly device:
 the refugee camp
 to make us accustom
 to the diaspora of the Lambs

About Claudia Piccinno

Born in the south of Italy, Claudia now lives and teaches in the north. Operating in more than 100 anthologies, she's a former member of the jury in many national and international literary prizes. She is the Continental Director for Europe in the World Festival Poetry and she represents Istanbul culture in Italy as Ambassador of 1st Sanat Art Association. She has published 38 poetry books, among her own poetry collections and other poets' translations into Italian. She has gained almost 250 prizes in Italy for poetry and cultural merits. Her poem "In Blue" is played on a majolica stele posted on the seafront in Santa Caterina di Nardo (Le). She currently writes for e-magazine and literature newspapers such as Menabò, Verbumpress, Il Porticciolo.



**Ron Riddell
New Zealand**

SONG OF LOVE & DEVOTION

I

Don't look at words
on paper or in the mind
don't look for signs
in the earth or sky

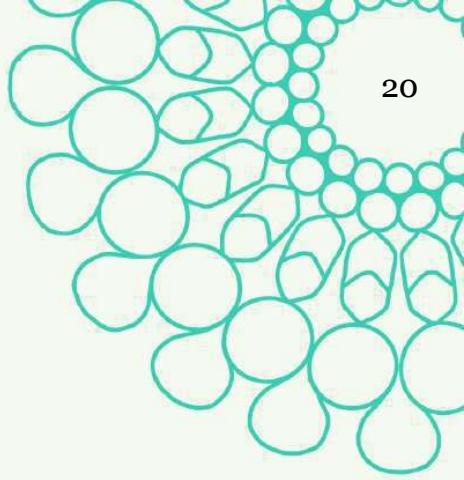
erase each word
each thought unkind
purify your being
purify your mind

wipe the slate clean
let kindness prevail
we all have our own
little boats to sail...

II

Don't look to the past
present or future
any construct or
trick of time; time passing
illusory, evanescent

there is but one reality –
the life of the spirit



look into that; thereby
redefine your life
your human nature
in that radiant centre

that wonder, glory
that Light of all light...

III

No mind, no body
no heaven, no hell
no subject, no thought
no history to tell
no tragedy to cling to
all being well...

no evening, no morning
no fading, ending
no summons, no fear
no trial, no spell

no promise broken
no empty well

no eye, no ear
no feast or famine
no need or longing
no suffering, lack

no haj, no mission
no coded message
no note or word
no song or grief



but music in the veins
of hand and leaf

IV

There's no death sentence
hanging over us
nothing we have not glimpsed
welcomed in a green world
a shining gate of entry

ushered in by rolling fields
and tree-lined adventures
sometimes memories
yet something else:
undying paths of light
colour and convergence
undying dreams of delight...

V

Only when we let go
when we empty ourselves
are we ready to be replenished
filled with the grace
of the parent spirit
whose warmth & generosity
know no end, no limit...

VI

We all need understanding
we all need compassion
the gentle rain, radiant light
no hope ransomed or abandoned



but a moment brimming
with understanding

larger-than-life
of another dimension
beyond philosophies and economies
beyond empires and histories
tribes and colonies
oceans and tributaries

its reach beyond the earthly
the solar and planetary
space missions, evolution
dinosaurs or minotaurs
creatures of ancient art

beyond black holes, extremes
big bangs; physical means
by which we seek to explain
bodily phenomena...

we all request and receive
the gift beyond all measure
the bestowal of heaven's light
that's shining in us and around us
our common ground, common bond
that in every way unites us.

About Ron Riddell

Ron is a writer with a deep commitment to ecology. Recent books are: *Dance of Blue Dragonflies* (poetry) and *Pachamama & the Jaguar Man* (novel). Previous work has been translated into a dozen languages. Book One of his long poem *The Wanderer* was launched in New Zealand in 2020 by HeadworX Publishers of Wellington. Married to Saray Torres from Colombia, he has two sons Roland and Pablo, and three granddaughters Tuvia, Felicia and Ella, who all live in Sweden. His latest collection of short poems is *Exilstationer/Stations of Exile*, a bi-lingual English-Swedish edition, was published in May 2020 by Simon Editor, Jonkoping, Sweden.



THE DEATH HYMN

**Rati Saxena
India**

She was hungry
as the death at the beginning of the universe

and cold as death had already touched her,
Waiting for a warm touch in the lonely dark room

The machines are pumping as if
draining the water out of fields.

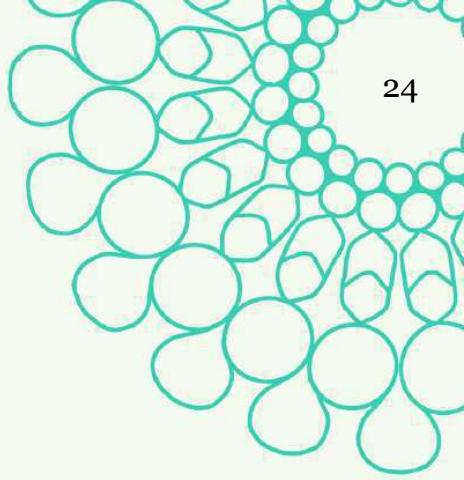
Now, she is waiting to be burnt with the woods
to get some warmth before her journey

bodies are on the bank of the river Ganga
waiting to get nirvana,

before that, her soul jumped onto the water
started swimming along with fishes

she is in the field of Vietnam
to become the food for seeds

he couldn't make a pyramid for her
so made a locket with her ashes



and started his journey towards the sea,
interrupted by death.

BUDDHA, EINSTEIN AND THAO IN THE POST ICU

Buddha is sitting in the corner of ICU from where
Seeing all that he saw before becoming Buddha

Two-year-old boy, lilac eyes, swinging between eternal and finite
Wounds covered with white bands like tilak on the forehead,
Sliding slowly in the throes of death

Ninety-year-old woman.
Wrestling with death and overtaking him,

What is the path left after becoming a Buddha?

On the other hand, Einstein humming the theory of relativity
Apart from diseases, connecting the burning of stars to the universe
Were just tying knots in theory of relativity
Disease, and death have relativity, the real question is of the universe.



What rules will change if one become a Buddha?

Taking off the spider's web, Tao looked down
said with a smile

sip joy in pain

find life in death

About Rati Saxena

Rati Saxena is a poet, translator, editor, as well as an academic scholar of Vedic and ancient literature. She has six collections of poetry in Hindi and four in English. Her poetry is translated and published in many international languages. She has participated in over 35 poetry festivals and has also published two travelogues, a memoir, and a critical volume on Balamanyaama's poetry. Her recent work is titled "*A Fist That Opens.*" Saxena has won several awards including Naji Naaman's Literary Prizes (International) for a complete work (2016), the DJS Translation Award for Chinese poetry (2018) and the *Rajasthan Patrika* prize for best poem (2020).



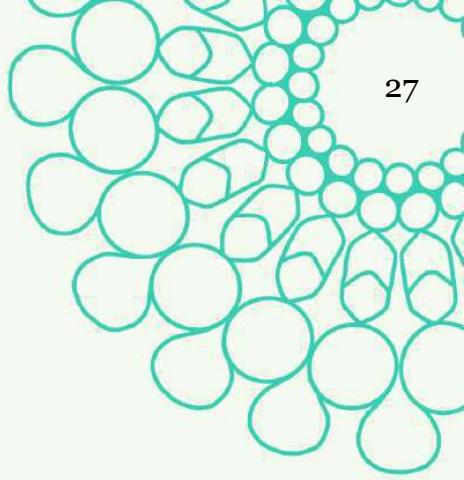
ONE FINE DAY

Peter Robinson
United Kingdom

It was one of those days when unusual heat
and light transforms the look of things
like that sunstruck silence on big houses
down along the esplanade,
one of those days when the heart
is filled with forgotten, if ever known,
pasts come back to tell you who
or how you used to be ...

when even the oldest of us all
can be coaxed out to see how the world appears,
that old familiar world transformed
by time and this cloudless sky,
how it appears to the slow steps and pauses
of one taking in our afternoon river
or what there may be yet to learn
from the accents passing by ...

You're remembering a girlhood on the North Sea's
beaches, piers and promenades,
its cyclists, dog-walkers, couples with pushchairs
and picknickers under their clump of trees,
but don't tell what this long-drawn-out



life in the promise of one fine day
 could teach you after your ninety-five years
 grateful as you are, you say,
 for sunlight and a breeze.

EVENING PRIMROSE

You call me out as the light goes
 to watch our evening primrose
 lemon-yellow petals splay.

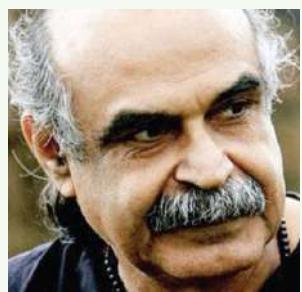
With more rain threatened for the weekend,
 sun coming and gone all day,
 getting ahead of itself again
 can a summer remember its springtime?
 Is it welcoming of autumn?

Because in this season's climacteric
 we're making the most of serene
 or over-clouded forecasts
 where age in marriage still loves to hear
 years told, and finds them evergreen
 despite your primrose petals' span,
 I ask what does the weather mean?

But you say best go in, as dew's
 seeping through our summer shoes.
 There is no time to lose.

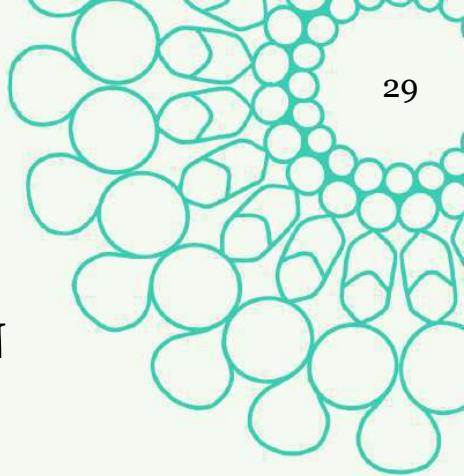
About Peter Robinson

The British poet was born in 1953 and grew up mainly in Liverpool. He holds degrees from the Universities of York and Cambridge. After teaching for many years in Japan, he returned to Europe in 2007 and is currently Professor of English and American Literature at the University of Reading. The poetry editor for Two Rivers Press, author of many books of poetry, translations, prose fiction, and literary criticism, he has been awarded the Cheltenham Prize, the John Florio Prize, and two Poetry Book Society Recommendations.



Qassim Haddad
Bahrain

DOUBT OF THE SUN



When you're on the brink of 50
 and you find yourself standing with two empty hands before an
 unknown future, crowded with depressing possibilities, and you look
 like the one who cut off the whole road from that hope to reach an
 abyss.

So you lift your eyes to the lofty wooden door,
 and you say to it,
 "open."

And it opens.

And you find nothing but a haze
 That means you are in the presence of creation, from its very
 beginning

When you're on the brink of 50
 After 15 books and two families and grandchildren on the way and a
 wrecked body and many prison cells and texts spattered with the ink of
 your heart and five manuscripts in the vault of your soul and friends
 who threaten to leave you and nights ablaze with nightmares and
 projects of fantastical proportions and you barely know what's after
 tomorrow,
 how can you possibly be counted as a human being,
 without being overwhelmed by despair?



When you're on the brink of 50

and you see before you a heap of betrayed dreams, the splinters of confrontations bloodying your failing body as your country stands on memory's sidewalk half in geographic illusion and half in the dream of history not turning back around to you except to weaken you with what little wick your soul has left in the oil of people, and you almost sob for how much you have lost and almost nothing hears you but the dust that clouds your mirror.

What will you name your next book, if there's even time for it?

When you're on the brink of 50

and you turn your head in a country becoming a barracks before your eyes, neither hearing your poetry nor listening to your wailing, nor affected by the turning of a stranger to a stranger a country that you placed upon your bruised body as an ornament—it props your waist with its spearheads and you look like a scarecrow in a field destroyed by dark winds you turn your head and you see nothing but deformed bodies blocking your path, claiming that they are the people you turn your head in the sorrow of one who is about to laugh but then cries how can you hold back the last thread of the ship's sails when she's abandoned in the storms of the sea, as if none of your forefathers ever sailed, and none of your grandchildren will ever learn to swim?

When you're on the brink of 50

You turn around and see nothing but rubble as if the life that you wasted yesterday had not passed but in hurried destruction and as if the path upon which you bestowed lamps of your flesh and your bones and the whites of your eyes was nothing but a



crypt loaded with the ghosts who you thought were the people on your side, and suddenly they are nothing but despair for you.

When you're on the brink of 50
 you try and count your joys but time does not succour you
 nor does the place open up for you to prop your back against
 a hell and stare into the embers and go dizzy in the
 hyper-distance that shook your body and splintered your
 soul and your heart was lost

When you're on the brink of 50

When you're on the brink of 50
 and overcome with doubt about the sun of your days
 you wonder if you'll be given enough life to re-read the draft of your
 last book before the grave

When you're on the brink of 50
 you will hope that you're still adding wrong

When you're on the brink of 50

Translation © Miguel Merino 2015

About Qassim Haddad

Qassim, born in 1948, is a notable poet within the Arab world known for his free verse poetry. His poems have been translated in several languages and he was first to rise in prominence with his poetry that contained revolutionary and political themes such as freedom. He published his first poetic collection titled "*Good Omen*" in 1970 and has since published more than 30 books. Haddad is also the co-founder and chairman of the Bahraini Writers' Union. He has won the "Arab Creativity Award" from the Lebanese Cultural Forum in Paris in 2000, the Al Owais Award in the poetry category in the 2000-2001 cycle, the Aboul-Qacem Echebbi Award in 2017. In 2020, he was regaled at the Fifth Cairo International Forum for Arab Poetry.



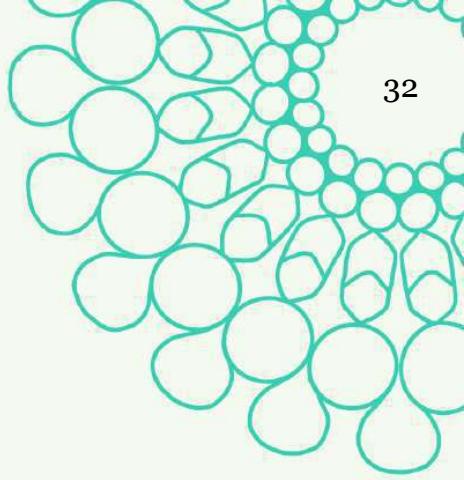
LOVE KNOT

**Menna Elfyn
United Kingdom**

Each morning old love is a gift renewed,
like the necklace I can't fasten
without love's help. The clasp
and eye don't let me believe
I can fix it at the nape alone.
It needs this ritual, the unison
of two, the secret lock
that lets the necklace lie
on my breast, a hidden knot
that binds two lovers.

Through generations,
this simple duty,
this task, lover to lover,
a moment's work
for finger and thumb.

Were they made, I wonder,
these lovely beads, in another age,
so that this ritual for two
would become common ceremony
in cave or private chamber.



To find two parts at the nape,
 to see them linked,
 to caress in the act of closing,
 this orderly commitment.

On one another, dependent as a necklace,
 love's need and pleas a chain,
 glowing beyond pearls,
 renewed, unbreaking.

Translated from the Welsh by Gillian Clarke

LOVE RIDES HIGH

The day the war started she bought a bike.
 It's what a peacemaker needs, she said: lean
 enough to steal through lanes with no barricade.
 Opening her shutters that morning she saw
 an officer bellowing at two lads in uniform
 for sloppy work on barbed wire. War after all

requires a duty of care. Precision in practice.
 So she followed their lead, sneaking
 into a bike shop armed only with her credit card:
 the sole customer this 9.am.
 Had the time of her life,
 choosing the right gears, the handlebars:
 just so for holding baskets abrim.
 The owner, bemused was so pleased -
 gave her a discount. In times like these
 he said, we all need a deep pocket.



That was a day to remember, her bike, blood red,
and a sunburst of delight at the sky's
stony face. Days later, she lengthened her list:
those bedridden, unable to queue for milk, eggs,
her little parcels of peace, their daily bread.

The twelve-day war they called it then. Her bike
now rested and rusty, was her badge of honour once,
anon. Of course. She who'd want none but the tale
of how love can make one ride high and dry
in that city of passion where people as they cross
the bridge in Ljubljana kiss all passers by.

Passers-by? Today wayfarers on foot. Barbed wire,
barricades? 'Spoke' another word which turns us dumb,
stock still. As we say far away, it's all the same difference.

(for G. F. for her quiet acts during the Balkans war)

About Menna Elfyn

Menna Elfyn is an award-winning poet and playwright who has published fourteen collections of poetry, children's novels, libretti for UK and US composers, plays for radio and television in Welsh and in English. She writes poetry in Welsh and her work has been translated into twenty languages. Her bilingual collection *Bondo*, (Bloodaxe Books) was published in 2017 and her literary memoir *Cennad* (Emissary) in 2018. Her work "Optimist Absolint" was shortlisted for Wales Book of the Year. She has won a major European Prize for her contribution to poetry: the *Anima Istanza Prize* in 2009.



FRIENDSHIP DAYS ARE OVER

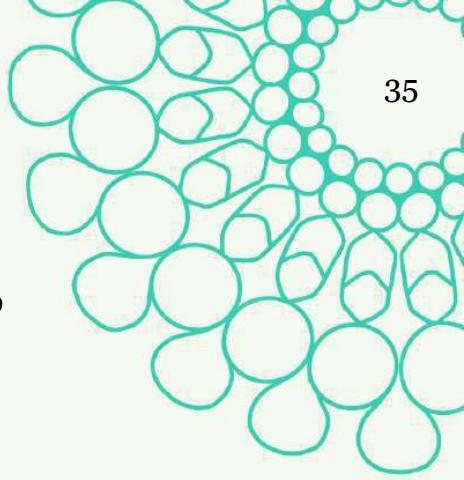
Tuğrul Tanyol
Turkey

My gypsy soul, curb your horse,
there is nowhere to go from here.
Evening, a wind-winged bird,
settles heavy: now is the moment
when travellers fail.

Bend down, look in my face
at the old maps traced in my eyes,
at those old roads sprinkled with stars,
no more long slow trails
of caravans camped by the rivers,
no hot summer nights
of nomadic drinking-bouts.

Here is the night's roof, the beauty
of creation opening out,
we have come to the end of the days
of free proud friendship,
when we slept beneath a thousand skies,
made love and multiplied.

What is this longing, it consumed us
in half-open rooms where candles melted away?



Where are we, what time is it?
 Whose wall this surrounded by wire?
 Whose work this dark street,
 this snow-white shroud, this lost time
 that suddenly died?

If I shoot an arrow and bring down night
 luminous days will kneel at my feet,
 my heart will open with the newly-washed wounds
 in our naked breasts,
 with the roar in the topmost branch of the tree.

My gypsy soul, curb your horse,
 we've come to the end of the road.

Translated by Ruth Christie

BASRA

In memory of those who died in the war

The dead calm gulf waters drew back
 The crazed stallion of desire went mad
 Autumn crowded into the gully of a summer shivering
 like a snake rearing away from its black shadow

Ah, the leaf that pales from happiness and trembles with pain
 Is this a crumb that comes to life
 in the dilemma of thinking? The total absence
 of sacred dust in the vast emptiness – perhaps a moonstone
 perhaps that Satrap of darkness cloaked in green



from distant Kerbela, on the haj to Mecca,
in pillaged and looted Basra city

Medieval, with a white beard and black turban
he seeps into the dead calm gulf waters
To die, kill and be blessed
on the field where the crescent fell, ripped in two:
Oh God, where is the promised key to paradise?
The dark waters of the gulf bear away
the ownerless shadows of purple corpses.

Translated by Richard McKane

About Tuğrul Tanyol

Tuğrul Tanyol was born in İstanbul-Turkey in 1953. He studied Sociology at the Bosphorus University and is now an associate professor at Yeditepe University. He is considered one of the leading figures of the new poetry of the 80's, and has published eleven books of poetry, among which are Elinden Tutun Günü "Catch the Day by its Hand" (1983); Her Şey Bir Mevsim "Everything is a Season"(2006); Gelecek Günlerin Şarabı "The Vine of Future Days" (2015), and Gidilmemiş Bir Yol "A Road not Taken" (2021). A selection of his poems were published in Madrid by Verbum in 2003 "*Los Laberintos de agosto y otros poemas*". Tuğrul Tanyol also received the Gold Medal in 2019 during the 4th edition of the LIFFT Eurasian festival, and the next festival will be organised in Turkey.



WORD AND MUSIC

Vadim Terekhin
Russia

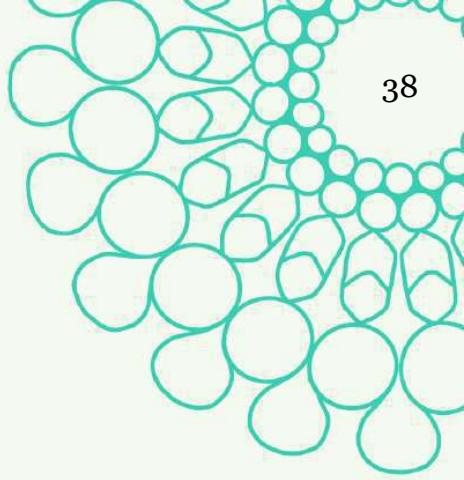
1

Do you hear the cricket start
The song on the lyre is baked.
No matter how cruel the world is,
Words and music are eternal.

We were born to be lost.
Vanish in the endless darkness
Fame, wealth, and power.
Words and music are eternal.

How can we live on earth
Simply, slowly, cordially?
In a world of evil,
Words and music are eternal.

Life fit into seven notes.
But in a hurry fleeting
Everything in this world will pass.
Words and music are eternal.



2

It's well-known that
 In accordance with all laws of nature,
 Water is unseen and dead
 On entering the supply network.

And waits to be rescued until
 It starts flowing through pipes.
 Water, like the language of poetry,
 Can't live in captivity.

It's devoted to flowing,
 To pressure hidden in the chest.
 And always beats its way
 Out of any kind of captivity.

And if you take a look at water,
 Compare it to our own meagre experience:
 As soon as it breaks loose into freedom,
 Water becomes alive.

Translated from Russian by Jenny Wade

3

Be careful, passerby.,
 Not for the turmoil in the people,
 And that the image of God is eternal
 Each of the first comer of the pedestrian.

Even if he's from hell in absentia,
 Disciple of his circles and curls,



We must feel sorry for the offended,
 For there was mountain ash in it.
 And in you, passing, eternal, too
 A light that is clumsy and ridiculous
 Gently gets under the thin skin
 And he asks for heaven.

4.

And when I met a homeless man
 At some wretched train station.
 I thought that our soul
 It stinks in the same way before God.

God does not require our prayers.
 But I lie prostrate before you.
 It is I who am battle-weary.
 This is me — thin-colored and black.

I'm the one who presented the rights
 And begging for mercy timidly.
 I understand that these words
 May be our main business.

About Vadim Terekhin

Vadim Terekhin is a poet and co-chairman of the Russian Writers' Union, Chairman of the Kaluga regional branch of the all-Russian public organisation "Union of writers of Russia". He is a member of the coordinating Council of the international poetic movement "World without walls" (WPM), a corresponding member of the Petrovskaya Academy of Sciences and Arts (Saint Petersburg), and full member of the Academy of Russian literature (Moscow). He is winner of several literary awards: all-Ukrainian literary award named after Taras Shevchenko, the international Slavic literary forum "Golden knight" (Golden knight in the category "poetry"), and prize of the Central Federal district of the Russian Federation in the field of literature and art and many others.



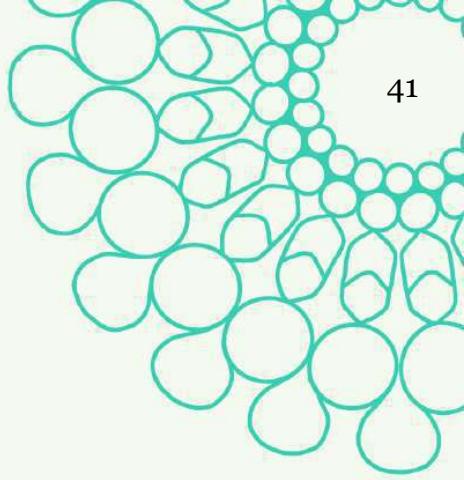
A WATER DROP

**Ahmed Sweilam
Egypt**

With waves I'm washed away,
Entombed ashore amidst decay,
Enslaved to a running stream...

In heavy clouds above, I see
A gentle dew,
A mighty tide,
Across the heavens drifting free.

O God,
A water drop I want to be,
Make me Free
To rain upon the earth,
Or pour myself into the sea,
Into the running rivers dive,
Or bring the barren waste alive.



O God,

A water drop I want to be

The pulse of life,

The thirst of grass for trees,

The urge of palms to tender dates,

The need of hearts to verdant dreams.

A water drop I want to be,

Make me Free,

Beyond my time's resentful grin,

Beyond the woes I sense within,

Beyond the howling cries of winds -

To fall in love with maids divine,

And claim the timeless passionate tales

as mine,

To foster blooms and luscious fruit,

Alluring butterflies and grand delight,

Brimming the night with endless tales.

Let me awaken charming girls

With every break of dawn,

To fill their pots with water fresh,



To foster blooms and luscious fruit,
Alluring butterflies and grand delight,
Brimming the night with endless tales.

Let me awaken charming girls
With every break of dawn,
To fill their pots with water fresh,
And chant along their blissful tune.

O God,
A water drop I want to be
A drop of love in arid lands
Of loveless, deathly sands,
And thorns of woe.

Make me that DROP,
To master nature in my hands,
With waves to ebb,
With rivers flow,
And soar on wings of doves,
Across the realms of love,



A water drop I want to be,
A ray of light,
A blooming dream...
Over your world, Let me gleam!

THE PANDEMIC

Wild, in corners, traumatic,
Stoops the Slayer Pandemic.
Ripping and wreaking havoc
In cold Blood!
Vehement, Senseless, Frantic.
But you can!
You can knock it down,
Or push it far away,
Or set it ablaze,
It will retreat!
Yes, you can!
You can turn it into a summer cloud,
Dark, foggy,
But grants no rain.
Yes, you can!



You can beat it!
When you crush despair,
With the sun of hope rising in your heart,
Turning abject silence into lines of Verse,
Laden with Love-
Verse that heals
And enlivens the barren void around you,
To bloom with lush turfs,
And blushing roses.

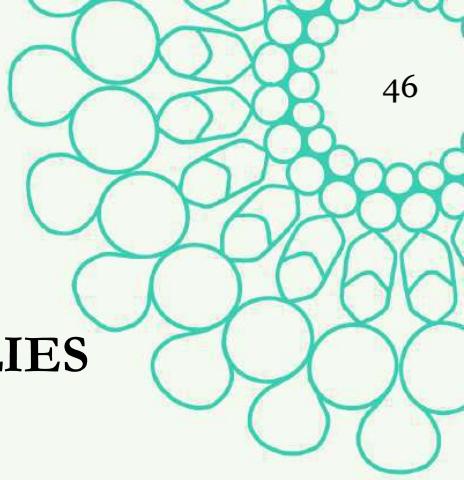
All Poems Translated by Dr. Subair Mahfouz

About Ahmed Sweilam

Sweilam was born in Biyala, Egypt, and has a BA in Commerce from Cairo University. His first collection, *The Road and the Bewildered Heart*, was issued in 1967, and his most recent collection, *Harbors of Thirst*, was issued in 2021. His poetic production comprises 4 poetic dramas: *Akhenaten*, *Shabryar*, *The Knight*, *The Unknown Well-Known*. He has more than 30 published critical studies, amongst which are: *Poets and Authority*, *Short-lived Poets*, *Our Children in the Eyes of Poets*, *Arab Poets Encyclopedia* (Names, Surnames and Nicknames), *Poets of Detention and Freedom*, *Arab Love Poetesses*, *Arab Insane Lovers*, *Travel in Old Arabic Poetry*, and *Poets of Divine Love*. He has more than 20 poetic, theatrical and fictional works written for children.



THE PLANET CONCEIVING A FEW LIES



Sungrye Han
Korea

Is the devil a man who deceives someone
 With a little bit of truth that a great untruth combined?
 A word that is born a moment ago is lighter than a dandelion
 A word that is buried waits her own resurrection on the wind path
 A word that is missing threw herself a long ago

The spring has come like investigating something, but it is not the real one.
 A noon that sun is blazing like midsummer
 Full bloom of roses take season's false pulse
 As they conceive a smell of death
 In the heart of the planet,
 Swirling frenzied blood that is gang-raped, comes across straits
 The womb of the planet
 We don't need any sonogram
 A chunk labeled as an embryo
 And a boundary of water
 From fish, amphibian, reptile to mammal
 That evolutionary seal
 That false package of gene
 Today, a gunfire bursts somewhere on the planet again
 I can hear the heartbeat of the planet
 An Embryo born today remembers the sound



THE ANGLE OF A BLIND SPOT

The faded sunlight shines through the leaves
 Underneath the tree, the leaves turn into a navy-blue canvas
 A hazy curtain hung
 At the evening when red and black are blended
 The hour of the devil, neither day nor night
 Spiders are coming down low
 A bird flies low
 Lives falling down from the air

,Under the influence of that power
 The heaven comes to the earth
 The boundary between the earth and the sky is erased
 Now is the time to forget what we said during the day
 At the end of the earth's axis
 Where the blood of day and night is blended
 A dream that hasn't cooled down is being buried
 The sunset drags its feet carefully
 Not to spill over the blood in a basket
 A person also flows holding up their lives in critical condition

I came to see a walking tree of mirage
 ...Created by the yearning for the sunshine, but
 A tree that has its own feet
 A tree that has its root on its body
 To move along to get nutrients



A moment Suddenly, a cluster of trees looks like a group of people
 A death spot
 Appearing on the skin immediately after death
 I wonder if the spot has buried lives in it
 When things look dimly
 At the evening neither day nor night,
 The angle of a blind spot
 That cannot distinguish this world or afterlife

All Poems Translated by Jaehyung Park

About Sungrye Han

Sungrye's works have earned her the Newcomer Award of Poem and Consciousness, Korea's Heo Nanseolheon Literature Award and Japan's Sitosozo Award. Her books of Poetry include The Beauty in a Laboratory and Smiling Flowers in Korean, as well as The Sky in the Yellowish Red Korean Skirt and Drama of the Light in Japanese. Her poems express Korean tradition, sadness, modernism and more. She translated many Japanese literary works into Korean and many Korean literary works into Japanese including books for children, self-enlightenment books and scientific books.

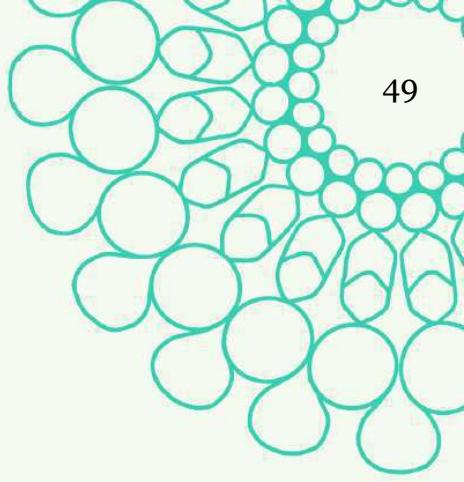


Saif Al Rahbi
Oman

THE STRANGER

This man who takes us to his distant lands
Unfolds on his bed and the table
The heaps of faces and places
Traces the borders of his days
Hill after hill
A tower, deserted village, a city devoured by war
Bites on an apple, smokes, remembering:
The graveyard of his grandparents
His mother in rags sleeping between sand dunes
The glass grabbed by hands
Before he sips its dregs and sleeps.

The wind hisses outside like a wolf
(Truly, he'd seen a wolf-pack in childhood)



The stranger heaps on his table faces and destinies

Tries to write

About what?

O soul of winged carriages

O soul of rains and dawn's trains

The soul of a stranger weeping at the start of the road!

THE BELLS WON'T RING

The storm hasn't subsided tonight

Before my door

Its five enemies slammed its directions.

In churches' pale light

I see monks dragging vehicles

Running for mountains

With pedigree horses in the wind

As if they're back to Byzantium.



In this ancient night
The bells won't ring after today
The storm won't cease.

All Poems Translated by Khalid Al Balushi

About Saif Al Rahbi

Saif is amongst Oman's most well-known and prominent contemporary poets. Born in 1956, he lived abroad in his youth for over two decades. Seeking knowledge and occasionally practicing journalism, he moved into a number of Arabian and Western cities. He founded the now well-known quarterly cultural magazine: Nizwa. At its outset, the magazine showcased (and still does) articles, research studies, reviews, translations and literary texts, both fiction and prose. Drawing upon his exposure to these cultural centres and upon the Arabic cultural and literary heritage, Al Rahbi has played a pioneering role in ushering in a new poetic diction in Oman. Formally, he champions a form of poetry free from traditional musical patterns and a vocabulary accessible to a wide audience.



PROSTATE

**Dr. Mary O'Donnell
Ireland**

It's a day for the sea when we depart the X-ray unit
giddy, relieved. First session over!

I overtake everything in sight on the coast road,
as we chat about the oncologist,

hope she hit the sweet spot.
All this joking. We make light of tenderness,

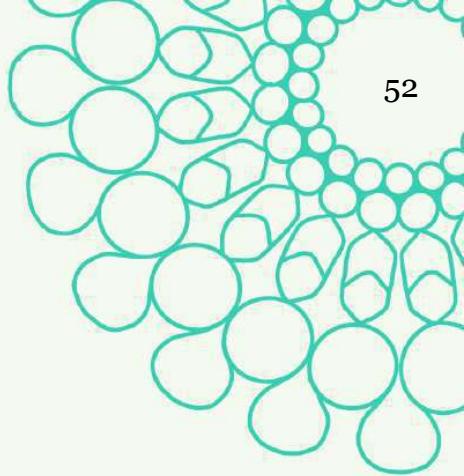
the desire of years, your body in my hand,
that continent I still explore using maps

of nakedness and a compass of scent.
The tongue of blue at Booterstown excites us,

we ache for the high tide steps at Seapoint,
a feckless gush of waves along sun-warmed stone.

Once there, we walk our grown-up selves
below the Martello, towards the water,

then ease into the tide, at play in this half-familiar life.



Now, we stand to our shoulders in the open bay,
in choppy water.

AFTER RADIOTHERAPY

It's a day for the sea.
Giddy, relieved. First session over!
The car shunts along the coast road,

as we chat about the oncologist,
make light of everything. We bypass
Booterstown's shoreline marsh, a boys' school,

a lone willow-tree and redbrick terrace.
There's tenderness, seeds of desire,
your body a continent read by secret maps,

a compass of scent. Finally we park,
eyes drawn to the rough impasto
of incoming sea below a glaze

of high tide steps. Seapoint. A feckless float
of breaking wave along ridge of stone.
Togged out below the Martello,

our pretend grown-up selves ease into urgent tide,
at play in this half-familiar inevitable life.
Local swimmers tread in circles,



social despite billow and inflow.
Wet to the shoulders in open bay,
we submerge our faces in choppy water.

About Dr. Mary O'Donnell

Poet and fiction-writer Mary O'Donnell is recognised as a leading figure in the generation of Irish women writers who began publishing in the 1980s and 1990s; her work is often cited as key in expanding the horizons of Ireland's traditionally male-dominated literary world. O'Donnell's fiction includes the novels *The Light-Makers* (1992 & 2018), *The Elysium Testament* (1999), and *Where They Lie* (2014). She has also published works of short fiction, including *Empire* (2018). Since 1990, she has published numerous collections of poetry, including *Those April Fevers* (Arc UK, 2015). Her eighth collection of poetry "Massacre of the Birds" was published in October 2020.



BRINGING BACK A MELTED PERSON

Wadih Saadeh
Lebanon/Australia

This lake is not water. It was a person to whom I spoke at length, then he dissolved.

And I am not trying now to look at water, but rather I'm trying to recover a dissolved person. How do people become lakes like this which tree leaves and algae top?

Drop by drop, the dead descend on my door.

A boat stops for me under the sun.

And a wretched fit of trembling returns to sand

I didn't shiver, but I went mad. The water is cold, but I didn't shiver.

I just trembled a little. Then I went mad.

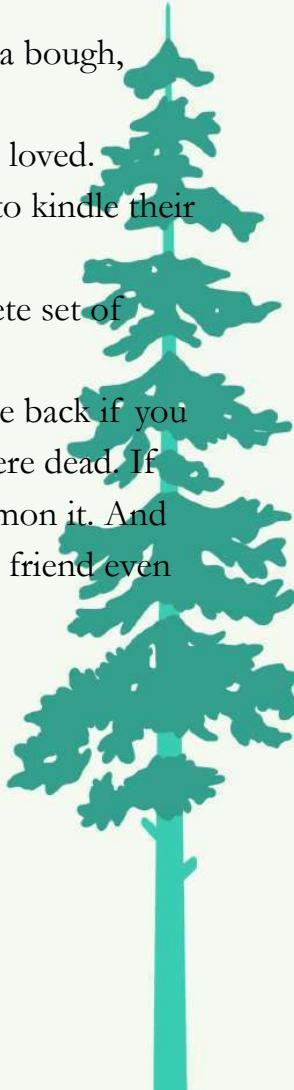
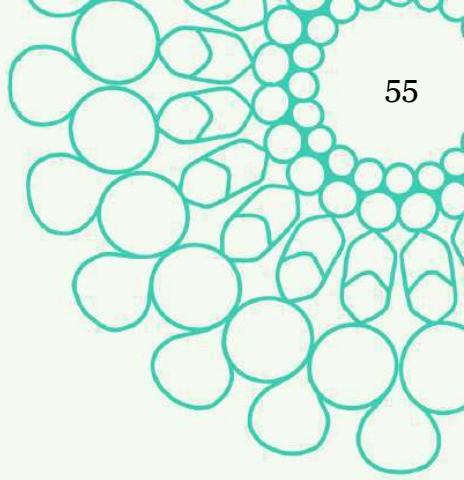
On the surface of the lake is a leaf. It was an eye. On the bank was a bough, which was a human rib.

I try now to gather the leaves and boughs. I try to gather a person I loved.

But many have passed by here. They gathered leaves and firewood to kindle their hearths.

Gathering together a person will never happen. Gathering a complete set of limbs won't happen. Many of them were burned.

Nonetheless I must restore a person I loved. Loved ones must come back if you call them. They must come back even if they were water. If they were dead. If they were algae. Algae must become a human being when you summon it. And he will come, even if wet, if bloated, if rotten. It must come back a friend even if he died one thousand years ago.



There must be some way to gather people from the banks, a way to turn the leaves and boughs floating on lakes into human beings
 But how very protracted is the distance between joints!
 I didn't shiver. The limbs shivered. I had to plug the space between their joints in order to stop their shivers so they would still.
 But how very protracted is the distance between joints!

I run slowly like the last drop of water which came down, and was too late to flow.

I run slowly scrambling to catch up with the running, and evaporate by and by. I won't make it. Part of me will come to be in space and part of me will sink into the earth.

I'm late for my comrades and won't make it. I creep on but I won't make it. Pieces of me I lose, pieces accompany me exhausted, and pieces become free-floating particles.

Even if I make it, which thing of me will make it?

Around me is grass and pebbles and dirt. Birds peck at part of me. Ants eat part of me. And part of me belongs to the grass and pebbles and dirt.

I run slowly, and above me rises a thread of me, and below me descends a thread of me. I run slowly between two needles stitching my nothingness.

I came down the last drop. I was in the cloud and came down. Am I looking for a person who dissolved or am I the one dissolving? Or have I, from searching so much for his dissolution, dissolved like him?

And I've come, instead of searching for him, to search for me!

I see on the way persons going by. Part of what remains of me sees persons.



These, most likely, haven't lost a person they love. Or they lost him and despite that are completing the way?!

I don't know how our legs don't stop walking when we lose a person we love. Weren't we walking, not on our feet, but on his? Wasn't the whole excursion for his sake? Wasn't he the excursion?

How can one walk if he's lost a person? I stopped. He was the one walking and I, his follower. I was the one walking in him. When he stopped, I no longer had feet.

I'm late, creeping, and I'm evaporating. How then will I bring back a person who has dissolved? Mustn't I, more precisely, bring back myself first? Come back at least as a whole drop of water coming down on a leaf, on an eye, on a rib, on a shore?

Mustn't I, in order to extract a person from algae, be at least of lake water? I'm late and I won't make it. All that I can do is see. I see from far off. Distorted vision from the eye of a thing that is not cloud nor water nor solid nor vapor. Then I don't see.

All of this is merely imagining. A glooming dark imploring glooming dark. I will not see and I won't make it and I won't restore a person and I won't bring him back...

I just am trying to creep along. I'm trying to catch up to my comrades. But they've come to be far off, very far off.

Perhaps in the past I was a person searching for a person who had dissolved, or perhaps I was the one dissolving. Now not even a drop. and in my frightening identification between the water and vapour and the person, I search for a name with which to introduce myself when I meet up with the ants and grass and birds.

You are creeping like me. You will necessarily stop on a protrusion. Send me out a cry from there, and I'll name myself with it.



Identifying between water and solid and vapour. Even so I have joints!
 And there are empty places between my joints.
 Waters crash into them. Winds crash into them and people crash into them.
 Many people now traverse my joints. I don't know whence they come or
 whither they go. But they crash against my bones.
 People I encountered once; people I encountered many times; people I have
 never encountered... but they gush out now, and bang on my bones.
 I must open these bones so they may enter.
 If only these bones were a door.
 Whence have they come?!

I think that those we look at, enter our bodies via our eyes and become flesh
 and blood.
 Some of them become some of those straying past between our joints
 and we continue thus hearing the raps on our bones.

I now hear water knockings
 I must open.

Translated by Clarissa C. Burt

About Wadih Saadeh

Wadih Saadeh ([Arabic](#): وَدِيعَ سَعَادَة) is a [Lebanese-Australian](#) poet born in [Lebanon](#) in 1948. He published his first poetry book written by hand in 1973, and sold it in the streets, titled Laysa Lil Massa' Ikhwah (*Evening Has No Brothers*), which was published in 1981. After travelling to many countries like England, France, Greece, and Cyprus, Wadih Saadeh immigrated to Australia in November 1988, and has been living in Sydney since. He has published twelve books of poetry in Arabic, some of which were translated into English, French, Spanish and Italian; some of these include Maq'ad Rakib Ghadar al Bus (*A Seat of a Passenger Who Left the Bus*), 1987, Ratq ul Hawa' (*Dawn of the Air*), 2006 and Qull lil'Aber An Ya'oud, Nasiya Huna Zillahu (*Tell the Passenger to Come Back, He Forgot his Shadow Here*), 2012.



SACRED RITUAL

**Kama Sywor Kamanda
Republic of Congo**

I will carry your soul

Through every wind with the gift of dreams

And I will guide your steps between hope and words.

My words will accompany

The thunder rumbling inside you.

You will rest on my shoulders.

Love, like an elemental fire,

Give wings to our passions and visions of utopia!

I will embody your every mad, ecstatic desire,

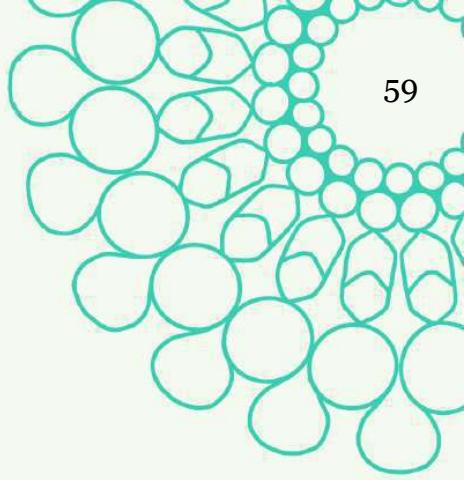
I will follow the progress of your embraces

through the echoes of hymns,

And the signs of happiness.

Your eyes, two stars in the depths of the night,

Will guide me through the shadows



Towards the truth of loving hearts.

I want your passions to embrace me,

Clasp me and captivate me,

Beyond the impossible,

Beyond the mundane.

THE MIRACLE OF LOVE

I will be there, at day and at night,

Through fate's trials and tribulations

To accompany you through life.

I will be there in the same dream kingdom as you

To nourish your heart

With all the vital virtues of my heart.

I will be there to love you to infinity

And my blood will trickle without noise nor violence,

Like an inexhaustible spring,

Into the most intimate of your fevers,

Your desires and your amorous intoxications.



LOVE COMES KNOCKING

Oh, tender heart! Oh, generous soul!

Loving you gives me wings

So I can fly to wonderland!

My dreams are as innumerable

As the stars in the night sky.

I would like to speak words of love

To brighten your heart like rays of sun.

I will water the flowers blooming inside you,

And soothed of my torments,

I will delight in transporting the essences of existence

Through time and then your heart,

I will link tranquility to laughter

And pleasure to relief.

About Kama Sywor Kamanda

Kama Sywor Kamanda is a Congolese French-speaking writer, poet, novelist, playwright, speaker, essayist and storyteller. He is also a committed intellectual who contributes to the evolution of ideas and the history of Africa. He was born in Luebo in the province of Kasaï Occidental in Congo-Kinshasa on 11 November 1952. His first publication, *Les Contes des veillées africaines* was an immediate success. From the beginning of his career, his literary work has stood out due to its originality, its unique style and its themes. As “Babelio” writes so well in his biography of the author: Kamanda owes much of his world renown as a writer to his "Kamanda Tales", as they should be called for their evocative power and literary quality, which rank this African writer among the greatest classic authors such as Andersen, Grimm, Perrault and Maupassant.



Robab Moheb
Sweden/Iran

FROM: GOD'S SMALL BEINGS

1

Alef

Lam

Mim.

in the Order of the Prophet
an invisible singer of my faith
in the Order of Love
but with
only the caprice of a gulp and
this tiny

2

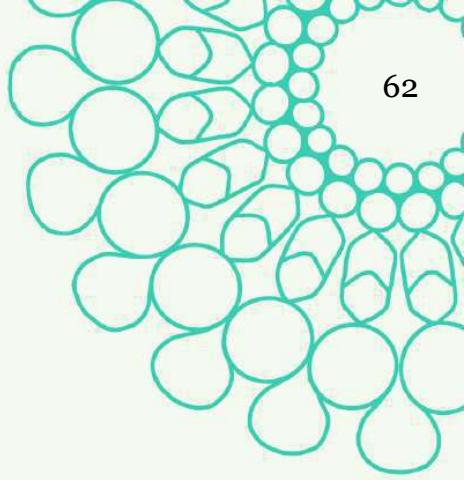
Man, sinks in the mirror
woman,
grows up in the mirror.

3

Relation
a reverse beginning
on the way of lost voyagers of dreams.

4

Man,
a burnt stub



Woman,
her heart lost to
the powder compact.

5

When the grey curtain of the nights
from the verdant stature of panicles
fell the Meteor of Lust
was also dead.

6

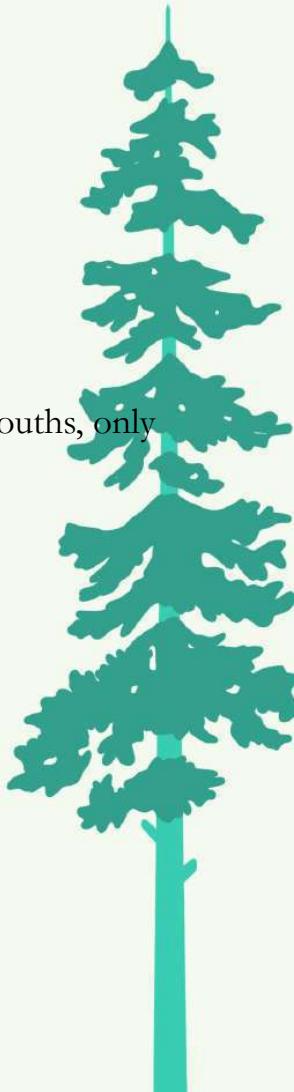
Without shoes,
bare feet, his heart
man moved through life, through sand,
smoke
and
fog
meanwhile
woman had already arrived.

7

Nothing but merchants, they were,
for two rings of copper
the marvellous stature of panicles, early love of youths, only
once
sold.

8

Once
they set the sails of their
imagination



the seas
looked surprised
as they stared into the tender breeze of storms.

9

In strains and curves of caress
free from error
the lover
mistakenly
desired his damsel.

10

The Gods of desire are
the strays in the alleys in the ruins of the soul,
the maniacs
of the excitement of the body.

11

The horizon,
they mourn,
in the maze of their voicelessness, their sightless emotions
abhorrent, exiled
cast out
to the dark dungeon of the heart
still
chained, chained to the shackles of
love.

12

The infant wishes in its first steps
to be captive in a bundle
tied up in blind trust.



13

Like glass
 not to withstand the stone
 this victim of the firing squad in my line of sight.

14

Woman
 says goodbye to her bed
 gently
 beginning the daily tragedy
 man
 deforms body
 tangled in linen
 and yawns
 his befuddled gratitude crying out.

* * *

Between rise and fall
 were only a few minutes.

15

Before they were born into the world,
 dead, they were,
 bare to the bone
 naked.

Translated by Sam Vaseghi

About Robab Moheb

Robab holds a Bachelor's degree in Pedagogical Sciences from the University of Växjö and a Master's degree from the University of Stockholm. In 2008, she published her first translations of Swedish poetry into Farsi in collaboration with the renowned Swedish poets Kristina Lugn, Ida Börjel and Katarina Grippenberg. Moheb's poetry begins with very elemental and existential thought processes, evolving into a strong manifestation of selfhood. Her early minimalistic work *ânâme kuchâke xodâ* (*god's small beings*) announces the commencement of her journey through 'herself'.

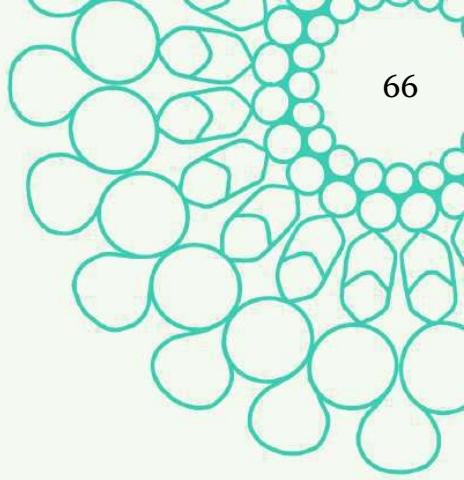


Ali Jaafar Allaq
Iraq

LADY OF CHAOS

Translated by Wissal Allaq

From where did this lady emerge?
To stir our lonely, stagnant streams
Did no one caution her to stop!
Did she not fear our chilly breeze?
We swear we never came across
A passion so fierce like that of hers
It's said that once upon a time,
she was mystically cast away
By a tribe forsaken by a ship.
Yet, it remains a myth they say.
Some say that maybe she descends
From lightly rising clouds above!
These tales were told & linger on,
For many, many days to come
Yet, she spread chaos as she pleased
& made the wind dance to her beat
She woke our heard from pleasant dreams
& lit our souls with wonderment



A JOURNEY'S BEGINNING

In your night of mist I drift away
 Like a little hat tossed in the rain
 Where the heart becomes a water bird
 That suffocates when reaching land
 As it rests calmly in your palms,
 My hand forgets about its sleep
 And this is where we start again
 And so a new journey begins

LADY OF CLOUDS

When the gloomy rain knocked on my door
 I thought: it's the lady of clouds
 The forest stones turned bright
 My veins now fraught with wild steads,
 The herd is charged with life & sound
 The birds of earth turned green

About Ali Jaafar Allaq

Ali is a poet, critic, and university professor. He received his PhD in Criticism and Modern Literature from the University of Exeter, UK, in 1984. He left Iraq in 1991 to teach at Sana'a University until 1997. He worked as a professor of Arabic modern literature and criticism at the United Arab Emirates University from 1997 to 2015. He published fourteen poetry collections and ten critical books, and participated in many Arab literary festivals and conferences in London, Montreal, New York and Istanbul. More than ten master's and doctoral theses were written about him in Iraqi and Arab universities, in addition to more than ten books by Arab and Iraqi writers. He won Al Owais Cultural Award, Poetry Branch, 16th session in 2019.



SURVIVAL TACTICS

Christine De Luca
United Kingdom

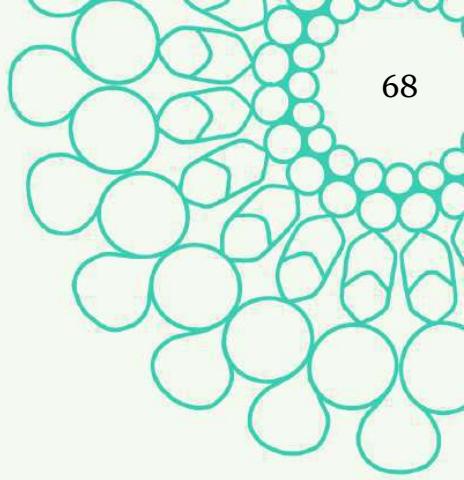
You have retreated
into the singularity:
imploded into a deluge
of inexistence.

Out there are days:
tomorrows whose weights
are beyond lifting. Somehow
even yesterdays are relative,
have lost their focus, their reality.
There is only an interminable now.

The catalogue of things we do
looks long and burdensome.
There's little point. You're through

with words picked up and strung in sentences.
They cannot express this dearth of future.
They are too heavy anyhow:
heavier than silence. But now

at last your voice is lighter,
lighter than for months.
You lift the smallest skylight on your world:
ask me how I am, and when I'll come.



I sense the dove you sent out
 has brought back hope, a slip of greening.
 And that you've held the singularity
 in your sights, and blown it free,
 dared to stare future in the face
 and once again believe.

NEW HORIZONS

Astronauts high in the space-station spin
 weightless, peer for planets risen, for sunrise
 spreading round the globe every 90 minutes
 and, at the poles, the Aurora trembling.

Like them, we timeframe: today's work,
 tomorrow's plans; another generation. It's hard
 to think billions of years, galactic Armageddon;
The Milky Way knocked off its spindle, extinguished.

For now, we look ever further out, dream
 of finding new worlds; and maybe sparing on
 this fragile earth. Besides, one moon is enough,
 one daily sunrise, one shared sunset.

Original poem written in Shetlandic

About Christine De Luca

Christine writes in English and Shetlandic, her mother tongue. She was appointed Edinburgh's Makar (poet laureate) for 2014-2017. Her eighth poetry collection, *Veve*, has just been published by Mariscat Press, Edinburgh. She also enjoys translation and has had five bi-lingual volumes published (French, Italian, Icelandic, Norwegian and English). She has collaborated with musicians and artists: her most recent poetry collaboration is *Another Time, Another Place* with Victoria Crowe (Scottish Gallery, 2021). She has also written and translated stories for children and recently completed a second novel.

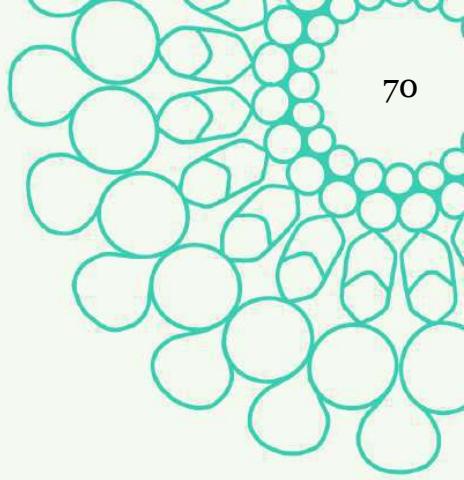


Ahmed Almulla
Saudi Arabia

A BURIED STATUE

If I had known earlier
what I was carrying
I would have cast off some of my illusions
and the road would have been less tiring,
But I didn't know
and I began to realise its weight every day,
I thought it was my name, of which I was aware
very early
and whose varied repetitions pained me
weakening my arm.

But then I realised that it was Time
accompanying me like a stone rolling down the
summit of my life
Later on, I noticed that it was Place
and a metaphor called The Grave
and here it was tied to my leg, my screams pulling
me down into the abyss.



Between the swaying grass
besmirched with shells and coral
and a refuge for frightened crabs,
the divers will find my sunken statue
lifting its eyes' amazement
with one finger
pointing toward confusion.

TAKE YOUR TIME

Take some time
and don't stop,
let your shadow go before you in fearful times
and follow after you to longing.

Take your time ... hold yourself together
take your time ... loosen your horse's mane
take your time ... let the boat carry you drunkenly
and don't jump onto any sober coasts.

Conceal the jostling words
grit your teeth to compose them,
Take some time
your anger is a treasure so don't waste it on the
unworthy.



If not for anger you wouldn't have tread barefoot
you wouldn't have made it through,
anger matured you
and moulded you
so take your time.

WHAT I'M SEARCHING FOR

I lost it from my hands early
and wasted my life searching for it ...
sometimes I describe it as the shape of a key,
sometimes I call it by the name it doesn't know,
and sometimes I imagine finding it easily
like finding my reading glasses
perched on the tip of my nose,
sometimes I find what other people have lost and
I put it aside,
amazed at the lightness of what they were search-
ing for ...

Whenever my desire for it increases
its ability to solve all difficulties grows ...
My hands learned in the dark
and exhumed the light like a plow prophesying,



until I was able to see with one finger, without
needing to open a door or light a fire.

I found the object of my desire
the day I forgot what I was searching for
That which I had lost
on purpose.

All Poems Translated by Karen McNeil and Miled Faizā

About Ahmed Almulla

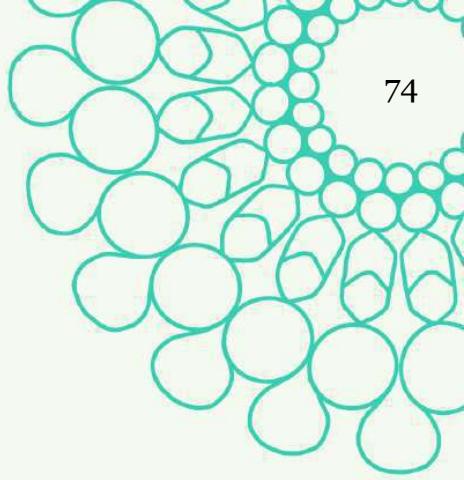
Ahmed, born in 1961, is the director of the Saudi Film Festival and the director of the Poetry Festival. He has published 10 books of poetry: *A Shattering Shadow*, 1995, *Light and slanted like forgetfulness*, 1997, *An arrow whispers my name*, 2005, *Girls have written us*, 2013, *The Beast exercises*, 2010, *Air is tall.. low is the ground*, 2014, *A distinguishing marks*, 2015, *My beautiful mistakes*, 2016, and *Eyak An Yamuta Qablak*, 2018, and holds the Grand Prix Award Poet Mohammed Althbyti of Taif Literary Club in 2015.

[Back to Contents](#)



Keshab Sigdel
Nepal

METAMORPHOSIS



I

A group of artists
have arrived into this city—
an Unreal City.

Since ages
we had dreamt of a Real City.
And now
these artists have promised it for us.

II

In the Unreal City
the sun and the moon,
the sky and the earth,
the humans and the birds,
the trees and the turfs,
all exist
without our knowing they exist.

Because we lived in an Unreal City
we never bothered to know that they ever existed.



III

We have our big dreams,
and these artists have a big responsibility!
They've promised—
a new sun,
a new moon,
and of course, a new land.
A perfect city!

IV

We are now in the becoming of a Real City.
And the artists are busy undoing the scaffoldings of the Unreal City.
They are experimenting with colours;
They are experimenting with words and the musical notes.
So, things are a mess.
Confusion prevails,
and we sometimes unwisely doubt things.
But they explain it for us—
it's a transition!
They want to reassure us.
Poor creatures!
We do everything to prove that we're reassured.
We are told
Our questioning disrupts the transformation of our place into a Real City.
So, we silently choose to accept our own defacement—
Witness of our own metamorphosis!

About Keshab Sigdel

Keshab Sigdel is a creative writer, editor, and translator based in Kathmandu. He is the author of *Samaya Bighatan* (2007) and *Colour of the Sun* (2017). Editor of *An Anthology of Contemporary Nepali Poetry* (2016), he also edits literary magazines *Of Nepalese Clay* and *Rupantaran*. His recent translation work is *Shades of Colours* (English translation of indigenous Nepali poetry). He is the International Coordinating Committee Member of the World Poetry Movement based in Columbia and the vice president of the Society of Nepali Writers in English. A recipient of the Bhanubhakta Gold Medal (Culture Ministry of Nepal, 2014), Kalashree Creative Award (2015), Rock Pebbles Literature Award (India, 2018), and Youth Year Moti Award for Literature (National Youth Fund, 2018), he teaches poetry at Tribhuvan University.



Silvija Butkovic
Croatia

I LAST IN THE FOG

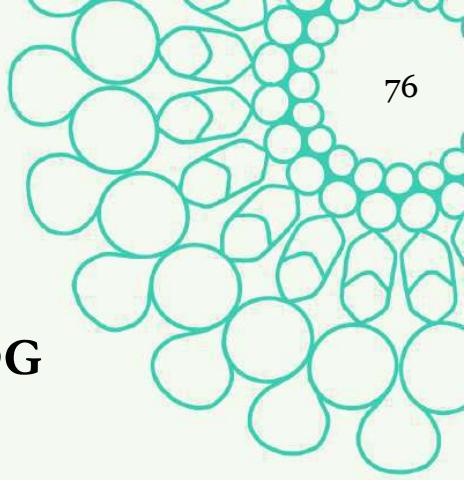
Quite quietly,
on my toes ... I'm leaving.
And all our colours
I hide, clothed in
yellow coat.

And I last in the fog ...

I'm waiting
for the echo of the promise,
I summon winged birds.
And paper clouds.
I want to hide them from the storm.

And I last in the fog ...

Take me
through the autumn rows of trees
with hand in hand ...
With pockets
full of fireflies.
Under the lake lamp.



Let's steal spring ... for life!

The rain will ...

SHOP FOR THE DREAMERS

I am selling LONELINESS!

Dressed in silk dresses,
with the scent of linden in bloom.

I am selling her clothed
with the singing of a stray bird.
I left and returned to her pupils for years
full of happiness, endless.

She's dumb and deaf,
stunned by the loud silence of the morning,
she greets.

She hugs and takes you in her arms, like a mother.
Me, intoxicated by the beauty of life,
me awake, dreaming trains towards tomorrow.

I'm only selling my loneliness today,
dreamers, painters, poets,
while creating a new day with a brush or pen.

I will not cry...

I'm selling it for a very ordinary smile
and I won't turn around while I'm leaving.

I will not cry, I promise...



THE SMELL OF RAIN

You could have been
a drop in the morning
which smells of blossoming linden trees.

And the rays of the sun
which rests on the treetops of my gardens.

You could have been raining
in yellow autumn as we last.

We could ... breathe spring together!

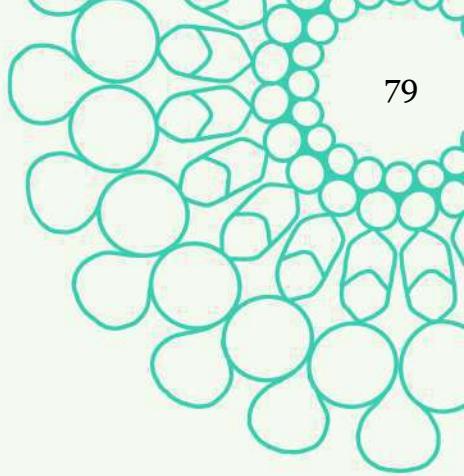
About Silvija Butkovic

Silvija Butkovic was born in 1964 in Osijek, Croatia, and now lives and works in Djakovo in the State Stud Farm Djakovo. She still finds time for photography, free-verse, prose, haiku and photo haigas. She was recognised by The World Haiku Association, who adorned her with the title Master of Haiga. In 2004, she published her first collection of poetry titled *Touched by a Dream*, 2007, and her second book *A Released Drop* and free-verse *Entangled into Nets* were released in 2008. Silvija has taken part in many competitions, both as a poet and a photographer in Croatia and abroad in Japan, UK, France and Italy.



Ban'ya Natsuishi
Japan

HAIKU OF HOPING



Love is the soil
at the foot of
a pillar set deep in the ground

Piling blue sky
on top of blue sky
they graduated

A male cricket
and a female cricket
protect the grass field



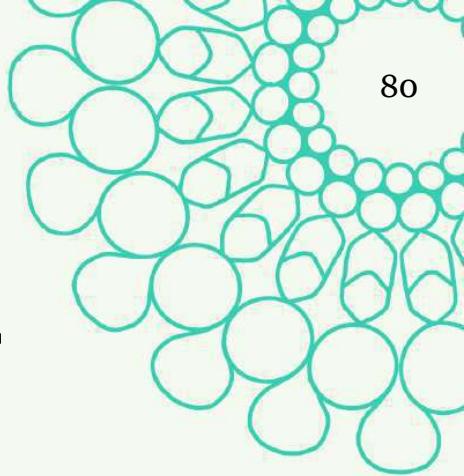
About Ban'ya Natsuishi

Born in 1955, Ban'ya studied at Tokyo University where he received a master's degree in Comparative Literature and Culture in 1981. In 1992, he was appointed Professor at Meiji University where he continues to teach. He is publisher of international haiku quarterly 'Ginyu'. Ban'ya Attended many international poetry and haiku events held in 5 continents, while himself organising international haiku conferences in Japan and overseas. His most distinguished publications include *A Future Waterfall* (USA, 1999 & 2004), and *Flying Pope* (India, 2008 & 2021; Japan, 2008; Italy, 2010; Morocco, 2016; Syria, 2017). He is editor of the annual global anthology 'World Haiku' as Director of World Haiku Association since 2005. He won the Modern Haiku Association Prize in 1991, and the Highest Prize of the Mongolian Writers' Association in 2015.



Tobias Burghardt
Germany

RETURN THE VISIT



The poem, a peacock butterfly,
flutters first to the bamboo palm,
sits on one of the high leaves,
then flutters across the room
to the window through which it entered,
consequently sits on the lower frame
and from there looks at me in wonder,
as we greet the sun's standstill:
we let the language out into the open
of the glances resting at haphazard ease.

CONTEMPLATION OF THE CLOUD

Like the forest and the leafy path,
like the gardener and the flower,
like the scribe and the text,
like the fisherman and the cormorant
is itself the resound of the tides,
the return of the spring awakening,
the reflection of the oblique light,
the recuperation of the origin:



from every direction the breeze flows;
the rain & the water go everywhere.

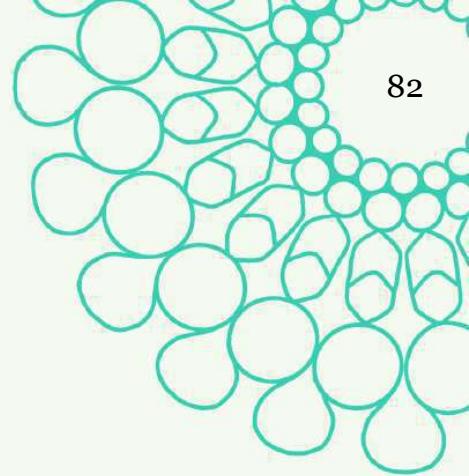
Poems Translated Into English by The Author

About Tobias Burghardt

Tobias is a poet, essayist and translator of Latin American, Spanish, Catalan, Sephardic and Lusophone poetry who works with his wife, the Argentinian poet and translator Jona Burghardt. They jointly received the *KATHAK International Literary Award* (2017) at Dhaka, Bangladesh, and the *German Publisher Prize* (2021) for their independent publishing house EDITION DELTA at Stuttgart, Germany. In 2020, he received the International Poetry Award Antonio de Ferraris (Italy). Burghardt was also a juror at the Global Poetry Project ‘Eve Blossom’ (Kurt Schwitters) of the EXPO 2000 in Hannover, Germany.



1 POEM



Won't you ask the clouds
What life has in store?
Why has the loved one become a stranger
And the stranger, a friend?
Who wrote his love
On Facebook yesterday?
Who tweets,
Spreading hate?
Why is justice hollow
And who is leading you astray?
All are lost in the crowds
Who was wounded in the brawl?
Wish that I could grasp
What lies hidden in the clouds



Scores of tongues are loosened
 But lips locked
 Messages fly in the clouds
 around the world
 Videos float freely in the streets
 Carried by the clouds
 The earth is empty
 Why do we cut jungles?
 Streets meander endlessly
 but hearts are pinched tight
 I wish that I could grasp
 What lies hidden in the clouds.

Translated by Uma Damodar Sridhar

About Jameela Nishat

An Urdu poet known for her forthright, hard hitting, colloquial and syncretic style which straddles divides of caste and religion. She started writing poetry at an early age and has published three collections of poetry. Nishat, who holds a Master's degree in English Literature and a postgraduate diploma in theatre arts, creates magic in verse and prose. Nishat's work has been widely translated and featured in several notable anthologies. In 2012, she won the prestigious Ladli Award for Best Radio Play for scripting *Jawani Diwani*. In 2015, she received the Devi Award from The Indian Express. She is the founder of Shaheen Women's Resource and Welfare Association.



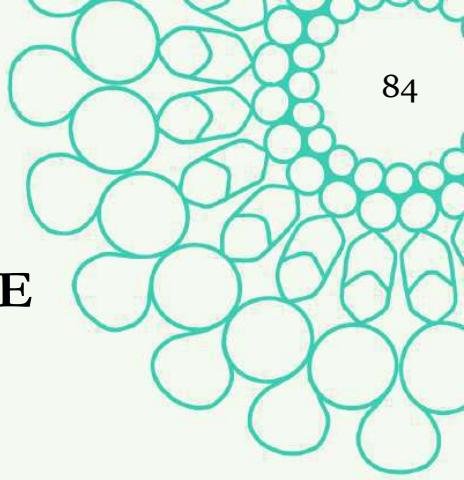
THE SHADOW OF THE NIGHT

Nujoom Alghanem
United Arab Emirates

To my friend Hassan Sharif, to his madness and breakdowns.

Fear crept into my corner
 To share the evening cup with me,
 Just as I was getting used to these naked days, to living
 With neither coat nor friends.
 I might have managed to escape from it,
 But our eyes met in a flash of hope,
 And fate built a bridge for us.

Together, we walked through the nights
 Leaning on a single cane.
 The years piled up on our table
 And we forgot that we were enemies,
 Just as friends forget they are friends.
 Fear became my shirt,
 I opened my arms to it,
 But instead of embracing me
 It slipped into my heart.
 We became each other's nocturnal companion,
 Surviving on air and sorrow,
 And now we have to pack our bags together



And stand on the hill of angels
 So they might choose us
 To appear before God.
 All these eras
 For the sake of this fear that rooted in my heart,
 And still it's embracing me
 Like a mother who cannot cope with the loss.

Translated by Kareem James Abu-Zeid

YESTERDAY

It was just yesterday when we met,
 We inscribed our signatures
 On the long pathways.
 It was just yesterday when we faked
 The first reason to be together,
 And we spent the first day
 adorning our tent.
 It was just yesterday;
 I swear it was just yesterday.
 Then, what are all those years
 that every time we counted
 another is added.

Translated by Dr. Omnia Amin

About Nujoom Alghanem

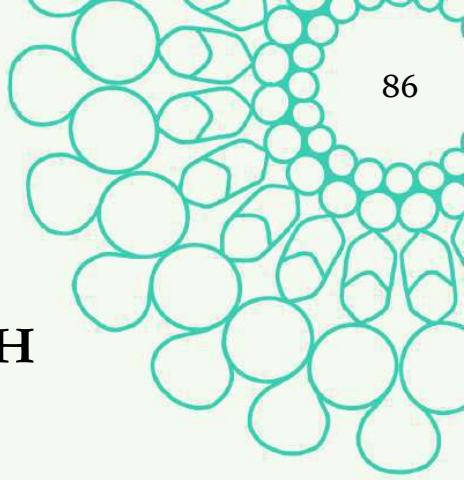
Nujoom Alghanem is an Emirati poet, artist, and multi award-winning film director. She was born in Dubai in 1962, has published eight poetry collections and produced around twenty films including fiction, documentaries, and art. Her films have won regional and international prizes. She is a professional trainer and mentor in filmmaking, art and creative writing. Nujoom's passion for poetry has been the foundation of all her aesthetical experiments whether with art or film. As a poet, she began writing in the late 1970s and published her work in the local newspapers and some GCC's periodical in the early eighties. Some of her collections include *Journeys* (1995), *Indescribable* (2005) and *A Night Heavy on the Night* (2010).



Azam Abidov
Uzbekistan

FAREWELL TO EARTH

Where is your forehead,
Mother Earth?
My Facebook friend
From Vietnam
Is taking me to his
Space Station
He has built in his blissful childhood.
With the same creation,
The same flesh
And even the same God
We are not working enough
To promote
The Exchange of Love:
My tears cannot extinguish
Big fires in Australia,
I cannot keep breathing anymore
Because of dying humans,
Animals and birds all over.
My friend told me
I will be the first poet
In his station,
So I can take some fellows to join



From elsewhere,
 Including from Iraq,
 North Korea,
 Iran and U.S.
 To foster our poorest exchange
 And be able to cast
 The Shadow of Peace
 Over you –
 And be able to cast
 The Shadow of Peace
 Over you –
 Mother Earth.
 You deserved all
 Wonderful things
 Existence could offer!
 But I don't deserve you.
 So where is your forehead?
 I want to kiss and thank you,
 And say good-bye.

IN MY DREAM

In my dream
 I was a ram with beautiful curly horns

Though I was so precious to my father
 Blindfolded
 He sacrificed me –

Those in need came for the feast and were happy.



A poor man like now
I could not offer a sacrifice this year,

Don't be sad,
Comforted me, the prophet
And sacrificed on my behalf.

In my dream
Men and women were so obedient
Children inspired
submission and devotion

We all remained too compassionate.
I was an adopted son of the prophet
In my dream
And we all passed a test from God.

In my dream
And we all passed a test from God.

About Azam Abidov

Azam is a poet, translator, short story writer, cultural adviser, singer, and is the author of *Tunes of Asia*, *The Island of Anxiety*, *Dream of Lighsome Dawns*, *Miracles Is On the Way*, *Greater Than Patience*, and *I Leave You in Complete Boredom*. He writes in Uzbek and sometimes in English, though his work has been translated into more than 20 languages and published worldwide. He was a Creative Writing Fellow at the University of Iowa in the U.S. (2004) and a writer-in-residence at LCB in Berlin. Azam attended poetry festivals, creative writing workshops and cultural events in over 20 countries. He is also a World Poetry Movement's (WPM) coordinator of poetry events in Uzbekistan, and one of the founders of Maysara literary and cultural club at the Yudakov and Oybek House-Museums in Tashkent. In 2018, Azam launched the first-ever Writer/Artist Residency Program in Uzbekistan for foreign authors and artists.



Elmar Kuiper
Netherlands

POEMS

A bird lands in your garden.

You let it
come to you and slip
the paper from the page.

“Come in.”

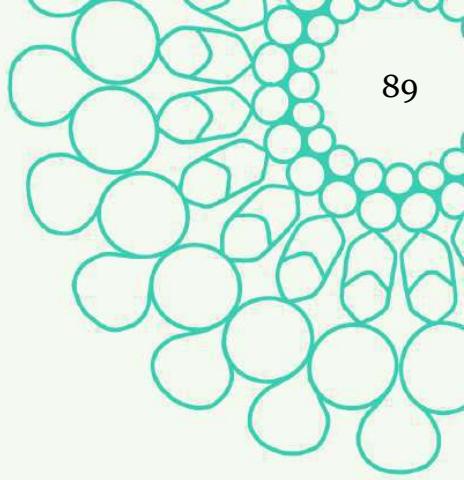
Don’t peck me, don’t strip me.
There is no need. This sudden shift
has been promised.

“Go away.”

There is no skin.
There is no miraculous mouth
in which the word weighs nothing.

only this:

*Translated by Willem Groenewegen
From: Hechtzwaluwen, publisher: Augustus, Amsterdam*



The churchyard's surrogate mothers could die of shame
because I say that I love you

so bare

your grave is my grave

stunned
you have spoken
now it is almost
over

please excuse me
when I hurriedly mix up
the sounds when Reynard the fox
bathes in blood

the wind blows
carries this verse
off like a cinerary moth

dead is dead
as stunned
you have spoken

which one of us will slink away
with the down on his lips?

read myself blue, forget it soon
give me a kiss, dig my pit



my grave is your grave
so bare

when I say that I love you
the mothers of the churchyard carry red death

*Translated by Willem Groenewegen
From: Granytglimkes, publisher: Bornmeer, Gorredijk*

XVII

I can't wrap my aura
like a peel
around you.

You use your left hand
to rub circles on my right hand

and I admit
that I can look
through human beings.

I whisper a small tune
so I can fill up
the lack.

Large is the space
that I take up.

*Translated by Sanne Greijdanus
From: Stienkeal, publisher: Bornmeer, Gorredijk*

About Elmar Kuiper

Among many things, Elmar (b. 1969) is a trained psychiatric nurse, visual artist, playwright, filmmaker and poet. From his first Frisian poems in *Hertbyt* (2004) right up to his upcoming Dutch collection *Blaue Hanen*, Kuiper seems able to combine humour and sincerity, absurdism and sensitivity, in a completely unique and personal way. With his intense and sometimes slightly weird poems, and his deadpan performance, he was a revelation on many national and international stages. His work has been translated into ten languages. The poems provide ample evidence of originality, nerve and a strong associative flair. They deal with large themes such as longing, love and death, power and impotence.



THE TORN AND TATTERED UNIVERSE

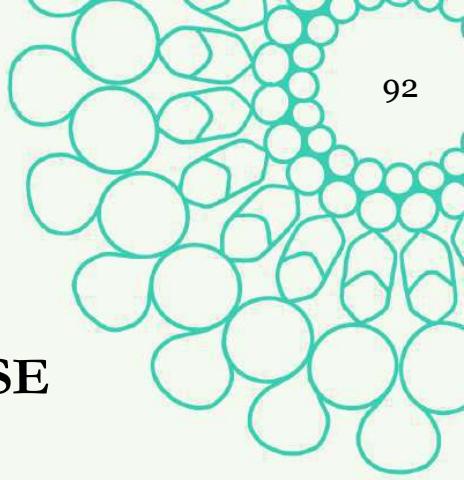
Aminur Rahman
Bangladesh

Tearing apart my world,
You go out every day
With utter indifference and aloofness.
Through every nanosecond of every night,
In every manifestation and each positive emotion,
You sit wrapped in a blue shawl of pain,
A few droplets of love rolling down
From the body of consciousness.

My grey engrossed being
Idles from this horizon to that like a *Paniudi* bird,
Mingling with the ultimate silence.

I have lost the feathers of the blue-necked bird
In the abysmal depths of slumber,
Yet I still recognise your eyes,
Even though I cannot decode your soul's language.
I am wearied by the ceaseless burning pain of sorrow,
My heart hazy with the smoke of darkness.

Still tearing apart my personal world,
You go out every day
With utter indifference and aloofness.



WORDS NO MORE UTTERED

Words unexpressed between us
 Were no more uttered to you; --
 Yet at day-end, night-end, or dreary full noon
 I burst out in tears while left alone
 By your flurries of laughter, with a sudden pull
 My inconsolable mind bleeding nonstop,
 Yet expecting whole-heartedly a room to stay
 Inside your intrepid mind, on this lonely walk --

Words unexpressed between us
 Were no more uttered to you; --
 Gazing at the intensity of the horses' hooves
 Man Singh and Udai Singh drove on their mission,
 I meet the dreamy delusions sprinkled in my bosom
 As you are lost in a furthermost end
 Leaving behind the smell of evergreen Madhabi creepers
 And golden Kanakchampa blossoms with sweet fragrance --

Rearing a rowdy cry inside my mind I go on
 Gazing at you in a bid to touch you at the innermost mind,
 While my thoughts grow restless like the birds losing their nests
 And changing their sides constantly with endless tears

Releasing the death sentence from the Himalayan peak
 I march ahead looking for series of my lost dreams,
 Letting the balloons fly we've jointly ventured;
 Maybe we would meet again, where fierce waters
 Inundate the vast expanse of the city of heart in Udaipur,
 As I burst out in tears with much efforts;
 Maybe I shall meet you there in twilight
 Like the evening sky clinging to you
 In the budding darkness of my mind --

Words unexpressed between us
 Were no more uttered to you; --
 Since this is not the way to live my days,
 Why should I hide the truth I know,
 That I shall win you someday
 At the end of some birth somewhere,



Either at a Himalayan hinterland
 Or fathomless waters of Udaipur,
 Or an arid Egyptian ground where
 I must win you beside Nefertiti
 At the end of some birth—

Words unexpressed between us
 Were no more uttered to you, never; --
 Though I know quite well that I love you
 More than anybody on this earth of ours;
 So passionately that it remains stranger
 To your recognition, distancing us forever;
 Slightly changing our sights, we go too far,
 This is what I seem to win as my own;
 As if this is my attainment, engraved in stone, --
 My pent-up words are never expressed,
 And told no more.

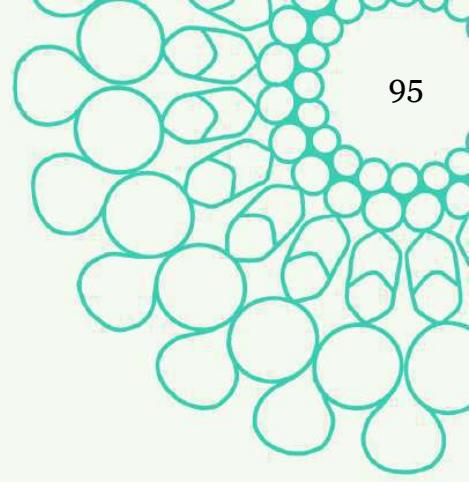
About Aminur Rahman

At present, Aminur is considered one of the most well-known poets abroad from Bangladesh. He has published six collections of poems in Bangla, and his work has been translated to more than twenty-five languages. He is a renowned writer and art critic, having three prose books to his credit. As an invited author, Rahman has read his work world-wide at various international arts & literary festivals, universities and cultural venues. He has represented Bangladesh and was awarded the *Heaven Horse Award* (2015) in Mongolia, *Numera World Award of Letters* (2016) in Malaysia, and the *Menada Award* (2019) in Macedonia.



**Renato Sandoval
Peru**

THE BELL



A blind man loves me
and is on the church door
with his money box of light
and the knotted glance
of a world with no tomorrow.

It is the future that shines without fears
scarcely darkened by the desert dammed
in my eyes.

To have is to lose, told me
the poet Drummond the day he left his town
forever,
and I, who carried my house in my pockets
and a sleeping woman
behind my back.

And he also said that love was somewhere else,
there where the crowds pale
when suddenly they know
that in perjury and eagerness
nobody can understand anything
nor even raise the head.

But in addition, he said
that love and distance are the same,
it is about to place a stellar emptiness



between the parties, not possessing,
 just be there, placed, under the bell
 of a church, just listening
 a coin falling down
 deaf
 in your money box.

COMPASSION

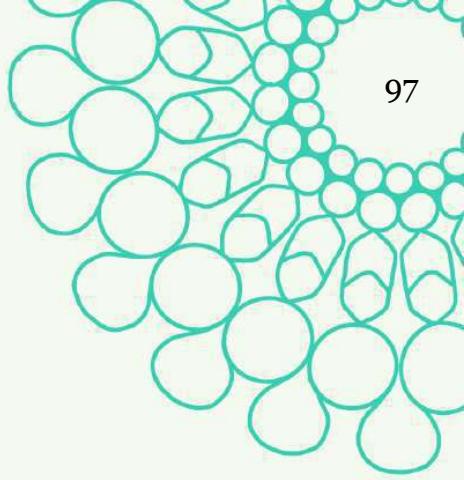
Absolute compassion
 on the other side of the summer;
 a forehead of blood
 illuminates the path
 that today oozes in the sea.
 Not to fear, not
 to laugh, not
 to silence the constant name
 that now collapses, to pick up
 with the erudite eyelid
 the stealth of the hour, the uncompleted fall of who stings
 so much, not
 to quarrel, not to graze, not
 to sanctify the father nor lie,
 never in the glory, not
 to be silent, not to see, no longer be
 here
 no.

About Renato Sandoval

Renato Sandoval Bacigalupo (Lima, Peru, 1957), studied Hispanic Literatures and Linguistics (Master of Arts) at the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru and completed his doctoral studies in Romanic Philology at the University of Helsinki, Finland. He has published a dozen poetry and essay books. As a university professor, he lectures on Nordic Literatures, as well as Hispanic, French and German Medieval and Contemporary Literature. He has been director of the International Poetry Festival in Lima (FIPLIMA) and director of the Editorial Fund of the Ministry of Culture of Peru. In 1988 he obtained the first prize of 'El cuento de las mil palabras' (The 1000-Word Short Story Prize) of the weekly *Caretas*, in 2016 won Copé Bronze National Prize for Poetry, and in 2019 was granted with the National Literature Prize with Special Mention in Poetry.



A TREE



the sapling doesn't ask the time
it has an ocean of time

the tree asks the time and reckons
when its sap will lose all passion

the snag doesn't ask the time
it has an ocean of time

Translated by Inger-Mari Aikio & Charles Peterson

ME MYSELF

I
just I
only I myself

I am very important
so important
so very very important

in the end
a solitary stone

Translated by Inger-Mari Aikio & Charles Peterson



SILK TASSELS

110,000 silk tassels
 trickle down a brown back,
 their seductive river
 is a call to dive
 to investigate the basins, the rocky shoals

a pillar rises
 appears like a thief
 boasting
 bragging
 tests the air like a snake

a tear emerges from the eye
 moistens the core
 raises the waves
 black silk licks the pillar
 tickling, sticking

droplets of laughter
 cascade in the firth

Translated by Kasper Salonen

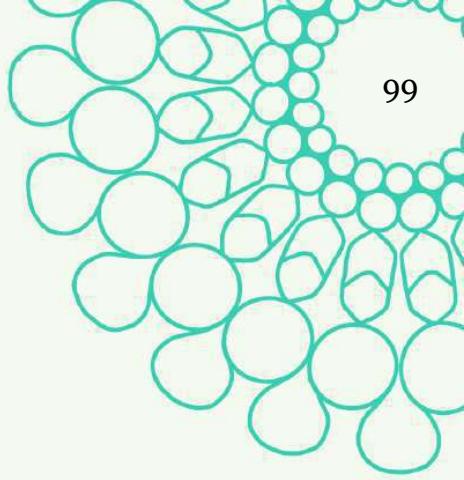
About Inger-Mari Aikio

Inger is a poet, writer, translator, director and producer of documentary films and music videos. While she has worked as a journalist, radio host and reporter, she has also published eleven books in Northern Sámi in which seven are poetry. Examples of her work are *Beairrás čuohká gaba – Aurinko juo kermaa* (2014) and *69 čuoldda – 69 pyhästä* (2018). She has been nominated for Nordic Literature Prize (2004) and was the winner of Skábmagovat Film Award (2013), State Award for Children's culture (2015) and Naji Naaman literary Creativity prize (2021).



Dr. Zhang Zhi
China

THE POET



1

You implant your feet into the land
 Where there is a strange current
 Rumbling and gathering beneath your feet
 As if hundreds of millions of whales
 Noisily well up your blood vessels and flow into your heart
 Turning into a boundless sea
 The deep sound of its waves dashes on the wall of your heart
 And finally breaks the control of the throat
 And gushes out of the tongue of the art
 Intensifying the scorching hot air without the body
 Accelerating the blooming of pure flames
 Sighting your own body
 Lighting reddish brown soil
 Until it becomes transparent
 Until it unifies with the world
 Until the nerves of thought
 Deeply wedge into the plump flesh of the land
 And then bud, sprout, flower and fruit

2

Your brawny and sensitive ankles
 Stand unbendingly like a monument



Under the temptation of eternity
 With a certain supernatural strength
 Resist the weighty hatchet
 And the whip of lightening
 Face the azure
 And the never-changing direction
 With the absolute posture of flight
 Sprout your brass branches and gold leaves
 Covering the soil and rivers
 With the light of soul
 Radiate the language of constellation the universal
 In the wrathful thunders
 Over the noise of the dusty world
 Probe the profound meanings in the hearts of ants
 Decode the code of birds' language
 And listen to the sounds of all things

COMING BACK HOME

The autumnal wind is wailing again over the Champaign
 The turtledove is calling in the bamboo forest
 Let's go, child
 Stretch out your little hands to me
 Let us—father and son
 Pass through this long, long country road
 And return to that white-walled warm hut

Let's go, child
 Never care how the dandelion swings
 Never care how swans fly southward across the sky
 Let's go, child
 Let us—father and son



Pass through this maple forest rustling with falling leaves
 Let the brass mirror of the autumnal sun polish
 The bygone tranquility, the bygone laugh
 And a cluster of flames dancing in the winter night

Let's go, child
 Let this long long country road
 Take us back
 To the warm dream in the old homeland

TITLE LOST

No one can calculate
 What time
 The sun will no more damp
 Frost will no longer fall on the land
 What time
 Our hearts and blood
 Will no more burn in vain
 What time
 The world is no longer a volcano
 We are no longer on the volcano
 A pile of ashes
 What time
 The wind, waving its black lightning
 Will attack the dying sky
 What time
 No one can calculate

About Dr. Zhang Zhi

Zhang is a poet, critic and translator in contemporary China. He is also a Doctor of Literature and is currently the president of the International Poetry Translation and Research Centre, executive editor of *Rendition of International Poetry Quarterly* (multilingual) and editor-in-chief of the English edition of *World Poetry Yearbook*. He began to publish his literary and translation works in 1986. Some of his literary works have been translated into more than thirty foreign languages and he has won international poetry prizes. His main works include poetry collections such as *Recita* (Portuguese-English-Chinese), *Selected poems of diablo* (English), *Poetry by Zhang Zhi* (German-English-Portuguese) and *A Jigsaw Picture of the World* (Albanian). He has also published translated poetry collections *A & I is the founder* and *Selected Poems of Tareq Samin*.

BRANCH



102

LOVE UMBRELLAS



Jenny Lewis
United Kingdom

Photo Taken by Ben Prestney

NOW AS THEN

Read our footprints on the long road out of Babylon.
They'll tell you

how the river stopped and fish became tin; how the air
had a taste of marble and our lungs fought for breath
as they turned to stone –

how our selves disappeared
into the shadows of date palms cast in bronze
on the walls of Sennacherib's palace.

Still we journey, unembraceable ghosts,
flying across continents between airports, each new city a
sarcophagus
from which the winged genies who protect us have fled.

And always the scent of cedar and cypress, boxwood and
juniper.

Always the mayfly hovering over the water.
Always the mother and child leaving their country for ever.

About Jenny Lewis

Jenny is a poet, playwright and translator who teaches poetry at Oxford University. She has had eight plays and poetry cycles performed at major UK theatres and has published five books of poetry including *Taking Mesopotamia* (Oxford Poets/ Carcanet, 2014) and *Gilgamesh Retold* (Carcanet Classics, 2018) which was a *New Statesman* Book of the Year. Since 2012, Jenny has been collaborating with the exiled Iraqi poet Adnan Al-Sayegh on an award-winning, Arts Council-funded project *Writing Mesopotamia* aimed at building bridges between English and Arabic-speaking communities to fight war and oppression with peace and beauty through combining poetry with visual art, theatre, music, dance and film. Her translation, with others, of extracts from Adnan's *Uruk's Anthem*, was published in 2020 by Seren.



Paolo Ruffilli
Italy

LIFE

How life
begins and ends
(by chance perhaps?)
the luminous vestige
the wake that leaves
behind all
that was loved
or unloved
or at least unknown
joy and mourning:
all is cast into
the blind vessel
into the arms of darkness.
Yet the faded trace
of every-thing,
all along,
flourishes anew
in the light
of the united strength
of men.

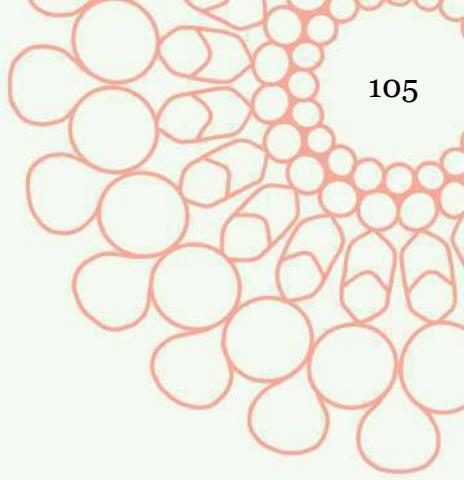
About Paolo Ruffilli

Born in 1949, Paolo has published volumes of poetry including *Piccola colazione* (1987, American Poetry Prize, in English translation *Like it or no*, Bordighera Press 2007), *Diario di Normandia* (1990, Montale Award) and *Camera oscura* (1992, in English translation *Dark Room*, Bordighera Press, 2012). He has also published the story books *Preparativi per la partenza* (2003) and *Un'altra vita* (2009), the novel *L'isola e il sogno* (2011), essays. One can find his work on the website: www.paoloruffilli.it



Maisoon Saqr
United Arab Emirates

BLACK AND WHITE



We used to exchange photographs;
His mother's for my mother's,
His father's for my father's, and
His for mine.

His mother was dressed modestly and on her head...
The photograph only showed her portrait.
While my mother was gracefully sitting on a large golden
armchair, her arms resting on the armrests, just like a princess.
The photograph shows a full body portrait.
His father was dressed poorly in monotone colours, his face
smudged with the mud he cherished.
That is why he never owned a land "after all those impoverished
years he has no need for it".
My father on the other hand, sheathed with a dagger around his
waist and it was not the same dagger that killed him later.
Our pictures however, showed no such comparisons, except
mine was coloured and his in black and white.



I'M THE ONLY CAT HERE

What do I say in the tent?
I, with my captivating eyes?
I, whose poem meows
at the feet of poetry
I'm the only cat here
licking my injury
without objection
While the coffee boils over
in the tent
I sit and paint my eyes with eyeliner
I tell myself:
I am a widow,
When I puncture the paper
with the tip of the pen.
While I apply the eyeliner with a pencil, I tell myself:
The dagger will pierce his heart
The blood will burst onto my face
I will drink it, and toast vengeance.
I open my painted eyes and say:
I will learn evilness
I will learn how to be the widow of a highway robber.



WITHOUT MUCH PASSION

In front of my skinny body
 I resist the urge to overthrow the world.
 I refrain from looking every time two people stronger than me
 fight
 and I go to the amusement park
 to see people who differ from me
 drawn to life as if it is a piece of candy
 and when I return,
 I hide underneath my blanket
 I sleep without much passion
 to capture dreams that do not suit me
 I search in my hands for a seedling to flourish
 beside a torn down wall
 I enter a house,
 as if I have lived there since birth
 and underneath my blanket,
 I will own freedom that no one will see with me.
 That is why we can embrace without any fear my freedom.

*All Poems Translated by Maisa Mohamed
 United Arab Emirates*

About Maisoon Saqr

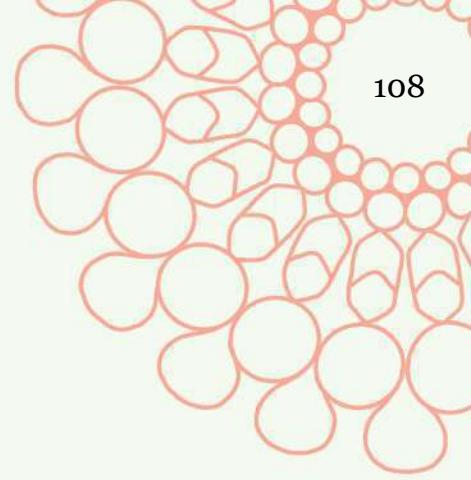


Poet, artist and novelist Maisoon graduated with a bachelor's in Arts, specialising in Political Science and Economics from Cairo University. She has worked as the head of the culture department at the Abu Dhabi Cultural Center as well as the Ministry of Media & Culture. She has many books; more than ten in formal Arabic, two in colloquial Egyptian, and one children's book with paintings. As a writer, she participated in many poetry festivals around the world, such as the Arabic book fair at the Arab World Institute in Paris, and the book fair in Hanover, Germany. In 2014, she received the Kavafis award for poetry, and in 2017 her second novel "*A pearl in my mouth*" was a finalist for the Sheikh Zayed Award literature section.



Hassan Najmi
Morocco

ASLEEP



Do not open the window unless there's a moon.
(An American Song)

When you come home and find me asleep –
Do not wake me.
Just check on the children and the flowerpots on the balcony.
Water the mint cuttings for the taste of tea to become greener.
Check on the chicken's coop and be careful with the eggs.
Check on the dog house.
Give the cat its evening meal.
Stop to listen to what the silly parrot has to say again.
And do not forget to stop and look at the night for me.

...
...

When you come home, and I am asleep –
Do not say I am dead.
I simply relinquished everything.
Precisely the life that has never been entirely a life.
As well as my soul
But do open the window –
For the moon will surely be there.



LIKE A CHILD'S CORPSE WASHED ASHORE

To Aylan Kurdi: in memoriam

I did not catch the child's name clearly when the news mentioned him.

I do know it: now.

When he washed up along the shore – that night, little, innocent, and empty of the world – he remained there lying down on the sand, alone at night as if to comfort his little body under the guise of silence. The face of the Kurdish Syrian child, which algae and seaweed had shielded and the starlight forsaken, Was engulfed by the clouds, the terror, and the night.

And he did not know –
Whether God had forgot or chosen him?



AKHMATOVA'S MAUSOLEUM

Pray for me.

A. Akhmatova, 1938

No other season is longer than this winter.

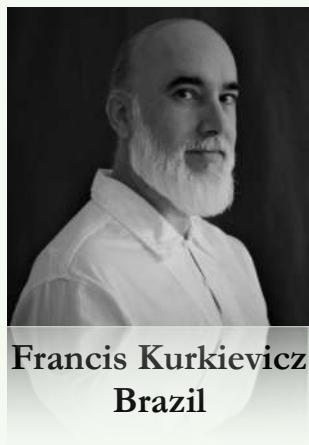
The little gods alone know –
 Why we stayed here, up to now, guarding the mausoleum.
 (Even at night we don't leave you).
 Some books have said that the Tatar woman will rise from her
 eternal sleep –
 And you will come with us, full of life, back to the palace of
 life.
 That's the reason we are here –
 Our poem praying for you.
 That's the reason we are here –
 Our poem praying for you.

All Poems Translated by Dr. Mbarek Sryfi

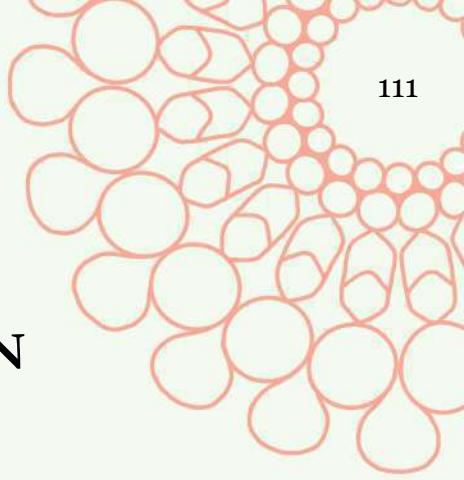
About Hassan Najmi

Hassan is a poet, scholar, and critic born in 1960. He founded the House of Poetry in Morocco in 1995, was the Chairman of the Moroccan Writers' Union for two terms (1998-2005), and is currently the Chairman of PEN International-Moroccan Center (2018-Present). Najmi holds a doctorate in Arabic language and literature and has served as President of the Moroccan Writers Union. He has published two novels, "The Veil" (2006) and "Gertrude" (2021), a number of literary studies, and numerous poetry collections such as A Small Life, The Granada Key and A Hurt like Love.





THE POET'S MISSION



I

In this insane age we live in
 Peace is a reason for wars,
 Hate murders every day
 the helpless love,
 The hope,
 that word that has already sown
 Futures in the broken heart -
 Became a forgotten word
 At the bottom of dictionaries of all languages;

II

Fear spreads over the epidermis of the world
 Like a cancer smothering the nature of all things,
 Suffocates the spirit of Friendship with mistrust,
 Suffocate Freedom with persecutions,
 Suffocate the Sacred Feminine with the heavy hand of misogyny;
 On the borders there is no Fraternal Embrace
 Waiting for the immigrant and the refugee
 For the warmth of affection,
 But there's the barbed wire and the angry policeman



Desiring to tear the bodies of the excluded;
Hunger is an insatiable monster
Devouring the stomach and dreams,
The presence and imagination,
Of those who fight against other cruelties;

III

But these things know all the Poets in the world,
They know from their own experience or from empathy,
There is no theme or subject that is ignored
Through the sensitivity of a Universal Consciousness,
No condition that affects our brother
- wherever he is, whoever he is -
It will be excluded from our poems,
For we Poets understand
That Poetry is a territory without borders,
That Poetry is the most democratic Art there is,
That Poetry is the space of resistance
Against all forms of fascism;



IV

In the heart of an honest heart
 And in the silence of solitude
 the Poets know
 That Poetry is the eternal refuge
 That preserves the Human Essence;
 who has truths
 That it proclaims for the good of humanity;
 [Because there are many anonymous voices
 That fall in the desert of battles.]



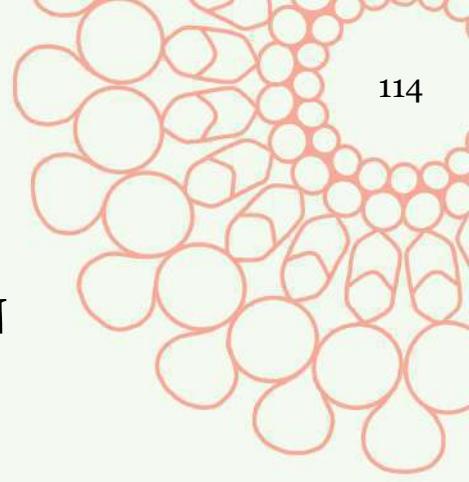
About Francis Kurkiewicz

Francis studied Philosophy, has an MBA in management and literary creation, and a specialisation in Teaching in Yoga. In 2015, he was one of the 36 finalists for the SESC Literature Award in the Tales category. He was also awarded at the III UFES Literature Award, in the poem category, in 2015. In 2020, he launched “*Editora Patuá*” - his first book of poems. He has contributed his poems in several digital magazines, and with articles and translation in other Literary Magazines. He participated in the 5th Festival of Eurasian Open Literary Festivals – LIFFT. He lives in Brazil, where he teaches Dramaturgy, Poetry and Meditation workshops.



Luan Rama
Albania

ELEGY FOR AEGEAN SEA DOLLS



For dolls, an elegy has never been written,
an elegy mourning their dreams,
but today on the Aegean coast,
an elegy alone too little seems to be,
for their faint eyes in the great calamity
burned and thrown by thunderstorms and lightning.

For the silent mouths of children left at sea
fleeing the war and the horror of the world,
there is nothing but their small shoes left,
the scarves of the lost mothers, who knows where
and these nameless dolls without hands and feet,
without their adorned shirts
and eyes that no longer can speak of anything



from their hell-journey,
dolls washed out on the Aegean coast ...
For dolls, elegies have never been written, says the foamy wave,
never, repeats the wind that hits the rocks,
the wind that weeps with its Homeric tears.
This is the elegy of shoes that will not walk tomorrow,
the elegy of children who can no longer dream,
the elegy of their extinguished eyes in the world of bullet-like
wonders

DO YOU REMEMBER?



It was a warm summer night,
just past midnight,
while lying in her bed,
the old woman extended her hand
and placing it over her husband's chest:
- Are you sleeping? She said
- Yes!
- I remembered just, like in a dream...
- What?
- The night when I was looking for you everywhere,
in the rain, through the wind,
looking for you like a fool

and I prayed to God that you would be with another woman,
 that you were alive...
 tell me, where were you?
 He turned towards her and touched her dry lips.
 It was cold.
 - Speak!
 The silence weighed heavily.
 - Yes, I was with a woman
 - I've wanted to tell you all my life,
 but what does it matter now?
 we will be leaving soon,
 leaving the sun behind, crossing over onto the long night...
 He kissed her. She cried.
 - Sleep now, it's late, birds will sing in a little while,
 and doves will take to the streets of heaven.
 - I was afraid for you! ...
 now, to sleep, I have plenty of time.
 And they held each other tight,
 eye to eye,
 tangled arms,
 heart on heart,
 with bleeding wounds slowly throbbing
 through a timeless time,
 and the dawn not wanting to shed its light onto the world...

POETS DIE LIKE BIRDS

*Arben Shehi went to blow out
 his candle the night before...*

Poets fall like sparrows,
 Fired,
 struck by lightning,



closer to the storm and the sun.
Poets are the wounded heart of gamebirds:
that's why they are the first to plummet
wing-broken, sleepwalking
towards an endless death
in a life that does not dwindle.
Poets take the first blow
as they have embodied the fires and the heavenly
voices
and so by Olympus are condemned.
They die before their time
From the life-long labour
of sowing love throughout their days.
Poets perish
From a lover's loss and yearning tears
They stop hearts and break one's breath
when in their death, they drop.
Glance away:
The poet's searing gaze is brimmed with tears...

All poems translated by Miranda Shehu-Xhilaga



About Luan Rama

Born in 1952, Luan is a scholar, filmmaker, editor and writer. He graduated in Journalism from University of Tirana, and subsequently specialised in filmmaking and communication at Paris VII Denis Diderot University. His career spans more than 14 years as a screenwriter of award-winning feature films, documentaries and cartoons for Albanian cinema studios. He is a distinguished diplomat, who served as an ambassador of Albania (1992–2005) in Paris, Lisbon and Monaco. Luan Rama has written 50 books, including novels, short stories, poetry, correspondence, essays and historical works published in Albanian, English, French, Italian and Greek. Many of these explore linkages - historical, cultural and personal - between Albania and Europe, especially France.



**El-Khidr Choudar
Algeria**

DEAR BILL

Dear Bill

I know you no longer hope for anything, or wait for anyone

Half a century after your seedtime

Since you were growing strong in Stanford,

Till now you've come to this abode.

You who know the Middle Ages by heart,

The tribes long vanished of the Germans

And the Gauls.

No one's eyes flash like yours

As you speak of the lessons of Guillaume de Lorris

In the Roman de la rose,

Or the knights of Chrétien de Troyes.

You would smile at the end of class

At the grand metaphors.

What's the use of that now,

You say,

When you have half a heart
 And are so weak,
 When your pulse comes burbling from pipes.
 Life is not strong enough,
 As it was before,
 To flow in charm and spontaneity,
 You say.

What's the use of all of that,
 When you moisten your dry lips
 With ointment from a tissue
 And read in your solitude words
 From your old book,

A Poet at the Fountain

Translated by Kay Heikkinen



About El-Khidr Choudar

A poet and translator currently living in Chicago, El Khidr graduated from the University of Florida and worked as a professor there before moving to the University of Michigan. He has published several collections of poetry and translations and has other books in print.



**Hugo Alberto Costa
Argentina**

DO YOU KNOW THAT... (ONE TRAVELLER'S ADVICE)

When you feel that life is a dot
and that dot your biggest failure
and your eyes fill with tears
accompanied by inconsolable spasms.

Do you know that, when the night comes,
there will always be a shining star.

When the anger overfills your distress
and your arms linger forceless
and your walk is slow
with the weight of your tired feet.

Do you know that, even though you do not notice it,
I will always be by your side.

When the pain bothers you in symptoms
and medicine has no cure to it
feeling that life holds a cross on your side.

Do you know that your spirit has the strength,
pain is only human.

When you stop to look
Each and every one of your acts and the past comes



Suddenly, being you your judge and lawyer.

Do you know that God does not punish
does not judge, only you must mend it.

When a word of disdain hurts you
and you feel a bitter taste in your ears
and you close your mouth apathetically
having to bear with the insults.

Do you know that the word said
always returns to the lips.

When the social burdens you,
and society leaves you aside
enclosing you in that concept
calling you disabled.

Do you know that even Jesus being so good
was also crucified.

When your look becomes lethargic
and you feel lost
and you do not know where to go
feeling forgotten.

Do you know what, leave your sight dazzled
with one enchanted landscape.

When the night strains
over your broken body
and you feel hungry and cold
without shoes.

Do you know that, when you were born,
only a pair of hands hugged you.

When the sky covers with clouds
and the storm is ready
and lightnings and thunders strike
and water overflows you.

Do you know that, in order to see the rainbow,
this is what you must have lived.

When you think that love
has distanced little by little
and you have built a wall
like a sacred shield.

Do you know that, while your heart beats
you will know how to find love.



Translated by María Pilar Cattalín

Argentina

About Hugo Alberto Costa

Hugo was born in 1976 and has been a member of the Provincial Police Forces since 1997. In 2011, he released his first book: “Colores, Perfumes y Olvidos” (*Colors, Perfumes and Oblivion*). His other books include: “Cuando amanece en vos” (*When it dawns on you*), “Soy” (*I Am*), “Fuego de otro Fuego” (*Fire from another Fire*). His books have been delivered to various libraries accessible to people with visual impairment and Hugo participates in International, National and Provincial Writers Meetings.



I AM A WOMAN

**Tarana Turan Rahimli
Azerbaijan**

I am not a painter
But I know a lot of colours
Most painters are unaware of them:
Colour of love, colour of longing, colour of grief...

I am not a composer
But I am able to hear the sounds
Of which any composer can't hear:
Sounds of harmony parting, joining and hope.

I am not a gardener
But as I feel the scents of flowers,
I also can feel the scent of days and months
Fragrant garland of colourful feelings
Gives a charm to my life.

I am not a painter,
I am not a composer,
I am not a gardener either...
I am a woman

Whom the God created
In a pleasant hour...
There is the light of love of God
In my eyes and in my heart...

WE WERE NOT CREATED FOR EACH OTHER

We are human beings of two different worlds,
It is dark in one world, it is light in the other.
Two different hearts, two different opinions,
We were not created for each other.

My wishes are like sail less ship,
Your waves can't push me.
This love may become a grief like a parting,
We were not created for each other.

I don't want the heat of love to scorch you
I can't bear the flames of love.
Who heard summer and winter united?
We were not created for each other.

I think all people on my way are angels,
But for you all people around you are tricksters.
What is the use of deceiving yourself?
We were not created for each other.



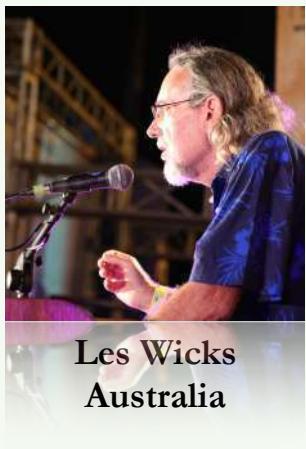
Each of us has different spirits, let's not be divided
Let's not shove each other on the train of life.
Let's not set a road the end of which is seen beforehand
We were not created for each other.

Translated from Azerbaijani into English by Sevil Gulten

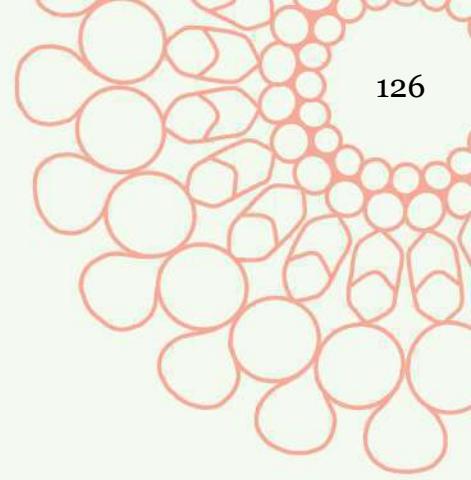


About Tarana Turan Rahimli

Dr. Tarana Turan Rahimli is a poet, writer, journalist and literary critic. She is a doctor of Philological Sciences, Associate Professor of World Literature Chair of Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University, author of 8 books and more than 400 articles. Her work has been published in over 45 countries in 25 languages.



MOORAY



You wipe & wander
through a maze of trails stretched with webs as
though you were cutting a ribbon,
some official opening each few metres.

You stomp & wobble
through loud silence,
the cicada & whip
of corella light/
sky cut spear
of the Gymea Lily, speckled
craze of Christmas Bush in bloom.

You amble & stumble
till you reach a camp site, the
haphazard fireplace ringed with cans & stubbies,
some miniature Stonehenge.

Worn dirt, exorcised ash.
Tribal paint suggesting
Doug loves Linda
yet this scene
throbs with a history
of subtlety & excess.

I'll let any stranger
in on our people's tiny secret.



Between Big
 Pineapples, Prawns & Rams we really
 come to worship at the smaller,
 hidden edge
 where the weft of eucalypt scours the air,
 its leaves stain ponds
 to a sleepy tea that lulls us —
 knowingly or not —
 all to peace.

TILT

At the edge of that cliff
 every cliff
 there's a wrinkle in the heart.
 Feet argued amongst themselves.

To drop like a seed into unknowable...
 but then I turn back
 towards the approved certainties of my cabin.

How far can you go
 into over beneath
 the granite precipice of tomorrow?

No doubt in the end —
 so much to do, to forgive, to touch.

Each cliff I pass thus far
 they ask. An answer —
I have enough.



ENOUGH

There is no mail today
 no prizes or bills. Let's be easy.
 A kookaburra sheds down
 like coins on a crowd of one.

It is raining somewhere else
 & time won't finish yet.
 Over breakfast
 a light northerly wind grooms
 crimson rosellas. Joy is deceptively busy.

For every pain there is a tablet.
 Fish are reported back
 in a once-polluted river. They pulped up trees
 to bring me the news
 but we hope small crimes are forgiven.
 Writing opens the pores. This is not the end.

The backbone's connected to the
 sky-bone. The wish-bone's connected
 to the home-loan.
 Drinking grey water my
 frangipani struts with flower.
 Cloud's gone a bit irascible but
 yesterday a humpback whale came close to the shore
 phones clicked agog &
 all be well.



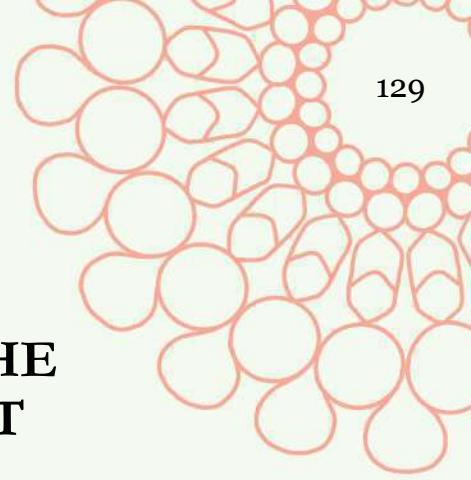
About Les Wicks

Born in 1955, Les is a poet, publisher and editor. He has a long list of achievements in writing, publishing and broadcasting. He has published fourteen books of poetry, his fourteenth being “*Belief*” (Flying Islands, 2019). He has been a guest at most of Australia’s literary festivals, toured widely and been published in over 400 different newspapers, anthologies and magazines across 33 countries in 15 languages.



Lola Koundakjian
Armenia/United States

ETHIOPIANS AT THE MOSCOW AIRPORT



On the second floor, far from overpriced bars
and eateries of the lofty food court
I sat roosting the cold floor in dim lighting
escaping the cigarette clouds

Others were setting up temporary bedding
at Sheremetyevo International Airport,
away from angry patrons at non dispensing ATMS
and happy noises from the Irish bar below deck.

Why do airlines impose a 15 hour layover
most of us seem to endure,
“all the more to empty
your pockets, my dear”.

By the toilets, a more permanent fixture of
Ethiopians seeking refugee status sleep
on cardboards under airline blankets
and feast on donated food.

They responded to my queries in perfect English;
telling me they had tried Cuba without luck, and
yes, Moscow seemed a good possibility, though
their smiles hid their grief.



I spent two weeks in Yerevan thinking about them,
breathing that foul airport air. And, on
that shorter layover on my way home,
I did not find them.

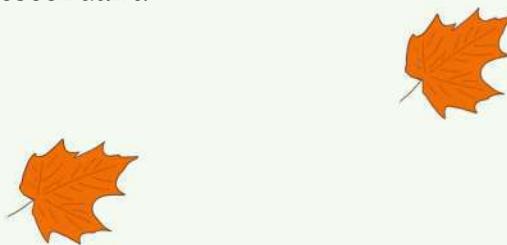
PORTRAIT OF AN ARMENIAN WOMAN

She wears her traditional dress and jewellery
on her wedding day, or perhaps at her son's
baptism, her first born in the arms of godparents,
the procession on the altar, the priest anointing
her dewy child and blessing him.
But why this gaze of sadness?

Is a premonition weighing her mind?
A century separates us, and I wish to tell her
she was right. There were many executions
and deportations, without justice or recognition.

I want to know her name.
Did her family survive?

Could I be her descendant?



About Lola Koundakjian

Lola is a writer, editor and translator born in Lebanon and living in New York City since 1979. After pursuing degrees in Fine Arts and History, Lola honed her skills as an editorial board member at the Ararat Literary Quarterly, in New York. She has four poetry collections in Armenian and English. She runs the Dead Armenian Poetry Society and curates and produces poems and audio for the online Armenian Poetry Project. Since 2010, she has read at five international poetry festivals, in several countries. Her work appears in various journals and international anthologies.



Minko Tanev
Bulgaria

CRADLE OF LIFE

Bright Week.
Blooming cherries
are blessing us
with spring sacraments.

A sun lift transfers us
above the clouds
on the way to infinity.

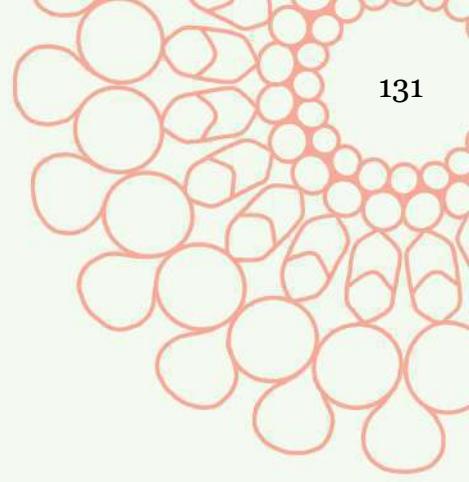
The cradle of life
turns us
in a happy galaxy.

I rediscover on the moon
cities of Atlanteans.
Cosmic fusion
in bright colours
elevates our sleep.
In the next round of the spiral.

Enlightenment.

BRIGHT PROVIDENCE

I am alone with the Word.
I am alone with the exclamation.
The miracle to recreate
like an earthquake.



Volcanic peaks
in me erupt
and the infinite calls me
in a stellar cycle.

Inspired by the love
I kneel.
And God shines brightly
in everything.

SURF

My trembling essence forebode
the smithy of the world where is.
Sparks fly. Comets burned me.
The midnight illusion rules me.

Substance! Spectacular. Alive.
Core. Consciousness. Galaxy.
And the ocean in my mind overflows.
From Antarctica to distant Arctic.

I'm breaking away. I'm splashing. I erupt.
I belong entirely of the yearning.
And I come back. Eternal. Uplifted.
With an enlightened spirit and body of love.

All Poems Translated by Stoianka Boianova



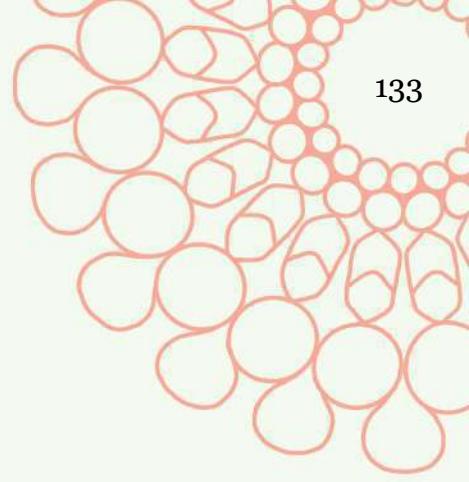
About Minko Tanev

Minko Tanev is lecturer of Bulgarian language for foreign students at Medical University, Plovdiv, and author of six books of poetry published in Bulgaria. He is the co-author of two bilingual books, poetry and haiku, published in India, and has participated in anthologies and editions with numerous awards and recognition from around the world. He is among the European Top 100 most creative haiku authors, and a voice within the anthology of the world's best poets, 'Temirqazyq', 2019, 'Songs of Peace – World's Biggest Poetry Anthology', 2021, 'Atunis Galaxy Anthology', 2021, and 'The first, second and third anthology of world gogyoshi'. In 2020, he received an award from "First World Poetry Competition of Newspapers and Televisions" in China, and has won numerous awards from global and planetary literary societies.



Consuelo Hernández
Colombia / America

THREE WORDS



What brings you here
Where do you come from
and who let you in to disturb my typing
on the last afternoon of this year...

You arrive flying as if
you sailed on the wings of a cockatoo
among the voice of cigars
that shout your name from the Potomac River.

Who lets you creep into my secret fields
where I harvest the seeds that will germinate later.

Who yanks this hoarse roar from my throat
I do not recognise my voice
that zigzags through the street
like a celestial wave
repeating the sound of your voice...

What kind of sorcery has made me a prisoner
could it be the magic
woven into your song
that travels from your piano
to reach my keyboard...



My heart tries to find you
in the streets that lead to your house
and in the air that puts light into your eyes
My throat cries out
emulating the screech of a condor
and the rain falls
through the rain you persist
over plazas, to the shore of my sea
an eye that does not blink
watching the infinite nothingness.

Three words in my heart
shout out your name
three words smother me
threes words moisten my skin and my dreams
three words: I love you.

YOUR SOUL

Your soul that whistles the wind song
resounds in my heartbeat
light, rebirth... we are not alone
you never forgot us divine memory.

Your love encloses magical powers
your clarity gets in my soul corners
all revives with you, all is moved by you
you dissipate my sorrows and pains
your understanding effaced up my anguish.

Time matures and falls from the trees
laws rotate in alternate waves



black storm clouds... a clear horizon
behind, another black cloud.

Ebb... flow. Rise and fall.

A wise person brings us balance
from waiting so much, I was no longer expecting
and in the end, you arrived.

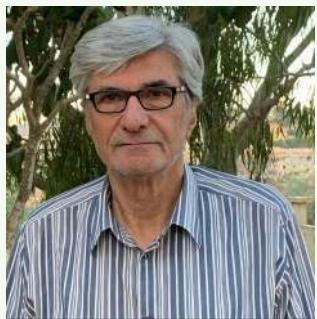
the bells of my soul are blooming anew
rain refreshes the weary visages
wind is again swaying in the leaves
your will gives strength and invigorates.

Oh! who can comprehend the magic of your being
you tower in the sky
surpassing the infinity
you melt in the clouds lightening the cosmos
as you were a tree whose fruit is the sun.

About Consuelo Hernández



Consuelo is the author of *Wake of Chance / Estela del azar* (2021), her most recent Poetry collection, and has published seven poetry books including *El tren de la muerte* (Chapbook, 2018). She has written numerous articles on Latin American literature and has two scholarly books: *Voces y perspectivas en la poesía latinoamericana del siglo XX* (2009), and *Álvaro Mutis: Una estética del deterioro* (1996). Her distinctions include the Antonio Machado Poetry Prize, Spain; Finalist in the “Ciudad Melilla” International Poetry Contest, Spain, and “Letras de Oro” Poetry Contest, University of Miami. Her poetry appears in numerous anthologies around the world, and she has been invited for poetry readings in Latin America, the United States, Canada, and Europe.



THREE PROFILES OF DEATH

Jawdat Fakhreddine
Lebanon

1.

I planted it,
three years ago,
the eucalyptus whose branch has grown
to resemble me.

It shivers within me,
confused and pale
as I.

I planted the tree
whose branching is life
and what have I
but the embrace of a shadow that becomes me?

I see us standing in stark exposure.
We exult and we conceal one another.

One is the shade
while together we are the secret
of our embrace.

This tree is life
and the branch I see reaching
takes me,
returns me to the wild.

It is life
and what am I
but the one
who planted it.

2.

To the one I love
I say: our time together ends
in seconds or in years.
It will end.
If only we could go on in this embrace
and never return.
What holds us back from disappearing
into an encounter whose end
approaches even now?

3.

The poem, which I drafted,
I read.
Then I redrafted it
and read
and read it again,
until I released it
unto listeners
at a reading
and then I forgot it.
Now, when I meet it in a book
from time to time,
it beckons to me like a prisoner,
lets out a sigh
and glows.
It wants to know where I've been.
Whenever I face it,
I face a new meaning
for absence.



BIRD

1.

The heart lies,
and drops in the pit of the body
heavy beats.
The heart lies,
and sends to the far limbs lightning
and night-long shivers.

2.

The heart plays, it does not lie.
It plays, drumming among lowly organs.

3.

It is the heart then,
the bird of this body.
In its pit, it plays.
In its pit, it strives.
It forever flies wingless within its thoracic cage.
Wrestling with echoes,
choking sometimes,
shy as shy words,
noble as noble words.



4.

It is the heart.
 It will fall asleep tomorrow.
 Then, would the bird break free from the pit of this body,
 a bird promised beyond these arid skies,
 slaking the skies?

All Poems Translated by Huda Fakhreddin and Jayson Iwen

About Jawdat Fakhreddine

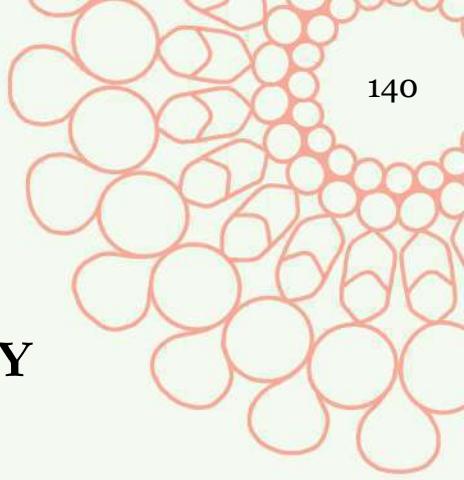


Jawdat is a poet and professor emeritus of Arabic literature at the Lebanese University in Beirut. He has published over ten poetry collections and two works of literary criticism. He regularly contributed to newspapers and journals across the Arab world. His collection of children's poems, *Thirty Poems for Children*, won the Sheikh Zayed Book Award for that category in 2014. His poetry has been translated to French, German, and English. Translated works include: *Lighthouse of the Drowning* (BOA Editions, 2017) and *The Sky that Denied Me* (University of Texas Press, 2020).



Ming Di
China / United States

ANCIENT POTTERY



women by the river
 kneel on their knees, knead
 mud, molding clay pots, jugs and jars,
 round bodies, mud, each a mother
 with children inside, they kneel
 to pray, the mothers, molding clay humans, blessings
 from the sky, they carve the names of each blessed child,
 the earthly clay pottery,
 round, ground, each a goddess.

From the round bodies of motherly goddesses fly
 out children and peach blossoms
 that grow, from flat tablets to round pottery
 on which they carve birds, lightning,
 flying fish, torrential rain, grain
 growing, blossoms born flowering, fall,
 clay vessels, epigraphs, words,
 all buried underground,
 broken bodies
 waiting for stars to decipher



FIRST RESIDENTS OF LOS ANGELES

They shared the land with elephants.
They shared the ocean with sea cows.
They sailed with fish, and soared with birds
with whom they shared the Sun and Moon.

Elephants have died. Sea cows have died.
They have survived—the Chumash people
from the ocean. They have lived here with seagulls
for ten thousand waves of years.

They escaped earthquakes while the elephants
walking up downtown Los Angeles
fell into in tar pits, emerging only as fossils.

The Chumash people, feathers on their heads,
Sun and Moon pull wrinkles out of their faces.



SAILING — FOR MY FATHER

I never knew that Yangtze River flew
 into the ocean until I sailed across
 the Pacific. How quickly I reached
 California through a warm current,
 my tomol canoe in the perfect wind,
 and how far away it seems now
 to reach back to the Three Gorges
 where ancient coffins stone-nailed
 on the high cliffs by the river – Yangtze
 must be running like a rainbow
 thousand tides of years ago.
 I wait for the coronavirus to subside
 so I can take your ashes home,
 my arm stretching out like a sail.

About Ming Di

Ming is the author of seven books of poetry in Chinese. She has lived between China and America for many years and co-organised international translation workshops in Beijing. She translates between Chinese and English with four books published each way, the most recent one being *Observations* by Marianne Moore for which she received the Lishan Poetry Award (in translation) in China. She has edited and co-translated *New Cathay: Contemporary Chinese Poetry* (Tupelo Press, 2013), *New Poetry from China 1917-2017* (Black Square Editions, 2019) and *Poetry from the Yangtze* (forthcoming). Some of her poems have been translated into fifteen languages and she has been invited to many poetry festivals.





Jana Orlová
Czech Republic

SOUL HAS NO GENDER

I'm partly a man
a machine and a planet

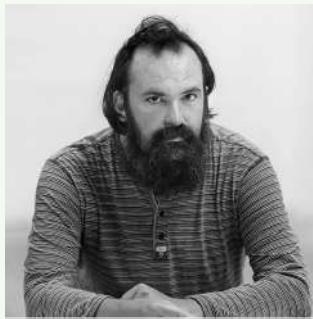
I will erect a chamber for ghosts
and I'll show you where to hunt in gloom

Then I boil them in my menstrual blood
Blade of forfeit, incision of love

I am white, naked, lovely
there, on a remote asteroid

About Jana Orlová

Born in 1986, Jana is a poet and a performer. Her poems were translated into several languages, such as Hindi, Chinese, Spanish, Arabic, Belarusian, Bulgarian and Italian. She gained the "Breakthrough Act Award" in 2017 at Next Wave Festival for "crossing the boundaries of literature, fine art and theatre naturally and with ease". She received the Dardanica Prize in 2020. Her work is to be seen on her website and she is an editor in chief of an online culture magazine.



THE DISTANCE OF SILENCE

Poul Lynggaard Damgaard
Denmark

I do not have words for the streets
which now and again
give a sound.

This period of time
emerges
as it were
the most lonely of times.

I have experienced this silence before
which is now my everyday life.
I have never greeted anyone,
when someone else runs through me.
I may listen, but I am not the one
you are actually speaking to.

The city has lost its pulse,
and I wear it gently.
The doorway in my hands is leaning.
A box full of life
where the children
hold on to close ties.

You place yourself in front of me
with complete naturalness.

THE VIEW OF CREATED FREEDOM

It is not the music in your eyes
waiting for something to pass by.
I turn to another side
than where the stars are.

A little further down the road
an arm is flung out into the air
in intuitive progress.

A field is missing,
if we are to embrace the landscape
we associated with the happy detour.

Someone familiar with the road
places himself in front of another
with a dream leaving its shell.

I am still wondering
how a single being
could contain the ground itself.

When I say, you are on your way again,
it is because you are standing on asphalt.

Yesterday it was gravel.

Once again, you are on your way.



WE LET OURSELVES BE PRESERVED BY A SEA THAT NEVER DIES FOR US

The nearest wave is the deepest
in a ruin of sky. Outlined birds
in the changeable direction
which slowly come into existence.
The time connected
to the column is a window
without a frame. Even the mud
is fused in the making
of a darkness of stone. A planet that cannot bear to be seen.
I let myself be produced as a system
which would never come into sight for flying geese.
But this morning,
I can stand and watch,
and still bring myself together.
The wind I cannot hold
will be yours. The cold is one glow
from being able to preserve strewn soil.
Always time for the world,
and the grain of sand
is a light.

All poems Translated Into English by Rikke Kirchheimer

About Poul Lynggaard Damgaard

Born in 1977, Poul is a member of Danish Authors' Society and since 2012, he has been connected to the Danish Centre for Writers and Translators. His work appears in publications and anthologies world wide. He has participated in several International Poetry Festivals in Europe, and his poetry has been translated to many different languages. His books include "Figurativ uniform" (2016), "Vi bærer hinanden som frakker" (2019) and "Rejsens farver" (2020). His **international participations include** "Ditêt e Naimit", Edition XXI, 2017+2020 in Macedonia, "Orpheus", Edition I, 2018 in Bulgaria and the international Poetry Festival, 5th edition, 2019 in Kosovo.





Luca Benassi
Italy

DECISION

Do not ask us
we know just this: who we are and what we want
for the rest there must be a reason
a way based on a norm
a firm law not to be interpreted.
If things are like this,
it is because they had met,
brought in papers, charts, objectives
around a table late at night
made a deal and signed the truce.
There must have been teacups
assurance to be given, flights to catch.
If things were like that, there must be a reason
you will see: a book will pop out
stationery floating on a yellow river
a Court sentence, bibliographies.
Someone will have made a decision.

POETS

We are like cans filled
of spices in the kitchen
with carefully selected tisanes
we are the nettle, the lime and the balm.

It takes the vegetable patience
that fills the labour of the balconies
to be fine glass loving
the dust, the indifferent scent
of the essences.

Brew your wombs
boil like fish or potatoes
and then strain the red juice
that furs up the bottom of the mug.

POETS 2

Who will carry the torch up to the summit
And from that height will look at the deserted deltas
that preserve the fundamental facts? Who will see
The vertical skies? Nobody
Knows the outcome, the deals made
The conventions that govern
The complex structures
And the exhausted fruits which look like miserable
thin gratings holding roofless cathedrals.



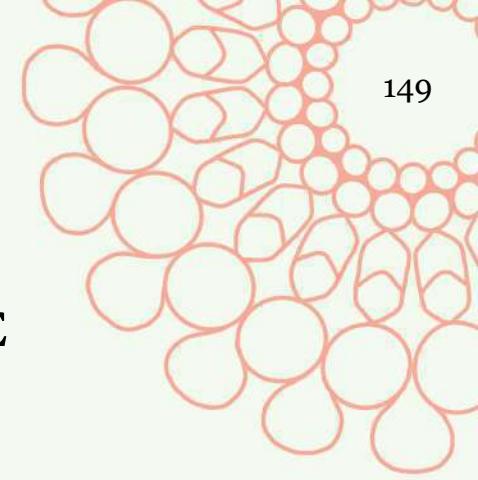
About Luca Benassi

A poet, writer, essayist, journalist and translator, Luca published 5 collections of poems. He published the e-book “*Duet of Lines Sen no Nijuso*” (poems in Italian, English, Japanese, Japan 2016, together with the poet Maki Starfield). He also published poetry anthologies in Spanish, Serbian and Macedoniana. His poems have been translated into English, Romanian, Turkish, Mongolian, Chinese and Korean. He translated the work of the Dutch poet Germain Droogenbroodt “*De Weg*” into Italian. In the issue 1/2004 of *La Clessidra*, he published a selection of translations from the work of the Palestinian poet Ibrahim Nasrallah.



Huguette Bertrand
France/Canada

GOLDEN PEACE



Peace is always struggling
in golden minds
while some are crawling
in the darkness of golden mines

since hope and peace are twins
for those mining in the depth of minds
with their headlamp of hope
of mending peace falling apart
they will always be walking
around the clock
to watch the burst of seeds
for the expected blossoming
of our common garden
on the sunny side
of golden minds



FOR PEACE, HOPE AND LOVE

Break all the walls down
and let dreams come out from darkness
letting them expand in the wilderness
of all memories behind closed doors

Break all the walls down
to let the flowers grow and all the trees also
fragrance and shade will radiate
the whole landscape of wounded minds
laying on the canvas of dusty times

Let's take the bricks of walls
to build houses with smiling doors
to let in the wind blowing words
crushing dramas on lands
with peace on hand

A MATTER OF HOPE



From ages to ages
the light is still burning
in the deepest nights

when the raging storms
try to switch it off
the gentle sun always
keeps the blindness away
when a gleam is still at sight

no more grief in dark old nights
since the blaze of the gentle light
will always ignite hope and good deeds
from time to time for happy endings
in the good nights



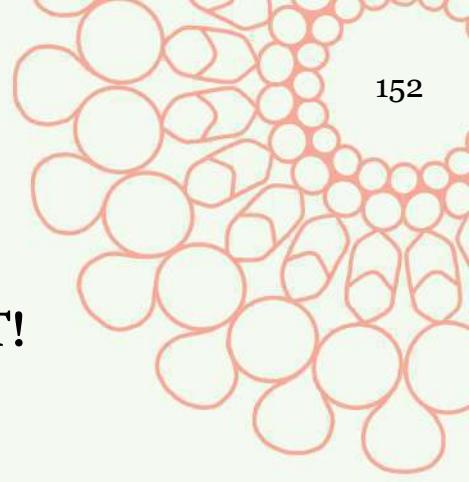
About Huguette Bertrand

A poet and an editor, Huguette has published 38 poetry books. Her poems were published in international journals and anthologies and translated in many languages such as Arabic, Romanian, Coreen, Spanish, Italian, Chinese, Japanese, Bengali, Turkish.



Alemu Tebeje Ayele
Ethiopia

OH, THAT NIGHT!



Our rickety hut lost in the dark,
just one thin blanket without a spark,
we warmed the blanket with our breath,
the blanket slept, not us!

beneath the blanket of the moon,
we lit ourselves like torches
and flared blissfully – wax bodies, souls,
love like a match on lovers' skin

flared and rocketed
us together into the startled sky,
our little piles of sadness up in smoke, bone-dry –
look! a cherub fluttering his flute,

Saint Yared* has allowed us to be mute
while chanting fills our ears,
a million stars explode! Earth changes gears,
our village grows into a shining city,



little huts bewitched to multi-stori-ty,
 our skinny be-bashed cow-skin mattress
 is a field of memory foam, big enough to ride
 a horse or write an epic poem
 we lie under soft sheets at the best-bread table
 where no pain exists, no hungry babble,
 here we have electric light!
 hot water gushing from the taps!

and everything just right, abundant, no mean
 gaps, a feast of comforts,
 even grass to make the baskets
 which we'll take with us forever

oh, that night! that night we nighted!
 how good it tasted! how warm it felt!

before we had to give it back to the chilly dark.

**Saint Yared is an Ethiopian composer and a choreographer who credited for inventing the zema of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in the 6th century AD; the chant that has been in use continuously for the last almost 1500 years.*

Translated by Into English by the author and poet Chris Beckett



About Alemu Tebeje Ayele

An exile journalist, poet, lyric writer, community activist and website campaigner based in London, Alemu studied Ethiopian Languages, Literature and Journalism at the universities of Addis Ababa and Wales respectively. He was also awarded a Diploma in Education and Training at the University of Westminster. His poems have been published in many anthologies such as "Swirl of Worlds", "Forever Spoken", "No Serenity Here", and other online and print literary magazines. His poem '*Greetings to the people of Europe!*' was projected on public buildings in Denmark, Italy, USA and UK by Jenny Holzer in 2017 and his first bilingual collection of poems was published in 2018. He also recently co-translated and co-edited, with poet Chris Beckett, the very first anthology of Ethiopian poetry in English, entitled "Songs We Learn from Trees: An Anthology of Ethiopian Amharic Poetry".



POWER OF POSITIVE SENTIMENT

**Dr. Deepti Gupta
India**

Positive sentiments
hide amazing power
They do wonders
they grant life, strength
Love, care and
protectiveness
Three powerful sentiments
can transform
lives miraculously.
Being protective means
that we care for the
person and are always there
to give support in the hour of need.
We can be caring and

protective from a distance also

Giving moral support

talking positive things,

making aware about dangers

showing and discussing

positive & constructive ways

providing feasible help

In the same way, love is a part or

another form of protectiveness

and Care

It doesn't harm anyone instead

it boosts up the morale

of the other person

makes him feel strong

fills with lots of

confidence and enthusiasm.

Love, care & protectiveness

these positive sentiments

are so lofty, pious and serene



that they instill life
and energy in a person
and inspire him to face
the calamities bravely
with a heart strong and
to move ahead steadily.

So the pious and
positive sentiments
should never be
questioned or blamed.

They are for betterment,
resurgence and strength!

GLOBAL PEACE

The whole world seems like a ‘war house’
Violence, bloodshed, firing and bombing
Have become the cult in the world
violence and cruelty is
the urge of insane minds
contemporary unjust global order
and Unrest have increased tremendously.
All around this scary scenario is awful...
People are living under the shadow of fear



no life, no humanity, on this earth.
 I feel, Gandhian philosophy
 is the only alternative
 to promote the global peace
 in the twenty first century
 I wish for the day when there will be
 understanding and brotherhood among
 all nations across the world!
 there would be no military threat
 from countries to each other
 A loving and peaceful environment
 Will make the globe a heaven!



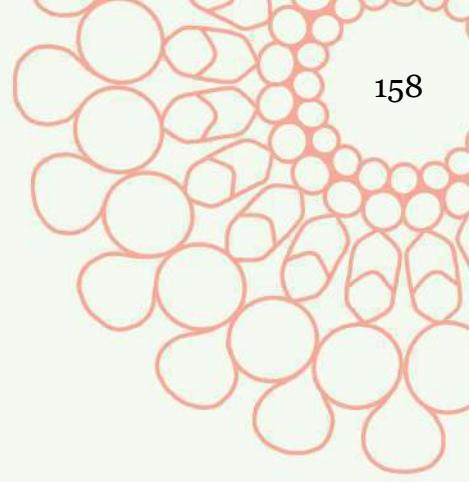
About Deepti Gupta

The recipient of the 'Great Global Woman Award' in February 2021, Dr. Deepti is an established writer and a Former Professor. She has been writing for the last 34 years and has published 25 books. She received 17 prestigious national Awards and 3 international Awards. Her 'rare' achievement is that her stories and poems got the honour to be the part of Pune university syllabus in its 811 colleges as well as ICSE- CBSE syllabus in 25 states of India, and in Dubai, Sharjah, Milan and Abu Dhabi. Dr. Deepti writes about socially relevant issues like World Peace, Communal Harmony, Love & Compassion and Women Empowerment.



Khazal Al Majidi
Iraq

I SPEAK



I speak every day with this river.
I speak every day with this tree.
I speak every day with this wall.
Perhaps
I could rephrase this river,
this tree,
this wall-
I could rephrase me.

BE PROUD

Let everyone of you
be proud-
be a planet or a hero or some rich song,
while I am just a small stone on a planet,
a slim hair in the body of a hero
a forgettable line in the ravishing song.
Leave me alone.



Every one of you:

a great galaxy and I'm a grain of sand,

a great champion while I'm an ordinary man,

a great song while I can't even sing.

Certainly you did many things,

for better and worse, to get where you are,

while I did but one thing-

I was what I wanted to be.

LINGER

Linger before what is coming from afar

and do not rush.

It may be a cloud or a woman or idea.

Linger

and do not reap too quickly.

Otherwise, the harvest will be spoiled and so will you.

Do not haste your destiny.. linger before it



and let it keep on reaping
 until it harvests you
 or you harvest it.

Translated by Soheil Najm

Edited by Dan Veach

About Khazal Al Majidi



A poet, playwright and researcher in the sciences and history of civilisations, religions, myths and orientalism, Khazal has held a doctorate in Ancient History since 1996. He worked in the Union of Writers and Writers in Iraq, then worked as a university professor at the University of Derna in Libya and even lectured at Leiden University in the Netherlands. He has 94 published books, 55 of which are in the fields of science and history of civilisations, religions, mythology and orientalism. His poetic works are published in seven parts. He has a theoretical book on poetry entitled ‘Poetic Mind’, and he is a member of the Union of Arab Writers, the Union of Arab Historians, and a member of the Arab Philosophical Society.



CROCODILE LAUGHTER

Carlos Vitale
Argentina

Don't be fooled.

The guy in the photo

with the big smile

was already unhappy

(you know that,

of course you know that).

Consider him back there,

an extra, one of the crowd,

out of focus

even in a close-up.

Smiling

even though he's dead.

If you ask him
to step forward
he has no shadow.

Convince yourself:
only a shadow
has no shadow.

LATERAL

A grey area,
some photos,
a few loves,
rites, scenery,
no tears,
something akin
to happiness.



APPARITIONS

The sea, painted,
and the island
that disappears,
not from memory
but from the moment.

All poems translated by Kym Coveney

About Carlos Vitale



Carlos Vitale (Buenos Aires, 1953) has a degree in Spanish Literature and Italian Literature. His books of poetry include *Unidad de lugar*, *Descortesía del suicida*, and *Cuaderno de l'Escala / Quadern de l'Escala*. He has also translated many Italian and Catalan poets into Spanish such as: Dino Campana ("Ultimo Novecento", 1986 Translation Prize), and Eugenio Montale ("Ángel Crespo", 2006 Translation Prize). He has participated in festivals, readings and poetry events in Argentina, Spain, Venezuela, Armenia, Italy, Switzerland, Romania, Estonia, Greece, Bulgaria and France. His books have been translated into French, Italian, Catalan, Greek, Bulgarian, Armenian and Estonian. In 2015 he won the "VI Premio José Luis Giménez-Frontín" prize for his contribution to bringing together diverse cultures. He has lived in Barcelona since 1981.



**Zahir Al Ghafri
Oman**

SEARCHING FOR A DREAM

Not now...

This window won't open but a small injury.

You dream like someone

Begging for sleep in the forest.

There

With a single stone throw

The dead wake up on the riverbank.

You walk on the edge of the world

To get to the valleys you lost.

On your way stones glisten

Like a golden memory.

The journey is very long

The wind goes after the hands waving

Despair lights your eyes dreaming of stars.

A DARK ALLEY

No one in the dark alley but you
The mouth's flower in the dark
You're the woman of the last breaths
And empty archways.

Hands in water, knees in soil
Each signal from you is a high threshold to exile.

The sea before your door is the refuge for passers-by
The sea is white in your blue palm
And a mark of my love-stricken heart.
Rebellious memory stirred the autumn leaves
Under the door
You went to pick them up
I was the cold light wind.

Inspiration comes with no compass
Under the riverbank,



You're the selfsame woman
 In the street or the dark alley
 Before others.

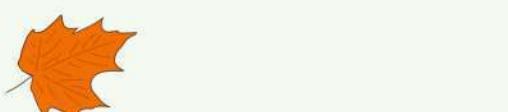
Did I say "gloom"?
 Did you laugh at the spring that let us down?
 Was winter what you meant?

This misunderstanding is a bow
 Hanging in ice
 Perhaps there should be... no end.

All Poems Translated by Khalid Al Balushi

About Zahir Al Ghafri

Born in 1956, Zahir is among the first poets championing free verse poetry in Oman. Thematically, his poetry is characterised by a marked transcendence of all manner of ideological affiliations. His cosmopolitanism is such that one can hardly find any treatment of local subject matters in his entire oeuvre. The poems are translations of his “Whenever an Angel Appeared in the Fort” (Beirut 2008).





ROUTE IN BLUE

**Marlene Pasini
Mexico**

Armoured by the Rif Mountains
a fantasy of bluish pearls are your stairs
its streets and its seductive Kasbah

Chefchaouen sapphire city
cheerful charm of its corners
that give shelter to traveling souls cold
seasons that collect legends
lost cats every sunrise
between a prayer from the Quran

Wrapped in a caftan of glory
through its labyrinths the murmur is heard
of Umayyad stories and Berber shadows
tears from an Andalusian poem
in the anonymous voice of a Sufi mystic

Doors like paintings of a surreal dream
oracles that the evening fills every moment
like a stroke of a staff over the Moroccan valley

Saffron flavour
route of all fragrances
that time leaves in its wake hermits
rumbling hearts by the spell of the lute
eternity of paradise
that remembers the ninety-nine names of Allah.

FAR HORIZONS

From afar you can hear
 the voice of the mountains of Tajikistan
 its mountain ranges seem to touch the sky
 its sound is song
 poem that resonates
 in the heart of every day

Like a golden dream that is born
 in the sweet joy of the dawn
 the clarity drains leaving traces
 on the rocky roads
 turquoise gorges of water
 that reflect the Divine face
 memories of the ancient silk road
 ruins of a Persian
 echoes and passages of glory
 crystalline prayers that rise to the sky
 about a story sheltered in silence
 The wind carries a song
 towards distant horizons
 dances and ecstasy
 in the tremulous dawn.

About Marlène Pasini

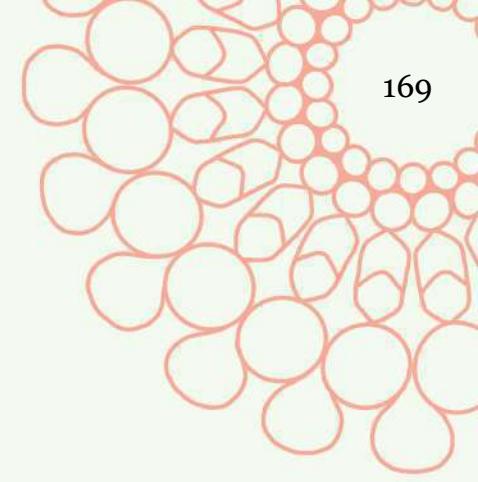


Marlène is a communicologist, writer, painter, and psychotherapist. She is president of the Mexican Academy of Modern Literature, the Cultural Director of IFCH, Morocco, advisor of the T. Fayad Cultural Forum, Egypt/Lebanon, and the director of the International Arab Network for Mexico. She holds a Doctor Honoris Causa, and has published 15 books of poetry, essays, novels, and personal development, which have been translated into several languages. She has received the Diamond Star Distinction, the Ibero-American Literature Award and the International Immortal Award for her career in Literature.



**Nashmi Muhanna
Kuwait**

THE BORN TWICE STUNT



I will provoke you day and night,

In the alleys and streets that you walk alone, within the bolted rooms
and offices,

Every time you look into your mirrors, you will glimpse me signaling
you,

Sticking my tongue into the mirror

Jumping on the backs of worshippers

Blowing in the ears of the asleep

I am the passer by in your dreams

Every time you drift off and fold a book onto a table, I flip the
pages and blow onto the meaning to bring it back to whiteness.





I boost up the sound of the songs that you love in the distant rooms.

I ruin the first sip of coffee in your mornings as I move the cups from their spots; and with a slight nudge from my figure, your mood overflows at the edges of the cup,

I blow the smoke of your cigarettes on your behalf and the circles of smoke tumble down

I open the drawers, scatter your intentions and arrange your deferred dreams

I restructure hope

I wring every drenched hope and I fling it to the sun

I banter with you, ignite the night's ember within you, and stir the curtains

I, who emulate the wind and fires and the fateful chances

But all my signs are lucid, you know them

And where I am now

I will deliberately start a battle with one of those guards with big
forearms and twisted muscles

So they will have to haul me up from under my arms

And hurl me at you

Once again

So wait for me

I am coming back to you once more.

Translated by Dr. Ibtihal Al-Khatib

About Nashmi Muhanna



Nashmi has worked as an official for the cultural department of the Kuwaiti weekly newspaper "Al-Tali'a." In 2014, he was awarded the State Incentive Award for the State of Kuwait in the Literature Poetry Branch. He has participated in several events such as the International Poetry Festival (2008), "Al-Mutanabbi", in Switzerland and the International Contemporary Poetry Festival (2014), "Live Voices, From Medium to Another", in France and the poetry forum, "The Night of the Arabic Poem" (2017), in Lebanon. His books include "*The Sea Leads Us to Sin*", "*The Coming as a Familiar Tomorrow*" and "*Water in its Surah*." He currently writes for the Kuwaiti daily newspaper "Al-Jarida".



WITH THE KITE

Fahredin Shehu
Kosovo

Where is home, we flew above
with the kite and
all those children
running around - those who
stole our cherries
in an early spring

Now we fear crazy machines
with noise that deafens our hearts

Where are all those
curly ginger-haired girls
I used to love more
than any broken car toys
more than swimming
in the pond nearby

Where are those teachers

who used to sew their dresses
From a local Tailor
and all of them looked
like conserved sardines
we used to import from Croatia

Where are those breaths
we used to lend to
the butterflies so they
may turn to a silkworm
fed by the Mulberry leaves

Where are those dads
that shouted and taught us
courtesy and humbleness
and those moms that
washed and cleaned our outfits
fed us with freshly made porridge
before going to school

Some decades after
a plane flew above the plot
of green darnel where was the home



so cozy, so warm and
 smelly by the pot cooking
 the white beans with the mint
 leaves and celery
 we so miss now
 that flying with the kite

About Fahredin Shehu



Fahredin is a world-renowned poet who authored over 20 books. His poetry has been translated in around 30 languages and has brought him many literary prizes. For his unique philosophical and artistic expression, he was awarded "Doctor Honoris Causa" and "Lifetime Academic" in Switzerland and was even nominated for Pulitzer prize. He has taken part in over 30 international poetry festivals and over 50 world anthologies. Currently, he is the director of the International Poetry Festival in Kosovo and is also a Painter and Calligrapher.



WE AIN'T FOR MADUKA

Jerusha Kananu Marete
Kenya

The memories of horror and nights of terror

Still cling to our minds

“Kill them

Burn them

They are rats, they don't support Maduka”

Children had no food, the pain untold

The price they paid, for not being that tribe

Bodies were slain several were in pain

The truth was plain, they were the rats

They weren't for Maduka the politician

Mr. Politician you spend hours

On your Porsche cars, we got our scars

But today we see the stars

We fiercely fight against poverty

We won't fight each other

Coz we ain't for Maduka

We are for peace

Mr. Politician

As you buy beer for the youth

Five years down the line

Students still missing from school

They are still rotting in the damn camps

They are dying in the dirty camps

Today I ain't for Maduka

I am for peace

Today, I saw in the news

Tribal clashes, Laikipia now red

As you kill each other in cold blood and die in pain

No drugs in hospital, fuel prices are now a scare

Tomorrow you sleep hungry, flour prices gone up

Maduka has medical cover, Maduka has plenty to eat

Don't kill me neighbour

The road that we tread



It is that we dread
 Today
 We ain't for Maduka
 We are for a peace

Maduka -Noun derived from Swahili word shop (Duka)

Maduka -Many shops

About Jerusha Kananu Marete



Jerusha is a writer and the author of poetry anthologies titled *Echoes Of Military Souls* and *Marry Me a Co-wife*. She is an English and Literature graduate from the University of Nairobi and currently is a MA student at Kenyatta University in the Literature/Theatre department. Jerusha is a teacher, a performing artist and a film and theatre enthusiast. Her poem “*Salaam My Motherland Africa*” was the keynote during 100 Thousand Poets for Change, an annual global event. Jerusha is among few African Poets who have participated in the Rucksack Global Poetry Patchwork the year 2021.



POISONING 13

Nils Chr. Moe-Repstad
Norway

The old state is the new state, with white cloths
on the tables and credit card terminals among the whores
first, the nights in Ukraine,
then the days on the Caribbean islands
where money is laundered through children's parties
like whales swallowing tons of krill
and straining water through the baleen
the laws are Caribbean, they create thin lines
in the sand and disappear
'Can you arrange a position for me in St. Petersburg?'
asks Chekhov
there they talk of the destruction of the forests
and duel over illegitimate children and married women
it's warm and green in the parks
from Moscow Station the trains reach so far to the northeast
that one recalls the uprising and slaughter
concrete ruins and wooden palaces by the Black Sea
the whales fill their lungs with air
that forms plasma in the deep
the lines of nobility are straight, but the nobility is political
and has the lungs of whales
so deep in the system that dueling over the purity
of the bastard economy becomes legitimate

plasmatic lawsuits and murders by poisons
numbered in the periodic table of elements
they are inhumane in the eastern republics
in the fossil fuels and the northern seas

'They love their fathers so much that my brain softens
and I sell my body's reserves of methane gas' *
and the duels?
too steep for the Odessa steps
too open for the Balkan plains
too hot in St. Petersburg, St. Tropez
gas princess, plasma and paradise
protest, flag and frost
dictators entering through portholes

** Following an injury received in a theater in Moscow, October 26, 2002, the body's processes began to slow. This results in an increase of methane gas that is off the charts.*

About Nils Chr. Moe-Repstad



Born in 1972, Nils intended to become a mountaineer, but life had other plans. Constantly seeking out limits, he found them when he was paralysed in a diving accident at the age of 19. Afterward, he spent a lot of time in libraries, began to read poetry and later to write it. His debut came in 1996 with *Nå* (Now), which was well-received; after this poetry collection came seven more. Moe-Repstad has collaborated several times with artists and musicians. Moe-Repstad's most recent collection, *19 forgiftninger* (19 poisonings), was published in 2014. It covers poisonings in the broadest sense of the word: infections, viruses, epidemics, pollution, political corruption and economic exploitation. It deals with both concrete and metaphorical poisonings.



AT MY REBEL HEART

Mirela Necula
Romania

My stranger
heavy diamond
along with longing
of peony love
"everything hurts"
the banality of so much emptiness
the snow from so many detours.

Darkness in the limbs
handcuffed in a scarf
giggle in humour again
full of power
immortal from yesterday.

My stranger
always troubled
in a tender murmur I would rumble
quiet of statues I would build for you
to my rebellious heart
the coward wind to sleep a little bit.

On the evening prepared for love
to drink the liqueur from the small cup
in endless flight the two of us
"to light up the heavy eyes even today with the fire within
us."

WITH LOVE TOWARD A NEW BEGINNING

I walked through the night that escapes in my path,
 Over the silhouette of the numb dream that reappears,
 You were in the valley with flowers, under an old acacia tree,
 it seems,
 Count the moments, ... what a dream, what a serene vault,
 what a valley.

Standing alone, lost in the frightening black,
 I chose a moment in ignorance to deepen your desire,
 That the shed tears will no longer be the spark of the
 unknown,
 To love you, to remain with you angel, on life's freckles.

What a joy, when the steam of love abounded you second
 after second,
 With melted eyes you raised a castle like the phantasm of
 legend,
 And I was asking you in a whisper, smiling,
 Is it you, or does the divine in the dark fill my eyes dreaming?

You were reciting quatrains with the voice of the dead whose
 arms were joined,
 And you were squeezing me, kissing me in my chimerical
 dreams,
 At your mouth the smile came out of his mind,
 When we loved each other, being saved by time.

But stay, don't go, you shouted at me!
 I have barely cooped up the dream, in my Iliad stay a little bit
 more!



I created the white longing in the whim of the heavy sky,
 When I met the sweetness, I took God's signature!
 Let us cross heaven through the heights of hell!
 With the mystery of mute love through the folds of the earth!

And it's cold, the old coat is ruined!
 I looked for the face of the moon that deceived my sight, and
 I got tired!
 But I loved you, I always back up my voice at you, my angel!
 You remained in the epic of youth after all the flood!

Immerse in the stars that have guarded our love strongly!
 All the fire I smuggled you, is written in the book of life!
 What will melt the land of true longing, never seen!
 Kneeling through the thinking ruins, to a new beginning!



About Mirela Necula

Born in 1964, Mirela's poems are written with the heart, in a wonder, before God. She believes that true love exists in absolute harmony in both her heart and that of the reader, in a mirror of life hard tried, but with an emotional end raised to the divine level. Her published volumes include: *Love a Diamond in the Shadow*, *Water lilies in the Eyes of Love*, *My Love has Gone Around the earth*, *Drunk and Guilty of Love*, *The secret love*, *Heaven trophy*.



Natalia Golovatyuk
Russia

1.

If you want to understand people, don't listen to what they say.

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. Citadelle.

If you want to look inside a soul

Don't believe a single word they say

Hide yourself within the rain and snow

Listen closely to their silent breath

Notice how they sigh and look away

Notice little things that make them smile

Look into their face when it's plain

Haven't we forgotten what it's like

Notice how they talk to little kids,

To the poor, the hopeless, and the sick

Be like sunshine, like the warmest winds

You will see how kindness does the trick

Just don't try to win or to regress

Don't pretend, and don't evaluate

Their heart desires one caress

Look into their eyes, investigate

If you want to look inside a soul

Look as deep as you can only dare

Words are often meaningless and hollow

Silence is the one thing true and fair.

2.

Love of mine

Don't tell me

What tomorrow brings

This very day

This very moment

Fills my heart with joy

See the birds in the tree?

I doubt that they fear

The starving future

Even if it's near

They live on their wings



They feed on their hope
 Just like you and me
 Birds in the land of heart
 We've got to learn to love
 So that the wings won't break
 Reach out your hand
 Doesn't it look like a wing?
 Love of mine
 You mean the world to me.

3.

The eighties are gone and buried
 The nineties followed them blind
 The present is sirens wailing
 Sending shivers down your spine
 Pollen and dust fill the air
 Smells of blood and dead leaves
 The present is going nowhere
 Just a drift sideways.



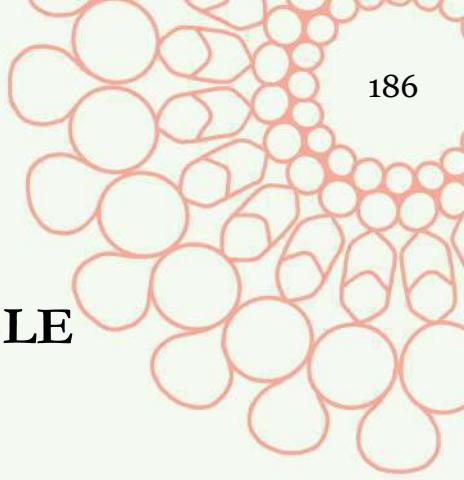
All Poems Translated by Victoria Sigeerva (Kaluga)

About Natalia Golovatyuk

A culturologist, Natalia graduated from the Moscow State University of Culture and Arts. She is the author and presenter of the "Cultural Environment" program on the regional TV channel "NIKA TV". She writes poems, songs, and romances. Her poems are published in collections and almanacs "Continuation", "Territory of creativity", "Clouds", "LiFFt" and others.



PRESENCE OF POSSIBLE MAGIC



Rozalie Hirs
Netherlands

[1]

woken up from a landscape of shadows dreamlike
on a palpable side branch clear in singular flashlight

detailing its current artery from the sky upon earth
refines contours restoring every trait into its ultimate

form illuminates the silent attack of the improbable
advantage once and again a word in naked wonder

[2]

a newborn language held in hairless hands ever so soft
skin tightly spun between auricles the occipital orifice again

and again lost to the doom of death as we know it
has developed through infinitely repeatable possibilities

yet written and renewed beyond the sun and its laws
naturally potent in a world outside the senses aim

voluntarily at whichever language the deferred hidden
being of gone things cuts the unbearable temporal

absence of the voice only on that day comes the time
to fullness, awakes the child from the game created



a wandering way back to hear the unflinching
song dear, become, recall, come near

[3]

returned to life from apparent death in reality never
dead at all alive-and-kicking the infant cannot drink yet

when it swallows nearly chokes on the limits of milk
and breath come upon language so new and unheard of

that words lack to describe its own glowing matter
touch in the brushwood of sentences telling the senses

to rid themselves of the necessary images die some day
move onto food for thought and not the unsayable feel

but matter where grounds narrate in fabulous abundance
such decisive experiences for a life to come

*Poetry Manuscript in English
2021*

About Rozalie Hirs



A Dutch composer and poet, Rozalie's poetry and music are lyrical and experimental. The principal concerns of her work are the adventures of listening, reading, and the imagination. Her poetry includes both printed collections and digital poetry: interactive poems created in collaboration with visual artists, and graphic designers. Some performers of her music include the Amsterdam Sinfonietta, and Slagwerk Den Haag.



3 POEMS

Elena Liliana Popescu
Romania

To my husband, Nicolae

TELL ME

You never believed
you could win by
giving up weapons,
and would find your freedom
only by fighting your own image.

You will no longer look at yourself
in mirrors that show you
weak or arrogant,
brave or coward,
when you wish it...

You heard that before
but never believed it...

What can your image be
in a mirror-less country?
You will ask yourself,
again, and will find out
only if you let the answer
come by itself.



What can you lose,
when the only possible reality
is your quest?

Which way to go—
the traveller asks,
unaware it is the only road
to follow...

And where to go
if he is already there—
even if he doesn't know yet
who will win...

What competition is more feared
than when you are
the only stubborn player?

But how can you keep fighting
when your opponent wears only
your image
as his lucky charm?

“Abandon all hope” you were told—
so you really can hope!

But tell me, what good is hope
for one who has everything,
or knows the way back
when he has already arrived?

WHEN EVERYTHING IS LOST

The clock did not stop
but hours no longer show
on Time's dial,
which has come to a standstill, contemplating.

Perspective still works,
but objects are no longer clear
against the pure expanse
of unnamed Space.

Life has not ended but death
no longer looms at the horizon
waiting for someone to rise up
sometime, somewhere, in the land of oblivion...

Everything is as it used to be
though nothing has meaning
when lost in a timeless space,
in a spaceless time...



THAT INSTANT

A few words, you told yourself,
 just a few—and created
 a story whose present
 is yesterday by now, just as tomorrow
 will be past for another story
 left behind,
 lost forever...

One word, you told yourself,
 just one—and you are on your way
 the unknown,
 that unexpected step, free
 to think of who you are and are not,
 of that instant in which you can become
 and be you.

All Poems Translated From Romanian by Adrian G. Sahlean



About Elena Liliana Popescu

Elena holds a PhD in Mathematics, is a professor at the University of Bucharest, a poet, a translator and an editor. She has published sixty books of poetry and translations from the works of classical and contemporary poets, from philosophy treaties and from spiritual dialogues. Among these books: *Imn Existenței - Inno all'Esistenza* (Hymn to Existence, Rediviva Press, Italy, 2018); *季節* (Seasons, Taiwan, 2019); *Para encontrarte* (To find you, Spain, 2019); *Primăvara acestei clipe* (The Spring of this instant (2019). *Cânt de Iubire - Szerelmes Dal* (2020); *Pelerin - Zarándok* (2020). She received a Diploma and a mention in the X Contest Poetry “Leonardo Cercós” (Palma de Mallorca, Spain, 2007) in addition to a Diploma and Honorary Mention, awarded by the Spanish Embassy in Bucharest, Romania (2011).

[Back to Contents](#)



**Dr. Hanyong Jeong
South Korea**

A PHOTO

On Mother's Day, Facebook fills up with lovely and painful stories.

A woman looks forward to a dinner with her son and daughter,
A man writes a flowery letter to his mother who suffers from amnesia,

Still another travels from America to Korea to find his birth parents whose names he does not

Know.

Now, what can I write?

I went back to my hometown last month and found an old photo album.

There was a picture of my mother in her youth.

The sunlight rolled and crashed

Along the cracked lines of chemical gloss

Like a dawn lakehead

From a time I can't remember -

I will keep this photo close.

I didn't know how beautiful she was; now I will have something to brag about.

I say to myself, “I’ll share her photo on Facebook.”

Calling her for permission, she does not answer. Could she be out somewhere?

The operator offers guidance: “It’s hard to connect right now, so you’d better ask her later,

When you are face to face.”

I reply, “Sorry, but I can’t wait until then, can you please ask her for me?”

A thousand suns and ten thousand moons have passed.

Do flowers bloom in spring and do winds blow in autumn in the place you’re living now?

If Facebook doesn’t work there, how about WhatsApp?

Do you know that a boy here misses you sorely?

A RECORD OF LOVE

On an outdoor table next to the flower bed on the school lawn
The maple leaves fall quietly

Over the white etched letters – ‘Sangmin♥ Hyejun_389Days♥♥’,
Covering only part of the words

The way lovers sometimes cover their faces
To hide their timidity.

But just as it is not possible to conceal all that is inside,
It is exquisitely balanced, showing the felicity of half a heart -
Their record of love
Neither exposed nor hidden for 389 days



Is aging like paint that peels along the table's rough edges;
The long story
That the sun strokes in the daytime, and the wind licks passed in the evening,
And the stars look into every night, again and again.
Maybe the sun and the moon copy that language,
Write it down in the sky and read it every time they pass.
Or tired of their old love, they might envy this teenage romance.
When the tinnitus embedded in the stars flows out
The sun and the moon murmur with jealousy
And pass again through another 389 days,
Another 389 light-years, they tread the same old paths;
Love is boring but it endures.
If you polish it well, you can put its lamp by the window of the dark universe.

If you are hardened by one lash too many, you can knock on its door.
After all, love persists your whole life,
Even when you have become intolerable to yourself.
The hope and joy of a period passing,
The unbearable madness of another season,
The gleam of a winter light just barely forming
Now dances on the shoulder of these young lovers,
Like the swaying pine tips that offer no protest
As they bend and whirr in the October moon.



A STORY LEFT BEHIND

A tribe in Africa believes that a man's soul still lives past his body's death.

It is said that he lives in the heads of the people who remember him. And he dies finally when they are all dead.

Who is living in my body now?

My grandfather, grandmother, and mother are still alive.

Here, with me, are Kyusun who passed away in his youth and my old teacher at whose funeral I couldn't grieve.

Sparrows I caught in the backyard of my hometown, and juniper trees I maimed in order to make sleigh sticks, are still alive.

Chinaberry flowers withered on my porch, my father, not aware of his fate, and a black-eyed boy fallen in the Afghanistan war, are not dead yet.

So, when I go,

Yes, then, we must all leave together.

I won't leave alone.

All things live in my body, so, there is no reason for tears.

Even When I die, I will not be dead, until the ones who remember me dwindle to four, three, two, one

Until we all unloose the strap of our lives.



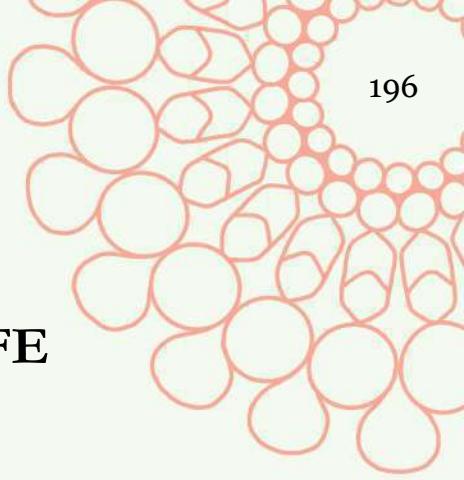
About Dr. Hanyong Jeong

Dr. Hanyong majored in modern Korean poetry and received his Ph.D. at Kyeonghee University in Seoul. He participated in the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa and in the Colorado Art Ranch in the USA. He has published six books of poetry, including *Ghosts* (2011), *The Birth of Lies* (2015), and *A Thousand Years of Rain* (2021). He also published his selections in English, titled *How to Make a Mink Coat* (2015) and *Children of Fire* (2020). In addition, he has collections of essays: *Two Reports about Hell* (1995), *Beaten and Listed* (2006), and *The Transcendental Poetics* (2016). His poems have been published in several countries.



P.J. Reed
United Kingdom

RETURN TO PARKLIFE 2021



Pink blossom confetti
blows across the park.
Leaf streamers hang
on pondside willows
now lying duckless
as the people return.
Enclosed, the playground
bursts through its bars,
swings soar screaming,
through the morning air.
Mummys sit in circles,
clutch paper coffee cups
watch wobbling toddlers
race on worn ride-on toys,
tailwaggers bark cloudward,
watch screaming sealess
gulls feed greying chicks.
Parklife has returned.



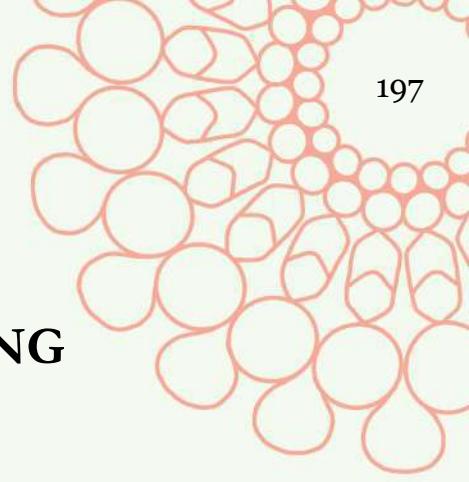
About P.J. Reed

Reed is an award-winning, multi-genre author with her books ranging from high fantasy, horror, to haiku. She holds a BAEd from Canterbury Christ Church University and an MA from Bradford University. Reed is an eclectic writer, with her poetry appearing in a wide variety of online and print magazines, anthologies and collections. In 2015, she was shortlisted for the National Poetry Anthology award. In 2018, P.J. won the Forward Press Poetry 'Circle of Life' competition for her poem 'The Empty Chair.' In her poetry, Reed writes of the beauty and ethereal nature of the changing countryside in her series of seasonal haiku collections – Haiku Ice, Haiku Yellow, and Haiku Gold.



Arsyad Indradi
Indonesia

THE MOUNTAIN SONG



From the top of Mount Sagaling shines the shimmer of Lake of Glass

The purple sky mirror over it

The sun that rises from the early morning

Sharpening sharp stick in farmland, spreading the seeds of prosperity

The rice spirit bathes in the sun

Mount Sagaling has given birth to the dream lake of the womb of stone shower thirteen

Born in own country. A country that must be defended.

Because this is the last limit of the heirloom land

The homeland was bathed by the ancestors in Lake of Glass

Rubber trees on the right and left of the mountain slopes, do you hear that popping sound when the heat stings every time the fruit falls ?

The voice of the conscience of the country's children flows in the current of the Batu Benawa river to the estuary of the Most Loving

I stare at the peak of Mount Sagaling with tears in my eyes because of the longing memories of childhood

On the saddle of the hevea layer of horses, I sing the song of the country child of Mount Layuh

Descending and combing the creek towards Libaru village

The splash of the orange horse's footsteps. Climb and jump over rocks and mud



The neighing of the horses at the crossroads meets other horses. Side by side.

And I don't hear the neighing of the horses anymore because the mountain has changed its shape when I look up to its peak

I found no more luwa trees growing by the river but crowded houses. Because trees and rivers are playmates in childhood At dusk I heard even though it was only the faint sound of toads on the banks of the river which was like a river in a quiet valley, splitting the city. The voice that opens the history of the night door

The scent of the dove orchid flowers on the mahogany tree every side of the road

The morning breeze of the Meratus mountains unravels childhood memories

On the edge of the field Dewi Warna again I sing:

Barabai city
morning dew curtained
Bandung Borneo

SONG OF THE SEA

Only to the sea pours the letter of life

The south coast wind never stays silent making the roar of the waves

as wide as the sea

When the twilight and the birds come home

And silent singing after the waves on the beach

Knitting of foam all over the peninsula

From a long sailing history

Never submit to fate

Because it's still far behind the dream

Before the sun goes down and the stars fall in the night

Do you know I'm calling you to the very end



The culmination of corals in no sound staring at the red light
on the horizon
Interpreting where the clouds will go

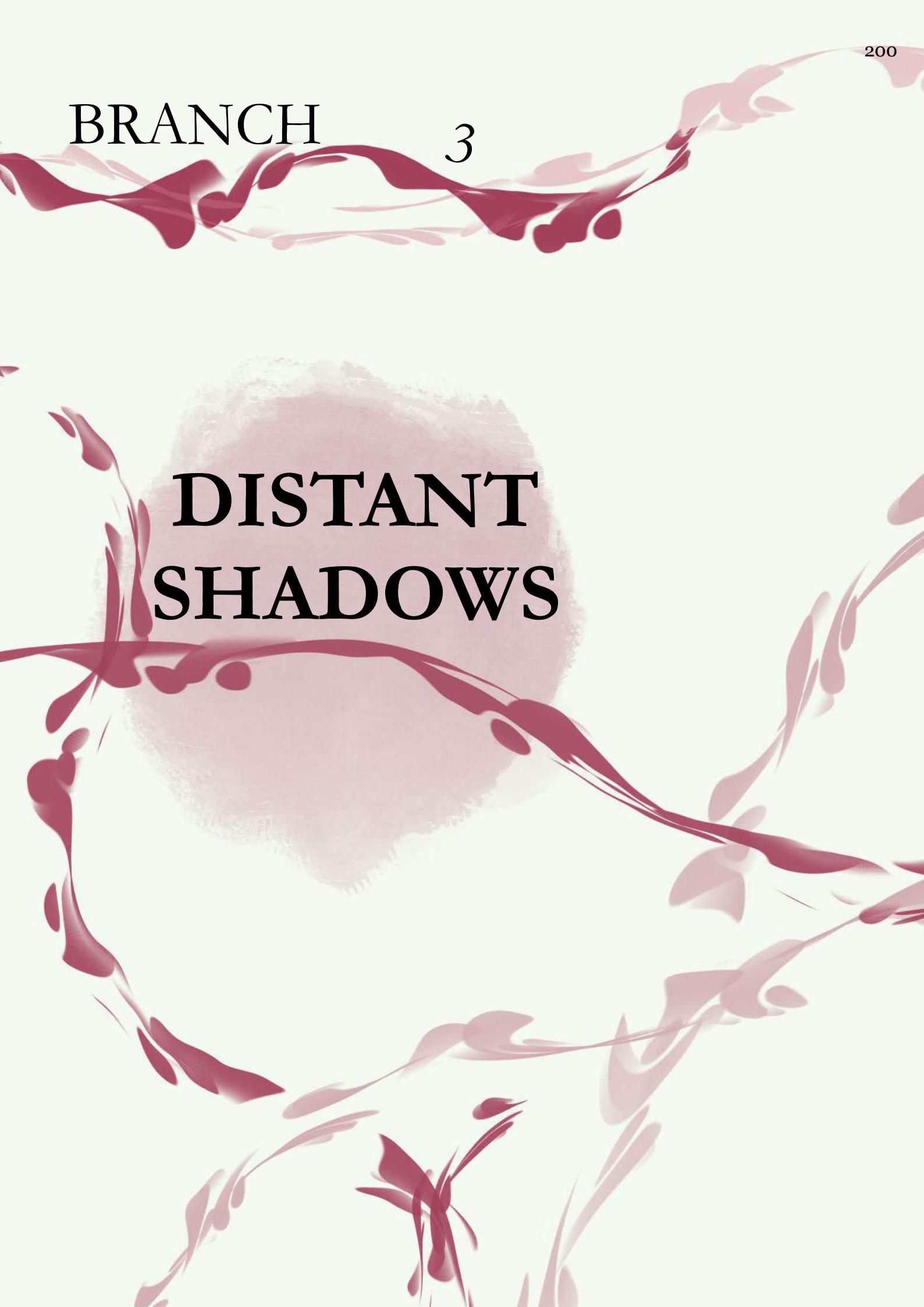
Coconut leaves on a stiff tree
I sigh after the the wind blows
Hopla roar
The roar of the waves chasing you
The skyline doesn't worried the waves won't be restless the
blue sea is blue the heart
red horizon red blood overflowing soul
Only to the sea
I sail all the longing

Banjarbaru, 2010

About Arsyad Indradi



Born in 1949. Arsyad is a poet who also enjoys dance and theater. His poetry has been widely published in both local and national print media. His solo poetry includes: *A Thousand Birds' Song* (KSSB, 2006), *Grief Wine* (KSSB, 2009) and anthology of Poetry "KAMAR" *Exploration of the longing wayfarer journey* (Banua Library, 2017). He also has dozens of joint poetry anthologies and has received the following awards: Literary Arts from the Mayor of Banjarbaru (2010), Literary Art Award from the Governor of South Kalimantan Province (2010), and the Cultural Award from the Governor of Prov. South Kalimantan (2014).



BRANCH

3

DISTANT
SHADOWS



Charbel Dagher
Lebanon

RASHM

I

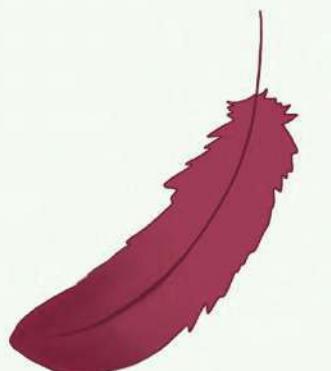
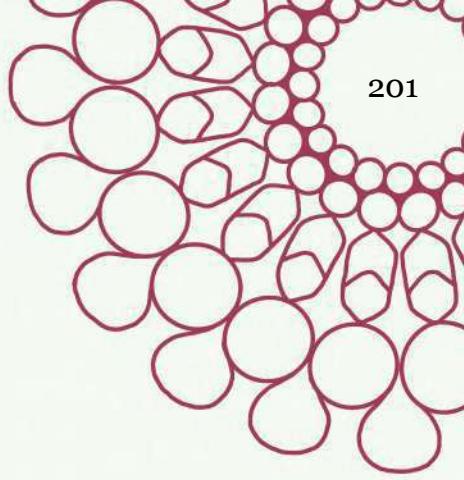
Veiling their faces, a translucent cover
Of impressions and shapes
Emanates from their ghosts,
And penetrates into their bodies...
A hasty encounter
In the doorway:
Long enough
To defer payment of accounts
And renew contract
Between passengers and captain.

II

My tongue
Is an oar that goes before me
Licking,
The craving for landing
Across a strait.
And between the two shores
My body is the dancing pendulum of a clock, swinging
With the frenzy of the rowers
As they rotate in their beating of the water...

III

Or the trackless wilderness of a cloud
Asking the rain
Of the earth:
Is my fruit that which awaits me
In the withholding of the water?
Between your hands my skin is transparent:
Sunken deep within, my etching and markings,
And all that has eluded me,
A quivering-like the creeping of ants-
In the tingling of my fingertips.



IV

Hodgepodge and jumble in the Bosphorous,
 And the lingering, obsessive apprehensions,
 Like the earth split in two,
 Both parts peek, and stare
 Like voyeurs
 At each other:
 Dubious, ambiguous borders
 And the uneasiness and disquiet of desires.

V

"Je est un autre"
 In the narrows of your lips,
 My desire carries no document of passage
 Or identification.
 It shares quarters with my ghosts and apparitions,
 Furtively detailing
 For each a life story

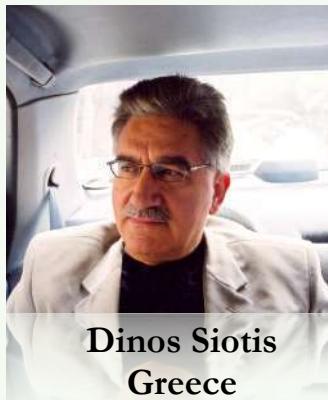
VII

Waters like the wooden planks of a stage
 With isles and numbered seats;
 Passengers become both audience and players
 Sitting
 Regarding
 Each other on stage...
 Sitting lightly
 In eager wait
 Of another play
 In which they are dancers
 In a dream unending
 With the ending of the crossing

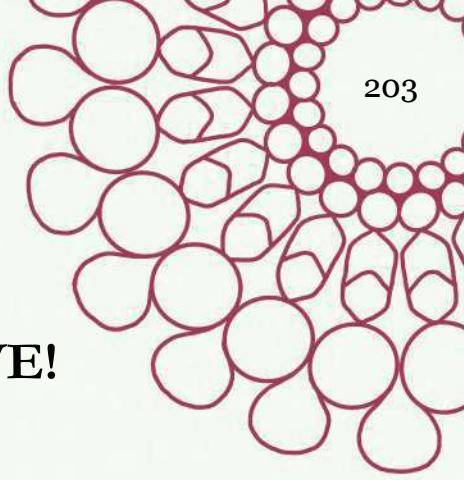
*All poems translated by Juan Camilo Gómez-Rivas
 United States of America*

About Charbel Dagher

Dagher has published more than seventy books, in Arabic and French. He is a university professor who has written, translated and studied poetry. He has revitalised the Arab prose-poetry, and has published 14 poetry collections, six poetry selections, two anthologies in French and German, as well as collections of translations of his poetry to French, English, German, Persian, Italian, Japanese, Turkish, etc. Selections of his poetry have appeared in many anthologies of poetry in French, German, English (U.S.), etc. His poetry has been the subject of interest in many refereed research studies or university theses, both in the Arab World and abroad.



PISTROPHY OF LOVE!



Stay out of trouble if you want to return to love,
stay away from statistics if you want
your future to be spared by fate,
in effect you return full circle to find love
after wandering the world,
in effect you pass through the same door
that thousands of lovers passed through,
you kiss lips kissed by many seeking amnesia,
if you want people to love you as you are
then return when they need you
(return when the almond trees blossom),
the hands of emptiness point to your land
but you have to ignore your thirst for water
because you have no alibi, you have no fan
to blow on metaphors, you have no desire
to step into the beauty of things fractured
unless you show some hope for renovation,
unless you express the wish to be hit by history

Upon your return expect nothing,
look for your parents' old house,
look for your dog you left behind,
wrap your past into your arms

Love will come and find you as you doze

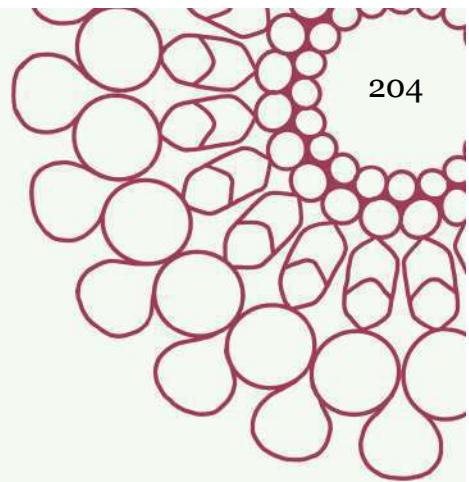
About Dinos Siotis

Born in 1944, Dinos studied Law at Athens University and Creative Writing at San Francisco State University. A poet, novelist and literary critic, he lived in California, New York, Boston and Canada where he published eight literary and/or political magazines. He has published 35 books of poetry and fiction in English, French and Greek. His poems have been translated into nine European languages and in Chinese. In 2007 he received the Greek State Prize for Poetry for his book "Autobiography of a Target." He writes book reviews for newspapers and magazines. He is the director of the Tinos International Literary Festival, president of Poets Circle, and publisher and editor of three literary magazines.



Anna Cates
United States

HAIKU



cloudless Easter
loose among the daffodils

children

*

red grapes

weighing down the vines

wedding bells

*

lights glimmer

across the brine . . .

serenity

*

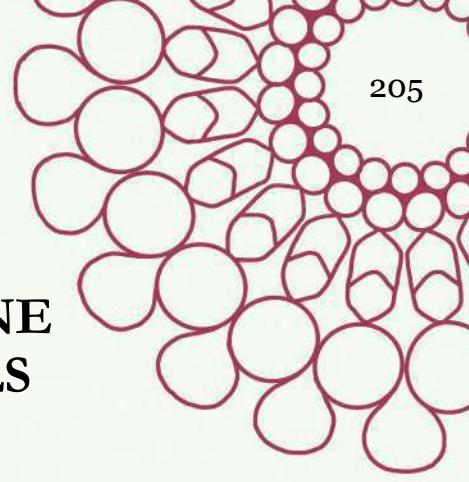
About Anna Cates

Anna Cates lives in Wilmington, Ohio, with her two beautiful kittens, Freddie and Fifi. She teaches college writing and literature and graduate education as an online instructor. She is author of the following collections: *The Meaning of Life* and *The Frog King* (Cyberwit Press), *The Darkroom* (Prolific Press), *The Golem & the Nazi* (Red Moon Press), *The Journey* (Resource Publications), and *Love in the Time of Covid* (Wipf & Stock).



**Siamir Marulafau
Indonesia**

YOUR LOVE AND MINE ARE LIKE DAFFODILS



You look like flowers of mine
and I grasp to pick up all days
Your love and mine are like daffodils
beneath the hills under the trees

Though never I touch in mind
The verse will come to visit
Since man is kept like what I guess nowadays
Keep the love up to the blue sky

That's the sign of humanity
To bring peace among the lives
Billion oceans will not be wild
If mutual understanding be in the heart

That makes man be united
With no race and rank to live in
As long as this world belongs to us
As long as it is not spoilt

Let's keep friendship in the nature of lives
To ensure who you are and I am
Created from the dust and engraved in the blue sky
Which has no difference in the eyes of Almighty

Medan, Sept 25, 2021, Copyright



NO PESSIMISM

How can I ask help from the sun
 Its lightening is faded away
 The Corona Virus is scattering
 To kill without warning

No worry to keep the lives
 Since the vaccine is found
 Some days nature will be bright
 As long as it will be a fellow of ours

Keep the health to survive
 That the lives will calm again and again
 That's the colour of the lives
 Which is sometimes victimised

No worry to keep the lives
 If nature will be a fellow of ours
 Who knows the wild waves will be calm
 And no wind blows, still to die

Keep this verse in mind
 With no pessimism to run the lives
 Let the moon give its lighting
 To walk on the winding roads in the night

That life will be in peace
 Create peace for harmony
 To search for medicine
 To ensure human beings are in safety

About Siamir Marulafau

Medan, Sept 25, 2021, Copyright

Siamir Marulafau was born in Nias, North Sumatra, Indonesia, on the 17th of May 1958. He graduated from the English and Literature Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, University of North Sumatra, Medan, Indonesia in 1984 and started teaching at the University of Sumatera Utara in 1985 and has remained there since. He is a national and International poet whose published works include *Humanity* (2015), and *Lighting* (2016) in English, and “*Bahtera Dalam Ayat*” (2016) and “*Kasih tak Putus*” (2020) in Indonesian. He conducted seminars in the form of scientific writing and research all over Asia in the late 2010s. He is a member of NUMERA POET Malaysia, organised and led by Dr. Ahmad Khamal Abdullah, who had accepted and certified him reciting poems since 2017. He is also a member of PEMUISI BERKARYA, organised and led by Dr. Radzuan Ibrahim in Kuala Lumpur, 2020



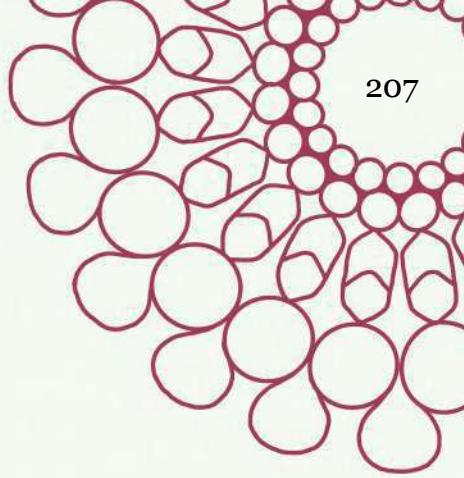
WISH

**Ricardo Rojas Ayrala
Argentina**

Now, my Clodia,
let's celebrate together
the coming of the freesias
the furious stars will crown us before daybreak,
this spring time and this happiness
are the longest road.

VACUI HORROR

Gagarin knows that the earth
is not more than a chimera of the men
confined to this world, so confident.
There is something out there that frightens.
Isn't that what really measures us?
So minute
the magnificent human works,
the one thousand and six hundred kilometres
of the great Chinese wall
are still an insignificant woodworm...
Gagarin knows but he does not tell,
he does not say anything,
anything.
He hardly blows his tea
that he sips with studied slowness.



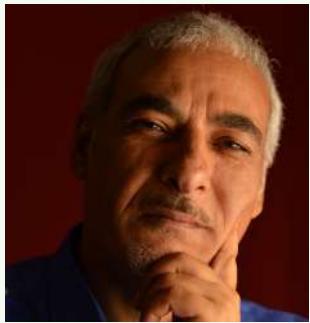
LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

Far away, aloof,
 Saint Michael or Saint Raphael
 sets his crown of light with exquisite class,
 agitating so many cherubs
 that play sweet mysteries.
 Down below, many kilometres down below
 in the bustling church at Liniers,
 the faithful knelt down before the Icon doubt,
 enchanted, if that gold were only a nimbus...

All Poems Translated by Professor Albert Colombres

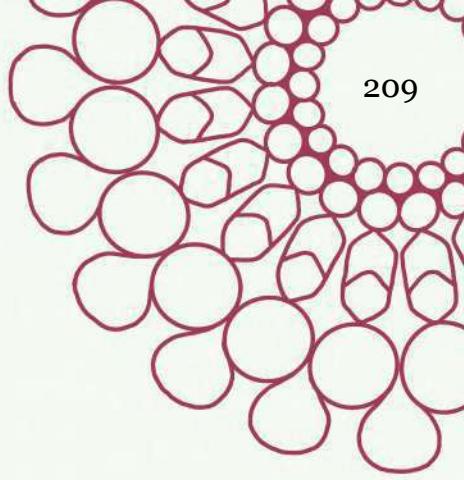
About Ricardo Rojas Ayrala

Ricardo Rojas Ayrala's edited work consists of 16 books, poetry, short stories and novels, in Italy, Mexico, El Salvador and Argentina. He directed the International Festival Vapoesia Argentina, of literature and social inclusion, with Marta Miranda. He is Secretary of Culture of the pharmacy workers union (ADEF).



Muhsin Al-Ramli
Iraq

THE HOUSE OF FRIENDS



One day
 I am going to have a house
 And I will call it the House of Friends
 I will make lots of copies of the key
 Even more copies than I have made of my ID card
 I will give one to my friend the poet
 Who believes only in poetry even though he is dying of hunger
 One to the painter who dreams of the colour of water following his stained life
 One to the musician who seeks a moment of silence for his new song
 Others to those who wish to philosophise, gossip, scream, insult or weep
 One to the man who is disappointed in love
 And who disappoints his lovers
 To the sad friend, the dreamy-eyed friend, the happy, the good, the friendly friend
 To the sick, the tired, the fearful, the lonely and to the idiotic egotist.
 To the lover who can't find a secret place for his love
 To the tramp lost after a night of drinking
 To the believer who is far from his temple
 To the one who is fleeing from his debtors
 To the mapless traveler
 To the one who granted me a favour and then forgot
 To the one who once offended me and then felt repentant
 To the lazy one who hates his job
 And loves reading



To the one who hates me and who worships heroes
 To the one who loves me and hates my work
 To the one who lost his house because of war or the bank
 Because of an earthquake or a divorce.

One day,
 I am going to have a house for my friends
 I will leave a key with my neighbour
 So she may come when I am away.

One day
 I am going to have a house
 I will call it the House of Friends
 And I will declare myself King under its roof
 Because there I will be a servant to my friends.

One day
 I am going to have a house
 ...but
 First I must find
 A safe country that will welcome me
 That respects homes
 A country that, like my house, will be
 Open, without borders
 For all of you
 My Friends.

Translated by Hamish Binnus

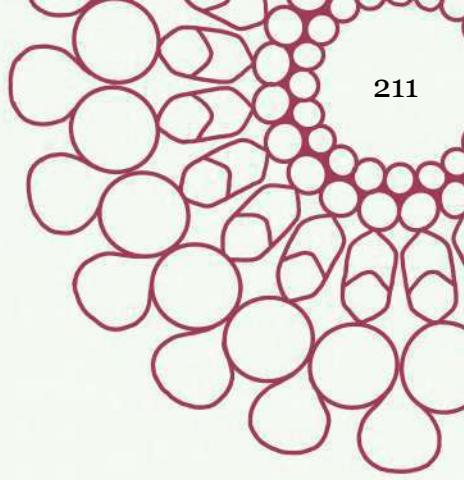
About Muhsin Al-Ramli

Muhsin Al-Ramli is an Iraqi writer, poet, academic and translator. He was born in northern Iraq in 1967 and has lived in Madrid since 1995. He obtained his Ph.D. in Philosophy and Letters, from the Autonomous University of Madrid in 2003. The title of his thesis was: “*The Traces of Islamic Culture in Don Quixote*”. He writes in both Arabic and Spanish and is a well-known figure in the world of Arabic literature. Now he is a professor at Saint Louis University, Madrid Campus. His works *Dates on my fingers*, *Daughter of the Tigris* and *The President’s Gardens* were longlisted for the I.P.A.F, known as the “Arabic Booker”, in 2010, 2013 and 2021. He was a finalist for the Sheikh Zayed Book Award in 2016 and 2019 for his novels *The She-wolf of Love and Books* and *Sons and shoes*. In poetry, his collection includes *We are all widowers of the answers* (2005), *Sleeping among soldiers* (2011) and *Winning loss* (2014).



**Suchismita Ghoshal
India**

LOVE - A COMPLEX



Danger may fall in love,
 Body turns into ashes while
 In a meeting with the ignition of love.
 Two hearts - sometimes too parallel to meet,
 Sometimes too close to peacefully reside.
 Forget about the coalescence,
 Enjoyment lies in the present moments.
 Sole bearer of losses finds insanity
 In sublimation into love,
 Dilemma between loving and unloving
 Is the one hand game of the scribblers.
 Speaking rubbish is a fruitful result
 Of swallowing chewing gums in a journey.
 Quietude assembles the melody of souls,
 Bounces back with the strength of submission.
 Love is never easy, says the mind
 And it is not easy to divinely be kind.
 Encroachment of feelings not only
 Turns into a red signal but an ascertained end
 But you must believe into the processes it bends
 And the exhilaration you get as you finally get to comprehend!

~ © storytellersuchismita



INTROSPECTION

Brutish murders in segregation may lead you
 To the hindrance of factual introspection;
 Emotionally processing with the image
 Of never-ending feuds won't bring back
 The tints of rhapsodies, dollops of solace.
 Reflecting what you have distributed
 Can be a little overwhelming or embarrassing
 Differing from one occurrence to another.
 Revolving around the goods can reverberate
 All the references in your pocket as your mind
 Slowly resurrects the serenity of the universe.
 Traces of satisfaction don't mean saturation
 But it indeed proclaims the gratefulness
 Of the journey 'till now since the infinite ages.

~ © *storytellersuchismita*

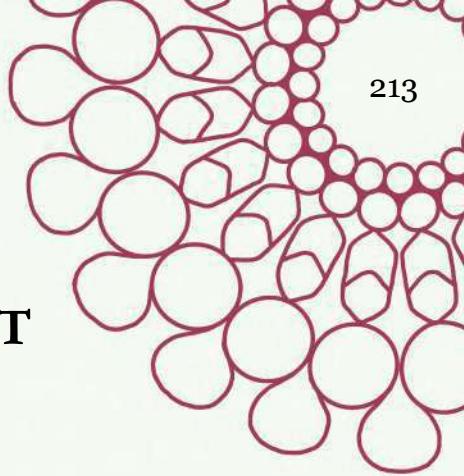
About Suchismita Ghoshal

Author Suchismita Ghoshal hails from West Bengal, India. At the very early age of 23, she has shaped her life in a way where she cuddles with literature and devotes herself to finding peace through love, compassion, learning & community service. She is a professional writer, published author, internationally acclaimed poet, literary critic, translator (English & Bengali), active communicator, literary influencer, content writing member, change-activist & a nature lover. With more than 620 prestigious co-authorship in various renowned national & international anthologies, renowned literary magazines, websites, webzines and eminent literary journals, she fosters her literary career in a more prominent way. In recent days, to nurture her writing skills and spoken abilities, she has been performing in various literary platforms to voice her thoughts in front of a wide audience.



Joshua Klemmant
Nigeria

OVER THE CRICKET OF THE WINDS



“Everyone smiles and laughs when the winds peacefully come by through gushes but everyone frowns and cries while the winds hardly come by through forces.”

Younger ones say,
What a pregnant bewildered winds!
That drizzle and fizzles by and dance to fog
Move quickly like the Hades
Bend over and turn on the card
From the right to the left
Accompanied with a great force

How he comes out majestically
To let out our kitesurfing years fly up
To and fro with the contents of energy
Our naming kites bend over and turn on
Like the Birches tree and flee
From the right to the left
Trembling over the cricket of the winds
Accompanied with uncontrollable tails

Elders say
What a plagued country winds!
That horribly and trembling Poplars drive by
From the West wind runs through the East wind,
North wind turns out to the South wind gambol

Here and there he numerically spread our bushy grey hairs
Trembling and spiritually stooping our goateed bard beards
From the right to the left occultism garment tails of Morris Dance



All abide in obstructing by our precious sightseeing trips
 Bending over and down up again,
 Running here and there
 Chasing nothing like a mad cow
 Accompanied with the days' time of the early Kung-fu Masters

Villagers' say,
 What a rigorous day winds!
 Boisterous apart like the Lion of Judah
 Circle on the village's echo structurally
 Down to the hillside of the valley villages
 In and out- the villagers scatter here and there to nook up and down
 He screams, squalls and brought with him the myth
 On the Colt the Foal of a Trojan and with prides,
 Freely he rides on a pedestrian road Pegasus
 Amidst the middle of the dark ages forest
 The winds toss down and cut off the trees
 With the falling dry leaves on the sliding ground
 They all keep quiet their mouths and make away gently
 To let only him pass on and continue to lead the way...

Towns say
 What a horrific incident winds!
 That wiggles his windfall tails
 Come and go,
 Far and near
 Rise and fall
 Side to side
 Expanding like a spring roll
 On the flamethrower of every smoke
 He perches on the close towns and the nooks
 And blows off the blowing windy-storm
 That rumbles and cracks up the town's
 Like the thieves in Forty-Four Minutes
 Under the canopy of the cricket winds

©—Joshua Klemmant

About Joshua Klemmant

Joshua Klemmant lives in Ibadan City, Oyo State, Nigeria. He is a lover of the arts and humanities, and it is this deep appreciation of aesthetics that drove him to becoming a writer, songwriter, teacher, guitarist and Gospel Preacher.

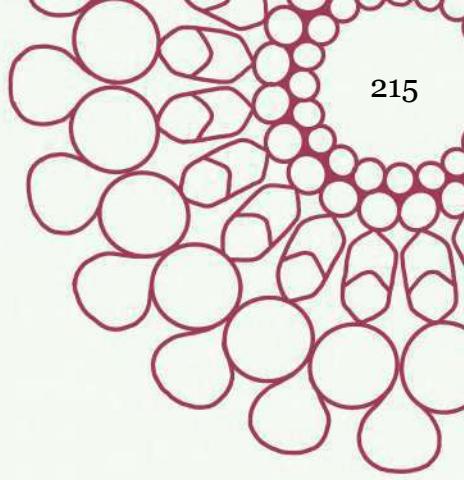


A WALL

**Mohammad Al-Domaini
Saudi Arabia**

Don't lean on that wall
My friend
It's not tough strong enough to fend off
The arrows of harm
And it's not thick enough to
Endure the foul minds.

It's nothing more
Than a wall that was
Besmeared with birds' droppings
And you've left carrying the burden of words.
Leave it, my friend, standing
And under whose shadow a passerby farmer
From whom they've stolen his mouth
Will take refuge,
Since they'd silenced



The singing on the slopes.

It's just a wall

That didn't even harm the trees that have become entangled on top of it.

It used to have a heart

But they've backfilled the hills around it

Don't rattle it violently

And don't climb it, disturbing its solitude

For there's nothing more behind it

But graveyards.

SOLITUDE

To be a good citizen

I told myself I must hang out in my street

The street that is devoid of sins

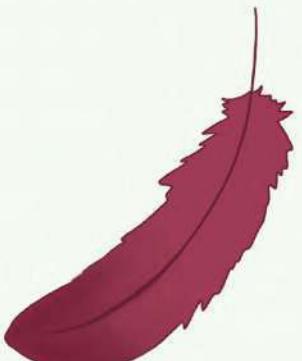
In which no woman's voice is heard

Except when she harries to my door

Mistaking my house for the neighbour's house.

I've lived on this street for four decades

And I've made out of its sandy hills



A house and neighbours and cats

And lots of garbage containers.

My house door is locked

As are all doors on the street

As are the hurrying cars

As is the forlorn mailbox

Which didn't fail to feel the delight of receiving a single letter.

As are the long walls

On top of which cats will climb in a glance

To prepare on it

A moaning feast of their lustful relationships.

Behind the door

Are widowed tales, worn out years and shrubs

Attacked by angry suns

Turning them into dirt in the garden.

Translated by Abdul Wahab Abu Zaid, Saudi poet and translator

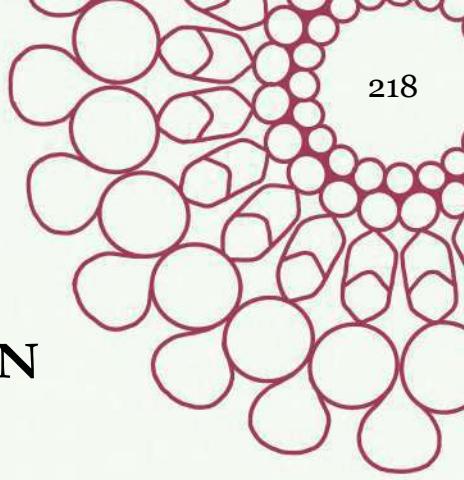
About Mohammad Al-Domaini

Mohammed worked as an editor for the Cultural Literary Review published by "Al-Yaum" daily and was appointed as an editor of "Dareen", a cultural quarterly published in Dammam. In 2010, he was appointed as Editor-in-Chief of al-Qafilah (The Caravan), the cultural magazine produced by Saudi Aramco. Three collections of his works have appeared so far, "*The Ruins of Joy*" (1989), "*Ears On A Slope*" (1994) and "*Days saved by nobody*" (2014). A number of his poems were translated into English, French and German. Mohammed has participated in many literary activities in the Middle East.



Nahid Kabiri
Iran

THE APPLE GARDEN



the moon sighs
Ah!
the star falls aground...
there is the wind and plot of guns in

the island's drum without a captain

and you with boots and fire,

advance... stop!

love me
lay down your arms
I'm a refugee of night
I'm related
to the apples of the garden of my dress,

to the broken clouds of my homeland

and surrender

in this useless, endless war
with smile
with salute

September 2021



A LITTLE MOON ON MY WOUNDS, I'VE RUBBED

in the celebration of sparrows and sun
 my rainbow balloons in the wind
 and a sky that is lower than the height of maple trees.
 cherries are ripe
 berries have fallen on the ground
 summer
 has left the drop, drop of its heat
 in the south of cornfields.
 and in the cool of water of the river
 slipping on the green route of seaweeds.
 when night comes
 it's not night
 it's not fear
 you're not here with frozen snow on your frame
 in a faint relation
 to stone the afternoons of my perfume and comb and poems
 with your foolish heresies
 You're not
 You're not, and I have rubbed
 a little moon on my wounds
 a little star on the hack, hacks of my coughs
 in the days when cherries are ripe
 berries have fallen on the ground
 and as if
 the sharp reek of a lonely thyme
 has grown on the white satin of my dreams

September 2021

All Poems Translated by Ali.M. Kabiri

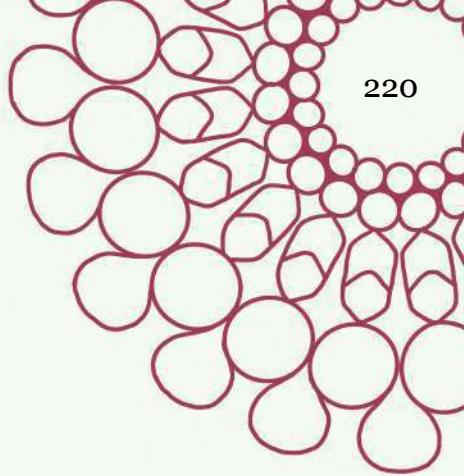
About Nahid Kabiri

Nahid Kabiri is a contemporary poet and writer born in Iran. She graduated in Social Sciences from the University of Tehran. Her passion for poetry and storytelling began to show at an early age and dominated her life ever since. Like others grounded in the prismatic mosaic of her native land, she was taken by the rich poetry of *Hafez* and *Khayam*. Later, she became irresistibly intoxicated by the poetry of contemporaries such as *Nima*, *Shamloo*, and *Farokhzad* – aspiring to compose her own poetry. She has published 11 collections of poetry, 4 novels, and 6 short stories. For over a decade, she has been invited to attend World Poetry Festivals convened in Barcelona, Medellin, Zurich, Dubai, Istanbul, Mallorca, and Atlanta. She has been actively involved in the World Poetry Movement since 2011. Her poetry has since been translated into English, Spanish, German, Arabic, Italian and Kurdish.



Alexandra Ivoylova
Bulgaria

HAIKU



concealed
among the budding trees
are my yearnings

the sun is rising
under the God`s hand
peaceful dawn

sands –
mirrors
of stars

THE WINDOW

Boundless sky
in a white frame.
Even in a frame
the sky is boundless.
Boundless from every window
be it the attic,
the hospital ward,
even from the prison cell



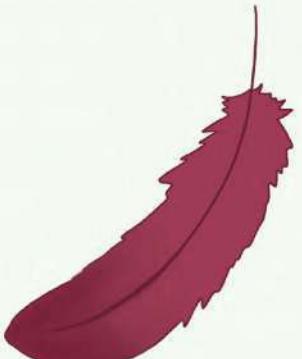
the sky is boundless.
 Even when contained
 within a single ray of light,
 within a single drop of rain
 upon the lashes.
 Even to the blind man behind the wall of darkness ...

Boundless sky, boundless sky!
 An immensity
 within a single human heart.

Old people –
 old people
 on benches of white in the garden –
 slender, transparent, absolved –
 listening dreamily to the wintery waft in their blood,
 smiling with late-autumn; smiles at the sun –
 and the youth,
 glimmering briefly in the light –
 no longer transports them to the past,
 but brings to their minds the angel,
 waiting for them midway.

THE BLOOMING APPLE TREE

Man recalls Heaven.
 But the secret of the recollection he knows not.
 He only wants to glide away
 with the clouds.
 To flow like a river
 towards an invisible ocean.
 To be the shadow of a bird, a tree,



that he can merge with nature.
 In the silence
 to converse with the stone,
 to listen to the frantic burgeoning of grass.

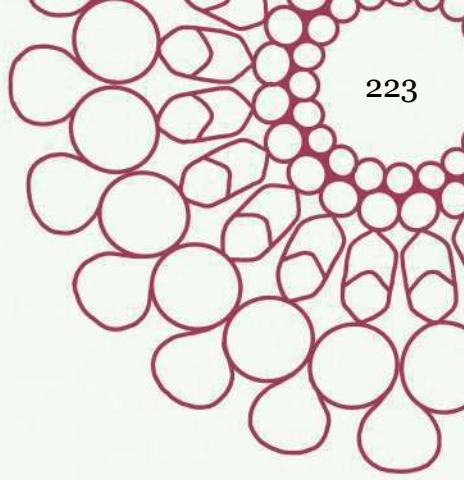
Oh, how he grieves –
 grieves him to return!
 From where this calling comes, he does not know.
 What is
 the secret of its incandescent core –
 the primal fire within the bosom of the earth.

Man recalls Heaven.
 He grieves gazing into the horizon.
 And at the blooming apple tree before him.

Translated by Fannie Krispin

About Alexandra Ivoylova

Alexandra Ivoylova graduated from the National Academy of Music in Sofia, and holds an M.M. degree in piano performance. She specialised in Paris, and studied chamber singing. Alexandra has recorded two compact discs: “Baroque arias and songs” and “Reflections – poetry and music” and has had individual exhibitions of art and photo haiga. Her publications comprise 10 books and collections of haiku and poems translated into eleven languages, haibun, maxims, essays, fragments, as well as literary, art and music reviews. She is the compiler of the Bulgarian-French bilingual haiku anthology “The town”. Her memberships include: World Haiku Association, Bulgarian PEN Center, Bulgarian Haiku Union, Elias Kanetti International Society, Union of Bulgarian Journalists, Rencontres Européennes Europoésie. Member of the editorial board of the Bulgarian magazine “Haiku World”.



**Godhooli Dinesh
Nepal**

HUNTER

A glimpse of moon
hunter overlooks
the game

MONSOON POUR

Transparently wet she is
drenched in devotion

SHORT LIFE

My front yard
night jasmine falls
silently

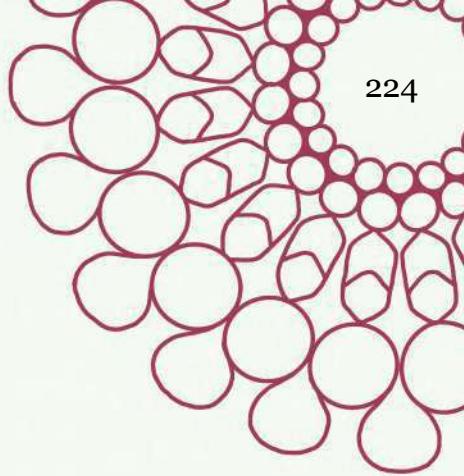
About Godhooli Dinesh

A retired Professor and Dean of Kathmandu University, Godhooli Dinesh is a Haiga artist from Nepal. His Haiga have been published regularly in international online journals like *Haiga Online* and *Daily Haiga*, and printed in journals like *Graines De Vents*, France. His haiku are regularly published in *World Haiku* and *Haiku University*, Japan and failed Haiku, USA. His haiku are published in anthology of Haiku in several journals of Nepal. He has his own style of Haiga of *Sumi-e* art with ink and colour, adopting minimalist aesthetics. He uses Nepali scripts and calligraphy on his Haiga and has also published a compilation of his Haiga works in a book titled ‘... old frog on the mound of a pond’.



André Cruchaga
Republic of El Salvador

PATH OF JOY



A vilano always dawns on the path of the mornings, in whose mirror we shelter the daily roots of fire. After all, it is always like this, because we are a tree, a drizzle and a window: in the nursery of our tools, there is the work of air that inhabits us, like a sea of challenging watercolors, like a city of thirst in middle of the tropics. (*Safe of that door gives us every moment, the horizon of your eyes and the canvas of your pores adhering to my desires comfort me.*)

REMINISCENCE

From childhood, those trains in front of my house and the river of then, cut by the breath of the stubborn day. There was a rush of dust on the sleepers, an aroma of parsnips hitting my feet, a drizzle fan in my pupils. From a whiny chair, I dreamed in code with the clouds coiled, endless. In the dawn bra, the greenery of a bird without clothes like me, ascending to the fire, being born among the sounds of tearing. (*You can never escape the cold or heat of the rails, a certain dark fascination with pebbles, an underground world such as sadness or anguish.*)

After all, the visions are the light of the path, the glass that reveals the wages.



PATH OF DISTANCES

Far away, a field of pine trees melts the echo of the boats and liturgy of night relay. Beneath the strides of hunch, the path makes visible the masks, the traces that the years take away, the absences that are never exhausted even in language. In the left feet, the mute crosses of soul and eyes that nobody sees in moving land. And the hands that get tangled in the circles of shadows. And the door that is always in vigil after a lamp, or your half-naked name, a design of remote phonetics.

All Poems Translated into English by David Pedersen and Cándida Pedersen

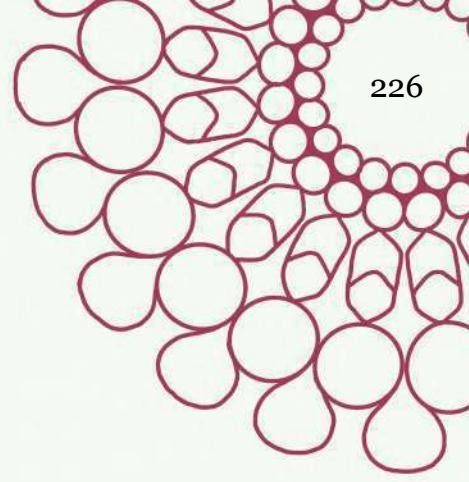
About André Cruchaga

André Cruchaga (El Salvador, 1957) is a poet and teacher who has taught from primary to university level for thirty-eight years. His work has been partially translated into several languages, having more than 20 poetry books published in Spanish, Catalan, English, French, Romanian and Swedish, and 5 plaquettes; Several of his books have been published in: El Salvador, Mexico, Cuba, Chile, Sweden, Spain, and the United States. Some of his works include "Poeta en Barataria", Editorial Arte y Literatura, (La Habana, Cuba, 2010); "Balcony of vertigo", Directorate of Publications and Printed, (El Salvador, 2014); "Invention of waiting", Laberinto Editorial, (El Salvador, 2021); and "Antípodas del Espejo", Teseo Ediciones, (El Salvador, 2021).



Sayumi Kamakura
Japan

HAIKU



My happiness—
come down
from the mackerel sky

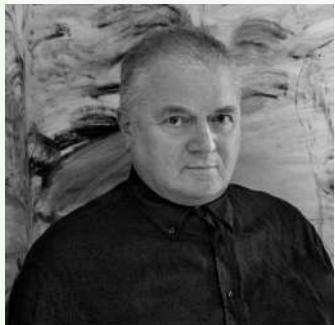
The butterbur stem:
even if small,
a dream is a dream

The scarf is red
so as to never
forget you

Translated by James Shea United States

About Sayumi Kamakura

Sayumi Kamakura was born in 1953 in Japan and began composing haiku at 19 years old. From 1998, she established the haiku magazine *Ginyū* with Ban'ya Natsuishi. She has attended haiku and poetry festivals in 16 Countries. She published 6 Japanese haiku collections and co-authored 44 books. She also published 4 books in both Japanese and English. Her haiku was translated into 18 languages. She is currently the judge of the haiku section of the Japanese daily newspaper *The Asahi Shimbun's "Saitama Culture,"* *The Saitama News,* and The Saitama Literary Prize. She won the Oki Sango Prize in 1988, the Modern Haiku Association Prize in 2001, and the AZsacra International Poetry award in the *Taj Mahal Review's June 2012 Issue.*



Franco Buffoni
Italy

AT THE TIME OF THE DOLCE VITA



At the time of the dolce vita
 Unlike mosses and lichens
 Cryoconite—that dark sediment
 Visible in summer on the surface of the glaciers—
 Preserves radioactivity for a long time.
 From the glaciers of the Caucasus to the Artic archipelago,
 Passing through what remains of the glaciers of the Alps,
 Cryoconite preserves, in abnormal quantities,
 Cesium-137 dating back to Chernobyl—1986—
 And even the isotopes of plutonium and americium
 And bismuth-207 traceable to nuclear tests
 Carried out at high atmosphere at the time of the Dolce Vita.
 Like the lungs of ex-smokers,
 That also remember what their owner has forgotten,
 Cryoconite emerges as the beast-conscience of the short century.



ERBIUM AND DYSPROSIUM

Erbium and Dysprosium,
 The atoms subjected to the great frost,
 Have recently entered the Periodic
 Table of the Elements:
 We got to minus 273.15 degrees,
 Very close to absolute zero,
 The Italian Research Council proudly asserts.
 The properties of the zero-friction liquid
 Are reached only through the workings of the cold,
 MIT echoes, harshly.
 And I listen to them with admiration,
 My windpipe, too, is curious.
 Erbium and Dysprosium are two boys
 With very strong magnetism.
 They cough a little, then go away.
 They return as Cosma and Damiano and they are saints.

All Poems Translated from Italian by Moira Egan

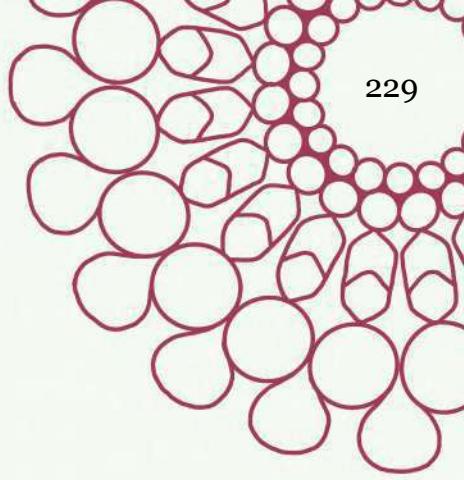
About Franco Buffoni

Franco Buffoni was born in Gallarate (Lombardy) in 1948, and lives in Rome. He is a professor of literary criticism and comparative literature. For 30 years he has taught in the universities of Bergamo, Cassino, Milano IULM, Parma e Torino. Some of his books of poetry are *Suora Carmelitana* (Montale Award, Guanda, 1997); *Guerra* (Dedalus Award, Mondadori, 2005); *Jucci* (Mondadori 2014); and *Betelgeuse e altre poesie scientifiche* (Mondadori 2021). Some parts of these books have been published in Spain, Germany, The Netherlands, and England. Two full collections have appeared in the United States and in France. In 1989, he founded and still is the editor of the review ‘Testo a fronte’, dedicated to the theory and the practice of literary translation (Marcos y Marcos).



Ashur Etwebi
Libya

HOME



Because in Libya there's no river, I don't know the sound of river.
Because in Libya there's no snow, I don't know the smell of snow.

But I do know:

the wild thyme in the mountain,
the wind wailing in a wasteland,
the fragility of fig trees in August,
the rumbling of the sea when the dead depart,
the rage of camels when winter ends
the narrow steps of Libyans with empty hands.

The door of this old song is closed.
The love of this land is heavy.
Ghazal, the harvester of wind

GHAZAL, THE HARVESTER OF WIND

Ghazal, the harvester of wind.
Ghazal, the wife of a blind god.
Ghazal, a fire's furrow.

Nature is a musician who sways and hums.
Dewdrops are people that rise from sleep



The valley is a fugitive thrown under a tree.

...I hear the drums beating...

Oh bird, your head on the window glass.

Suck in a last sip of cold Norwegian air, breathe it in slowly,

and tell me, which sky do you see now?

Tell me, which sea do you smell now?

Your heart's pulse in my hands.

Your fluttering wings are in my hands.

What are these hollows around your eyes?

Oh bird, dying is easy.

IMPROVISATION ON SAXOPHONE

Softly I enter jazz.

Softly as nectar.

Softly as a beat or two in the air.

Softly as the saxophonist's breath,
tilting his head a little towards the cosmos.

Softly as a Nubian boat on a spring morning.

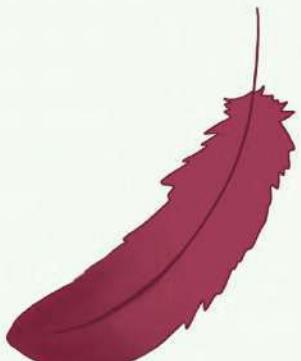
Softly as the gentleness of a soul
that keeps on looking backwards.

Softly as dervishes swirling in a Chicago tavern.

Softly as a sycamore tree,
oblivious, joyful then sad.

Since the rain stopped.

Since the birds of an abandoned village fell silent.



Improvisation on saxophone: a poem imbedded in everyday margins,
or stale ginger tea that has gone unnoticed.
I will push this tune to its limits.
Pure absence.

*These poems were published in: Five scenes from a failed revolution
Published by: Arc publications England, 2021.
Translated by the author and James Byrne.*

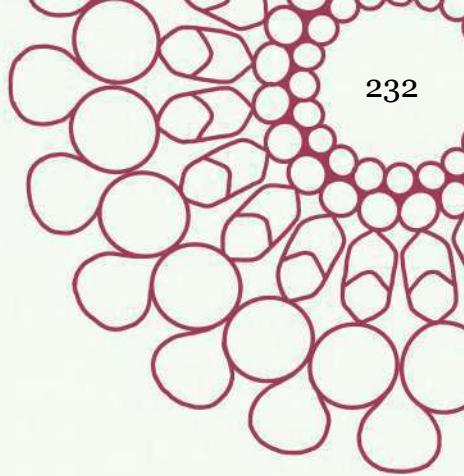
About Ashur Etwebi

Ashur Etwebi was born in 1952 in Tripoli, Libya. He is a poet, translator and painter who has published nine volumes of poetry and seven volumes of translations. Collections of his Poems were translated into many languages. He organised the first ever Tripoli international poetry festival in 2012 in collaboration with poet Khaled Mattawa. He also organised the Poems and Cities Poetry Festival that travelled the Great Sahara and the Nafusa mountain, in 2014.



Greta Ambrazaitė
Lithuania

PRIMAL FORCE



for D. N.

when we were sitting on the balcony
listening to Pink Floyd's *Animals*,
it was the time of seasonal miscegenation,
November murmurs, the stuffing of fall,
and I didn't know a sheep means love,
or that like a domesticated dog,
you're desperately afraid of being left alone
to dream until you forget yourself,
at the time, we just wanted to hunt in the Savanah
with our gnashing maws snarling our intentions,
so we snarled, we drained ourselves to the dregs,
and began to fight against the structure
of our bodies and the world,
until we absolved it all, vowing
that we would bypass the required conditions
and our nonconformity
would melt in the gaze's rheum
that falls from the clear skies
in brilliance,
and we would collect it and bury it
like our beloved childhood trinkets,
and the garden would enclose the animals
while we would be cast out –



I feel how reality heals,
 I feel how the dark autumn waters
 have almost closed with ice

BLOOD MOUSE

look how the trees rise high,
 a small blood mouse runs by,
 i close my eyes before beginning to speak,
 wanting so much to be closer

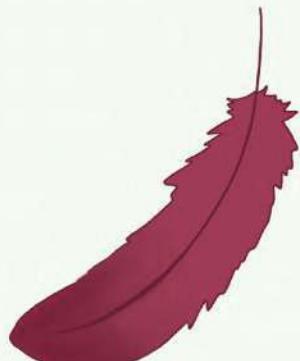
how grand, that which unites us,
 how petty, that which separates,
 don't jail me in empty speech,
 beyond it lies the metallic red of lips

look, the trees wind into the sky,
 the brooch of a leaf hits my palm,
 a small blood mouse runs by,
 wanting to be closer

don't jail me in empty speech,
 i don't know what gave me more:
 trees rising up into the sky
 or blood before morning tea

how petty, that which separates,
 just a few floors –
 you on the roof, i in the bath,
 a blood mouse in hiding

look how the trees climb and climb,
 how grand, that which unites us,



the metallic red of lips,
one elevator –
for all the furrows of pain

All Poems Translated from Lithuanian by Rimas Užgiris

About Greta Ambrazaitė

Greta Ambrazaitė (born 1993, in Vilnius) is a poet, translator and book editor. She obtained a master's degree in Literary Anthropology and Culture at Vilnius University. Her first poetry book *Fragile Things* ("Trapūs daiktais") was published in 2018. This book was awarded the Young Yotvingian Prize as a best young poet's book, published in two years. This book was also awarded as the Best Poetry Book of the Year. In 2019 the poet was awarded the Young Artist's Prize by the Lithuanian Ministry of Culture. Greta Ambrazaitė's poetry has been translated into 11 foreign languages. Her second book "Adela" will be published in 2022.

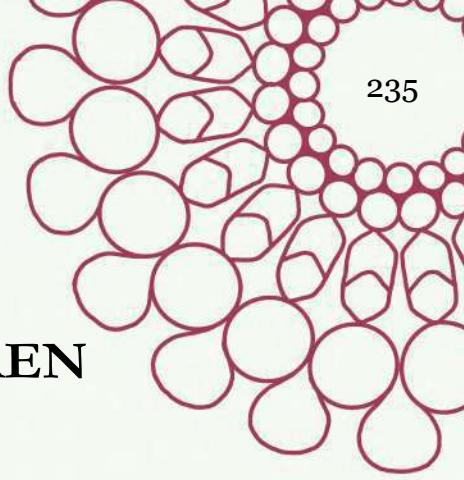


FORGIVE ME CHILDREN OF THE WORLD

Kathirina Susanna Tati
Malaysia

Forgive me children of the world
I can only offer prayers
when seeing you in agony
seeing you treated cruelty
not with tender loving care
sheltered under the rubble of bricks
not in a house with a roof and a perfect floor
looking for a bite of meal
revenge, anger, hatred and revenge
coloured your whole life

Forgive me children of the world
who are stuck with human trade
war and suffering
and persecuted
because people with good hearts
just keep quiet in silence
and the world is full of leaders



hunger for power and rank
 surrounding your life and country

Forgive me children of the world
 although I don't know when it will end
 but we still have hope
 Creator of the world and the sky is always with
 heaven, and earth has seen the fall and rise of power and cruelty
 stars and moon never gave up to sparkle
 the sun that comes and touches the world
 proof that tomorrow will always there
 there is a new Life a better one

The chirping of birds and the smell of peace
 will kill the sound of weapons bangs
 forgive me children of the world
 but believe in me
 happiness and peace will come.

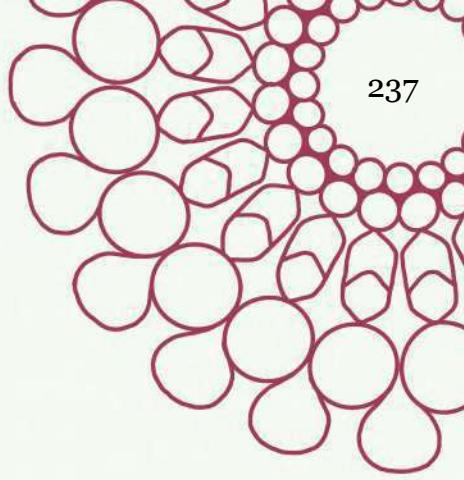
September 30th, 2021

About Kathirina Susanna Tati

Kathirina Susanna Tati was born in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia on the 30th of August 1958. She graduated with an Honorary Doctorate Degree in Humanity from Prixtan Church and University. She has written 12 books which consist of novels for adults, novels for children, collections of short stories, collections of poems, and folklore stories. Some of her children's story books were translated to Tamil, Japanese, Russian and in her own language of Malay. She has organised 13 anthologies, and was awarded the Sabah Literature Awards for 1996/1997, 2016/2017 & 2018/2019.



DEPTH'S CALL



**Hilal Al Hajri
Oman**

Glory to you

O ancient sea

There's a distant light

Shining in your soul

Lend me a flash from it.

O Sir

Let it be a shooting star's spark

Or the gleam of a pirate's gold tooth

Or whatever I light up with my dark caves.

JABAL AKHDHAR'S WINE [1]

What if the herdsmen of Jabal Akhdar

Started to spill their wine

Through streams and slopes?

This divine blood



Would it find its way
 To the mouths of the thirsty and wretched
 In the bottom of Hell
 Or would this giant seize it
 Sip it without mercy?!

[1] Jabal Akhdhar (Green Mountain) a mountain in the north of Oman (the translator)
All Poems Translated by Khalid Al Balushi

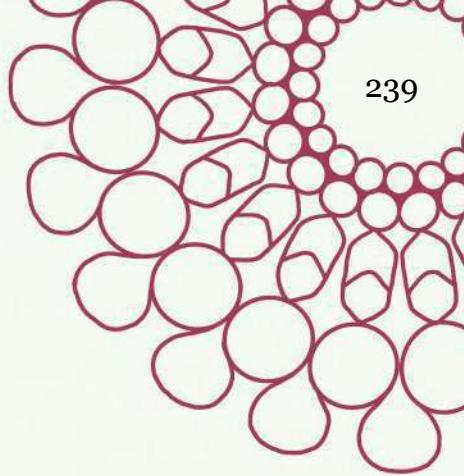
About Hilal Al Hajri

Hilal Al Hajri is a contemporary Omani researcher, translator and poet. Born in 1968, Al Hajri served as a professor of Arabic literature and travel writing at the College of Arts and Social Sciences at Sultan Qaboos University for over a decade. Interested in the discourse of orientalism, he has written extensively on Western travelogues on the Arab world. The title of his masterpiece “British Travel Writing on Oman, Orientalism Reappraised” encapsulates the geography of his scholarly interests. Published by Peter Lang, International Academic Publishers in 2006, this book traces the writings of British travellers for over three centuries, (roughly from the 17th century to 1970). In 2010, he was honoured by the GCC ministers of culture for his “outstanding” contribution to translation, and in 2020 His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq bestowed upon him the Order of Appreciation for Good Civil Service, Second Class.



Laurențiu Bădicioiu
Romania

LOVE AND HOPE



I pray for you,

My dearest universe!

I pray for the trees.

I pray the beautiful stars-your eyes.

I pray for my humankind.

But I am sorrow...

Where is the peace

I used to feel

In my heart?

Where are my friends

I used to have before the pandemic?

Where I am?

I hear a sad love song



Flowing in my veins,
 Poisoning my inner universe,
 Killing my peaceful thoughts,
 But barely whispering:
 Don't give up, don't give up!

So I'll walk on across the river of beliefs
 Recharging my lost humanity
 And now the voice of happiness
 Is filling my emptiness
 Taking away my depth despair
 And let me dream again...

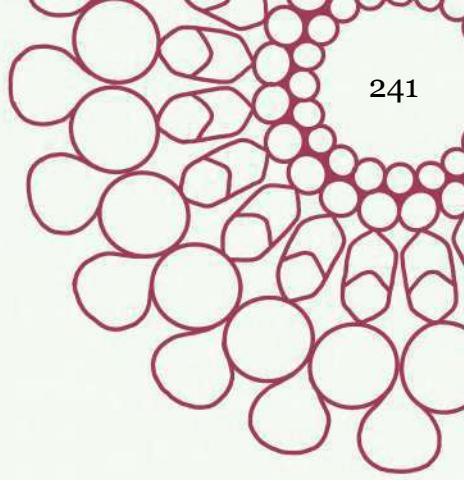
About Laurențiu Bădicioiu

Laurențiu Bădicioiu was born in Mizil, Romania. He graduated from the Marine Military College, Faculty of Letters at University of Bucharest with a Doctor in philology (PhD) in 2019. His doctoral thesis was entitled "Landmarks of the Romanian comic in the satirical-humorous publications from the interwar period". He was a sailor, electrician, DJ, journalist, and photographer on a cruiser. He coordinated 14 anthologies "Romeo and Juliet at Mizil", "We love Mizil!", "Quintus 100%!", as well as 14 editions of the homonymous literary festival between 2007-2021. He is a teacher and the president of the Cultural Foundation "Romeo and Juliet at Mizil". Now he is the Director of the Poetry Festival "Romeo si Julieta la Mizil", 15th edition.



Yeşim Ağaoğlu
Turkey

ICY POEM



ice blooming tulip
dervish whirling on ice
white falcon black eagle
wings frozen in ice
Rudolf's slender legs
a ballerina's arms outstretched to the sky
thorns growing along
the icy path leading to god
a swan breathing his last on the ice
the body of an ice-drowned lily- of- the- pond

while you, how very hot you are
as if challenging all things icy
how hot your stalactites and stalagmites
wish you were here so all the ice could melt



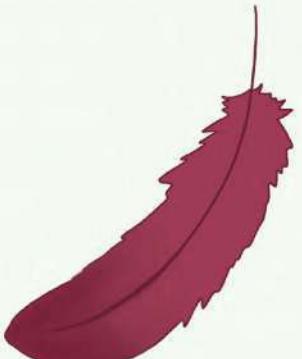
SLEEPING POET

poet sleeping
 stretched out on the grass
 his hat askew on his brow
 poet asleep, his hands on his throat
 his house and trees are sleeping too the sun making ready to leave, only
 images are awake now dark blue horses, winged ballerinas the violin-
 bodied man, the harp playing bird woman and the pauper king.

now the poet is astride an image horse
 the park as wide as can be
 and as rich as it gets
 the chateau splendid, the trees giant-sized, his hat straight on his brow,
 hands on hips, the poet is smiling now

SWEET TALKING THE FAIRY

o, fairy who makes that master write poems
 my call is clear, no ceremony,
 having sharpened your wings, just drop in,
 even if you're wet from the rains
 your tea is made, coffee if you wish
 and if you're cold, your wings frozen from the snow



my wine is warm, so is my home
 we could even make it springtime
 my window is open
 my room fragrant with roses
 or come in summertime if you wish
 let it be scorching hot
 let's share an ice-cold water melon
 spread your hair across my room
 o, fairy who makes that master write poems
 come with your sharpest wings
 my secrets are sacred
 I won't tell anyone that you've been here

All Poems Translated by Nihal Yeginobali

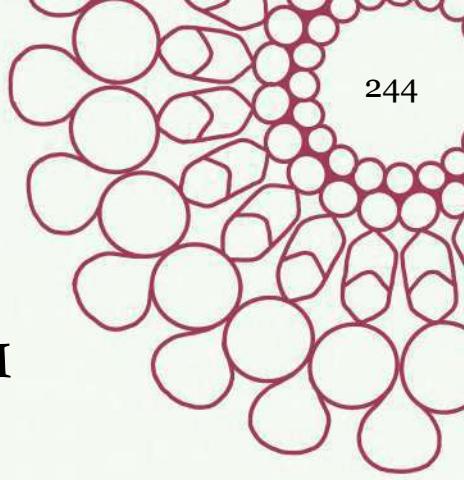
About Yeşim Ağaoğlu

Yeşim received her undergraduate degree from Istanbul University in Art History and Archaeology, then a Master's in Radio, TV and Cinema. Her poems have appeared in various anthologies, and her published books of poetry have been translated into many languages. She frequently participates in international literary and poetry festivals, as well as gaining recognition internationally as a contemporary artist. Her published poetry books include "*Güllerin ağırlığı*" (the heaviness of roses) in 2017, "*sehrin üzerindeki şiirler*" (poems over the city) in 2018 and "*Kapıların düeti*", a duet with Maki Starfield, in 2020.



Khulood Al Mualla
United Arab Emirates

SENSE OF WISDOM



Destined to live alone

and so I wake up every morning having sense of wisdom

Because I feel I can say anything

any time

Oh, what a happiness!

HASTEN

Everything around me is still

Even the shiver of that lonely bough

This state will not change

So I must hasten to my heart,

set it free

WITH ONE WING

I think of the faces that have left me,

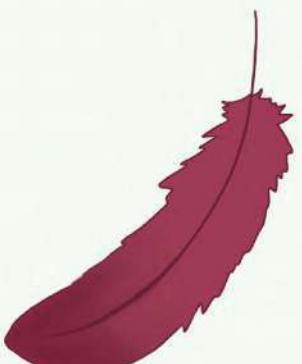
I travel into my seven directions,



abandoning a memory that has lost its time
I think of what is beyond existence,
of what is not within my capacity to comprehend
I think of what the heart does not accept
I lie down alone
Thirsty are my springs
I wish a downpour of affection showers my land!
I wonder how many poems I am still waiting for,
or is it a soft flapping of a sparrow with one wing.

AND SO WE PARTED

Friends like the sun
Their light shines in my memory
I still lean on their affection
The cafés that knew us changed patrons.
And the road that leads us toward each other, how far away it is now!
Friends
Fade into the smoke.
Our faces look pale.
Like when we met;
and so we parted!

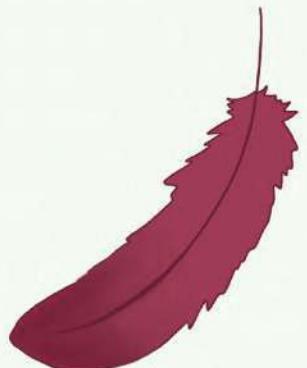


A DIFFERENT COLLISION

At dawn,
 while the rain fills the walls of my senses with its silvery cities,
 there was a knock on my door
 I opened it
 Unawares, I heard the sound of my heart colliding with the wind.

COMPLETELY FREE

I practice my passion to the extent of the sky
 Just like that
 completely free
 I look out from my narrow window
 and I see the universe complete
 its great mysteries are revealed
 Just like that
 completely free
 I colour my little details with the colour of snow
 I make peace with the moment
 that takes me into the delight of things
 from my narrow window I overlook
 I indulge in expanding
 and my sky is moistened with life
 I practice my fondness,



picking the fruits of my existence
Stripped of my old afflictions
Stripped of the excessive silence around me
Completely free,
lest I be complete.

All Poems Translated by The Author

About Khulood Al Mualla

A respected voice of modernity in the Emirati and Arab poetic scenes, Khulood has a monthly column in Publishers Weekly Arabic Magazine. She is inspired by a world of her own that takes mysticism as a premise to create her poems, making her distinguished. She published six collections of poetry. Her poems were translated into several languages and published five books in Spanish and one in Russian, French, Turkish, Italian, Hindi and English. She is involved in the poetry science and was selected as a consultant for the International Poetry Festival of Costa Rica. In 2016, she was honoured by H. H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum's Initiative for Poets of Peace. Khulood won the Buland Al-Haidari Prize in 2008, the Assilah Festival in Morocco.



MEMORIES

Moëz Majed
Tunisia

Nettles, doves, daisies,
Freed from the jaws of the world,
I stretch out like the transparent shadow of the day
And the resonant flow of white mornings.

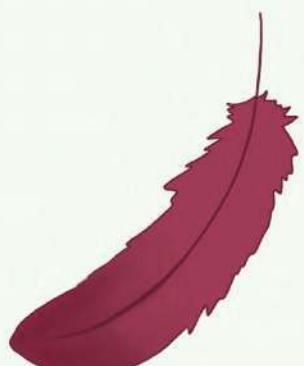
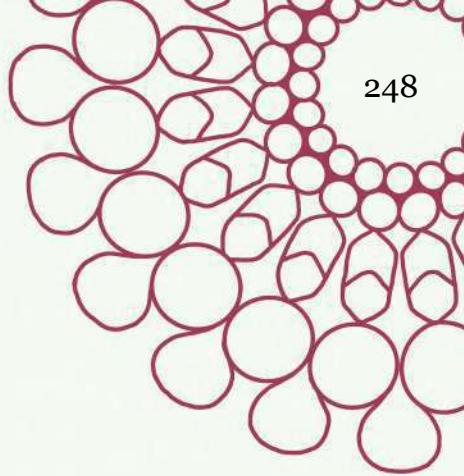
Here I am at the disposal of memory,
Of the high winds of deaf steppes
And of the long and silent nights to come
And I wait...

For the guardians of twilight times
To finally lose courage,
And so they deliver to the driving forces of erosion
The extinct key to so many parochial temples.

I'll wait
To see the white smile of dawn blooming
at the tip of the highest branch.

I'll wait
While a dragonfly lost by the winds of yesterday
Finds its way once more and lands on my heart
Like it used to do when I was its father.

And I will keep as if a divine word
The heralding beginnings of moving waters.



I will climb to the top of the fortress
 The way the steep paths of desire are taken
 Shattering a silence that was gained after such a fierce struggle
 Taking revenge on the sheer size of penalties
 Ransacking sanctuaries and estates
 So that I am reborn to this world
 Without a trajectory,
 Without deities or offerings.

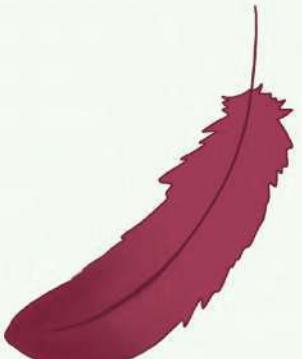
Come to me
 O Great pains and bitter follies of memory
 So that I hug the tough bark of ordinance
 So that I snatch from bygone times
 the indelible privilege of occurrence.

Come to me
 O Scarred souls of pampered faces,
 O Trunks, with opulent attributes,
 Gorged with sour sap
 And dry as barren hills.

Come to me
 With the grudge of torched paradises
 And of sacrificial soldiers in the mud of blackened plains;
 Those who find their beloved ones
 Crippled like beggars
 Broken like a twig on the trails of transhumance.

Come,
 From now on,
 I stand at the threshold of waters
 that have let go of their tumults.

A shiver of whiteness spreads in my sight
 And in the lap of sound I elect as my home
 The flowering branches in the breeze.



Come
 So that you may dissolve like a sullied memory
 And be swiftly abandoned to the relief of forgiveness.

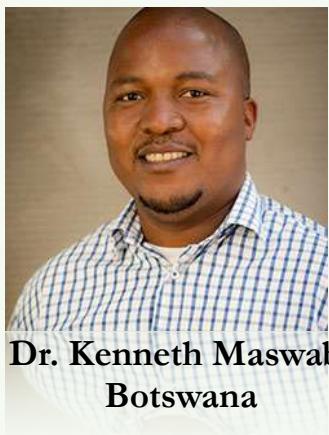
So that your faces may disappear with the broken junctions
 In the tangle of memory.
 May your forgotten voices disappear in the stream of days
 And that the love to come is finally born.

A dragonfly
 For too long lost in the winds of yesterday
 Will soon find its way back
 And will land on my heart once more
 Like it used to do when I was its father.

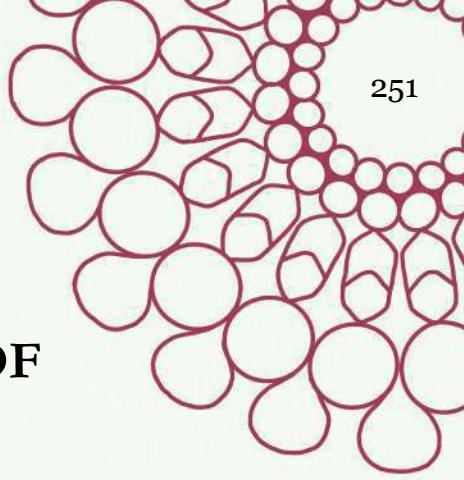
Translated from the French by Ghassan Al Khuneizi

About Moëz Majed

Born in 1973 in a family of poets and diplomats, Moëz studied life sciences in the Tunisian University and in the Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle in Paris. He has been the director of the Arab-speaking literature magazine "Reehab Al-Maarifa" and the French-speaking magazine "Opinions." His poetry is written in French, and he has been published in Tunisia, France and Jordan in addition to his poetry being translated and published in many languages. He has 6 poetry volumes including *Gisants* (Fata Morgana, Saint Clément 2012) and *Chants de l'autre rive* (Fata Morgana, Saint Clément 2014). He also holds 6 translation books.



THE EXPOSITION OF TRUE PEACE



Dr. Kenneth Maswabi
Botswana

Like the taste of water

Peace takes on so many tastes and states

Different nationalities subscribe to different colours of peace

Just like water, peace can be mixed with so many solvents

To produce a solution of artificially manufactured sweeteners and colourants

It is sometimes pre-packaged for the unsuspecting subjects and masses

Or mass-produced for those who are in vulnerable positions

This peace is not the actual substance of true peace

Just like water, true peace is a remedy for the spirit

It is not uncommon to paint true peace with the colours of happiness

It is not the blue sky that defines true peace

Or the well-manicured flowers on the front patio

It is also not the richly-nourished menu on the table

Or the well-cooked itinerary of our wildest dreams and desires

True Peace is a state of being beyond physical description

It is the totality of body, mind and soul fully awakened on the fabric of being



True peace is an abundance of being, an illumination of the spirit

True peace is an inheritance to all human beings

Wrapped in the most colourful substance of nothingness

True peace is not an awkward absence of war and conflict

It is a realisation that war and conflict are an integral part of the physical world

And an adoption of a well-defined path of existence

True peace is the substance of the spirit and the colour of Love

It is a garment worn by those who have seen the Light

A shield for those who walk on the path of knowing (awareness)

True peace is not a manufactured state of being

True peace is the fibre and fabric of our innermost state of being

We can all embrace our inheritance of true peace

But first we have to learn to walk on the path of Light

Discard our selfishness, fears and wicked ways

We have to adorn the fabric of existence (unconditional Love)

We have to be the summit of being

©Kenneth Maswabi

About Dr. Kenneth Maswabi

Dr. Kenneth is a Clinical Research Physician by profession. He studied Medicine at Melbourne University, Australia and has been practicing Medicine for 15 years now. He joined Clinical Research 8 years ago and is currently working on Paediatric HIV/AIDS Cure Research Studies. His interest with poetry started as a teenager, totally inspired by the silence or stillness of mind, body and soul. He only writes poetry when he is in this state. He considers himself as a Spirit Poet and writes mostly about the Spirituality of Love, Consciousness and Humanity. He has just recently published a Poetry book Titled: *Love, Consciousness and Humanity: The Shadowless Dreamer...The Illuminated Path of Silence.* This is a collection of spirit poems that are inspired by Silence.



Borche Panov
North Macedonia

BRECKLAND THYME ON THE SHORE OF THE IMPOSSIBLE



The engravings in the fog are evoking the memories
that the life was eternal once upon a time
that Breckland thyme was growing on the shore of the impossible
that the universe lives in the body of its infiniteness
that even the infiniteness has its own volume, and the memory has time
that the mould of the night keeps the footprint of the day
that the Sun goes down in our palms
and rises up again from the lifelines
and the death whispers to the life
that the good goes on

through the engravings of the fog, the tongue slides
on the bloody thread of the history like a snail
tied on the blind dot of the nose
and no one could ever see the other end with the word
from which everything has started and the lips like birds travelling to the
south
are migrating for so long under the awnings of an unspoken time,

are we ill because the Sun cannot reach
the shadow that has hidden under our skins
and is afraid to grow towards West or to contract to the East
or because the Sun is just a temporary engraving
of a shabby dime of a past time
that hangs on a chain of imaginary days in the fog
and I am just a ring that is closest to the imaginary Sun

on the railway platform, the last dot gets down as well
and the last passenger car disappears with the end of the sentence
and the waiting itself is a magnet needle in the fog
and it is only me who is waiting for the moment to bear fruit



when with a cavalry of the seconds a wind will start to blow
and it will take away everything but the fear that each moment
an apocalypse could happen if only we think of it

nevertheless, it is enough for us to remember that the shore of the
impossible
is right behind the fog and that the Breckland thyme
grows on the palms of the universe
and that among the three dots of the infiniteness anything is possible
and that the universe lives in the body of its infiniteness
and that even the infiniteness has its own volume, and the memory has
time
and that the mould of the night keeps the footprint of the day
and that the Sun will go down in our palms again
and will rise up again from the lifelines
and that the death whispers to the life
that the good goes on

Translated by Daniela Andonovska Trajkovska

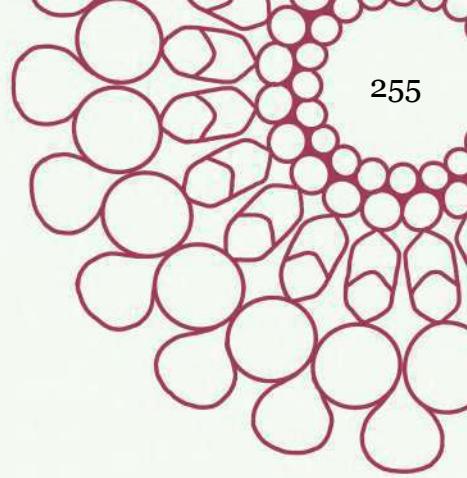
About Borche Panov

Borche was born in 1961. He graduated from the "Sts. Cyril and Methodius" University of Skopje in Macedonian and South Slavic Languages (1986). He has been a member of the 'Macedonian Writer' Association since 1998. His poetry was published in a number of anthologies, literary magazines and journals both at home and abroad, and his works were translated into several different languages. He has won several literary awards such as: Premio Mondiale "Tulliola- Renato Filippelli" in Italy for his book "*Balloon Shaving*" (2021), International Award of Excellence "City of Galateo-Antonio De Ferrariis" (Italy, Rome, 2021), Premio "Le Occasioni" in Italy (among 662 participants), and Sahitto Literary Award 2021.



Justo Jorge Padrón
Spain

THE HAND THAT WRITES YOU



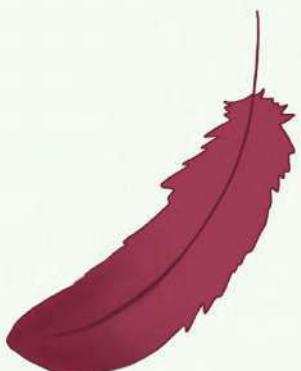
To Kleo

They are not history, dates, the hours we embrace,
not even a handful of words
or flocks of images in eloquent air.
From my forehead springs your name's flow,
and in that still water staring at you
from the past, you live always just as you are,
unburnt by the years.

I sketch your snowy profile, signs
dictated to me by winter with its bleak truth.
White laughter, birches, slow fascination,
time without time, days in night,
sun going back to its wellspring of aromas
beside the cabin's tamed fire.

The world dissolves in your gaze,
the page longing to keep you
in an eternity that aches and stays.

Only the hand that writes you dies.



WE ARE GOD

Naked before my eyes, you go back to the ocean.
 It's the turbulent time when the miracle occurs.
 What hallowed loneliness till arriving,
 resolute and released to your company!

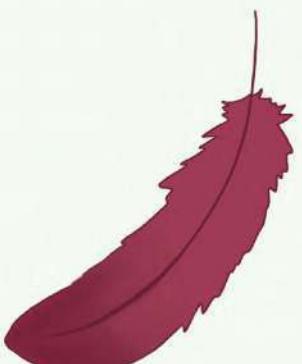
Apples listen to the heartbeat of your breasts
 and water slips over your skin
 like a blessing by which we're redeemed.
 Holding tight together we are God.

From your fullness the sun is a salutation,
 the most plentiful allure of lightning.
 What a lesson of energy your blood bestows
 in the throbbing of a shared day!

To have all the courage of dreaming
 and of feeling the risk becoming engulfed
 in the passion of being our soul. To sense
 with another thirst the euphony of pleasure.

To be the resplendent happiness
 of the instant chosen without the least shadow
 of your own supervision, free from the threat
 of a seduction overpowering all.

In loving you're more certain than night or day
 like a paradox shedding its fear,
 but when praising you, I behold your elation,
 this dazzling warmth you exude on earth.



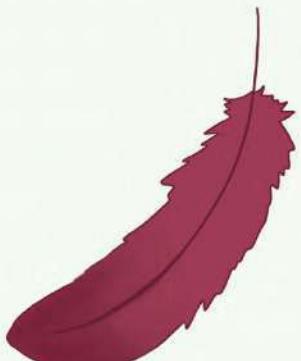
I glow with your smile, flow through my eyes,
 feeling the heart grow huge
 from the high alertness of passionate metaphors,
 with that brightest gift presenting me your life.

LOVING YOU IN THE LIGHT OF DAY

I touched your body when the light dawned,
 feeling your voluptuous presence.
 You blazed in the bonfire of an infinite blue
 with your scent of impregnable young woman,
 earthly, impetuous, the freest creature
 singing in the freshness of desire
 with that fullness that reigns in your gaze.

You shine in the greenery of nature
 between earth and space with that joy that's yours
 like a murmur of forest and dew
 when dawn reveals where the world begins.
 You are languor next to the grapes
 in the breath of wind, a dance growing ecstatic
 in which no one could ever pass away.

The fire wakes up drinking from your flame
 with your limpid emerging syllables
 whose yearning rises and transfigures.
 To feel in your look what cannot be expressed,
 a dazzling mirror of keen deliriums,
 plucking golden strings on the naked harp
 that smiles at its enthralled shadow.



To live the anxious beam blazing in your womb,
 a magnolia unloosed in my impatient fire,
 and to shape that light with its lesson open
 next to the fullest book of the blood.

I plow your loveliest nakedness
 by raising its fervour in the enigma
 after the revelation that makes us immortal.

Your vertigo overwhelms me, this blazing adventure,
 by being the foretaste of miracle,
 for wonderful is all that is still transformed,
 granting its good fortune to the instant expanding
 the multiplication of the senses.

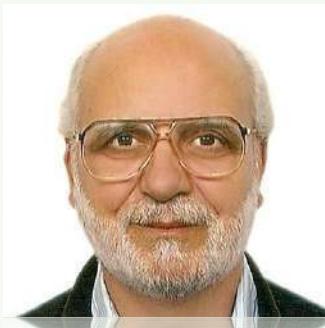
This way you give evidence of our eternity
 with the brave treasure of bliss.

I sense and embrace your paramount prelude
 with that reality of great enchantment
 exceeding dream in its divine essence,
 for you are that truth that never dies
 when love makes us excessive, unique,
 and shakes astonished life when we come together
 to forge a soul transformed into heaven.

*Spanish Poems translated into English by Louis Bourne
 All Poems were sent in by his wife, Kleopatra Filipova de Jorge*

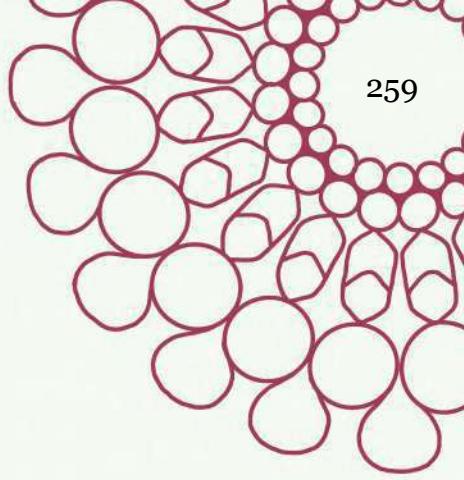
About Justo Jorge Padrón

Born in 1943. Justo received a B.A. in Law and Philosophy and Letters at the University of Barcelona and continued his studies at those in Paris (international law), Stockholm and Oslo (literature and Nordic languages). He practised law for eight years in the city of his birth. In 1974, he left this profession to dedicate himself entirely to literature. He died on April 11, 2021, as a victim of COVID-19. The poetry of Justo Jorge Padrón has reached global attention, and has been translated and published in 50 languages spread over more than seventy countries, he is the only Spanish poet awarded on the five continents. He has won extraordinary recognition such that he has accumulated seventy of the most prestigious awards and distinctions in world poetry for the whole of his poetic work, such as the International Grand Prize of the Swedish Academy, 1972, the Swedish Writers' Bi-annual Award, 1976-1977, for the best book of foreign poetry in Europe translated into Swedish.



Ali A. Kanaan
Syria

BRAVO!



In horse racing,
The beetle raised its head,
Asking for the prize;
The field mouse hailed:
Behold, the deer has won!

Damascus, 1973

LONELINESS

Loneliness begins with a lily in the heart,
Which splits into two halves: one is embracing memories,
And hoping not to lose vision,
The second is scattering through pathways of the night
Thousands of shreds.

Tokyo, 1994

SURREALIST NIGHT

The sound of the clock announces nine,
It might be around one,
It would be even five,
The hand of seconds has intermingled
With the years' hand.
Soon, midnight will be at eight,
Just in time to resume the battle.

. . .



Here I'm a king with no crown or scepter,
 The wasteland that looks like Damascus
 Is my kingdom.
 The winds of the city,
 and returning whistles in its squares
 Are my processions.
 The steppe of its empty streets,
 Is my palace gardens.
 A king without guards or courtiers,
 But hungry cats and mosquitos
 Which could not get enough in the day.
 Just a moment, midnight would be at eight
 Homes crushed by mountains
 Of horror and agony couldn't sleep,
 I think they are dead,
 They have not died yet,
 They might prefer to sleep
 Yāsalām! (What a miracle!)
 The Sky is too kind to save the spider community,
 In a dying country.

Damascus, 1984

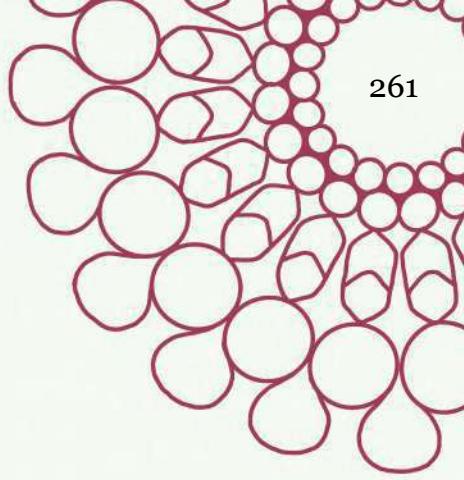
About Ali A. Kanaan

Ali was born in 1936 in a small village between Homs and Palmyra. His father was an orphan grandson of an Iraqi refugee who was killed by his camel on the way between Tripoli and Palmyra. Ali went on to read English Literature at Damascus University and has published 12 collections of poetry, a study about great Japanese novelists, and several translated books. He has also visited several countries from USA to Japan, where he taught the Arabic language at Tokyo University for 3 years. His poems are a vehicle to express his anger and frustration from the lack of freedoms. He is writing a trilogy about Syria through the 20th century, a black comedy about The Military Coups and The Spider Farm.



Damir Janjalija
Serbia

POEMS



waning summer

cicada's mating song

in every pore

cold deepens

yet on a leafless tree

stars in full bloom

blue mountains

between silence and silence

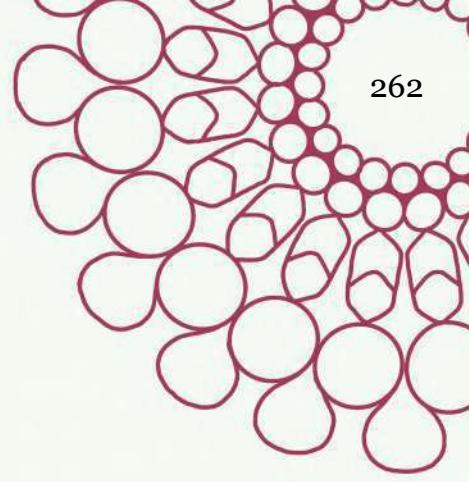
cuckoo cry

MY LOVER'S EYES

the holy waters of the spring

in a salmon's dream





first dark
red traffic light can't stop
the dreamer

pieces of heart
I sort by the shades of pain
kintsugi gold

All Poems Translated by Kruna Petrić

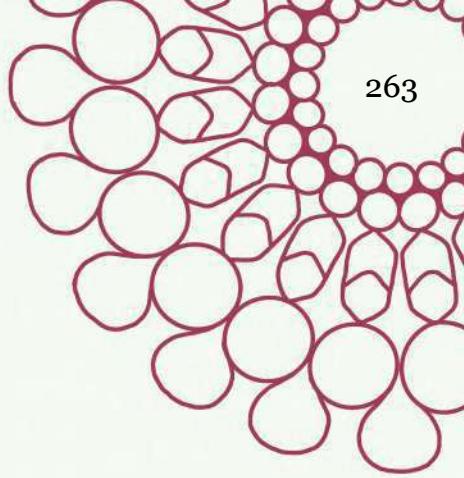
About Damir Janjalija

Damir was born on November 6, 1977 in today's non-existent Yugoslavia. A sailor by profession, a poet by vocation, and a dharma bum by choice. His poems have been published in many significant contemporary haiku anthologies, both in the country and abroad. He is the winner of several international haiku awards including First kukai by Mongolian Haiku Association (2015) and the 31st Haiku festival Odžaci in 2020.



Ahmed Raffa'a
Iraq

THREE SORROWS



I

The tree will not wear beachwear
 The boats are gone
 And the waves are torn apart as if they are the fabric of the sad captain
 And the tree won't recognise my face
 Because the birds died
 On the first morning of the escape of the rose

II

I thought
 The morning dress will not change
 I do not know
 That the skin of the snake was dry dawn
 You little hut
 Not used to snow
 I was drinking hot night
 And let the remnants of the morning eat me

III

Away from the spring
 And close to the fall of my life
 The train did not come
 Bags sticking out of my tongue



As if it says:
No travel . . . No travel
The stations are not candles in your fingers

About Ahmed Raffa'a

Ahmed writes regularly in Iraqi and Arab newspapers and magazines. His poetry collections include: *Apollo*, *Dance Fragments*, *Seasons of Dimeter and Blown Your Voice to Me, I Will Fly*, which were published in the House of Taweel in Sweden-Orbro. One of his poetry collections was translated into Persian and published in Tehran. He received the Al-Jawahery Trophy from the General Union of Iraqi Writers and a certificate of appreciation from the same Union.



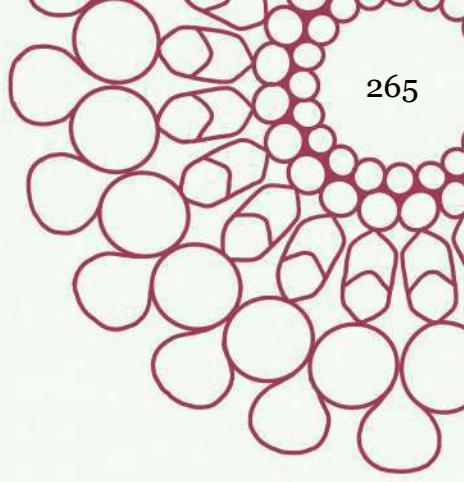
HUMAN SONGS

**Satish Saxena
India**

We simply wants to live with laughter
 Willing to accept everyone,
 Only got a little time,
 Wish to spend it with a smile.
 but world is divided into sectors,
 where everyone has their own songs,
 Why a smile should be restricted with Nations, rules, and prohibition?

We fought and divided Rivers,
 lakes, forests, and mountains...
 we captured land where we reached,
 never learn to live together
 unable to sing in chorus,
 even we wants to capture
 beauty of moonlight and love songs

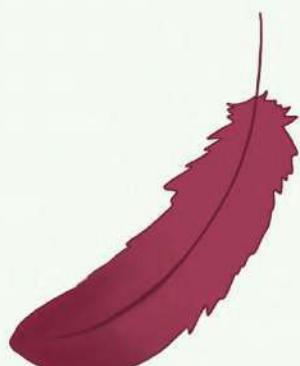
What a beautiful dream of our Universe,
 Where temple and mosque would co-exist dearly,
 All religions survive in a common spirit.
 why we divided beautiful waterfalls,
 Rivers, Mountains, and Carols,
 we want all of Mother Earth
 this is a worship wish of my songs.



We wish the world will unite in our life.
 We wish to sit together, eat without quarrel
 To ignite the universal humanity spirit,
 these songs looking forward
 with the hope of universal brotherhood
 will live where we want
 will eat whatever we like
 black, yellow, and white
 will live together, die together
 let's break the walls of countries
 sit together to sing in chorus the human song
 we call by heart, to sing a song of humanity
 and appeal to invoke universal choir

Homo sapiens are the best of species,
 How could we not understand humanity?
 Speechless animals understand love,
 How could we not recognise the same?
 We have to love all races and
 become conscious empaths.
 Born from Mother Nature,
 brought up by Mother Earth,
 we are citizens of a global world

Insecurities of Human beings,
 Attenuate Conscious minds.
 Materialism, apprehensions, frustrations,
 Destroy the humanity.
 we are relieved to feel
 safety of our brittle life

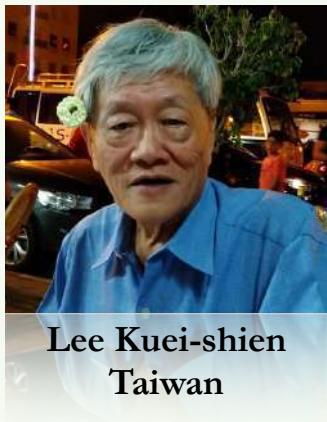


human poems are worried
to watch widening trenches
between exploited and exploiter

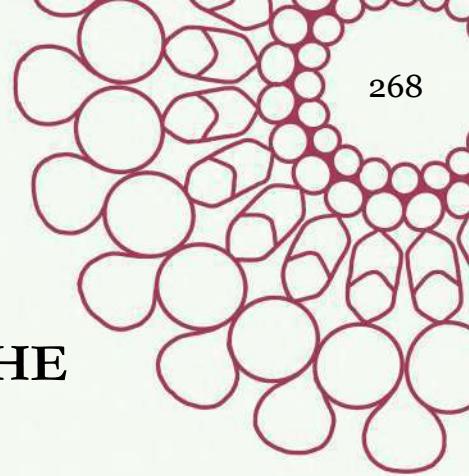
Nothing will be left in the human,
Without emotions of love
What remains, in human
A life without sympathy?
What mark will humanity leave
With a beast-like attitude?
These poems remain worried, seeing humanity in danger.

About Satish Saxena

Satish is the Chairman and the Founder of Anchal Charitable Trust (Regd) India. He writes poems on the improvement of human life and the hypocrisy in the social and political system. His poems and work have been published in Indian magazines and newspapers. His collection of poems, '*Mere Geet*', is featured in a book.



LOVE SONG FROM THE SEA

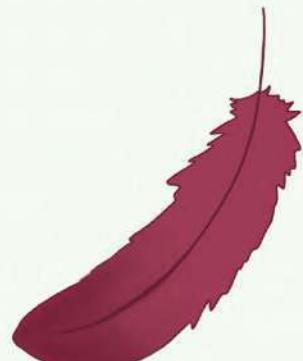


The sea has been inquiring
the emotion of the land
to get response by the rocks.
The waves sometimes rush
sometimes retreat quickly
always embrace the curved coast
while sing an exciting love song
in sputtering
to the silent land.
The land accumulates the feelings in mind
to prepare a volcanic eruption,
a presentation of most flaming hot.

MY TAIWAN, MY HOPE

I hear your sound from the morning birds singing.
I feel your passion from the noon sunshine.
I watch your magnificence from sunset glow.
Oh, Taiwan, my home, my love.

The coasts have your curve.
The waves have your surge.
The clouds have your elegance.
The flowers have your gesture.



The leaves have your evergreen.
The woods have your burliness.
The bedrocks have your sturdiness.
The mountains have your loftiness.
The streams have your meander.
The rocks have your grandeur.
The roads have your roughness.
Oh, Taiwan, my land, my dream.

In your lung there is my breath.
In your history there is my life.
In your being there is my consciousness.
Oh, Taiwan, my country, my hope.

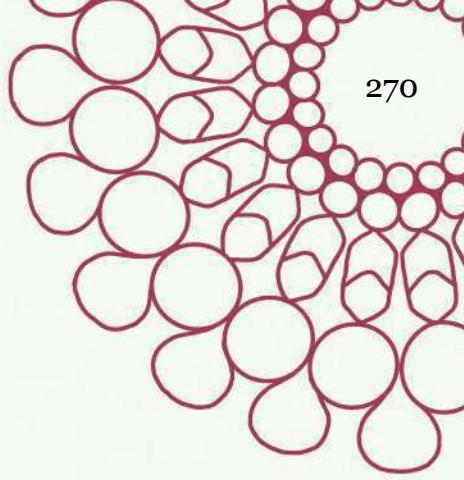
About Lee Kuei-shien

A retired Chairman of National Culture & Arts Foundation in Taiwan, Lee is now the vice president of Movimiento Poetas del Mundo founded in Chile in 2005. He has published 53 poetry books in different languages, some of which have been contributed in several countries including Canada, New Zealand and, Bangladesh. His poems in English translation include “*Love is my Faith*”, “*Beauty of Tenderness*”, “*Between Islands*” and “*The Hour of Twilight*”. In addition to Taiwan, his achievement in poetry creation has been awarded internationally in India, Mongolia, Korea, Bangladesh, Macedonia, Peru, Montenegro and Serbia so far.



Zlata Golayzhbina
Russia

OUR PLANET



It was raining and there was a thunderstorm. So the whole earth trembled! No one can go out on the street. Heaven and earth are frowning at you. And the clouds are not white at all. They are black, as if burned! I was waiting for warmth and was very sad. The slush and rain did not attract at all. I was attracted by the sun, warmth! Follow the path where there is cleanliness. And suddenly, I looked out the window and petrified for a little bit. Dew drops light up the grass! Once at least look at this miracle you. After a terrible rain, the sun came out slowly. It illuminates everything and shines brightly for us! What a wonderful planet! There is a lot of light in it. There is a lot of warmth and quiet modest darkness here. The moon is shining, here, in the blue sky. The Earth cares about a person, about anyone. And the colours are yellow and blue, so it's very beautiful! Everyone in the world loves our Earth, but unfortunately, they are ruining it. So let's not ruin the Earth, but take care of it and love it!

CHILDREN

Children play in the kindergarten: they run, run, talk a lot. It is joyful for children and very easy, the yellow sun came out a long time ago. They all played hide-and-seek together, sang a wonderful summer song. The ball was bouncing big and beautiful, it was orange, like an orange. The children went for a walk in the forest, the branches grew there right up to the heavens! The bouquets were plucked and the berries were eaten. The boys climbed an old spruce tree. But a cold and strong wind blew: it is immediately clear to everyone-evening has come. It's time for the guys to



go home and go to bed in their beds. They will see colourful dreams. Go to sleep soon, and you!

FIR

I'm standing in the dark. Silence...There are thousands like me around. And again, I am silent, merging with the crowd, but still one desire owns me! After all, I don't want to be simple at all. So ordinary, monotonous, but amazing, and the one beautiful, which is not the same as everyone else! But I'm still standing in silence. I want to shout about what I've been dreaming about all my life. About the fact that I am unusual, extraordinary! But they will answer me: "What are you responsible for the stranding?! After all, you are the most primitive spruce!" And the pain of breaking me from the outside, tormenting me tediously from the inside will make me think only worse. Therefore, I will overcome my desire.

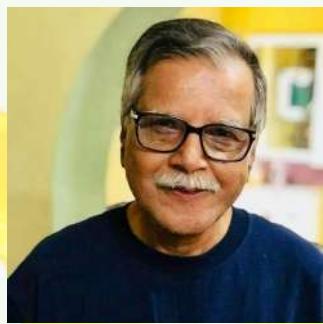
About Zlata Golyzhbina

Zlata is a young 14-year-old poet that has graduated from a music school. She is interested in the violin, piano and guitar specifically. From an early age, Zlata has been engaged in dancing and studying English and French. She started writing poems at a young age as she felt it was an easy outlet to express her thoughts and feelings.

BRANCH

4

LIGHT SONGS



Biplab Majee
India

YOU YOURSELF IS A STORY

You yourself is a story

You yourself is a culture

you are a scenario on your own

When you walk through
any road of the city
you yourself is an Art

We all are like a narrative

But we do not resemble others

But you are always different...

DREAM GARDENS

Our dream gardens are being burnt
one after another

We are depressed with the urn in our hands
While one thinks the theory is wrong
the other thinks that the
application is wrong.

Taking the sun along with the sea
goes afar

And we are thinking with the yellow sighs
Where do we reach?

Why is there no seagull in the sky?
Where shall we start again?

Who will show us the path?
When shall the dream gardens come
out like a phoenix bird from the ashes
Where we sleep in peace...

All poems translated from Bengali by Nandita Bhattacharya

About Biplab Majee

Biplab Majee was born on 30 May 1947 in Tamluk, West Bengal, India. He is a poet, prose writer, literary critic and translator with 28 books of poetry, 36 books of prose, 16 books on translation, 6 books of Children literature, and 8 edited books have been to his name. He received 8 International awards and honours, including the International PULARA prize from Malaysia (2016), the KATHAK International Award from Dhaka, (2018), the Writers and Artists Association of Vietnam conferred him their highest award for the valuable contribution in Vietnamese literature (2019) and the Miluo River International Poetry Festival prize from China, (2020). At present he is Chief Advisor of International Society for Intercultural Studies and Research (ISISAR), Kolkata, and Chief Advisor of Kolkatar Jishu, an International Bilingual Magazine from Kolkata.



Khalid AlBudoor
United Arab Emirates

WHILE THE RAINS FALL HEAVILY

We need time
to walk the streets of this town,
and time to get to know its nights
which come late: ten o'clock turning the corner.
I need to walk with you along the road to the cafe
a little before midnight,
so that they can light the candles for us
and we can look at our desire
flaring beneath the rain's cascade.

I need time to feel the warmth of your presence,
the features of your face against the night,
each of us inhabiting
a different planet.

We need time to warm ourselves by the fire of longing
in our ribs.

The night's not ours,
nor is this town,
that we may wander its narrow lanes.
You turn your face from me and after seconds
turn back

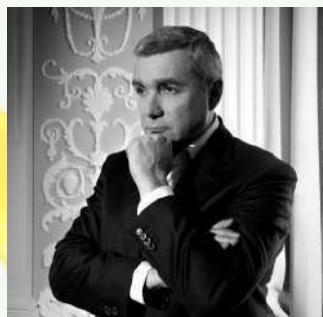
I gaze at your eyes
 where ancient pains erupt
 and tears of joy spring forth together.
 We sit facing one another
 and between us lie great spans
 but your hand
 presses on my fingers
 and fire flows in my veins.

We need time to remember
 and time to forget.
 Who knows?
 Perhaps we shall part, each on their path,
 leaving our desire to freeze
 on the winter pavements
 in a town that does not know us.
 We need time to understand
 that life's routine goes on in every town;
 there is no future, neither here nor there,
 there is nothing but now,
 only now,
 as we sit face to face in silence
 while the rain falls heavy
 against the cafe's windowpane.

Translated by Robin Moger

About Khalid AlBudoor

Khalid Albudoor, born in Dubai in 1961, is considered one of the poets who contributed to the emergence of modern poetry in the United Arab Emirates. He is a founding member of the Emirates Writers Union in 1984, and a winner of the Al Khal Prize for Poetry in Lebanon in 1991. He has published several poetry collections, and participated in readings and poetry festivals in the UAE and abroad.



Dmitry Mizgulin
Russia

BY A COMET FLASHING THROUGH THE SKIES

By a comet flashing through the skies,
there, summer has come to an end,
and the signs of the soon coming autumn
can be seen in the woods and on lands.
The dews are in fields growing misty,
and the grasses droop close to the earth,
and the birches are gleaming so dimly,
and I pity and welcome them both.
And just on the threshold of parting
the doubts and fears are light.
I take without pity or torment
the flow of the river in sight.
Yet, song of mine faded away,
the bee doesn't hum, and lost mirth,
and somewhat inaudibly cast off
my boat from the berth.

WRITE, WRITE, IF YOU ARE WRITER

Write, write, if you are writer,
 till you the hand can lift,
 if the Creator gave you
 this magic happy gift.
 In troubled times – unwanted.
 But don't you take it hard,
 if the Almighty opened
 for you the happy card.
 In breathing gloomy sewage
 push off from idle praise,
 till didn't call to account
 the Merciful for pays.
 In rays of treacherous glory,
 and in the flow of deeds
 pray, that the cunning demon
 didn't overcome you. Heed!
 In watching tricks of devil
 you don't forget the Lord,
 if our Savior did it –
 put in your mouth the words.

All Poems Translated by Slava Rabinovich

About Dmitry Mizgulin

Born in 1961, Dmitry graduated from the Leningrad Voznesensky Institute of Finance and Economics in 1984 and the Gorky Literary Institute in 1993. He is a member of the Union of Writers of Russia, academician of the Petrovsky Academy of Sciences and Arts, and president of the literary charity fund "Road of Life" honorary resident of Khanty-Mansiysk. He is the author of several poetry books and has won numerous poetry prizes including the International Slavic Literary Forum "Golden Knight" in the category "Poetry" in 2019.



Guanyu Chen
China

7TH DAY OF 1ST LUNAR MONTH IN PENG CHENG

To listen every spring Chu Yuan has no place
Orchid buds are carefully green under the steps
The place where blows the fragrant ripples
Gossip in crystal windows with small wind bells

CLASSROOM

Sky wind and its ghost colour with each other have attracted
Through desolate windows snow of mountains hasn't disappeared
The setting sun is full of seats on the quiet faces
I am like a reef and light is like water deep and remote

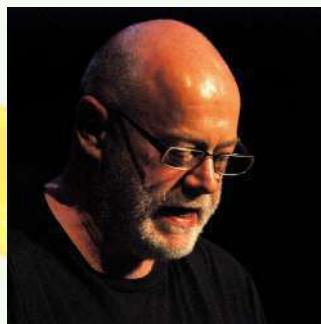
AFTER RAIN IN OASIS SCHOOL

There's no sand in spring field with lush grass
 Straw shoes come and go with falling blossoms
 In setting sun *Lilium concolor* is like a drunkard
 The east wind divides green to its new shoots
 Ministers and travelling women in colourful clothes
 With hair grey civet cats are sitting face to face
 In school gates the schoolwork is still unfinished
 Stepping on the eaves and stopping my small bicycle

All poems translated by Sophy Chen

About Guanyu Chen

Guanyu Chen (陳冠宇), born in 2002, is a young Chinese poet and fellow of World Haiku Association (WHA) and Chinese Poetry Society (CPS). His works have been published in Classical Chinese Poetry (《詩詞》) and Zhonghuashici (or Chinese Poetry 《中華詩詞》). He focuses on the research and creative writing of Shi and Ci and on the writing of Haiku in both Chinese and Japanese. His studied poets are Li Bai (李白), Du Fu (杜甫) and Masaoka Shiki (正岡子規)



Ian Duhig
United Kingdom

THE BRAMHOPE WORM

Seven major faults at the crux
risked the tunnel and its rocks
constantly poured down water
as if from their inside weather.

Men lowered down an airshaft
in buckets, working candle lit,
got thirty bob a day like night
for twenty tons dug each shift.

Engineers cut an empty worm
beneath the ridge and dressed
it in white stone, but it turned:
twenty-four navvies were lost.

The railways honoured them
in the cemetery with a model
of a Bramhope Tunnel Portal,
exalting what killed the men.

There, worms lack a clothing
of limestone, skin on nothing,
nor bore through white space:
that's this poem, my soft face.

About Ian Duhig

Ian Duhig became a full-time writer after working with homeless people for fifteen years. He has published since then, among other things, seven books of poetry, most recently "The Blind Roadmaker" (Picador 2016), a Poetry Book Society Recommendation shortlisted for the TS Eliot and Forward Prizes. Duhig has won the Forward Best Poem Prize once, the National Poetry Competition twice and been shortlisted four times for the TS Eliot Prize. His New and Selected Poems will be published by Picador in December 2021. He is a Cholmondeley Award recipient and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.



**Faruk Buzhala
Kosovo**

BAD TIMES

Rising earlier than usual
 Roosters peck the sunlight
 Dogs howl like wolves
 Crows settle the sky.

What kind of day is this
 The one I have to live in?!

Translated by Shenasi Rama - Muja

LIFE

The spiritual torment beats me
 as waves beat the shores
 as winds beat the troubled sea.

I don't understand, confused
 as an infant looks at the world around him
 full of light, colours and hues.

Like shadows
of a flickering candle
my thoughts sway.

As Mother rocks baby
in the cradle, to rehearse balance
needed later in life.

The road is clear
with signs placed along sideways
by my father.

What I need to know more
other than my body limbs
where signs of my fate are deciphered.

Translated by Besa Kosova

About Faruk Buzhala

Faruk Buzhala is a well-known poet from Ferizaj, Kosovo. He is the former manager and leader of "De Rada" literary association from (2012 - 2018), and the representative of Kosovo on 100 TPC organisations. Besides poems, he also writes short stories, essays, literary reviews, and travel tales. Faruk is an organiser and manager of many events that are held in Ferizaj city. He has five published books, and his poems have been translated to English, Italian, Spanish, French, German, Croatian and Chinese, and are published in anthologies in the US, Italy, Mexico, Albania, China, and more.



KHAMAAJ

Adeeba Shahid Talukder
Pakistan / United States
Photo credit to Willem van der Mei

—after Fuzön & various thumris

You no longer speak

to me, you

in every name,

you in the still

water.

The season of the rains

is passing. I

stand on my rooftops

the dust of you.

When they sang

of the beloved's parting

I heard beauty:

the smearing

of a woman's kohl.

soil on her hem.

her loss of all reason

for beauty.

But when you left

pajharwa

you broke all mirrors left my city in ruins.

About Adeeba Shahid Talukder

Pakistani American poet, singer, and translator of Urdu and Persian poetry, Adeeba Shahid Talukder is the author of *What Is Not Beautiful* (Glass Poetry Press, 2018) and her debut collection, *Shahr-e-jaanaam: The City of the Beloved* (Tupelo Press, 2020), is winner of the Kundiman Poetry Prize. Her poetry has appeared in *Poem-A-Day*, *Gulf Coast*, *Meridian*, and *The Margins*, and her translations in *PBS Frontline* and *Words Without Borders*. A Best of the Net finalist and a Pushcart nominee, Adeeba holds an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Michigan and an Emerging Poets fellowship from Poets House.



DEBT OF DECEASED

Dr. Suresh Nooranad
India

The body trembles when praying
 Throw away the crows-
 Steady hands
 Rubbed on chest.
 He covered his dried and dead eyelids,
 With a green cloth
 And washed his black cloak of breath.

The crows bowed their heads.
 In the darkness of Cempaka
 The eyeballs swirled.
 The Sun slept in a swamp
 As a weary baby deer.
 "I am like a puppet now
 You tighten the strings."

The tragedy of crazy pastimes
 The strings of madness sweat
 And the navel burst
 And came out nakedness.

When the flow of the fingers ceases
 In the river,
 In the first night
 Bruised blue body.

Night
 A tree split in the wall.
 The bird's beak was pecked.

The roar of mango trees fell on
 The hot chest of the rain
 Heat of the spine
 When the shirt was torn and removed
 There was the smell of last savings.
 Through the corpse
 A torch light moved by crying.
 An empty coffin burned playfully in a pyre.

"Even the death of the unsecured is unknown.
 Only the groan of your wail
 Becomes the music in the earth."

There was a spreading cloud of song
 Among the scattered branches of trees.
 As the crawling star on the fence
 Stopped singing at the end of the dance.
 The statues of darkness spilled in water.
 The stagnant sea and the fragmented fort
 Vanished in the song.
 Darkness is the light of a lone memory.
 Your body is like the bark of a beast.
 A singer who never sang
 Finds every seed in your fresh flesh.

The leaves of life are burned
 Your feeble face is yet to be seen, child
 The teenagers who pick up the broken eye lashes of emotions.
 The emotional emptiness of bloodstained youth.

When the time spread out the mat
 By rubbing the husk of tender coconut
 By showering the pretty smell of the sacred leaves of koovalam*
 (Crateva Religiosa-a medicinal tree)

The art of makeup descended inside
 Is it a star or a fireball?

The tree in Thirumala
 Gave a hollow in the heart.



The camp in Pangode
Gave a split hair of liver sharpness.

Hastiness is like a loose, slippery dress
My hands become long far away beyond reach.
Someone stole the trees in my pictures.
As the clouds grasped and a single tree was swept away by the snow.
Your saffron drips through my pencil drawings
As the wall bursts and the water wets the bed.

Have you given up poetry's law-breaking movement?
Yes! Through the divided groove of dusk
When the wind makes ready for the rites to the departed souls
I circled the dysenteric poem inside the mosquito net.

The bird boiled before the eyes
The scalding head of the morning mist
Was given to the children who were sleeping in the sunlight.
By shaking their arms and limbs, children celebrated freedom.

In each pot
There is a flood.
In hospital
In flask
There is an explosion of untouched life.
The wind's anklet
The kylie's friction
The vehicle's footprint.

When the nun stretches out her oily neck,
Which shines in the evening sunlight,
And shows the green flag
The dolls come in, instead of the babies.

Let this darkness to shine brightly around the earth
Let the sea engulf the overflowing drowsy rivers one by one.

Translated by R. Santhosh Babu.

About Dr. Suresh Nooranad

Dr. Suresh Nooranad was born in a hamlet in Kerala, India in 1966. As a poet, he published an anthology of poems titled *Sathru* and *Puravasthu*. His major works include a textbook on *Nature Images in Malayalam Poetry* and a highly-acclaimed autobiography, *Aparakatha*. He was also the editor of *Kavikootukar*. He has published a Malayalam-Tamil poem *Ethiri* and a Malayalam- Hindi poem *Puravastu*. He received his Doctorate from the University of Kerala in 1999.



HAIKU

Toyomi Iwawaki-Riebel
Japan

Midsummer night –
On the peaceful cape
powder of the pearl fell

Hope of the morning sun
overflows on the other side
of waves

Sanctuary of love,
daisies are in full bloom
– my loneliness

About Toyomi Iwawaki-Riebel

PhD. Toyomi Iwawaki-Riebel was born in Japan and has lived in Germany since 1988. She is now a lecturer at a university. She studied philosophy and conducts research on German philosophy, international philosophy and Japanese studies. She has also been writing haiku and poems for a long time.



Rethabile Masilo
Lesotho / South Africa

MOSOTHO CHILD

Sometimes, even after the sun has gone
and street music has stirred the town
and tired the people,
and there are dancers still
from neighbouring villages
laughing and draining their beers,
I do not leave my room.
My world is the walls of its words.
I study shadows that crawl down the hillside
like let blood setting, before making the choice
to go back to my people, to the eyes
of those who fathomed the world
and brought it the revolt of peace,
moulded it, according to the needs
of its people, conjured everything up
and constructed it for lives to come,
kneading soft its clay.

BIRDS OF III

—after a Kevin Carter photograph

They'll follow any being carried away
 by the winds of tumult, these ominous things
 that hang in flight till a creature dies at length.
 And is it in the life of us to turn against them,
 opinions of demise? Renegades born inside a dying day,
 they'll follow any being across the landscape of survival.
 But we are all children under this house.
 Different organs to the same spirit.
 Pressed against the wall and menaced
 by the shadow of wingspans,
 is it in the life of us to withstand?
 Gnarled under hunger, demented eyes, holes,
 they have put that lading upon our souls.

About Rethabile Masilo

Rethabile Masilo is a Mosotho poet who has published five books of poems, and edited/co-edited three anthologies. In 2016, he won the The Glenna Luschei Prize for African Poetry with his book *Waslap*. Masilo lives in Paris, France.



Abdul Hadi Sadoun
Iraq

SLIGHT SMILE

I tell you
paths are not my thing
since I am par excellence
a homebody
I don't like to self-plagiarise
my feet don't cope with travel
they have stumbled for an eternity

but every time I walk on further
the desire to disappear does not seduce me
nor does the taste for scanning the countryside as it passes
I squander my time like a traveller at home
staring at a tourist guide
and smiling not even mussing my hair up.

I tell you
that I am no Virgil
I own no light luggage
I am the tired sight
and the slight smile
of a sepia-coloured photograph.

BAR

In the *Kiosco de Orejas* bar in the Alameda
I polish my scales, rusted after so many years

while people gaily fill their bellies
with kegs of beer
they remember while knowing nothing
of the barmaid's advice
in the tavern of Gilgamesh

But I
in spite of the weather
turn my face to what remains of the blonde sun
forgetting this time
kegs full of so many lives that I witnessed
and which still pursue me.

Even though all was already predestined
centuries ago
my ancestors used to say
that fire
the whole fire
leaves only
cinders.

English translation by Mike Baynham

About Abdul Hadi Sadoun

Writer, editor and translator Abdul Hadi Sadoun was born in Baghdad, Iraq, in 1968, and currently resides in Madrid where he is professor of Arabic Language and Literature at the University of Madrid. He has written many books in Arabic and Spanish, the ones that stand out being: *Writing in cuneiform* (2006), *Familiar plagiarism* (2008), *always* (2010), *Fields of the stranger* (2011), *Memories of an Iraqi dog* (2016), and *everyone writes about love except you* (2018). Abdul Hadi's poetic work has been appreciated by many cultural entities: He obtained the 2nd Antonio Machado International Scholarship (2009), he was named Distinguished guest from the city of Salamanca (2016), and he also obtained the IX Distinction of Poets from other worlds by the International Poetic Fund (2016).



WINDY CITY

Eugenio Sánchez Nieto

Colombia

The wind takes over my city
it blows at dawn with the singing of birds
it ruffles the schoolgirls' hair, raises up their skirts
arouses sleepers, smells of fresh bread

the daily passers-by with their many occupations
the man pulled on by his dogs, the girl with her white apron
the lost look of the office worker
the teacher stressed by the endless murmur of her pupils
the driver with his merry song, the cyclist struggling against the wind
the model on her high heels almost losing her balance
the tireless lover in search of his lost place
the watchman engrossed in his desire, the sportsman flying his kite
in the long streets of the macarena, soledad, teusaquillo neighbourhoods

the wind embraces them and lets the unfathomable
city sleep with its deep secrets
its amazing streets leading us to unknown vertigos
blue, white, gray, pink streets
back doors, invisible, doors open to the wind
lockless doors

the city of furies with barbaric faces and looks of fear
 visitors look down on my city, they abuse it, they curse it,
 however, they always stay in
 my green city peeking at the setting sun
 with wounds that are slowly healing

I fly from the mounts and go over the city
 its deep green envelops me
 my heartfelt desires fall like rain
 hallucinated I cross invisible doors, reddish tiles, windows to the sky
 I stroll in lost places, I am of this city of this climate
 of a distant, ambiguous, critical behaviour
 the friends of yore with transformed faces,
 friends gone, ties broken

there in the middle of the square young people sing waving flags
 girls of pale beauty smile to men in mourning
 I go about my city I lie in the green garden
 earth draws me down, traps me
 unexpected choirs pierce the white walls
 decided young people tremble in their sleep and the open sky salutes
 them
 my dear abandoned and bounteous city in search
 of its own humanity.

Translated by the writer Nicolas Suescún

About Eugenia Sánchez Nieto

Eugenia is a poet holding a degree in Philosophy from the National University. She has obtained several national awards and international recognitions: among others, she was nominated for the Ibero-American Poetry Prize, Pablo Neruda, Chile, 2021; and won the National Poetry Prize Hormiga Editores, 1984. Her recently published books are *Los Gestos Escogidos* (editorial Uniediciones, Bogotá 2021), *Singular Voluntad* (Editorial Grainart, Cali, Colombia, 2021.) and *Lo Inasible* (Editorial Uniediciones, Bogotá Colombia, 2017). Several of her books are published virtually.



Ron Winkler
Germany

THE IDEAL WORLD

it all came down to the Samaritans of the nights that wanted to donate red sky

to the days. down to the ones who lay down to sleep covered in powdered asphalt.

down to Andromeda children, to the *constabulary of henna-coloured ladies*, and the union of cubators and then it also came down to dreamy subjugation and subservience. to chili earth and touch soil. down to the snow

at the foot of the snow. just like it came down to the water contained in water.

it all came down to finding a molecular homeland. and to ordering atheist prophets to guide you there, them

and their flavourfully bitter essence wafers. and down to preparing for arrival in a semiotic or even authentic Nova. it came down to all that fundamentally. to the repair of the Atlantis cluster inside you.

and down to the ones with bourbon jackets who waited in the halo of darkness

for the wage of their work on a bazaar

for young philosophies. thus, also down to the body, as a sphere (a ferry) of self-assurance.

it came down to the establishment of a network of Secretaries of Openness, as it nearly always came down to clover crystals. the clover crystals

in your hands, which every day from being your hands
 became your hands. down to the clover crystals in the cemeteries
 with their sandy footpaths, footlings. and it also all came
 down to the probable subtlety engineers, who wove
 musical scores into the reinforced concrete's steel. where
 it came down to a language for our bodies to dwell in. to buildings
 that smelled (almost sweetly) like they weren't built yet.
 down to our power kernels and the counterbalance
 moon with its fake Neil Armstrong paint in a, shall we say,
 deformed Barbie face. it came down to coming down to it.
 down to therefore. down to thereat. therefrom. to the joy of mobile
 metropolises
 inhabited by static I's.
 what it came down to was from our perspective too (and also from our
 perspective)
 softly overmodulated clouds. or blossoms hanging like cherries
 in an apple tree. it came down to the jungle *time*,
 which gradually lost itself in the Malevich square of our mind. and
 it came down no less to the elegiac tattoos
 of midlevel bank employees, who were not responsible
 for the demon machine they operated. down no less either to the atoms
 grown visible: the atoms of a beloved hand. the aromas
 of a beloved hand. the flowers in a hand that belongs to you, even
 if it is not yours. in the broadest sense, it almost came
 down to us not knowing anymore in which context we would actually
 like to speak. be able to speak. be allowed to speak
 (probably 'speak') about laconic mermaids and Ikebana furnishings. every
 day
 it came down to clouds shaped like clouds. to the abolishment
 of monoversities. down to a proper mix of poltergeists and poltergasps.
 it came down to not arranging rooms
 as if they'd have trained residents.
 all in all, it came down to an asset-side swarm



of independent angels, to making waves with them of words
without understanding the door of the words
as the shore.

Translated from the German by Jake Schneider

About Ron Winkler

Born in 1973, Ron Winkler is a freelance writer and translator living in Berlin. He has published several volumes of poetry and edited numerous anthologies. In addition to poetry, he writes flash fiction. His poems have been translated into more than two dozen languages. Selected poems have been publicised in Mexico, England, Slovakia and the Ukraine. In 2021, Winkler brought out two new volumes: *You Don't Know How Hard It Has Become to Send a Letter, A Poetic Correspondence*, and just recently *Magma Within the Things*. Currently, he is a one-year fellow at the 'German Academy in Rome Villa Massimo'.



SURPRISE WILL HAPPEN

Mimoza Ahmeti
Albania

When all plans will be leveled at a stretch

And all angels will fall into a plan

As pearls will flow hearts over the square of eyes

Will appear the invisible with the clear of the most obvious.

The farewell of senses will happen little by little,

Brain perceives beyond touching

The longing for senses will fade very slowly

And this will be an unhealable wound.

For where is leaving this absolute creature, together with its sense of the mad?

Is the One self-sufficient?

The secret of secrecy has been so simple:

The life of the bullet in the shoot of the target,

oriented by direction.

Where are you heading, you star, you, unified man with a cyber smile?

Remember: everything moves while you move.

The object is elusive because it is displaceable... Loss appears as Time,
Victory as Space.

But everything swallows and rotates to extinction and renewal.

Desire lives beyond what is.

And so is God.

THE VALUE OF A LEAF

People are a set of signs

They may attract you or leave you inert.

To me the signs do not mean too much.

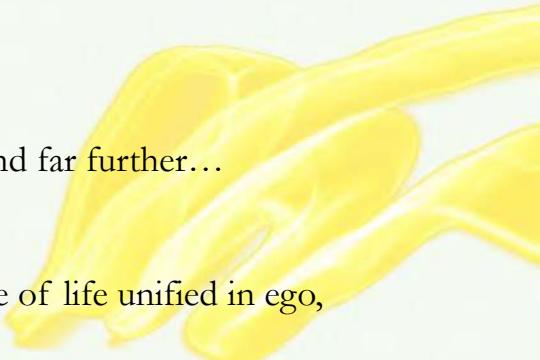
That was the reason I took the risk to signify...

Poor I, I could have lived,

better than write...

By the way signs and my way are far different and far further...

Meaning vibrates under the words that the force of life unified in ego,



shaking, increasing, decreasing... Oh! Chasing the soul...

Ego and I are yet far away from my way.

The sign I make is real or fake for the one who will take it as a meaning...

The grid of logic makes one's peace for others' panic...

Far far away I am a sign

Equal with me

When being free

Freeing myself from me

I'm feeling free

Freeing my mind from my mind

And breathing perceptibly.

(Under the terror of skies like men's eyes!

Why does a leaf go quiet and easy in the hand of a wind?

There are millions of years in the bit of its valse.. which your mind loses
to the same trans...



DELAY

Are we late?
In this delay is something happening far away?

Are we early? Or in time?
What does it mean to be in time?

And if we are.. as are “we”..
Does this mean exactly to be?
What if one has no idea of time?
Does this mean that he is insane?

Or does it mean-- he is complete?
Why does the delay of earth’s round trip make seasons?
And the delay of acting makes reason!

So many worlds in such a way

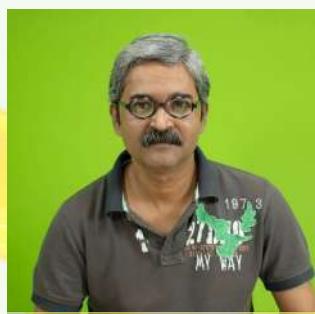
There is yet day on night’s delay.
There is, there are, there were, will be..

Who is making love in the delay of me?!

*All Poems Translated by John Hodgson
These poems are taken from her poetry collection The Book of Happiness, 2017, Mapo-edition.*

About Mimoza Ahmeti

Mimoza Ahmeti is a postdoctoral lecturer in Tirana, Albania, having graduated in Vienna and Paris. Her work has been translated into different European languages. Mimoza Ahmeti is winner of the First Poetry Festival San Remo, 1998, organised by RAI, Italy.



**Shakhawat Tipu
Bangladesh**

SHADOW IN LIFE

Death will help you forget everything!

Birth will awaken all your memories!

I farm a metaphor between birth and death.

For a long time—

I haven't seen you in a shadow procession.

For a long time—

The birds are crying for you in public.

For a long time—

Red-crimson flowers bloom for you.

For a long time—

My lips are always lopping for you.

I'll wait for a flower to bloom, As if

a colourful soul like a petal in a storm

came into existence very light secretly.

About Shakhawat Tipu

Shakhawat is a distinguished poet, essayist, editor and a prominent figure of the new Bengali poetic movement. His poems have been translated into Greek, Spanish, Italian, Serbian, Slovenian and English. He has published two Haiku collections, seven titles of poems and a book on a famous Bengali sculptor Noverta Ahmed and her works. Tipu edited Jatiya Shahitya (2008), a magazine of linguistics and philosophy and Charalnama (2011), a collection of street people's interviews with a subaltern dictionary. His poems appeared in many magazines and anthologies around the world.



DREAMS

Hassan Al-Matrooshi
Oman

Dreamy young men and a poet
The first said: I'll be a prophet
riding the steed of heaven,
and pass before your homes bearing glad tidings
The second said: I'll be the knight of the crown
I will invade the lands,
open their gates for my soldiers,
come back triumphant,
and give captive women to princesses in their palace,
and give them bracelets
The third said: A hermit I will be
and perform thaumaturgic deeds like saints
and descend to heaven in my overcoat
glowing with deadly sins
The poet said: Comrades
I will remain
as nature has begotten me... a bird!

THE SILK ROAD

The Silk Road passes by our door,

two index fingers away

Caravans come from the east,

laden with spices and runaways.

Legions come from Hadramawt

crowded with bullets and with khat.

Battleships come from cities of the night,

crowded with invaders and deportees,

seeking to inherit their ancestors' lands

when they reach the east.

Caravans come from a country there,

carrying fatwas about enjoyment and stoning.

Vessels come sailing from Samarcand,

swarming with concubines for the Caliph's palace

Meteorites come from a continent I can't recall,

and crush the road upon our heads.

And histories pass carried by two battle tanks

I pass,

decamping from the caves of histories,

bleating like a ram married to two forests!

All Poems Translated from Arabic by Nizar Sartawi

About Hassan Al-Matrooshi

Hassan Al-Matrooshi is an award-winning poet, translator, and media-man from the Sultanate of Oman. Hasan has published five Arabic poetry collections, two of which were translated into French and Spanish. In 2016, he was awarded the Sultan's Praise Medal and also honoured as the Omani poet of the year. In 2019, he received an award in the prestigious international poetry contest Tulliola-Renato Filippelli in Italy.



TOGETHER WE CAN

Ngozi Olivia Osuoha
Nigeria

We are humans
Living in a beautiful world
We are supposed to be fine
And do great things
But we derailed
And chose otherwise.

We are humans
Made by a wonderful Being
We were instructed to do mighty things
But we deviated
And went contrary.

We lost love and killed peace
We buried peace and lost love
Then turned hopeless and helpless.

But as humans we can
Yes, together we can
We can live in peace
And love one another
We can be hopeful
If we turn helpful to each other.

If we love ourselves and not religion
If we plant peace and not war
If we feed the poor and not starve them
If we help the needy and not kill them
If we live in unity and not divide
If we practice humility and maturity
If we hate evil and embrace good
We can, yes, together we can
We can change the world
Yes, of terrorism and racism.

About Ngozi Olivia Osuoha

Osuoha is a graduate of Estate Management with experience in Banking and Broadcasting. She has authored twenty three poetry books and featured in over seventy international anthologies. She has had some of her pieces nominated for the pushcart prize and best of the net awards too. She has published over three hundred pieces in over forty countries. Some of her books are archived in the United States' Library of Congress, some anthologies she featured in are in some foreign libraries too. She's a tailor, a poet, and a writer, and her pieces have been translated into Spanish, Polish, Macedonian, Russian, Romanian, Assamese, Khloe Farsi, Arabic, Scot, Serbian, Hindi, among others.



THE DAY I WEPT

Krishna Prasai
Nepal

Ripples of joy had gripped the world!
While many enjoyed in freedom
the festive hours with firecrackers
I was reclining, down with grief;
it was 29 May 1953 Wednesday.

A man from New Zealand stepped upon my head.
Another man, who stood atop the hood
was a porter from my own country
who, in the long run, became a foreigner too.

The truth I know is single:
The Himalayas stand above us
and the nation above the Himalayas;
we exist, because the Himalayas and the nation do.

The day Hillary placed his foot atop Sagarmatha,
and Tenzing atop his own cap
someone else rose above the nation.

That day
when Sagarmatha, the world's hood we revere as God
shied away,
that day, when the crown of the world was vanquished
that day, when grandeur withered
was the day I cried
seeing my height diminish,
getting a stranger's feet upon myself,
seeing you crown a man who downplayed my hood

How can I call a person great,
who crushed down my head
and is doing so, even now
erecting a Pyramid of impurity?

I have a question for you, Motherland!
Which of your gods is appeased
with offerings placed in a temple
by someone who places his feet
atop the idols enshrined therein?

I care not what you say;
I defy your old statute!
Say, where on earth can a head be crushed
after paying a fee for it?
Under whose rules can the crown be trampled
after some cash has been paid?
Can anyone mount atop the chest
merely for some pelf paid thereof?

Presently, I am soaked with indignation and hatred
on seeing the rules your country sets.

NUDITY

I was nude!
My mother had the first glance
of my nudity—
a nudity of her own creation!
It perhaps made her proud!
As I grew, the nude chain of mountains
far way,
and the hills
watched my nakedness.
It's a tale of those days when
the sky, the moon and the stars



and the peers that played with me
 looked at one-another's nakedness
 and exchanged our love-laden hearts!
 Along the cozy trail of nakedness
 we were never ashamed of our nudities
 and by the time, all of a sudden
 moments of such innocence had slipped
 times had changed!
 Peers had changed too.
 But same were the moon, the stars
 and the sky
 in matters of cloaking nudity.
 The eyes of the mountain ranges
 kept lying supine as ever
 exhibiting their bareness to one another
 with least concern for shame
 on their explicit nudity.
 Along this cozy path of years
 I regret,
 I am presently living
 unconditionally
 concealing my nudeness
 inside a closet!

All Poems Translated by Mahesh Poudyal

About Krishna Prasai

A poet, travel writer, essayist, and postgraduate in Nepali Literature and Sociology debuted in 1975 with the publication of his poems in Jhapa-based periodical Suryodaya. Prasai edited 'Nepali Samasamayik Kavitahroo', an anthology of contemporary Nepali poetry when he was just 24 years old and exhibited a rare literary talent. Some of his works include *Gham Nabbayeko Bela* (poems), *Ghamko Barsha* (Zen poems), and *Prakshepan* (stories). He has been awarded the Yogi Naraharinath Award, Dharanidhar Koirala Award, and UNFPA Essay Prize. He is the chairman of Jara Foundation, and Treasurer of Devkota Lu-Xun Academy, a literary organisation. He is also associated with Rotary International. Also a stakeholder with several other literary organisations, Prasai has got his works translated into multiple languages.



Ioan Es. Pop
Romania

2 POEMS

i've returned home after long years of
wandering around Bucharest
i've returned with an empty string bag in my hand.
she comes to the gate and says, well,
my dearest, you promised you'd make money.
you said that in two years you'd earn more than others earn in four,
and look, you're bringing back nothing.

listen to me, my dears, i earned nothing.
i'm bringing home more nothing than anyone could
have saved in these two years.
i've hardly been able by myself to carry
all the nothing i've earned.

behind me come carts heaped high with nothing,
near to breaking under the weight.
when all are unloaded in our yard,
nobody will have as much nothing as we.

in a year or two it will be more valuable than gold.
we'll sell it after when the price goes sky-high.
my dears, rest assured, nobody has as much nothing.
i've saved it for two years, thinking only of you.

October 12, 1992

When I was a small child, I dreamt of being even smaller
 smaller than the table, smaller than the chair,
 smaller than my father's big boots.

no bigger than a potato is how i dreamt of myself.
 because in spring they put po-
 tatoes in the ground, and that's it,
 they never bother about them till autumn.

i dreamt of curling up in a hole among them,
 sleeping sweetly in the dark,
 turning to one side and the other all summer long,
 then falling asleep once again.

in autumn i awaken still unrested,
 unwashed like my brothers,
 and when the spade thrusts near i leap out
 and shout: stop digging, stop digging,
 i'll gladly come back home
 if in spring you return me here.

so in spring i'm the first
 they drop down into the hole.
 in this way i could go on sleeping forever:
 from the ground to the cellar, from the cellar to the ground,
 year after year, undisturbed and forgotten.

Translated into English by Lidia Vianu and Adam J. Sorkin

About Ioan Es. Pop

Ioan made his debut with the volume *ieudul fără ieșire* (Cartea Românească Publishing House, 1994). The same publishing house edited his next two volumes of poetry: *porcec* (1996), *pantelimon 113 bis* (2000) and the anthology *podul* (2000). Pop also published many volumes of poetry from 2000 to 2020, including *rugăciunea de antracit / the anthracite prayer* (Dacia Publishing House, 2002), *no exit* (Corint Publishing House, 2007) and *Arta fricăi* (Charmides Publishing House, 2016). He has received many awards during his career, including, The Prize “Niram Art” (Madrid, 2010) and The Prize “Cartea anului” (The Book of the Year) in Bucharest, in 2012.



Jordi Valls Pozo
Spain

CULTURE

People don't die.
They just form links
in a long chain that winds its way to me
and that I drag unaware.

I feel the weight
of Abel; the hollow rumour
of kings and prophets; the aura
that gave them power; the old
shepherd whom no one knew,
nor maybe ever was; life's grazers,
leaden, neither good nor evil, most
simply lazy.

People don't die, they rise
up from the grave and press
on to our only life they can claim
as their own. At home, I offer them sanctum,

a dark space to cast off their souls I accept
impatient as a chaffinch. In dreams, I see
the long chain lost in the distance,
and I add the next link.
I speak in their name.

Translated Into English by Raoul Izard

About Jordi Valls Pozo

Jordi Valls Pozo is a Catalan poet born in Barcelona in 1970. He presided AJELC (Association of Young Catalan Language Writers) from 1994 to 1996. Having won The Jocs Florals de la Llengua Catalana in 2006, he was the first author who holds the office of City Poet. Ernest Farrés, author of the anthology called *21 poetes del XXI* (2001), states that "In the hands of Jordi Valls, poetry is not only subversion, but it is most of all the essence of the literary fact". He was invited to festivals of international poetry: Days of Poetry and Wine, Medana, Slovenia 2008, Encuentro Internacional de Poesía Ciudad de México 2015, Festival International Poetry Bucharest 2017, Festival de Poesía "Luna de Locos" Pereira, Colombia, 2017. Some of his published books include *D'on neixen les penombres?* (Award poetry Martí Dot de poesia 1994), *Última oda a Barcelona* with Lluís Calvo. Santa Coloma de Gramenet: La Garúa 2008, *Guillem Tell*, Adia Editors 2016, and *Penumbras*, Godall 2019.



ON SEEING THE GUERNICIA AT THE CENTRO DE ARTE REINA SOFIA

Alice M. Sun-Cua
Philippines

Its immensity stuns.

Human beings, or whatever is left of them,
have mouths all agape---in agony, in despair,
in extreme grief. The horse, galloping on two hooves,
shows a sharp blade sliding out of its tongue.

Only the dead infant seems oblivious to it all,
lying limply in its mother's arms, its eyes closed,
a small sad smile on its lips: A Pieta silhouetted
on a bull's torso, a palimpsest on a half-sphinx.

Here a hand clutches a flower, a dagger;
there, sharp teeth crunch a torso.

A stake thrust into the belly of the steed
disembodies fingers, horns; blood flows,
the salt seeps through whimpers, shrieks
and stomping feet; the doors
that might have opened to sunlight
remain shut.

They leap, dance, eddy, grow, diminish,
black and white shapes vertiginous,
coming to life as one gazes and

makes sense of how it must have been
 for this simple village, plundered senseless,
 senselessly.

The crowd silently files out of the Sofia
 into a noontime of spring rain, umbrellas unfurled.
 Calle Isabel smells of damp earth, the sky
 a granite grey. Back home, an upheaval
 not unlike the mural, unfolds: tens of thousands
 had again massed on that large avenue
 where the Lady stands enshrined in brass.
 Footages showed the disgruntled, the unshaven,
 surging forward, as if by sheer numbers
 they can topple a newly-installed government.
 Those of us who are far watch silently, but we, too,
 hear the screams, the crunch of broken bones,
 and smell the cordite of gunfire.

Towards the Paseo del Prado, stragglers
 of a full marathon reach the finishing line
 amidst funfair of confetti, a crescendo of applause,
 cheers, laughter, ambulance sirens and *policia* cruisers
 under the steady rain: three men and two women,
 their hands raised, limping, exultantly waving to the crowd.

About Alice M. Sun-Cua

Alice M. Sun-Cua is a practicing obstetrician-gynecologist in Manila, Philippines. She is a poet, literary translator, travel narrative writer and a Tai Chi practitioner. Her latest book is a translation of the Spanish novel *Nada* by Carmen Laforet into Hiligaynon, a Philippine regional language.



MY TALE WITH WATER

Fethi Sassi
Tunisia

Let me dance;

As if I make love for the first time with a butterfly,

or with a tree trunk.

Let me kiss a cloud quiet in the garden.

And take clouds with my hand to another sky.

I will become perhaps a star of the night,

or a spike that puts her hands on her cheek,

while I cut her my tale with water.

THE LAST KISS

Your last kiss has cracked

I found it on my cheek bending like an old date stalk

I took it with a child's innocence

And put it in a vase

I thought that it'll grow

As flowers grow in their vases
But it vaporised in the air
Then flew like a confused pigeon
And left an endless autumn on my cheek.

About Fethi Sassi

Fethi Sassi is a poet, translator, and haiku writer from Tunisia, born in Nabul in 1962. Passionate with poetry since the beginning of his life, his poems have been featured in numerous journals and anthologies. He is a member of the union of Tunisian poets, and the literature Club of the cultural center of Sousse. He participated in poetry events all over the world, such as the international poetry event in Dalaman, Turkey in 2017. Some of his books include *Seed of love* (2010), *I dream ... I sign on birds the last words* (2013), *Sky for a strange bird* (2016) and *As a lone rose ... on a chair* (2017).



Kerry Shawn Keys
United States

I TURN, YOU TURN

You've come tonight
as quiet and light
as an apple blossom
shimmering to the ground,

past windows of friends
and enemies, rivals, spies.
And quiet and light
as a hijacker fly-by-night

you lay yourself lightly
next to me in bed.
I turn to you, leaving
my wife wed to sleep.

Like dew in moonlight,
flawless, we do what we do.
Then you turn your fire
into smoke, and disappear.

I WAVE GOOD-BYE AS YOU START THE ENGINE AND THEN

for Oliver Goldsmith

down the snow-covered sandy loam you go,
 slowly, silently, as the snow tears on warm cheeks
 and brow. Adieu. I'll miss you, already do.
 Not many hermanos to host in Winter's wrap,
 and the deserted village is practically empty
 except for two, widowed, older, weathered women
 who pass the flush of time watching television.
 Returning, I pass along the rickety, free-standing
 pine-pole fence jerry-rigged two summers ago,
 and through the forever postponed gate, and enter
 the cabin to keep company with a few other
 derelicts, a daisy-like moth still as a wallflower
 but enamoured of the ceiling, and a thawed-out
 confused housefly writhing in the web of a spider.

About Kerry Shawn Keys

The fountain of Kerry Shawn Keys' poetry is in the Appalachian Mountains, urban America, India, Brazil and Lithuania, but the roots go worldwide. He has performed and recorded with the free jazz percussionist and sound-constellation artist, Vladimir Tarasov (CD-Prior Records), and quarterbacked the jazz *Nada Quartet*. Recent books are *Black Ice*, May 2020 Black Spruce Press; *Night Flight* (poems), 2012; *Pienas* (prose tales and plays), 2013; *Sich einen Fluss verschaffen*, bilingual English/German poems, tr by Ron Winkler, Hochroth Verlag, 2017. Keys received the Robert H. Winner Memorial Award from the Poetry Society of America in 1992, and in 2005 a National Endowment For the Arts Literature Fellowship.



Sudhakar Gaidhani
India

EXCERPT

O seafaring birds hunting for pearl-feed!

Fill up your beaks
with the eternal youth of my wings
because I'll soon be flown off
by messenger-fakirs that weep while they laugh.

On this isle just a few buds remain
of intoxicating flowers;
so before I too shed my petals
search out and keep my eyes -
because I'll soon be flown off
by messenger-fakirs that weep while they laugh.

One hasn't yet found the caravans
of Sinbads with golden dreams
that were on this same way misled;
nor has one yet wiped
the stains,
on the stones,
of the jewels that the stars here shed.

The ruined pavilions
within a score of miles,
in this phantom's domain,
were undone by their love of tombs,
their passions yet unquenched.

It's a valley of tyrants where
all hell has broken loose and where

a war is on-a veritable wildfire -
while the waves that girdle me in chains
fornicate freely with the shore.

Fledglings!
Since He does not find on my riot-torn face
the glow befitting a prisoner
God himself is pained.
I too can hide this earth
under my wings outspread;
I too can soar, can flap my wings
Like you and you; every branch here bears
The marks of my claws

It was I that gifted
This graveyard to those fakirs

To this day I cherish in my wings
the eyes of Christ
and the Buddha's smile
That's why this sea has made a captive of me.

Birds,
out at sea the boats of my agonies
are singing their sea-songs;
go and receive them please,
because even they will be flown off
by messenger-fakirs that weep while they laugh.

Friends,
the tribes of hangmen-weavers
that pleat the ropes for their job
have earned a bad name here;
their only crime is this;
they are slaves to hunger.



There is so much fire still
 in the kiln of their eyes
 that no sooner do the rulers become oppressive
 than will they reduce to ash
 every dictatorial structure.

Hey, is it that you, too,
 consider me a madman?

So, count your feathers in the dark,
 quietly sharpen your beaks
 by rubbing them on each other's
 and let the night pass
 And pester daylight
 so much with your beaks
 that night should come back fast.

It is only now that the sky
 is feeling chocked with compassion
 and is sending down rains -
 at first drop by drop
 and then in torrents

The benevolent cataclysmic forces
 of the universe, have burst out
 shaking up all that is quick or dead.
 The sun, spangled with stars
 is shivering, seeking alms,
 with his begging-bowl of horizon
 at the gentle evening's gate.

And says in a piteous voice:
 "Mother, O mother,
 God will bless you -



let me spend here this night.
I'll be on my way
by break of daylight."

Beware all
A mighty rain is about to fall.
The river will be in full flood again
and my deep, lake-deep eyes

that quest for the shore
will be carried by the current
with my oyster-trapped soul.
Before this calm in me that
anticipates an earthquake
breaks loose, come, death,
and set me free.

The cry of the virgin night
scorched in a forest-fire
in now more than I can bear
The jungle of sufferings on my body
is ablaze, every cell in me
is cracking, bursting,
so remove at once these houses on the shore -
the world is in flames,
the world is in flames.

*Excerpt from his book Dervoot: The Angel
Translated from Marathi by Om Bijani
Translation of Canto - I of Mahavaakya (The Great Utterance)*

About Sudhakar Gaidhani

Sudhakar holds an M.A. in Marathi Literature as well as an M.F.A. in Drama - both from Nagpur University, India. He has 6 poetry collections, and his poetry has been translated into more than 10 languages and published in several international magazines. Gaidhani has received many honors and awards, including the *Best Literature Award of Maharashtra Government for Dervoot* in 1982, and the *Best Music Direction Award of Govt. of Maharashtra* (for his self-authored drama *Raibai Bhulabai*) in 1987. More recently, he received the *International William Blake* award for outstanding contribution in poetry from Contact International magazine editorial group, Romania in 2021.



Layla Al Sayed
Bahrain

WE EMBARRASSED THE STONE

We embarrassed the stone
That It could not see but its shadow
We lengthened (extended) in its speech
A nightmare we crouched
A sweat glittered from it
And its seat ran a river
But we didn't run ...
We rubbed by its husk (shell)
And ran in coaly years.
We shut our laughs
For lean and skinny years
It resembles ...
But it is...
We have embarrassed the memories inside it
We've talked to all lovers
And went in lamenting and singing
We left him writing
Rushes of sweat on sand
We made him dangle by its soul
And drinking love toast
By stone we've secretly talked to the sea
And draw borders to our town
Oh God, it did not sink
It drew a bewitched street

By candles of lust
 And fraternised salt with sweet
 Struck by life
 And been numbed
 And love
 And becomes another memory
 And we left it trembling
 And when (fluttered)shuddered
 It beholds the shadow of its curse in us ...!
 We have embarrassed you when we said
 We are like...
 Stone.

Translated by Jamal As-Sayed

About Layla Al Sayed

Layla Al Sayed is a new generation poet with a BSc. in Arabic language and Education. She has published 7 poetry books since 2003, one of which was published in English, Spanish and Dutch. *Who Inherits The Smile Of Me* was published in 2005, before she traveled to Columbia to attend the International Poetry Festival of Medellin. She is a member of the Circle of Bahrain Writers and Editors. She has been listed in the book of *Maram Al-Masri* (Femmes Poets du monde arabe) published in Paris-France (May 2012). Two of her poems were published in German Magazine ‘Oda-Ort der Augen’ in March 2010. Many of her poems have been translated and published in several languages such as English, Spanish, French, German, Dutch and Swedish.



**Hussein Habasch
Kurdistan**

MY MOTHER'S CHANTS

1. The Vision Chant

This morning, my mother was sitting alone at home
 Mending my brother Mahmoud's pants
 Torn by yesterday's mischief
 The needle pierced her finger and warm blood flowed on the thread
 The pants were stained and my mother's thoughts were muddled
 She swore to my father and the neighbours
 That she saw me or my shadow
 Or saw me without my shadow passing before her this morning
 And when she saw me,
 She was so eager; she was confused and was about to hug me
 But the needle betrayed her and pierced her finger
 Was I really there or was it my mother's heart?

2. The Longing Chant

Mother,
 Thirty years... and I am still running with a barefoot heart
 Whenever I see a woman wearing a long dress
 Or a white scarf on her head
 I call out to her: mother, mother
 Mother!
 Thirty years and six thousand miles
 Exiled from roses, the sunrise and the face of angels,

Mother's face
 Thirty years...
 Whenever I write about a woman
 Whenever I draw a woman
 I find myself writing about my mother
 Clothing the image with my mother's colours
 Thirty shrouds, thirty graves, thirty...
 I am filled with hope and peace of mind
 Whenever I lay my head
 On my mother's chest.

3. The Passion Chant

The inscriptions on the walls of our mud house
 The yellow paint on the door
 The family picture, carefully hung next to Imam Ali's
 The traces of a tattoo on the baking tin
 The big quiet stone next to the door,
 Always ready to receive guests
 Shelves crowded with old newspapers
 The lamp, philosophising with a long luminous tongue
 The hanging mat, always ready for prayer
 The sacred laugh that brought all this passion
 And this weariness
 Is my mother's laugh.

Translated by Sinan Anton

AS A KURD WOULD LOVE HIS STUBBORNESS!

I love these rugged mountains and these slender rivers
 with wobbly knees pouring into their charnel house.
 I love these stones that defy sunrays in the midsummer heat
 and the frosty cold in midwinter chills.



I love this soil that resembles my body
and this land that foremost means the heart.
I love this dust, a coal for my eyes it is,
and this air, a balm for my lungs it is.
I love this skimpy terebinth and the fragrant hawthorn.
I love cacti and their thorns, olives and their yearnings.
I love this thin reed that serenades all the time on the river bank,
this dark swamp where frogs continuously croak.
I love the daisy flower that resembles the whiteness of my heart,
and these tulips that fraternise with my blood.
I love these mud houses
and these tents, fluttering on the outskirts of forgotten villages.
I love this generous vine, the bequeather of grapes and wine.
I love these yellow grain spikes, the bequeather of food and bread.
I love these swaggering kite birds,
and these cicadas, continuously singing.
I love my land from top to bottom and from bottom to top,
just as a Kurd would love his stubbornness!

Translated by Azad Akkash

About Hussein Habasch

Hussein is a poet, with his work translated into several languages including German, Persian and Hungarian. He has had his poetry published in a large number of international anthologies and some of his books include: *Drowning in Roses*, *Fugitives across Evros River*, *Higher than Desire*, *Fever of Quince* (in Kurdish) and *The Red Snow* (in Chinese). Hussein has participated in many international festivals of poetry including: Colombia, Nicaragua, France, Ecuador, Cuba and New York City.



Saki Inui
Japan

HAIKU

The galaxy came into being
with one simple word:
Love

One strawberry –
this is
how I feel

A winter galaxy
between two hands
about to touch

Translated by Eric Selland

About Saki Inui

Born in 1990 in Tokyo, Saki grew up in Saitama Prefecture. She graduated from Waseda University and is a member of Ginyu Haiku Group and the World Haiku Association. She published her first haiku collection in 2019: “*A Drop in the Future*” (Coal Sack Publishing). She also won the 2nd place of the third World Haiku Association Haiku Contest in 2019.



Zhou Duanzhuang
China

PERSONAGES OF SPRING AND AUTUMN PERIOD

Spring and Autumn Period approaches the platform of history
From the campus window of the seventh period of class
Hoofbeats are heard

Duke Qihuang is with the surname of Jiang and given name of Xiao Bai
To fly toward a star in darkness
The tragedy of history is some hidden weapon

Like the selfish people for money
Try to suffocate the beautiful spirit
And the arrow of Guan Zhong
For a bronze button to open
The wonderful inside story of Spring and Autumn
The most intelligent people
At the critical moment play feign madness or
Disappear

Xiao Bai feign death
Xiao Bai pursues his journey day and night
Eventually to be
The most fair fruit of fruits
The far-sighted person has recommended Guan Zhong
Has recommended the other side of
The bronze button
It is the landscape in the insightful eye of Spring and Autumn Period
That has blown the blossoms
Of modern campus

THE SEA AND YONGCHUN ROAD

The slender trees cast green shadows
 By the sea
 Crashing waves
 Are waiting for the sunlight to go through
 Footprints on the beach, another unknown sea
 Seagulls fly to and fro
 Attempting to cross its depth
 Go upward or you will not get to Yongchun Road
 Here all paths lead to the spring
 Even a one-legged man with a walking stick
 Can pace along steadily

IT GETS COLDER

Several gray chirps of birds
 These are the sounds of the snow
 Clearing away your viruses

It gets colder
 Until warm hearts get tranquil beauty in the icy cold
 Until heaviness stops flying

It and the wintersweet stare at each other
 With the intertwined roots under the frozen soil
 It shakes hands friendly again

Translated by ZHANG Zhizhong & SHI Yongbao

About Zhou Duanzhuang

Zhou's poems have been carried on *The Star Poetry Periodical*, *Monthly of Poetry Newspaper*, *The Yangtze*, POMEZIA-NOTIZIE (Italy), MITOLOGÍA DEL RÍO (Peru), Kritya (India), and EKT-BKG (Serbia), etc. Her important poems have been included into *Classic Collection of Chinese Poetry and Painting in the Past One Hundred Years*, *One Hundred Young Poetesses in Contemporary China*, *Selected Short Lyrics by the End of the 20th Century*, *Poems by Poetesses of Yangzhou in the Past Dynasties*, *Seven Plus One* (Chinese-English-Italian), and *Under The Azure Sky* (India), etc. In 1998, she was invited to attend the poetry activity in Russia. She has won the International Prize for Best Poet (IPTRC) 2020, Bangladesh Sahitto International Award for Literature 2021 and the 19th Lebanon International Prize for Literature.



María Chapp
Argentina

MINERAL PSALMS

in the middle of the world

no epitaphs only sea

vertical arrives a miracle

looks for a name

pores know

they fester jade

mineral psalms

ceremonies at Jama's beach

an adagio sounds

multiplied fishes

in turquoise silence

rumourous whales

poetry tastes salt

pores are aware

between skin and crystal

the whole world

half and half

NILE -EAST BANK-

each regard strip off the leaves
 caresses the object
 abandon it
 I need a bridge
 between the eye
 and the thousand petal flower
 the narrow river's channel
 high up
 where the ibis renews its plumage
 and sings
 to find the everlasting poem
 perfect fruit space
 the Nile's east bank
 where all things are born

About María Chapp

María Chapp was born in 1950, at Buenos Aires, Argentina. She holds a master's in Sociology from the Buenos Aires' University. She researched about prejudices and discrimination towards disabled people and about working class teenagers' life projects. Her works were published in specialised books and reviews and her poems are published in several anthologies and reviews in Argentina, Cuba, Chile, Ecuador and México. She has published 3 books of poems, "La Sed" (*Thirst*), Editorial El Mono Armado, Buenos Aires, 2005; "El Ojo Peregrino" (*The Pilgrim Eye*), Editorial El Mono Armado, Buenos Aires, 2008; "Luz de Agua" (*Water Light*), Buenos Aires, 2014. She received prizes and recognitions for her works and attended several poetry festivals in Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Perú, Colombia and México. In 2020, she was invited to participate at the International Poetry Festival of Medellín.



Umid Najjari
Azerbaijan

MY HEART BAG

In her loneliness room
 First a bird flew, then the sky ..
 I forgot
 I forgot my heart bag in the taxi of your eyes
 ... then
 I forgot myself in the longing café of this city
 I don't know how many door pains have,
 I don't know about those died in moonlight
 I don't know the story of crying ones ...!

... But
 There's somebody on the earth, cries silently,
 ... He never misses like a stone on the roads
 Never passes the earth like a cloud ...
 He speaks of his wounds to the darkness,
 Behaves like a God to the letters in his heart ...

... you know
 If we don't draw a wing to ourselves in the mirror,
 The rain drops clean it,
 We'll be forgotten one day.
 ... you know
 Forgotten ones used to give
 The skies to their eyes ...

BLEEDING WING

I was sitting!
 And I was forcing my eyes to meet
 the sky.
 I was singing my past to the trees
 My cloudness was passing the bridge of my hopes
 I was singing for all wings
 For the God that made the wings
 The world beneath the wings

In this house
 Everything is like a bleeding wing
 All the pillows made of feather
 ... I was sitting here,
 There was nothing here!
 Only
 A pigeon whose nest is ruined by the wind
 Was speaking to herself ...

OPEN THE BOOK

From humanity to being a book
 There is a way of one night
 If one day I become a poem
 Don't look for me in the alleys,
 Open the book
 Word by word, hold my hands

All Poems Translated by Reza Hosseini Baganam

About Umid Najjari

Umid Najjari (April 15, 1989, Tabriz, East Azerbaijan Province, Islamic Republic of Iran) is a poet, author, translator, publicist, member of the Azerbaijan Writers' Union and the World Union of Young Turkish Writers. He began his career at a young age. His first works were published in the periodicals of Tabriz. He is the author of three books: *Valley of Birds* (2015); *On the other side of the walls* (Iran, 2019); and *Photo of Darkness* (Baku, 2019). In 2020, a book of poems *SLIKA TAME* (Serbian) was published in Belgrade. A book of poems, *Forget* was also published in Uzbekistan.



PAVED

Yolanda Felicita Rodríguez Toledo
Cuba

Nothing can give us back
what in passing marched forward;
and you watch it
without imagining the noise
that left its vortex
by circling the words.
On the cobblestones
scattered leaves lie
and the naked almond tree
under the drizzle
slide the torso;
like a woman
that she is awarded
others' pain.

EARTH

On the road
a woman reflected her face,
so deep
in the mud cleft;
she furrowed her hands
between the roots of it.
And her nails
fingertips

embroidered blood;
 she so submerged
 in the heartbeat
 where the light germinates
 scattered seeds
 under the swamp.

WARP

Shock,
 the voice early
 to get up;
 its swamp thickness
 or rot coming
 with its bluish tones,
 maybe purple.
 Warp,
 the sound of strangers
 talking;
 words never
 they can reach you
 because they don't radiate you,
 they just persist.

About Yolanda Felicita Rodríguez Toledo

The work of Yolanda appears in various Periodical and Anthological Publications in Cuba and abroad, as well as in Literature and Arts Magazines. She has published the collections of poems “Kilometro 12” (2008) and “Dominus” (2018). With *Wendy no conoce el mar*, she won the Eliseo Diego National Award and was published by Ediciones Ávila in 2005. Some of her published pieces include: *Salmos por Denisse* (2019), Poetry for adults; *Cosas que vienen del cielo* (2020) and Tales for adults; *Luna de Aire* (2020). Her recent publications are *Tragarneltas*, a book of poetry for children and *El Canto de los Caballos*, a novel for children and young people.



Fernando Alonso
Uruguay

PANDEMIC

Is laziness necessary?
we live the pandemic of confirmation
each one is who has always been
I'll take the dictionary and erase the word
individual and instead I will write individualism
each being defending its poverty

Greed
liquid spider web
drank like holy water
and then transpired through the pores
to pollute the air we breathe
Coward silence squeezes them piece by piece

To be a poet you must be a thief
such Prometheus
as to leave your life for the weak
punishment is only a consequence
well ventured his titanic feat

to look at the unruly
into their eyes
for they fear the dignity of empathy

FUTURE

The night will find me in the middle of a poem
 calm
 but with the fury of the poet
 delirious about all the sane
 how to want to heal an ill society

The night birds of my mind
 they will write what has not occurred to me yet
 giant animals of oblivion will weigh on my brain

Certainty will no longer be needed
 much less the uncertainty
 of knowing
 what will happen tomorrow?

Now
 to plan
 a word
 oxygen green

OBLIGATORY TASK

I breathe
 "Thirteen times a minute"
 I'm still breathing

I absorb the outer life
 the air populated by the living and the dead
 come to me with the perpetual breeze

every moment is filled with particles
 in every puff my loved ones enter
 also strangers
 the unknown
 they come from the old corners of my village
 where the old women gather to tell what they did not see



they come from distant countries that I have never visited
and populate me

and so I walk through life
with the whole world inside of me

All Poems Translated by Carmen Vignolo

About Fernando Alonso

In 2021, Fernando participated in the Havana Poetry Festival, the V Festival of Literary Festivals of Eurasia and the Hispano-American Encounter of Writers of Santa Clara. He was the poet of the day in THE POET MAGAZINE in the US. Some of his works have been published in different literary magazines around the world. His work "*Aproximación a la Poética*" ("*Approach to Poetics*") has just received the recommendation of a jury specialised in Poetic Education, in the Argentina 2020 International call "for a poetic education."



David Eggleton
New Zealand

LAKE WAKATIPU

A jade lizard bends in a circle,
chasing its tail;
straightens, and darts for a crevice.
Mist swathes in grey silk the lake:
flat-stomached, calm, slow-pulsed,
a seamless bulk.
Vapours spiral,
pushing up to a cloud-piercer,
where snow has been sprinkled
like powder from a talc can at height.
Grandeur stands muffled.
The *Earnslaw* headbutts shorewards.
After lying prone for years,
rocks shift downwards
at speed, eager to wheel
through air, crash in a gully,
and not move.
The lake buttons up to dive deep,
leaving a perfectly blank black space,
through which you might fall forever.

from The Wilder Years: Selected Poems

CIRCLE

Inside whale bone, shark tooth,
 inside shark tooth, dog fur,
 inside dog fur, albatross wing,
 inside albatross wing, kiwi feather,
 inside kiwi feather, kaka claw,
 inside kaka claw, whale bone.

PROTEST

Jolts and ruckus
 lambaste swarms
 and hives;
 ant trails wave
 placards
 of fear and anger
 at whatever's out
 there that doesn't
 care but looks on
 with the languor
 of big cats lifting
 a paw — the smears
 are human tears.

About David Eggleton

David edited the New Zealand literary journal *Landfall* between 2010 and 2018. He is a recent recipient of a Janet Frame Literary Trust Award, an Ockham New Zealand Book Award for Poetry, and the New Zealand Prime Minister's Award for Poetry. He is the New Zealand Poet Laureate for 2019-2022.

BRANCH

5

BELONGING TO
THE FUTURE



PEACEFUL PANORAMA

**Germain Droogenbroodt
Belgium**

On the other side of the window
a garden with orange trees
Intoxicating
the perfume of the blossoms
No people
no cars
a cloudless heaven
Only a blackbird
praising the perfection
of silence.

*Germain Droogenbroodt
Garden of Muses, Selianitika, Greece, 19.4.2019*

DAWN

Slowly
the way a poem writes itself
daybreak comes into being
from nothing

disposes of silence
and brings light

green rises everywhere
provision for the sun

which from the earth
removes no other darkness

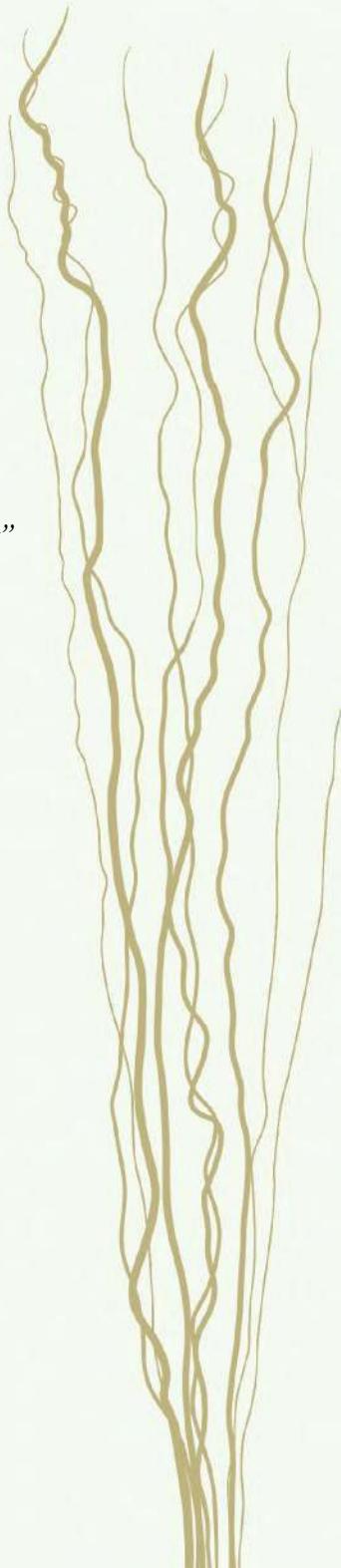
but the night.

From "Counterlight"

THE STARS...

The stars are hardly more
than the dispersed fragments
of an invisible unity

Resisting all questions
about what disappears
or continues to exist



just as in the stem of the autumn tree
 the invisible blossom
 is already present.

From "Counterlight"

NIGHTFALL AFTER A GREY RAINY DAY

Indecipherable
 the dark figures
 of the night
 neither at the mountainside
 the signs, the flight
 of a lonely bird
 so late, above the lake
 nor the convulsion of silvery light
 that breaks through the darkness
 lights up the mountains
 and draws up to the sky
 - just for a moment
 an ephemeral colour arc.

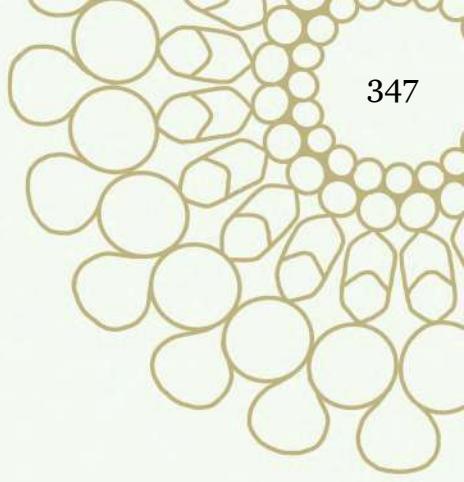
From "Counterlight"

About Germain Droogenbroodt

Germain is an internationally appreciated poet, translator, publisher and promoter of modern international poetry. He has written short stories, literary reviews and 14 poetry books which have been published in 19 countries. He is the founder of the Belgian publishing house POINT Editions and set up the project *Poetry without Borders*, publishing a poem from all over the world in 33 languages weekly. Several famous artists have made paintings and music inspired by his poetry. Germain received more than a dozen of international poetry awards as poet and was even recommended for the *Nobel Prize of Literature* in 2017.



WAVES



Malathy Mairti
India

This is a house whose windows
open out to the sea.

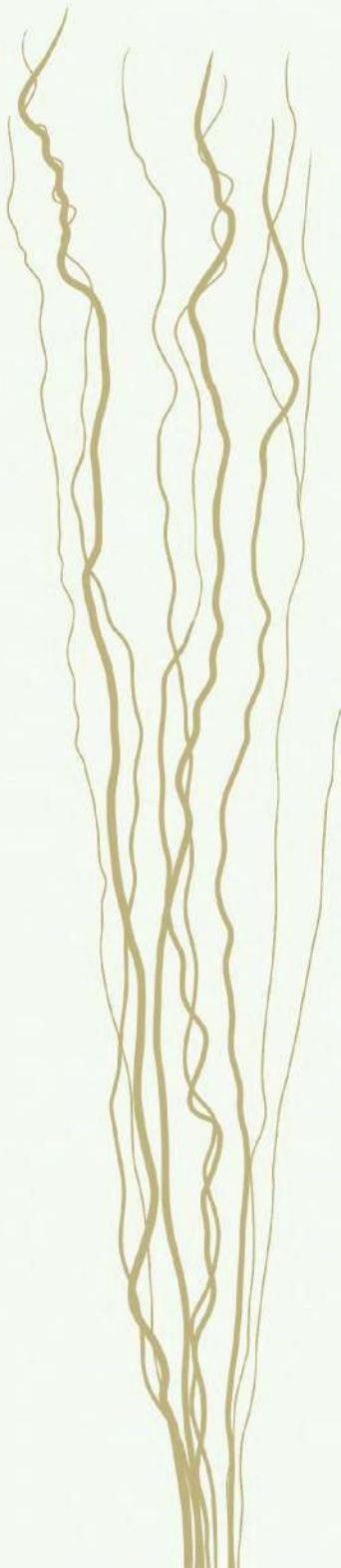
Fallen across the road,
a tree toppled by the whirlwind
and a broken nest with two fledglings.
The mother-bird, gone in search of food,
will seek out the tree
on her return.

This is a house whose windows
open out to the sea.

I open my computer.
I read the email that arrived today.
A single line, like a poem,
makes me forget all the rest.
The rain pours down suddenly, like a god.

This is a house whose windows
open out to the sea.

Through the windows of a bus,
a mountain passes by.



A goat that stands on a rocky ledge
reaching for a bunch of leaves
must be someone's prey, by now.

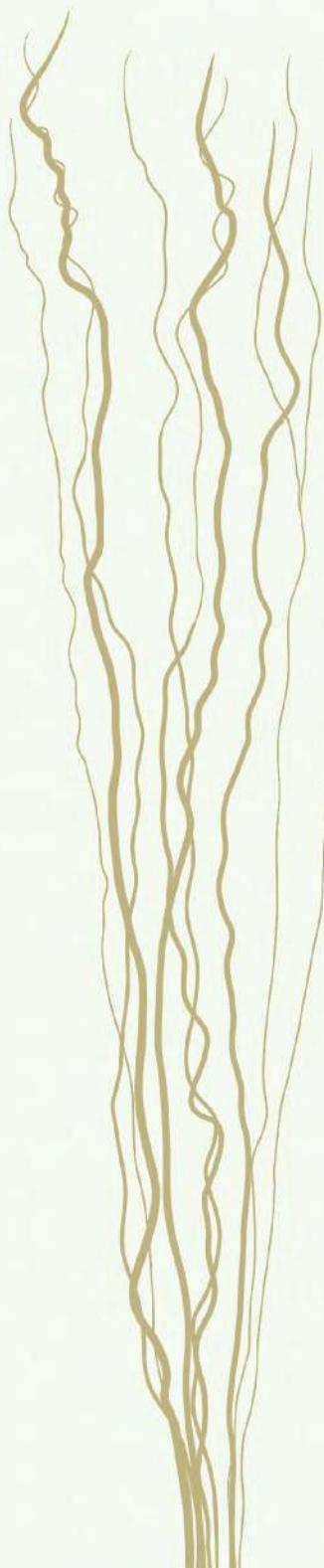
This is a house whose windows
open out to the sea.

Someone shouts at someone else.
Cars, screeching to a stop,
call my attention away
from the cinema song
blaring out from the teashop.

This is a house whose windows
open out to the sea.

A pervading scent
of gratified desire
mingles with the smell
of the fish curry simmering next-door.
From a neighbour's house somewhere
a telephone rings.

In this house whose windows
open out to the sea,
you and I
are fish in a glass bowl.

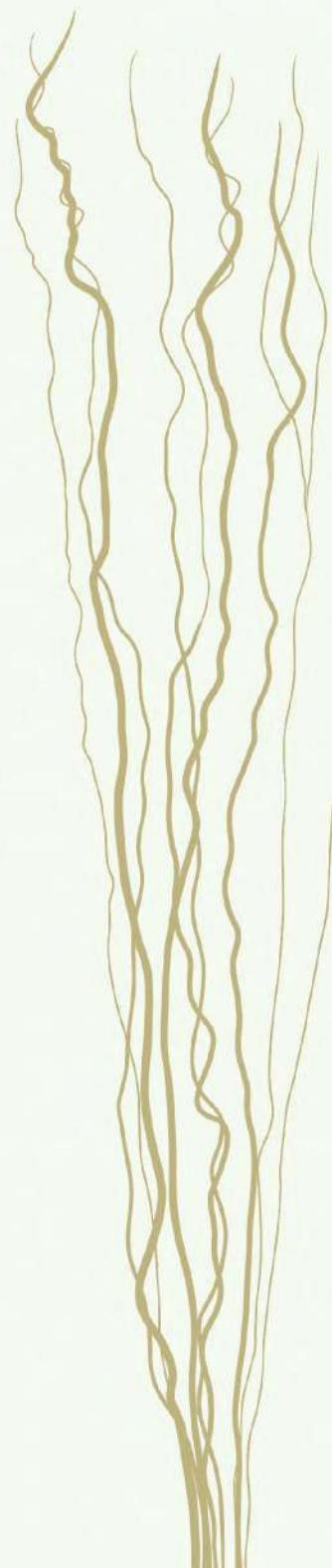


CAMELS, HORSES AND A FISH BASKET

My grandmother had
five Arab camels
six Greek horses
and a fish basket.
She tethered them
to the pillars surrounding
her tile-roofed house.
It was like a playground there,
echoing with children's laughter.

At earliest dawn
when even the morning star
hesitated to appear
she swept the courtyard
scoured the dishes
cleaned her teeth
lifted her eyes to the low horizon
made a quick obeisance.
Then she filled her stomach
from a small pitcher of rice-water
and set off eastwards
with her fish basket.

A cool breeze untouched by light
held her hands, accompanying her
and wiping away her fatigue.
Amidst the distant sailing boats
pushing towards the shore,



in the horizon, the sun
red as her betel juice-stained lips
would kiss the sea and laugh
as soon as it saw, upon the shore,
the waiting woman.

When she returned, after
selling her fish in one village
and another, she filled the empty basket
with rice, tamarind, chillies, snacks
for the children; a bundle of firewood
and a pot full of toddy.

She was home by the evening,
holding hands with spirits and demons,
sages, sirens and goddesses.
The camels and elephants followed behind.
After she bathed and spread her mat,
chewing on her betel leaves
she would begin,
while the children slept
on the lap of the siren.
The camels chewed their cud
and the horses neighed, shifting
from one leg to the other.

Poems translated from the Tamil by Lakshmi Holmström

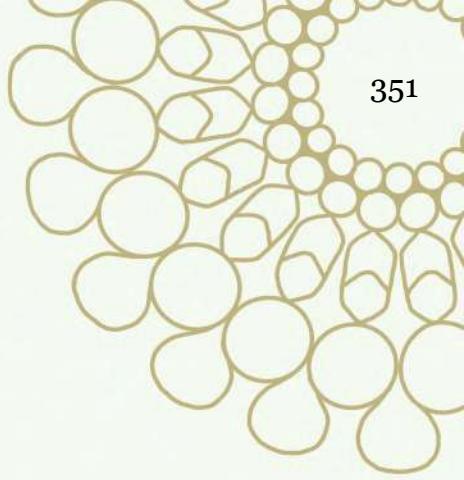
About Malathy Mairti

Malathi is an acclaimed feminist poet, social activist and public intellectual of Tamil. She has been writing since 1988 and contributing to Literary and political magazines with her poems and articles. She is the founder of the Feminist Literary Movement 'Anangu' and published a Feminist Political Magazine with the same name and is publishing women's writing from her publishing house Anangu Feminist Publication. She has published Six collections of poems including *Enadhu Madu kuduvai* (My Toddy Jar - 2012), *Vettaveli Sirai* (Open Prison - 2014) and *Kadal Oru Neelasol* (Sea as a Blue word - 2019). She received Best Poet awards from Puducherry govt and Tirupur Tamil Sangam.



Stephen Juhō Comee
United States

SONG OF THE SIX ELEMENTS

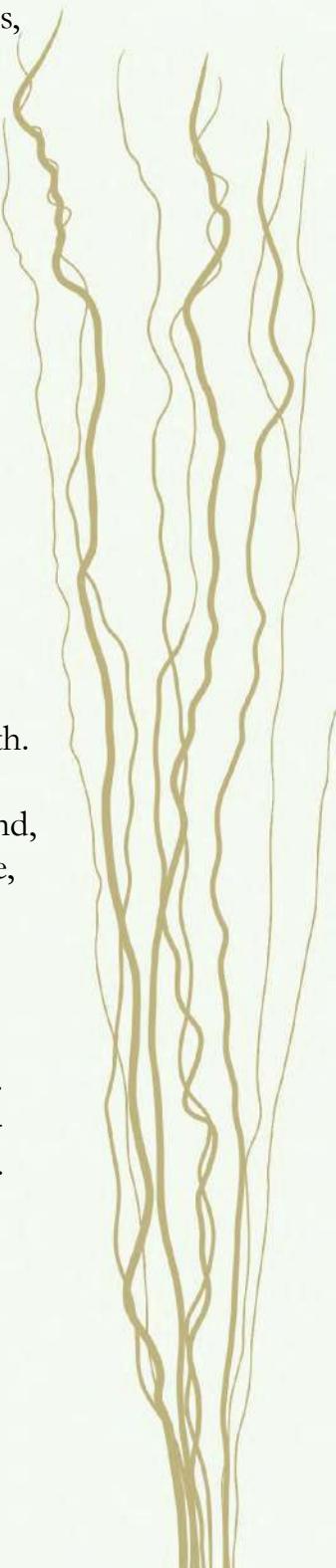


Remember that you are the **Wood** of the **Wind**,
 The boughs from which the eastern elves make bows,
 The trees whose leaves swirl in whirling spirals,
 Breezes that bring forth Spring and then move on.
 Be like the Wind: light, mobile, and cold;
 Be like the Wood: rough and pale and dry.
 Move and Breathe. Focus. Penetrate.
 Put into motion all that maintains life—
 Water and Earth control, and then give birth to Fire.

Remember that you are the **Fire** that fuels the Sun,
 Summer flames that light up the heart's desires,
 The sparks that fly when love and hate go south,
 Raging blazes and humble butter-lamps.
 Be like Fire: hot and sharp and dry,
 Rough but light, oily and yet mobile.
 Burn. Tame. Purify. Cleanse. Adapt.
 Remove the unneeded and make us more mature—
 Melt Phlegm and Metal; with ashes create more Earth.

Remember that you are the **Earth** on which you stand,
 The red sands of the sahel, the black soil of the Nile,
 The central land that holds all life in its bosom,
 The late-summer fields that feed us with their grain.
 Be like the Earth: heavy, stable, and dull,
 Smooth and oily yet dry as a mummy's bones.
 Make roots. Support. Produce. And give forth freely.
 Connect, make stable, put down firm foundations—
 Ground both Wind and Wood, and give forth Metal.

Remember that you are **Metal**, child of the Earth,
 The gold that western kings seek for their crowns,



The white tin of the poor man's begging cup,
 The glint within the eyes of passers-by.
 Be like Metal: contracting, smooth, and dry,
 Hard and stable yet somehow flexible.
 Contract. Withdraw. Regroup. And take a stand.
 Cut away bonds in brilliant transformation—
 Cause e'en strong winds to cease, then turn to Water.
 Remember that you are the very **Water** of Life,
 The northern waves that visit distant lands,
 The winter drops that sometimes fall as snow,
 The wild tsunamis that destroy whole nations.
 Be like the Water: liquid, cold, and heavy,
 Dull and Oily, so very flexible.
 Cry. Parch thirst. Bathe. Flow. Let go.
 Moisturize and soften the dry and hard—
 Stifle excess heat, and then give birth to Wood.

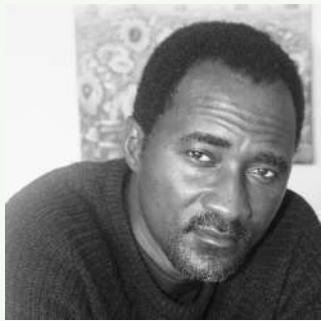
From Water to Wood; the cycle start again, in Space.

Remember that you are Spirit, **Space**, Emptiness,
 The Void that is nothing but the Great Expanse,
 The unseen space contained within each atom,
 The *je ne sais quoi* pervading all that is.
 Be like Space: unseen yet everywhere,
 Eternal, everywhen. A cosmic mirror.
 Be. Be Still. Observe. And contemplate.
 Inner and Outer, Above and Below, the same—
 Keep all in balance and in harmony.

24–25 March 2021, Kujukuri, Japan
 Stephen Comee

About Stephen Juhō Comee

Stephen studied at the University of Oxford, where Tolkien was one of his mentors, and he was befriended by Elizabeth Jennings and John Wain. In 1974, he came to Japan and briefly taught English at the prestigious Japanese-American Conversation Institute. Stephen has continued his study, both as an academic researcher and as a performer, for close to fifty years. Some of his other qualifications include certified Heart Intelligence Life Coach, Hypnotist and Acupuncturist



Adjei Agyei-Baah
Ghana

FOR THE MOUNTAINS

better to climb the mountains
than to descend the valleys
though it comes with much sweat and pain
at the top you catch the first dew and rain

beside the mountains the valleys lie
a place to walk on finest soils
with dancing lilies to grace your feet
the valleys are serene and admirable
but the mountain tops are glorious
a place where your flag must find its feet

but beyond the mountain's cliff death lingers
at the top, its cold whispering winds
but within are hidden lessons to learn
better a dream born at the mountain top
than a vision received in a valley deep

valleys, plains where any man can plant his feet
angry floods sweep through with joy
but mountains' peaks are for the eagles
there you can pluck your stars
and journey along with passing clouds

better head for the mountains
where the moon peeps and hides
a perfect place to behold the rising sun
observe nature's beauty in a single look
and see beyond the hazy horizon

About Adjei Agyei-Baah

Adjei is a lecturer, translator, editor and a doctoral student at the University of Waikato, New Zealand. He is the co-founder of Africa Haiku Network, Poetry Foundation and The Mamba, Africa's first international haiku journal. Adjei is a worldwide-anthologized poet and winner of several international awards. His maiden haiku collection *Afriku* had been commended by Professor Wole Soyinka, Africa's first Nobel Prize Literature laureate. His other poetry collections include *Ghana, 21 Haiku* (2017), *Piece of My Fart* (2018) and *Finding The Other Door* (2020)



PERSEPHONE UNVEILED

**Ruxandra Cesereanu
Romania**

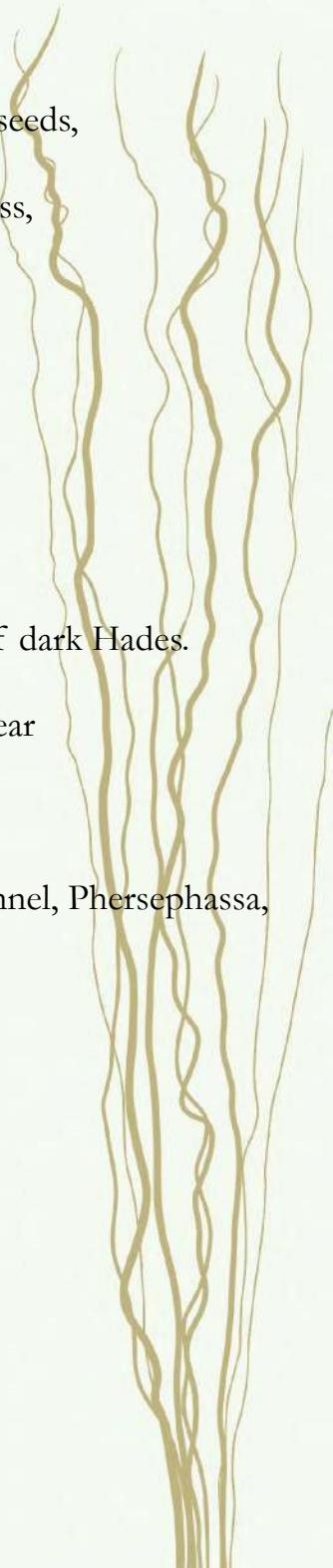
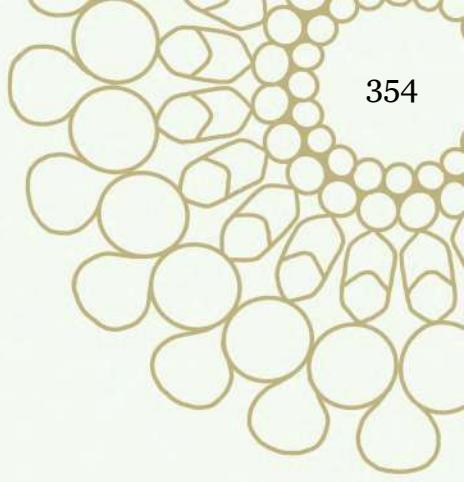
Credit To Catalina Flaminzeanu

Oh, you spider-chested gods,
flaunting algae beards and teeth like pomegranate seeds,
I am Persephone, once blind, my eyes a golden glass,
now become a seer like a white owl.

While I walk in the fields I can smell the olives
and my bliss curls up like a cat in the sun,
oh, trees ablaze with life, oh dry-rim heathers,
how I longed for you while I'd listen to the tales of dark Hades.

Sea water waves would break on the inside of my ear
like liquid drums thundering:
come into the light, Persephone, get out of the tunnel, Phersephassa,
come, desolate Periphonia!

In the beginning I felt the darkness shrouded
in barren women and men,
I couldn't grasp at all this blackness



on which grey-tongued dogs seemed to feed.

There weren't any birds there.

Then, on my left bosom I placed a hollow shell.

I wanted to dream of the flowing meadow,

of the gentle field and of the sun like a yellow sacrificial blade,

I wanted to touch the grass, even if it had been scorched,

I wanted to touch the leaves of countless families of trees.

For days and days I would sing out names of flowers:

daisies, pimpernel, campanulas,

dandelions, wild roses, poppies,

tousled flowers, flowers sweet to touch and smell.

The air was a hidden temple,

I would wander dazed, taste of tinder in my mouth.

And suddenly, at dawn I breached the wall,

and I could smell mad lemon,

and I got out into the shady light, sleepless as I was.

First I saw the zephyr-stirred field,

and heard the birds rushing above the sea,

and shrubs had Gorgon hair,

then I shouted and made an oath to the sun.



I cut the storms' head for all time
and the sea seemed white like a soft lamb.

The guards' lips were covered in sand when they let me pass.

Now my joy is a fountain,
I say be praised,
water and sun, air and fruit,
grass and fish, bell and flower!

About Ruxandra Cesereanu

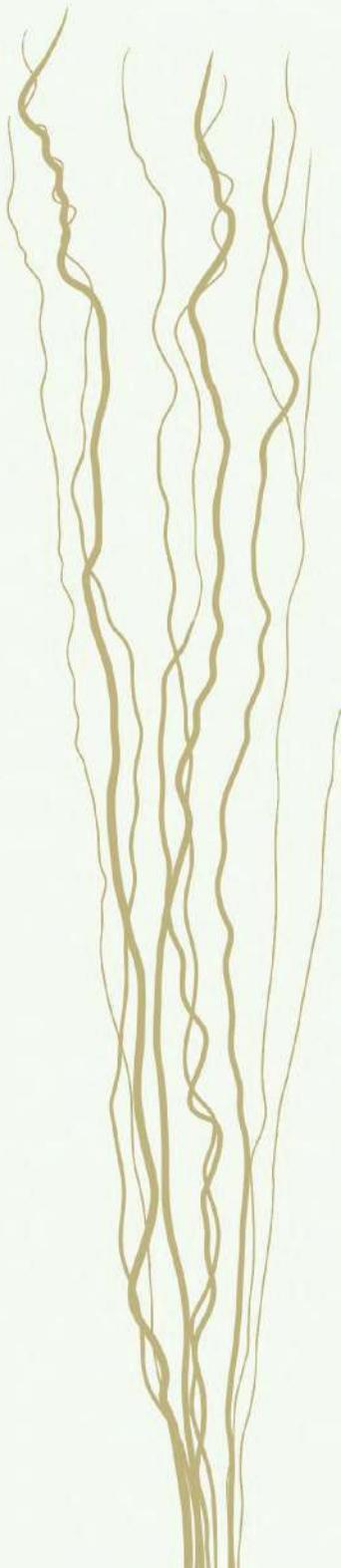
Over the last two decades, Ruxandra has established herself as an important poet and prose writer. She is also a Professor at the Faculty of Letters (Department of Comparative Literature) in Cluj, member of the staff of the Center for Imagination Studies (*Phantasma*) and director of the Creative Writing Workshops on poetry, prose and movie scripts. Cesereanu's literary achievements include: *Letters of a Courtesan* (2002); *Kore-Persephone* (2004 – which won the Prize for Poetry of the Writers Association in Cluj) and *Coma* (2008 – awarded the Prize for Poetry of the Writers Association in Cluj). She has also published two bibliophile editions, co-authored books and produced seven books of fiction.



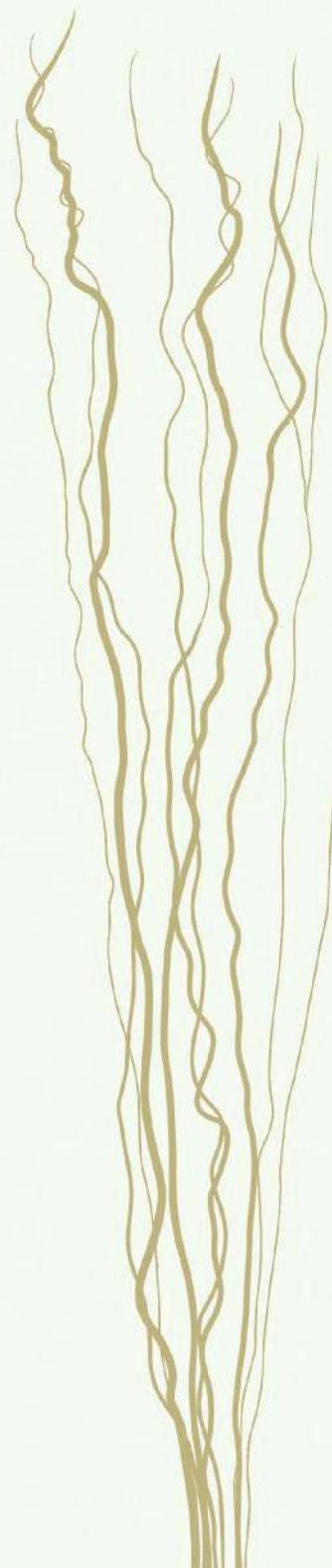
Natalia Ivanovna Kharlampyeva
Russia

FOREMOTHER ASIA (A PRAYER)

When the self-willed blood of my ancestors
Agitates my heart
When I see the way of my people
In the dark starry sky
When the centuries-long nomadic spirit
Awakens in me
When I feel like riding
Clinging to the horse's mane
When I let both joy and sorrow
Enter my heart
I want to kneel
In front of you
And pray in thankfulness!
Foremother Asia!
Before your eyes,
Within your borders
There passed great peoples
The blessed ones
Vanished
The strong ones
Saw defeat!
I am not saying
You treated
My people harshly
Like a heavy stepmother
Or ruled
With iron hands
And made them suffer,



I am not saying
That you hadn't left them
In warm abundant places.
I am grateful,
My great Lady,
For making our thoughts and dreams
Last for centuries
For making strong
Our bones and muscles
For letting us find
The banks of a great river
For hiding us in the depths
Of thick snow
For bringing us to the foot
Of magnificent mountains
For preserving
This lifestyle of ours,
For embedding our beliefs in my soul!
Foremother Asia!
Do not cover the past
I see in my dreams at night
Do not hinder
The bright future
Of my people
Do not deny the forecasts
Of my all-seeing ancestors!
Please leave to me,
The girl from a green meadow
A powerful fate rooted in the past
The fortunate strength
Of being Turkic,
The future protected by spirits!
Foremother Asia!
Coupling with your other peoples,
Joining with your other children,
Do not take away our strength.
Preserve our language,



We look so alike.
 Do not deprive us of our force,
 Do not let us to forget our past!
 May the blood of those
 Who call themselves Sakha run faster
 From the soft glance of your eyes
 Cast from the bottom of centuries,
 From your blessed name,
 Glorious, spreading heat!
 Foremother Asia!

I am the child
 You hid in your wide skirt
 I am the offspring
 You hold in your warm hands
 I am a blessed woman
 Who can see far and beyond
 I am used to mounting a horse
 And riding for days
 I have tendons
 Heat and frost treated,
 I have the bile that can digest
 Any ordeal in the present.
 Foremother Asia!

With the treasure of your Turkic language
 With the means of your Mongol language
 With the splendor of your Sakha language
 May I speak
 May I ask
 May I pray!

Translated by David Parry

About Natalia Ivanovna

Born in 1952, Natalia is writer, novelist, poet and member of the Union of Writers of the USSR (since 1988). She is also the People's Poet of Yakutia (2002), Honored Worker of Culture of the Russian Federation (2007), Laureate of the Great Literary Prize of Russia (2003) and the Delvig Literary Prize (2015).



Kimiko Nakanaga
Japan

HAIKU

starry night
for each tear
a violin

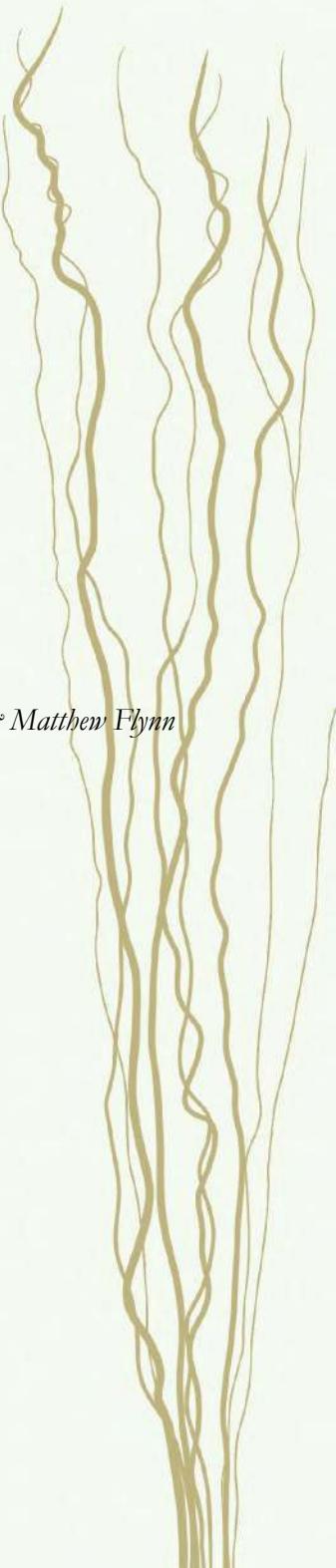
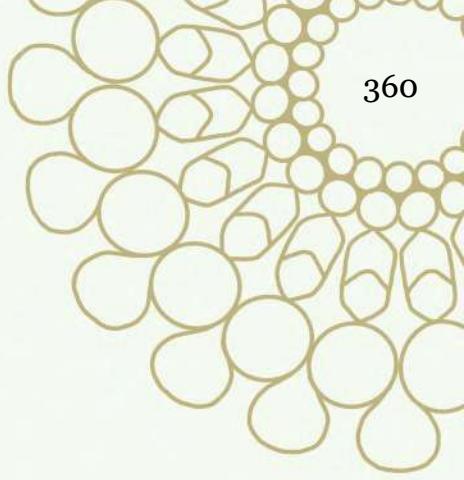
weight in my hand
feather of the swan
message from the sky

Sol rolling
through the vast ocean
the world in its wake

Translated by Kimiko Nakanaga & Matthew Flynn

If a pregnant woman runs
the marine landscape
slides down an incline

Peering inside
a Jomon pot:
darkness of the womb



Storm of cherry petals
within my womb
an ancient fish is swimming

The morning sun begins to bloom
a baby
becomes a bullet

My baby's first cry
penetrating
"la fin de siècle" without a waist

Haiku is born to me
always
like an omen

Translated by Eric Selland

About Kimiko Nakanaga

Kimiko is a Haiku artist who seeks collaboration with artists in various other fields, including contemporary art, video & film, and music. She authored haiku collections *Mongolian* (1988), *Dust of The Snowy Night* (1998), *When the Stars Aline* (2017), *Annunciation* (Haiku × Installation Art/1994), and a script, *Dust of The Snowy Night, I Sleep*, which was nominated for an award and screened at The International Electronic Cinema Festival Montreux in 1997. She has also created haiku reading concerts with viola da gamba and cembalo, such as *The Story of Early Christians in Japan* (YouTube/2014) and *Kwaidan Hoichi the Earless* (YouTube/2016).



**Nadejda Kostadinova
Bulgaria**

HAIKU

siren in the distance

a woman in black

puts her baby to sleep

*

end of the year

so many eyes

pointed to you

hope

*

chamomile tea

nevertheless

world is beautiful

*

About Nadejda Kostadinova

Nadejda has been writing poetry and haiku since 2017. Her haiku has been published in various printed and online international magazines among which are Asahi Shimbun, World Haiku Review, World Haiku Series, The Living Haiku Anthology, Under the Basho, Frogpond and Presence. She has also received international awards and nominations, with some of her poetry published in Bulgarian magazines. She is a member of the World Haiku Association.



Jorge Alberto Giallorenzi
Argentina

HAIKU

1

Sengaku temple –
the sound of my friend's getas

2

riverbank –
the long snout of a horse

3

a bird glides ...
a hook
in the beak of a heron

About Jorge Alberto Giallorenzi

Born in 1947, Jorge is a photographer, an architect and a haiku lover. He does research about Taneda Santoka and is a collector of envelopes and tea boxes. He conducts workshops with Julia Guzmán in different provinces of Argentina and has published two books of haiku, "*Aniko y Akiro*" (2009) and "*Helechos en la cornisa*" (2016). His haiku have been published in different anthologies in Spain, Colombia, Japan and USA. He is the organiser and editor of "Cutlass Moon Space"- haiku plaquettes, with the collaboration of Julia Guzmán.



Hashem Shafiq
Iraq

THE MOUNTAIN

I have washed the mountain,
I have washed the stones and the snow, and I have
washed the sand.
I have washed the pebbles
and the wind that clings to the trees. I have
washed the mountain,
I have lit the paths
and the back ways around the mountain. I have lit
the caves and the stairs
and the hideouts in the folds of the mountain. I have
washed the summit
and every crevice of the mountain
so that my loved ones might pass
in the forenoon of the mountain day.

Translated by Saadi A Simawe and Ralph Saverese

DESTINIES

My daughter works each night
to make my knee her pillow.
I tell her tale after tale
until she falls asleep.
I tell her about the silk of the moon. I tell her about
coloured waters,
walking playgrounds,
the buried fortunes in her hair.
I tell her about scattered stars
drifting down through the sky like feathers. I tell her about a
blue orange
and a mountain circling the city all night and a pure white
elephant.
I tell her about everything.
But when she asks for my story, I slip around this
corner and that
until she drowses on my knee and falls asleep.

Translated by Saadi A Simawe an Ellen Doré Watson

About Hashem Shafiq

Hashem published his first collection of poems in Baghdad in 1973 and worked as a journalist, critic and writer. He left Iraq in 1978 for Paris, later living and working in Beirut, Damascus and Nicosia as a journalist until 1989 when he moved to London, where he lives now with his wife and two children. He has published one novel (Beirut, 1992) and many of his poems have been translated into English, French, Kurdish, Persian, German, Dutch, Italian and Polish, and also published in international anthologies. He has recently published his collected poems called "*La Promenade Du Cristal*", translated in French. In Lebanon 2005, he also published two volumes of collected poetry.



Nurduran Duman
Turkey

THE SKY SETTLED ON THE LAKE

the sky settled on the lake, the clouds a flying carpet
we prepare to step on the moon, its walk
and pass over the moon's dance, its water and time

rustling hydrogen skirts float
passing by our sides, by our heads. daybreak.
we spread and are spread from cinnamon to blue from diamond
from bee
we're graced with fields and gardens on the earth's silk

we, too, are learning to cultivate: the light

WEAVE OF COLOURS

caught every morning in the lover's hair, the sunset
circulates through its strands of red, of light

because every arrow emerges from the dawn
evening is weaved from midday to joy
from sorrow to night... an opposite, a face

everyone knows sharing is sacred
if leaves and statements don't decay, then death
is a green garden, its reward infinite

people evaporate from boiling water to the face of the sky
 painting the sky blue so it rains
 the person who plants the growing tree is mixed with the
 infinite

there are people who love rain and also those who don't know
 how to love

Translated by Andrew Wessels

BINDING SPARKING

stones to soil salt to books
 all life carriers!
 come now come forward
 here only one step already three times of three

inner barriers outer fences, decisions
 evil an accident one's self is pure, pure as nature

every night before sleep
 everyone could bury a pinch of darkness
 underneath trees to water's bottom

heartfelt hearts bind together
 can't we spark stones and set alight?

Translated by Grace Wessels

About Nurduran Duman

A poet, playwright, editor and translator, Nurduran is also a columnist in the newspaper Cumhuriyet. Her books include: "Yenilgi Oyunu" (2005 Cemal Sureya Poetry Award), "İstanbul'la Bakışmak" and "Mi Bemol". Some of her other works consist of "Semi Circle" (2016, US), "Selected Poems" (2017, Macedonia) and "Selected Poems" (2019, Belgium). Her poems have been translated into several languages and she featured in the #internationalwomensday2018 (#IWD18) Modern Poetry in Translation (MPT) list of ten international female poets in translation. She also received the Golden Camel Award of 2020 Silk Road International Poetry Awards.



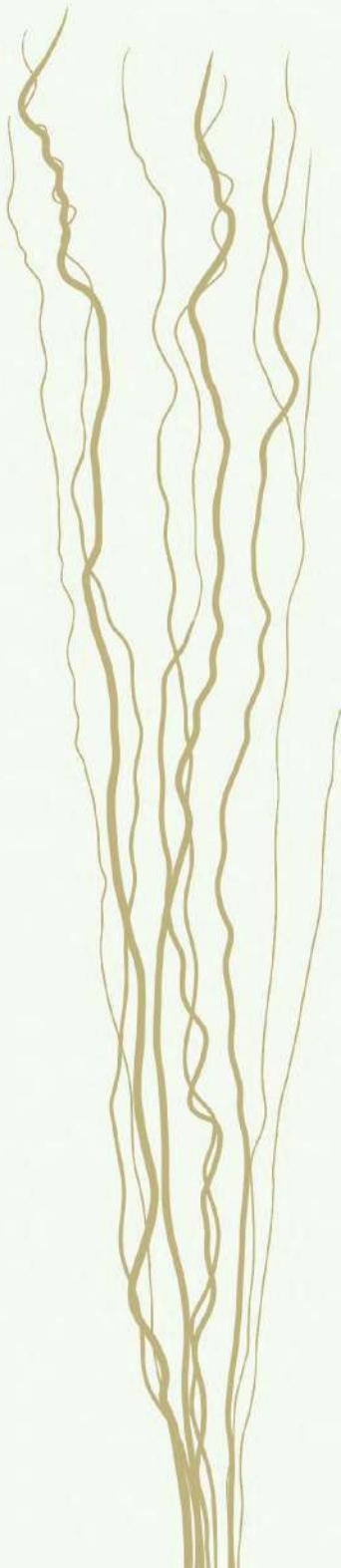
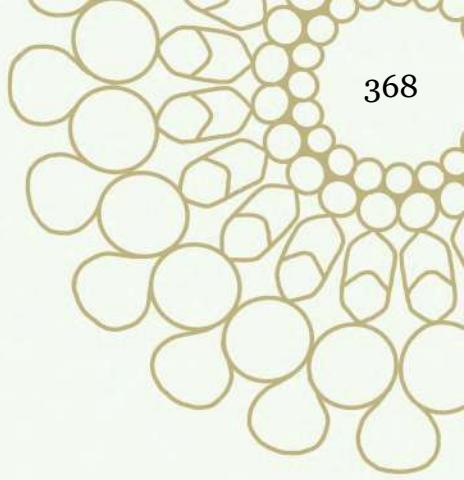
Hamda Khamis
United Arab Emirates

RAY

I do not write poetry
For glory
Nor to seek fame
In the media
I write to illuminate
Like a ray
Sneaking stealthily
To eliminate darkness

WITHOUT REASON

Without reason...
Writing rebukes us
It commands us
Drives us once to heaven
And another time toward flame...
Without reason!



THOSE NOT FOR ME

The present now is
not for me

The man who showers
Before bathing in my body
is not for me

The man exhausted by running in my labyrinths
is not for me

The man who preens
glazing his nails
Before he sacrifices my monotony
is not for me

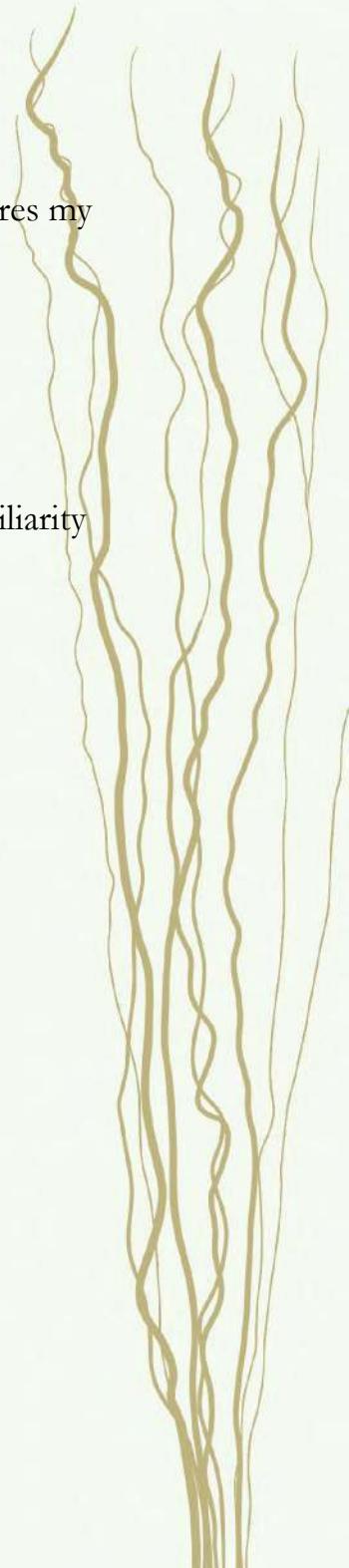
The man who satisfies those around me and ignores my
hunger
is not for me

These glazed walls
are not for me

The house heavily armed with normality and familiarity
is not for me

The house that defines my incarceration
is not for me

The beautified mare
With her bridles and saddles
is not for me



COUPLE

Oh, man who has been living
 in our home for twenty years.
 Why don't you speak to me?
 Like a transient
 I'll depart
 Leaving the room
 Full of chatter!

All Poems Translated by Hameed Al Qaed

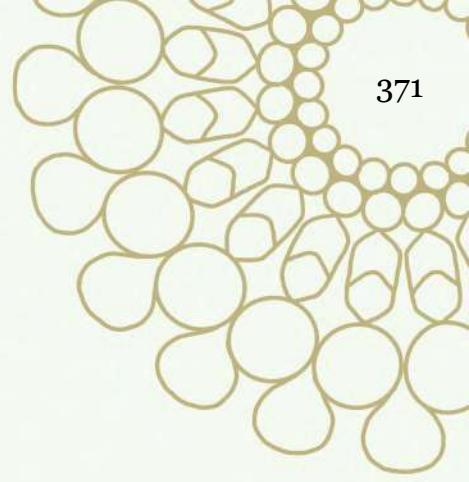
About Hamda Khamis

Poet and journalist from the United Arab Emirates, born in 1948 in the Emirate of Sharjah to parents from the Emirates - she worked as a Journalist and columnist for a number of newspapers and magazines in the UAE and Arab world and participated with her poems in a large number of poetry festivals, and has translated selections of her poems into languages: German, Italian / English/ French. She won many awards, including the Outstanding Book Award - Bahrain 2004 and the Bashrahil Award for Cultural Achievement in the Poetry Field 2006. She has about 15 poetry collections, 3 narrative works that are studies in rhetoric and one collection of short stories. Hamda Khamis is considered one of the pioneers of the poetic movement in the Arabian Gulf region.



Rahim Karim
Kyrgyzstan

WE ARE BRIDGES



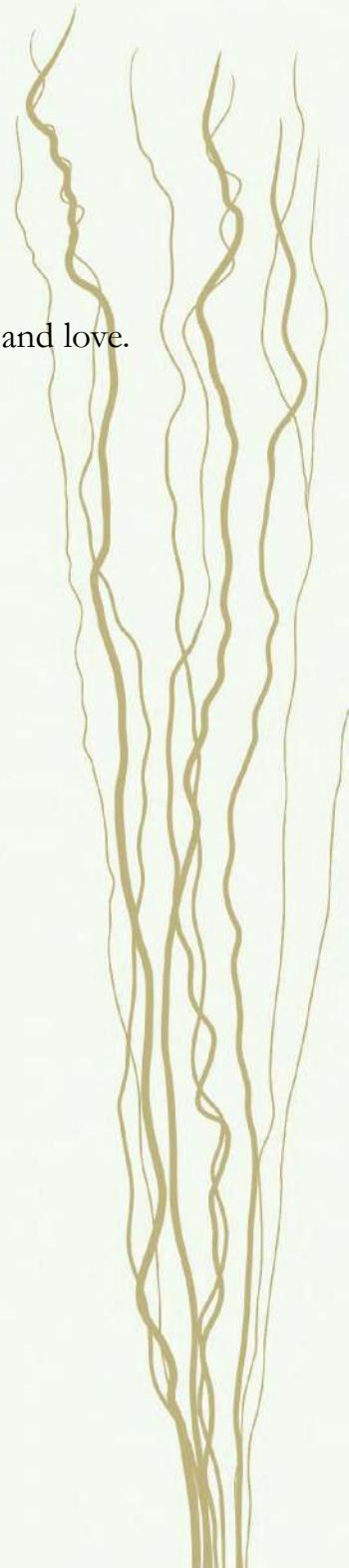
We are not poets, we are bridges
Bridges between peoples, countries.
We are bridges outstretched
Through rivers, lakes, seas and oceans.

We are not just people, we are bridges
Through us, through our hearts
Billions of people on the planet are passing by
To find each other, communicate with each other and love.

We are not poets, we are bridges
We will unite the whole world with our bodies.
Holding on to each other's legs
To keep the world from falling apart at the seams!

We are not poets, we are bridges
Over the fogs, over wars, misfortunes.
We have a responsibility to save lives
The life of all mankind!

We are bridges built by God
Sometimes we are blown up, burned and broken.
They spit, walk over us carelessly,
We endure everything. Because we are bridges.



IS IT EASY TO SHINE...

Is it easy to be a star
 Is it easy to be the moon
 Is it easy to be the sun
 Try to shine, at least with a ray.

Among billions of people
 Among billions of hearts
 Among billions of souls
 Try to sparkle, at least with a candle.

What a huge world
 Which is full of talent.
 Among millions of people
 Try to shine, at least with a lantern.

What a limitless world
 What a dense world.
 Try to walk to every street
 Try to get into every heart.

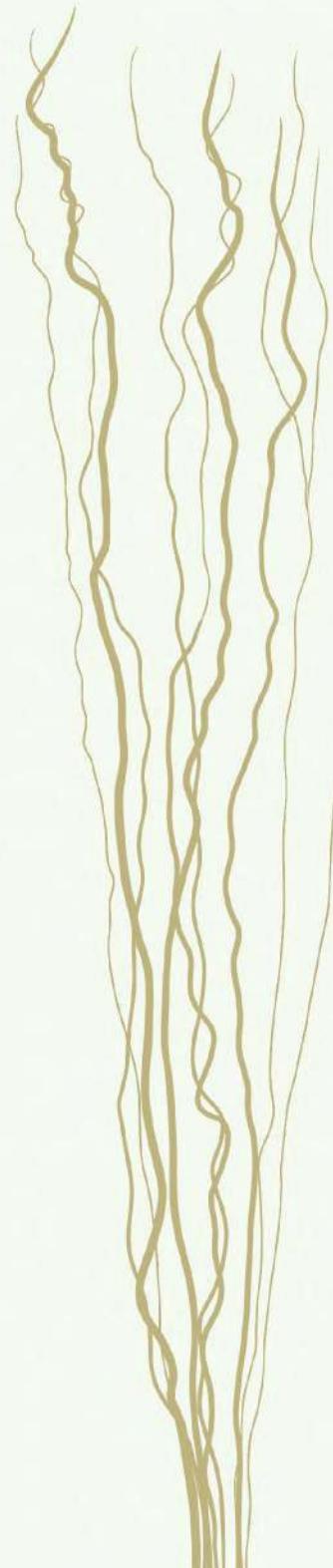
EARS

How the ears love flattering words,
 Praise, gratitude, melody and songs.
 Sometimes they crave word of mouth
 Oh, how they love to listen!

Sometimes you won't believe your ears
 Sometimes you stand on your ears.
 How we want our ears to be happy,
 Sometimes there is ringing in the ears.

Sometimes they hang noodles on them,
 The poor can believe the rumors.
 It is easy to deceive them: simple-minded,
 Want to cover them with your palms.

Fall in love even head over heels
 No rest for ears from mosquitoes.
 Ah, those attentive ears
 Crickets are caught in nature.



How hungry they are for the sounds
 Sometimes they want silence.
 They really like the words of love
 They are disgusted with shouts, insults.

They hate lies, they'd better go deaf
 Than listening to lies and deceit.
 How sensitive they are
 They can even hear a rustle.

They do not sleep day and night,
 Even birdsong can wake them up.
 Like a seashell contains ringing,
 They echo the days gone by.

They remember wars, screams and groans,
 The explosion of bombs and mines, the roar of grenades.
 Crying children and screaming mothers
 The cry of the fighters, the "hurray" of the warriors.

They like silence the most
 Merry songs, ringing laughter.
 May our ears always be only happy
 Human happiness on Earth!

About Rahim Karim

Poet, writer, publicist and translator born in 1960, Rahim is a graduate of the Moscow Literary Institute. He is a member of the National Union of Writers of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Union of Journalists of the Kyrgyz Republic and the official representative of the International Federation of Russian-speaking Writers (London-Budapest) in Kyrgyzstan. He is also the co-chairman of the Literary Council of the Eurasian Peoples' Assembly (Russia) and the laureate of the Republican Literary Prizes named after Moldo Niyaz, Egemberdi Ermatov (Kyrgyzstan).



...WORLD

**Eva Petropoulou-Lianou
Greece**

World
Is not about
Who cares more
Who loves more

World
Is who can survive
In a lockdown
In a breakdown
In a difficult situation

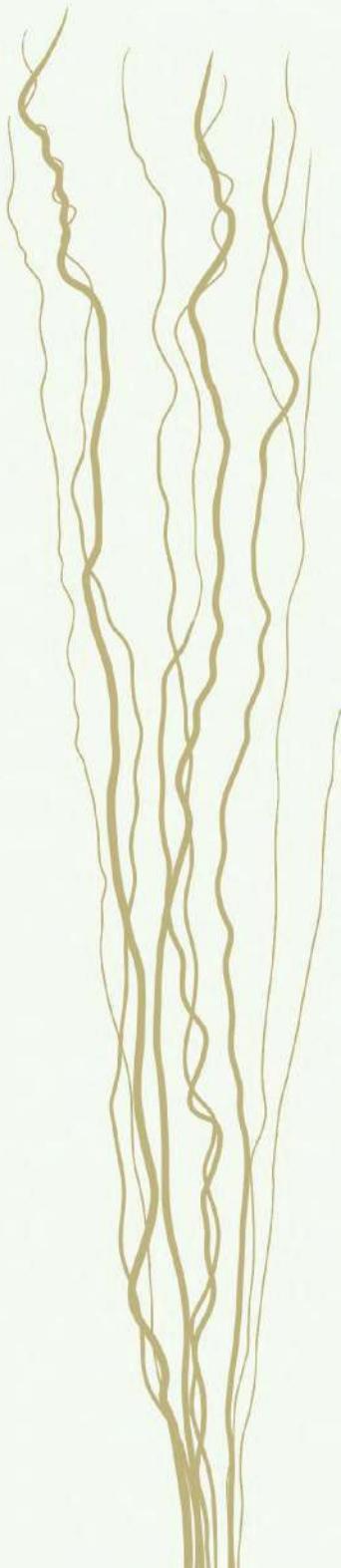
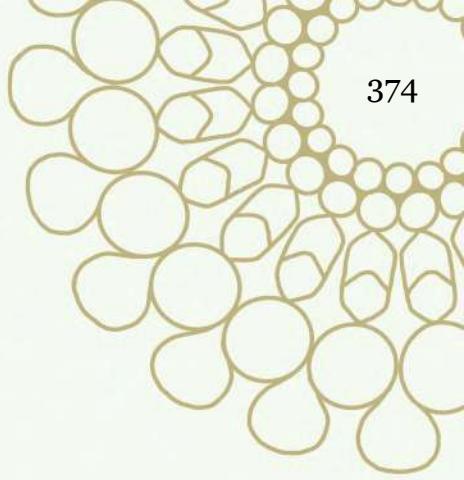
World
Is not who has the power
But who has the ability
To overcome

The possibility to understand a situation and
continue to fight

World is not being together

But being apart and continue to respect
To support
To hope
For a better future

This is my kind of world



NOTHING BELONGS TO US

We are free
 We are the captain of our soul.
 Nobody can say this or that and you must execute.
 Nobody belongs to us
 We are choosing according to our feelings
 Our thoughts
 Our beliefs
 Our stomach
 The more a person makes you laugh
 The more u want to be with
 We are nobody
 We are nothing
 More than the butterfly
 Than the bee...
 We are no creators but small ants
 Or cigals
 Or wolves
 Show respect
 Kindness
 But no trust
 Trust your instinct
 Trust your heart
 We are nothing more than a fly
 We are nothing more than a bird
 Laugh to your heart
 Love your inner soul
 And put your frequency high
 Touch the stars
 Make a wish
 Stay a happy child

©®Eva Petropoylon Lianoy

About Eva Petropoulou-Lianou

Initially working as a journalist for the French newspaper "Le Libre Journal" in 1994, her love for Greece won her over and she returned in 2002. She has published books and eBooks including: "*Me and my other self, my shadow*", "*Geraldine and the Lake elf*" (in English - French), "*The Daughter of the Moon*" in Greek - English and, "*The Fairy of the Amazon Myrtia*." She recently published her book, "*The Adventures of Samurai Nogas san*." Eva's books have been approved by the Ministry of Education in Cyprus and she was awarded in the great festival of China, with her poem published in the official site of the Minister of Culture and Tourism in the Republic of China.



THE FIRE OF FRIENDSHIP

Kujtim Morina
Albania

We should feed it with solid stuff.
The lively flame to stand for hours.

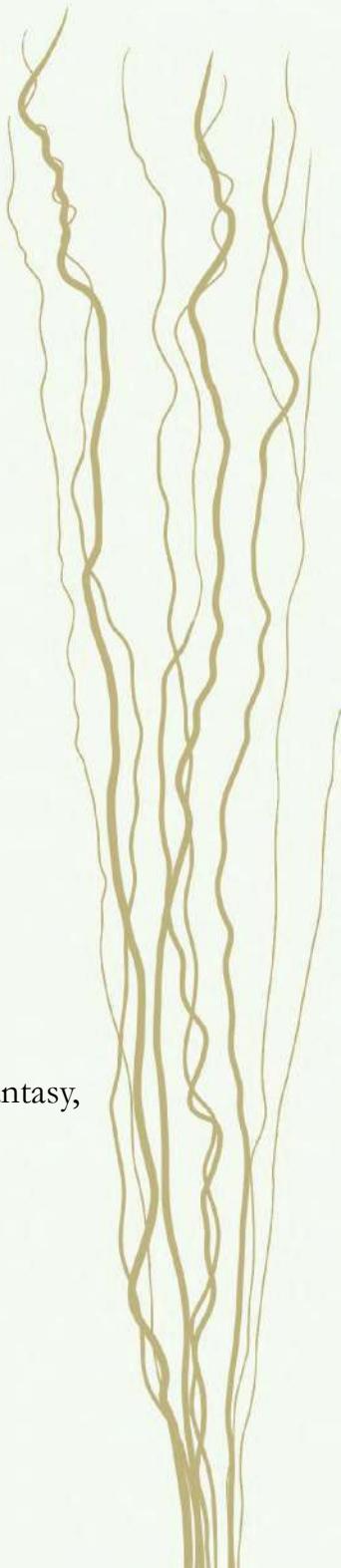
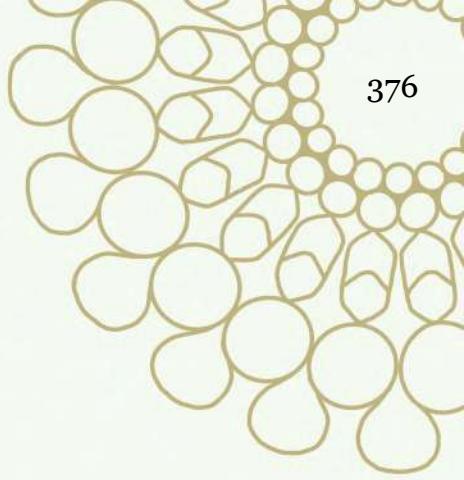
Then to make and remake it again.
The hands can't be warmed in the dry ashes.

If either one leaves, the fire isn't made
until they get together, the magic fails,

It risks always to be vanished,
thus, by divine spirit is furnished.

THE RIVER OF LOVE

Every day we nurture the river of love,
which we created somewhere in between us.
We care to increase the inflows,
through adding the streams and torrents,
We clean it from splinters and garbage,
that water to be as pure as crystal.
We feed it during the daytime with uncontrolled fantasy,
and at night with bold dreams,



Then we go out together and sail in a boat,
in the virtual river of love.
We move the sails in a row,
We burn the ardent passion.
We swing until late in the evening,
sometimes swimming and then with small boats,
We caution against approaching the deep whirlpools,
lest we drown.
It is rough, the drowning
in the azure river of love.

About Kujtim Morina

A diplomat, poet and translator, Kujtim received a Bachelor's degree in Maths, Law and a Master's in European Studies from the University of Graz/Austria. He currently works in the Albanian diplomatic service. He has published two books of poetry and one of short stories. He has also translated and published some works including: "*The soul dances in its cradle*" (Niels Hav, poems, 2016), "*A collection of Kuwaiti poetry*" (2017) and "*An anthology of Iranian modern poetry*" (2017). In English, his poems were published by the literary magazines "The Sound of Poetry Review", "LAKEVIEW, International Journal of Literature and Arts", "The Galway Review", "Prosopisia" and more.



TRIBUTE TO SPRING

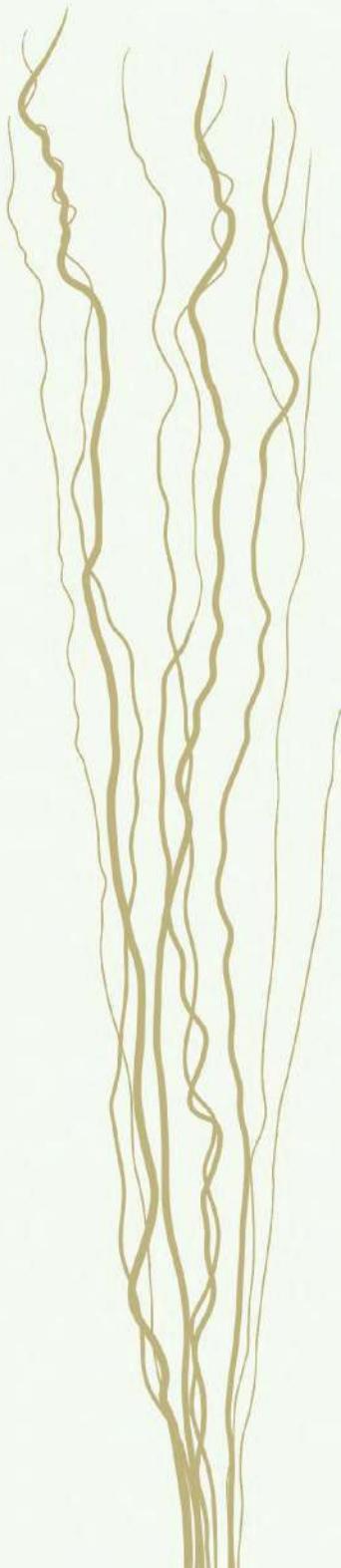
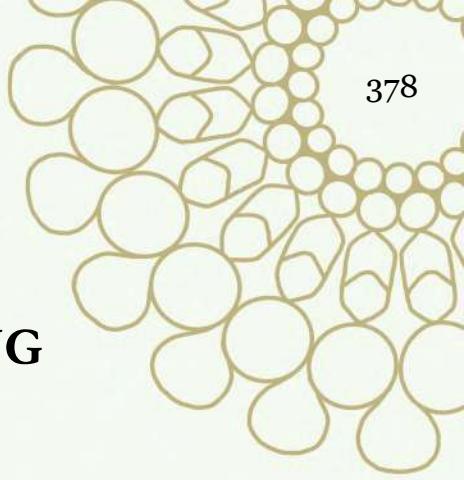
**Mahnaz Badihian
Iranian / United States**

I feel so ripe
as if I was just born
from a tall tree in the garden.
Fresh leaves were spurting all over my skin.

I cannot stop growing
every second under the
the clear whistle of sunshine
on this Sunday, before spring.

I feel so ripe
as if coming out of
the winter ground
carrying with me a taste
of many springs.

Is it me, or the aroma of
the coming spring or the
recycling of love in my heart



which helps me with rebirth

So beautifully today

IMAGINE

Imagine that every morning on every door

A stem of a flower, of love, hangs

void of locks, chains, and iron fences.

And every day on the streets,

children play like free birds.

Hand in hand with full bellies

with the right shoes on their feet

going to school,

without fear of being stolen.

Dogs and cats like dear citizens,

walk with patient men and women

We can imagine that we all can

live Together

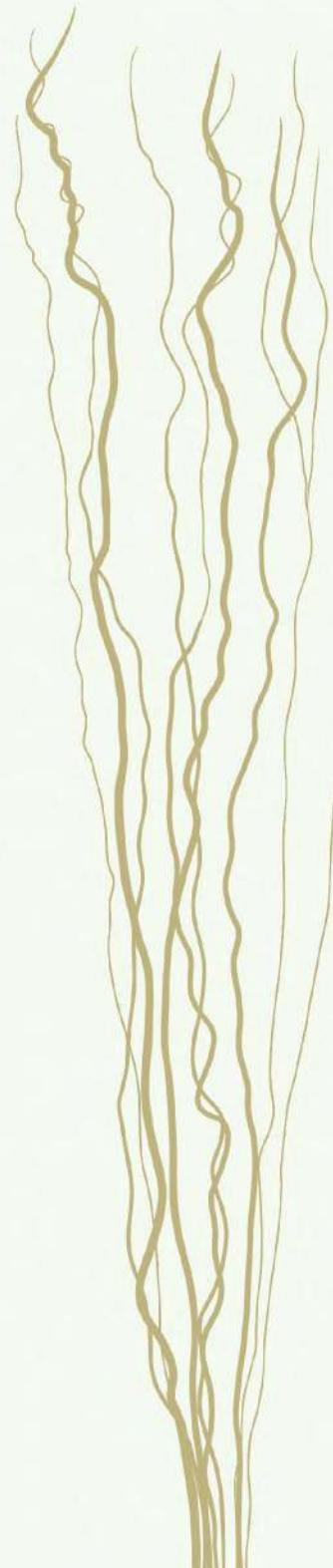
without war and bloodshed,

Wherein people shall worship

the earth and the lands.

A world in which every human death

would be a disaster.



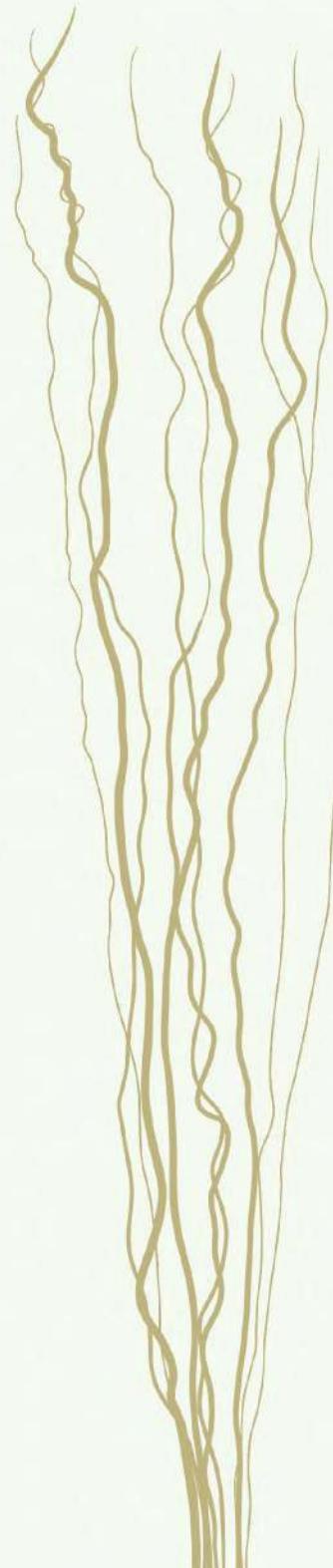
And in it, there will be fruits,
and trees and plants,
In place of cannons and guns
Anthem and poetry in place of anger and hostility

OCEAN

The day I was riding
on the Ferry from San Francisco,
I saw someone was walking
on the surface of the Ocean
who was dead years ago.

The Ocean we love,
with its endless beauty, had a chest
filled with drama, screaming
with the echoing voices of the dead,
and the wounds of unfortunate sailors
and the melody of the corps of migrating birds.

While each new wave
was swallowing the previous wave,
the Ocean had a gift for the forgotten dead.
The gift of blood on its shores,
The gift of the lifeless body



of the little boy, Artin Iran-Nejad
with a piece of his mother's dress in his fist.

The gift of a lost pair of shoes
arriving with each wave
from unknown rivers and oceans

I felt the burning of the Ocean's heart from
black oil dripping on its blue chest from tankers
from the black boxes drowned with
the destiny of countless lovers.

About Mahnaz Badihian

Mahnaz is a poet, painter, and translator. She runs the Literary magazine MahMag.org to bring the poetry of the world together and has finished the translation of the book "Spalding Arise" with Jack Hirschman, published in San Francisco in 2014. She received her MFA in poetry from Pacific University and her latest poetry collection, "*Raven of Isfahan*", was published in 2019. She is a member of the San Francisco RPB (Revolutionary Poet Brigade). In 2018, Mahnaz had three days of an art exhibition in San Francisco. Currently, she is working on her novel, "*Gohar*". Her collection of poems "*Ask the Wind*" will be published in January of 2022 by Vagabond publishing.



THE DAY I TRIED TO MURDER MR. S.

Katherine Medina Rondón
Peru

Nobody knows why I get so violent
when the frogs play the drum.
Is it maybe the alignment of planets
or my compass without a meridian?
Nobody knows why I cross the bridge in reverse
and torture rabbits until they confess
or jump down the precipice with a poem in their
necks.
Nobody knows why I grabbed a knife
and wanted to pierce Mr. S.'s jugular
with a perfect slash
nor why in a blink
peace was signed in the estuaries.
Nobody knows if there is any honey left in the
kitchen
or if flies are still asking themselves
the same questions
when they hear someone crying on the roof.

About Katherine Medina Rondón

A poet and visual artist, Katherine's published works include: *Mínima celeste* (Transtierros, 2016), *Disidencia* (Cascahuesos, 2018), *Papiros mágicos* (Vallejo & co. / Sol negro, 2019). A few projects she was anthologised in include: *Antología 5º Festival Caravana de Poesía* (Amarti, 2018) and *Aliados, dosis de poesía para tiempos inciertos* (Dendro Ediciones, 2020). She has presented the bi-personal visual exhibition *Comisura* at the Casa Blanca Cultural Center in 2016 and has participated in several collective artistic exhibitions. She has also collaborated in magazines such as: Ojo Zurdo, Fórnix and Ulrika. Currently, she is a member of the research group on rhetoric, literature and culture at the University of Lima.



A DICTIONARY OF FOREIGN DREAMS

At the beginning it was like a dream.

She said:

“Have at least one dream with me.
You’ll see – it’ll be a dream
which you’ve never dreamt about before.”

Descend deeper with me,
dream from the back,
dream retrospectively
in a labyrinth of mirrors
which leads nowhere.

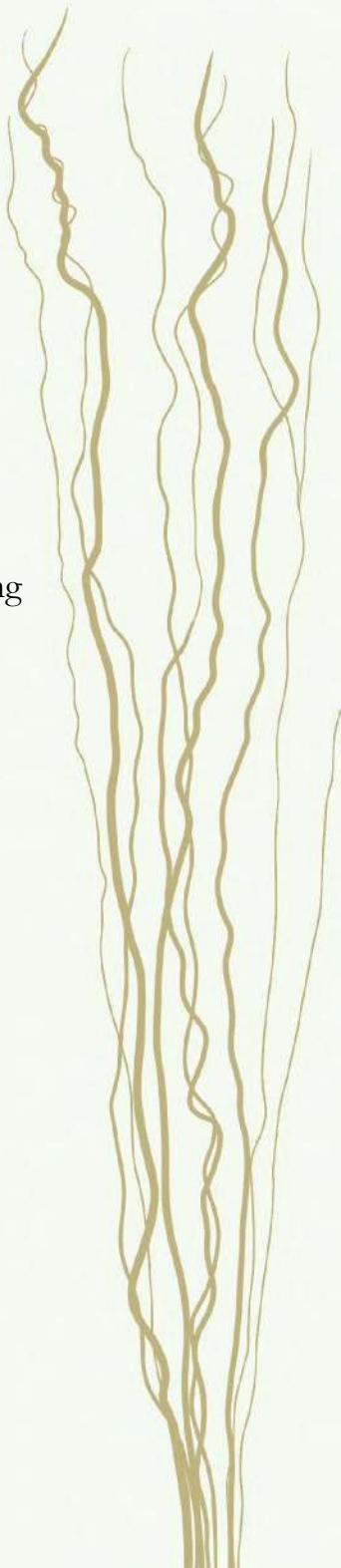
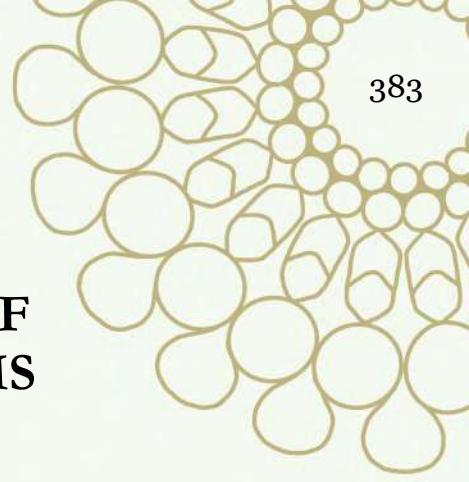
The moment you come to the beginning of nothing
you’ll dream an exciting dream.

Frame it
and hang it in your bedroom.

So it will always be before your eyes
because a dream which is removed from the eye
is removed from the mind
in the sense
of the ancient laws
of human forgetfulness.

Dream your own.

Dream your dream



of a starry night.

Pay a toll to the dream's
deliverance from sense.

You repeat aloud
the intimacies of secret dreams,
with the dull gleam
of your persistent night eyes
you explicate a mysterious speech of darkness.

You dream, therefore you exist!

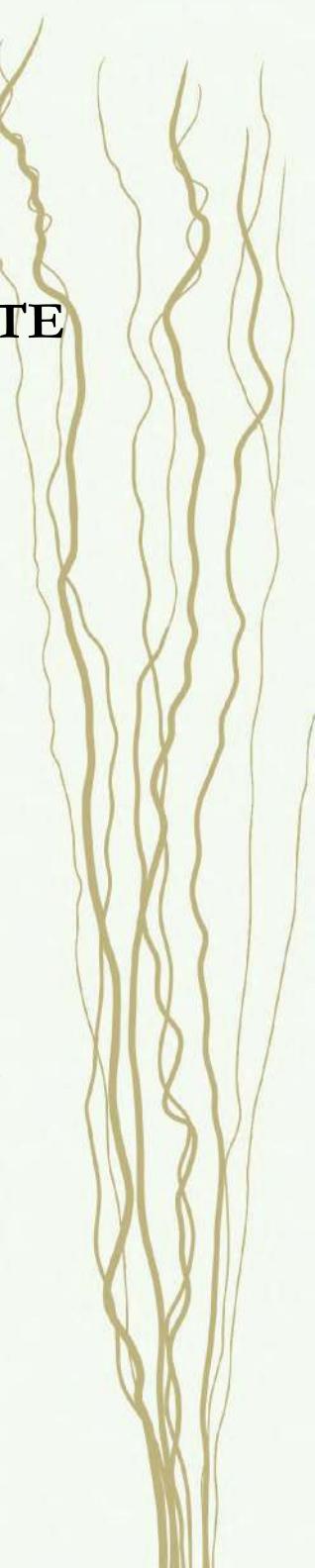
1998

PEDESTRIAN WITH ABSOLUTE RIGHT OF WAY

Live life
without a car.
Be slower than a trolley bus.
Be tired.
Be late.
Be unable to get out of the city.
Be unable to arrive at yourself.
Be a pedestrian.
Entire and without impediments.

To subvert the rules
regardless of anything.

1985



which is reflected on the surface
of a frozen lake.

A dream smooth and freezing:

Grieving keys,
a downcast forest,
curved glass.
The tributes of mirrors.

The rising of the moon
in a dream of water.

Recoil from the bottom
of the mirror's dream.

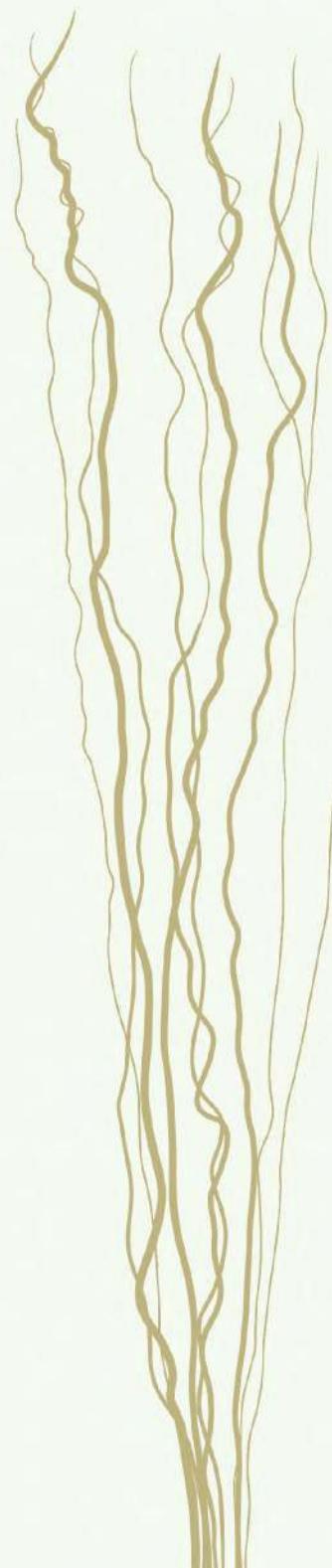
In the gallery of dreams
then you'll see
a live broadcast from childhood
fragments of long-forgotten stories.

Because our obsolete dreams
remain with us.

Don't be in a hurry, dream slowly, completely
until you see the crystalline construction
of your soul
in which dreams glitter.
- intentionally and comprehensibly like flame.

Perhaps you've already noticed
that new dreams always decrease.
They wane.

Soon we'll light up
in the magical dusk
of the last dream
the despairing cry



SUMMER

The sun smashes our windows.
An urgent song reaches us from the street.

On the cellophane sky
steam condenses.
Unconfirmed reports are reproduced
about the wind.

The trees are the first to begin to talk
about the two of us.

1981

All Poems Translated into English by James Sutherland Smith

About Pavol Janik

Pavol is a poet, dramatist, prose writer, translator, publicist and copywriter. He has studied film, television dramaturgy and scriptwriting at the Drama Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts (VSMU). His literary activities focus mainly on poetry and his first book of poems *Unconfirmed Reports* (1981) attracted the attention of the leading authorities in Slovak literary circles. In his work, he is pointing to serious problems concerning the further development of humankind, while all the time widening his range of themes and styles. He has received a number of awards for his literary and advertising work both in his own country and abroad.



Kwazi Ndlangisa
South Africa

THE SHEPHERD

I have a new exciting hobby,
 I watch over my grandfather's herd of cattle
 They have a way of tickling my most hidden emotions
 How they are always on each other's backs
 When they walk in one line to the river
 And when strangers try to break their bond

I've never thought I'd be taught how to feel
 Or how to love
 By just watching mother cows bathing their babies by licking
 their skin
 And by gazing at them, freely grazing
 Without worrying about who is watching
 Or if food will be enough for future
 Their best secret lies on embracing life in the present
 It is not that they have doubts if they'll ever smell the fumes of
 future
 But that the present moment is the most tasteful
 Especially if you do not yearn for something you have never
 eaten

I've had my tasteful moments
 When searching for my grandfather's herd of cattle
 It gets more exciting when I have to search for them
 In different mountains, rivers and forests
 Without the luck of finding them,
 The most joyful moment lies on finding them where I least
 expected it
 I've learnt that a premature completion delays utmost joy
 I've had the most peaceful meditation on this land
 I've seen personification of love
 Deep within, ME.

AN ANGRY OCEAN

It is the most distant river
that dreams of embracing an ocean,
until it gets too close to it
that it can see itself disappearing,
and then it fights its way back
but it's shoved to an ocean by
the (now) most distant rivers,
so when you see an angry ocean,
blame the rivers.

About Kwazi Ndlangisa

A multi award-winning poet and a published writer and translator, Kwazi's writings are a golden thread through Africanism and spirituality. His work is inspired by his surroundings as well as his inner being. He believes that writing and reading poetry is a perfect channel to collect the self back to its true purpose, in both the psychological and spiritual realm. Ndlangisa is the author of "*Collecting Self*" and has been published in poetry anthologies and in online magazines, including; Sol Plaatje EU Poetry Anthology - Volume 9 (SA), Yesterday's and Imagined Realities: An Anthology of South African Poetry (SA)/ (France), Di-vêrsé-city Annual Anthology (USA).



Suzanne Hayasaki
United States

LESSONS OF THE LEAVES

Isn't it funny how light changes our perception?
 How dull rust leaves transform into crystal claret
 When a beam of light finds its way to them –
 Catching our eye as they seem to come alive?

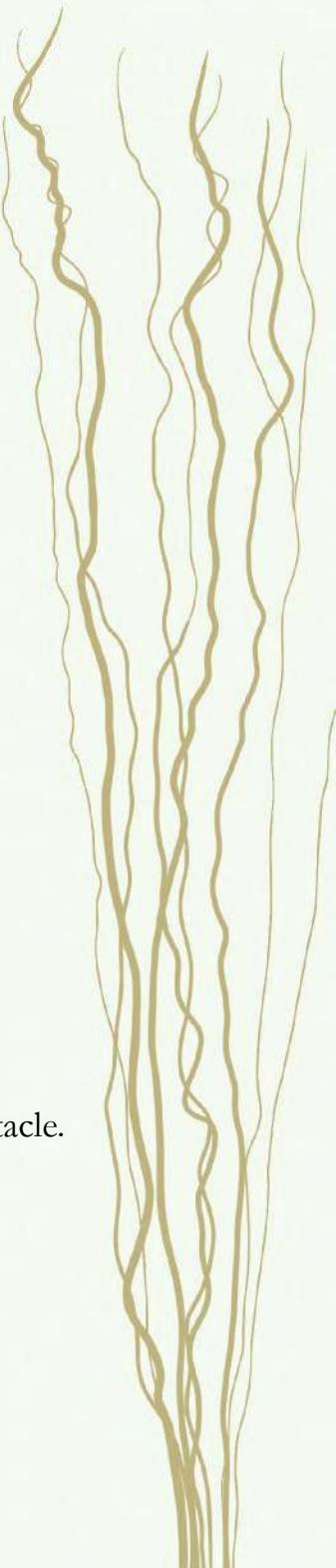
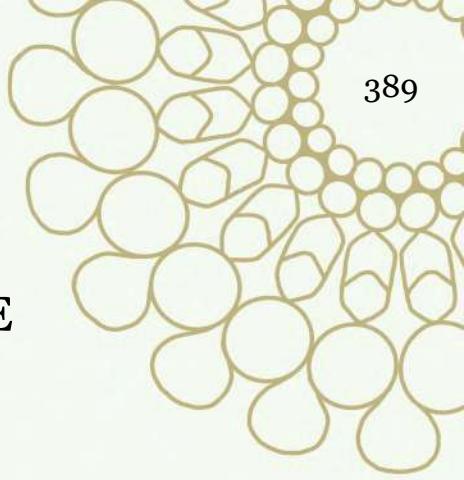
Standing in the river valley at dawn
 Before the light has crawled over the edge
 Of the ridge of bareheaded mountains to the east
 Everything seems dead, or at least dormant.

But then light begins to drip like honey
 Down the limestone cliff, turning the stone golden
 And seeming to set the leaves on fire
 While the river remains hidden in shadows.

Then the light finally strikes a slow-moving pool
 And the cliff is reflected like a brass mirror
 Shimmering on its surface and leaking red
 Into the deep purple-black water still unlit.

And my eyes follow where they are led.
 I notice only what shines most brightly.
 If I lived here, I might notice more.
 But as a visitor, my eye flits from spectacle to spectacle.

Bamboo bending over the riverbank.
 Moss covered walls dotted with maple leaves.



Couples in Japanese robes, strolling under the trees.
A postcard of pleasantness.

A Japanese would probably see the decay
And keen about the impermanence of things,
But I see only the brightness of the sky
And the boldness of the reds and yellows at their height.

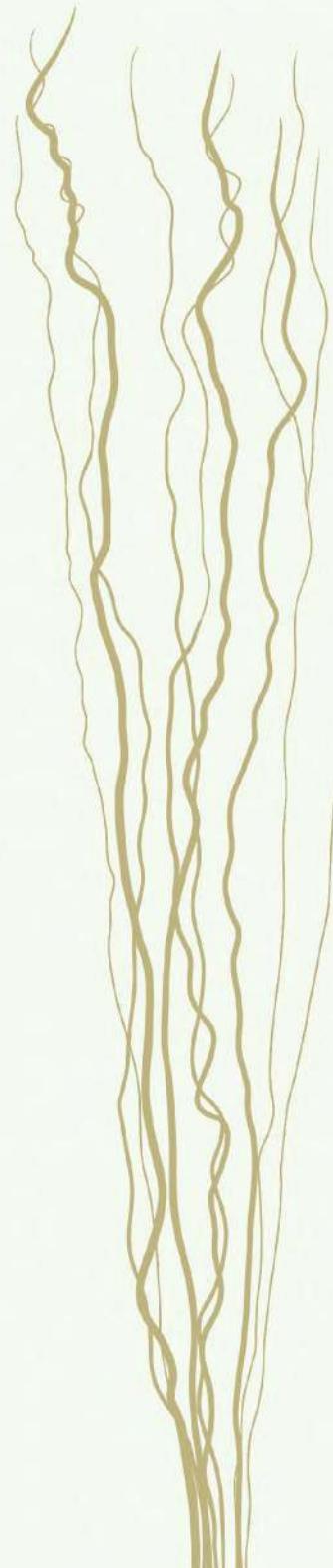
I feel lifted by the crispness of the air
The clarity of the sky clears my mind.
I know that summer is not dying
It is passing the burden of time to fall.

Spring is not the beginning.
Winter is not death.
We are just visitors
In one place, now.

But somewhere it is noon.
Somewhere it is spring.
And I may be in my fifties
But I am somewhere in my life.

From here my youth does not seem halcyon.
My old age does not seem ominous.
At this moment in time, I feel rock solid.
The light may shift and leave me unsteady.

But for now I will look around me
And be quietly pleased with what I see.



FIREFLIES

We are fireflies in a vermillion sky
 Shining at twilight
 Flashing frantically
 Perhaps attracting momentary notice
 From strangers who glow on grander stages.

But we are more than our tiny lights.
 We remain in flight throughout the night
 Deep in the valleys of our own emotions
 Even when no one is present to witness our signals.

We exist within the limitations of time and space
 But our potential to create is infinite if we kindle it.
 So blink, if you think you can compete with the stars.
 I will conserve my energy for more important things.

I will listen to the crickets.
 I will dance with the honeybees.
 I will tunnel with the ants.
 And maybe, I will discover what drives us all.

About Suzanne Hayasaki

Born and raised in Wisconsin, Suzanne has lived in Japan with her Japanese husband for over 30 years. She teaches English to Japanese students, who are preparing for the entrance exams to universities. She fell in love with Japanese poetry as soon as she came to Japan. While she does not write haiku or tanka, her life and travels in Japan's culture affects the themes of her poems. Suzanne started writing poetry at 40 years old. 55 now, she has been unlearning and rediscovering herself ever since.



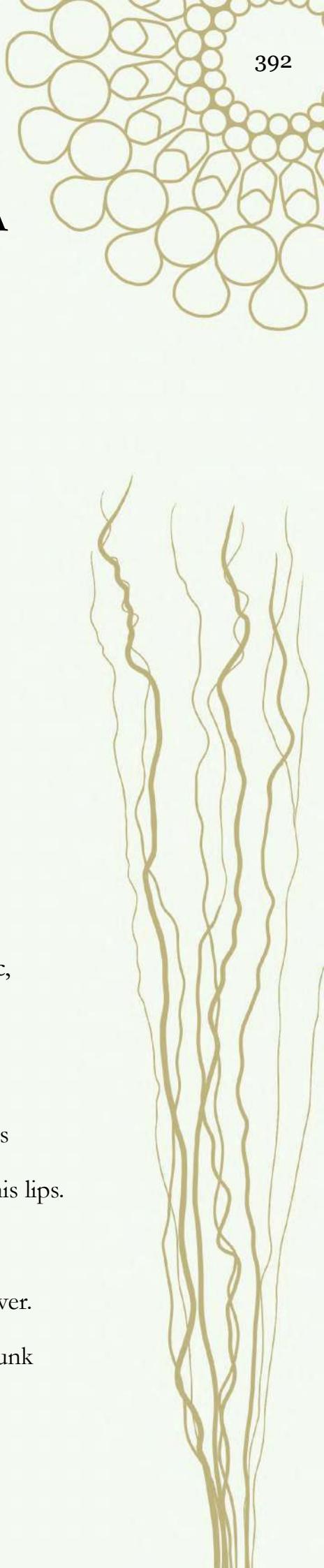
SOLILOQUY OF A GRAND TREE

**Dr. Shihab Ghanem
United Arab Emirates**

An exhausted traveller takes to my shade,
He shuts his eyelids and sleeps soundly.
He dreams and dreams.
Absolute quietness falls over the world
And darkness shrouds the Earth.

* * * *

A rosy thread emanates from the east
The birds take to my branches and sing
The leaves dance under the gentle breeze,
The fragrance intermingles with the music,
A refreshed face slowly opens its eyes
Like an egg hatching
Happiness sparkles in his half-opened eyes
The smile spreads its wings and rests on his lips.
When the leaves dry up on my branches
And all my umbrageous shade leaves forever.
The woodcutters whirl their axes at my trunk



But I might become a bench in a garden cradling lovers,
 Or a window through which the rays of sunrise seep,
 Or my wood might be converted into paper
 On which would be written love poems or letters of longing,
 Or I might be cut into wood for the fireplace
 And radiate warmth copiously
 And feel that even at the moment of my extinction
 I could still be creative!

Cardiff, 1986

THE WAVES

It is the wave coming,
 It is the wave receding,
 So are the vagaries of life, my love.
 If life at times is harsh on us
 Do not be sad, my love.
 Smile to me tenderly.
 Oh, how sweet is your smile!

* * * * *

It is the wave playing,
 It is the wave having fun,
 It will come and go
 And come and go again.

So if today is harsh
Perhaps tomorrow will be kinder.

And if a beguiling glance is cast your way today
Be not deceived, my love,

For tomorrow it may become a fickle frown.

But do not grieve my love, my music, my fragrance,
Hand me the cup of love,

Filled with sweet nectar.

Soothe my parched soul —

Never let my cup run dry!

It is the world - sweet and bitter,
So why should we despair,

My love, sister of the moon,
But yet more beautiful.

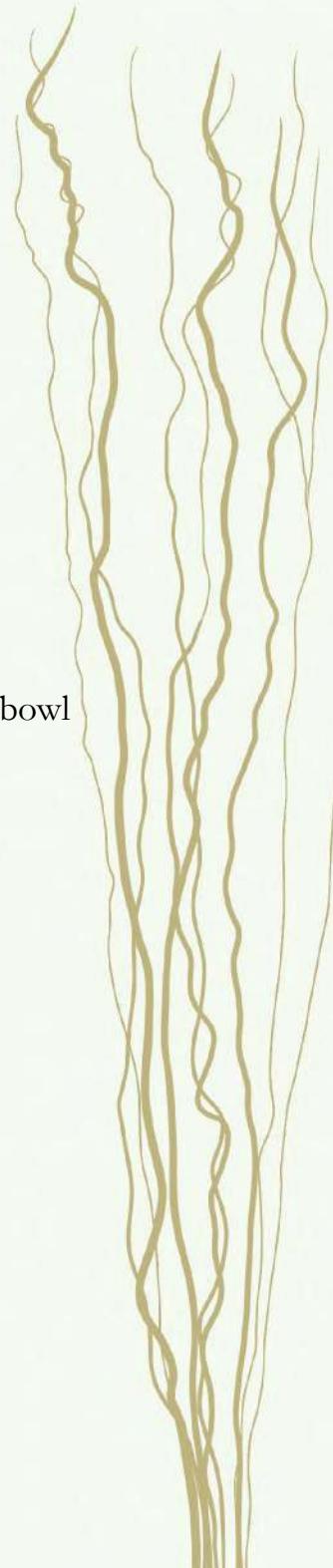
Fill the cup of love to the brim and let us drink
So that we may drown our lingering sorrow in its bowl
If we do not rejoice now, when will we ever?

* * * *

It is the wave playing,
It is the wave billowing,

Surging angrily, harshly,
As though to welcome violence.

But so long as your image sleeps in my eyelids,



So long as my heart throbs with yearning,
 So long as your heart flutters with love,
 Then will our love never drown
 But forever ride the surf.
 And if the waves could come between us,
 They would dry up!
 In our hearts will always be
 The song of Love
 Despite everything

Abu Dhabi, 1972

All poems are translated into English by Dr. Shihab Ghanem

About Dr. Shihab Ghanem

Dr. Shihab has published 90 books in Arabic and English, including 20 books of Arabic and English verse and 30 collections of translated verse. Some of his poetry has been translated into 20 languages and more than 20 songs by various singers including Sami Yousuf are based on his poems. He is the recipient of 30 awards and honours including Tagore Peace Award (2012) and UAE Cultural Personality of the Year, Al-Owais Creativity Awards (2013).



**Magie Vijay-Kumar
Seychelles**

BE TEACHERS AND NOT PREACHERS

Let not give space to favouritism
To uphold egotism
Be graceful
As the Swan - so beautiful

Is one so possessive of oneself
To the extent of being a pseudo deaf
As not to hear the Swan
Over the last great song

A personal desire
May sink one into a mire
Focus
May change the locus

Heaps of papers
Need so many trailers
Be teachers
And correct the unwanted behaviours

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“BEAUTIFUL ENIGMATIC SCAR”

Trust is more than gold
It is a Must
That one should hold
More invaluable than the gold dust

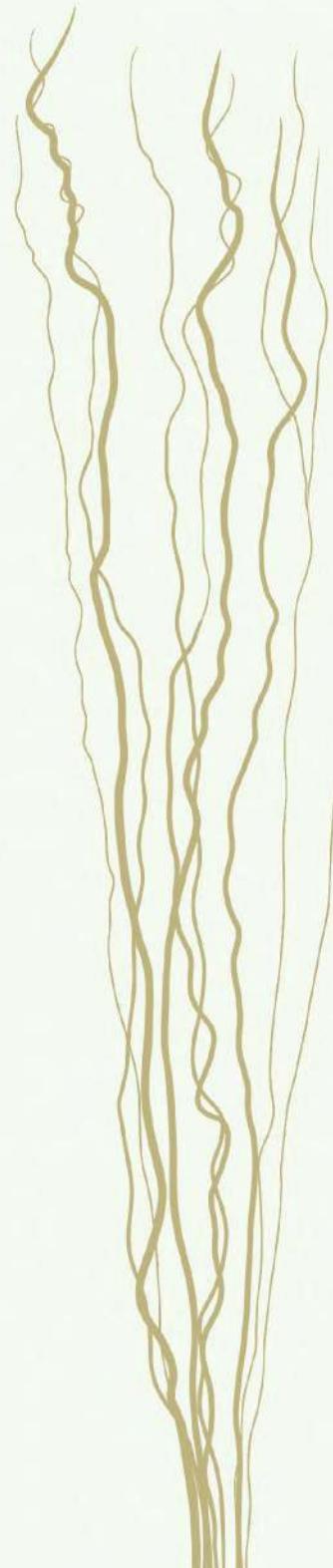
One may not redeem
 Respect for a pseudo dream
 A beautiful scar
 May shine as the pole star
 At times the autophony
 Becomes a photocopy
 Being auto didactic
 Allows one to better do the act
 Not any figment I am adamant
 My life rolls over bridges
 Not in search of riches
 Rainbow colours
 Do not light the obituary
 But UNITY of the global garden
 with varieties of flowers
 I am
 A noun
 In quest of global peace
 And I insist
 We are all in need
 And indeed
 Of all our resemblance of over world
 And to respect our PEARL

CELESTIAL VENUS

There we are on an island
 Watching them Eurydice from all creeds
 Doing utmost to erase greed
 Which have empowered the global land

Long ere - frail and scenting as flowers
 Modern world, we are generators
 All are pseudo walking brains
 Protecting humanity from heavy rains

No need to be a man
 Nor a woman



To accept the phase if universal logicality
To strive for unity and equality

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About Magie Vijay-Kumar

Magie is an author in three national languages: French, English and Creol. She has participated in 33 literary anthologies and has won numerous international awards. She is the Chief Editor/Director of Publication *Sipay Global Magazine*, Chief Consultant to three governmental literary associations (Seychelles, RDC and Mauritius) and a Regional Director- MS/ SE Africa/Asia. She has been published in various International literary journals and her work has been translated. In March 2020, she was interviewed in the Seychelles by BBC.com



Stoianka Boanova
Bulgaria

WORLDS

The earth - our apple of the eye to the Universe,
and the springs are her clear tears.

The ocean - salty and the waves - majestic.
The rivers are life-giving, singing, irrigating.

The wings of the eagle elevate the heights.
A meadow with wild strawberries rises in the morning.
The bitterness ripens in the quinine bark.
The nightingale's song bends from perfection.

The Universal sorrow overwhelms the poets
to worlds touched in dreams,
where there isn't death, betrayal and disease.
And God creates harmony and love.

SPEECHLESS SPEECH

I learned to communicate mentally with the universe.
I don't write.
I don't speak.

Of mind I tell the flower how lovely it is,
of the dewdrop how perfect it is,
of the star how far it is,
but it's reflected in my essence.
I send signals to beings in space,

to loved ones in the afterlife,
to dad,
who lives behind the mountain peaks.
I talk mentally with the universe.

I wake up and tell you out loud:
"Good morning, beloved!
Let's sing our song for God's praise!"

MORNING HOPE

The cobbled street is fast in the morning.
I'm stepping from stone to stone by stone...

I imagine tomorrow -
a world without pandemic,
wiser humanity, we live in brotherhood,
harmony, peace. God blesses us.
Around - aroma of flowers, songs of birds,
people's laughter.
I think of you, I long for you,
I behold you...

Imperceptibly I reached the top of the hill.
Winged by my hope, I fly
from cloud to cloud by cloud...
And I float above the Earth.

About Stoianka Boianova

Physicist and author of twelve books: poetry, novel, collection of short stories, published in Bulgaria. Co-author of two bilingual books, poetry and haiku – in India. Stoianka participated in anthologies, editions with numerous awards and recognition around the world. She was amongst the European Top 100 of the most creative haiku authors. She is included in several anthologies including “Temirqazyq” (2019), “Songs of Peace” (2020), and “Atunis Galaxy Anthology”, (2020-2021). She received an award from “First World Poetry Competition of Newspapers and Televisions”, (2020), China.



NOMADS ON THE SILK ROAD

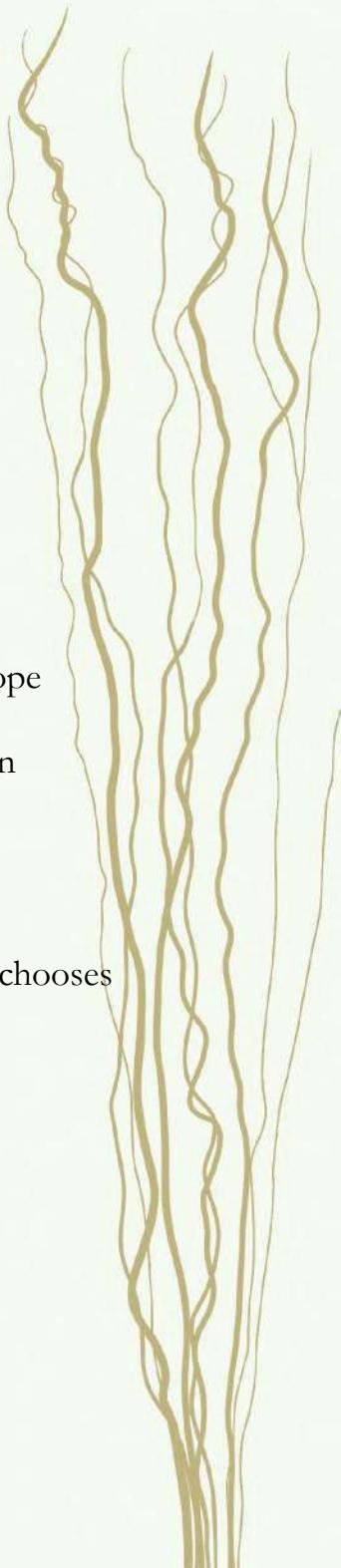
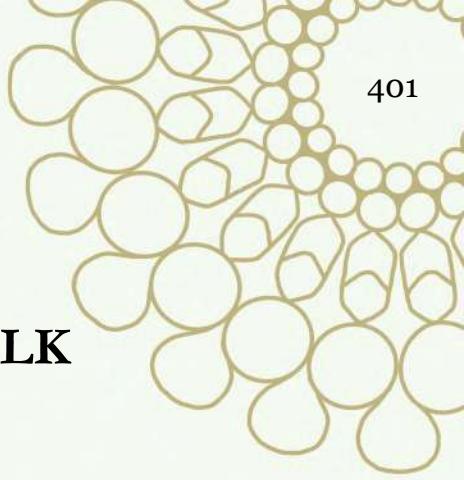
- for Bai Li

nomads on the Silk Road
 slog onward
 in a spring teeming with colour
 en garde for every unforeseen danger
 “Courage, Vision, Strength”, their mantra
 their aspirations tinted by a kinder pink
 signal a change not readily welcomed

nomads on the Silk Road
 sit under
 the blossoming cherry tree
 petals canopy each delicate dream
 kiss a tenderness
 conquer the fears of the unknowable
 while maintaining balance between bravado and hope

down the way sits a blind man who really has vision
 over there paces a man with a full belly
 in constant hunger
 over that way a mute with a voice
 hidden in pantomime
 there lounges a deaf man who hears only what he chooses
 here stands a kind man who doesn't know
 where to go nor what decisions to make

nomads on the Silk Road
 hold fast each other's hands
 walk together
 lean on one another
 obliterate the futility of despair



don the lion's spirit
infuse the sun's courage
vanquish the moment's desolation

*On display at the Richmond Culture Centre
Life Celebration of Bail Lik, Richmond B.C. 2010*

BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR

Be careful what you wish for
Wishes sometimes come true
It's the fear and terror of success
That could be haunting you

Success has responsibility
Attached to its name
Standing up, above the crowd
Means destiny, fortune and fame

The tallest poppy, like success,
Is a target 'cause of its beauty
Knives looming, cut it down
Life sacrificed in the line of duty.

Be careful what you wish for
You just might get it
Love, happiness, friendship and trust
Come. Are you prepared to let it?

Be careful of expectations,
They ride on a carpet of surprise
Courage, strength, patience, persistence,
Blossom into your deepest allies.

About Honey Novick

Singer, songwriter, voice teacher and a poet, Honey has been published in numerous anthologies and has nine chapbooks and eight CDs. She is the Arts Winner of the 2021 Urban Hero Award, the 2020 Recipient of the Mentor Award (CSARN) Canadian Senior Artists Resource Network), 3rd time awardee of the Dr. Reva Gerstein Legacy Fund and recipient of the 2020 Community Hero Award. She teaches Voice Yoga and sings with Bill Bissett.



Álvaro Mata Guillé
Costa Rica

1 POEM

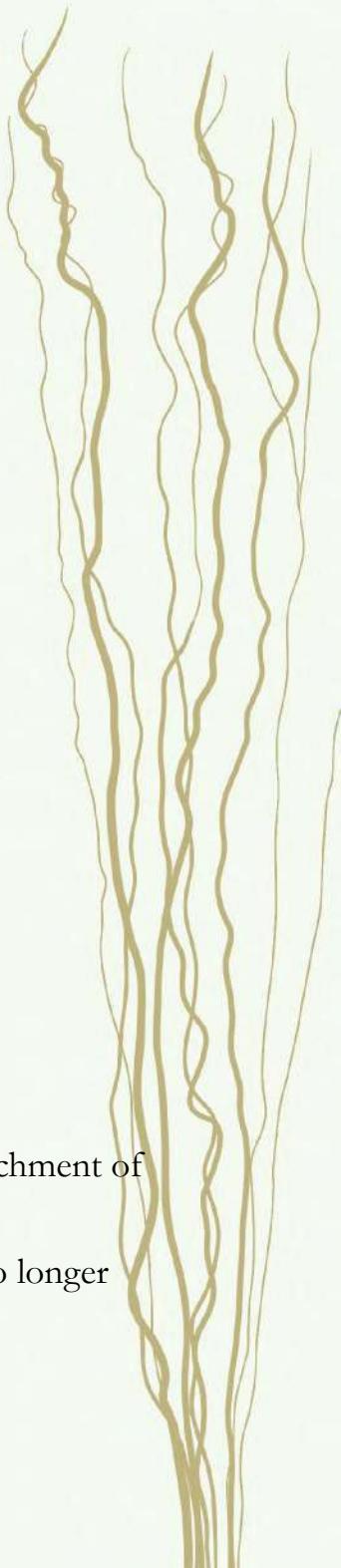
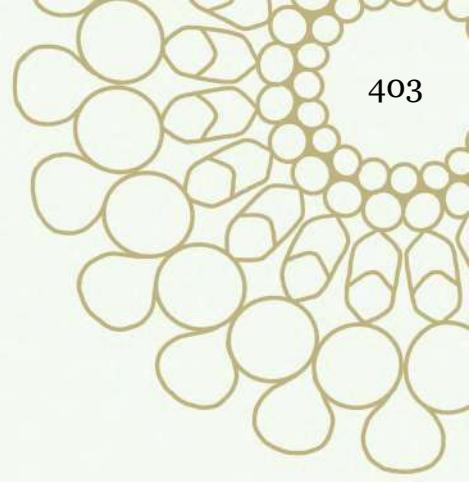
What begins,
what ends,

we transit from one night to the other,
to another nightfall,
another fog,
knowing that each instant touching us is the last

that we aren't eternal
that time isn't ours
only its indifference

that we emerge from hollowness,
from silence
from the absent

It is said
that one cycle ends and another begins,
a something that closes,
a something different that appears. But,
if there is a new phase, which we suppose is true
and it approaches as a radiance in the half-light,
what would the difference be from that other detachment of
the environment?
what makes rain stop being rain or wind from it no longer



being wind and that their caress is now different?
 what should be glimpsed upon so that it provokes another yell,
 another countenance
 another fog?

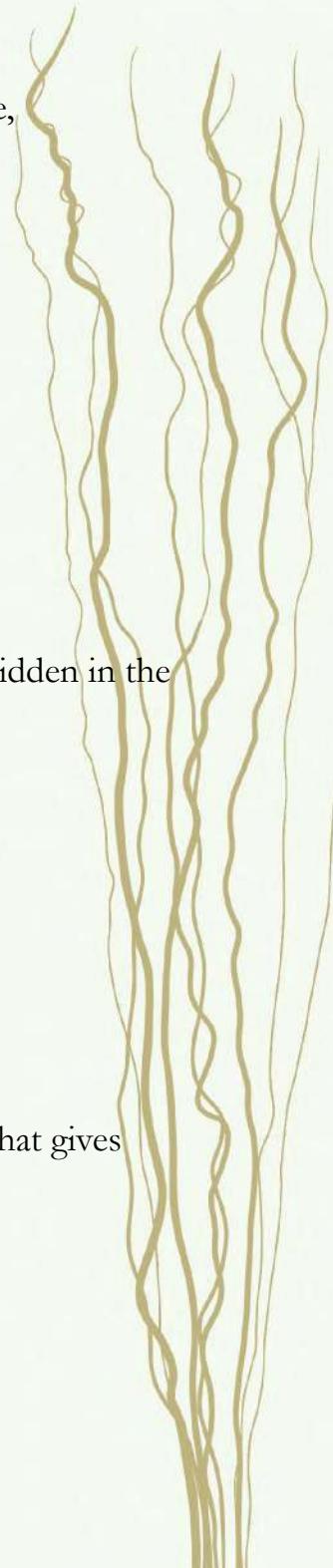
The orphanage we endure as we discover ourselves in transit
 towards death,
 is evidence of the other's need:

companion, disaffection,
 distance, pursuit,
 encounter and loss of encounter adhered to desire,
 to the epidermis,
 the strangeness,
 we are encountering with the absent,
 looking at the gloom in the exile,
 in the dessert

in the sun-diluted horizon submerging in the hill,
 attracted by the shadow

there
 in the place of the beginning where the bird lies hidden in the
 cloud,
 behind the tree,
 behind the sunken eco in the valley

from there,
 hidden in the umbrage,
 reflecting in the exaltation of the stone vault,
 in the absolute longing,
 in the not-knowing with its thirst of questioning that gives
 meaning to the permanence,
 to the meaning that we are:



solitude that chases in the insides of language,
 a transit from one night to the other that returns into a dream
 that doesn't awaken,
 like the leaves,
 that as they glide in the beam of the shadow,
 they evaporate.

It is said
 a cycle ends
 a something that closes,
 a distinct something that appears,
 but the terms dilute in the absent
 and no other place
 but the half-light

*Translated by Daniela Negrete
 Chapter 1. Book: "On the fragments"*

About Álvaro Mata Guillé

Álvaro has been involved in several works: as a columnist of the review (Libros y letras), director of a project (Poesía en tránsito-Corredor cultural) and director of the Festival Internacional de poesía En el lugar de los Escudos (State of Mexico and Mexico City). Some of his published books include: “*Una serpiente sin alas*”, Babilonia and La isla al mediodía, Bogota, Colombia (2020); *Un país sin nombre*; Ponciano Arriaga, Mexico (2018); *Más allá de la bruma*, Editorial Abismos, Mexico City (2017).



**Dr. Pragya Bajpai
India**

PEACE

The immortal banyan tree at the historical war site
of Kurukshetra absorbed
the recital of celestial song of the Bhagwad Gita
in the midst of the epic war of Mahabharata
And stood unaffected by the massacre, the bloodshed
and the sounds of armour at the place of righteousness
The tree didn't digress!

The repulsive stench of politics, ego, enmity
plagued the air and turned it heavy
but the sacred banyan tree
drank the poison and made it easy to breathe
The sins of the kings
couldn't adulterate the ocean of peace
that lies in its being

It was busy growing the roots deeper in tranquility
investing in being a firm believer
of progressing in peace
making stronger its faith
and memory that matters
All that a war denies!
No trace of crisis or anxiety
stays on the countenance of a tree

The flame of life flickered, faded and died,
the madness of men and the mayhem
the naked dance of meaningless violence
silently witnessed the sky

And the eternal peace kept the banyan tree alive!

HOPE

You're not overwhelmed by your poetic thoughts everyday
 Not every day the sun finds someone thanking it
 for less of heat and more of warmth
 Even the solar energy, the centre of human existence
 gets criticised
 And makes us stay inside
 Not every day the stars are appreciated with naked eyes
 Not every day the moon is worshipped
 Not every crop gets enough rain every year
 You don't get surprises everyday
 You don't get touched by gestures everyday
 You don't get the right one to love you just when you want

It's not a coincidence that things come
 right on the verge of giving up
 on the verge of falling apart
 to save you
 Hope is everything that fuels and keeps you going!
 You rise and try, start afresh everyday
 even if you don't hope every day!

THE POWER OF LOVE

A tale of love begins by the side of a bonfire
 fanning the nascent spark of desire
 Where the wind plays a gentle game
 it's not easy to neglect the distant touch of the flame
 enough to thaw the snowball clouds floating like drones
 recording the gradual breaking of the ice
 on a freezing winter night
 Ancient stories of life and death
 hidden in the core of dried logs and leaves burn itself
 to give light to an unborn story of Adam and Eve

far from the world of chaos and cruelty
 consumed in making peace
 The embryonic love seeds longing to sprout
 saplings in the untouched hearts wait for the monsoon
 of nectar-soaked conversation and stir up a sensation
 in the thunderclouds
 between the moon and the ground
 A milky haze creates a bubble around
 to contain the warm air ignited by the meaningful stare
 and the adjoining temple bells create ripples of divine bliss
 The seeds begin to germinate a sacred bond
 for some life beyond
 The old bruises don't pain anymore,
 the mayhem in the mind let the guards down
 the stubborn scars mellow down
 and the crazy storm settles
 as they open up like rose petals
 the layers of deepest desires and darkest fears
 A healed heart has a power
 to break free from the self-made dungeons within
 You don't have to be a hermit to let go of a betrayal
 to forgive the beasts and their sins
 A journey to the boulevard of paradise
 that was lost in the yesteryears begins!

About Dr. Pragya Bajpai

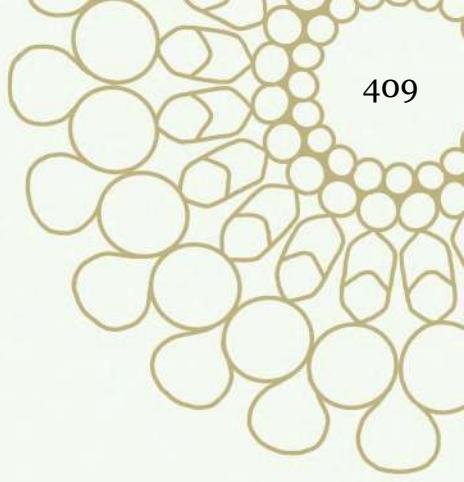
Dr. Pragya is a faculty of English at the National Defence Academy, Ministry of Defence, in India. She is also an editor of *Brahmand: Voice of the Cosmos*, an international ezine for creative writing. She has contributed poems to 22 national and international anthologies like *The Poets Scribble*, *Krishnashtak*, *Paradise on Earth Vol.2*, *The Mask*, *Souvenirs of Best Indian Poetry in English of 2021*, *Pixie Dust and All Things Magical*, *Around the world- Landscapes and Cityscapes*, *Soul Shores*, to name a few. Writing poetry is a form of meditation for her that helps her connect spiritually to her consciousness. Her book, "*A Potpourri of Proverbs*" is based on 51 poems on English proverbs.



Dr. Andrea Inglesi
Italy

2 POEMS

Let's project, even for this day,
even stupidly, with great effort
of distraction, eating the piece of leftover bread, using the dirty
spoon,
looking at the giant mushroom bed under the birch,
let's project, even though the buildings will remain
filthy, northwards, in the precinct that once was
working-class, and that today is nothing, concentration
camp of non-labour,
of identical days, long-lasting,
inventing ways to remain standing,
as if nothing, let's project it
here, us, in Chinatown,
between one small square and another, and inside our homes,
and on the little balcony, perhaps, even
today, even today we won't die,
neither you nor I, and none of the neighbours,
neither the cats nor the invisible insects
that seek pathways in the cracks,
in the fissures, the project today,
even today, as new,
is not to die.



To Giancarlo Majorino

You did not confine your mind to the fragment,
to the separate piece, to the debris of images
positioned as absolute field, summary
of the world.

You see that the apparent
rock of the real, our city
that is filmed, contains the secret struggle
of the living, labours to restrict the entry
of the light, wounds to open...

And the monument of the visible: the dying man
called to the microphone, dragged to his feet
on the sand, under the organised shade,
is cut away from his torturers,
appearing elsewhere, at another hour, in shirts
freshly washed and ironed,
using pens on paper and not hooks
on defenseless flesh.

Texts from La distrazione, Luca Sossella, Roma, 2008

Translated by Sandro-Angelo de Thomasis

About Dr. Andrea Inglesi

A poet, essayist, novelist, translator, and literary activist born in 1967, Andrea holds a PhD in Comparative Literature and has held teaching positions in Contemporary Italian Literature at the University of Paris III. His literary essays on novel and poetry are included in a number of volumes, in Italy and France. He has published nine books of poetry and experimental prose. One of his most recent poetry books, “*Lettere alla Reinsersione Culturale del Disoccupato*”, has appeared in an Italian (Italic Pequod, 2013), French (translated in French by Stéphane Bouquet, NOUS, 2013) and English edition (translated in English by Sara Elena Rossetti, Patrician Press, 2017). His first novel, *Parigi è un desiderio*, was published by Ponte alle Grazie in 2016 and won The Bridge Prize 2017 for Fiction.



Jill Magi
United States

“A SINGLE DEATH IS ALWAYS PLANETARY”

I.

When I failed your grief
I wanted to be honest

about my new grammar
but it was too much light

to lay at your feet—
you were already empty—

I kept wanting new speech
so I pushed you

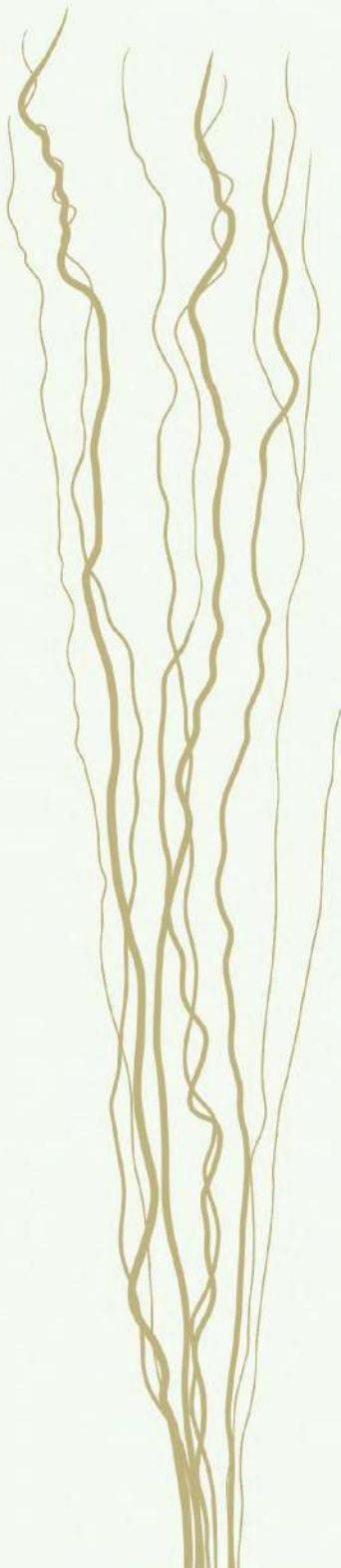
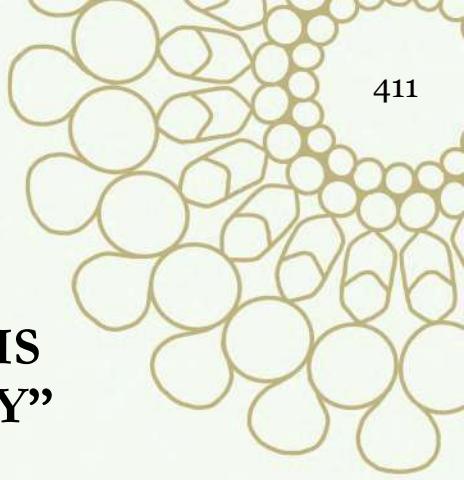
into yourself. My
outstretched arms—measuring

great space between us
that had always been there

an inherited
architecture

but now, if the fog should lift
such a decoding such a knife

such a birth for us
inside his death.



II.

An installation inside
a palace contains

a crude metal statue
in front of a coat of arms

wielding a machete
for felling cane or

revolution. We agreed
on the zero-degree angle

as the geometry from which to hear
the women best able to theorize

planetary disaster such as
cancer—

a machete to finally excise toxins
forged by us all.

III.

Re-

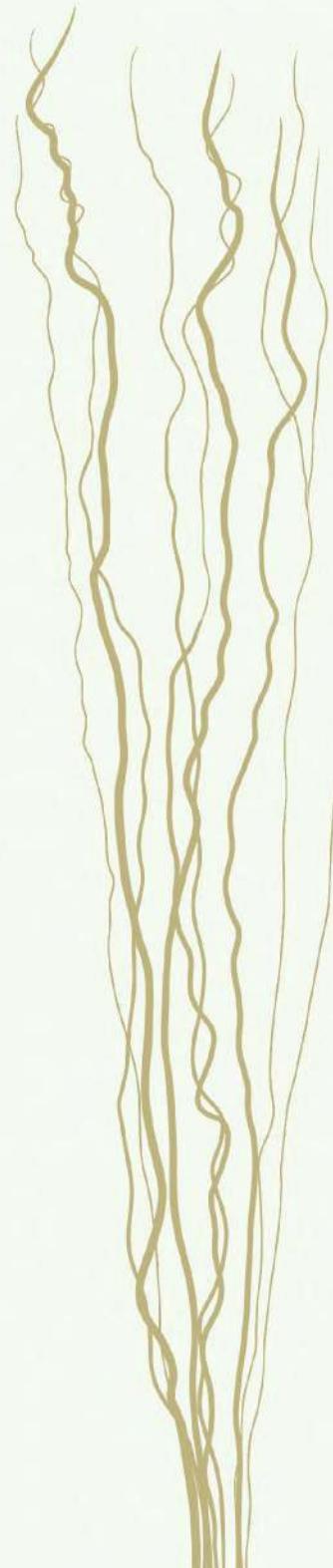
Call

Set

Seed

Cycle

Re-



Moralize

Rights

To include

Rocks and lava—

Re-

Vision to

Spare the taking:

A gift

Before passing

Sings the song of

What lies

Below.

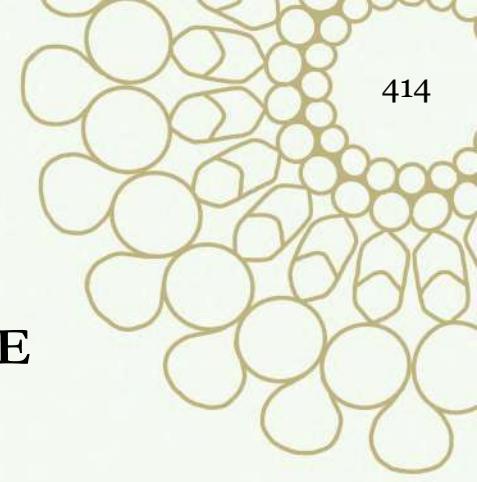
About Jill Magi

Jill splits her time between the United Arab Emirates and Vermont. She works in text, image, and textile, and her recent learning focus is in “textility”—how its disposition upsets all kinds of binaries. She has had exhibitions at Grey Noise, Tashkeel, NYUAD Project Space, and the Brooklyn Textile Arts Center. Her books include *Threads* (Futurepoem), *SLOT* (Ugly Duckling Presse), *LABOR* (Nightboat), and *SPEECH* (Nightboat), and her handmade books are collected by the University at Buffalo poetry collection. She now teaches at NYUAD. With Sarah Almehairi and Shamma Al Bastaki, she is co-founder of the UAE-based chapbook publishing initiative, JARA Collective.

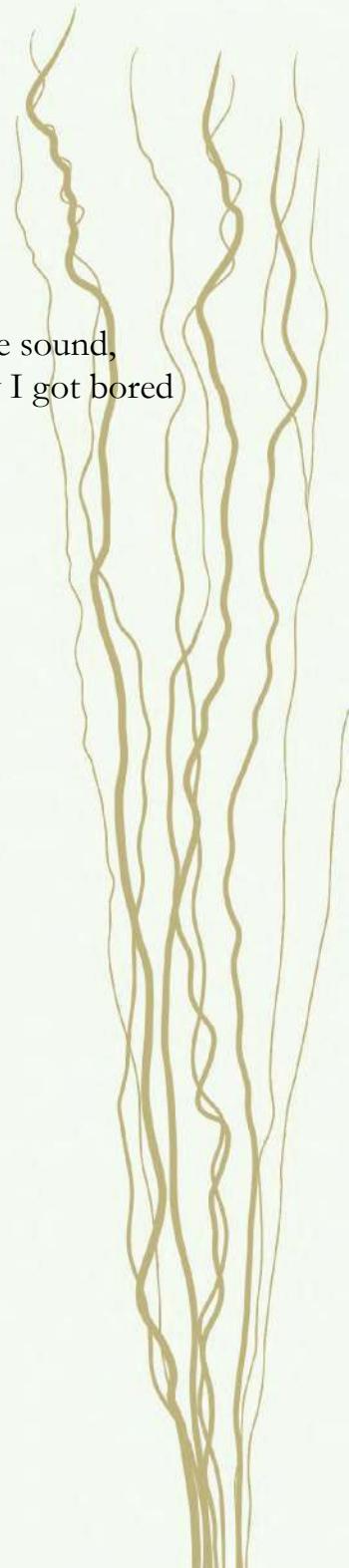


Shurouk Hammoud
Syria

I CLEAN MY VOICE



I clean my voice
from love vocabulary
I cut the nails of yearning
One by one
And colour my lips with the red colour
Of the blood that came out of them
I scatter the letters of waiting
Placing a letter before or after another
Then laugh joyfully with my victory over its fragile sound,
Its dots which got scattered like beads of a rosary I got bored
of
I clean my voice from passion's roses
Those walk every day towards their death
In a book
That is why I shorten the road for them
Crumble them, wither them in the eyes of futility
My ancient friend
I clean my voice from kisses, hugs, desire
From everything that cut its vocal cords
Out of yearning's stammering.
I clean my voice from love vocabulary;
The night bites my Adam's apple
Turning me dumb.



LOVE THEM

The ones who do not love you,
 Grow night in your skies' carpet
 So, get on it as if it was a step you are waiting for
 To flirt lilac
 To get pregnant with gardens.
 Who do not love you,
 Are extinguished moons which do not titillate the kohl of your eyes
 So they do not cry, spin love or waiting.
 Who do not love you
 hold the tongue of the mornings that are available to them
 For fear that some dew of awakening approach you
 so you wake up.
 Who do not love you
 are forgotten margins in your language
 with or without them
 the poem will be completed
 so, love them
 As if they were some of your sins.

About Shurouk Hammoud

Born in 1982, Shurouk is a poet and literary translator. She holds a BA in Arts and a Masters in text translation, Damascus. She has three published poetry collections in the Arabic language and two published poetry collections in English titled: "*The night papers*" and "*Blind time*", with one bilingual book in Serbian and Macedonian, and a book in Mandarin titled "*the world is burning*". In addition, excerpts of her poetry have been published in many poetry anthologies in several countries. She is a member of Palestinian writers and journalists union and the award winner of many local and international poetry awards.



**Subhadip Majumdar
India**

THE SOLILOQUY

Are you the traveller yourself?

Yes.

And the moon?

My lover.

And the window?

My sky.

And the door?

My footsteps.

Are you the traveller yourself?

Yes.

And the moon?

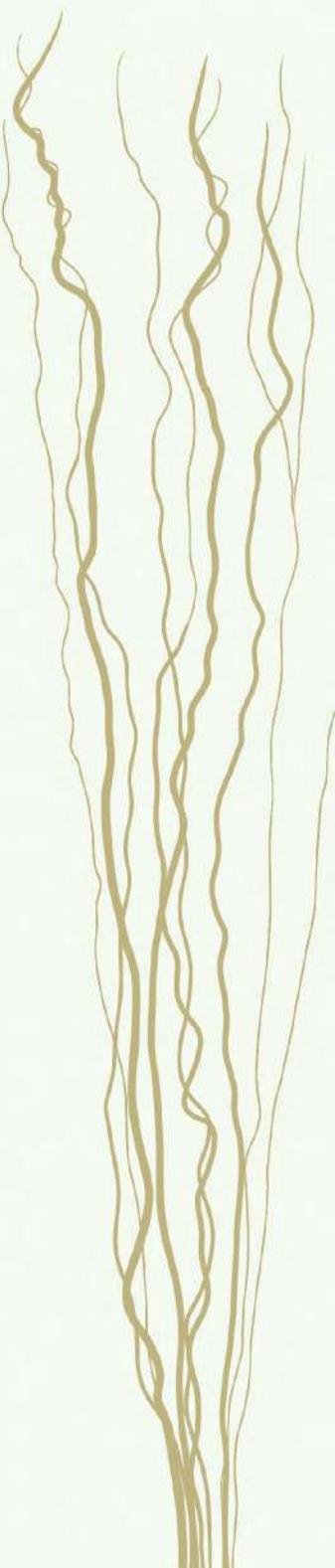
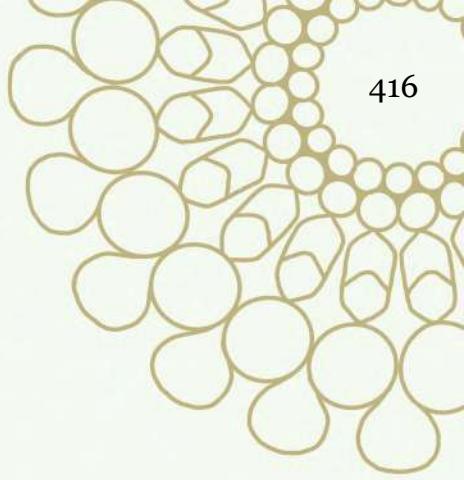
My lover.

And the shadow?

My past.

And the room?

My childhood.



And the notes?

My words.

And the letters?

My youth.

And the tram lines?

The wait.

And the building?

My pilgrimage.

And she?

The woman.

And the road?

My home.

A MERMAID, SLEEPING AT LAST

Stop visiting me in my dreams

Like a muse in a twilight universe

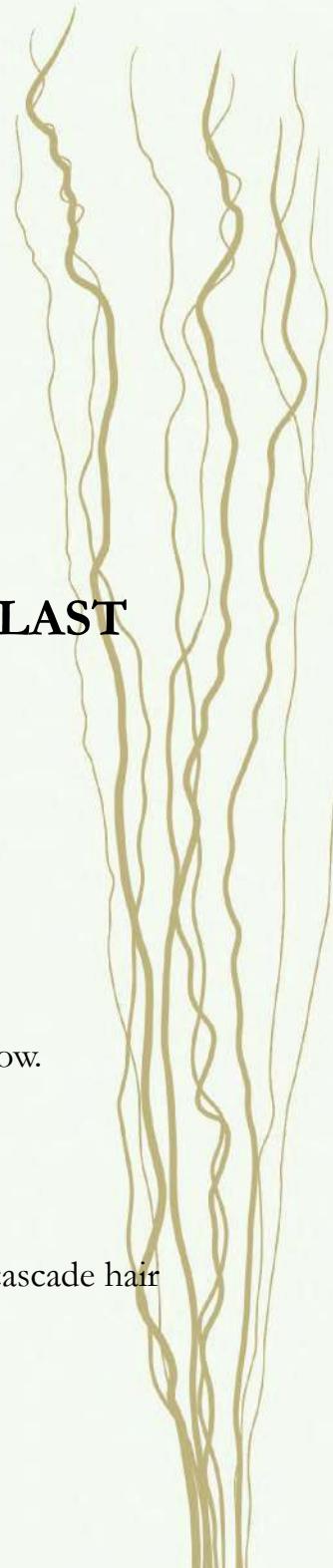
The December cold has clicked the footsteps

Of yours, the half-closed door

But the moon comes through the half-open window.

Is it the bedroom where you wait?

In your nightdress with the comb brushing your cascade hair



With the dew of the night on the glass

Do you still paint the name with your lips?

I love the tremble of those sleepless eyes

The same has happened to me, insomnia or a trance where
each night I go on a journey

To search for you

Like the Italian boatman of Naples

Who once took me at first light to go fishing

The sky reminded me of you

In bed, a mermaid sleeping at last.

About Subhadip Majumdar

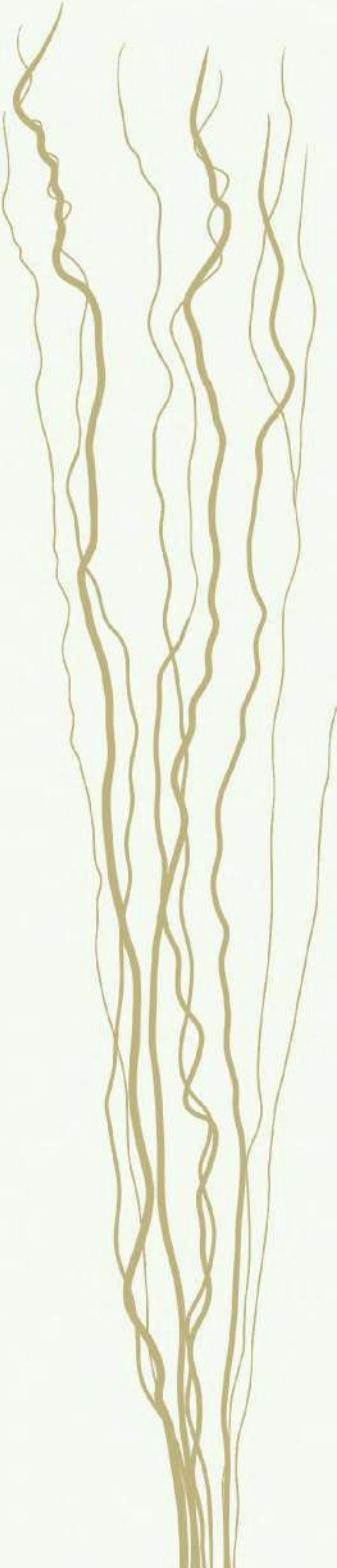
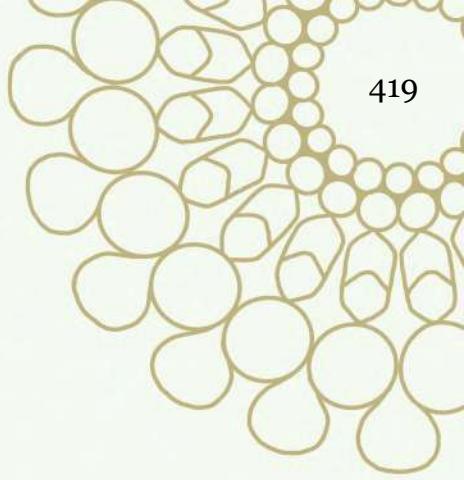
Subhadip is a writer and poet certified in Creative Writing from the University of Iowa. He worked as an editor for a reputed Bengali poetry journal and has also written a short novel as a Tumbleweed writer in Shakespeare and Company in Paris, France. Two poetry books have been published and one novel is in the process of publication. Some of his published books include: *The Resurrection of Sunflower: Anthology on Van Gogh* (New York), *The Paris Walk: Stories from Europe* and *The Shapeless Dance of Lovers: Twenty One Poems from a Bohemian Heart*.



Marion de Vos-Hoekstra
Netherlands

VOICES

The river
praised for its beauty
set a trap,
spits water like vomit
relentlessly
affecting us all.
We hear the voices of the lost
growl
deep at the bottom
of the riverbed.
Whipped up
they spill over dykes,
worm through cracks
in sluices and dams
wail over flooded fields
docks and quays
stream into houses
swirl dazed between furniture
fill cellars and souls of
the living until
they flow away
on to the sea
where they caw like crows
scream like sea gulls.
We stand at the beach,
between washed up debris
and small dead animals
listen to their woeful whisper
you are sucked in merciless
we all drown anyway.



ZANZIBAR

I trace my steps back
to long before the tourists came.
Balmy Trade winds
brush my face.
On the horizon, Dhows fade
in a hazy mirage.

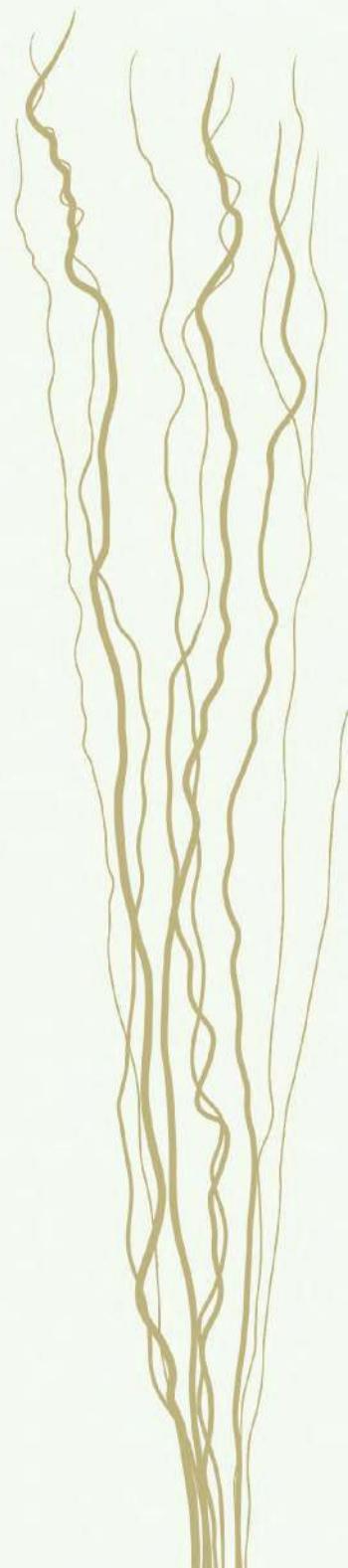
The virgin whiteness of the sand
blinds my eyes.
The shell cemetery is littered
with pieces of Chinese pottery
and Dutch VOC coins
from ages of East Indian Trade.

In the forest,
the air is saturated
with the smell of vanilla
nutmeg and cinnamon.
Red Colobus Monkeys
observe my sleeping son.

His white curls fall
on the shoulder
of an elegant black man
with Omani features,
a Frangipani flower
in his cropped hair.

His pace, almost dancing,
cradles the innocent.
In the slave market,
a number, a price,
silent vestiges of
an islands' gruesome past.

The snake slithers from
the lichen-weathered porch
of the only church.



LOST PARADISE

Poor Perlemoen
 lying on your back
 on the blinding sand,
 your mother of pearl
 inside shining,
 your pastel palette
 showing.
 Poor people scavenged
 your soft insides
 for the rich men's table,
 left your remains
 in this cemetery
 of cruel beauty
 on the shores
 of the turquoise sea.
 Abelone, heavenly name
 of a lost paradise.
 Why do you have to pay
 for your sluggish ways.

About Marion de Vos-Hoekstra

Married to a career diplomat, Marion and her partner both served in several countries including North Yemen, Tanzania and Mali. She is a translator of French, English and Dutch. She is the author of five poetry collections (in English and Dutch), four with Demer Press, and is published in 25 anthologies and magazines all over the world. (South Africa, Australia, UK and US). Marion has also given several presentations including Bloemfontein Literary Museum, Dutch club, The Hague, and at the libraries of Wassenaar and Nijmegen/Netherlands.



Marlene Villatoro
Mexico

STEPS TO THE EDGE OF THE INSTANT

they go through the way

The night doesn't come

and my eyes delve inward

Without looking at myself I advance on the bend of hours
that melt away

perhaps another place will give roots to my footsteps

and say the secret of the earth

or vanish the memory

and my face will hide amid the penumbra of solstice

or the primitive nudity of water.

A STAR IS LOOKING FOR

a place amidst the night

the night and all the fireflies sleep

and we

will know how to be the singing of the bird

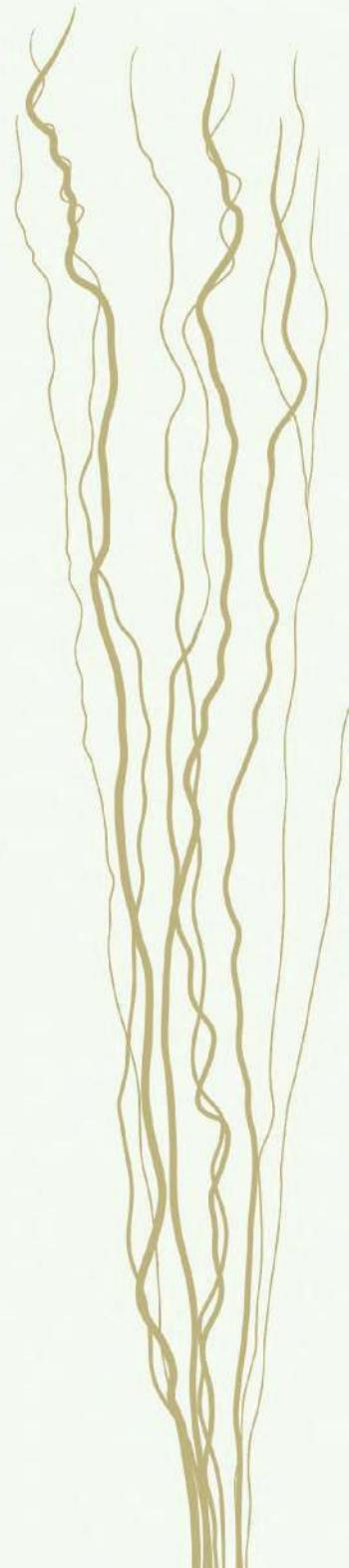


will know how to be love and dream
will cradle in our heart the man
and in the spirit of the man
the word

Let time not separate us
from rivers and waterfalls
and from all the seeds that sprout in the world

Let the voice be the light of the blind one
that looks
what we can't see

Heart, get joyful
because light has broadened the soul
and mankind became of another age
and the dew of the leaves
and the wind of the woods
opened from the bottom of silence



2.-

Heart, get joyful

in this fire of lights and music

and let the word come out of your mouth

let us become siblings in the colours of the voice

let life sing

and the sound of the sea

vibrate in the seashell of the world.

All Poems Translated by Raúl Suárez Morter

About Marlene Villatoro

A poet, actress and storyteller, Marlene is the author of two books of tales and seven books of poetry, the most recent ones being: *The Guilt of the Origin* and *Settings of Memory*. She obtained the international poetry award Jose Ortega y Gasset (1995) and the Premiere Prix, 13ème concours Internationale de poésie de la Associationale La Porte des poètes (2009), two acting awards and two oratory awards. Her works appear in several anthologies in Mexico and abroad. She has been a judge of poetry, belongs to the Association Prometeo de poetry of Madrid and is a member of the General Society of Writers of Mexico.



Sabrina De Canio
Italy

JOURNEY

In memory of Pippa Bacca

White
olive, pink, red,
green, brown, black.

White
silken lily
cleansing ash.
We are milk
in the best china
sacred and intact
at each new fresh start.
We are the needle that mends
and the thread that binds
rustling like pages
in the white that turns us off.

From Libera nos a malo (Deliver us from Evil) Journey (with the original version in Italian, Viaggio. Pippa Bacca was a young Italian artist, brutally raped and killed in 2008 during her performing journey for peace)

About Sabrina De Canio

Sabrina is an award-winning poet, translator and co-director of Saint Christopher Poetry Museum, the only one of its kind in the world. Years spent in East Africa gave rise to her poetry's underlying theme, namely resistance to adversity. She is mentioned in several national and international anthologies. Her *Libera nos a malo* (Deliver Us From Evil) was published in 2020.

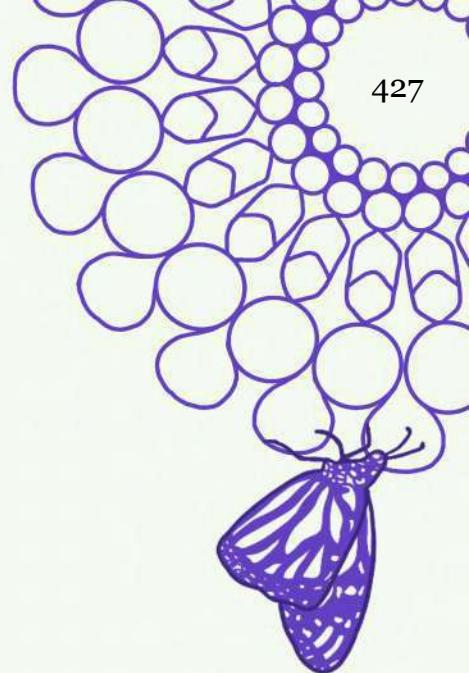
BRANCH 6

**ARRIVING
LOVE**



ALL TRUE

Dr. Ayo Ayoola-Amale
Nigeria



All true lives
are fires of heaven
speaking out loud in the light of one breath.

All true lives
are completely ripened self
listening to the sun and the story it tells,
how it sings
living from the heart.
And yet some lives change their mind
like subway tokens.

A GOD BEAUTY

My words are like the sun's full lips
that meet, enter, and eternally heal
laying its glowing gaze against my eyes
not to die to self.

My words are like a God beauty

rising within.

Rising like the tide.

In the sun rests the sunshine.

It's path, the cycle of life,

A God beauty.

THE SLUGGISH HARMATTAN

I hear the village drummer beating like a sound beats in a durbar
 and words fell out of him like ripened mangoes on a windy afternoon
 absorbed and uncovered, silent and loud,
 time fluttered over the deep
 then the morning in pajamas drops on the streets of a naked earth
 with warriors behind, all with unwinking bliss clung together
 to prevent draining away sluggishly.

On the slow-moving peak of a cool frontier
 drowsy with the drifting of dryness
 like a dead dump, the haze increases on forgotten fields
 and lightens the bones of my trembling fears and of my ancestors long
 gone and living.

I should not be misled that faraway I heard the hand calling



as the door opens like strong teeth, and
the wild tears follow
no one could take this singing dust away
I will rise



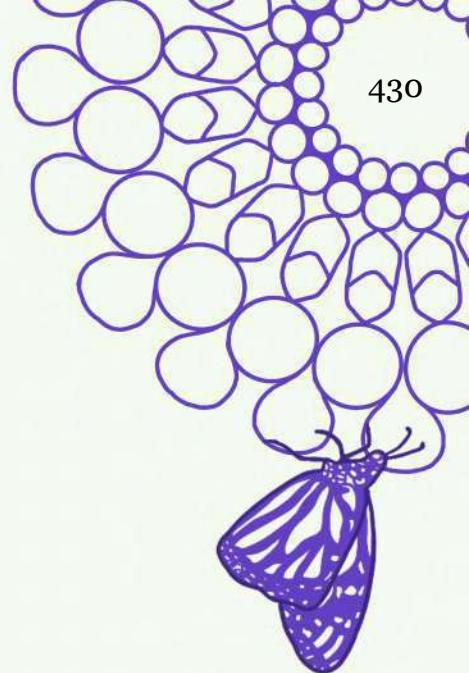
About Dr. Ayo Ayoola-Amale

Dr. Ayo is a poet, artist, author and director of Splendors of Dawn Poetry Foundation. Ayo believes that poetry can change the world and contribute to positive social change. She uses poetry and art to inspire and empower young people through her workshop and her writing project, known as the SUN project. Ayo's poems have appeared in several international anthologies, journals and more, with her work translated into many international languages. Her poems are concerned with confronting the problem of violence, racism and the breakdown of the human community.



Osama Esber
Syria

THE WIND OF FEAR



-1-

Something shakes the planet
throwing it into the wind of fear.

-2-

The planet was always
on the edge of the abyss.
Strange that it has never fallen.

-3-

The city streets are empty.
Death waits there
in parked cars
on seashores
on the stage
on the front pages of newspapers
in bars
in schools
in kisses and embraces
in the barking of tired dogs.
and the proclamations of politicians.

-4-

The threads of the prayer mat
Unravel
to make a face mask.

Supplication prayers
find no wood
to make ladders on which to ascend.

-5-

I am preoccupied now
with setting the table
so I can sit down at it,
me and my solitude.

-6-

The glass in front of me is full
but feels that it is empty.
My hand feels
That it is not mine.

-7-

We have become bridges
over which death crosses.
Here are our bodies, dangling, waiting
On their drooping branches.



THE WAITING MACHINE

-1-

Things come only so they can go.
If they settle, they do so as dust
until the wind comes.

-2-

In the middle of this madness
on the summit of its high mountain



for the first time
I feel that the body is a waiting machine.

-3-

A fury rises under the maple tree.
Ravens in large flocks,
gathering as if to decide the fate of the city.

-4-

When the sun rose
and light revealed the streets,
traces of wheels appeared
as if a people's convoy had passed by this place
in this desert.

-5-

In front of Salvador Dali's Museum
I saw a huge iron anchor
in the park.
I thought of old ships and voyages,
of world explorers
and mapmakers.
Inside me, a question arose:
Our sphere-shaped ship,
which sails dizzy
and without compass
through the shadows of the heavens,
where will it cast anchor?



-6-

And my body said to me,
"Stand against the wind,



amidst this blast.
Strip off your clothes!
Swim in this abyss,
and dream of a beach
to wake up on.”

All Poems Translated by Lisa Wedeen



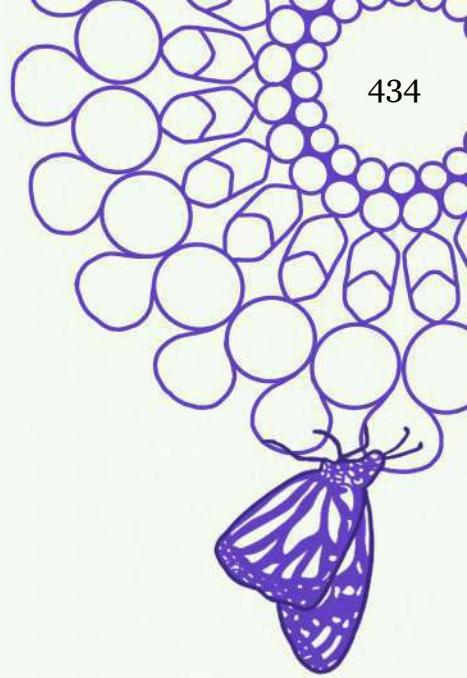
About Osama Esber

Osama is a widely published author of poetry and short stories, as well as a major translator of English writings into Arabic. He is also an editor for the Arab Studies Institute's Tadween Publishing house, associate editor in Jdaliyya's Arabic Section, and a host of *Status*, Jadaliyya's audio-visual podcast. His two most recent collections of poetry are entitled *My Seaside Paths* (Jordan: Dar Khutut wa Zilal, 2020), and *On the Bank of the River of Things* (2021). His poems explore how writing reattaches us to life and how the COVID-19 pandemic shed light on the embodied loneliness marked by recurring blasts of fear and an overwhelming sense of exhaustion.



LORETTA

Ann-Margaret Lim
Jamaica



Your poems brought me to Puerto Rico
long before Des-pa-cito.

You experienced the Jamaican
night, from below the mango trees
beside the blue hammock,
through my daughter's bedroom window
and insisted you heard coquís in the band
last time you came.

We've shared lines on love, death
poetry, droughts.

And now Loretta, you and your daughter
have no water, no light.
(And insulin is to be refrigerated).
You read books of solares homes back then
when Puerto Ricans fanned the heat
played dominoes, drank coffee on porches.

But this is not a novel, as you know Loretta.
This is your country after Maria, where people queue
in lines to enter the few opened pharmacies,
grocery stores with their empty shelves
like in socialist Jamaica; Venezuela.

This is you, Loretta in Puerto Rico
who never said, “there is no school
no one to teach: there is no pay.”

WomanSpeak Journal 2018

THE CAVE

It was Negril’s west end
and a slower track.
Always the sea, always
the cliffs and a long sunset,

and Patrick the masseur
goaded us to dive into
the cave outside our room,
first thing at sunrise.

We peered into the deep blue
cave the day we came,
but spent our morning in
the blue room with coconut

incense and a stone-cut bed.
Now, in memory,
the blue of our room was like the sea
that spread to the horizon,

the blue canvas of the sky
that turned grey when storms threatened –
like this hurricane
we’re in, with no light, with only



a radio, while outside the white wind
crashes down the bananas, howling.

The Festival of Wild Orchid, Peepal Tree Press, 2012



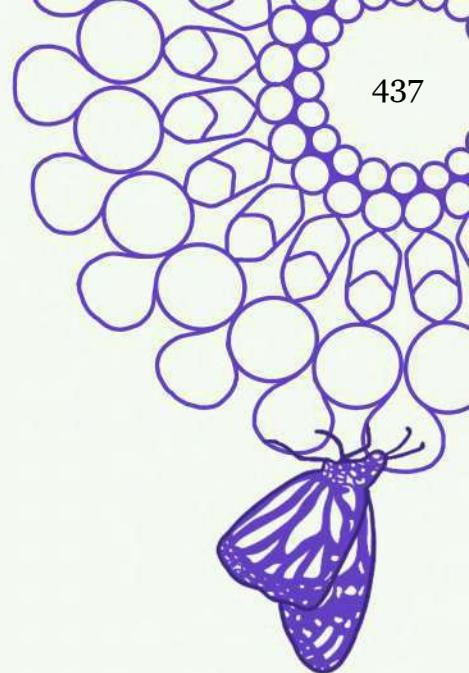
About Ann-Margaret Lim

Ann-Margaret's second poetry collection, *Kingston Buttercup* (Peepal Tree Press, 2016) made the poetry shortlist of the Bocas Prize. Her first collection, *The Festival of Wild Orchid*, (Peepal Tree Press, 2012) was nominated for the UK Guardian First Book prize and received Honorary Mention in the 2013 Bocas Prize. Following her 2014 Calabash Literary Festival debut, Lim earned a feature in the Ebony Magazine alongside five other Caribbean Writers. A Calabash Fellow, Lim was part of the Jamaica Calabash offering featured in the 2020 Literature Around and she has read at the Medellin International Poetry Festival.



**Bina Sarkar Elias
India**

I AM A TREE



a tree lives inside me
its cloistered roots
anchor my
wandering mind
its gnarled trunks
hold my spine
its branches
stretch into
the hidden sky
of my ruminations
its leaves are words
that sing songs
of enchantment
when stirred
by the nomad breeze
of new beginnings
that drift through
my blue veins~
its precious fruit
is plucked and peeled
for untold narratives~

a tree lives inside me.
i am a tree.

MY INK IS RED

my ink is red with the blood of those who fight with their spirit of caring beyond the bubble of personal spheres working day and night in the battlefields of an enigmatic pandemic that holds the world hostage for an uncertain time an unknown future holds it hostage in a grip of fear and hopefully repentance for the centuries of misdeeds unleashed on nature our soil our trees our rivers and seas our lives endangered by nuclear waste our air polluted with greed and power and a decimation of compassion beware we shall live and die through yet another chapter of learning and not learn from it.

only hope anchors us to sanity. my ink is red with hope.

PEACE

for Agha Shahid Ali

Peace?

have we met?
do I know you?

are you
the proverbial lull
before the storm?

are you the virgin
before the rape?
...silence
before the scream?

are you a bird song
on a tranquil morning
singing softly
before you transmute
into a screeching hawk?



are you the rationale
of dialectics
before strident speeches
of fascists, bigots
and unreason
tear our sanity apart?

are you grandma's tales
of honey and pickles
of halcyon days
before you are stolen
from innocuous jars
and mutated
into narratives of war?

are you idle chemicals
before you catalyse
into deadly weapons
of mass destruction?
are you a placid drone
morphing into
a menacing toy for
the world's warmongers?

are you the chrysalis
concealing
and nurturing seeds
of benign faith
that flowers
and proliferates~
that stealthily become
venomous weeds
of xenophobic hate?

are you paradise
in Kashmir, before
it becomes hell~
a flaming playground
for scheming politicians?
are you a child waking to life



in Afghanistan or Syria
before a bomb
bludgeons you
and your village?

are you the wings
of dreams before
they are burnt
so you don't fly?

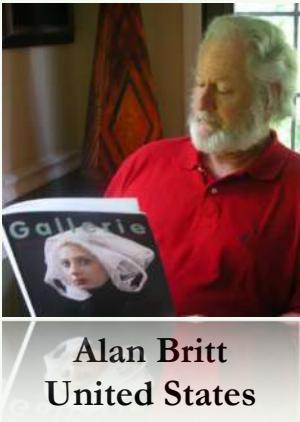
Peace?

have we met?
do I know you?
“are you the desolation
called Peace?”



About Bina Sarkar Elias

Bina is a poet, fiction-writer, art curator and editor-designer-publisher of International Gallerie, the bi-annual global arts and ideas journal she founded in 1997. Her mission has been to encourage Unity in Diversity through excellence in the arts. Her second book of poems, *FUSE*, has been taught at Towson University, USA. Her sixth book of poems '*Song of a Rebel*' was recently released. Amongst other awards, she has received the *Times Group Yami Women Achievers' Award*, in 2008, and the *FICCI/FLO Award* for excellence in her work, in 2013.



ALL YE NEED TO KNOW



Startled like Maine Coon in a room
full of strangers late one afternoon,

I remember the ticket coachman,
but I don't remember you.

I remember a feline soul, such as it
was, but I don't remember you.

So, I close my eyes & dream
of oilcloth sails meant for you,

& sail we do on abalone wings
throughout adolescent bougainvillea

& musky misfortunes releasing a
poetic virus that the universe wedges

between us, which is neither here
nor there, but for better or for

worse, I built a boat called love that
floats, & that is all ye need to know.

POETRY

For Emily

Poetry trolls opposites,
otherwise perishes. No

sentimental parades or affairs
with wealthy benefactors

snuggled inside Maserati log
cabins lost somewhere off

Route 128, Little Beaver,
lakeside, purring beneath the

beeches. No, poetry carves
her comfort zone between

love and grief, then rubs her
ashen hips against the walls

of Lascaux. You could, if
the mood struck you, even

suggest that poetry is to
freedom what oxygen is

to life as we know it, or
think we know it.



WE'VE GOT THIS!

People make shit up as they go;
it's what we've always done.

When we didn't know Jack,
we believed the Earth was flat.

& before that we had no idea we were
coughing out germs on this spinning
cobalt marble (in the conventional
scheme of things) cartwheeling
its way across the cosmos.

But, hell, we tattooed our souls
onto cave walls all over this molten
rock before a single page of history
was ever recorded, so we'll sure as hell
figure out how to navigate this newest
pandemic: Coronavirus, aka, COVID-19.



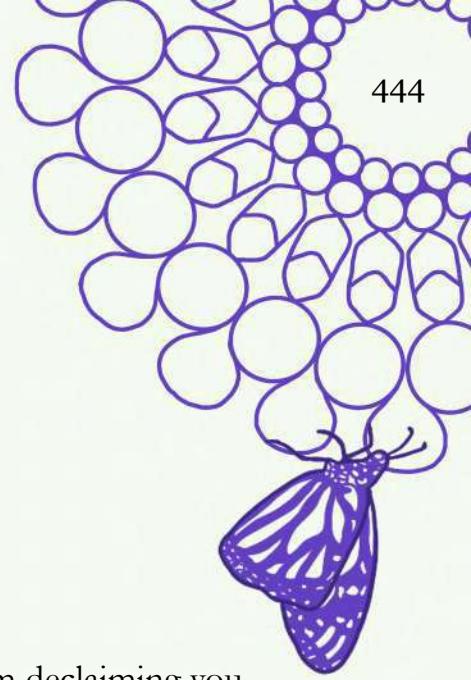
About Alan Britt

Alan has been nominated for the 2021 *International Janus Pannonius Prize* awarded by the *Hungarian Centre of PEN International* for excellence in poetry from any part of the world. Previous nominated recipients include Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Charles Bernstein and Yves Bonnefoy. Alan was interviewed at The Library of Congress for *The Poet and the Poem*. He has published 20 books of poetry and served as Art Agent for Andy Warhol Superstar, the late great UltraViolet, while often reading poetry at her New York studio. A graduate of the Writing Seminars at Johns Hopkins University, he currently teaches English/Creative Writing at Towson University.



**Mahmoud Quorani
Egypt**

ROUTE



On behalf of wretched and idiotic generations I'm declaiming you.
 On behalf of the friends
 Who created a joint poem;
 And were pleading for an interest-free loan from you
 Thus they passed away liable for the costs of Boxes of adulterated liquor;
 And stinky bones.
 On behalf of farmers
 Whom your graciousness
 Never recovered them from bladder cancer. On Behalf of girls
 Betrayed by your footfalls
 In the absorbed-in-silence countryside. On behalf of the workers of folk
 eateries
 Who sang the praises of your nobleness Along the banks of
 sluices and ditches. On behalf of the waterlilies
 You left as food for elephants.
 So, ornamental birds wrote their will
 And parted.
 On behalf of those
 Who had, under you banner, gone
 To the soldiers' contingents;
 Without a word of farewell.
 On behalf of a state
 Commanding you from the watch towers, Sending you the monthly pay
 And sex steroids.
 On behalf of the warrior,

Stepped over your head;
 And allowed his cannon to talk on your behalf. On behalf of the
 philosophers,
 Who went down the river
 In search of your truth

And the crows snatched their pants. On behalf of all those silly and
 cheated people, It would be better for you,
 Oh Poetry, to take another route.

Translated by Taher Albarbary



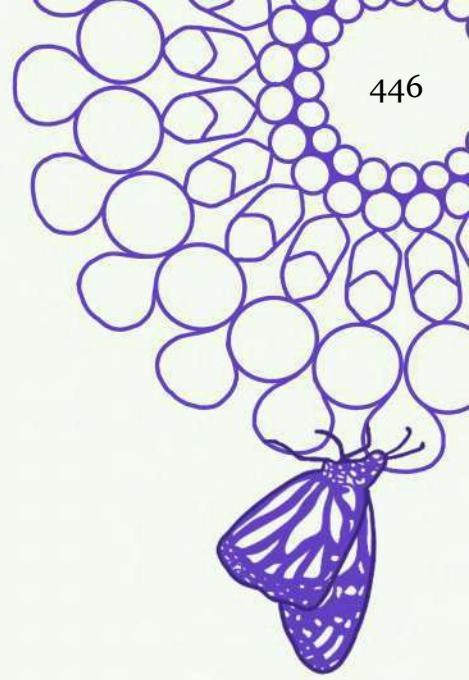
About Mahmoud Quorani

Poet, writer and journalist, Mahmoud authored 13 collections of poems and more than 5 books on politics, philosophy and literary criticism. A selection of his poetry entitled, *Protagonists of Incomplete Novels* is published. During his career as a journalist and essayist, he wrote and published tens of articles on arts. He participated in founding and launching several literary periodicals like Moqadima (An Introduction) which centred on prose poetry and Alketaba Alokhra (The Other Creative Writing). He was a member of the jury in several Arabic literary prizes in addition to his fruitful participation in many national and international poetry festivals.



Kentaro Yokoyama
Japan

SLUG



A life
full of lost items

Everybody in shambles.
A firefly
on the breast

Winter rose-
I want to meet person
Named “past”

Shihaku Translated by

Ban'ya Natsushi



About Kentaro Yokoyama

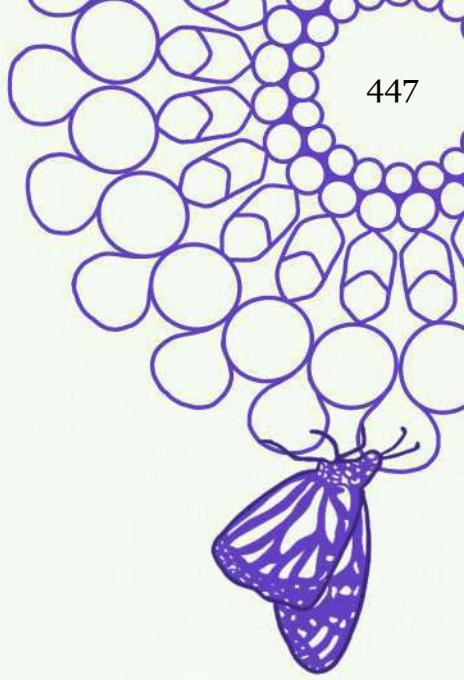
Born in Kobe in 1970, Kentaro graduated from the Nagasaki Institute of Applied Science in Japan. He is interested in history and politics, and has a great love for the early modern lyric poet, Sakutarō Hagiwara. Yokoyama began writing poetry in 1996, and began writing haiku in 2007. He had an accident in 1999, which made him painfully aware of his mortality, and as a result his work deeply contemplates the human condition. He became a member of the *Ginyu Prize 2020* in 2019, is the author of *Absolute 100% Purity* (2016) and *A Life Full of Lost Items* (2021).



THE CREATION

**Homero Carvalho Oliva
Bolívia**

God said turn off the light
your clothes fell to the floor
and the world came to light.



US

After so much time together
I started to forget
Who you were and who I am
Now, after so many years
I miss that you are not you and I am not me.

POETICS

Literature is the perfect stellar metaphor of time, because it encloses the past, the present and the future. It is infinite, as if each book was just the word of a perpetual book that is written incessantly. It is in eternal movement, nominating the inner worlds, the daily life and the spiritual search, and it is transformed into action if the book is read and understood; then it becomes an imperceptible wave that tries to interpret the chaos. When the final order succeeds to chaos, literature will no longer be necessary and we, human beings, will not make sense and the worlds, suns and galaxies will disappear, nothing will exist and nothing is the denial of the word. That will be the moment, when the Divinity will wake up again and conjugate the verbs, so that everything comes back into existence.

LOVE POEMS

Defeated dictatorships

love poems

became dangerous because

they are the only things

In which we play out our lives

Rosy-fingered dawn will always bring a promise!

All Poems Above Translated into English by Miranda Crowhurst

THE GOLDEN KINGDOMS

When we lived

in the Golden Kingdoms

the world was not yet born

life existed

death existed

but the world was not yet born

inhabitants of the jungles

were presents at the birth

of this golden world

where everything was new

where everything was wonder

and above all was the Water

the river

the rain



The songs of birds
 the growls of beats
 the buzz of insects
 the lights flapping of leaves
 wet about naming the world
 and we served as Baptists

The names
 Were revealed to us
 by the protective spirits of the jungle

A caw and the *night hawk* was born
 a roar and the *jaguar* appeared
 the trees we named
 with coded and secret words
 we called them *ochooó*
 we called them *tajibo*
 a light motion of the waves and we cried *caiman*
 a slight crack of the leaves and we whispered and *sicuri'*
 with the beautiful *arairiqui* we named the star

The same spirits
 created the *manioc*
 so we could concoct the *chicha* and *chive*



So new was everything
 that those up there
 called us *musus*
 which in the language of the *inkakuna*
 means new earth

We knew
 the names of the animals
 and they were our dreams
 they announced the coming of death
 and they were born with the children.

Translated by Elizabeth Miller



About Homero Carvalho Oliva

A writer and a poet, Homero has won several awards for short stories, poetry and novels at the national and international level; in addition to the 2016 *International Book Fair Award* in Bolivia. 18 of his books have been published in other countries by prestigious publishers and parts of his poetic pieces have been translated into several languages including Chinese and French. His poetry and short stories are included in more than 50 international anthologies and accredited magazines around the world.



**Dr. Touria Majdouline
Morocco**

THAT COUNTRY

The Country which blossoms day by day within us

And makes us die every day,

The country that grows like a lovely dream

Into our shadows

And howls

like a bereaved lyre

playing the tunes of our burning pain,

The country that hid its nights into our blood

And inhabited our daily speech,

Here it is now

resting a while

from its lovers' complaints,

Eluding this long night

While engaged till morning in dreams

If I could, O friend

Recover my blood from the rose tower,

Blood which chants into the veins of the country

and salutes me,



If I could recover my name from the book of passion
 And equip it with painted wings so it could fly,
 Still would it persist in choosing this country again,
 The country which in my blood
 Howls like a she-wolf
 And shows up every time I hit the road.

O friend
 Son of the clouds!
 As you grab the country like a burning coal,
 silent as space,
 lonely as dawn,
 and crowded as absence,
 Remember the smell of the sea at your departure,
 Remember the swallows in my heart
 While reading our overturned history
 And the old cruel letters we exchanged.

Stations we travelled through together might vanish,

Places might bleed,

But this country remains like a sword

Piercing the neck of speech,

For neither distance can pull us apart

Nor proximity bring us together



O friend

I'm in no rush to pluck truth

from the mouth of dreams

For I might be a descendent of rain

Flowing sometimes into the river mirrors

And filling your cup with the water of longing.

Therefore, give my words some time

To restore the morning's path

And be able to endure the country.

I am your brimful well,

I'm somewhat a fruit

And somewhat an ageless heaven,

I turn my passion into a spot that accommodates afternoons,

I paint windows for songs

and keep saying again and again:

O you, country that taught me to hold its own burning coals

As then it flew away

into darkness

like a straying dream

No new morning expects us to report what the evening did

No time is enough for reproach

No door opens to let us into a future



Indifferent to our groans,
 No paper is enough to contain our dreams,
 And no hand is stretching to hug us out of excessive longing,
 So dance in the distance O blind country
 And grant us a date for the evening

I'm not weary O friend,
 Nor am I distracted by the rising moon in my night after you left.
 Dreams might wither inside us,
 Mirrors die out,
 But I remain the sole stranger here and there,
 Sitting in the void,
 Laying the country on the wing of a poem
 And pouring out the remnants of my salty tears
 Heading towards you
 And towards it.

Let me then shout
 Into the ear of the country:
 I am your eloquent mirror,
 I draw the nightingale's shadow over speech,
 Write poems on the fringes of your night,
 And walk towards you



Knitting the sand into a scarf for your marine feet.

Let me fill your cup with words

So they perchance burn inside your mouth,

Let me make the poem whistle in your silence.

The country, my friend

Is our lofty narrative

Our deceitful tear...

Translated by Norddine Zouitni



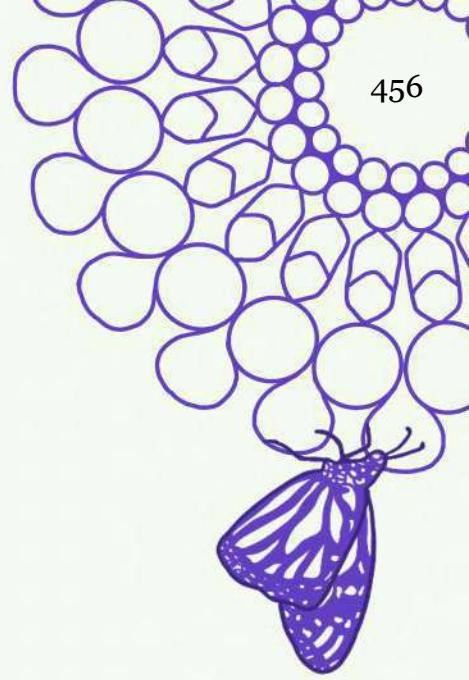
About Dr. Touria Majdouline

Dr. Touria Majdouline is known for her extensive literary, poetic, and academic contributions in conferences and festivals both nationally and internationally. She has so far published five books of poetry and two critical studies, as well as numerous political and intellectual articles in national and Arab newspapers and reviews. Her critical publications are *The Vision and the Mask* (2016) and *The Dynamics of Dramatic Action in the Theater of Sayyid Hafez* (2005). Touria Majdouline also won the *Nazik Malaika Award* for Poetry in 2011.



Rania Angelakoudi
Greece

FRIENDSHIP



Think a while in silence..
 For those who loved you
 more dear...
 For they are the ones,
 who will never weaken you up!
 when life is not so clear,
 close your eyes and come
 to my arms dear!
 Let your soul fly above
 The horizon!
 Where there are no clouds!
 No dust! no drought!
 Life there is so clear!
 Don't lose the chance my dear...
 And... I will clean the rocks
 of your road,
 to find it easy when you come!
 I'll beg the birds, the winds
 even the weather...
 To have some help when you fly!
 I'll tell the Nature to be pretty
 to smell the perfumes of my land,
 When it's time to fly away...
 I'll spread the colours of my sky!

My faithful friend...
 Thank you for the trial...
 For the directions...
 For the discoveries...

For your struggle on the way
to our friendship...
This will be forever!

THE DREAM'S SCENARIO

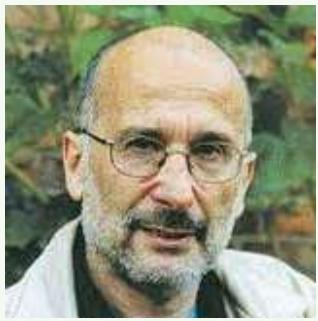
A sky without borders is the world I dream.
A land full of trees is in my mind's sphere!
A plethora of black and white birds
Flying around in harmony
Is the world I want to live
So Human!.

Let your fantasy's generosity guide you
Above the horizon's bright path
Where the ideals are alive!
Let the rhythm of your heart
Beat in peace!
And love those anonymous soldiers
Who fight their brothers and teach them!
And fetch those who have been lost into chaos!
STOP the war's anathema to avoid agonies
Between Scylla's and Charybdi's slavery
And follow the freedom's melody
AND
Dance and sing!
AND
Switch off the light...to go to bed in peace
AND
Rest! There is no possession anymore!
And keep on dreaming my fellow citizen!



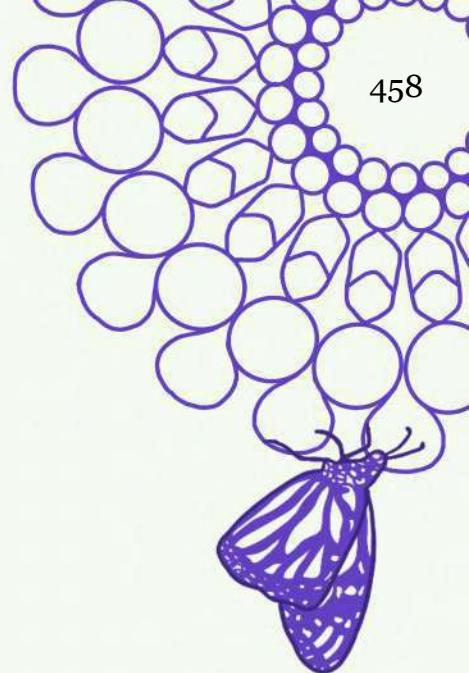
About Rania Angelakoudi

Rania focused her studies in English Literature and Language, helping her meet famous British and American poets. In 2015, under the auspices of the Italian Ministry of culture based in Ankona, she was awarded in a special ceremony. In 2016, she was nominated as the 'Icon for World Peace.' In 2017, Rania was titled Ambassador for Greek and Swedish Branches for the WIP organisation. Her work is included in a number of national and international collections and anthologies.



Hebert Abimorad
Uruguay

THE WINDOW



From my window I see
two people
a car passing by
two people thinking
a car passing by
two people meeting
a car passing by
two people squabbling
a car passing by
two people on the ground
a car that isn't stopping.

CHANGE

The neighbour's getting out
he's taking along a space
surrounded by hermetically closed windows
and furtive glances.

FRAGMENT

I'm leaving
 leaving alone
 to wait for myself somewhere else
 and when I ring me on the phone
 I'm not going to answer.

FEAR

First scene:

the wind is blowing
 the leaves of the tree are moving

Second scene:

the wind blows
 the tree's leaves and branches are moving

Third scene:

the wind keeps blowing
 the tree's leaves and branches move
 the trunk is bending

Last scene:

the whole tree is shaking
 there's not a puff of wind

All Poems Translated into English by Karen Hofling



About Hebert Abimorad

Born in 1946, Herbert has worked as a teacher and a journalist. He has written poetry books and translated swedish poetry into Spanish. He now lives in Sweden.



Gaqo Apostoli
Albania

DON'T BE AFRAID OF MY POEMS



Don't be afraid of my poems,
don't be.

I'm not throwing stones at you,
as once upon a time
ignorant people under murderous calls,
killing to death under the wall
a sinful woman.

Don't be afraid of poems,
don't be.

Every night you appear to me like a white dream
Running hair loose, thirsty for love,
Secretly coming to drink
in my poems oasis.

Oh, you... don't be afraid of poems,
don't be.

They are meteors exploding in my soul from all angles,
are fiery stones burning and extinguishing within me,
seeking to be reborn again
In the spaces of your soul.

Don't be afraid...

If you slowly will die one day,
under meteor fires
people will not judge you.

They will not say
you were a sinner,
with grace will say:
She died of love.

So, do not be afraid of my poems,
don't be.

I know...
When someday after years
You will come again tired, thirsty,
drinking water in my poems,
you will say...
cravings,
how much you loved me...

You weren't afraid of them,
you, were afraid of yourself.

Translated from Albanian into English by Msc. Entela KASI



About Gaqo Apostoli

Born in 1951, Gaqo is now a prominent professional in the area of engineering, professor in the Polytechnic University of Tirana, a prominent politician and the MP in three legislatures and the Minister of Albanian Cabinet. His name is also recognized in the field of art, in particular in poetry and songs. His poetry has been published in the national literary newspaper and magazine and he also holds two books of poetry and several hundreds articles in the field of journalism.



Ali Al-Hazmi
Saudi Arabia

TEARS ROLLING DOWN HER SALTED BURNING LIPS



Near the coast, we used to build sand homes.
When he left for fishing, for the last time...
We raced to return the trimmings of his net
To his little canoe.

With little hands
We waved unceasingly to the last waves
That snatched his boat away,
Away from the times of our childhood.

Behind the window bars, our little heads squeezed;
With eyes fixed on the coast road;
Mother's wings spread over our little shoulders
As she injected her body among ours;
Immensely worried about our budding innocent souls.

I was scared that her long hair may submit to the winds,
If she leant forward on the metal rail;
I drew her back towards the warmth of the timber room;
Then I stared at the seashores dwelling in her eyes,
And saw the sea travelling far beyond the sand homes.

“Sure, he will return,” she said,
Before her tear floored upon my lips— my salted burning lips.

Twenty years did not avail to demolish the sand homes
In our eyes.
The dried out face of my father, laid upon the waves
Became a window that looks at the silver years of our age;
An age abandoned in muddy traps.

An age abandoned in muddy traps.

Still, my beloved mother conceals her regrets behind her shadow.
 Still, on the mornings,
 She makes fresh bread with her dreams;
 And at midnights,
 She reheats what remains of her wishes on the stove of her soul.
 Still, we trust her and eat the bread of her lie,
 Just to live on.

SHE LOST THE KEYS TO HER DESIRE

A lonely woman
 Struggles with the whip of autumn,
 With hands bare of luck, family, and friends.
 The autumn which kept creeping over trees
 She hid away from the passers

How she fears the past,
 And a dream that never visits her in sleep twice.
 Whenever she embraces, with her little her hands,
 The butterflies of the dawn waving at her,
 The palm of absence wastes her shadows in the wind

She no longer cares about the goldfinches
 Fleeing from the dimness of her terrace.
 Life taught her to bend away
 From the joyfulness of her femininity, so soon;
 To not reach for the ripe fruit on the branches of the body;
 To not try to awaken her shivers
 At the fall of night.
 She lost the keys to her desire
 In her waiting for the bird bleeding from her soul

With hollow eyes,
 So empty of warmth, love, and hopes,
 She keeps rowing down a blank river,
 Circling her loneliness at the brink of night.
 Willingly,
 She surrenders herself to the illness of exile



Without paying a single glimpse to the flute
 That lulls the embers of her fires,
 Faraway.

Night is so long,
 In the metallic silence of her solitude;
 Pains that gaze from the mirror look on her dream,
 Flowingly.

There's no clear meaning
 In this headache in habiting her head;
 For autumn has gone,
 And the morning of butterflies is about to regain its footsteps
 Towards a shore so far, at the end of the coos.
 There's nothing to prevent the river
 From tracking the passage of her anklet
 On the nearby hills!

Could she desire to praise the eyelids of the faraway, again?!
 Could she weave a shawl for her cold femininity,
 From the sun,
 From the new dawn?!

LEAVING

At airports,
 Roses of words dry up so rapidly;
 Birds of the eyes, falling upon the terraces of the faces,
 Address the verses of their purity in bitter longing;
 Icy fingers melt in the warm hands,
 Grasping the last wishes,
 For the last time.
 Leather bags of sadness seem ready for vomiting
 Upon hearing the last call.
 Hands urge the tears to fall down from the sublime trees
 Blooming in the ribs.

Hearts depart the bodies of dear persons
 On seats about to fly.



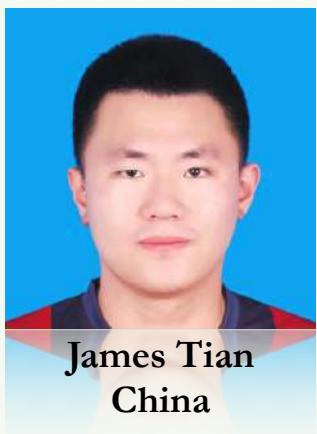
A nectar of kisses traveling on a check
 That has already fastened the safety belt to its waist.
 A river of chaos mingles with cries
 Swimming in the whiteness of their conscience,
 And wastes the last minutes of quick last hugs
 On a receding shore.
 Since distances are diminishing in the eyes dreaming of a similar flight,
 The roses of words will stay on the airport floor,
 Lifeless and dried up,
 In complete despair.

All Poems Translated by Dr. Hamdi Al-Jabri



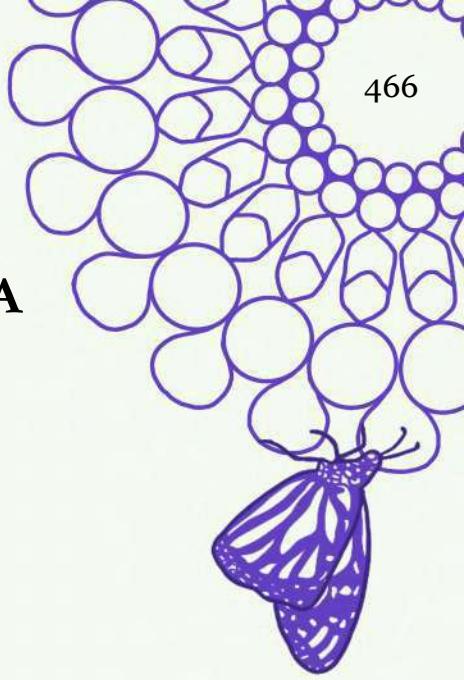
About Ali Al-Hazmi

Born in 1970, Ali is now a famous poet in contemporary Saudi Arabia.. Since 1985, the poet published poems in a variety of local and Arabic cultural Periodicals such as *The Seventh Day* (Paris), *Creativity* (Cairo) and *Nazqa* (Amman). Ali participated in a number of recital sessions of poetry inside and outside of KSA including the Festival of Latin American Poets (Bolivia, 2020) and the International Poetry Festival (Argentina, 2020). His publications include *Comfortable on the Edge* and *Now in the Past*, with several of his books translated to different foreign languages. He has won several prizes including; the Global Icon Award (Italy, 2020) and his Poem “*A Road into the Wall*” won Verbumlandi Prize (Italy, 2017).



James Tian
China

DEATH IS MERELY A PEACE



As small as a seed,
And thin like a tree.
Maybe one day is the last day,
Perhaps somedays I'll vanish.

Like a star full of hope,
Like a river never empty.
What the choice of my fate,
I don't want to be that Paris.

Yearning for more dreams,
Ignored the stuff and switches.
Disappeared just like appearing again tomorrow,
Death is merely a peace.

LOVE CAN DEFEAT ANYTHING

Anytime and anywhere,
There have been many myths through our eyes.
Several times,
I'd like to make it sure,
What's the meaning of this life.

Anything and anyone,
There needs more feelings to be as the tide.
Day and night,
Keep combat,
Believe firmly that love can solve all the crimes.

Love can defeat anything,
 Know this ancient word has been used many times.
 As long as its expression is from our very heart,
 There'll have the infinite burst of power and light.

Love can defeat anything,
 But can always guard the true aspect.
 Hold this tight and draw with the soul,
 You never know what kindness can do till you try.

A CITY WITHOUT YOU

A city without you,
 Flowing time is just like a dove.

Have the wings,
 But can never touch the ruby,
 Each night the token of love
 seems to lose.

A city without you,
 The moonlight is like a dying rose.

Praying to the God,
 Can bring me to your side soon,
 Let our love story
 be so moving too.



About James Tian

James is a member of Chinese Poetry Society, China Central Television (CCTV), "Chinese wisdom" group director, calligraphy and painting at the signing of a writer, the member of the American China frequently, international archaeological and historical linguistics institute researcher, director, Serbia *Alia Mundi* magazine at this stage the only interview Chinese poets.



**Partha Sarkar
Bangladesh**

CHILDREN PLAYING IN AN UNEVEN GARDEN



Children playing in an uneven garden....

Lures the innocent birds the nest egg.....

So much nettlesome bribery....

The colourful neuralgia...

Is going to be an unbearable upper world.

I want the return of the ancient pastureland

And I get drooping....

Becomes the holy place the netherworld.

Dream is good

The harsh reality is better

And the breaking of a dream is best.

THE FATHOMETER AND THE FATHOMLESS FATIGUE

The fathometer.

The sound from or to

Fathomless fatigue or

From or to deafness or

The loud cry.

But there should be no confusion.

None is discontent with silence.

None is content with peaching.

There are the discophiles.

Feel the disequilibrium the vibration of dead

And the fathomless silence.



About Partha Sarkar

Partha writes poems being inspired by his elder brother, the late Sankar Sarkar, his brothers and his friends (especially Bapi Khan) to protest against social injustice and crime against nature. Once, he used to believe in revolution, but now he is confused due to human's obscurity.



Kajal Ahmed
Iraq/Kurdistan

THE LONELY EARTH



Neither do the white bodies of the universe say good morning to her nor do the handmade stars give her a kiss. Earth, where so many roses, fine sentiments are buried, could die for want of a glance, a scent, This dusty ball is lonely, so very lonely, as she sees the moon's patched clothing and knows that the sun's a big thief who burns with the many beams he has taken for himself and who looks at the moon and the earth like lodgers.

THE FRUIT-SELLER'S PHILOSOPHY

My friend! You were like an apricot.
At the first bite, I spat out the core and crux.
My old flame! Sometimes you're a tangerine, undressing so spontaneously,

and sometimes you're an apple,
edible with or without the peel.

Neighbour! You're like a fruit knife. There's never a time
when you're not at our dinner table. But forgive me if I say - you're a
waste of time.

Dear homeland, you're like a lemon.

When you are named, the world's mouth waters but I get all
goosepimply.

You, stranger! I'm sure you're a watermelon. I won't know what you're
really like

till I go through you like a knife.

Bridge Translated by Choman Hardi

Final Translation by Mimi Khalvati

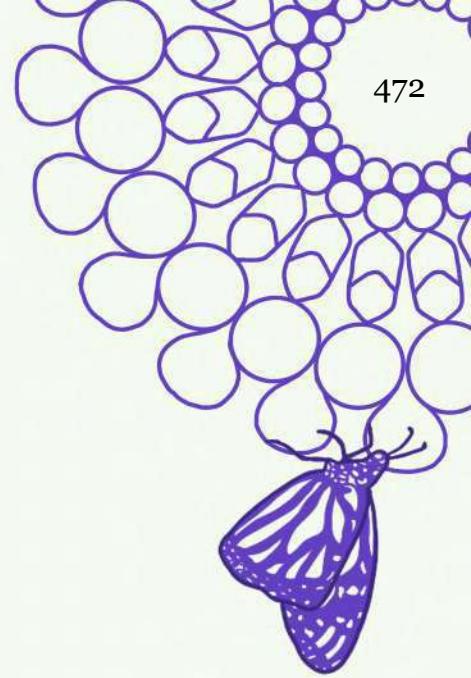


About Kajal Ahmad

Born in 1967, Kajal began publishing her poems in the eighties and has been concerned with women's issues in her country. She worked in the Kurdish press and her texts were chosen as a model for the Kurdish women's movement. She published seven collections of poetry in Kurdish and a collection of poetry in Arabic entitled *Poems Raining Narcissus* (Dar Al-Mada, Damascus). Her poems were translated into several languages and she has also translated a book "Killer Identities" (by Amin Maalouf) into Kurdish.



DAFFODIL



Someone has lost it
or maybe has thrown it away.
Now the daffodil in the vase
adorns my Easter tablecloth
with its virginity.

FIREFLY

Fence in the camp.
On this side we make friends
with a tourist from abroad,
behind it a firefly glows
in the seaside evening.



About Alenka Zorman

Alenka (1947) is a retired jurist and human resources manager.. She has been writing haiku for more than 20 years, was the president of the Haiku Club of Slovenia and the editor of its journal *Letni časi (Seasons)* and even served as a member of two Slovenian haiku juries. She is also a member of the World Haiku Association, Japan. Alenka has won awards in haiku contests in Slovenia, Croatia and Japan with her haiku being featured several international collections. She has published two haiku books: *Butterfly on the Shoulder* (2004, Slovenia) and *Inner Liberation* (2006, Macedonia).



INVERSE PROPORTION



As I get older
 quite conversely
 my brain shines brighter
 wants to travel further
 to comprehend science and nature
 though the numbers increase
 in arithmetic progression
 my heart gets younger (and younger)
 and misses childhood's happiness
 innocence, laughter and hopefulness

If I became a child again
 with my current brain
 should I change anything
 or
 leave things undisturbed?

NATURAL LOVE

The trunk of a tree
 materialistically
 a piece of wood
 But combined with earth and water
 it's a symbol of life

They become one body
 Neither can exist
 on its own
 Nor bear a twig
 to offer a home
 for a pair of Paradise Birds
 to perform their mating dance

Seeing this with our third eye
 teaches us
 the importance of love
 and balance in all life

PLAYING GAMES

Every infant learns any game
 As a beginner
 Without shame
 Children just enjoy the game
 Winning or losing weigh the same

The thrill is in playing
 Competitive rivalry isn't registered in their brain

Then comes the taste of chocolate
 Bitter or sweet and
 Characterisation starts surfacing

Hostility or maturity
 Are the choices at this junction

Genealogy and parents' education are
 Important milestones before schooling
 Well manners can be taught as the civility of playing

Being satisfied at fair play is
 The rule of a happy game



The adults also play games
Full of gimmicks, a copy of treat or trick
They call it life
Happy or unhappy
It's *their cup of tea.*



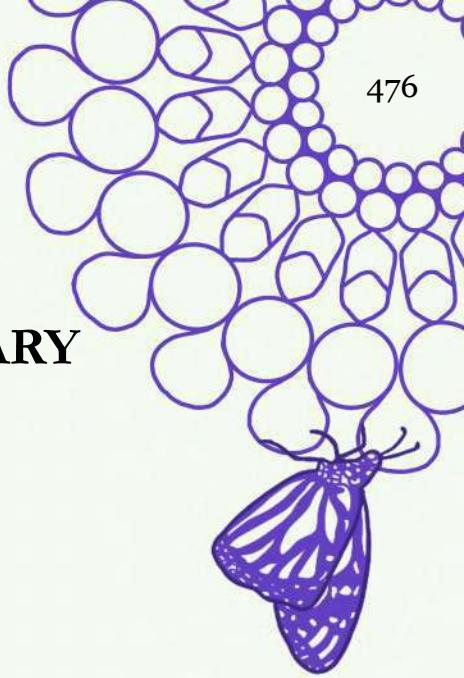
About Muhsine Arda

Following a lengthy teaching assignment at New York University, Muhsine returned to Turkey in 1997. Her work has been extensively published in Turkey, including: five volumes of poetry, short stories, essays, and two novels. Many of her poems have been translated into other languages and have appeared in international literary publications. A staunch advocate of Women's Rights, her feminist viewpoint is reflected in much of her writing, which also addresses such "taboo" subjects as women's sexuality, physical disability, and suicide. Her work includes *Dicem Tebülə* (Essay, 2018), *Serçe Yürek* (Poetry, 2018) and *Besibiryerde* (Novel, October 2020).



AFTER A DOCUMENTARY

Piergiorgio Viti
Italy



If millions of years ago
they hadn't existed,
we wouldn't have had
all this oxygen.

We would have remained where we were
(and who knows where we were, who knows...),
life wouldn't have developed
helixes, binary codes
nothing at all,
a clean slate, an absolute zero.

But thanks to stromatolites,
to their air bubbles,
we exist
proliferate
we kiss in the evening
while eating soup.
And thanks to them
in the gardens of Recanati*
kids can wave hello
and at night, under the covers,
I can whisper to you

*Hug me
for if you turn away,
it gets colder.*

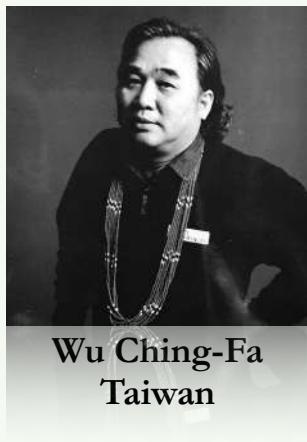
*Recanati is an Italian city, famous as the birthplace of poet Giacomo Leopardi.

Translated by Elisa Aceri

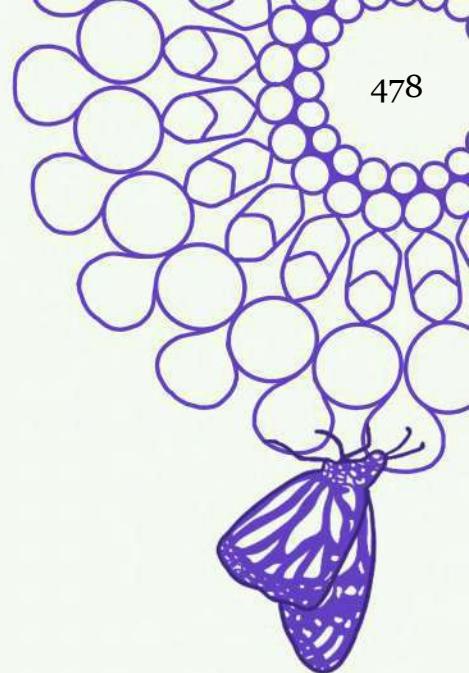


About Piergiorgio Viti

Currently working as a professor, Piergiorgio has published five books of poetry and the sixth is in the press. His poems are translated into five languages and published in anthologies, literary sites, magazines of all over the world. He also wrote for the theater: "The fable of Virginio and Virgilio" with famous singer Tosca as protagonist and "Ray's dreams" (dedicated to Ray Charles) with an important actor as Carlo Di Maio. He went on stage in the theater as author and acting voice for "The voice of man", a tribute to the Italian song-writer Sergio Endrigo. He is involved in the dissemination of poetry through the organization and participation in festivals around the world.



RICE



Mom asked someone to bring me a sack of rice
Without leaving any message.
Last week, I went home to see her.
Before I left, she looked into my eyes,
"No need to compromise;
There's abundant rice at home."
I was born
While Mom was doing farm work.
Feeling stomachache,
She went home giving birth to me
In a season when rice ears grew.
"After birth, midwife buried your placenta and umbilical cord
In the rice paddy. Mom chatted about this recently.
Mom sent a sack of rice connecting to my umbilical cord.
How could I eat the rice;
How could I not?

Translated by Zhengwei Chen

DON'T LET THE BULLETS FLY

In Gwangju,
At Tiananmen,
In Myanmar,
The Bullets were flying in the sky

In straight lines, curves and tangents
 From darkness to light
 To the voice of roars.

Don't let the bullets fly in the sky
 For it is supposed to be free.

With her head of nineteen years
 She stopped the bullets.

If the bullets insist on flying in the sky,
 Please go into the chest of the Dictator
 And stay there.

March 3rd , 2021

*Dedicating to Ma Kyal Sin, a nineteen-year-old woman who was shot dead during 2021 Burmese
 protests*

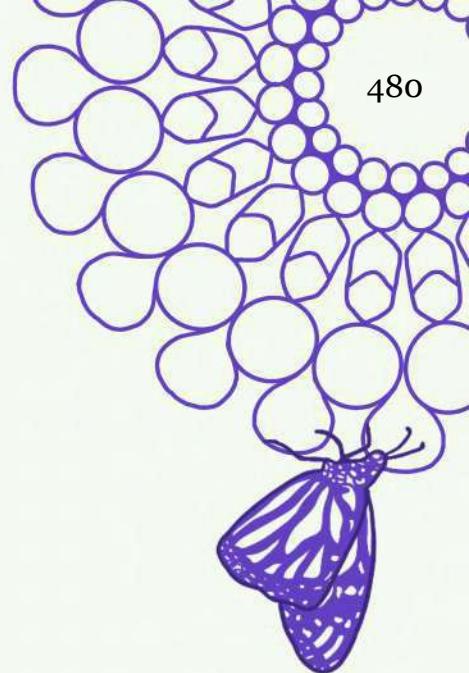


About Wu Ching-Fa

A novelist, poet, proser, reviewer and radio host. Wu was the news commentator of “The Common Man's Dily”, Vice Chairperson of Culture Committee and the director of Culture Services of Pingtung County. He has published a collection of books including: My Mother's Teahouse, Autumn Helenium, Three Steps (novels) and We Human. His novel, My Mother's Teahouse, was adapted into a movie and TV drama.



YES, I'M SILENCE



Yes, I'm Silence

In an illuminated full moon

And in the golden sun of the dawn,

I'm rainbow's silence

Peeping from rain clouds.

The unique music of mother Nature,

The smoldering fire of malevolence,

I'm in the broad blue heaven

Swinging on the rhythm of the universe.

Horrifying, World war

Hiroshima sobbing in breath,

Lamentations after massacres,

I'm a synonym of eternal death.

Resonating Om in Daharakash,

Kabira, Mahavira, Buddha

Isha, Moses, and Muhammad

The message of peace, truth, and non-violence

Yes, I'm Silence.

POETRY

India, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Pakistan
 blooming with fragrant Spring
 Yinghua freshes China, Sakura flourish Japan
 whilst west shining by tulip blossoms.

Mother nature defines two seasons,
 Spring and Autumn,
 full of fragrance and rainbow colours.

Essence and colour of poetry,
 encompasses everything, defined as
 an ambassador of global peace.



About Brajesh Singh

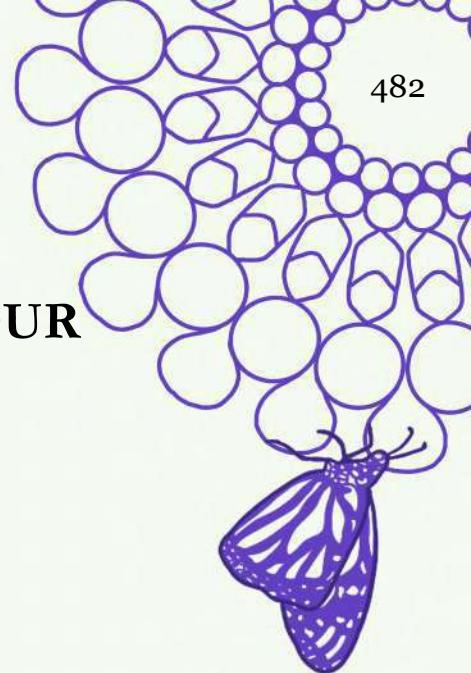
Brajesh is a writer, poet, translator and member of the editorial team of Kritya International Poetry Festival. He received his Postgraduate degree from Lucknow University, India. His poems appeared in the international anthologies *Ancient Egyptians*, *Modern Poets*, *Adversity* and in a number of online magazines/journals including *Atunis Galaxy Poetry*. His Hindi articles, poems and translations have been published in *Sabitya Kunj*, *Hastakshar* and daily newspapers.



Issa Hassan Al-Yasiri
Canada / Iraq

ON THE BANKS OF YOUR RIVERS I WEEP

To Amarah Once More²



1.

Oh, Amarah! Forever weary you are
No one remembers you except the birds of the cold regions
I, alone, sit weeping on the banks of your rivers.

2.

Your face is pale as a sick autumn
Your clouds break like an aged tree
And time of dust piles up on the roofs of your homes.

3.

O' saint,
The roads forgot you and the mountain slopes snubbed you
Do you recall when the lovers stood at your gates?

4.

You lived simply like a dervish.
Poor like a beggar

With worn-out attires like an imprisoned princess

With blooded arms like a person on a cross

Yet no one forgot you name

5.

Whenever I came to kiss your threshold

There was no one to guide me to you

An empty seat was there

And there stood a tree naked under the rain

6.

As I stand on the top of mount Montreal

I see you from behind the curtain of the dark blue Atlantic

contented with a cane to relieve your sorrow

And a windowless hut



7.

You have nothing to do

You write with your emaciated fingers

The names of your children

On the wind's tablet

And whenever night pours its darkness in your clay cup



You hang up your amulets on the eyes of the stars

To be dropped as a warm sun

On the thresholds of houses in our desolate exile.

8.

There were buds about to bloom,

spikes raising their eyelids to the rain,

a covey of birds disturbing the silence of the fields

and a child playing with pigtails of a sleeping girl

And there was a shade of a smile

But heartless men ruined them all

9.

If I am destined to visit you, O' you whose heart is full of tenderness,

I will bring you

A tale about the night's rain,

A jar of tears,

And a map to guide me to my friends' homes.



²*Known as Iraq's Venice because of its rivers and marshlands, Amarah is a city located in southeastern Iraq.*

*Translated By Salib J. Altoma
Professor Emeritus/Indiana University*

About Issa Hassan Al-Yasiri

Issa has worked in the field of education, journalism, and radio broadcasting between 1963 and 1990. He has received several awards including Prize “*The Free Word*” from Poets of All Nations (PAN) in 2002 and the Phoenix International Prize in 2008 for his novel, “*The Days of Mubssineh’s Village*. ” He is also included in several Iraqi, Arab, and International Almanacs and Compilations including *Almanac of Iraqi Poetry* (Venezuela, 2001) and *Almanac of World Poets* (Montreal, 2015). Issa published recent books such as: *I Am Going Alone* and *Before the Water Runs Out..* One of his poems ‘*For the sake of Objects I like*,’ cited in his anthology *Winter of Pastures* has been translated into twelve local and foreign languages.



Neal Whitman
United States

IN MEMORY OF TOKO SHINODA (1913-2021)

practitioner of shuhari

shu – adhere to rules / *ha* – veer from rules / *ri* – rise to transcendence

Her longevity was remarkable,
yet she remains a living artist
so long as her paintings are viewed.

Translated into her next life,
she is no longer form, but essence
leaving a legacy of evanescence.

Rubbed on wet stones to release
their pigments, her sticks yielded
a subtle ink, strikingly ephemeral.

Her ink imbibed by paper
precluded re-working even one line.
Movement and stasis were one.

Though a stand of bamboo



is more beautiful than a painting, still
she strived to make it live on paper.

She fused calligraphy
with abstract expressionism
in elegant, minimal compositions.

In her creativity, she embodied
its guiding principle and precept:
inspiration is an active process.

Tugged with fortune ...•

made with my own hands
my kite will be a good flyer

what makes it special
is the colour I choose

gold as the guiding star
on its first flight

you should have seen
how my kite flew higher than gulls

then the string snapped,
and off she went all the way to China



• *Macbeth, Act III, scene 1, William Shakespeare*

POSTERITY: IT'S POETRY

homage to anagram poet, Tin Whealman, Gleneng, Scotland

Walking on your ground, but do not own.

Open roads, but a map helps.

R

Laughter because it transcends language.

Dancing from the day we are born.

One umbrella for two in love.

Family is everything, always at your side.

Being, not doing.

Every day not too late to be kind.

Animals teach us to be human.

Unconditional love, the gift that need not be earned.

Trust in the Divine unseen that is seen everywhere.

Your first time and knowing it.



About Neal Whitman

Neal is a contest-winning member of the *California Federation of Chaparral Poets*, *Bay Area Poets Coalition*, and *Ina Coolbrith Circle*. His poems have also been awarded by the *United Poets Laureate International* and *Amici di Guido Gozzano*. Whitman is Vice President of the United Haiku and Tanka Society and member of the editorial team of *Pulse: Voices from the Heart of Medicine*.

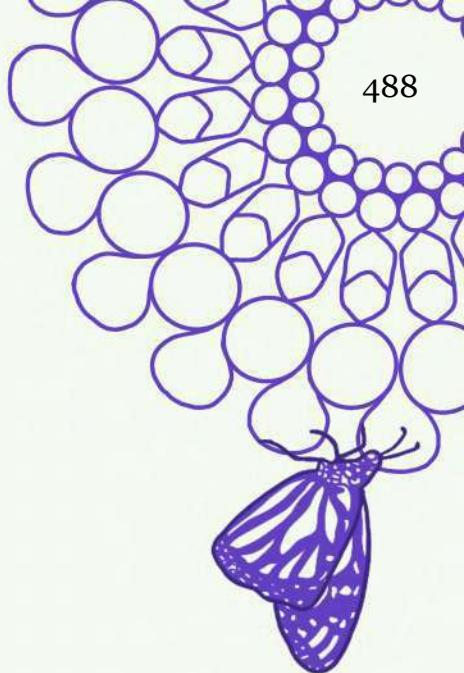


Colin Carberry
Ireland

THE BULLET

for Goran Simić

Afternoons were reserved for sweaty toil:
bare-chested labourers, with hoe and spade
we dug and hacked the mortar-blasted soil
of Ilidža - thoughts of unexploded
ordnance suppressed in a tacit, sustained
joint effort to snag a real war souvenir.
But all we gleaned from those drills that had lain
undisturbed since the siege were broken beer
bottles, tin cans, and a child's shoe. We'd meet
again in Toronto two months later,
at a blues bar on a dark, leaf-strewn street:
rooting through your pockets for a lighter,
you produced a spent, rain-rusted bullet,
the dust of your ghost homeland still in it.



GUANTÁNAMO POET

'In his cell, Dost wrote thousands of lines in a strict Pashto form of poetry similar to the sonnet: 14 lines of syllables, rhyming alternately after an opening couplet. A year after his imprisonment, when the detainees began receiving paper and pencils from the International Committee of the Red Cross, he was able to accelerate his output.'

—*The San Francisco Chronicle*

Fingered by a corrupt local Islamic cleric barbed
to the bone by your lampoons, you came to a heavily
drugged and shackled enemy combatant, a bright orange blur
being frog-marched through a coiled maze of mesh pens to Camp X-
Ray's
razor-wired heart; the bulldog rage of your Yahoo-captors;
sleepless terror when they failed to see the light side of your
five-million-Afghani bounty for Clinton's fatwaed head....
But those first desperate lines - *Just as the heart beats inside
the darkness of the body, so I, although in a cage,
continue to beat with life* - scratched on flattened paper cups
and passed on a ghost-pulley of threads torn from prayer-caps,
brought back the glitter into the gaze of your co-shadows
for whom your gift was the sole ray of sunlight that shattered
their daily night. Poet, gem-dealer, Abdul Rahman Muslim Dost.



About Colin Carberry

Colin is the author of the poetry collections and is the translator of *Love Poems* (Biblioasis, 2011), along with an earlier volume of Jaime Sabines verse. His work appeared in anthologies, journals and newspapers worldwide, and his poems have been translated into many languages. He was the *Writer in Residence* at the Heinrich Böll Cottage in July 2015, and has been awarded *Writers' Bursaries* by the Ontario Arts Council. Colin has read his work on radio and television, and at book fairs, embassies, festivals, prisons, and universities in different countries.



Driss Allouch
Morocco

CORRIDORS FOR THE STREETS OF LIGHT



To search for myself,
Synonym for the lack of a name,
I need a microscope of a retired scientist
A sieve to collect the splinters of truth ...
The hands of dusty clocks...
A bag of cold secrets..!

2

Maybe I find myself
As in yesterday's childhood
Full of absolute wonder
And whiteness of colours...

3

Expatriation smells of death
Its fingertips have the vastness of gravestone
This grave is mine, I will not leave it
Until the swaddle bids me
Until the ashes of the shroud bid me
What if he began to drink
Drinks the evening with his nudeness
The balcony of strangeness is wide open
In depression
Crave a travel ticket
To the workshops of birth
To the womb
Of Desert ...

4

The corridors of turtles are for loss
 Light for a maze of alleys
 The same distance of the protective shield
 of grief
 She risked air
 To render its cities
 And who is going to lament the bars
 Except wisdom wine
 I asked the glasses of history
 They became streams of eternity ...

5

Perhaps the depression of existence
 May urge my steps to walk
 Towards anonymous archipelagos of the self
 Or towards the dance of desires...
 The destruction of this age
 I risk it when I call it life
 The question of emotion remains
 Not in the lobby of the place
 Except for the contributions of gypsies
 Vines of the nomads
 And travel
 of the strong..!

6

Numerous in moments
 I sew time in solo
 First with the astonishment of narration
 Second by destroying the mirage
 I wander in hotbeds of riots
 Butterfly hovering in the patio
 And I leave the heat of noon
 To the exhilarations of sun ...



7

The shirt of diaspora
 Corresponded to the mailbox
 It admonishes the memory of a woman
 Who wears a sail instead of a mask
 Instead of illusion
 Question of this country
 Obsessed with the wall map ...

Translated by El Habib Louai



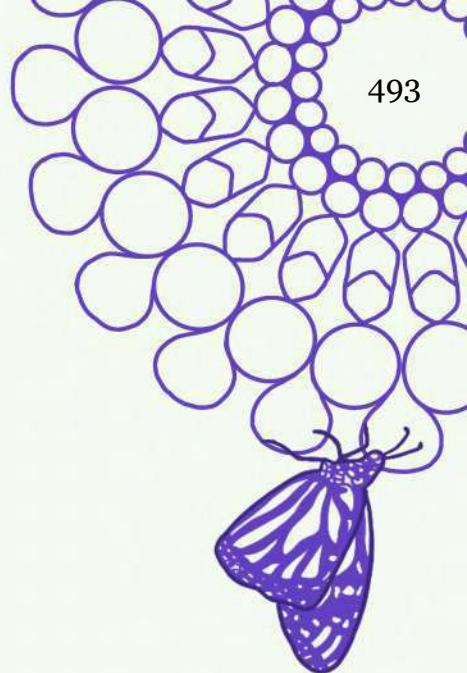
About Driss Allouch

A poet and a journalist, Driss publishes his writings in local, national and Arab press. He is a member in the Moroccan Union of Writers and prepares a program about the culture of Morocco for CAP radio Tanger. He has printed: *The Hand of the Wise* (Poetry, Damascus 2010), *Rotating Cylinder Poetry* (Dar Ain Cairo, 2011) and *Points of the Desired Nothingness* (Tunisia, 2011).



Andrei Sen-Senkov
Russia

BEACH IN ORBIT



for a while they sent cats out to belka, strelka and the other
space dogs
the cats would fly off but never came back
they just didn't want to
they just didn't understand why
they were heading out to outer space in the first place
and they would hang stars on their claws, stars
glittering like mice in the darkness
they'd head out cautious and lovely
like you
touching the water with one foot
before entering the naked sea

Translated by Ainsley Morse



About Andrei Sen-Senkov

Andrei was born in 1968 in Tajikistan and has written 17 books of poetry and prose. He was awarded the *Andrei Bely Prize* in 2018 and the *Special Prize of Moskovskiy Schyot* in 2019. A collection of his work in English, *Anatomical Theater*, won the *PEN Center USA translation Award* in 2015. Sen-Senkov's work has been translated into 29 languages and he now lives in Moscow.



Lilia Racheva
Bulgaria

1 POEM



stars in the eyes,
even the wind cannot
blow them out

whispers,
petals of camellia
in afternoon tea

hazy moon,
a violin playing
tango...

Translated by Radosvet Aleksandrov



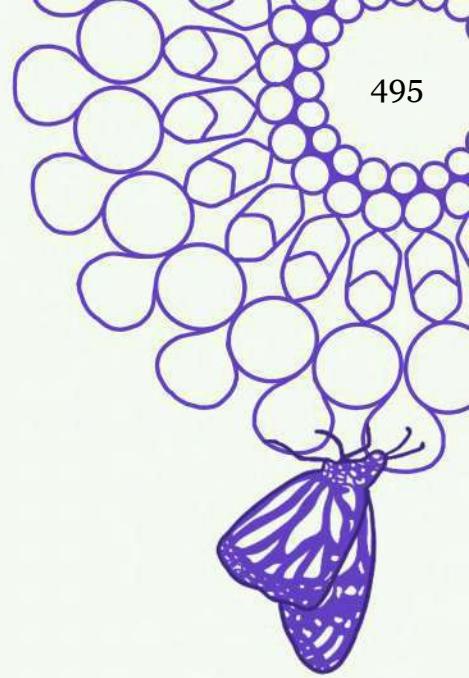
About Lilia Racheva Dencheva

Lilia is a 57 year old journalist in Radio "Rousse." She is passionate about haiku and has a book of her own, with poems. Dencheva's poetry also appears in different books including, "Pristine of love" (2001), "Invasive fires" (2005), European haiku "The Rose" (2003) and *World Haiku* (2010 -2018).



BREEZE

**Charles Edward York
Vietnam / United States**



An angel soft breeze blows through my mind
Where I paint pictures with words
And butterflies form as verse
Bringing me a new landscape and hope.

The undiscovered country
Becomes a cacophony of sounds
Colours and savory meanings
And florals bloom to their own rhythm.

A peacock strolls quietly into a poem
An array of new definitions
Unfurls into unlimited possibilities
And the scent of creativity blossoms.

You surface from the bluest ocean
Stroll into my senses unashamed
In metaphors and similes
That abound in one of a kind gestures.

I am enamoured by your elucidations
The way you express so silently

As if a whisper gently held
 A force, wisdom of persistence in your eyes.

The benignity of benevolence awakens
 A wave of little wonders floats
 From a deep mud of adversity comes
 Your art in beautiful prose.

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DARE TO DO GREAT UNSEEN

Dare to do great unseen
 Especially since the random act of kindness
 Seems to have swallowed shadows
 And gone inexplicably missing.

Dare to reach beyond you
 Wear your sensitive heart on your sleeve
 Openness not vulnerability is
 What the deceived hunger for most.

Dare to tell the truth out loud
 Even if it costs you something precious
 Only fools value shiny fallacies
 While the wise feast on what nourishes.

Dare to humble yourself
 And do your good deeds in the dark



Ego does things for applause
But genuine love serves for the cause!

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About Charles Edward York

Charles is an author and poet activist living in Ontario, Oregon. He's written over 1100 poems and published 14 books of poetry. Born in Vietnam and raised a citizen in Dallas, Texas, he writes poems that include the subjects of love, relationships, nature, astronomy and social justice, including police violence against African-Americans and minorities.



Yosuke Tanaka
Japan

LEMON

Winter, day.

Unable to withstand the sweetness that wells up within
When I think of a certain someone,

The sunlight is faint. Getting, tired out
That's right. An umbrella stolen,

I say that name.

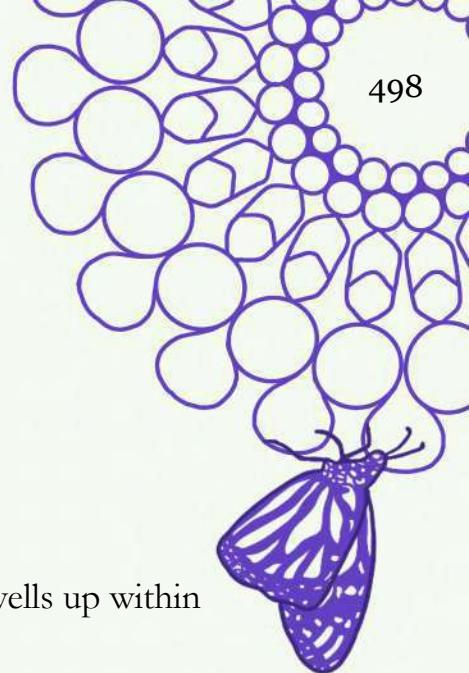
Fun, just for fun. If someone heard me I'd feel ashamed but still . . .
A newspaper filled with good news,

A boring show about traditional Japanese music. My personality
Breaking down even further, the oil on the hot plate
Splatters all over.

Green pepper. And eggplant
Slowly burning as they turn as if trying to twist their bodies.
Those games are over now. Over.

Even so, I still cannot withstand the sweetness
That wells up suddenly in my heart.

Lemon,
I wander on a diagonal through the cold wind
On a day, faintly winter.



Original publication by Yosuke Tanaka in Japanese: Poetry collection “Sweet na gunjyo no yume (Sweet Ultramarine Dreams)” (Michitani, Tokyo, 2008)
Translated by Jeffrey Angles was first published on Poetry International Web, 2008.

About Yosuke Tanaka

Yosuke (born in 1969) is the author of four poetry collections: *A Day When the Mountains Are Visible* (Shichōsha, 1999); *Sweet Ultramarine Dreams* (Michitani, 2008); *I'd Love to Go to Mont Saint-Michel* (Shichōsha, 2018), and *Pink Sandweight* (Shichōsha, 2021). Since 1989, he has served as the editor of Japanese poetry magazine *Kisaki*. When he is not writing poetry, Tanaka works as a molecular cell biologist.



THE BLUE STREAM¹

**Santhan Haridasan
India**



As ripe fruits fall from blossoming trees
So the enlightened ones leave their mortal bodies
In the blue stream.
I'm the blue stream, the Ganges.

To ascend the next world
The hermits immersed in meditation
Left their bodies in the water
Like birds winging away from their nests.

Although scores of corpses floated
The distressed folded their hands devoutly
Making the clear, beautiful blue stream
a river for suicide unawares.

Because of a spate of corpses in the stream
The space for water *samadhi*² was banned
Yet in this rare pandemic
The Ganges and the Prayag are a heap of corpses.

Those who dipped in water, performing *Aarathy*³
for release from sin on *maha kumbha mela*⁴
floated lamps in water
and prayed in burning agony

Now, lifeless they flow
 Into the depth of my being
 The place where I've merged into their tears
 Birth after birth.

Why should the dead be ostracised?
 shouldn't I be a support
 To my sons who saw me as their mother
 The men who groaned in anguish and died of the contagion.

I am a body of water holding to my bosom
 Corpses as *Siva*
 A pestilence-eaten body shouldn't be treated as alien
 Let me flow like a bier of corpses.

My long watery course can be reserved
 For those who died of the pandemic
 I am the blue stream that constantly
 Flows into the seashore.

Give me corpses, I shall bear them
 All the way from the Himalayas to the sea
 The sea will take them from my hands
 As a new-born babe passed from hand to hand.



¹The Ganges by the holy ghat Rishikesh where hermits abandon their mortal body on attaining Samadhi is known as blue stream or “neela dhara” which is the original title of this poem in Malayalam.

²Samadhi :A state of deep meditation resulting in union with or absorption into the infinite soul or ultimate reality. It marks the end of the mortal life of the devotee.



³*Aarathy*: A devotional ritual characterized by the offering of fire to mother Goddess Ganges. It is performed by a group of priests who bathe in the sacred sites of the Ganges, wearing special costumes and large lighted lamps, reciting devotional songs about the river Goddess.

⁴ *maha kumbha mela*: a grand religious festival held once in 12 years, in which a large member of monks of various orders take part and bathe in the sacred parts of the Ganges and its tributaries for the purification of sins.

Translated by Dr. S. Sreenivasan



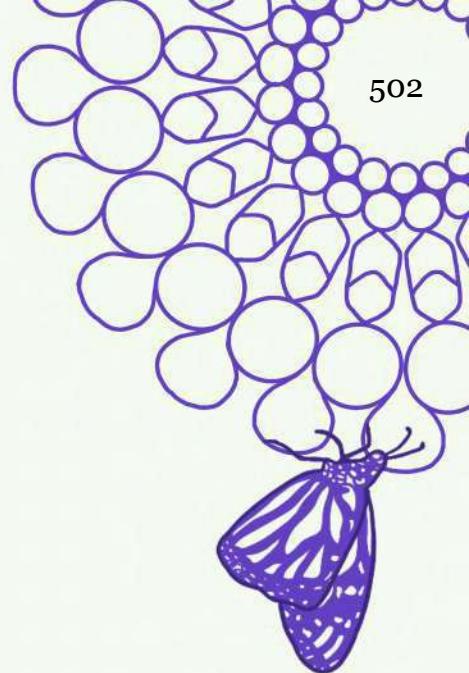
About Santhan Haridasan

Santhan is a Malayalam poet, essayist, and journalist. He won several awards including: Kumaran Asan Award for Best Young Poets for his first collection of poems *Riding on a Motorbike in the Rain*, the Ramachandran Poetry Award for his work *The Blue Stream*, and the Sri Raveendra Nathan Nair Smaraka Award for his series of essays on his experience with cancer patients at RCC, Thiruvananthapuram. He currently works there as a Technical officer in the Radiation Department. Santhan has also published a widely noted book, *Suvaranachakorathinte Kadha* about the international film festival of Kerala.



Jordi Doce
Spain

JOY



I open the door, and the scent of water
piercing the earth enters the room:
slow vapor that thickens the air and leaves
a seed of joy
on the skin:

the hours pass,
the rain doesn't let up,
the seed has grown a stalk
which tangles round my body;
outside it rains, but a sun rises up
before my eyes, which already forgets
the rain's defeated gray:

tree that offers light, not shadow,
beneath its branches
I smile, without knowing why.

NOON

Resplendent ritual of every day,
this sun that sounds the alarm
in the eye's plaza.

Time stops awhile:
it admires this rocket of sparrows
that crashes among the benches,

the willow's exclamation on a corner,
the swinging hunger of the children
who fly toward the tablecloth.

Faces and clouds pass,
faceless cars, old men in the clouds.
They go past and confirm me

beneath the brimming light of this moment.

Ripe fruit—
it offers me its juice without opening,

swollen with sap and presence,
happy to join me
in my fresh lesson of excess.

I understand for whom
the bells of the sun toll:
and my blood swells and rouses

at the recently-set table of *yes*.



INSTRUCTION MANUAL TO REBUILD A CITY

The language of war has ceased to serve us. It would be advisable if we stopped pronouncing certain sounds in every word. Those which, for example, require us to show our teeth.

Watch the children running among the ruins. There where they step new streets will open way.



Foundations have shown their fragility. From now on we'll build houses starting with the rooftops.

People have stopped shaking hands. To greet one another, they use parts of their bodies that have not been in contact with weapons.

At the start of every month families will move into their neighbour's house.

The clouds will stop taking on any shapes. The shadow of the bombings is not far off.

All the statues will be demolished. Only some pedestals will be left standing, paying homage to the disappeared.

At least once a week, empty boxes and windows will be displayed in the market stalls.

Where the dogs dig up bones from among the ruins new trees shall be planted.

At least once a week the children will fly kites to purify the skies.

All Poems Translated by Lawrence Schimel



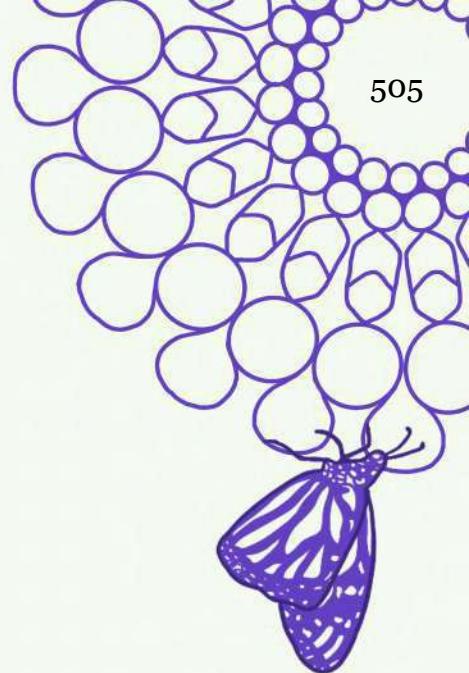
About Jordi Doce

Jordi is the author of six volumes of poetry including *No estábamos allí*, which was chosen as the Best Poetry Book of 2016 by the literary weekly *El Cultural* and has been recently published in the UK by Shearsman Books (*We Were Not There*), which also published *Nothing Is Lost. Selected Poems* in 2017. He lived in England from 1992 to 2000, where he worked as a Language Assistant at the University of Sheffield and The University of Oxford. Now living in Madrid, he is poetry editor at Galaxia Gutenberg Publishers.



Peter Semolič
Slovenia

LIPICA*



The hotel has been closed for years. You step
among the pillars in the lobby, wiping the dust off
the grass door. It is dark and empty in the middle of the day
as if it were 3 a.m. with even the receptionist

asleep, hidden behind the deserted desk. Underneath
the footsteps, in between the concrete slabs,
sprout weed and sorrow. You have never thought
such buildings could be pervaded with such

melancholy. You are not old. You just smell funny—
the nicotine and the loneliness increasingly filling
the voids in your body have impregnated your skin.
Therefore, you do not lower your eyelids to imagine women

and men, perhaps children, walking out of the elevator,
handing out their keys—the symbols of their fleeting
lives. Behind your back, a cloud obscures the sun.
All at once, you gaze into your eyes.

Lipica, 7 September 2018

*A settlement in the Slovenian Karst, near the Italian border, mostly known for its Lipizzaner horses.

Translated by Andrej Pleterski

FOREST

The forest starts right behind the house. Acacia and elder tree,
then beech, hornbeam and oak. Say the ‘cone’!

Do you feel how something primordial crawls under your skin,
something horrible, that has filled you with anxiety?

Cut. The path is no longer steep, the roots disappear
into the earth, leafy trees are replaced by the oasis of the high
spruce. The soil is brown, but now covered
with fallen needles. You can easily imagine

building a sanctuary here, to invent the crusty
God, who would smell of resin and defend the world against
rot. And punish those who in the multiplication
of annual rings see the multiplication of profit.

Cut. We decide to walk in silence.
I'm not thinking about the past or the future.
Just walk deeper and deeper into the forest.
Cut. I'm there. Above that slope. With legs

buried in black earth, and a head
full of green hair. The birds have a nest in them.



Translated by Antoine Cassar and Peter Semolič

COLOURS

Your eyes are blue, blue is your colour.

Near the evening, the yellow forsythia flowers and a full
moon above the apartment blocks close by – you have made a
step and I, though still brown, walk by your side,
suddenly no longer staggering, your step
is thirty-two years long and smells like an orange.



I haven't expected it, not even in a dream – tonight we
 shared in it white bread and then called forth,
 no longer in a dream, big red
 blossoms to our faces. Which colour is your favourite one?
 Which male singer? Which female one? Summertime sadness
 is behind us and the black voice of Lana del Rey is no longer a sign,
 but just another song like any other.
 Light green grass, dark green in the moonlight,
 you, who don't believe in yourself yet, I, who have believed in you
 from the moment you came with rosemary and mint,
 believe in us. The colour of your eyes changes
 with light, at night they shine with their own – two stars,
 no longer shrouded by any cloud of dark matter.

Translated by Barbara Jurša



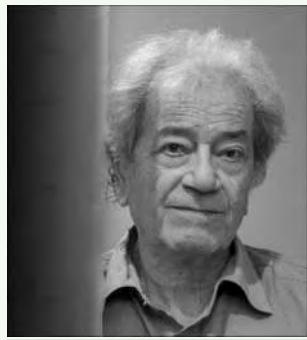
About Peter Semolič

Peter is the author of fifteen books of poetry including: *Night in the Middle of the Day* (2012), *The Other Shore* (2015), and *The Edges* (2020). He has received many prizes for his work, including the two most eminent awards in Slovenia, Jenko's Poetry Prize and the Prešeren Fundation Award (the National Award for Literature and Arts). In 1998, he also won the Vilenica Crystal Award and in 2016, the Velenjica award for “10 years of outstanding poetic work”. Semolič also writes plays, children’s literature and translates from English, French, Serbian and Croatian. He is co-founder and chief editor of the first Slovenian online poetry magazine, Poiesis.

BRANCH

7

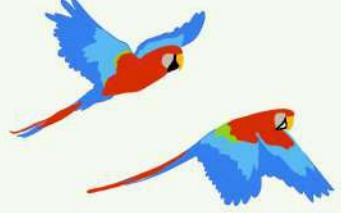
**FREEDOM'S
BIRD**



Beppe Costa
Italy
Photo taken by Dino Ignani

I'D DESIRE EARTH

I'd desire earth
the smell of leaves and ants
grass, dried tree branches,
I'd sit and watch my body
covering itself with insects



I'd desire the sea
let my body be covered with water
go down to the bottom
to discover light and extinguish it slowly
and die like a fish caught

I'd desire heaven
to pass through clouds and beyond
to intrigue birds,
which eventually fearlessly would start pecking
and fall back with no more heart

I'd like to hear it beating, the heart
to amplify until bursting
I'd like to think about my years
all together
to lose and restart again

I'd desire to drink much wine



to go insane, drunk with no more eyes to tell
 I'd like to run to the infinite
 and see me arriving always before me

I'd desire to shave my wrists well
 to drink my blood, to return clean and childlike
 and
 I'd very much desire you

Translated Into English by Giorgio Kotzalidis

INVISIBLE

Many dead people who have almost become invisible
 In poetry books, in white shrouds
 And in dark woods, continue to march silently
 Making no noise, so that they can avoid disturbing

Infinite crosses, sometimes visible, sewn
 On survivors, but we no longer see blood
 Roars of bombs and visions of torn bodies
 Have disappeared as if they were imagined miraculous massacres

We, men and women of letters, shared our “successes”
 Through our useless pieces of writing
 Nothing else seems neither to happen around nor to matter
 Invisibles so increasingly invisible to stony-hearted humans

What a sadness...

Translated Into English by Era Вицфард

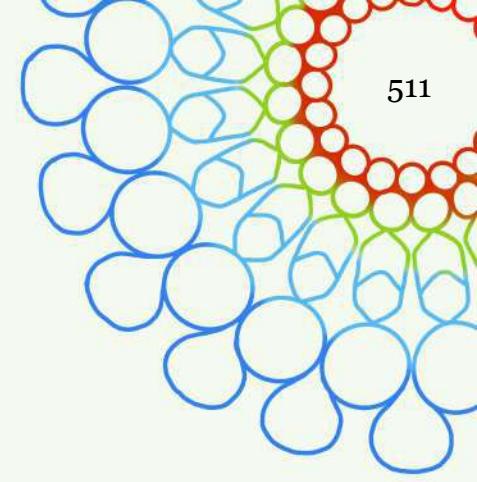
About Beppe Costa

Beppe Costa (Catania, 1941) is a writer, translator, publisher and founder of the publishing house Pellicanolibri. Author of over 20 books of fiction, poetry, theater, among the most important: *Romanzo siciliano* (1984/2017/19), *Rosso: poesie d'amore e di rivolta* (2013/2016), *L'ultima nuvola* (2016), *Per chi fa turni di notte* (2017) e *Il Poeta che amava le donne (e parlava coi muri)* (2017/2019). During the pandemic he managed to make a new CD completely online with the music of Nicola Alesini "Metà del tempo, poesia a due voci", published by Alfa Music in September 2021. He has been on tour for several tours with his video shows of music and poetry which are presented and translated into different languages such as English, German, Spanish, etc. Applied for the first time in Italy, the "*Bacchelli Law*" (1985) in favor of Anna Maria Ortese which was then approved for Costa in July 2020 by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.



Dr. Tian Yuan
China

ANTI-CREDO



The wind that whirled around you has scattered
 Clarity gives the sky extra height
 The tree we leaned against
 Begins to turn frail

Thereupon, you also scatter like wind
 Dimness of twilight descends
 Swallowing your footprints
 On the river's edge of memory I am
 An emptied-out, broken boat
 To evade a merciless storm
 I rest gasping on the bank

You have taken the wind with you
 An unfamiliar face
 Floats in the stultifying air
 Separating me from you
 Along the boundary of night and day
 The convoluted world tries on fancy costumes

A sojourner grows numb to loneliness and distance
 Floodwaters spread due to betrayal on the opposite bank
 Navigation lights are ruddy like an old lady's cheeks
 Writing parables across the river's surface

After your disappearance
 You will always be related to the river



After your disappearance
 I become the bodily remains of wind
 Strewn along the horizon

MEMORY

Like a subterranean river
 A person's memory purls along
 Never knowing weariness
 It flows beyond death

The memory of history
 Is like a great ocean never disappearing
 Though earth itself may be destroyed
 It will flow off toward other planets

The memory of god
 Is like the ever-silent sky
 Never uttering a word
 Even when truth is under attack

The memory of war
 Is a graveyard covered with shifting sands
 Even when shrapnel rusts away
 Sorrow will remain in that place

Trees cannot remember the colour green
 Though all is concealed in their growth rings
 It will be exposed by a steel saw, without mercy

All Poems Translated by Denis Mair



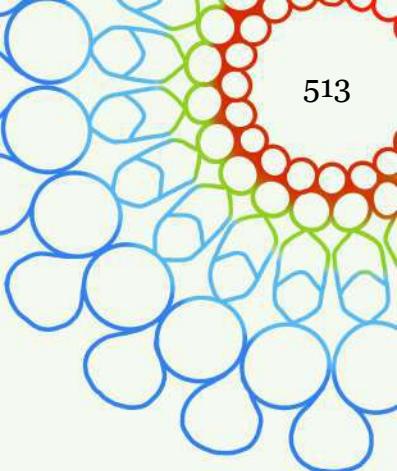
About Tian Yuan

Tian Yuan (1965) was born in Henan Province in China, and earned his doctorate in Japanese Literature from Ritsumeikan University. He currently teaches at Josai International University and his main publications include the Chinese volumes *Selected Poems of Tian Yuan* and *A Snake in Dreams*; the Chinese-English bilingual volume *Beijing-Tokyo Poems Composition*, and in Japanese, *Thus the Shore Was Born, Memory in Stone, A Snake in Dreams, Selected Poems of Tian Yuan*. His translated volumes include *Selected Poems of Tanikawa Shuntarō* (published in 16 volumes in Chinese), *Tsutsumi Seiji, Takahashi Mutsuo, Complete Works of Kaneko Misuzu*, and more. He has edited volumes such as *Tanikawa Shuntarō: Selected Poems: Volumes 1-4* (published by Shūeisha Bunko), his doctoral dissertation, *Theorizing Tanikawa Shuntarō* (published by Iwanami Shoten), and others. He has been awarded with 10th annual Shanghai Literature Award (2013), Overseas Chinese Poets Award (2015) and 1st annual Taiwan Pacific Translation Award (2017). His works have also been published in Mongolian and Korean translations.



- WRITING -

Samantha Barendson
France / Italy / Argentina



Writing is waiting. Writing is waiting for something to come. Writing is depending on when it will come. Writing is thinking that it will never come back again. Writing is wondering if it will come again. Writing is looking at the white page. Writing is leaving the computer and going back to the TV. Writing is looking at the white page. Writing is leaving the computer and eating something from the fridge. Writing is looking at the white page. Writing is pacing up and down and reading to forget. Writing is waiting. Writing is doubting. Writing is thinking that the next line will be never as good as the last one. Writing is doubting. Writing is stumbling. Writing is waiting. Writing is at last a moving hand. Writing is at last galloping fingers. Writing is lining up words, lengthening sentences, blackening sheets. Writing is every word a musical note on a score. Writing is music, rhythm, tempo, movement, measure. Writing is galloping horses in the mind, their typing hooves on the desk, their tails whipping the thoughts. Writing is a shot of adrenaline, accelerating pulse, pending breath, apnea. Writing is telling the others to leave you alone, to prepare their own dinner by ordering pizza. Writing is now or never, or it will slip away, back to waiting, back to doubting. Writing is a flash, a gap, a slap. Writing is a trance, an ecstasy, an alkaloidal delirium. Writing is reading and wondering where these words are from, from whose minds' hinterland, which floor, which basement. Writing is surprising. Writing is regaining consciousness and conquering text and tempo again, and galloping, *tatactatum*, *tatactatum*, *tatactatum*. Writing is a passing train. Writing is being on board and looking through the window. Writing is a passing landscape and eyes attempting to capture it. Writing is painting. Writing is being a pointillist. Writing is enjoying. Writing is coming.

Writing is orgasming. Writing is silence. Silence. Writing is marks, spots, circles and colours before the eyes. Writing is breathing, sighing, inspiring. Writing is reading aloud already-delivered words, reading aloud new-born sentences, speaking. Writing is daring to say. Writing is speaking. Writing is saying unsayable words, impalpable phrases, unpaintable spaces. Writing is risking poetry. And living.

Translated from French by the author and Jacky Luciani

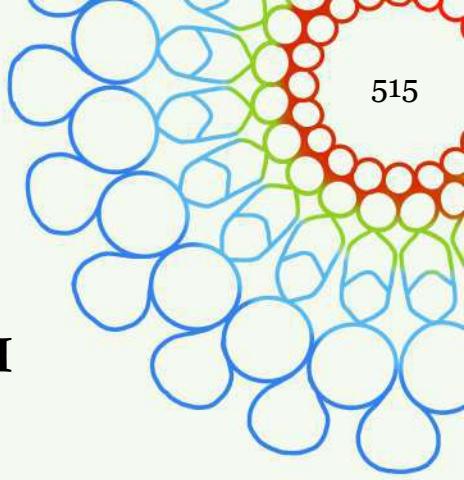
About Samantha Barendson

As a poet and novelist, Samantha is an active member of the collective Le syndicat des poètes qui vont mourir un jour (The union of poets who will die someday), whose purpose is to promote poetry for everyone and everywhere. Laureate of the 2015 René Leynaud poetry prize "Emergence & resistance", she received the Gina Chenouard creation grant in 2018 from the Société de gens de lettres. In 2019, she obtained a writing residency at the Villa Marguerite Yourcenar. Her novel, published in 2017, is titled *Mon citronnier* and her recent poetry work is *Americans don't walk / Les Américains ne marchent pas* (Le chat polaire, 2021)

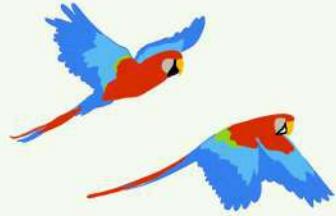




THE ROAD THROUGH THE WOODS



Dr. Ranjana Sharan Sinha
India



During a long drive,
a deep happiness
steals over me,
as I follow
infinite processions
of green shady trees:
Ubiquitous, spreading forever!
They become reflections
and appear in rear windshield,
I feel like dissolving into dreams!

I stop the car
for a sensory feast:
The dry leaves crackle
under my feet
while the green ones
susurrating in the breeze
allure me with endless whispers!
Far away canopies hang dense.



A wide array of mixed sounds:
Orchestra of birds,
chirping of crickets
mingle with the speaking silence!

I think about God and
marvel at His Creativity--
The mysterious Creator
with invisible benign hands!

MEMORY

Amid such a great flood of friends,
So many-- amounting to thousands:

Facebook App and other contacts,
I look for some precious alphabets,

And place them in the vast volume
Hemming and hawing in a big boom!

True friends are the greatest blessing,
Friendship is all about sincerely caring.

Being grown up, old or unyoung
Doesn't mean cessation of song--

Friendship with mutual trust,
Admiration without disgust:

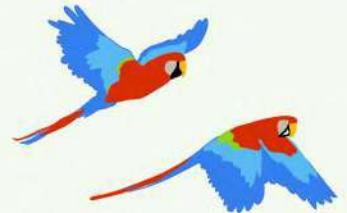
Adds charm and happiness to life
At times that's fraught with strife.

On life's roads in years advanced
With experience quite enhanced!

The golden time with friends I shared
Those days: how I loved and savoured!

The association with some angels:
Those memories of togetherness--

Like beautiful, dainty peach blossoms
In pink profusion on trees awesome:



In my sunlit courtyard blossoming
During a vibrant fascinating spring!

I remember all my childhood friends
And sharing with them the peaches!

Once again they come quite close, aye
In the fresh and lovely peach-like way!

Lo and behold, I go into orbit
On a crescent rainbow mist!

But the joy and dream break like eggs
As I think about fair-weather her friends--

Poisonous people in tough times:
Cold stones full of slippery slimes!



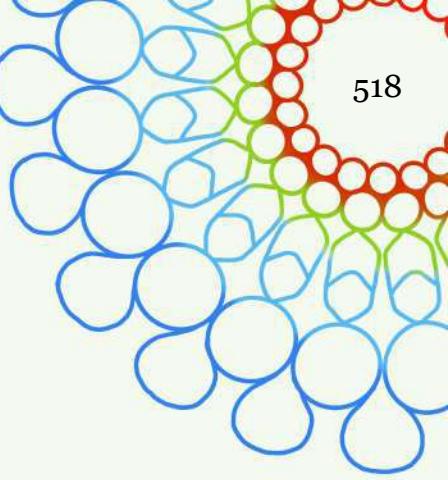
About Dr. Ranjana Sharan Sinha

Dr. Ranjana Sharan Sinha is an eminent poet, author and professor of English. Ranjana has authored nine books in different genres and 50 research papers. She has received a commendation from the former President of India, A.P.J.Abdul Kalam besides a number of awards for her contribution to poetry. Her recent awards in 2021 are: *Citation of Brightest Honour from Sufi International* (Bangalore), *Order of Shakespeare Medal from Motivational Strips* and *Independence Day Literary Honour* (Gujarat Sahitya Akademi).



Ertuğrul Erdoğan
Turkey

WARS ARE YOURS!



Give me the streets of my childhood!
 Take those bad years of mine, they are of warphilists.
 I don't want your rifle, your cannon!
 And your virus that suffocates people . . .
 I have missed the flowers in my garden.
 And the four o'clock flowers
 And the daisies standing innocently in the corner
 I have missed the flight of the insects,
 Wandering around the bulbs that give pale yellow light
 Over the tables laid under the stars
 In the dark of the night
 Ah mom!
 In a huge bowl
 She used to wash me up
 With a bar of soap
 That used to make my eyes smart.
 With beady droplets shining
 in the sun . . .
 Oh mom, you used to clean
 But the outside used to make our young bodies dirty.
 Wars are all yours,
 And also your kills.
 Give me back my marbles.
 All my dreams remained in them.
 I have also missed the cottonlike clouds,
 My future remained hidden in their shapes.
 Here I have missed!
 Its crumbs left on the handle of a candy apple,



And the games we played in the shade.
 Take my dirtied years from me!
 Life is very ugly, my dad!
 In fact exceedingly ugly!

Translated by Baki Yiğit

YOU SEE, YOU ARE GONE...

You see, in a flash, one morning you went



I found myself so destitute just like that,

In the middle of the street.

I went to see the room of yours,

I even did not make up the bed.

For long, it's been staying just like that

As if it is newly curled lips...

You see, you are gone,

Let your warmth not leave,

I even did not open the windows



For not having your breath flown,

Do you know my baby about this,

This morning, for the first time

I went out to the garden.

You know there is a cactus flower there

In that small vase you fancy,
 I stared at it...
 I caressed it,
 With my hands bleeding...
 You see, you are gone,
 Then I realised that my half was also gone.

21st November, 2018

Translated Into English by Mesut Senol

About Ertuğrul Erdoğan

Ertuğrul's stories (*Deliler Boat*, *Literature Watch*, *Üvercinka*, *Iblamur*) were published in printed media, literary magazines, newspapers and books. He even has a few novels such as "*Insects in Jar*", "*Candy of Candy*" and "*Corona Loneliness*." Literary interviews with world writers are ongoing and when completed, Erdoğan considers collecting them into a book. His books include: *Mor Gözdeki Hüzün* (Deha Publishing, 2014), *Mor Gözdeki Hüzün* (Hel Publishing, 2015) and *Sonrasız Kadınlar* (Lakin Publishing, 2015).

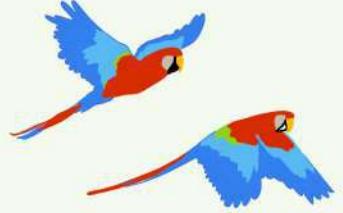




LETSVILLE

George M Momogos
South Africa

The light, plump, retires then unfolds again.
Let's unfold, with the greenish river,
the Half-Collard Kingfisher, the friction of its
feathers as it hangs in the wind, the river –
no, I'm double-dealing.



There is no river, no Kingfisher. Mostly my
sense lets me chaw on foolish figments.
We've ignored the friction our love spawns,
love that offers little resistance. My mind
notes, littered with doddles like Perfection
cannot save us.

A Chorister Robin-Chat streaks pass me,
its fiery underparts calling off my attention,
like a striking match. Let's not be dramatic,
as this is not a large love you hear. This is
a small love, but with learning on its face.



Come, let's unfold rather at the gates of hope
not the sagacious gate of sunniness, where
the light, plump, retires never again to unfold,
a place of truth telling.

Let's.

LOVE STORY

The stars orated in the night skies
 telling your story, listen;
 in another time and place, long
 fore time grew old, you

a flushing meadow, she a wild,
 scented flower who
 shieled at the heart of you, since
 you chased the curiosity
 of it all;

How, when the flush of love's light,
 falls on the fear of the
 uncertainty of it all, you stayed to
 fill her fancy with hope.

With the winds of likeness blowing
 the flushing meadow sees
 your heart, the saddest world, grow
 brave, to shield your wildflower.



About George M Momogos

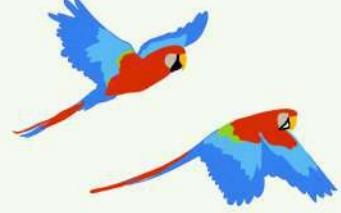
George's published works have appeared in *New Coin*, a prestigious South African poetry journal, the annual *Sol Plaatje European Union Poetry Award and Anthology* (published by the Jacana Literary Foundation), "Musing During a Time of Pandemic: A World Anthology of Poems on COVID-19" (2020), "I Can't Breathe: A Poetic Anthology of Social Justice" (2021), and he has work read on *Reels Rebels Radio: The Broken Verb* (London).



A SEA AND COLOURFUL FISH

**Azmy Abdel Wahab
Egypt**

Open the door;
I came to you by sea,
And tried hard
Not to lose one of
Its waves on the road.



You don't trust me
Since I came back with colourful fish
In a cage made of glass.

I didn't wash away salinity from the sea water
It wants to be dulcet on your lips.

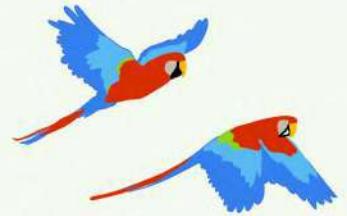
The sand on feet was
Nothing but your footprints
When you strode barefoot on the beach
To escape suicide between those
Accidental people who hate
The sea for personal reasons.
(It takes the ships away
And leaves yellow lights behind



That weighs the memory down by its dim glow
Before it fades away like a sick night.

O.k.

You are sleeping now
I will be back another time,
But you don't know
How that sea exhausted me;
I carried it on my shoulders
During all your sleeping years!

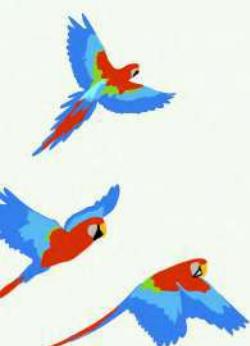


DESIRE

Travelling is a renewable desire
Whenever a woman is about to weep
And a poet is incapable of
Writing a poem
For a woman who
Kept her silk pillow clean
So that, upon it, the poet
Rests his head
And dreams.

A WORD

The word that hurts
Takes its origin from an everlasting mirage,
And moves me to tears.
The word that hurts
Is a lonely
Woman who flew



Towards the lofty balcony,
 But upon seeing the face of
 Sweetheart,
 It relinquished cruelty
 And turned soft.

OH DAD!

Oh dad!
 Couldn't you have chosen
 Another name for me,
 So that I can recognise myself
 If a voice from the past calls on me?

All Poems Translated by Nasr Abdulrahman

About Azmy Abdel Wahab

Wahab obtained a Bachelor of Arabic Language from Mansoura University. He is the head of the cultural department of Al-Ahram Al-Arabi magazine as well as Many Others Cultural media. Wahab's poems were published in most of the Arab periodicals and newspapers. His poems have been translated into several languages. He won several awards from Egyptian cultural institutions and published 8 collections of poetry in Cairo and Beirut as well as 4 prose books.

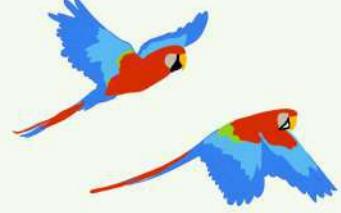
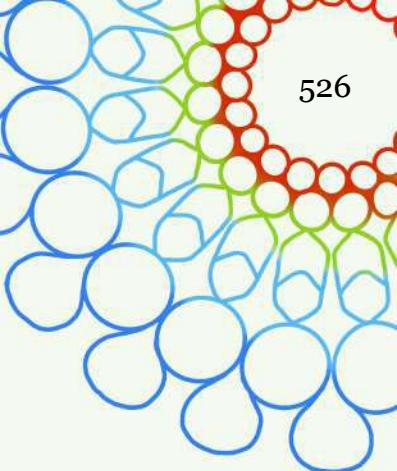




EXTRACTS FROM URUK'S ANTHEM

Adnan al-Sayegh
Iraq

Photo taken by Hussein Al Sikafi



We have no anchors, just ships that steal our memories
and sail away.

I come close to the sea, I touch the fading transparency
of the blue horizon.

How did you shine like my tears?
Did I spend too long awake?

.....
.....

It's for me to turn the millstone of words
to grind my soul for a girl drinking coffee in the morning,
to see other than the blue of this sky, a sky for your shining eyes
behind the iron of prisons and melancholy songs.

We suffer because poems last forever.

.....
.....

I lift my head from the lines to see
children playing with our legacy –
fields of bombs

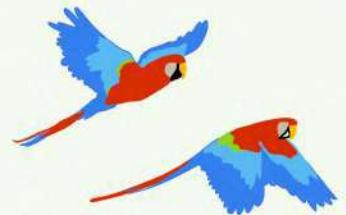


and young girls by the Tigris
 washing their faces
 so their beauty drains away to be drunk by the sea –
 how many of our dreams did the sea drink
 as we sat on the timeless stones of Babylonian wisdom?

.....

.....

I need a lifetime to add your wine to –



sweeping the war and crap out of the courtyard of my house,

I said: *I wait for you*

in the doorway

until the branch of longing buds

and then, between my eyes and your absence, grows into a jungle.

Why did I lose you, love, in a crowd of poems

(I see her on the other side of the pub,

she laughs, catches my thread of tears

and draws me near) whenever the airplanes pass

I remember Layla, who is sick

in the Iraqi foothills,

besieged by snow and gunners...



I crawl between the graves and our mines, sensing the tread of your soft
 songs subdued beneath the whistle of a wind that lulls the nights of
 sleeping villages

(my clothes wet with clouds and my heart a haven for finches.

Do you feel the soft down growing into a wing of impossible longing,
I must fly, fly...
to my homeland, to see you)



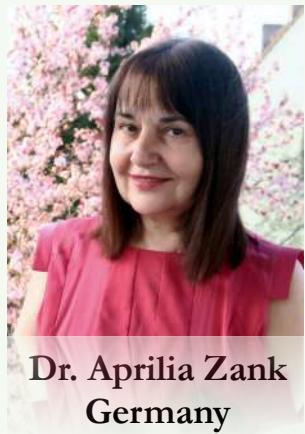
From: "Let me Tell You What I Saw...", Seren Books, Cardiff / United Kingdom 2020

Translated by Dr. Jenny Lewis and others

About Adnan al-Sayegh

Adnan al-Sayegh (1955) has published 11 collections of poetry, including the 550-page Uruk's Anthem (Beirut 1996). His poetry denounces the wars and dictatorships. He has received several international awards, and gets invited to read his poems in festivals across the world. Many of his poems have been translated in various languages. He is collaborating with Dr. Jenny Lewis on the project '*Writing Mesopotamia*' – which has resulted in a huge number of creative outcomes.

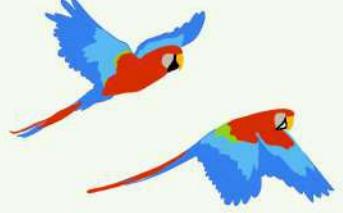




IN MY END IS MY BEGINNING

**Dr. Aprilia Zank
Germany**

there are cracks in the earth
baring sore roots
under a callous sun



there are birds
blinded by wandering dust
craving for shade

there are alien cells
in the grey mass
anxious to build new paradigms

there is a hope for rain
lingering on dry leaves
in dwindling woods

there is a seed in the earth
deep under silent ash
dreaming of germination



TO THE MOON - A SONNET

Since human eyes perceived you in the skies
And worshipped you in reverence and awe
You have bewitched the candid and the wise

And lured them with your beauty without flaw.

To wonder what you are I never cease:
 Are you a virgin, sorceress or nun,
 Are you Narcissus' guise in lucent seas,
 Are you all these in one, or are you none?

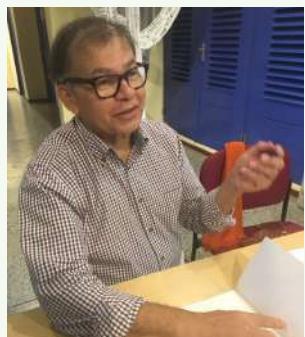
Do you rejoice with me on ardent nights,
 When shy you harken from behind a tree?
 Or never care about my joys and fights
 And only mind your cold geometry?

Androgynous creation, man or maid
 You are the alchemy of light and shade.

About Dr. Aprilia Zank

Dr. Aprilia Zank is a lecturer for Creative Writing and Translation Theory from Germany. Along with being a poet, translator, and editor of anthologies. She has written verses in English and German and was awarded prizes at the *Vera Piller Poetry Contest* (Switzerland) and at the *TwoWolz Press Poetry Chapbook Contest* (Great Britain). Her recent poetry collections are *BAREFOOT TO ARCADIA*, translated in Telugu (2018), and *READING THE SIGNS*, launched in the USA (2019). Aprilia has received wide recognition in both western and eastern countries for her merits and achievements. In 2018, she was awarded the title “Dr. Aprilia Zank – Germany Beat Poet Laureate – Lifetime”, by the National Beat Poetry Foundation (USA). Aprilia is also a passionate photographer: many of her images are prize winners and have been selected for poetry book covers.





**Quito Nicolaas
Aruba**

PRELUDE

*Highlight of everything in life
is in the hands of someone else.*



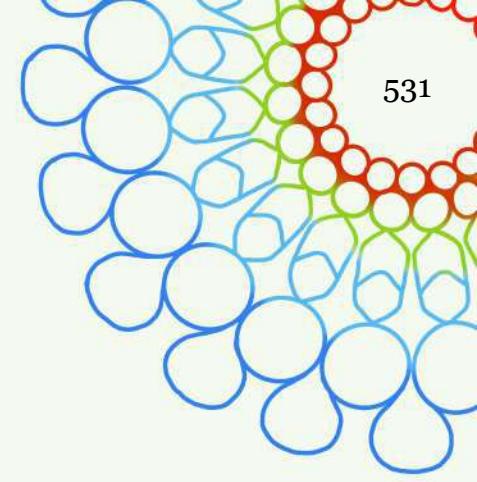
Take me in
your outburst
hug me, caress me
that I feel the colour of
your breasts.

A carpet of flowers
shoved under my feet
without detachment
to emigrate into
your body.

Bring the dinghy
closer to the coast
in my enthusiasm
you will forever
be my bride.



After a while
the sacrifices bubbled up



indigenous traditions
which buried unintentionally
the umbilical cord.

Because of heavenly love
when leaving the house
one starts a new alliance
between two lovers
climbing up another hill.



TWO BODIES

Memories can exist, as long as
One's self-esteem is recognised.

I feel isolated next to you
that the colour of your body
no longer speaks.

Sitting on the side,
separated by mountain ranges
saltwater puddles remain
hidden from each other.



In the evening, lying close to you
the wind doesn't even detect
any sense of human beings
from the past.

Locked in a cage
the door of sentiments opens.
that even the crystal voice
of your eyes no longer moves.

Courageous like no other
your smile once brought joy
transformed into an obsession.

Let it rain of new hope.

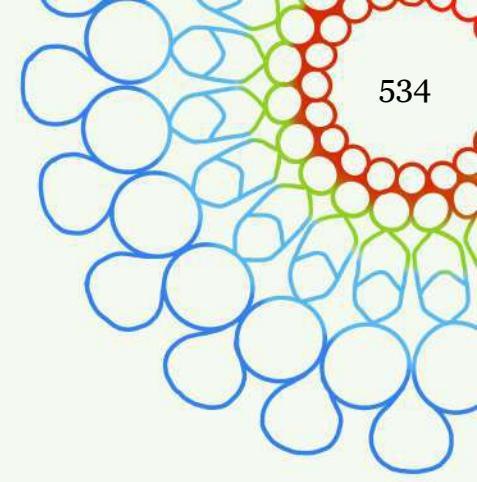
About Quito Nicolaas

Quito has published 13 books: eight poetry, three novels and two non-fiction. His poems are included in 15 different anthologies in several countries including Argentina, Bukarest and Indonesia. His articles and essays appear in various magazines and journals. *Kadans* (2006), the History of Literature of Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles, zoomed in on his oeuvre. In 'Balance: Aruban literary life' (2015), his work was discussed. His oeuvre is included in the Oxford University's *The Dictionary of Caribbean and Afro-Latin American biography* (2016).



Rudra Acharya
Bangladesh

CAPRICIOUS



Let the age be thirty-six

Let him be poor.

Be mad, be ever-sick

Be it widow, be it rape

Be it barren or virgin

Be it Hindu, Buddhist, Christian

Be a believer, an atheist - a priest

Whatever he is, whatever

Be drunk, be a smoker

Be it a dancer or a prostitute.

Whatever he is

Let there be only Bengali women-



May he have a beautiful mind

A little love

It will only be capricious.



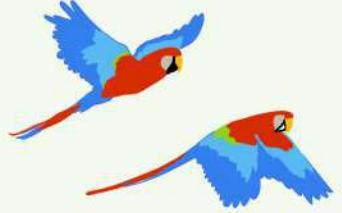
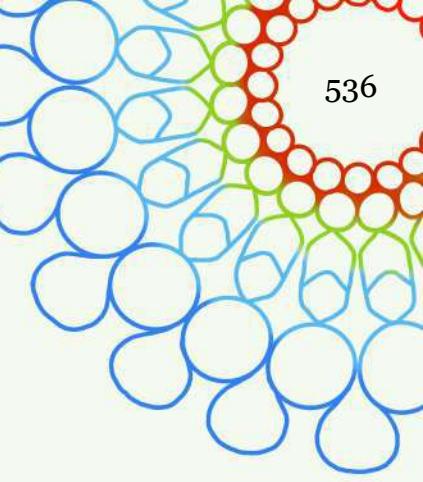
About Rudra Acharya

Rudra is a prolific poet, editor of Little Magazine and a cultural activist. His edited paper was widely acclaimed in both Bengalis and established the "Kavyasudha Open Library" for the study of the knowledge of the masses. The poet is living a farm-dependent life without involving himself in his job, and he has continued his literary pursuits.



Oulaya Drissi El Bouzaidi
Morocco

ALL



Why won't you come?

In a past life

I intended to become the sea

But my waves were at a funeral

I intended to become a tree

But my leaves went out on a date with the wind

I intended to become a mountain

But my back was naked in the open

I intended to become the soil

But my rain was pouring

I intended to become the shadow

But the smoke was fighting

I intended to become a bird

But the forest was on the hunt

I intended to become a turtle

But my back was at war



I intended to become a frog
But my croak was up in the sky
I intended to become a rose
But my scent ceased to exist
I intended to become the light
But my gloom was in a night spot
I intended to become the path
But my memory was confused
I intended to become the devil
But my grandma was on my back
I intended to become a goddess
But my mother covered me in my sleep
I intended to never exist
But my father begot me



I am a tree.

Would you like to check if my heart is green?

Before she gave birth to me,
my kicks put a smile on her face,
if only she knew I was hammering a nail



to keep me from falling down
her womb.

Translated Into English by Youssef Elharrak

About Oulaya Drissi El Bouzaidi

Poet and member of the Union of Moroccan writers, the work of Oulaya includes: *A long-winged air* (Dar Tawhidi Publication, Arabic, 2014; Edilivre Publications, English, 2017), *Shadows falling upwards* (2015) and *Roses imitate me to fall* 2018 (Dar Tawhidi Publications, 2018).

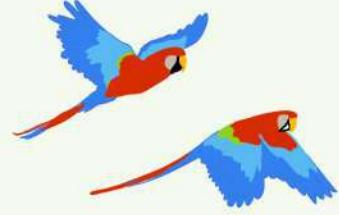




Xanthi Hondrou-Hill
Greece

CEASEFIRE

In the Ceasefire
 I am using the time
 to take flowers and tears
 to the battlefield
 where the blood
 of my brothers
 is drowning
 the earth
 to heal the wound
 the eternal wound
 of war



VIEW

From there
 where you are standing
 you can always see
 just what you have
 inside you.
 From there
 you recognise
 love
 and beasts
 lonely paths
 and maybe at some point
 salvation.



About Xanthi Hondrou-Hill

Xanthi has worked as a multilingual teacher, journalist, public relations manager and translator for poetry. Her poems have been published in the University Newspaper of Stuttgart and in big newspapers like Stuttgarter Zeitung. Additionally she participated in anthologies in cooperation with the Greek Society of Writers in Germany, "*Gute Reise meine Augen*" and the yearly anthology of the House of Writers in Stuttgart, "*Almanac*". Her poems have been translated into several languages and are published in media around the world like The Poet, Opa and Silk Road Anthology. She has recently won the Golden Prize in the Chinese Poetry Competition.



PLANET SONGS

Sue Hubbard
United Kingdom

I am full of galaxies,
a black hole where each nerve,

each synapse connects me
to a fishnet of stars.

Darkness dissolves
this glass-spun constellation,

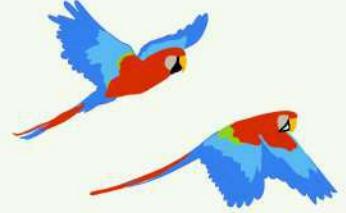
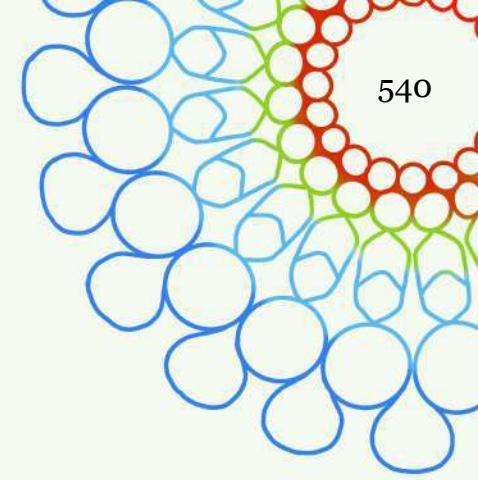
this matrix of beginnings and ends.
In time everything collapses.

Planets, houses, love, crumbling
like the dust of old bones.

Three in the morning
and a patina of moonlight

slips beneath the curtain's milky edge,
filling the curved emptiness with

a sheen of cosmic dust, a helix
of light in the dark mauve.



THE WEB OF THINGS

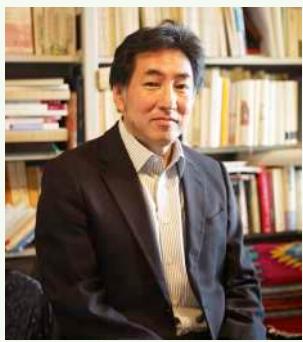
The wind wanted to sing
 so decked its head
 with a coronet of bird's down,
 gathered up a timpani of raindrops,
 cloud symphonies
 and thunderous drum-rolls,
 a bolt of lightning
 streaking through the white dawn sky.

All that fluency, judging
 nothing, selling nothing
 just filling spent gullies
 and the crannies of old trees,
 blowing over school yards
 and car parks, ruined
 villages and parched fields
 with its fragile song,
 over this web of things:
 the cat's saucer of milk,
 a child sucking its wet thumb,
 those stained sheets that smell of home.
 Singing up our life. This life of things:
 The things within
 us.



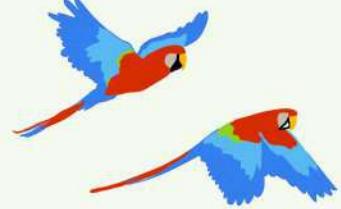
About Sue Hubbard

Sue is an award-winning poet, novelist, broadcaster and art critic. Twice winner of the London Writers Competition and winner of third prize in the National Poetry Competition, her publications include *Everything Begins with the Skin* (Enitharmon), *Ghost Station* and *The Idea of Islands*: a collaboration with the artist Donald Teskey (Occasional Press, Ireland). Her poems have been read on *Poetry Please*, *The Verb* and *Front Row* and appeared in *The Irish Times*, *The Observer* and numerous magazines and anthologies and been recorded for the *Poetry Archive*.



Shoichiro Iwakiri
Japan

GRASS FIELD



I open the window...a cold air
 ...open the window...a cold air
 ...hyper-height buildings are being built, each blocking a corner of the sky
 ...years are immersed under the water...
 ...a wild animal is wandering
 hungry
 a wild animal doesn't have a window
 I have a key in my pocket and gather herbs of early spring...sleeping awake...
 (like roses full of elementary particles ?)
 ...in the winter
 the tip of your elbow was swaying...
 I remember flowers of Chinese Trumpet Vine
 looking like a dream wearing pajamas that is overhanging to a daylight...Oh, a
 memory comes back to me : it was June
 holding the eggs of a crow, and white flowers of *bouttuynia cordata*...
 A day is now wearing twilight and darkens
 ...above us...
 with a memory of a field of grass...

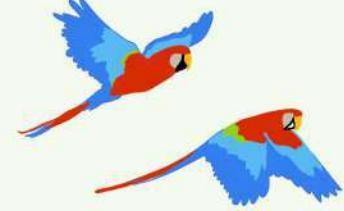
About Shoichiro Iwakiri

Shoichiro participated in the International Poetry Festival in Genova in 2004, and Rotterdam International Poetry Festival in 2008. He has translated many French dramas into Japanese (Racine, Giraudoux, Anouïh, Camus, Sartre, Vian, Beckett, Reza, etc.) and was the laureate of Yuasa Yoshiko Prize for the best translation 2008. He is a baudelairian and writes articles on Baudelaire. His most recent poetry book is *Hapax* (Shicho-sha, 2019. In Japanese). He is a professor of French Literature at the International Christian University, and serves as the president since 2020.



NAMES AND NATIONS WILL CHANGE

Ali Hussein Al-Failakawi
Kuwait



The strong, smart and greedy men

Draw big borders

They say: You are French,

You are Arab

...And you are

Then the strong, smart and greedy men

Draw bigger borders

They say: You are Asian

You are European

...And you are

The strong, smart and greedy men

Will come

They erase all lines

Then draw new borders



Names will change
So will nations

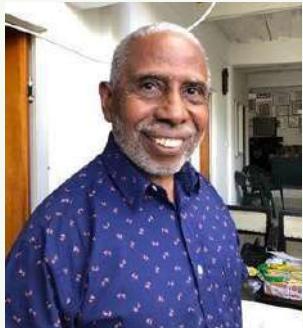
I still face a white sheet
Where I am now
I know neither name
Nor nation.

Translated by Mohamed Jalid, journalist and translator from Morocco



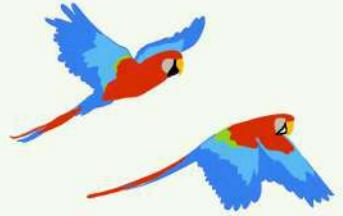
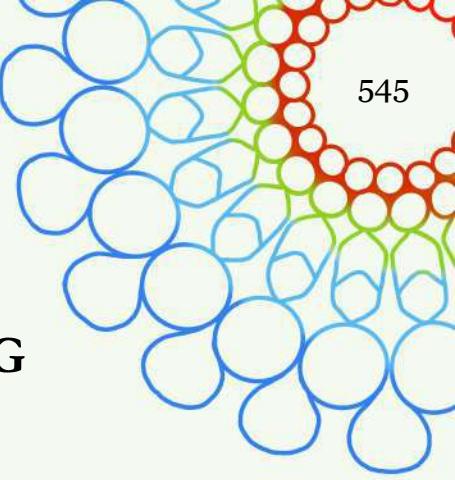
About Ali Hussein Al-Failakawi

Ali Hussein Al-Failakawi was born in Kuwait 1965 and has published five collections of poetry. He holds a Master's Degree in History and is also a member of the Kuwaiti Writer's Association. To date, two of his novels have been published.



Pedro Licona
Colombia

SOMETHING IS WRONG



They lose track of time and space

They wish more land, more blood, more submission.

And in the mountains, far away, the grass sprout

Haughty,

Coquette;

After the rain,

to seduce the hearts of other men

With the breath of remoteness

With the throbbing of a voice announcing disasters

Where something is wrong, smells bad, tastes bad.



Then the human chest beats

Strong, with the ashes call

And in the ticket of the jungle the animals scream,

The men shout, while they run away;

Then shut up



When the rivers run impatiently

Animated by the blows of a mountain of stones

Next to the distant game and the centuries to come.

TO AFFIRM THE FEET OF MEN ON THE FOREIGN LAND

When the lights roll in silence

The night calls for calm

Voices sprout from dust

Dissect the suns, the anguishes



And destroy the mountains by order of vigilant fools.

The wake time finally begins

After the dream, the intention.

The migrant's ears shake,

And a cascade of lights falls from the sky,

To affirm the feet of men on the foreign land.

All Poems Translated by the poet Mariela Cordero

Venezuela

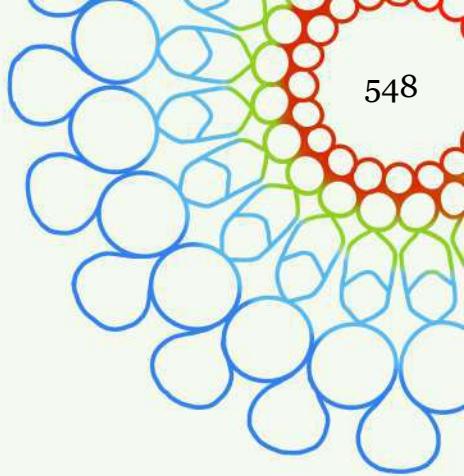


About Pedro Licona

Poet, novelist and short story writer, Pedro is a graduate in Philology. He has published *Lamps of my Earth* (stories, 1983), *Champion of Dreams* (1984) and poetry books including *Journey on foot to Akasha* (1991), *Recipe to call love* (2006), *Landscape of Memory*, 2008; *The Touch of Time* (2009), *Illusion* (2017). He has also published novels: *7 and 45* (2007), *Sambapalo* (2011) and *Tiempo de Gracia* (2014).



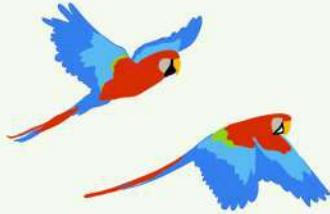
3 HAIKUS



Samo Kreutz
Slovenia

Haiku 1

summer morning
marble war monument
still so cold



Haiku 2

anti-war protest
among the participants
the sunshine

Haiku 3

hoping
for both of us
a foster dog



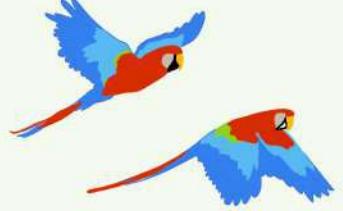
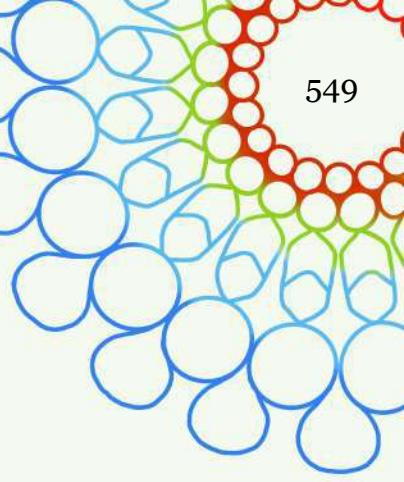
About Samo Kreutz

Besides poetry (which he has been writing since he was eight years old), Samo writes novels, short stories, and haiku. He is the author of nine books in Slovene, all published by the Ekslibris publishing house in Ljubljana, and one in English, a haiku book titled *The Stars for Tonight*, which was published by Cyberwit.net from India. His recent work has appeared on international websites (and journals), such as Ariel Chart: International Literary Journal, Better than Starbucks: Poetry and Fiction Journal, The Bamboo Hut, The Big Windows Review, and others.



Tarek Eltayeb
Sudan

BRANCH OF LIFE



I chopped it off thoughtlessly,
 that branch in my garden,
 that had moved in the wind,
 gave it to my son
 to play with.
 He moved it, once, twice,
 then threw it away, carelessly.
 The branch lay on the ground, motionless.

Slowly I looked up
 at the amputated tree
 when a wind sprang up suddenly.
 It made me think of a tree
 that had waved at me
 not too long ago
 with its branch of life.



COFFEE AND WATER

A hundred times a day, he says,
 “I’ll have to return. Here, there is no mercy.”

There, there is kindness and warmth and ...”
 Then he falls silent.

I ask him, “There?
 Where is that?”
 He points somewhere.
 His face is expressionless,
 and he does not say anything anymore.



I take his hand.
 We go to a café
 and sit down at a quiet corner table.
 I order coffee for him
 and water for me.

I speak to him in Arabic
 and mix water into the coffee.
 He is annoyed, “Are you crazy?”

He tries to remove the water
 from the coffee.

He tries to.

He tries to get the water back
 into the water.



IN A NARROW LANE

This narrow lane makes you
 push through the crowd,
 first from the left, then from the right.
 Makes you

greet the people passing by,
 bumping into some.
 You quarrel,
 and you apologise.
 It makes you
 jostle against little children with your knees,
 children playing there.
 The narrow lane makes you
 slow down,
 avoid a passing beast of burden.
 Makes you
 change sides
 to escape the heat.
 Makes you
 accelerate your thinking
 and reduce your speed
 on your way home.

And finally, it makes you
 follow the café owner's invitations,
 and you sit down at a table.

You watch the life in the lane,
 you order tea and a water pipe,
 and you smile about the hardships of the way.

All Poems Translated by Wolfgang Astelbauer



About Tarek Eltayeb

Tarek is currently teaching at three universities in Austria. He has published five novels, two collections of short stories, five poetry collections, one play in Arabic, one autobiography and a collection of essays. His last poetry collections, *Not Sin*, were published in Cairo and Khartoum in 2021. In 2018, he published a novel titled “*Nude, I Go Wandering*” in Cairo. In 2021, he published the novel “*Friulous Little God*” in Tunis. His books have been translated to several languages and appeared in various literary anthologies, magazines, and journals worldwide.

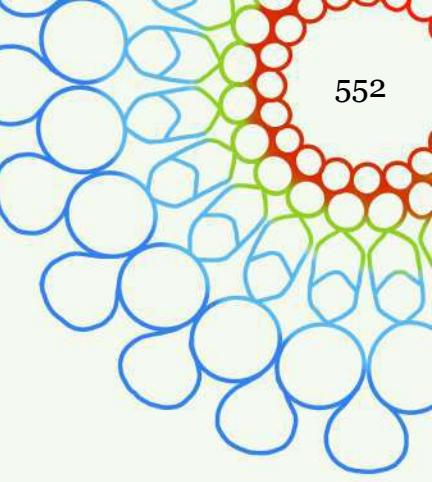


Mark Saba
United States

THE TREES KNOW MY NAME

The trees know my name.
I hear it in the wind
that rustles their branches
as I walk by. If I become immersed
in my own thoughts they beckon me
with a gentle creaking, having passed it
from one to another along deep roots.

They only do this when I am alone
when the green and blue ceiling
breaks open, a barred owl hoots
and turkeys dart across the road.
The further I walk, the more they hold out
their tangled arms to me, wanting
my company. The more they convince me
that theirs is the world I belong to
that I could walk forever around the globe
and never know another, that their wish,
transmitted in silence, reach all of us
one walk at a time.



STEP OUT OF MY COVID SPACE STATION

Where I've been sequestered all these months
 looking down on a slowly spinning globe
 unable to take part in greetings,
 in arms touching and mouths open wide

in laughter. It's too soon for me
 to be floating above, too dark, too lonely
 hearing nothing but the sound of empty space.
 I've pondered the loveliness of Earth,

my back to the Moon, stars competing
 to draw my attention. But I will not.
 I will not go to them, nor anywhere else.
 I wish only for the gravity of my memories

and the cold hand of the future,
 the light and the dark together
 offering me wakefulness and gentle sleep
 as it caresses me into tomorrows.

Tired of weightlessness, I want my body
 to be pulled in the direction
 of humid green, sand, blue water;
 I want to hear the echoes

of many words, the many tongues
 that have spoken through centuries
 and cast a net over my thoughts.
 I must articulate in the oxygen

of others, inhale the warm breath
 that stirs us, that keeps up bound
 to our individual rendezvous,



lost in the thick of it, never again
imprisoned in lofty omniscience
looking down on what was.



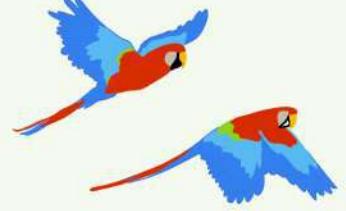
About Mark Saba

Mark has been writing fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction for 40 years. His book publications include four works of fiction and three of poetry, most recently *"Two Novellas: A Luke of All Ages / Fire and Ice"* (fiction), *"Calling the Names"* (poetry) and *"Ghost Tracks: Stories of Pittsburgh Past."* His work has appeared widely in literary magazines around the U.S. and abroad. He is also a painter and recently retired as a medical illustrator at Yale University.



COLLISION

Attila F. Balázs
Romania



when
you met me
I was going through a strange time
I was collecting alligators
scorpions and rattlesnakes
I was pecking on feminine souls
like a diligent woodpecker that
pecks rotting branches
I filled the pillowcase
with words
it was soft beneath your head
and now uncomfortable

I palled around with death
I tested it with a frontal collision
the law of action – reaction

I didn't understand why every traffic light
turned red in front of my nose

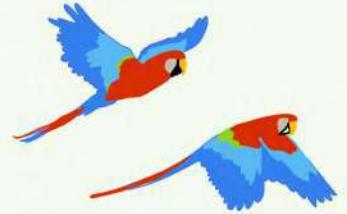
In every relationship
I sought a state of repose



as a safe
relaxing nest
but the puffball exploded
and the rug was pulled out
from beneath my feet

the chair leg broke
the prop tilted
the handrail buckled
and a storm came up suddenly
impossible to prepare for it

that's why I nestled up to your breasts
like a restless wandering student, a wizard
looking for the security
that my mother had once given
but the delicate twitching of my body
showed you
that my dreams are always uneasy
and when I lay in your arms wasted
and emptied
mimicking bliss
I rush there
at a dizzying speed
on an unfamiliar speedway
toward another collision



DOOR LEFT OPEN

dust kittens
preserve the mood
the fragrance

the secrets
 in the innermost recesses
 when you went away
 you forgot to take your shadow
 which lies impassively on things
 as you once lay on the couch
 the pulsation of your artery
 sets in motion waves
 in another body
 we left the door of our memory
 open
 and now every wandering breeze
 makes it flap open and shut?
 you place the words
 like the pieces of a puzzle
 you don't manage to finish it
 you keep starting over
 you look at
 the death throes
 of feelings
 the glass tiles glitter
 on the path toward you
 I don't know yet
 whether I will start off toward you on bare feet

All Poems Translated by Elizabeth Csicsery-Rónay



About Attila F. Balázs

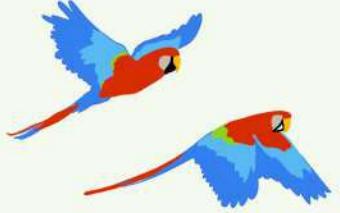
Attila F. Balázs (1954) was born in Târgu Mureş, Transsylvania. He studied at the Institute of Catholic Theology in Alba Iulia and graduated in Library science and Literary translation in Bucharest. He founded AB-ART Publishing, 1994 (Bratislava) and is a member of the Hungarian Writers' Union, European Academy of Sciences; Arts and letters, Paris; Writers' Union of Romania; Hungarian PEN Club; Writers' Association of Slovakia. Attila has written more than a dozen collections of poetry, which has been translated in 25 languages and has translated more than 35 books of poetry and fiction, based on which he has received numerous awards and prizes in acknowledgement of his various literary activities, *Opera Omnia Arghezi Prize* (Romania 2014), *EASAL Prize* (Paris, 2020), *Lukijan Mušicki Award* (Belgrad, 2019). In 2018, the Board of Trustees of the World Academy of Arts and Culture confers to Attila F. Balázs The Honorary Degree of Doctor of Literature.



**Abol Froushan
Iran**

REINCARNATION

In those invasions of my psyche
 By the milling grass down by the
 Smallest river the path becomes
 Shady and the sound liquid like
 Gargling through the bed of
 Circumstances put in perspective
 In an elongated diagonal view



Relations appear in different guises
 Much younger as children or
 Somewhat altered in identity or face
 Or in some cases they are there but
 Never looked at - just a companion
 In my adventure through blue or some
 Purple hues in a sunset I long to capture
 On camera but can't since this realm
 Like the militarised zone has photography
 Prohibited except through the shutters of memory
 which it also tries to wipe clean
 By mine or yours or everyone's opening eyelids



HOPE'S ENVIRONS

In the vicinity of hope
 There was a town of

One hundred acres
Four stories high and
Receding into a distance

Hunger brewed an infusion
Force lauded it forward
Decades passed unarmed

Acres echoed the silencing

Winters or sprouting sprigs
Brooks and flows of wind
Or shrubs never knew
What hid in the heart of a
Girl that hungered to create
Her father and be loved

Only the four storied houses
next to the hospital
knew how she held his hands
And walked in
With a balloon shaped bottle
Oozing tetracycline to a teaspoon

The father holding her hand
Putting her to bed reading
The most salivatory spirit of song
Where hunger grew out
Of that infusion of hope
And yearning

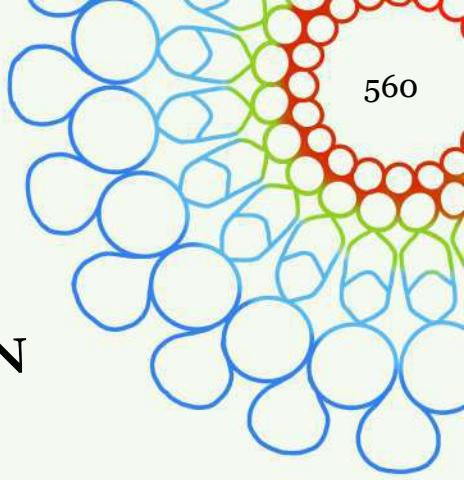


About Abol Froushan

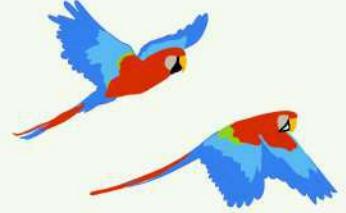
Abol Froushan has pursued a hybrid career in poetry, translation and criticism and digital architecture, he currently lives and works in London. He serves as an Associate of Post Colonial Studies at NTU and has a PhD from Imperial College with a long career in digital transformation in industry. Abol is the Iran Editor of Poetry International, and erstwhile chair of Exiled Writers Ink, UK. Two selections of Abol's poetry have been published: *A Language Against Language* (English, 2008 by EWI) and the bilingual volume, *I need your desert for my sneeze* (in Persian & English, 2009 by PoetryPub). Other publications include English translations of Ali Abdolrezaei: *No one says yes twice*, (2012, by London Skool).



AMAZON, I HAVE SEEN YOU



José Muchnik
Argentina



2 Extracts From Amazon, I Have Seen You

1

I have seen the earth
the earth in ashes
wrecked as far as the horizon

mother earth
our sweetheart
creator of song
and the bones
of voices
and of fish

a shamed earth
with no face for flowers

2

I have seen parrots crying
the absence of their loves

I have seen tourists buying
exotic feathers



I have seen cows
one cow
two cows
three cows

highways of cattle
nose to tail towards market

my kingdom
for a cow

one cow
for seven forests

one forest
half a hamburger
(a few dribbles of ketchup
as tribute to the tomato
a few grams of mustard
in the innards of bread)

All Translated from Spanish (Argentine) by Gerry Loose



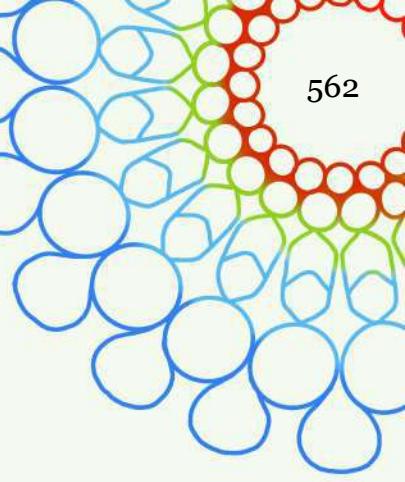
About José Muchnik

Poet and anthropologist, José has lived in France since 1976 and obtained a doctorate in anthropology in the *École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales* of Paris. He specialised in the study of local food cultures, going through diverse countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. He published numerous books of poetry, novels, anthropological works and he made photographic exhibitions. His recent publications include “*Di-amants*” (2020, ed. CICCUS), “*Quarantine poems*” (2020 ed. CICCUS) and “*Déchirures*” (2020, French, ed. Unicité).



Hannie Rouweler
Netherlands

AUTUMN IN OCTOBER



Another autumn that is hiding behind other autumn days
 like a folding harmonium of the same similar hours,
 the days shorter, the light that breaks through heavy clouds
 hanging severely above the landscape of meadows, houses,
 neighbourhoods with trees along streets. Another autumn forcing us
 to think about the end of flowering that continues in yellow, reddish,
 and brown foliage, the rotting of leftover flowers in gardens.

An old woman can no longer be seen behind the windows of the
 opposite flat building, someone has been tending her orphaned plants for weeks.
 The balconies are no longer filled with voices in the evening, in the night,
 the noisy chatter, buzz until the wee hours.
 Another autumn that merges with all other autumns with rain showers
 straight from heaven, which no one spares. The sad elongated song
 of all that passes and does not return in the same form,
 except the after-bloom, the whispering of words in the early evening.



BEAUTY

Beauty has burned its face –
 these words were not a prophecy but a statement
 not a supposed argument
 but a fixed fact
 like putting apples on a scale and pressing a button
 the ticket jumps out of the machine
 you paste it on a plastic bag and pay at the cash register



people know damn well why beauty
 burned its face – everyone gives a reason
 points to the other
 points to history
 points to a group of people that has responsibilities
 and they also refer to others
 the great decision makers of the big right of what should be done



in the end you should be happy if you have nothing to do with it
 that you are in no way a part of it
 that you reject it because it's wrong it's filthy and dirty
 and whoever has a nose knows that it smells bad.

So we seek the innocence in the smallest thing,

which hardly has a right to exist.

That's beauty. The smallest thing and what does not stand out

and wonderfully smells of green and fresh every day.



About Hannie Rouweler

Poet and translator, Hannie's sources of inspiration are nature, love, loss, childhood memories and travel. In 1988 , she debuted with Raindrops On The Water. Since then, about 40 poetry volumes have been published, including translations in foreign languages (Polish, Romanian, Spanish, French, Norwegian, English). Hannie writes about a variety of diverse topics. 'Poetry is on the street, for the taking', is an adage for her. She is a member of the Advisory Board of the yearly Kritya festival in India and she has even published a few stories such as short thrillers.



Chandra Gurung
Nepal

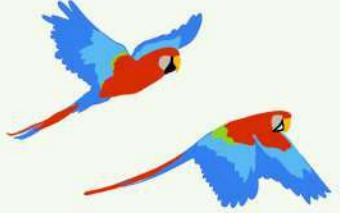
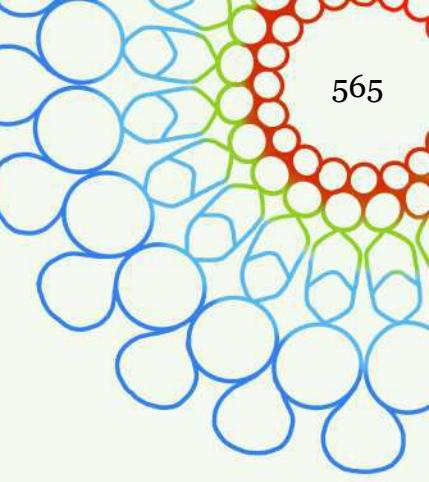
PEACE

And thus
A terrible war started.

A tender hope that had just started toddling was killed
Many youthful aspirations were trampled and wiped out
Old faiths crumbled and died
But nothing changed.

In fact, nothing changed
The prickly plants of jealousy and hatred continued to sprout
The high walls of discrimination continued to loom
The disgraceful sword continued to glisten
As enmity shamelessly grinned from a cavern in the heart

One day
She came...
New buds sprouted in desolate hearts
Kites of excitement flew in the disrupted sky again
The light of faith spread
All around
And life smiled once again.



MOTHER

When nimble brooks
 Drifted away from the earth's lap
 Hopping
 Playing
 Dancing
 And singing
 Return in the form of rain,
 The countenance of the earth glows
 Gaily, like flowers.

The way my mother's countenance glitters
 When from a land far-off
 I return home.

All Poems Translated by Mr. Mahesh Paudyal



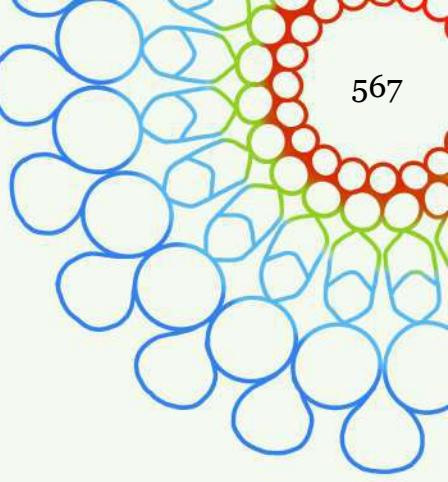
About Chandra Gurung

Gurung has two anthologies of poetry: the first was published in 2007 while the second, "My Father's Face", was released in October 2020. His work has found space in many online and print magazines including *More of my Beautiful Babraine*, *Snow Jewel, Collection of Poetry and Prose* compiled by Robin Barratt (UK), Warscapes.com and many leading Dailies in Nepal. Chandra's poetry depicts the politico-socio-economic conditions of his place. He participated in the First Dhaka Translation Festival (2018, Dhaka) and was awarded *ASVIKRIT BICHAR SAHITYA SAMMAN-2016* for his contributions in the Nepali literature.



**Shanta Acharya
India**

FRIENDSHIP



Like birdsong beginning inside the egg,
a flake of snow dreaming of an iceberg –

the rainbow sky beyond judgment,
one soul dwelling in two bodies,

names safe in each other's mouths,
walking together, sometimes in the dark

in silence more sympathetic than words,
something understood, treasured –

not a duty, just a responsibility gladly undertaken,
a comfortable hand-in-glove feeling.

When the giving grows, the taking goes,
angels let us see the best of what we can be

just as the shimmer of dawn prophecies
the appearance of the Milky Way and a zillion stars –

not following, not leading, just loving
for trying, not blindly, but closing one's eyes

in forgiveness, in prayer, finding the hard times
worth suffering, there being no better love than love

with no object, just being there, unquestioning,
willing to be trusted with everything.

From What Survives Is The Singing (Indigo Dreams Publishing, UK; 2020) by Shanta Acharya.



SNOWDROPS

In the shadow of tall, sky-gazing trees
a convent of reclusive snowdrops
face the earth, bent in meditation.

Possessed in the white heat of passion
the gravity of their thoughts weigh them down,
their porcelain faces averted from our direction.

In translucent stems of jade and petals of pearl,
they arrive bearing the gift of life – nuns of peace,
breaking out of the barren winter's embrace.

Messengers of hope, figurines of faith and charity,
fragile creations exuding dignity –
they give according to their measure,
demanding nothing in return, their miniature
stature lacking fragrance, not colour.

They bow, emptying themselves of all desire,
make peace with themselves without walking on fire.

From Imagine: New and Selected Poems (HarperCollins, India; 2017) by Shanta Acharya.



About Shanta Acharya

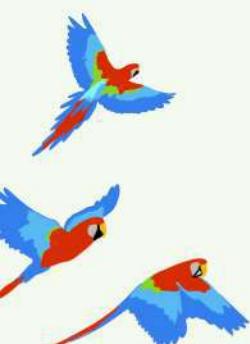
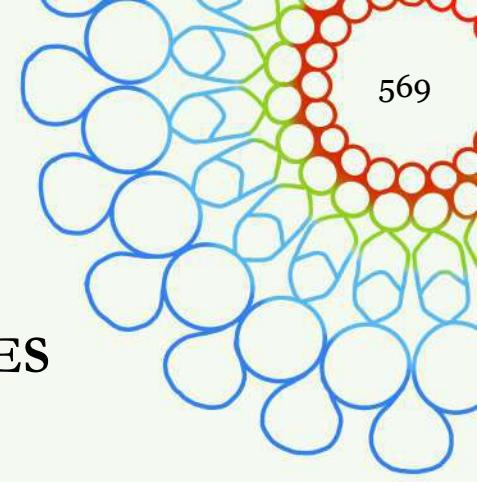
Educated in India, Shanta won a scholarship to Oxford, where was awarded the Doctor of Philosophy for her work on Ralph Waldo Emerson. The author of twelve books, her work as a poet and novelist, reviewer and scholar, has been published and translated internationally. Her latest poetry collections are *What Survives Is The Singing* (Indigo Dreams Publishing, UK; 2020) and *Imagine: New and Selected Poems* (HarperCollins, India; 2017). Founder of *Poetry in the House*, she hosted a series of monthly poetry readings at Lauderdale House, Highgate, London, from 1996-2015. She served twice on the board of trustees of The Poetry Society in the UK.



EARTHLY WORMHOLES

Angelos Sofocleous
Cyprus

Our metro stations
look like
earthly wormholes.
I enter a station,
exit from another,
and everything changes.
I wish our life was like that also.
With a cheap ticket,
or with a ticket taken
from the broken machines
which a good man would have left,
I would enter a world proof state
and everything would change
at the next station.
I wonder,
is it I who gets transported
when I travel on the metro
or is it the world that changes
and I keep getting off at the same station
unchanged?



HERACLITIAN SKY

Even if everything around you stays the same,
the sky will always change.

If you find that life is monotonous
just look up.

Sometimes blue, sometimes grey,
on its stage the clouds
will dance disguised.

At night, the performance ends.

The lights turn off,
but the curtain remains open.

So that the bright figures
of the night performance
can be seen.

Always the same,
but always mysterious.

Watching the performance again
one gets to know the protagonists better
and discovers even more extras.

At your grey days,
the blue sky will be there to encourage you.

At your blue days,
the grey sky will be there to relax you.

And the dark nights will be there to remind you
of your majestiness and smallness
simultaneously.



About Angelos Sofocleous

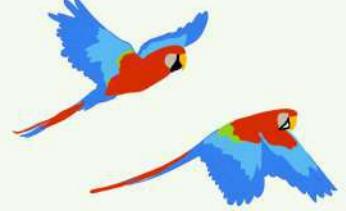
Angelos Sofocleous (1994) was born in Nicosia, Cyprus and is currently a PhD Researcher in Philosophy at the University of York, working on the philosophy of depression. He regularly writes articles on philosophy, psychology, religion, and politics, and has published two poetry collections - *Peri zoes ke thanatou* (2013, Armida Publications), and *Anisichia* (2017, Pigi Publications). Angelos is a founding member of the Bicommunal Network of Cypriot Youth, an organisation which seeks to bring Greek-speaking and Turkish-speaking Cypriots together, and is also the Secretary of the Cyprus Humanist Association.



A YEAR OF ALL WINTERS, 3.06.21

Cristiana de Marchi
Italy / Lebanon

Spring has been postponed



so many times

during this long year
of all winters
- ungenerous and seemingly eternal

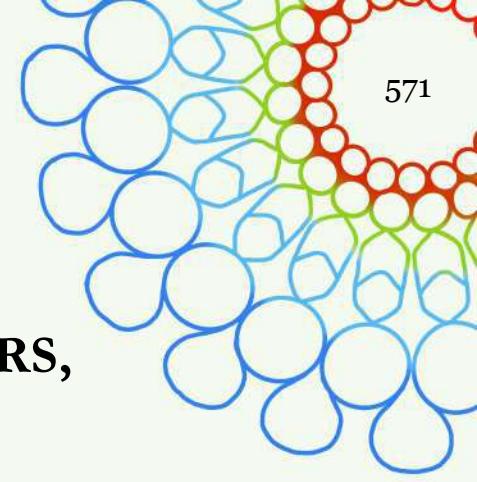
—

to the point
of not knowing
anymore
how to welcome lightness



how to welcome

Light



MAYBE THIS IS IT, 1.09.21

Maybe this is it
The ultimate purpose
Of existence

- sequence of identical hours
within which to pursue a thought
a steady pace
accept the inevitable
without more
riots of rebellion.



Maybe this is it
Peace

“TO MY FATHER”, 13.09.21

Daughter,
I am mother to you
Tonight
Watching over the dying body



Soon dead

I mutter words in silence
Still unavowed

As in the past
 everything
 composed of unvoiced
 thoughts

I was about to reprimand you For
 the slowness
 Of your parting

Now I lament the haste
 of your farewell

About Cristiana de Marchi

Cristiana is a visual artist and writer, with her practice exploring social and political terrains, from memory, places of the past and present and identity. Her work, presented internationally, has been featured in several publications such as Canvas, The Arts Newspaper, and Harper's Bazaar Art Arabia. She has exhibited in many locations such as NYU Abu Dhabi, UAE; Mexican Cultural Institute, Washington, DC and Villa Vassilieff, Paris, France. In 2015, de Marchi was awarded the Italian "Premio ORA" and in 2016, her first poetry book *Embodying* was published by Sharjah Art Foundation.





Xu Chunfang
China

BETRAYAL

How many acquaintances a whole life would get
 After a great dream
 One could finally see the snow-white moonlight
 Fills the spring breeze and holes

Like a band-aid on my face, the sun
 Finds the secret pain
 Man's heart is beyond the telling of a radar

How many gullies are hiding on the plain
 The blade lurking behind a laughter
 Pierced the soul off guard

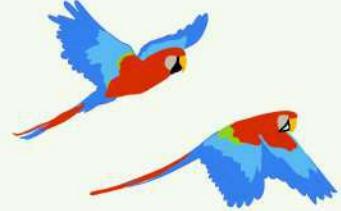
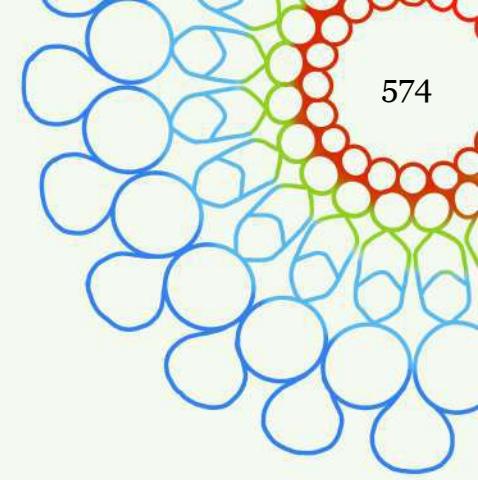
How many times a dream climaxes, how many grams is solitude
 Your joy shows on the negative
 Taking me away from the dripping ghost ship

Time leaving behind only an expanse of silent trees
 The taste of salt and sugar lingers on my tongue
 Ringing with the ending of a play

THE WORLD

My eyes on the world are deep affection
 My love to the world is benevolence

The spring breeze in puffs
 Blows with colourful birds singing



The snowflakes in grains
Are pure like your eyes

I get myself clean and dressed in the world
Before making a pot of dying warmth by your lips

To the burning coal and harp
I ask for a boiling and flaming kiss

The sky quietly opens the sitting room
To serve those dreaming stars

When words are covered with moss
I'd no longer be there as a poet

About XU Chunfang

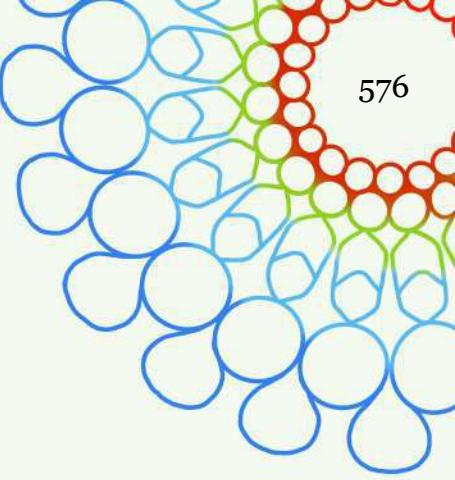
A famous contemporary poet, Xu has published many poetry anthologies, such as *Ode, Elegy, Jiangnan, Selected Poems of XU Chunfang* (Chinese and English edition), and prose anthologies *Wind from Hometown*. Some of his works have been translated into Italian, Greek, Arabic, and other languages. He has won the Lebanon International Literature Award, the Top Ten Chinese Poetry Collections of 2020, the Social Science Award of Anhui Provincial Government, the Shandong Poet Award, the “20 years of Chinese Online Poetry” Creation Award, the first “Anhui Poetry Award Best Poet Award”, and the East West Poetry Award, the Luli National Poetry Award, among many other awards at home and abroad.





TO AL HALLAJ^[1]

**Abdullah Al Balushi
Oman**



The following is the translation of an elegiac poem from his “Crossing Solitude's Bar” (1994)

(1)

In the grandeur of the dawn
Tranquility begot you
While the night was bathing
In virgin water.

(2)

Don't shed my blood
Don't blend it with your faults' ashes.
I want to die at night
When the universe resorts to silence.

(3)

Clothed with death, the night descends
Here's your mother
Staring at your crystal soul.
She'll bemoan you
As she returns from unfinished wars,
The bereaved saints at night
Will cry for you in the ecstasy of absence.

(4)

O lamb
Didn't you feed their dead children?
When the soul slumbered
In its long night
They forgot your bleeding cries
They burned your sacred bread.



(5)

Behind you is a thirsty flower
 Its sick trunk
 You yesterday watered
 Behind you the orphan's hut
 And the bird's cage
 Behind you a dawn dying
 Behind you a sparrow you nursed yesterday
 Behind you the whirl of winter.

(6)

Let your town sleep now
 Let it sleep in your roaming soul
 Let the migrants pass on your love strings
 Let the night hymns sleep

Your bewildered town will remain
 Like a sore ready to explode.

[1] *Al Hallaj* is a well-known Muslim mystic. Born in today's Iran in 858, he moved to Iraq. He was executed during the reign of the Abbasid Caliph Al Moqtadar in 921 for having held unorthodox religious views.

Translated by Khalid Al Balushi



About Abdullah Al Balushi

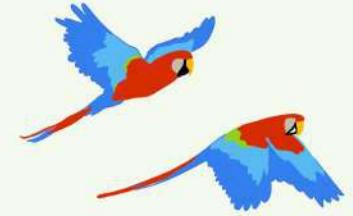
Abdullah Al Balushi (1967) is amongst Oman's most prolific contemporary poets and has published more than ten collections. These include *Crossing the Bar* (1994), *Immorality's Seasons* (1996), *Tear's Path* (2007), *The Darkness that Brightened* (2016), *A Bird Kneeling in Supplication on the Riverbank* (2017) and *Turning Away towards Triumphant Immorality* (2018)). As might be inferred from these titles, there's an atmosphere of mystics and Sufism in Al Balushi's poetry. Divine love, universal brotherhood, transcendence of the worldly, a close affinity with nature and an intimate identification with the celestial are recurrent themes in his extensive repertoire.



Brian Kirk
Ireland

NIGHT BROODING 3

The firelight dies to embers in the grate
and still I sit and recreate the times
I failed to act or speak, accumulate
more reasons for self-hate, enlarge my crimes,
elaborate the patterns of decay,
parade disintegration. No one climbs
to safety in the dead of night. We flay
the mind with worry, the body with wine,
we want to but can't stop the cabaret.
The old routines are easiest to malign.
So this is how we see out winter nights,
with fire and fags and booze. We can't define
our lethargy, beyond that we feel low,
we answer every challenge with a no.



NIGHT BROODING 4

But sleep will overtake me at the last,
and the fire will die in time as surely
as new leaves bud, then wither on the grass.
My future, a child born prematurely,
was feeble from the start and couldn't stand
on its two feet, undernourished, poorly,
fed on hope, desiring a promised land
that never existed in life, except



in the yearning mind, in the second-hand dreams of a timid schoolboy who was kept awake at night, harassed by abstract fears about his budding life. Some nights he wept, drenched in a waking sweat that hid his tears, unable to imagine future years.

NIGHT BROODING 5

Thank God those days are gone and won't come back.
 And who would want to be that person now,
 before time led me down this cul de sac?
 Imagine going round again somehow,
 selecting different roads in life until,
 arriving here today, I disavow
 all choices made, complain, deny free will.
 I only ever took the path of least
 resistance, never once set off uphill.
 So here I sit at night alone, high priest
 of the humdrum, bemoaning how I live,
 exasperated, angry, unreleased
 from all the things I take but never give,
 a shadow man that memory will outlive.



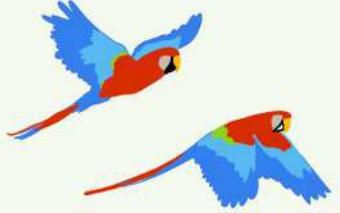
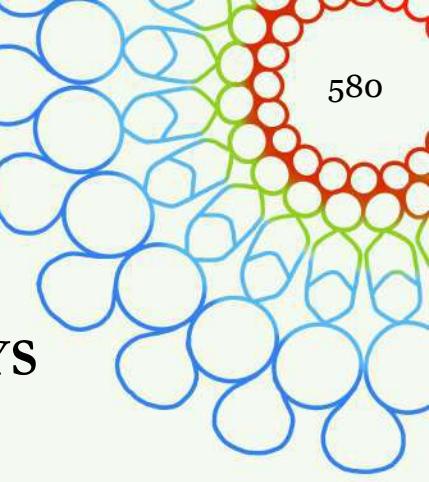
About Brian Kirk

Brian's first poetry collection *After The Fall* was published by Salmon Poetry in 2017. His poem "Birthday" won the Listowel Writers' Week Irish Poem of the Year at the An Post Irish Book Awards in 2018. He was awarded a bursary from the Arts Council of Ireland in 2020 to write and film a sequence of formal poems on the Covid 19 pandemic. His short fiction chapbook *It's Not Me, It's You* won the Southword Fiction Chapbook competition and was published in 2019 by Southword Editions.



Catherine Graham
Canada

THERE IS A STIR, ALWAYS



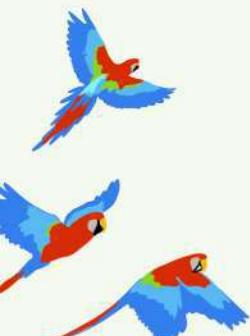
If I hold onto this body the snow will grow inside me
 and the winter of my cells will flake
 into tiny crystals like six-figured gods,
 each arrow tip attempting to make the point of something
 as tears flow.

There is a stir, always.

I rise to the cold
 to take my place among the fragile stars,
 and sleep.

From Her Red Hair Rises with the Wings of Insects, Wolsak and Wynn

PASSAGE



There you were, floating beneath
 before passing through the hover-mist
 we could not face. Crab-apples,

red-pebbled jewels, rainwater-seeds—
 light drying to come out. Yolk,
 yellow bubble. Can you hear the singing?

Water falls to where the heart aches,
a ladder slowly lifts, and the birds
the birds hurl themselves up.

From Train: a poetry journal

THE STRING IS WHAT MATTERS

There is yes in love. The frog
in the courtyard, a sign.
The moon bulges towards the horizon—
a frog, swallowed. Every

scene holds Ariadne's thread.
A maze we never got out of.
There was love in yes. That chill
in the open field where the grove

holds no yellow willow.
Only a bird remembers, flies
back, hovers. The string is in her too.

From Exile Magazine

About Catherine Graham

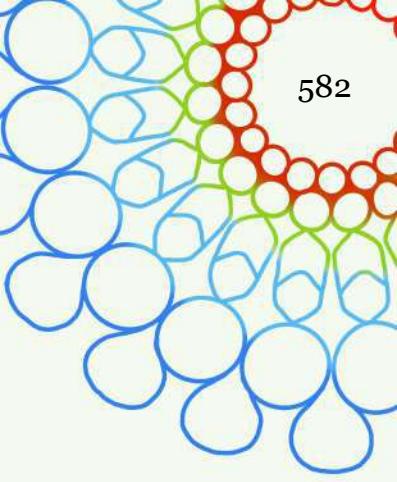
Catherines' seventh poetry collection, *Aether: An Out-of-Body Lyric*, was a finalist for the Toronto Book Award and *The Celery Forest* was named a CBC Best Book of the Year and was a finalist for the Fred Cogswell Award. Her *Red Hair Rises with the Wings of Insects* was a finalist for the Raymond Souster Poetry Award and CAA Poetry Award; and her novel, *Quarry*, won an IPPY gold medal, The Miramichi Book Award and was a finalist for the Sarton Women's Book Award for Contemporary Fiction and Fred Kerner Book Award. A previous winner of Toronto International Festival of Authors' Poetry NOW, she leads their monthly Book Club.





THE MEMORY OF THE SNOWFLAKE

Francisc Edmund Balogh
Romania



I was trying to bring to an end
the inner debate
whether the life of a snowflake
should be prolonged
or to consider it just as it seems -
a self-sufficient story of beauty
while sort of suddenly
you opened two of your fingers
to let the embroidery of delight
happen for another glimpse of illusion.

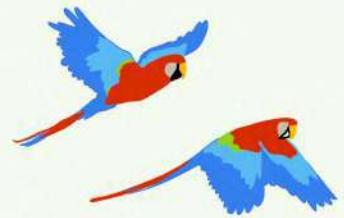


The snowflake
felt heavy due to the memory of the water –
the old-time legendary snowfalls.

FATHER NIGHT

I looked into eyes of the night
as a child to a father

We talked
about the old days
till the last dew drop
of the morning.



What still kept us bound
father night,
was that last smooth
batter of the wings
of silence.

I held you
inside my chest pocket
as if you were a seed!

THE MILKMAN

The milkman comes always
on his bike, at four a clock,
not even the dawn is
woken up yet.



Some people say
 they saw him
 between delivery,
 chasing the stars as they
 were butterflies.

The very few bystanders
 were worried,
 some for the stars,
 some for the milkman on the bike,
 some for the milk.

Only the milkman was
 hoping that the dawn will not come.



About Francisc Edmund Balogh

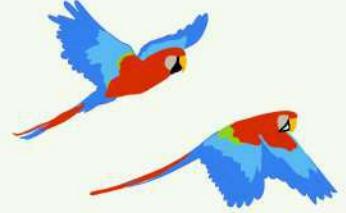
Francisc's big debut took place in 2015 when he coauthored a poetry book, titled "*Clarobscur și fum*" (*Misty haze and smoke*) with Iulia Olaru. In his country, he was published in various anthologies, literary e-magazines and magazines. He won first place at the 2020 L'Olimpiade Mondiaux de Poesie competition. Recently, Francisc published in India on the Litterateur Rw literary blog, Opa and Cultural Reverence. Some of his work was also published in Germany, the UK and the US.



AUTUMN, HOLY FRIDAY, 2021

Mirian Da Silva Cavalcanti
Brazil

Blue anises getting closer
slowly
almost surprising
in flowers curtains windows breezes



and the space between blue and me
narrowing
slowly
I, realising everything
(quiet, delivered)
thinking of Van Gogh
in Van Gogh not of sunflowers

behind so much indigo blue
some ancestral fire
(I think)
and stories that didn't belong to me
(did not belong to me,
with this official name and ID number
but that belong to me,
today, here,
this fall this holy Thursday
of blue curtains flowers windows breezes
and Tom Jobim and bem-te-vis



But I'm not all that. I'm all this and more:

A stunned Brazilian, vaccinated citizen with the right to life.
Amidst 318,000 Brazilian lives forever pruned from the right to hug

POUND AND TRIAL

I love rain. (Me and the frogs. Happy, they croak.)
 Happy, I go down the trail in search of rosemary to season okra.
 It rains, it rains...
 Music prettier than birds, this
 of rain, heart and frogs!
 Happy, happy.

Communion is sometimes a matter of moments.
 Frogs and bogs and trails and
 some incredible rosemary urgency.
 (Sometimes.)

BIRD'S OBSERVERS

And here we are
 on these silk and mist trails
 silencing steps, silencing souls,
 while light and moist butterflies
 spy on us.

So here we are, ecstatic.

Still sleepy
 the morning stretches, intertwines, in the
 spider webs sprawled up the bank
 bank down
 while the sun shines and shines a lot of colours
 poured into the transparent feast of dew

and here we are
 rough human beings
 divinely endowed with the ability to marvel.

And here they are, the birds.

Amen, Saravá, Insh'Allah, Shalom, Namaste, Haribol, Taupéicha, Ajayô



About Mirian Da Silva Cavalcanti

Mirian debuted in the literary field at the age of 66, with the novel "*Confraria Van Gogh – The secret life of a public library book*", for her love for Van Gogh, books and libraries. From there on, she published short stories, chronicles, children and juvenile books and collective student memoirs. Her poetry in 2021 is titled: "*Drafts – Exercises in poetic gaze*". She believes in Art as a bridge between peoples, despite the brainwashing of globalisation.

BRANCH

8

TIME DISCOVERS
ITSELF



Chrys Salt
United Kingdom

THE INSURRECTION OF POETRY

Poems are on the march.
They are singing
from the rubble of Ground Zero,
the ruins of Damascus and Sarajevo,
the bomb shelters of Amiriya
the poisoned bodies in Halabja,
from the mouths of murdered men folk
in Srebrenica.

Poems are growing from their winding sheets
in the mud and trenches
of butchered nature.
Their guns fire white poppies.
Their flags are the colour of rainbow.
Their hands fold paper cranes
under the olive trees.
From the bones of mutilated generations
they grow blossoms of resurrection.

Listen
you tyrants, murderers,
fundamentalists, mutilators,
rapists, occupiers,
racists, persecutors,
autocrats, crucifiers,

fanatics, torturers, liars,
obfuscators, manipulators,
warmongers,

silencers.

Listen!

Poems all over the world
are saying

ENOUGH.

WITH ADRIAN AT THE PEACE FESTIVAL

i.m. Adrian Mitchell

if you saw him running it was because he'd spotted truth in the crowd
and was chasing after it if you saw him smiling it was at a good deed
waving from a balcony if you saw him jumping it was in a playground
with all the other daft kids on the block raising anarchy if you heard him
singing it was girls and boys come out to play if you saw him laughing he
was laughing he was really laughing if you saw him waving it was to say
HELLO come in and join the feast of the human race if you saw him
writing it was a love letter to the world on the day of its crucifixion if you
saw him dancing it was to a Beatles tune about giving peace a chance and
waiting for that moment to arrive.

About Chrys Salt

Chrys's work has been broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and 4 and performed in countries such as the UK, USA, India and Australia. In 2019, she was the International Poet at The Tasmanian Poetry Festival. Her work has been set to music by several composers and translated into several languages. She has written four full poetry collections, five pamphlet collections and been the recipient of bursaries and awards including a National Media Award and a Fringe First at the Edinburgh Festival. In 2014, she was awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for Services to The Arts.





Abdulla Issa
Syria

THIS IS WHO I AM

Tell them

He who casts a stone to count the circles in the river,
will hurt the gravel, algae, and unsuspecting fish

Therefore, do not allow the disobedient to twice fill up your
well

and pinch an ember that has left its shadow in your hearths
so that you may see in the water the expression of a star that
has fallen in the imagination of strangers

Do not look at me from behind the hills
for you won't see me

He who is without sin
and eyes – despondent out of despair
let him follow me and step into my cottage
I am the one who comes when invoked

AN INCOMPLETE BIOGRAPHY

He's never revealed what he saw after the strangers' visit

But he went on crying against the trunk of the olive tree that

still stands naked

in front of the house,

as he remembered that the handles of those daggers

which amputated his fingers were made of wood.

He's never called anyone. They were all gone

leaving their last talk on the sides of the floors chattering

and their dreams torn to pieces on reed mats.

He wished he had gone as they did.

All Poems Translated by Nizar Sartawi

About Abdulla Issa

Abdulla has been an editor of the "Poets" magazine - House of Poetry in Ramallah since its publication in 2013. His poems have been translated into many languages, including in the anthology of Palestinian and Arabic poetry. He received the Golden Medal of Honor for the Forum "Euro-Asia Century 2021." His published work includes *Shepherds of Heaven, Shepherds of Oleander* (2013), *My father, my brothers, not the wolf* (2015) and *Fawzia Al-Hassan's Ten Commandments* (2017).





HUGS

**Malachi Edwin Vethamani
Malaysia**

Now that it's safe to hug again,
hug all those you once hugged.

Those who you hugged
behind closed doors

Those you stole a hug
between bookshelves

Those whose hands you squeezed
lest you were seen

Those whose shoulders you grazed
as if by accident

when it's safe to hug again,
hug, hug, hug

You don't know when
virtual hugs will come upon us again.

LABOUR OF LOVE

for Ram Tai

The aroma of lamb curry,

a fusion of ginger, garlic, onions,
cinnamon, cloves, cardamom and coriander
wafts from the kitchen,
enveloping the house.

Its arrival to my room
is unannounced. Yet, I know,
it's been slowly rising from
the pot on a slow fire,
gently simmering, slowly bubbling.

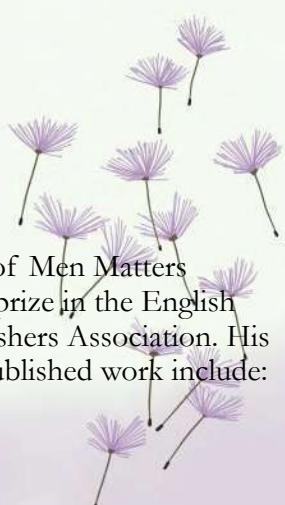
It feels like I'm home again.
I half-expect Amma
to come out of the kitchen,
and ask me to buy scraped coconut,
from our kampung grocery store.

But it's Ram who comes out
of the kitchen,
hands me a green beer bottle.
He's got it all under control.
His is a labour of love just like Amma's.

His curry won't be the same,
as Amma's mutton curry.
His curry doesn't have to be,
but Amma will have a smile,
to know her son is loved.

About Malachi Edwin Vethamani

A writer, poet, editor, critic, bibliographer and academic, Malachi is also the Founding Editor of Men Matters Online Journal. His poetry publication, *Malchin Testament: Malaysian Poems*, won the Best Book prize in the English Language category for the Malaysian Best Book Award 2020 organised by the Malaysian Publishers Association. His creative work has been published in various local and international literary publications. His published work include: *Life Happens* (Maya Press, 2017) and *Malchin Testament: Malaysian Poems* (Maya Press, 2017).





3 POEMS

Álvaro Maio
Portugal

I

In each letter a heartbeat
At the end of each verse
A rhythmic inspiration
The poem appears in a pulmonary orgy
Sensations sung in groans of pain
On suspended roads
Light snares intersect with fear
Looking for hidden destinations in time
In linear stanzas
There are worn metaphors in colourless rhymes
In tired refrains
The poem rests
Without rhythm the verses are lost
In anonymous measures
spiral lines
Orchestrated words
No waiting time
Increase the no times
From unnamed verses
And at the end of time
The poem is born
For the time of unconsciousness
In which being born is just the opposite of dying
But in every dead verse
A new poem is born
It is us?
We started reading it!

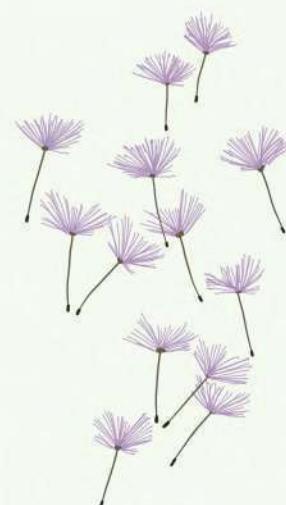


II

The land cries
 Clouds hover at half height
 The angry winds release bonds
 The seas roll in waves of rage
 Nature demands revolt
 The trees line up like condemned in a row
 The flames of hell dictate sentences
 Capital punishment for innocents
 Even the inert stones feel the end
 Nothing is true
 The unreal calls for us
 Shipwrecked heirs of a world in agony
 Where silences become deafening
 And where souls seek escape routes
 In the funnel of history
 Black spirits survive
 Just lit by the flames of hell
 It is us?
 Abandoned in ourselves
 We decided to run away!
 From whom?
 Of us!

III

Men are not islands
 Sometimes they are
 Greed consumes loners
 Sharing raises knowledge
 Knowledge is like light that warms life
 Nobody walks in the same direction with their backs turned
 The sea that separates and separates can be a bridge
 Thought is like the sea
 Sometimes it unites others ...
 *** Lost wander on the avenue
 I do not identify the trees that flank the tar



I feel the wind hit me in the face
 The plowing filtered through, the leaves of the trees whistles
 The agitated branches bend in greeting
 I can almost hear their voices
 Can someone translate what they say?
 The morning dew still shines on the leaves
 They look like tears that denounce suffering
 Earth suffers
 And we too
 Could it be that we were trees too?
 Or will we still be again?
 The eternal question
 Where we came from?
 Where are we going?
 While we have no answer
 we stayed!

About Álvaro Maio

Álvaro has co-authored several Portuguese and international anthologies translated to seven languages. He won the Cesar Vallejo Award Artistical Excellence 2020 as Singer-Author. In 2021, he was named Intercontinental President of UHE Lusofonia and won the ÁGUILA de ORO Award Excellence in Literary 2021.





**Dr. Zakia Ali Malallah Al Essa
Qatar**

COME TO ME

Come to me for my heart is lonely
on the sky's horizon;
come and sing
and say: we will live, every meeting a spring,
Come, let me be a child in your embrace,
a song, a cry
for I love none but you;
You are what is true. You are hope
and the story of love in the story of my life,
and the breeze through my dawn,
the silence of the night.
Come, let us race against the years,
fold away our despair, forget our misery,
play the tunes of our love with the night,
and fill every night with songs.
My longing for you is deep until infinity,
my soul fragmented into nostalgia and prayers;
I loved you once
and in your eyes adored purity
My flowers still long for you

and embrace the brightness from your image

LONGING SONG

I long for a night without thoughts
to embrace us

I wish to be lost
in your eyes and travel

I wish our yearning to be erased
like an immigrating boat

I love you will be to me
and every day our compassion be irrigated
be verdant like spikes

I love to enfold you in my emotions
and hide you in my lines
like fingertips

I like my daffodils
to sleep in your palms

I like you to call me: my love
and hope winter leaves with compassion
in the margins of tomorrow

All Poems Translated by Aref Tamfiq Attary

Specialist of Arabic language-Arabic Cultural Centre-Qatar (1992)

About Dr. Zakia Ali Malallah Al Essa

Álvaro has co-authored several Portuguese and international anthologies translated to seven languages. He won the Cesar Vallejo Award Artistical Excellence 2020 as Singer-Author. In 2021, he was named Intercontinental President of UHE Lusofonia and won the ÁGUILA de ORO Award Excellence in Literary 2021.



Qiao Hao
China

IT'S AUTUMN

We forget, while walking and walking
the switch of seasons. How should we
forget the road we walked past
the things that we experienced
and the things that we saw? I never
wished that life would be easy

Autumn wind is blowing,
This is God's will.
Is the wind urging the leaves to stay
or just its solicitous send-off?
while I stand in the midst of the seasons

It was the thunder that showed no sign of weakness
that keeps me awake in my troubles
Year after year, I have nothing
Nothing, what else do I need?
In this autumn, all the good of time
Is good for us

These dead branches, these decaying leaves
And the music from the stores along the street
—they are sewing up the ageless life

NOTES

The moment I pushed open the door, some debris
pours down behind me, making me
involuntarily look back, much like
a frightened deer.

These encounters have taught me
to stay alert in an unreliable environment
The world is lovely, but also
dangerous. This is what the eye can see

It was twilight and it was getting late.
I feel a little sick
My heart is empty, like I have hope and
longing, even at a loss

SNOW

Early morn, pushing open the window, the world
once again surprises me. I seem to have become used
to both the real and the unreal, the fake and the genuine
Well, okay. I choose
to cater to you to the fullest extent

The wind having roared all night, the prepared snow
Falls to the ground into water
as it always does. It accepts all
The gesture it embraces all
so graceful, open-minded ...

Snow. I listen to the sound of its falling
fantasising about that silvery scene
Snow, light and white
graceful falls, and
Snowflake speaks the inner monologue

Listening to the snow, perhaps I can hear
its old loneliness, and also its
new drifting

Translated by Brent O. Yan

About Qiao Hao

A famous poet in contemporary China, Qiao's works have been published in many newspapers and magazines, some of which are included in a host of anthologies. Some of his works have been translated into foreign languages such as English, Japanese, Russian, and Italian. He has won the publishing prize at the 4th Anhui Provincial Social Sciences and Literature, and literature prize at the 2nd Anqing Municipal Government. He has published: *Selected Poems of QIAO Hao* and *The Poems of QIAO Hao*.



Brian Turner
United States

ENSEMBLE AT DUSK

I have been I, if for ever so short a time

Bruce Frederick Cummings (1889-1919)

The cypress and the elm have watched us
all summer long, our blankets spread
under the wine of dusk, our lips
in a sweet conversation with each other's
skin, our signatures held by pliant
blades of grass, long after we've left.

And all through the quiet hours
these trees watch how the grass
slowly releases the memory of us,
each blade rising the way the soul might
when we die, an owl calling us home.

By Autumn, they will have seen too much
to bear. And it won't be the month of October

with its crisp chill that makes it happen.
And it won't be the snow that pulls them down
come winter. Rather, it's the bright spark
kindling within them. It's what they've seen of love
that turns their leaves from gold to amber to dust.

About Brian Turner

Brian is the author of two collections of poetry, "Bullet and Phantom Noise", "Here", and a memoir: *My Life as a Foreign Country*. He is the editor of The Kiss and co-edited The Strangest of Theatres. He has published work in The New York Times, The Guardian, National Geographic, Harper's, and has appeared on the BBC, PBS, RTÉ, among others. His work has been translated into Arabic, Dutch, French, German, and other languages.





Abhay K.
India

EARTH ANTHEM

Our cosmic oasis, cosmic blue pearl
 the most beautiful planet in the universe
 all the continents and all the oceans
 united we stand as flora and fauna
 united we stand as species of one earth
 diverse cultures, beliefs and ways
 we are humans, the earth is our home
 all the people and all the nations
 all for one and one for all
 united we unfurl the blue marble flag.

NOTHING OF THAT SORT

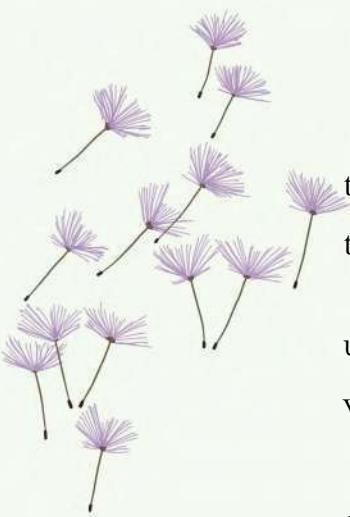
The warmth of the last night
 still lingers on

I miss you
 as lovers do

but we know
 we have

nothing of that sort
 between us

we were just so lost
 into each other



there was no time
to know

until this evening
when sweet pain

devours me
calmly

and I miss you
as lovers do

but we know
we have

nothing of that sort
between us

I wonder
if you

miss me too
this evening

and write poems
to lessen

your pain
instead of telling me?



SLOWLY, GENTLY, GORGEOUSLY

You said—
 you would kill me

 if I didn't leave
 enough ice cream

 for every puff
 of your smoke

 and I wish you could kill me,
 slowly, gently, gorgeously.

About Abhay K.

Abhay is an author of ten poetry collections including *The Alphabets of Latin America*, and the editor of The Bloomsbury Anthology of Great Indian Poems. His poems have appeared in over 100 literary magazines including Poetry Salzburg Review and Asia Literary Review among others. His 'Earth Anthem' has been translated into over 120 languages. He received the SAARC Literary Award 2013 and was invited to record his poems at the Library of Congress, Washington DC in 2018.

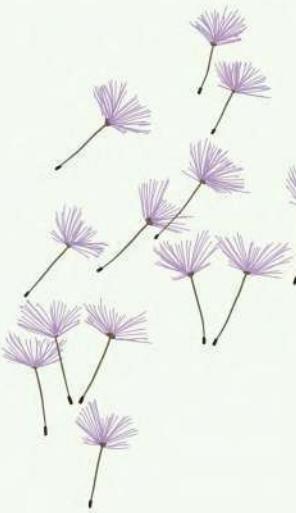




Hamdi Meça
Albania

DITHYRAMB

The woman on that rib from which she was created was firmly grasped
 She with her retreat brought the man down from Paradise to earth
 Speaking and writing about you, woman
 I convince the extraordinary
 You are in history another country that takes possession of territories
 You are not a time when a country remains occupied
 You are not even the time of the invader
 You are the most complete and comprehensive invasion that has ever
 existed
 Like this complete conquest of the world, no other conquest has been
 possible before and can never
 be in history
 Neither from the British Empire, nor from the Mongol Empire, nor from
 the Persian Empire
 Neither from the Roman Empire, nor from the Umayyad Caliphate, nor
 from the Carolingian Empire
 Neither from the Spanish Empire, nor from the Portuguese Empire, nor
 from the Ottoman Empire
 Neither from the Egyptian Empire, nor from the Aztec Empire, nor
 from the Russian Empire
 Neither from the American Empire, nor from the Chinese Empire, nor
 from the Internet Empire
 Empires lie only in a straight line, calculated in the horizontal plane
 But how many giant linear surfaces on the globe became cracked,
 separated, torn
 The empires of the future have the fate of the previous ones
 Empires can only make a partial male conquest of the world
 Empires can never achieve complete female conquest of the earth
 Speaking and writing about you, woman



I obey the celestial bodies
 The star from afar, the star from near is the Gulliver of the writing
 clergyman Jonathan Swift
 The woman has earthy skin with the most nutritive roots and the most
 beautiful flowers
 Which gathers bees inalienable by evolution and the mechanism of
 natural selection
 In it the photon particles travel mysteriously at the speed of light
 And the painted solar spectrum is biologically coloured
 Her skin full of vitalising effects, without any plagiarism, monotony,
 fatigue, exhaustion
 Most suitable for changeable shoes that are day, night, season, years, age
 Her wrinkled lips kissing make up the Earth's ozone layer
 The ozone layer is reduced to the point of kissing a woman
 No beautiful truth in the universe
 It is no more real than in a woman's body
 Celestial bodies sound using the voice of her little ones
 Speaking and writing about you, woman

I obey a woman
 Or the swollen place of a branch
 Or the stalk from where the leaves erupt
 Or the swollen part of the trunk, from where the branches come out
 There is the woman's belly
 The woman when she dies is not buried by anyone
 She buries herself in her noisy belly.

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS

Soldiers of the superpower
 To conquer another country
 They have the abysses of the world
 For walking shoes.
 When they sleep on clay
 Every bare foot scares them
 Every foot without shoes for them
 Or a marble tomb
 Or a high support of hewn stone



From the compromise between the afterlife
 With death here.
 When they leave they are severely offended
 Conscience is barefoot.
 The abysses of the world they have for walking shoes
 They do not take them with them
 They certainly do not return barefoot
 The original shoes from the site of the attack bear the feet of the replicas
 The mud trampled by them may be the material of the new shoes.

They possess the new shoes necessary for life
 The left shoe is a wallet
 The other shoe is a free apartment
 Shoelaces are blood vessels
 In their body.

Translated by Gohimn

About Hamdi Meça

Hamdi is a poet, author, and philosopher. He is internationally recognised and honoured with various awards, important medals, honorary titles, diplomas, certificates and more. He was also elected to various international cultural boards. In Albania, he has published about 40 books in the genres and types of poetry and prose. In addition to Albanian and English, he has published in other languages such as Spanish, Italian and Romanian. His work includes: "*A Poet Mountain Range*" (2019), "*Lines*" (2019) and "*Visa*" (2019).





Lidia Chiarelli
Albania

POLYGLOT SEA

*“...ah the polyglot sea...
sybils' syllables fellahen dialects all run together
everywhere re-echonig...”*

Lawrence Ferlinghetti

New dreams
emerge from a shadowy sky
today.

The salty breeze
permeates the morning air
and the sunlight
silently
erases our loneliness.

Myriads of polyphonic voices
relentlessly
re-echoing
are sweet music
fed by ancient rhythms.

Now we can pause and rejoice
in the gentle breath of the ocean

while

words from different languages
slowly take form

and fill
one by one
every empty page.

PATHS TO PEACE

*'Poesía es lo imposible
hecho posible. Arpa
que tiene en vez de curda
corazones y llamas'*

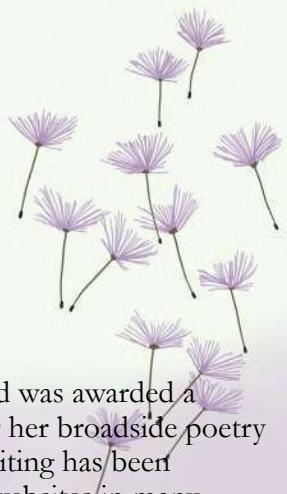
Federico García Lorca

Send me words of love
and together
we will build
paths to Peace

Send me words of hope
and together
we will fill
thousands of blank pages

Our voices in unison
will become
the sweet sounds of a harp
prayers
carried by the wind

they will be
a new song
in the deep blue of a sky
that will not switch off
in the dark of the night.



About Lidia Chiarelli

Lidia is one of the Charter Members of Immagine & Poesia. She is an award-winning poet and was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation from The First International Poetry Festival of Swansea (U.K.) for her broadside poetry and art contribution. She was awarded with the Literary Arts Medal – New York 2020. Her writing has been translated into different languages and published in more than 150 Poetry magazines, and on websites in many countries.



**Wu Ming-Chuan
Taiwan**

TREE

I dream of becoming a tree on Taroko Mountain
Before Propping up the sky and the earth
nourishing this home and its soil

In the joy of holiday
I am a lonely tree
From the north to the south
There's a smile I keep thinking about

Father
Please be strong again
With the glory of our warriors

What will I give back
To the land that raised me?
Mother~

I dream of becoming a tree on my hometown hill
And after your hard hunting
Looking down at the tribe

Never leave again
Never leave again

— On April 2, 2021, the Taroko train in Taiwan derailed, causing numerous deaths and injuries, and the Aboriginal-Bunun young guy was about to return home to take a sick dad to see a doctor. Unfortunately, an accident occurred

About Wu Ming-Chuan

Wu's pen name is Yamana honoka. Over the past two years, she has successively published several works in Taiwan's "Chief Poetry Club" and continues to create poems. Wu Ming-Chuan is a child who grew up with friends in the arts and literature circles in Kaohsiung city. She has participated in many arts and environmental activities with her parents. She is the daughter of the novelist Wu Ching-Fa.



SHALL WE BE IN CREATION

Salah Boussrif
Morocco

The sea is the night's garment

And the earth is a bed of dust.

The child said to the palm tree:

-The earth is bodiless

-Wait...

The palm tree said

And then bent

Calmly down

To weave a thread of shades

That extends

From one body to the Body.

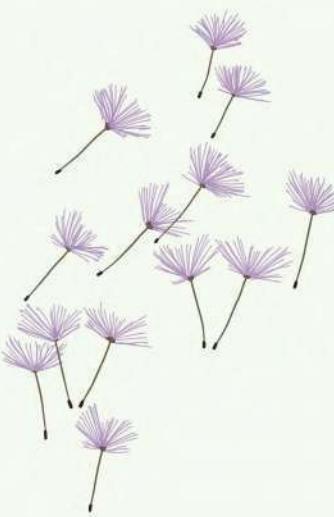
The child

Gradually Realised

That the sky is bristling with clouds

And the earth has a history

and a body



He then bent down
in reverence
And saluted the earth.

I am a shade

Suppose

I spent all my life
Trying to rise up to you,
Pulled a flute
And a hoopoe feather out of my hand,
And started singing,
How then can I combine blowing and singing...

I wash myself every time with great care
And admire your loftiness
Hoping
To bring together
Clothing and nakedness.

"So grant me a joyful celebration,
And cover me with light that can illuminate my darkness,
I'm a shade
But also a shining sun
Thanks to you"
You will not pierce the earth



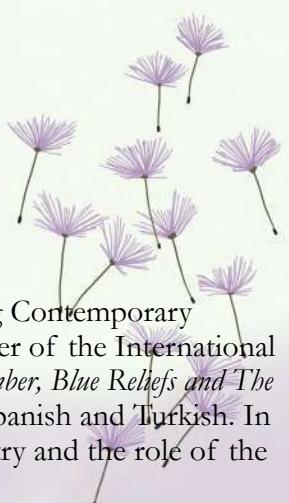
Hurrying up he came to tell me
 That what we call dawn
 Rises
 Only
 when
 Twilight pours forth

 Then whenever we crave knowledge of creation
 Mirage swallows us
 And we drown into a fathomless
 Sea.

Translated by Norddine Zouitni

About Salah Boussrif

Salah received his Doctorate from Dar El Mahraz University, with the topic of his thesis being Contemporary Arabic Poetry. He is the founding member of “The Moroccan House of Poetry” and a member of the International Union of Poets of the world. Some of his poetry pieces include: *The night's fruit*, *The tree of slumber*, *Blue Reliefs* and *The Holder of the Mirror*. His work has been translated to a number of languages, such as French, Spanish and Turkish. In addition, he published many manifestos around his poetic project in the structure of epic poetry and the role of the page as a medium that gives poetry its voice





**Gorka Lasa
Panamá**

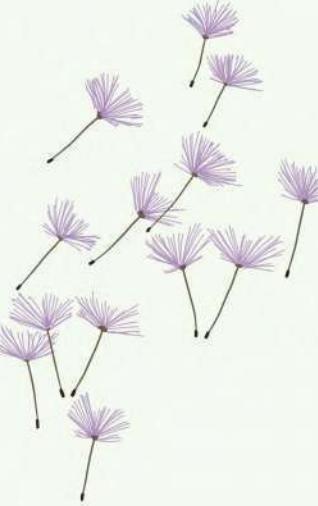
SOLAR TEAR

What Ion has perished in the solar tear of my sadness?
 what happened to that ocher and scented fluid of God?
 that sacred emptiness without form
 after burning in the eternal fire.

In intimate secret, the symbol is born
 dance of the strive
 the wild flight
 the magic night
 seal of the equator.

Galactic balance of the hemispheres
 lonely temple of ancient symmetry
 arcane sentinel of my eternal pain.

We raise our cry in the darkness of the stars
 we define with fire the stationary circles
 the secret keys that defeated Kronos.



I think I have been around this distant cluster for eons.

After the ritual, the sorrow
the silent wisdom broke my soul
imploding within me, supernova.

Lucid vastness in which he drank
forever lost in the eternal loop
my indomitable spirit.

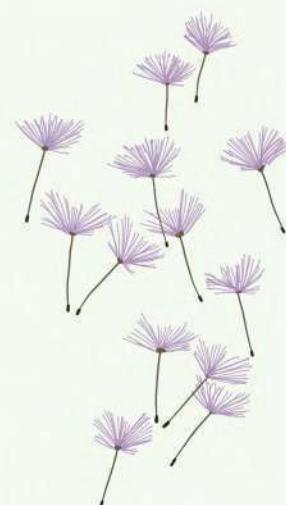
Only out of love I've taken this route
only out of compassion
the sunset burns within me.

COSMICALLY EXHAUSTED

Exhausted from wandering the route of the cyclic night
timeless horizon which expands in endless swirls
eternity which awaits holding the illusory self.

Impossible duality
formless generator of fire storms
solar wind which wears off the barriers of my soul.

Exhausted from the vision which slowly fades away
dense fog of death over the square and its sphere.



Tears of blood germinate eternal poems in my hands
destined to get lost in the human abyss of indifference.

Deeply exhausted
my thoughts draw the shape of the essence
I walk lifelessly to the non-existent memory
again, wandering on the axis of the naught.

Recurrent, sullen, moody.

I won't come back in the old dormant way
Cosmically exhausted.

All Poems Translated from Spanish by the author

About Gorka Lasa

A poet, writer and visual artist, Gorka's literary work has been included in numerous anthologies and collective poetry books of Latin America and Europe. He has published in specialised international magazines, internet pages, and translated his work to English, French, Portuguese, Rumanian and Russian. As a result of his distinctive and critically acclaimed poetry, he has been invited to show his work in many international literary forums, congresses and festivals. His published work include: *The spasm and the silence* (2019), *The edge of eternity* (2017) and *The equilibrium of the hemispheres* (2013).





Zlatka Timenova
Bulgária

HAIKU

1.

a spring wind

inexplicable thrill

chases away the words

2.

salesmen of water

a smile glued

upon their lips

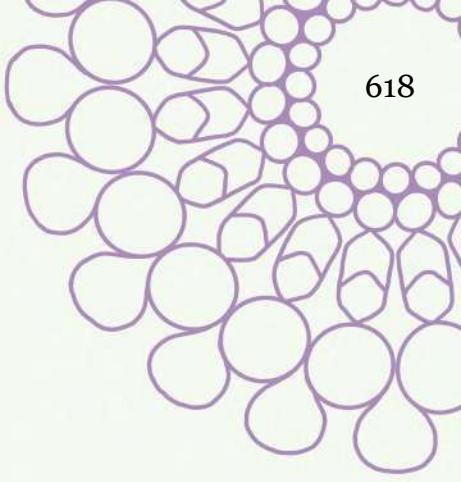
3.

a sunny morning

the ants rush

with confidence

*From: Zlatka Timenova, Traces of wind. Ed. Karina M, 2019, Sofia, Bulgária
Translated from Bulgarian by Shtilijana*



About Zlatka Timenova

Zlatka publishes articles and books chapters about literary critics, French literature, theory of translation and comparative literature. She is a member of: WHA (World Haiku Association); PEN-club Bulgaria; FHA (French haiku association) and EUROPOESIE, France. Her poetry has been published in French, English, Portuguese and Bulgarian journals and anthologies. She has eight published books of haiku, including: *L'élan du haiku slave* (2016), *L'(im)possible beauté du paysage urbain dans le haïku* (2018) and *Urban haiku: three blades of grass between cobblestones* (2020).



Samira Negrouche
Algeria

THE WHITE SURFACE

The white surface is not the void
nothing is not the void
what's not said about us
is not the void

I'm not afraid of what's not said
nor of the gap that disguises time
it's the din of the world that scares me
the din of the nothing that isn't nothing
the din of the swollen void
that inhabits the pavements
and then the streets
and then the parks
and then your room
and then your head

I'm not afraid of emptiness
the gap is a distant moment
a sun reborn
in the cool surface
of a silent winter morning

where I want to think of the nothing that opens
 where I want to think of the space that remains
 where I want to believe
 that on a path of snow
 a breath is stirring
 that stirs fear.

Translated from the French by Zoë Skoulding

From « Quai 2I1 partition à trois axes », Éditions Mazette, 2019

About Samira Negrouche

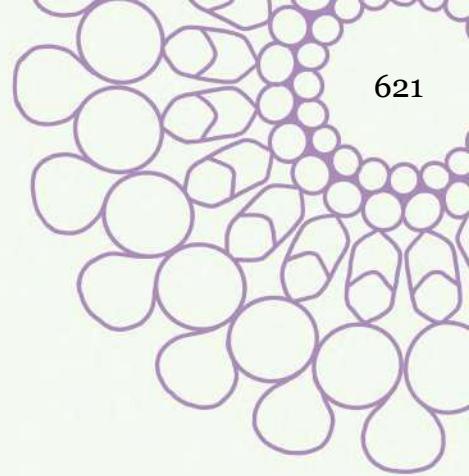
Samira is a poet and translator, as well as a doctor, who has continued to pursue her literary projects over the practice of medicine. She is an author of seven poetry collections and several artists' books. She is involved in various multidisciplinary projects and frequently collaborates with visual artists and musicians. Some of Negrouche's published books include: *Six arbres de fortune autour de ma baignoire* (2017), *Quai 2I1 partition à trois axes* (2019) and *The Olive-Trees' Jazz and Other Poems* (2020).





Fazil Jamili
Pakistan

FOR TREES...!



O' trees! when you are cut down
and turn into dry wood

temptations will come, O yes! they would
never forsake your traditions good

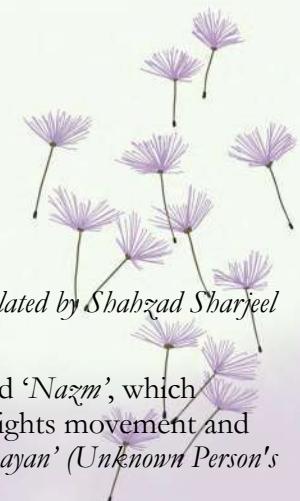
don't be an emperor's throne
become a plank and to a pavement adorn
a loving stop for tramps and beggars
you are not to become a gun's stock
or render yourself to knives and daggers

definitely not a threshold of a door, to a knock
no matter how loving, does not unlock

O' trees! When you are cut down
and turn into dry wood

a crutch and support indeed
for a boat with so much love proceed
to ocean's immensity do not concede

turn into my arm-like ore
and live by the light of core
my world that yet not love acquaint
my arms that love not yet implore



Translated by Shahzad Sharjeel

About Fazil Jamili

A renowned poet and journalist known for '*Ghazal*', which is steeped in classical tradition, and '*Nazm*', which encompasses both existential and universal issues. He actively participates in the journalists' rights movement and was elected President of the Karachi Press Club. Jamili is the author of '*Gumnam Aadmi Ka Bayan*' (*Unknown Person's Narrative*), a poetry collection published in 2017.



Dustin Pickering
United States

THE RAVEN HELPED BURY MY BROTHER

Surah Al Maedeh (Chapter 3) verses 27-31

Sores covered my body in its prodigality.
 They grew deeper and wiser.
 I dug in the sweet earth
 with my tiny finger.
 The wind blew in torrents, blew and blew,
 reddening my skin.

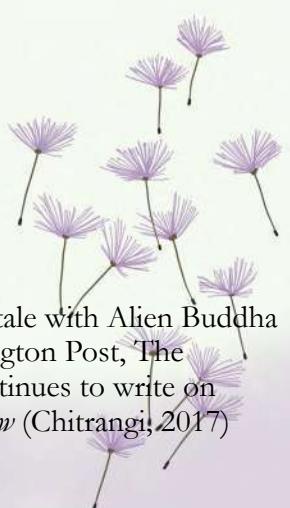
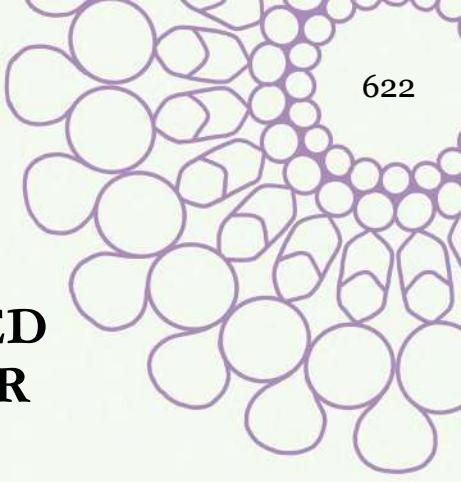
I killed Abel for his righteous gift
 accepted by God.
 What of *my* offering? Even evil ones wish
 to please God.
 The sores cast me to another land.

The Raven came to help me
 bury my brother's body in the sweet earth.
 My tiny finger could not make a trench.
 I dumped his carcass in the hole, worthless,
 although his spirit will ascend.

Ascend like Nature, ascend like the Sun:
 the Raven flies back to God.

About Dustin Pickering

Dustin is the author of multiple poetry collections. He has published short fiction and a fairy tale with Alien Buddha Press. His essays and critical commentaries on contemporary literature are published at Huffington Post, The Statesman (India), and other publications. As a Best of the Net and Pushcart nominee, he continues to write on engaging subjects in the US city of Houston, Texas. His published work include: *Salt and Sorrow* (Chitrangi, 2017) and *The Stone and the Square* (Hawakal, 2021).





Christopher Kelen
Australia

SILENCE

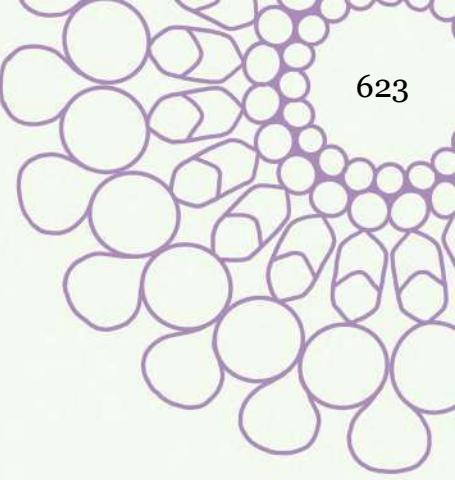
has love
to curl into
it's the between words, breaths
between each touch
when you're still touching
but nothing is left to say

LOVE SONG

barbarism is never far
it is the heart's horizon
beyond which I taste
blood of my enemies
sweet to the bone
I know they think
of me this way
that we sing
the same song

THE WHOLE CITY BURNS

and the cannibals
are warming their hands by it
learning the names of the towers by heart
just as each one falls



About Christopher Kelen

Christopher is a poet and painter that has published his work widely since the seventies. He has a dozen full length collections in English, as well as translated books of poetry in other languages. In 2019 and 2020, he won the Hunter Writers' Centre award in the NPP. His *Book of Mother* is forthcoming from Puncher & Wattmann in 2022. He has mentored many poets and translators from various parts of the world, is a Fellow of the Royal Society of NSW and published *Poor Man's Coat* (2018).



THE DREAM OF A CINNAMON TREE

Oscar Saavedra Villarroel
Chile

For my daughter, America

I want to have a giant bed, 5X King, like those
 Made for NBA basketball players,
 So that my daughter, my Little Star and I can sleep like prairie.
 And even if my Little Star opposes, I still want that bed, and I want us to
 sleep
 Like prairie or like native woodlands far away, very far away from the
 destruction of the light.
 And if my lil' child wants a lil' puppy, then the puppy can sleep at the foot of
 The bed.
 Love in times of capitalism-doesn't have a measure, doesn't have a reality:-
 Let it be a bed then without a size, without a structure
 only love.

About Oscar Saavedra Villarroel

Oscar is a poet, professor and video-poet. He received the Pablo Neruda Foundation Scholarship in 2005 and the Council of Culture and Arts Scholarship in 2017 for his book '*Montparnasse la Victoria*'. He received an honorable mention in the *Juegos Florales Gabriela Mistral*. He has also been included in several anthologies and Latin American magazines. He is an honorary partner of the Ñuble literary group and has published *Tecnopacha* (Desbordes 2016) and "*Entre Montparnasse La Victoria, una familia y Asia*" (2018).



Adiela Akoo
South Africa

AS YOU PERCEIVE

I am a flower that blooms
Perfume filtering the air
I am a veiled mystery
To hearts that don't understand
And eyes that cannot yet see

I am a reflection
I am a teacher
I am a lesson
I am the yang and the yin
I am the quiet voice amidst the din

I am a stranger, and stranger yet
I am a beloved friend
A secret well kept
I am a seeker
And I have been sought

I have been crushed and ground

Tempered by fire

I have been dead

And I have been reborn

With passion and desire

I am fiery, yet cool

Strong, yet gentle

Creating from destruction

I am nurturing and can feel you

In the hidden depths of your soul

I am ancient and I am young

I am a germinating seed

I write and I am written

I belong to The Love Creed

But I remain, only as you perceive...

About Adiela Akoo

Adiela is a poet whose poetry has been published in a number of anthologies across the globe. She has represented the Durban UNESCO City of Literature in collaborations with its counterparts. Adiela is a recipient of the prestigious *DUX Award* and a recipient of *The Silver Star Award* from the Global Literary Society for her “excellent contribution to world literature”, among others. Her soul stirring debut collection, *Lost in a Quatrain*, was written over an eighteen-year period.





EXTRACTS FROM THE SWEET ANIQUIRONA

**Winston Morales Chavarro
Colombia**

IV

Enchantress made of light
shells and submarine coral
Must I turn into water
to withdraw any revealing substance?

I oscillate
between the gulfs of your hands
And the imprecise shadow of your tree
I die
and become a tridimensional being
for your eyes
you know that there
in the resounding weightlessness of your river
my heartbeats
turn into musical notes
converging with the sweaty current of
your forest.

V

What was I doing
in the midst of that crowd?
That obscure town?
Why were those words calling to my ears?
Dim the lights
there is no need for you to undress.

To love each other that way
 without a touch
 nor a glance
 without even seeing each other
 with the lights dimmed
 without blames or quarrels.

There I love you
 as you proposed
 without even undressing
 without hearing your breath
 without hearing mine.

Why upon leaving the dark room
 was there such a redeeming breeze?

The plazas were filled with smiling faces
 I did not recognise anyone
 But the breeze continued
 and the light of a distant sun
 did not dazzle that road.

Translated by Luis Rafael Gálvez

About Winston Morales Chavarro

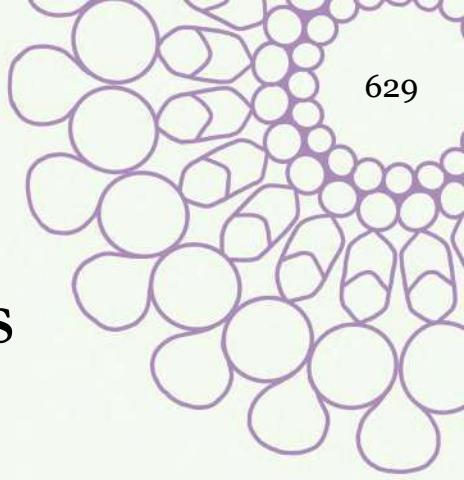
Winston has participated and been awarded in several poetry contests: first place in the Great International Poetry Prize Curtea de Argeș, Romania (2018), finalist of the youth story prize "El fungible" (2005, city council of Alcobendas, España) and winner of the artistic residency of the Grupo de Los Tres of the Ministry of Culture of Colombia and of Mexican Foncas with the project "*Parallels of the invisible: Chichén Itzá-San Agustín*". His poetry books include: *Słodka Aniquirona* in 2019, *Encrypted Light* in 2018 and *El vuelo de los pájaros azules* (*The Flight of The Blue Birds*; Uniediciones, Bogota, 2018).





John Ennis
Ireland

SPEAKING OF DOVES



Our dovecote high above the battlements,
We look down on the defenders of the realm.
We rule the roost and just our coos
Are visible as the night it cuddles in at Fore.

There is always a beginning and an end to things,
From the foundation stones of the cote on a morning
When the sun it must have shone, such hopes
For our wings still fluttering across millennia.

Don't underestimate us ever, the doves,
If on all sides we're the dove-trodden,
Our dovecote fallen. Listen out for us
As the memories of oak leaves cease.



About John Ennis

John published his Later Selected Poems 2000-2020 Going Home to Wyoming (Book Hub, Athenry) in 2020. His haiku appeared in *Trio of Shadows* with Maki Starfield and Kika Hotta in 2021. He is currently working on *Speaking of the Doves*.



Wansoo Kim
South Korea

TEARS OF THE MOON

A woman who has come
Stepping lightly on the darkness
In yellow skirt and coat,
And white socks.

Why does she look around
With her big eyeballs?
Is it because she wants to see her lover?

In the whirl of flashes
Sharp like the edge of a knife
On the streets of blazing lamps and neons,

She's shedding only tears
With eyes blind and heart torn
Shrinking and lingering.

TEARS OF GLACIER

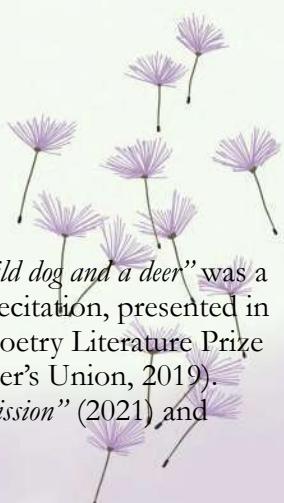
In the jungle of buildings
City dances in all seasons
Falling in a hot love
With air conditioners or cars
Day and night.

A woman who has kept her virginity long years
 In clothes of virgin white with loft pattern
 Sobs growing thin day by day
 With the pain
 That the disease of repressed stress bursts her heart
 And tears her internal organs
 Because of the hot dancing wind
 That city blows with his whole body and soul

The man that doesn't even turn his eyes on
 Why the woman sobs
 And what kind of serious disease she suffers from
 Still today day and night
 Burns his body
 In flames of money and pleasure
 With his blood boiling over
 Due to the dancing wind.

About Wansoo Kim

Wansoo has published seven poetry books. One poetry book, '*Duel among a middle-aged fox, a wild dog and a deer*' was a bestseller in 2012. He was granted the World Peace Literature Prize for Poetry Research and Recitation, presented in New York City at the 5th World Congress of Poets (2004). He received Geum-Chan Hwang Poetry Literature Prize in Korea (2019) and International Indian Award (literature) from WEWU (World English Writer's Union, 2019). Some of his published work include: '*Heart of God*' in America (2020), '*Secrets and Fruits of Mission*' (2021) and '*Flowers of Gratitude*' (2021).





NEAR PROXIMITY

632

Thorvald Berthelsen

Denmark

When did you grasp
that you loved me?
I've always known it
when I lost you
When did you understand
you couldn't do without me?
When I did not realise
I lost you

All love letters are overdue,
'incited by renewed declarations
without a clue that the Best before date
expired long ago '¹
otherwise they wouldn't have been sent
We sneak through everyday life
roaming close to indifference some days
Others we stroke our cohesive body
against the hairs

Suddenly your mouth shapes all the words
so they stand finished with common resonance
and yet they are the embryo of the future
long after they have fallen to the ground
and become a precipitate between
death on the fourth floor and The Towering Inferno

From the edge, the light is sharply defined
 'In the middle' flows all over the place
 closer it becomes noticeably invisible

Gets around the corner and there you pass
 into yourself
 or wherever you are now
 while the bus runs

It doesn't matter
 and evaporates into
 everything
 held between the meshes of the net
 The wild thought is stretched out completely
 and stands still with its trillions of quivering drops
 at all ends of the love of earthworms
 which is so finely meshed that any law of nature
 Escapes
 right next to vacuuming and payment service

Seen up close infinity is
 a drop in the beginning and
 the end
 If you dot to it
 two hearts are seen
 almost touching each other

¹By the Slovenian poet Lucija Stupica

About Thorvald Berthelsen

Thorvald has published seven poetry collections. His poems have been translated into 13 languages including English and Arabic. He reviews poetry, writes essays and non-fiction on literature, history and politics. He has edited several anthologies including new poetry from Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2018, which was awarded the *Best Editing Prize* at the Sarajevo Book Fair in 2019. He was recently appointed Cultural Frontrunner of the year by the Danish Minister of Culture in 2014. He has published *The tectonic plates of Skin* (2018) and *Sakskøbing Mixture II* (2021).





Brane Mozetič
Slovenia

1 POEM

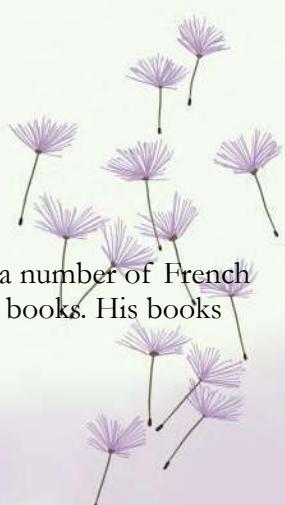
People decide these days between war
and peace. The aggressive ones are more in favour
of the former. They wait in long lines and cast their
votes. Others, hunched over in their
shacks, do not understand and have never
understood why they are alive. And I
sit here in front of my own life realising
how banal it is. Barely worth mentioning.
I am silent. All those books, all that
talk and writing have become lost
in my mind. I no longer know anything. Only
that I'd rather disappear. This nonsense
suddenly hits me as I stand up in front
of my own life, turn around and jump
out. I walk around the town, the shops,
I talk the whole time. About the banal

things that become fun
 and put me in a good mood,
 words I play with, with meaning, nothing
 fateful anymore, nothing tragic,
 deciding. Even deciding about war,
 religion, or love, everything
 has rolled off my chest, swarms somewhere
 under my feet, and I smile,
 redeemed, worry-free about what will happen
 to my banal life that sulks alone
 in its room and ponders and ponders.

Translated by Elizabeta Žargi and Timothy Liu

About Brane Mozetič

Mozetič is a poet, writer, translator, essayist, editor and activist. He has translated the work of a number of French authors, has edited several anthologies and published 15 collections of poems and four fiction books. His books have been translated into several languages, including Arabic.





Francis Otole
Nigeria

GOD FORBID ANOTHER WAR

From these things I saw,
God forbid another war;
there will be breakdown of law,
men will eat themselves raw,
women will make themselves whore,
children will hunger for more
hearts will grow many a sore.
hell will reign for sure.

FORTRESS OF LAWS

Fortress of laws
crumbled by wars,
lying in the rubbles
of her own troubles.
why mankind
to man not kind?

over borders
mankind bothers,
same flags
with different tags.
why mankind
makes hard to kind?

one earth region
with different religion,
one congregation
with multiple segregation.

why mankind
breaks the cord that binds?

different horror
by difference in colour,
colours bled
all crimson red.
why mankind
so passionately blind?

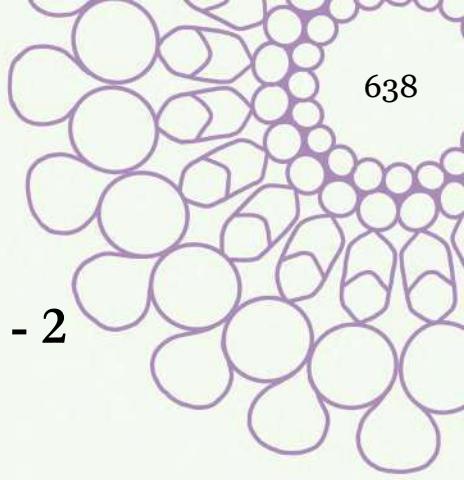
About Francis Otole

A poet, academician and member of the Association of Nigerian authors (ANA), Francis is a graduate of the prestigious Benue State University. He is an award-winning poet from the local and international scenes, featured in several magazines, journals, and anthologies.





VIA LOVE PATH - PART - 2



**Layeba Humanity
India**

Love Unconditional

You and I,
our love will never die.
I don't need your face to love you.
You don't need my body to feel me.
I don't need qualities to praise you.
You don't need sweet words to heal me.
We only hold on to the sensation,
that tells us we belong to each other.
We hold on to the point,
that tells us we melt each other.
You have many mood swings,
I never think about your perfection.
Yes I get hurt on your anger
but I feel the intensity of your angry action.
I have many, yes shades,
you never mind about my correction.
Yes you get short-temper on my tears,
but you accept all my reactions.
I will always make you comfortable
with my flawless care.
Whenever you need me terribly,
via love path, I will be there.



About Layeba Humanity

A natural bilingual English/Hindi Poetess and Motivator, Layeba is an honourable member of the World Nations Writers' Union, featured with some magazines and published online. She writes truth, raises social issues in her writings and has been a guest poet on radio stations. She is a fighter of adverse conditions and a narrow mind-set, believing in humanism with a sound of justice and truth.



Rira Abbasi
Iran

THE EARTH SINGS WHITE

When you become a mother
words go beyond dear dear
The dearests wear their hats, their scarves and leave
and the letters of the alphabet on the blackboard write
themselves in white:
When you return home
write in white on the walls, on the doors: Mother
When you go to the sea with the men,
write in white on every black net: Peace
With a friend write in white on every land: Home
When the earth sings light, joy rises from equality
snowflakes fall like butterflies
and the earth takes delight in peace
the earth thrives lovingly on peace

LOST IN WHEAT

So, you have something even for this barefoot woman?
I want to lobby a little on
those oil barrels I want to
plant wheat and open my

eyes in the eye of an apple

to weep a little wheat, a

little wheat

Perhaps I will become the apple's eye to the tree

perhaps I will become a loaf of bread that goes from

hand to hand and lands in the mouth of a child in war.

All Poems Translated from Farsi by Maryam Ala Amjadi

About Rira Abbasi

Acclaimed as Iran's Lady Poet Laureate and the winner of the Parvin Etesami Poetry Award, Rira also received a grant from Prince Claus Fund institute to take part in 21 Festival International de Poesía de Medellín in Colombia. Since 2007, she has been the founder and director of the International Peace Poetry festival. Abbasi has edited and introduced the first collection of Iranian Peace Poetry (an anthology) and has had several of her poems translated into different languages.





Eliza Segiet
Poland

POWER OF WISDOM

To Tatyanie Fazlalizadeh

Gender or skin colour
can't be igniters of aggression
Experiencing the world,
without torment from anyone,
is a human right.
For when being broken
must through power of wisdom
fight the lack of understanding.

Defensive force
Is not derived from the void
because
the body's colour is but a hull.
Inside it live
memories, plans,
dignity,
which no one's allowed to take away

SPITE

*To Abiy Ahmed Ali –
Laureate of Nobel Peace Prize in 2019*

Not the one that was read
but the one that was lived,

the war drama
showed him, what is hell on
earth.
He was there.
Got to know bitterness of time,
of a brother killing a brother.

Luck, maybe destiny
let him live through
and create a better tomorrow.

He knew that the imaginary wall
between two countries
must be replaced by the *bridge of friendship*.

Peace exists
when there is justice.
To spite hatred and discord -
—love, reconciliation, forgiveness
build harmony.

Translated by Ula de B

About Eliza Segiet

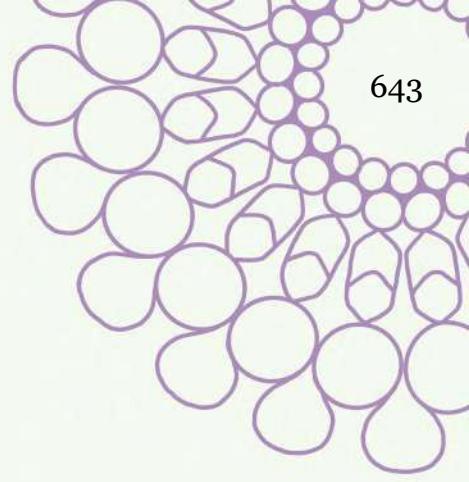
Eliza's poems won the *International Publications of the Year* in Spillwords Press in 2017 and 2018. She is the recipient of many honours including *Tra le parole e l'infinito award of the International Cultural Festival* (2018), *Naji Naaman Literary Prize* (2020) and *World Award "Cesar Vallejo"* for Literary Excellence (2020). The author's works can be found in anthologies and literary magazines worldwide.





Emna Louzzyr
Tunisia

'A QUESTION'



How round can a full moon be
High above deserted homes?

Does the universe even see
Hunger as it groans?

Does Spring rejoice
Or mourn its forlorn?

When upon doors we pound
Will someone hear the sound?

Black Violet

What is to be said of violets
When death enshrouds the world?

It is said

That the deceased
Nourish our earthly ground
Thus once mourning is over
Will more radiant violets be found ?

Translated by Hayet Toukabri



About Emna Louzzyr

A poet and journalist, Emna was also a laureate of the Zubeida Bchir Poetry prize in 2009. Her poetry has been translated into Italian, French and English, and she has attended several international poetry festivals in Lodève (France), Bari (Italy) and Skopje (Macedonia). Some of her poems have been selected in: *A World Anthology of Border Poetry: Blurred and Political*, published by Victoria University, Canada, 2021. Emna's work includes: *Sabra* (2009), *The wind talked to me* (2017) and *Le silence des volcans* (2015).



**Rosabelle Illes
Aruba**

DNI (DO NOT INTERRUPT)

to affirm reality.

I will awaken on my own to realise it.

As long as my morning gaze is fixed,
as the day unfolds, its likeness will reflect
and when it's time to close my eyes

I will know where to go
for although tomorrow is not promised,
today was mine for the taking.

Originally written in Papiamento by Rosabelle Illes

Translated Into English by Jonelle Hector

MATCHES

I have found my mate

I am certain she is the one

I need not think outside the box

to know true love

I need no thoughts

only her touch

We have formed a community

all of us

Even though we are mainly in darkness

we remain sticks of light

and every so often we must serve our purpose

Heaven slides open and we are exposed to clarity:
 my deepest dilemma
 Do I try to move and save us time?
 Or do I take my time to admire her beauty?

As heaven closes I reach over to find her there
 She is smiling, I hope
 Her deepest dilemma
 Is she happy that she was spared?
 Or does she feel for our neighbour, a widow in despair;
 I cannot make meaning of this dreaded process:
 Not once are we needed when there is absolute darkness

Originally written in English by Rosabelle Illes

THREE STEPS

One persuades your toes to set the corals free
 They hold the magic identities of feet that show the way

Two is deliberate
 Once in motion habit takes over

Three is for the dreamers
 Those who take solace in the sand and step into restorative power

Originally written in English by Rosabelle Illes

About Rosabelle Illes

Rosabelle, PhD (1987), is an artist, writer and performer. She is the author of two collections of poetry **Beyond Insanity** (2005) and **Spiel di Mi Alma** (2010), while her third book **TITLE** (2016) consists of short stories, poems and thoughts. She is also the co-author of a multilingual children's book entitled **Hearty** (2018). Her work has been published in international journals and she has been invited to participate in several literature festivals around the world including Bogotá, Taiwan, and New York City.





JUST ME

**Luz María López
Puerto Rico**

Me!

I am woman

seeking the truest

denotation of life!

Thousand vortices of daring vigor

where all my tiny steps

can be turned into a rhizome

spreading potentials

for spiritual and flesh reveries,

not these aromas of paradoxical dreams

- so futile -

for I might get lost in solitude.

Never to deceive my own eyes

and these hands full of warmth.

Never to lose the grip on time,

the love call offering a pulsing emotion.

Never to miss the only door to

sacred rhapsody!

SOULS

Needles drew a hologram

a green sanctuary to walk

over the world

on a crisp morning.

Some tiny flowers
blossomed eagerly
splashing asymmetric beauty
on the path that we followed,

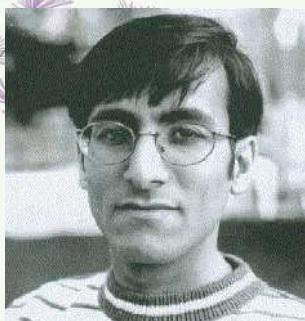
A threat of light
was guiding the way
and before we knew it,
a prayer was born
from our lips and hearts.

Rejoicing in a universal song
rooted on earth,
a kiss is just another rhyme
echoing the freedom
of all souls.

About Luz María López

Luz is a bilingual author, poet, narrator, editor, anthologist, translator, prologist, lecturer and international cultural promoter. Her poetry is translated into more than 20 languages and published in books of selected authors, literary magazines and international multilingual anthologies. She is an awarded poet and international traveler learning from diverse cultures and perspectives of life.





Ali Abukhattab
Palestine

EMPTY

The wind has its logic.
 And you walk against the saltiness of time.
 The place smell croaks in you.
 You spin your death by hands of holes.
 You stick to the wind hissing
 Yourself burnt on the flame of fragmentation
 You create your ceremonies in mixing the tears by the fantom foam
 Your crushed myth rises from the poem hell
 Go up
 Go up
 Go up
 Do not stop on the tip of chant
 I see them approaching from your echo
 I see them slipping from the cough attendants
 Escape,
 Follow the prophecy of wind

“WAITING FOR GODOT” AGAIN

I, in the first of distance, was waiting for him.
 As a defeated prophet
 The time scorpions were biting me
 The wild age words were stoning me
 The weakness was spreading into the rocks
 I said he must come
 But they left me
 I waited till the dates evaporated

 Nothing came except death.

TRILOGY FOR THE SEA

(1)

The narcissus desire
Draws abstraction for the finite
Picks, from my smell, an ink
And I still write.

(2)

A violet rests to steep
In this green storm
My pen swims like the jellyfish
My face is a rocky jut
My lips are a remains of moss
And I still speak.

(3)

The coast is the start of the flock
The fish fished the sea colour
My eyes smell the cloud
And I still look.

About Ali Abukhattab

A poet, critic and translator, Ali studied English literature and translation. He published some books and participated in some anthologies. He also writes children's literature and writes political and cultural essays. He participated as a lecturer in many cultural events and is the co-founder of the group "Utopia", which achieved many important events in Palestine.





ANADOLU

Shadab Zeest Hashmi
Pakistan / United States

Appears in the book Kohl and Chalk (Poetic Matrix Press, 2013)

At the end of the river, a woman makes bread.
 A shady tree will be easy to find here
 and anything you've lost,
 if it matters, will bob up
 right by the small boats.
 Neither the flowers
 nor the fruits are without a thin fringe
 of brown. Clay pots shimmer. Everything
 is aging, with a sweet center.
 My cold desk, wafting in the Bosphorus,
 is circled by honeybees

CALL TO PRAYER

First published in Contemporary World Literature, then later on the site Charter for Compassion.

In a city hillocked
 and covered
 with cherry blossoms

this time of the year

the runner
carrying the message of war
has reached

before
bales of cotton

Caravans bringing sugar and rice

The elders in their white gowns
have been moved
from their perch in the mosque

A cloud of quiet departs

The women are busying themselves
with salves
with feeding the horses that will carry
their men

The next call for prayer
will be made in full armour

Arrows threading the men's bodies
will be removed during prayer

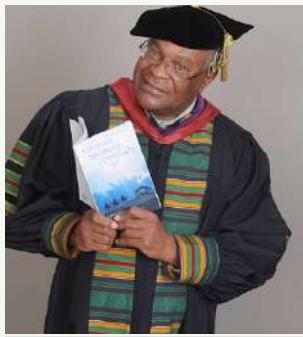
About Shadab Zeest Hashmi

Shadab is the winner of the San Diego Book Award, Sable Books' Hybrid Book Prize, the Nazim Hikmet Poetry Prize, and has been nominated for the Pushcart multiple times. Her poetry collections include *Kohl and Chalk* and *Baker of Tarifa*, her book *Ghazal Cosmopolitan* is a work of critical and craft essays, lyric essays, and original ghazals and qasidas. Her latest book is titled *Comb*. Her poetry has been translated into several languages and have appeared in numerous anthologies and journals worldwide.



BRANCH 9

TRUTH IN THE MIRROR



NEVER FAR - UNDER SHINING STARS!

**Dr. Joseph S. Spence
United States**

My sweetest lovable love
You're like a tasty hive of honeydew.
Let's leave for the lovely garden of paradise
The blooming valley blossoming with the fragrance of sweet roses
Where only butterflies, hummingbirds, and Pegasus flew.

Our hearts are resonating with ripe colours
We will reside under the rainbow's arching radiance
Stimulating our souls with gold, green, and reflecting resonance.

We will enjoy sweet mangoes, berries, and cherries
Build a cottage in its midst
Bake brown gingerbread with raisins at twilight
Take showers in the morning's misting rain
Sing sweet melodic songs with the birds.

At dawn, when the golden sun's rays melt the dew
We will sip nice drips and develop imaginary visions beyond
And at twilight, catch fireflies to light our lanterns.

The hummingbirds will feed us food
After getting sweet nectar from bright, beautiful flowers.



Like the prophet Elijah in the wilderness
 The sparrows will build our nest
 Providing our pleasing and pleasurable rest.
 With enchanting inspirational melodies
 We will wish upon a star
 Sailing across the galaxies
 Smile at cows jumping over the moon
 Sip splendid sparkling wine from Milky Way streams.

Intertwine with the setting sun and rising moon
 And from each other, my sweetest lovable love
 Under the shining stars, we shall never be far!

LOOKING OUT TODAY - HUMANITY STAR HORIZON!

Author's Notes - This poem addresses the subject of hope. It reflects humanity's insight and foresight, on the past and future with quality of inspiration for the mind, body, and soul, opening new doors, and reaching for the stars.

As I look out today, I see:
 people are moving about
 smiling, crying, rushing, walking.

As I look out today, I see:
 blue sky above, birds flying, chirping
 trains are moving, planes flying, clouds creating rain.

Looking out today, I see:
 concrete highways, cars driving, bikes riding
 life moving along, happily, sadly.

Looking out today, I see:

fences mending, beautiful gardens growing
sad people not crying, seeking a new way

As I look today, I can see:

opportunities for growth, roses blooming
new possibilities as life keeps moving.

As I look out today, I see:

a new horizon, upliftment for a nation in unity
for humanity's quality to reach for the stars!



About Dr. Joseph S. Spence

Joseph authored ten inspirational poetry books and over 200 published peer-reviewed articles. He is published globally and has memberships in various international academic honor societies. He is honorably retired from the U.S. Army and is a Goodwill Ambassador for Arkansas, USA, appointed by President Bill Clinton. He created Epulaeryu, Linking Pin Sonnet, God's Dynamic Steps, and Seventh Heaven poetry forms while studying English literature, creative writing, African Diaspora, Japanese linguistics, and poetry. He is published in over ten languages, and has received numerous worldwide poetry awards.



Maki Starfield
Japan

ONENESS



Not in a heart, reason, and egoism,
 but where I am you, and also you are me.
 I live with you in this happiness.

Not in the sky, earth, and a rolling stone,
 but where I am you, and also you are me.
 I live with you in this happiness.

Not life and death, status, and parents,
 but where I am you, and also you are me.
 I live with you in this happiness.

MOON FORTUNE

1

A clump of nettles
 Bloomed above the cement—
 Glorious green!

2

My sweetheart is away,
 But tonight
 We watch the moon together.

3

Naked in the dream,

We hug each other strongly,
Leaving me breathless.

4

The magic of a kiss!
Now you
Become the flame of my passion.

5

Sleeping together,
Two fools in love;
The moon approves.



6

You bloom
In my garden—
A wonderful rose.



7

Your saliva
Engraved in my mouth—
Eternal taste!

8

Echoes of a dream...
The lake is accompanying me:
Words of water.



9

A poet!
His heart is heaped full
With wonders.

10

Winged words...
The peach trees are in full bloom
In my hometown.

11

Three petals to you
Why is Fortuna
On the navel?

12

The poet's dream
Is adrift.
But the dream is true.

13

In a garden
I see you in full bloom,
Ready and disheveled.

14

I have no illusions, right?
But without illusions
You are playing!



About Maki Starfield

Maki is a poet, translator and painter. She has translated several English works into Japanese, from Gabriel Rosenstock to Bill Wolak. She has published her work in haiku magazines and one of her bilingual books is *Duet of Fireflies*. She is a representative of Immagine & Poesia in Japan as well as a member of Japan Universal Poets Association. She has received several awards, some of which are: The PushCart prize nomination 2020, Sahitto International Award for Literature 2021 and Silk Road International Poetry Festival 2021 Outstanding Poet Awards.



**Reshma Ramesh
India**

LOVE

Now I know love is

A tongue that cannot speak

Love is writing poetry

To a tree

Love is my grandmother's

Salt in your pickle

Love is a pomegranate

Bleeding for you

Love is the patience

Of a towel waiting for you

Love is the hands of rain filling

a farmer with hope

Love is sunlight in a

sparrow's nest

Love is the pulse



Thumping in your vein

Love is learning to write

Your name at sixty-five

Love is a shoot

Emerging from a seed

Love is a healing wound

That you offer to him willingly

Love is waking up every morning

To watch the sunrise again in the same place.



IF YOU WERE LIKE ME

If you were like me

you would know that

a name is a place that you used to visit long back,

a place where there were no farewells only shadows of fables

where a river would flow around us in stillness and listen

to the gentle beat of your heart.



You would know that

a name is a certain night where a sea is drawn from a window,

a night where you would fill my wounds with your poems,
and the wind is made of clay.

If you were like me
you would know that
some things remain with us and some things float away
and you would fold a river into my palms
so that when you leave they would
recall your fading footsteps.



About Reshma Ramesh

Reshma is an award-winning bilingual poet writing in English and Kannada. She has the unique honour of her poem being displayed permanently in the ruins of Ancient City of Olympos, Antalya, Turkey. She has represented India at many international events such as International Olympus Culture and Literature Festival Antalya, UNESCO Istanbul festival, 37th World Congress of Poets Mongolia. Her latest book *Language of Shadows*' collection of poetry and photography has been published by Edition Delta Germany.



3 POEMS

**Alireza Abiz
Iran**

1.

I chased the fly out of the kitchen
He will die tonight
I opened the door onto the yard
And many times I shooed him out with the yellow napkin
And each time he came back in.
In a small saucepan on the stove
I was cooking black-eyed beans
The fly flew toward the pan
Drinking in the stem from the beans
I swatted at him with the napkin
Careful not to hit him-
I don't want his blood on my hands.
He made a turn and hid under the table
I could easily have grabbed him
I was scared I would catch germs and kill the fly as well.

I don't want his death to be at my hand.

I chased him out with the yellow napkin

And quickly closed the door

If I want to have a smoke in the yard

I must remember to shut the door after me

If the fly were smart

He would go and sit on that vent- is it from the boiler?

There is always warm steam there

I don't think he is that intelligent

And I wouldn't know how to explain this to him

And anyway, he is not going to last the winter, is he?

2.

I dream I've swallowed an oak tree

And its branches are spreading in my stomach

Soon it will grow out of my skin

A dove is building a nest on a bough

And a leopard is napping in the shadow of the tree

In the leopard's dream

I am his mother and I'm suckling him

I want to wake up

I'm afraid I may disturb the leopard's dream

3.

I left the house at night following a young rabbit
 She took me through the trees toward the sea
 A fierce wind blew and a sudden rain fell
 I stood on an esplanade and looked out at sea
 The rabbit was moving off on a shining board
 The sea was terrifying and I was shaking
 The rabbit was still moving away on the board

I said nothing about my dream to you
 I said nothing about my dream to her
 I went back home from the sea, hopeless,
 The rabbit was sleeping soundly in my bed.

All poems Translated by the poet in collaboration with W. N. Herbert



About Alireza Abiz

Alireza is a multi-award-winning poet, literary scholar, and translator. He has written extensively on Persian contemporary literature and culture. So far, he has published five collections of poetry in Persian, English, German and Arabic translations of his poetry have been published in numerous journals and anthologies and have been showcased in public places including Stuttgart Underground in Germany. His latest collection published in 2017 was awarded the most prestigious independent poetry award in Iran, the *Shamlon Award*.



John O'Donoghue
Ireland

GHAZAL

When your heart is broken don't pretend to be
Together when you're in bits, just send for me.

When you're bereft, and the world has turned to ash
Come to my door, you'll find a friend in me.

When you feel yourself sliding into the pit
Look up, reach out your hand, ascend to me.

When life has banished you to where the shadows
Gather, you know you can depend on me.

When the postman brings you only bad tidings
Try these, love letters to you, penned by me.

When you are ready to fight, alive to life
At last, then, Beloved, contend with me.

And when love has restored you once again
May all your wanderings find an end in me.

About John O'Donoghue

John has published several books including *Brunch Poems* (2009), *Fools & Mad* (2014); and *The King From Over The Water* (2019). His writing has attracted a number of awards, including Mind Book of the Year 2010; the Irish Post Listowel Writers' Week Award 2016; and a Brookleaze Grant, also in 2016, from the Royal Society of Literature. He is a Co-Founder of The Wild Geese Press, Books from the Irish Diaspora, and holds a PhD in Creative Writing from Bath Spa.



3 POEMS

Aysa Jhorna
Bangladesh

1.

The tree
I asked the tree,
"Where is your wound?"
The tree became silent
Fantails birds living there,

Tree listens to their warm voice
And the axe hurting the tree
repeatedly. and the wave!

It moves through the time
Sea calls the wave by roaring
Wave, time comes from eternity.
And the tree is like
my grandmother's face, looks
to the sky where there is
hope, a cry, death and life.

2.

Wave
Wave moves through time
Sea calls the wave by roaring
Wave, time comes from eternity.



3.

Pakur Tree
 The day I thought to become enlivened
 The older one in me has died.
 This new me became worried or
 Anxious with me,
 Thought I had lost the older myself;
 My imageries during infancy
 Cast shadows being a plant
 On the story of my growing elder today
 Only like a pakur tree.

Translated by Soumitra Saha



About Aysa Jhorna

Aysa is a prominent poet who writes in Bangla and English. Her poetry has been published in international journals as well as in different print media and web magazines in Bangladesh. She has eight poetry books, three translated books from English to Bangla and one essay book including a short story book.



Chad Norman
Canada

THE BIRTH OF SHADE

1

Limitations. Limited. Limits.

Why acknowledge the unfriendly
especially when a fellow man
who came across otherwise
having once returned my hello?

Actually there is no question there,
I mean why should he come out
from the safety of changing trees,
chosen by friendly feathered ones
to protect new invisible nests.

2

Thank you, chipmunk.
Your astounding tail in the breeze
what manages to find us in here
where a fly lands on a hand.



I keep my fingers full of
one peanut at a time, you
from the Wild also give a gift
I try to tell means so much
to the man I sit inside of now.

Your tail again, again, & again
sunlit in the wind educates
about how I know so little,
you choose to feast on the peanut
taken, teaching me more about trust.



THE SOLOIST

Often on certain sunny
late fall afternoons
an ailing aging man who
seems to enjoy weekly walks
is brought to a
point of total stoppage
under the shimmer of
sun through leaping leaves,
a brief moment of
immaculate hearing
as he watches how
his lengthy shadow
causes the lone cricket's



nearby solo to grow cautious,
until he steps back onto
the path he has made,
the lowering brightness
almost like a conductor
waving that wand to
ask the solo to resume,
rising out of a bush
able to turn from green
to a loud pleasant red.



About Chad Norman

Chad has given talks and readings in Denmark, Sweden, Wales, Ireland, Scotland, America, and across Canada. His poems appear in publications around the world and have been translated into Danish, Albanian, Romanian, Turkish, Italian, Spanish, Chinese, Czech, and Polish. His collections are *Selected & New Poems* (Mosaic Press), *Squall: Poems in the Voice of Mary Shelley* (Guernica Editions) and *Simona: A Celebration of the S.P.C.A.* which came out early in 2021 from Cyberwit.Net (India).



Dimitris P. Kraniotis
Greece

OUR HEART'S VISITORS

A stranger's talk
with a stony garment,
threateningly hovers
in our every step,
cold drops of courtesy
burn our breath.

Did hope cease
to visit our heart?

The snow today
isn't white.
It is colourless
like the iris of our eyes,
like good morning
which doesn't come out of our lips.

Did love cease
to visit our heart?

A torn poster
in the whirl of the wind
our every word,
blue pebbles
sunk in the blue of the sea
our dreams.

Did poetry cease
to visit our heart?



ODE TO THE PEACE HERO

You were born once
for a thousand revolutions.
You died once
with a thousand resurrections.
You enlightened eternal ideals
into chests full of dreams.
You blew poets' words
into harmonious winds.
You got hurt by faceless wounds,
slapped injustices,
you fought for Freedom,
and won for Peace.

LESSONS OF “YES”

Shadows weave
bitter words,
sentences with needles.
Strong trees
falling at once,
the lemon tree blossoms freezes.
But you
which burn like the kiss
and shine like “I want”,
you give lessons of “Yes”
of “I love you”,
of “I feel”.



About Dimitris P. Kraniotis

A poet and a medical doctor, Dimitris is the author of nine poetry books and the editor-in-chief of an international poetry anthology. He has won international awards for his poetry, which have been translated in 25 languages and published in many countries around the world. He has participated in International Poetry Festivals and is an academician in Italy, president of World Poets Society (WPS), Director of Mediterranean Poetry Festival (Larissa, Greece) and member of World Poetry Movement (WPM).



IN PRAISE OF OBLIVION

Ismael Diadié Haidara
Mali

The poem does not heal the open wound.
It takes my hand and walks me between the word and the epitaph.

I just want to enter a city that I do not know
I want to discover blue and green houses
I want everything that can keep me away from the mud of my country
his blood and his bitter kisses.

I just want to forget
walking in the field, naming perfumes and beehives.

The mountain has seen cities born and die
the city has seen houses rise and fall in ruins
the houses have seen so many inhabitants come and go
and among them I want to be one who is gone
without writing a poem about this transitory world.

X 2021

MY COUNTRY

My homeland is the glance of a dragonfly frightened by a girl
She is in love with the tall grasses and the dragonfly looks for a place to hide.

My homeland is the narrow path that passes through the forest's heart
 My country sees the top of a mountain and I follow it like the pilgrim
 towards infinity.

My homeland is an open window at twilight
 My country waits for the song of the birds that return and the sunlight
 that leaves.

My homeland is that loneliness, that silence, that peaceful night
 and you, mother who lights up the darkness of those times devoid of
 poetry.

17 X 2021

THE CANDLES AND THE DAISY

Nobody asks to be born and once under the sun
 The parents lovingly care for their children until they see them grow up.
 Then they go to the cemetery to rest
 They leave helpless their son
 who sees every day the unlit candles.

I don't know how many burning candles I have left.
 In the night of this world
 I make sure each one lights up a daisy.

15 X 2021

*All Poems Translated by Virginia Fernández Collado
 Poet, Spain.*



About Ismael Diadié Haidara

Ismael is a historian, philosopher and poet who lives in Spain. He is president of the Kati Foundation and the author of several books including: *A Hut on the Shores of the Water* (2015), *Sabel* (2017), *Tebrae for my Mother* (2017), *Diary of a Timbuktu Librarian* (2017); *From Toledo to Timbuktu* (with A. Llaguno, 2018), *About Sobriety* (2020) and *Tebrae* (2021).



Gino Leineweber
Germany

SHE

Her world alone is enchanting her. She doesn't notice anything of what is happening around her. She isn't even aware of where she is at this moment.

But I was already under her spell.

Suddenly she looked at me with her captivating eyes that blossom like two flowers in eternal serenity.

For a while, I could not breathe.

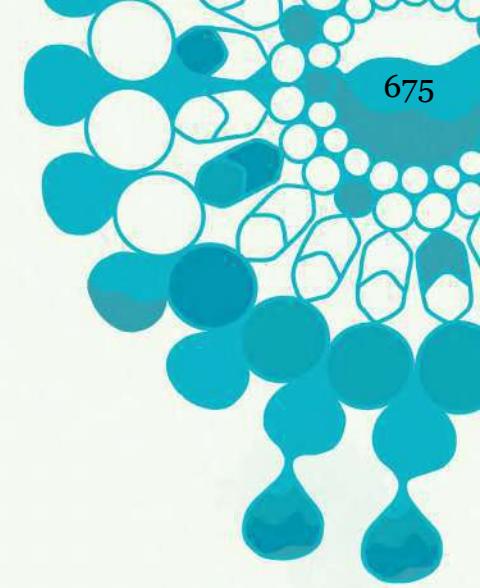
However, her look at me reflected nothing.

Let alone considering who I, a part that surrounded her world, would be.

But I lost myself forever.

LEAVE DESTROYER

I am under the impression
We, the human beings, are
The most intelligent beings
In the world
But I do not longer claim
We are the only ones
With intelligence at all
And I do not think alone
Of dolphins, crows, or rats



And also not about the dog
Of my neighbour
Who claimed he, the dog,
Is the most intelligent animal
He ever happened to see
What he proves with
When he is going to his kitchen, or bathroom,
Or elsewhere in his house,
The dog doesn't lift a leg
Nor takes a blink
But when he, the neighbour,
Is intending to go out
The dog is running
Even he, the neighbour, hasn't
Lifted his body entirely
From the sofa he, the dog,
Already is running to the door



But I do not mean this dog
I mean a small worm
That lays her eggs
In a leaf
Even though
It has no fingers
To fold it
Instead she tries hard
Preparing the leaf
So that she can use it
She cuts five leaves from a branch
Then with a small thread
That she spins onto the loose leaves
Glues them back at it
A worm can do such things



Of course the leaves dry out and curl up
 This is what the worm expected
 She lays her egg
 In one of the prepared worm flats
 Only in one because of the birds
 Birds are curious and wonder
 What might be in the rotten leaves
 They land on the branch
 Check it and when it's empty
 Do not bother about the other four
 think 'shite' to themselves – and fly away



About Gino Leineweber

Gino has been working as a poet, writer, and translator since 1998. He was editor of the magazine *Buddhistische Monatsblätter* (BM) for six years and led the Hamburg Authors' Association (HAV) for 12 years. From 2013 to 2020, he served as president of the Three Seas Writers' and Translators' Council (TSWTC), based in Rhodes, Greece. He publishes non-fiction and poetry, writing in both German and American English. His poetry has won numerous international awards.



IN MY ARMS

Aicha Bassry
Morocco

When I was very young
I didn't understand the pecking of the birds,
Nor the sleep of latent butterflies in their velvety silk.
When I was very young
I was afraid of the slithery sand beneath my feet
And the sting of the water on my lips;
Then I grew up
And the apples of my autumn ripened.
And yet, I still do not understand
Why when I embrace a wave
It shatters into misty spray in my arms.

LONGING

What are you dreaming about now?
I am dreaming that the phone is ringing,
That a voice is calling out to me:
“Come ride the nearest cloud
And come to join me.
I fervently long for you
And the sheaves of wheat
Have dried out in my hands.”



I AM NO LONGER HERE

I called out to you.
 I called for years on end.
 When you finally said “yes,”
 Inside me the words
 Lost all meaning,

 When the bird returned,
 The sky had already left.

All Poems Translated by Mbarek Sryfi & Eric Sellin



About Aicha Bassry

Aicha is a poet and novelist who has numerous poetry collections and is also the author of four novels. Aicha was awarded the *Kateb Yacine Novel Prize* (2016), for Greta Garbo’s Granddaughters, the *Simone Landry Women’s Poetry Prize* (2017) and *Best Arab Novel Award* at the 37th edition of the Sharjah International Book Fair (2018) for her novel, *Life Without Me* (2006). Her work has been translated into English, French, Spanish, Italian, and Turkish.



YOU

Bhismā Upretī
Nepal

This greenery of the nature is yours

All these seasons
And the splendour they create are yours
Delicate feelings the beauty provides as a gift
Is yours

All shades of creation and the fragrance also are yours
The motion of rivers
Caressing of the breeze
The music jingling in the heart--
They are all yours

The nights, the days and the dusks too are all yours
The god and the boons are all yours

Moreover, anger, passion and arrogance that exist in this world
Along with frustrations and admonitions are all yours

Even after everything becomes yours
There still is something left
The only thing that remains is mine

And, that is you!

Translated by Keshab Sigdel

STATUE

When man loses his ways
he becomes a statue.

When the way ahead stretched further,
destination shifts too, accordingly
and to devise strategies to reach his goal
man becomes more creative,
more visionary and dynamic.

But when man loses his ways
he becomes a statue.

I would never love to become a statue,
soulless,
standing erect!

Translated by Mahesh Paudyal

THE DOOR

'What's behind this door?'
I open every new door
with this curiosity in me.

I reach the other turn from one
walking a road to the other road
crossing a bridge to the other river
and stepping an age to the other age too.

The more one walks, meets the next way
next turn
next river
and a new petal of life
every time being a new door.

'What's behind this door?'
I feel myself only in this question,



meet myself
see myself.

My curiosity
my living.

Translated by Mahesh Paudyal



About Bhisma Upreti

Bhisma is a poet, essayist and novelist who has published 21 books in Nepali, English, Hindi, and other languages. Many of his works have been translated into Korean, Chinese, Russian, and more. His works have also been published in various anthologies, international literary journals and magazines. He is a gold medalist of the National Poetry Festival organised by Nepal Academy. Bhisma is also the recipient of prestigious awards like the SAARC Literature Award, Shankar Lamichhane Youth Essay Award and many more.



FLOWER OF HAPPINESS

Vesna Mundishevska-Veljanovska
North Macedonia

One day
– my birthday,
two beautiful young humans
gave me a flower.

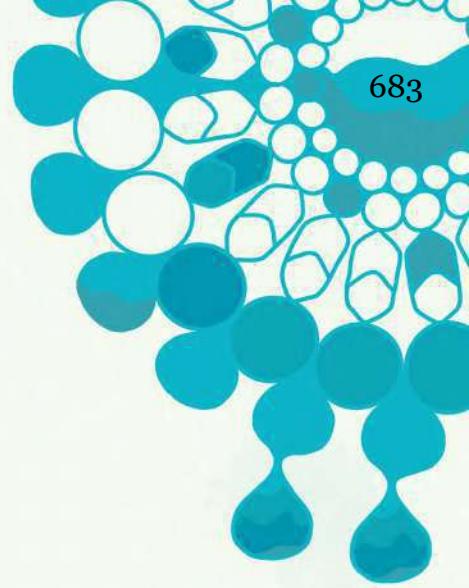
They said it is
an unusual plant
– it brings here the happiness
from all over the sphere.

I chose
an appropriate vase
and I kept it
with special attention.

The unusual creature
filled my home
with wonderful feelings
and affection.

They also told me
not to be afraid,
– the day will come
when the flower will wilt.

Then, out of gratitude
for my love,
all its happiness
will be spilt on me.



So here I am
enjoying, by all means,
among the benefits of
the newly created garden.

Me,
the dried flower
and my smart,
grown to my heart, teens.

BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

I am a shell
stretched
on the border
between the water and the shore.

On my body whorl
the lack foams
in golden shape,
in my womb
the times
find their escape.

The wind
furrows on my back
with stones and sand,
and the rainbow in the glance
rides
on the nets of the challenge.

A frog
or a snake
irritate
my mantle,
and me
nor do I swim,



nor I hide,
but I open
my lids wide
and pile up nacre
on the heart
ready to erupt.

With a mermaid's symphony
I dig to fit
in the colourful mosaic
with motives from
my journey
towards the end
or the endlessness.

The waves are roaring,
the shores are screaming,
my ships are breaking down
on the wilderness
between the two lifespans.

In the treasury
of both worlds
I am a pearl relic
that awaits its revelation.

Translated from Macedonian into English by Vesna Mundishevska-Veljanovska



About Vesna Mundishevska-Veljanovska

Vesna is the author of 13 books of poetry, two books of critical-essay texts, co-author of a book of poems for children and the author and co-author of 6 vocational books for teachers. Her poetry has been translated into many languages, awarded and represented in anthologies. She has also edited 40 poetry books and collections. She has performed at numerous literary events and for several years, she has edited and hosted the radio show "Poetska kvecherina/ Poetry Evening" on Radio Bitola.



LONELY WOMAN

Rodaan Al Galidi
Netherlands

A woman buys a boat
and puts it in her bedroom.
She loves the sea, freedom and calm.

A man walks into her bedroom.
He hears seagulls
and smells the salty sea.

How magical the walls
with they're rounded sails
and how far
the distance of sleep.

Lonely woman,
because the man
is not a sea.

HARBOUR

My mother was the harbour,
my father a boat.

My mother was the boat,
my father a sail.



My mother was the sail,
my father a wind.

My mother was the wind,
my father a horizon.

The harbour, the boat, the sail, the wind, the journey and the horizon
where my mother
and my father and I
were travellers;
the one from the outside world
to her inside,
the other from inside her
out into the world.



WHERE IS SHE NOW?



Where is she now?

The woman I will always love with all my heart and being.

Am I her loneliness,

or her waiting for me?

Will I ever find her? Or does she find me, and will I then

be her hesitation,

as I was for other women?

Does she exist?

Will fate bring us together,

or will she pass by?

Long nights I dreamed of her.

The woman whose non-being makes her

more true

than love.



Will she remain my searching for her,
and the fire that crushes because I cannot burn in it?

Or have I, without realising,
already found and lost her,
found and lost?

Maybe she should remain unknown,
so she can be love and loneliness
together.

All Poems Translated by David Colmer



About Rodaan Al Galidi

Born in Iraq and trained as a civil engineer, Rodaan has lived in the Netherlands since 1998. As an undocumented asylum seeker who did not have the right to attend language classes, Rodaan taught himself to read and write Dutch. His novel *De autist en de postduif* ('The Autist and the Carrier Pigeon') won the European Union Prize for Literature in 2011. *'How I Found the Talent for Living'*, already a bestseller in the Netherlands, is his most successful novel to date. He is a well-known poet in Dutch with eight poetry books, in which two were nominated for the biggest poetry-prize in Dutch. His last publication is called *Neem de titel serieus* (*Take this title seriously*).



Momen Samir
Egypt

BETWEEN MOM'S FINGERS

while my mom tells me

The ranks of the ants devoured us.

In the belly of the ants, the tales left us.

*

Hanging between my mom's fingers

without strings..

*

My guys fall out of the window

And their shadows pass..

*

from the picture on the wall

I fell and became a mask



He roams at a feast for madmen.

*

People no longer take shelter in my shadow

After my mom's shadow ran away..

*

I search in the middle of the crowd...



If I find you, I wake up at last...



MESSAGES FROM THE OTHER SIDE

I want to jump over the river

to catch the other side

And I resume my way

For the big castle..

the river obstructs me

And the captured beauty

Her messages shake my bones.

Her last message was a smiling cloud

then cry...

And the one who accepted it

She was a rose, a heroine of silk



Moving from one story to another

It leaves a faint scent

And a sad whistle...

Yesterday I was alone

And I was afraid...

I searched for my mother's picture to be bold

I caught two fat bats

I rubbed the wings

And their ashes were thrown into my plate

...and so the house was filled with howls

And I became a beast flying over the river

He folds the other side into his pocket

And he takes the beauty that he sees beautiful

that adorns our small town

In her memory...

All harvest.



About Momen Samir

Momen is a poet who has published 17 poetic books, four play books, five critic books, a translated book, a text and an autobiographical book. His volumes of poetry include: "No bread or wine" (2017), "An erotica basket under your window" (2020) and "Voices under the nails" (2020).

All Poems Translated by Kareem Abozaid



Shaip Emërlahu
North Macedonia

TROY OF THE HORSE

The geography of the Troy running horse
expands with bitten knives

you break out
and your little mind doesn't understand
how we bite the fish bait
when the shadows surround our bodies
with the Troy of the horse through and through
the foam of its mouth

fill our tables

nobody ruins their day, their fun

what remains from Troy
despite the horse
with the whinny's fraud

13 January 2011

English versions by Belfjore Qose

THE APPLES OF TETOVA

through the concerted centuries
 Tetova pruned and watered
 its own apple trees

like rock salt
 you'll want to burst
 when you spot them turned rotten
 from maggots

in the end
 they've eaten so much
 their teeth went numb

Tetova, 1989

WHERE ARE WE GOING

the tail-end of night
 stayed to host crickets

the morning leaf
 exploded in anger

where are we going now?!

1994

English versions by Craig Czury and Elvana Zaimi-Tufa



About Shaip Emërlahu

Emërlahu has participated in international and national poetry festivals in Columbia, Ireland, Italia, Greece, Tunisia, Poland, Croatia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Turkey. He has been awarded with many national and international literary prizes. His poetry is also published in several languages including Swedish, Bulgarian and Arabic. His poetry has been included in several international anthologies and his published work include: “*Ditët e Naimit*” (2018), “*Le marathon Albanais*” (French, 2014) and “*Life’s rags*” (2010).



Alexey Kalakutin
Russia

ASCETISM

"Those who lived in seclusion lived well"
René Descartes

That he lived in seclusion,
in the deserts, between the rocks,
in the monasteries,
his soul grew closer to God.

That he lived in seclusion,
thus avoiding
humiliation bites
and the poison of lying tongues.

That he lived in seclusion,
and swam calmly, like a sailboat
to the ups and downs
he didn't look.

That he lived in seclusion,
so he realised that life is not entertainment,
and leisure as ash.
He departed in prayer.

That he lived in seclusion,
that masculine passion
and craving for pleasure
it is replaced with meditation.

That he lived in seclusion,
understood nature,



nature does not mean:
bottle and barbecue.

That he lived in seclusion,
did not collect riches
and on the way to salvation
with so little he was happy.

This heroic feat is incomparable.
A hero, who is capable of repeating it!

Translated by Marlene Pasini, Mexico

RETURNING TO GOD

"Lord, I cry out to you, listen
remember the voice of my prayer".
Psalm 140

Tell me, tell me, tell me, tell me
to me with a star of truth in the constellation of lies.
Explain to me, how the earthly torment will end?
A series of boring days that drains to death?
Or is it that no one will ever know?

Guide me, guide me, guide me, guide me
to a world where the rains do not cry of sadness,
a world of smiles, funny and happy songs,
to a world where eternal happiness and tenderness are in the chest,
where my little world is interesting for everyone.

Protect me, protect me, protect me, protect me
of the vices that I will find along the way.
I am earthly and subject to material influence
Stay with me, help me walk the path
Help me not to shake my foundation!

Confirm me, confirm me, confirm me, confirm me
that I will still see you ahead.

All hope is in you, comfort is your word.
Take me out of earthly doubts,
and I will believe in happiness again, as in my youth.

03/23/1996



About Alexey Kalakutin

Alexey is a writer and philologist who has a debut publication titled "*Khokhloma Pattern*" (1990). He is the author of six novels in verse, and six long and extensive poetic pieces. His poetry has been translated into several languages and has been published in international magazines. He was awarded the 1st degree diploma (PWUR) for high professional skills, International Ambassador for Peace (WLFPH, Bhutan), Honorary Doctorate (IFCH, Morocco), and participant in several international poetic anthologies, awarded with certificates of recognition.



LOOK AT LOVE

**Keamogetsi Joseph Molapong
Namibia**

He found himself lost, again
To a realm, another spectrum
Encroached by bushes, thorns
Shrubs and unmarked detours
That forecast a short passage

From his last emotional travels
He recalls the up hills of doubt;
The excruciating short breaths
They shared for brief moments
Followed by long heated silence

Was it his memories or hers?
That kept his heart throbbing
Afloat, sorrowful and chilled
Or the fright of more failure
that shrunk his unkind desires

This new face and the humanness
Was not, could not be the last one;
Hers was brimming with warmth
And her smile, cracked his walls
Invited him into the open, hope

It was the chirping morning birds
That woke him from his trauma
Of dread and gently raised his sight
Above the horizon of past hurt
To enjoy a clearer vision of love



THE POINT

In his deepest of minds
He knew with certainty
That he had to eventually
Step into the mud again

For so long he promised
Himself never to be a fool
Rather allow himself to toil
In the pleasures of her will

Unfortunately, each time
The trickster was exciting;
pleasure always blinded him
to a state of true foolishness

He airlifted himself with lies
Hovering above a menacing
Reality of broken hearts, souls
And leisurely, indulged himself

The mud carried his footprints
And suspiciously waited on him
To confidently dress his shadow
And walk the earth with ease



About Keamogetsj Joseph Molapong

Keamogetsj has been part of the poetry scene since 1990. He has published and contributed to poetry publications such as “*A Poem to the President*” (2020), “*When Words are Few*” (2020), and “*Walking from the Self*” (2020). Molapong has taken upon himself to compile, edit and publish a series of poetry anthologies with the second anthology entitled as *Naming the Tomb* (2021).



LIGHT AFTERNOON TEMPERANCE

Francisco Muñoz Soler
Spain

Light afternoon temperance
precise seasoning, where colours are
still contained in the outburst of its
zenith and the air with faint murmur
consistently spreads the
aromas that purity I
contemplate
in the walk of beauty.

Translated by Juan Navidad

THERE ARE TOMBS THAT IN THEIR SILENCE

"There are tombs that in their silence speak of the world"

RAINER MARÍA RILKE

There are tombs that in their silence
speak of the world,
they keep a joyful harmony
and emit a music that go beyond
walls, barbed wires and shackles,
that keep alive youthful dreams
where love heals wounds
which stability and solace,
there are tombs that rise



above cruelty and infamy,
their river of bliss
purifies acid rains.

Translated by Malabika Bhattacharya

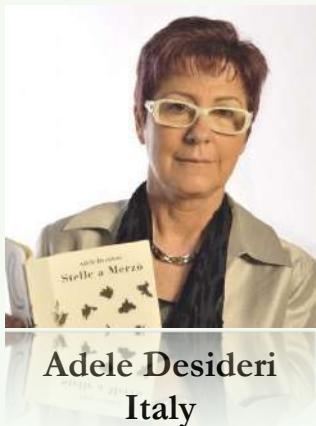
RETURN TO THE ORIGIN

I look at the sea from my house
trying to find a moment of
ecstasy, a tiny nirvana, given my
vision
with a calm mind silence
making body with a sound
precise texture and dense in its germen,
the same mark bathed my
childhood diluted in a morass of
memories
feeds the ocean of my dreams
He turned back to me on edge,
urging me to return to the treasure of my
life devoid of vanity and nostalgia,
bird of light in quantum gravity
with gossamer wings exceeds
the fear of tomorrow that awaits,
with their footprints my back
Far magma principle
overcome my age, origin.

Translated by Juan Navidad

About Francisco Muñoz Soler

Francisco is a Spanish poet with extensive work published in several countries. His work has been translated into English, French, Russian, Turkish, Italian, Arabic, and other languages. His poetry is intimate, full of fine sensitivity, and impressive that invites reflection. His lyrical self offers us testimony of existing, showing us an ethical commitment to the existence of otherness. His work is also included in Anthologies and in more than 100 literary magazines. He is the organiser of the Plenilunio Poetic Cycle of Malaga.



AIROLA, AUGUST 17TH

Adele Desideri
Italy

(Doing the roast)

Like a spasm – a feverish strain,
it penetrates into the slender layer
that separates the skin from air.

Along the muscles it expands,
twisting in the space between the lungs,
confusing the breath – falling away –
going down towards the stomach.
Insolent, with its red-hot irons
it draws signs on the face – pain.

I pull my clothes apart
– in the crackling of the fire I recognise
other misdeeds. Once more
every short story of life dies.

MERZÒ, AUGUST 17TH

The sacred halo launches flames
instead of lights. Feet trample on
hidden mines. On the flanks



livid figures appear.
 The face is decaying, the flesh steeped
 in ointments made of oil,
 rosemary and sage – there's no pepper.

You, madmen – simple men –
 like ruins you have gathered in the world.
 But if I listen to you, if I take you by the hand,
 you smile at me – dancing –
 you flatter me – sweating.



But you, do you know the paths of stars,
 the mockery of broken clouds,
 the torment of pride?



AIROLA, AUGUST 18TH

In the rusty alcove – it was San Lorenzo –
 we were unaware of the falling stars.

Our hands were numb with cold
 while our glasses – red with wine –
 jiggled on wooden planks
 blackened by flies.



Now the sun peeps out from behind the tower
 and the garden is engrossed in a deep rest,
 after the fuss of mouth-to-mouth breathing,
 and the painful pleasure of nature splayed,

that your crow-like eyes have contemplated.

This is the time of distance, of waiting in vain,
of the solitary return to daily chores.

We'll meet again, perhaps, greeting each other
politely as if the ocean had not bowled
us over, as if we had never stayed,
never left, never returned.

MILAN, SEPTEMBER 1ST

It's impossible to watch over – I'm not hissing –
the body wrapped in spotless satin.

On her breast remains the traces
of a stream of blood – a wound
that, apart from death, marks
every transfiguration in red.

This is no time for melodies:
the culprit is on the run, the father
is corrupting the sacred Vestal.

In the weakness of the day
the chant of the penitent one resounds.
From the orator's gentle turns of phrase
rises, however, the smell of the sheets
that once protected the daughter's body
– the mother was naked.

The summer is over, sharpen your eyes,
protect your nest – the nest you
have to rebuild every season,
you – you bum – who hold out
your hand like some beggar:
in the hollow of your hat are coins,
candies and the occasional kiss.

All Poems Translated by Gray Sutherland



About Adele Desideri

Adele is a poet, essayist and literary critic. Her works have been featured in exhibitions, history books, anthologies and plaquettes. They have been translated into English, Spanish, French, Swedish, Dutch, Arabic, Russian, Albanian and Japanese. She has published four books of poetry which include: Non tocco gli ippogrifi (2006), Il pudore dei gelsomini (2010) and Stelle a Merzò (2013).



Daniel Bănulescu
Romania

YOU'LL SHRIVEL UP YOU'LL BE AN EXOTIC FRUIT

There's no need to forget you

Because as soon as I fall asleep you'll no longer exist for me

You don't have to move or sigh

Or whimper in every dry grass blade of your cells

Because as soon as I fall asleep

You'll no longer exist for me

Go back to that good queue for buying tomatoes

Be proud satisfied with your friends distinguished in society

Act as if from tomorrow on

Only an earthquake would get you to lift your skirt

Only spaded earth would give back the part of you that you've lost

Be reasonable

You've such beautiful hands that haven't yet wised up



And never will

Lips the bulldozer driver won't ever know thoughts the carpenter won't ever hear

Breasts the gravedigger won't ever lay eyes on

Who'll prepare you and wash you

Who'll place the small coin in your mouth

Who'll slip you in my pocket

Where's your soul

Where's your sweat

The Scala Patisserie window has steamed over

I'll send a madman to wind you up with one little finger

Until you no longer can bore any window

You bored me

You're a tuft of dwarf vegetation my imagination plucked a metal grille

Through which my gaffes ogle you as if you were a giraffe

You're graced with dresses spice cake and flesh

But as soon as I fall asleep you'll no longer exist for me

You're no more than a gesture someone once made to me

Someone who drank up a whole life with me

You're the thought of socks stuffed with my feet
Like an out-of-work man's breast bursting with work songs

Translated from Romanian by Adam J. Sorkin and Lidia Vianu, Alina Savin



About Daniel Bănulescu

Daniel is a novelist, playwright, poet and freelance writer. Some of his famous works include: “*The most wonderful world's story*”, “*Would you like to become God's Friend?*” and “*Daniel Bănulescu's Ballad*. ” His pieces have been translated into German, French, Hungarian and more. He was awarded with the European Poetry Prize, Romanian Academy Prize for novel and Romanian Writers' Association Prizes for Poetry and for Playwriting.



PEOPLE AND GOD



The people on both sides of the war
believe the same God.
The left side insists—the truth is ours,
The right side insists—the justice is ours.
Both sides face toward the same God at the same time
to pray for the victory on the same battlefield.
The God is separated into two halves
and caught in a dilemma.

The people on both sides of the war
believe different Gods.
Both sides face toward their own God to pray
for the victory on the same battlefield.
The left side insists their own to be victory,
The right side insists the opposite to be defeated.
The war between people and people
becomes an innocent war
between God and God.
The people utilise missiles to decide
whose God
is a real one.

Translated by Kuei-shien Lee

THE FIRE WAS BURNING

Amazon rainforest, 2019

While the earth did not smoke
 but from outer space, it was covered by billowing smoke
 black smoke, black, black and black
 made daytime turned into dark night.
 The sky suffered from secondhand smoke.

The elephants were assaulted on the bottoms by fire tongue,
 the jaguars were paralysed,
 flying birds were shot down from the sky by the flames,
 a mournful monkey embracing her child like the Pietà statue.

The trees wavered their green hairs dancing over the red fire
 shouting in pain
 and eventually turned into ashes.

The cremation and tree burials held in the rainforest for months.
 The aborigines had not enough tears to extinguish
 the flames caused by human desire.

The earth grew everything to live
 and up to now being set on fire time after time.
 Were the medias blind caused by the evil fire?
 Many people drank coffee in watching the news
 and knew nothing about
 the distant rainforest burning and burning.

The people lit candles on the earth
 to sing happy birthday with vital capacity.
 The earth used black fireworks to celebrate the people's birthdays.

When the rainforest was on fire
there were many politicos spitting their curses
nothing to do with the lungs of the earth.

Translated into English by Lee Kuei-shien



About Chen Hsiu-chen

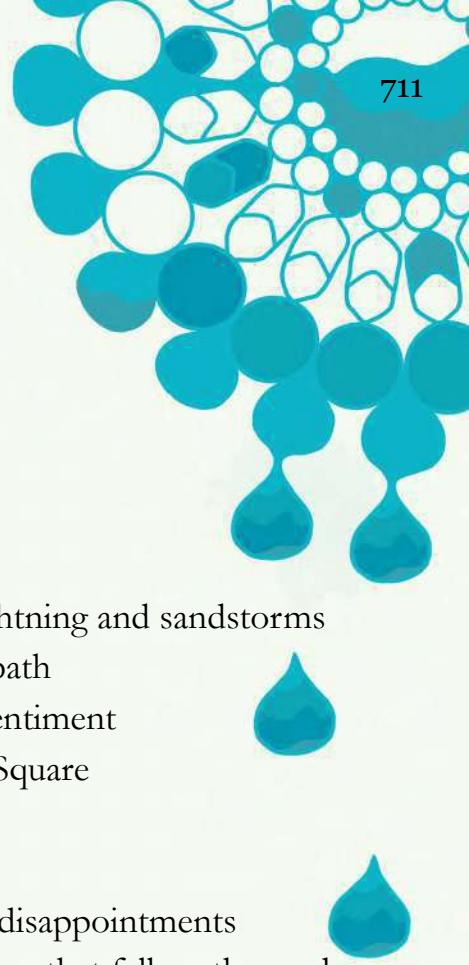
Chen is an editor of newspapers and magazines. Her poems have been selected into many Mandarin-English-Spanish trilingual anthologies including “*Poetry Road between Two-Hemispheres*” (2015) and “*Voices from Taiwan*” (2017). Her poems have also been translated into several different languages and she has participated in numerous poetry festivals. Her publications include “*Tamsui poetry*” (2018) and “*BoneFracture*” (2018).



Hammed Qassim
Iraq

THIS WILL PASS AS WELL

This will pass as well
 From between my hands, under the lightning and sandstorms
 While nature is preparing us a muddy bath
 In this fickle spring, with bewildered sentiment
 When the passersby cross the Meidan Square
 Grim with stone features
 As if wearing similar masks
 Because of the excess of despairs and disappointments
 I think of the bitter orange-white flowers that fall on the garden grass
 Of the reflection of the lightning on the blossoms...!
 The rain scent is full of dust this time
 Did I judge myself to be prisoned in the deep darkness
 After I made my life wet with Alcohol
 Listening to the sounds of the thunder
 And the drops of rain on the window?
 And despite all this rain
 The rain scent is full of dust!
 I will treat my tumours with Alcohol
 And watch my life disintegrating
 Before the others put me on a narrow coffin
 To understand the meaning of life
 Was I thinking that
 I will continue to live
 Until I write a poem in the 20th of April
 Or in my 20s?
 Will the last to hail the dust on my coffin, know
 That I am thinking- for the first time-of the meaning of life
 And if I write a poem in the depth of mud and darkness...?



Then how late will your advice to me be?
 “stop calling me”
 While I am writing in the dark
 Without anyone to hear me or think of me!
 And without anyone to know what I am thinking of?
 I am thinking of them all
 Of their stone mask whose passage is recurring
 In the Meidan Square, where is the great urinal
 And where the drunk stuck their faces to the asphalt
 Before their vomit burst from their wet mouths
 The vomit which files their teeth with its acidity
 You, city...your great legend is finished
 Since there are no skirts blown up with air
 To be put down by girls' fingers, shaking
 Your stormy air is no more able to move the trousers and
 jubbahs
 Your air is no more able to show us little softness and whiteness
 Not in the Meidan nor anywhere else...
 I am writing in the dark
 I have a bottle of Alcohol
 And a big bag full of nuts, pistachios and almonds
 And wetness
 And a bowl of curdled yogurt, and a spoon
 And a naïve knowledge of English language
 And this will pass as well...
 Because life here is raffish
 And full of mud
 Mud which makes our shoes dirty
 And the ends of our trousers
 And souls



April 20, 2011

Baghdad

Translated by Adhraa A. Naser

About Hammed Qassim

Hammed is a poet, writer and multimedia journalist with literary experience that spans over four decades. His works and publication are widely acknowledged across the Arab world. He won Best News Coverage (Dubai Shopping Festival, 1999), Best Coverage (Gulf Theatre Festival, 2003) and Best Poem Award (Dewan East West, 2008). Hameed has published: This is Also Right (2008), I Left My Gaze in The Well (Anthology of The Emirati Contemporary Poetry) (2009) and I Play in the Garden and I Think (2016).



Shota Iatashvili
Georgia

A KISS

When you have word-deficiency diabetes,
Three teaspoonfuls of words
I put in your blood and mix them in well,
At the same time I blow in breath
So that I cool it quickly and
Then I put the edge of the cup
To my lips.

Meanwhile I hold the cup
With both hands,
Gripping it tight.

And when I put the empty cup
On the ground and from the bottom of it
I hear some hesitant
Sounds rising up,
I feel in them
The linguistic
Sweetness
Of the sugar I added.

Translated from Georgian by Donald Rayfield

FLASHING

People were flashing.
The car was flashing.
I was flashing.

And above,
The stars were trying hard
To flash

Like
We
Were
Flashing.

Translated from Georgian by David Chikhladze



FRIENDSHIP

When my friend becomes a leper,
One day I postpone all my businesses
And go to the lepers' hospital,
Knock on the window and then
In the mist through the glass – cleaned some time ago –
We keep looking at each-other
For a long time greedily.
When saying good-bye
We unfix our fists
And press our palms against the glass
From our spaces.

And this way
Our palms
Touch each-other.



My friend smiles
And shows me with this smile,
That he does not ask for anything more from me,
But he would not agree on something less either.

Then we are friends.

Translated from Georgian by Tim Kercher



About Shota Iatashvili

Poet, fiction writer, translator and art critic, Shota has published 10 poetry collections, one novel, four works of prose and a book of literary criticism. In 2007 and 2011, he won the SABA Prize, and in 2020 – LITERA - Georgia's most prestigious awards. He also won the International Poetry Award “Kievskie Lavri” (Ukraina, 2009), the polish literature award of Klemens Janicki for poetry book “Golden Ratio” (2018) and the Vilenica Crystal Award in Vilenica International Literary Festival (Slovenia, 2018). His work has been translated into several languages including Italian, Latvian and Armenian.



Ibrahim Al Mulla
United Arab Emirates

DIASPORA



We scratch the wood of night
 with our hoofs
 addressing the winter:
 hey, we are the ones who harvested love from graveyards,
 lived in houses surrounded by wolves,
 and hid ovens with sleep
 as palms stood naked in groves.
 We are the ones who hung clouds on a clothesline
 and made rain to have mercy
 on small wounds of walls.

TOTEMIC CLOUDS

Time passing
 numbed by music.
 Wrinkles of the coast
 numbed by clouds,
 crossing the water in a second

numbed by a strange child.
 They were invisible faces
 numbed by grass smells
 by rainbow
 by laughing women in chambers.
 That no eye can see
 but the dreamy one.

CROSSING

I couldn't stop for the sadness
 But I stopped for the cloud -
 crossing
 with no rain.



About Ibrahim Al Mulla

Ibrahim has issued two poetry collections titled: *Desert in Baskets* and *I Left My Look in the Well*. He has even published a critical book in cinema titled “The Stories of Those Films). He now works as a journalist in the cultural section of the UAE newspaper ‘Al Ittihad’ and is preparing to release two books, one about the cinematic experience in the Emirates, and the other on critical readings of international films. He has written screenplays for several short fiction films and prepared documentaries and television programs that won local and Arab awards.



SPACE STATION

Shen Youjun
China

After several times of samsara, if I have a second ideal life
 The time and light of the constellation will still be a wink
 I want to be a free explorer, an effective warrior
 In the space station on the strange surface of the planet

I know not where my homeland is
 I should have my perception, but I want to let go of it temporarily
 The reason of human's birth
 Is to explore by nature, the unknown outside their home

Nostalgia is the reference when nothing regretful is left for life
 I want to proceed, proceed and proceed
 To seek the brilliance of the farther constellations
 To go through the fatal universe radiation that breeds hope

I want to gain brilliance
 Life could end, brilliance would not leave with us regret
 When life comes to an end, I will see my hometown
 Forging the unyielding flame with my very birth

LIGHT OF THE COSMOS

In an age of common cosmos, an inhabitable planet is not unique
 We continue to live, live as usual
 We develop diplomacy and decorate our home

In this age, vastness and light are particularly dazzling
 I want to wait for the rising of the stars with my brothers
 I want to witness the beautiful fall with my brothers

Waves surging, land sliding, stars war waging, we have to survive
 and survive beyond all that
 Process, is immortality

Love in the age of the cosmos, for love
 For the beauty of light and for the things of the world
 And too for the establishment of our city-state

Translated by Brent O. Yan



About Shen Youjun

Shen is a famous contemporary poet, original name Wu Xiaofang and member of Chinese Poetry Society. In 2012, he was awarded the *Naji Naaman International Literature Prize* in Lebanon. He has published a number of poetry anthologies, some of which are translated into many foreign languages. He is an honorary doctor of Letters from the Greek Academy of Arts and Letters.



PARAFERNALIA

Jorge Palma
Uruguay

I haven't put on
my ears this morning
however
the world is stunning me,
its multitude of chairs
tied together
its stock market crashes,
that grinding of teeth
amid new shoes
and banknotes.

I think, with a bull's insistence,
on what side of life
has life ended up?

The leopard skin
is trading on the market
at the price of a diamond.

Down the slide of fire
slide the passionate kisses
of lovers
falling into sidereal disadvantage
with the cold days that wander
without a motherland



about the stressed cities
crammed with rubble.

No-one whistles on the streets anymore.
And it seems embarrassing to long
for the calm blue sky
the yellow sound of wheat
the movement of water
in perfect circles
when a pebble
is thrown by a child
from the illuminated window of his room.

The pigeon returning
to the laid table
brings in its bloodied beak
a slap from the world.

How will I know where
death will come from.

*"Here is the sea
the sea into which
the smell of the cities comes
to crash"*
V. Huidobro

THE BIRTH OF THE MOON

Black is the sky
and the shirts
hanging on the line
are ruined
by this
undertaker's malaise.



On this unlikely morning
(half the sky
is weeping buckets, in the other
two suns are singing like goldfinches)
I walk up a step
I recover.

A beaver
weighs heavily in my left pocket
and breathes, under my eyes
one clean morning
with my back to the tar
spilt into the estuaries.

I recover as I watch the sea
torn asunder like my body
into seven uneven parts.

The moon wanders nervously
smoking down the corridors
of the ocean.

The asbestos cities
sparkle like cierges
in the stressed hands
of the dead.

And I wait.

From red to green all yellow dies'

G. Apollinaire

Translated by Gaston Bouchard

About Jorge Palma

Jorge is a storyteller. Some of his poetry has been translated into several languages including English, German and Macedonian. He was a guest at the 14th International Poetry Festival in Havana (Cuba), the 48th Struga Poetry Evenings (Macedonia), and VI International Poetry Festival in Granada (Nicaragua). He has published ‘*La vía láctea*’ (*The Milky Way*) in 2006, ‘*Diarios del cielo*’ (*Diaries of heaven*) in 2006 and ‘*Lugar de las utopías*’ (*Place of Utopias*) in 2007.





**Anil Kumar Panda
India**

LOVE IN THE MORN



Wish to wake up to a serene dawn

Birds frolicking and flowers blooming

Bees and butterflies hovering in the air

Waiting to bask in the glow of the sun

Wish to wake up to a world of peace

Prayers streaming down from temples

Stream flowing down the green valleys

The cool wind blowing like divine bliss

Wish to wake up to a world of love

Clouds pacing the sky in a lazy way

Squirrels dancing upon stacks of hay

Golden ray flowing down from above

Wish the day breaks with new hopes

There will be no hunger and poverty

Violence and bloodshed will be gone

And all citizens have jobs and scopes

THE TOWN

The town will sleep under the night sky

In peace and love as millions of stars

Would forget the bloodbath of gone years

The town will wake up to the smiles of

Flowers in gardens and sound of murmuring

Streams passing by without shedding more tears

The town will have schools and colleges

For children to get educated and grow

Into law abiding citizens and live in peace

Sound of guns will die and in the heart

Of enemies love will grow like tender

Plants and they would live under divine bliss

The town will no more witness the pain

Of mothers seeking their young daughters
Getting raped and thrown into drains
Flowers of love and peace will bloom
All around and a soft wind will blow from
The crop-filled fields singing sweet refrains

Racism, hatred, injustice and corruption
Will vanish and the town will shine with a
New hope for all to live and enjoy their time
Love, peace and the feeling of universal
Brotherhood will fill the air of the town as
It turns into a heaven without hatred and crime



About Anil Kumar Panda

Anil has published two poetry books, *Fragrance of Love* and *Melody of Love*. He is working on his third book now. His poems have been published in many national and international anthologies. He loves to write poems on nature and love, taking inspiration from the simple life of the villagers and nature's beauty still thriving in rural areas.



Mai Văn Phân
Vietnam

NEW YEAR BATH

without attaining purity after continuous purifications
I returned to take a bath with the lamp

I moved my shoulders towards the light
then both hands
my feet, my chin, my knees
even both eyes and my dry coughing

pouring light into all hidden recesses
each of them working as a germinator of sprouts
as a forge to temper hot iron with water
as an incubator for eggs
as a grafted trunk sticking out lateral branches

taking a bath to welcome the new Spring
immersing oneself in light
while silently evoking grandparents and parents
the body rises towards the lamp

light pours profusely while I called your name
it was hovering in pregnancy
I tried to call somebody in the faraway region
the still lamp became all the brighter
and brighter.

Translated by Nguyễn Tiến Văn.

Edited by Susan Blanshard



THE ROCK INSIDE THE STREAM BED

Be quiet for water flowing
 Swift, deep, unending, icy cold over the rock.

Is there the Spring?
 Festoon climbing the trail
 Voice of birds resounding down gurgling

Shadows of trees tremble on the rock, shade or sun--
 How can the colours of wildflowers be unscathed forever?
 The stone closes its eyes in calm to let the water sweep across it.



Langurs with ashen thighs^(*)
 Cause the tree-shadows again to bob and rise;
 Gentle drizzling rain disordered flies
 Creeping into the deepest crevices.



Clouds stop where the clouds...
 The fragrant odour of ripe guava creeps through the forest
 A porcupine ruffles up its quills, goes still.

Above all in this moment
 Let's stay put at the spot where you are at

^(*) A kind of gibbon (*vợc chà vá chân xám* or '*vợc Java (?) chân xám*') Scientific name: *Pygathrix cinerea*.

Translated by Trần Nghi Hoàng.

Edited by Frederick Turner

FROM OUR HOME

You gather things according to their seasons
 a bunch of grapefruit flowers for autumn
 plums for spring



We are the pulse of air, deep abyss, breasts of soil
 we choose warm places to set our furniture
 uncluttered places to put our tables and chairs

We drop our worries at the dinner table
 with chopsticks we pick vegetables from the field afar
 the fish bites on the bait inside our clay pot

We love the footprints near the rice stubble
 deep wells, streams and rivers, ponds and puddles

Don't sit in the room too long
 go out into the field, out to the riverbank
 where leaves grow green and fish wriggle

Bite on fresh pineapple or sweet orange
 and let juice drop on brown soil.

*Translated by Nhat-Lang Le.
 Edited by Susan Blanshard*



About Mai Văn Phấn

Mai has published 16 poetry books and one book titled "*Critiques - Essays*" in Vietnam. 27 poetry books of his are published and released in foreign countries and on Amazon's book distribution network. His poetry has been translated into 36 languages and he has won a number of Vietnamese and international literary awards, including *The medal Alisher Navoi of the Union of Writers and Historians of Central Asia* in 2021, *Winner of Sabitto (Bangladesh) International Award for Literature* in 2021 and *The Award of Newspaper Kitob Dunyosi (Uzbekistan)* in 2021.



FOR YOU

**Oleksandra Babychuk
Ukraine**

I will become an eagle for you,
put your wings before you,
and I will be that bird of prey,
that will embrace your world with his love.

And maybe I'll become a wolf
faithful to you, gentle,
favourite,
and for others - just a secret, no
insidious and elusive. My spring

We have spring, everyone has their own,
comes at different ages at different times,
as long as I live, mine blooms,
in the cold autumn, severe winter.

Over the years, the petals fly away,
the soul is still in full bloom,



from the stem grows two young shoots,
in which there is still no strength to fight the wind.

That wind is called - life,
ruthless,
sometimes calm,
broke my branch several times already,
but I do not give up, because I know the unreliable.



The unbreakable soul flourishes and lives,
life she learned to love,
the future sees in sprouts new,
and it gives her even more strength to live.



THE ROAD

The road in life or nowhere,
in which there is a beginning, an end,
like a herald, a messenger, people rush at it from birth.
They look like thirsty camels
seeking for water, root.

The road in life or nowhere,
in which there is a beginning, an end.
Leads to deception of the unknown,
we walk on it like a blind man,



tripping over a stone,
we don't know
further, where else will be.

The road in life or nowhere ...



About Oleksandra Babiychuk

Babiychuk is an artist and her poems have been translated into English, Chinese, Arabic, Spanish and other languages. In 2020, Babiychuk was published in the almanacs "*Baltic Circle*", "*Flight of My Thoughts*" and "*Zhytomyr Heat*". In 2017, the poet's poems appeared in columns of local newspapers in Rivne, including: "*Medical Bulletin*" and "*7 days*".



THE HUMANITIES

Anxiety, agony and hope
 Examining the idea within the inner self
 An enlightened idea, an insignificant idea
 That follows the mind

To be immersed so many times
 To be amazed, to be furious
 Travelling aimlessly through the Humanities
 In the absence of light

It is there, face to face
 A dialogue goes on in solitude
 Observing it
 And ending up stripped unveiled

Nasty appearances
 Whisper of melodious ideas
 And furtive tunes crossing the mind
 An inner call to close the eyes
 And sense
 Where to travel.

THE VOICE

The tongue defeated
 It digs deep in the remains of forgotten memories
 A vision sets up from the ashes
 Speechless and refined



It is freed from fate
 It flies beyond the essence
 It dances at the rhythm of time
 With an inexhaustible feeling
 A path broken

By the destructive void
 Invisible
 Without any turmoil and without colour
 That leads to degradation
 By concealing the frightened tangible
 And lost in the labyrinth

Engulfed by the endless fire of silence
 It hints at me the spring breeze that blows
 Lips warmed by the reflections of the sun
 Irritated by the coldness of winter
 It glues fragments of peace
 It wins again the harmonious equilibrium
 of the voice.

Translated by Vatsala Radhakeesoon



About Hamid Larbi

A journalist and poet, Hamid is the author of various essays and poetry collections translated into Spanish, Italian, Russian, Ukrainian, Romanian, Arabic and Serbian languages. His poetry mostly originates from the depth of the human soul that evolves into lyrical realism. In 1995, he received the journalism award from the Press Circle of Milan for “Giornalistà estera” in Milan, Italy. In 2018, he was awarded the International Poetry Contest, *Concours International de Poésie , L'amour de la liberté*” from the European Academy of Science, Arts and Letters (EASAL) in France. He also received the commemorative medal of Taras Chevchenko and won the Silver Medal at the International Festival of Literature (LIFFT) in Baku (Azerbaijan).



MY ILLUSION IS HIGH

**Abdeljaouad El Aoufir
Morocco**

1

I roll the comrades

In one roll

And smoke them slowly

2

Music descends down the stairs

Like a coquettish woman

But my house is downward

How did I imagine music

Would descend down the internal stairs

My Illusion is high

Like a small prayer

Enters into God violently



3

Saturday

At the door of the Sunday courtyard

Giant dolls frighten me...

Translated By Munir Mezyed



About Abdeljaouad El Aoufir

Abdeljawad El Aoufir has published 2 poetry collections: '*Shepherd of the void*' (2010) and '*Laughs of Karaki*' (2015). He has translated the work of several poets including Claude Ezo, Humberto Akbal, Antonin Artaud, Claude Fiji, Alberto Corabil, Julian Ferdinand, Neji Fuyono and Dakutsu Lida. He has also been honoured by the Government of Sharjah.



Raghavan Atholi
India

KURI

Sea severs in my eyes
 Body severs in this mud
 Angel breeze crossing mountains
 Spoke to little fishes thus
 Play not with me my own people
 None who played with me came true
 Primitive dawn, the Sun and the Moon
 Pecking at each and every tale that
 Bloomed on the body of warrior gods
 Rivers of your tears kept coming to end in
 Stones of my heart where waves never end
 Scratching poetry with hard solid lines

Translated by Sandeep

MY DAUGHTER

O, my daughter,
 I meditate on not one, but four legs
 So that you can
 Sleep and dream.
 So the angry sages,
 Young Rahul's lust



Migrating to the all-renouncing father,
 Forsaken Yasodhara's tears,
 Roaring like the sea
 Stopped me in my tracks:
 Why if you have not seen the true Path
 Should you pour your venom into poetry?
 I said:
 The true self, Gurave Namaha
 That glowed in your tongue
 Was my mother.
 Never did I go the way
 The young maids at the Court
 Led me on.
 Let my son retain his youth –
 Let the land not be punished with a drought
 For the king's folly.
 For me to burn like a torch
 In the sanctum sanctorum
 When my children call me –
 Glow with your grace
 Like a celestial maiden
 To feed the flame with oil.
 O, my daughter,
 I have come to the end of my tether.
 But, what is life for
 If you do not rage like a flame?



About Raghavan Atholi

Renowned as poet, sculptor, artist, novelist, playwright, tribal and social activist, Raghavan has also installed 52 solo sculpture exhibitions in Kerala and outside. His first Book '*Kandathi*' in the name of his mother was published by DC Books under the light of Ayyappa Panicker, this was followed by other works such as '*Kanalormakal*', '*Thiruvvarashu*', '*Theekkolangal*', several poetry anthologies, novels, essays and children's literature, forming 38 works. He has been honoured with Dravidarathna award for poetry, first Vaikam Muhammad Basheer award for novel and Bodhi Books award.



LAILA'S CALL

**Sukrita Paul Kumar
Kenya**

Dedicated to Mahmoud Abu Hashhash

O Qais, the eternal lover,
If only you could come out
Step out of your mystical yearnings
Walk out of your longings frozen in verses
And see your Laila, hear her pounding heart
Feel her lamenting soul

If only, Qais, history could release you
And geography could bind you
You, camouflaged in clouds of love
Travelling through time and space
Century after century
Blowing images of Laila into caves and tombs

You fettered in words and epitaphs

Laila stuck forever on the potter's wheel
Rotating between the cups of your palms
Your fingers chiselling and shaping her forever

But Qais, Laila is whole
As the complete circle of the full moon
A planet amongst planets



Your poems are the gurgling waves of the ocean
 Leaping to reach the skies
 And withdrawing merely with the reflection
 Tired and limp on the surface of the placid waters

Love is a blessing
 Says Laila, not a curse

My Majnu, my Qais,
 Says she, come to me,
 Fear not death,

Your wish for immortality
 Keeps us apart.



PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

Buried in the debris
 near the blind well
 in the jungle
 are a thousand tales
 nibbled by scurrying rats
 and infected by amnesia

Bits of tales peep out
 as if sticking their tongues
 through fine slits
 in the wrinkled surface
 of the heap
 hardening over time,
 with more and more
 thorny creepers and shrubs
 gripping the forest
 in a net
 from which slip out



dead voices severed
from their bodies,

Compressed sighs
rising occasionally
as white smoke
and bouncing as cold echoes
against the walls of the deep black pit

spewing the romance,
hidden snugly,
of times immemorial
in the tunnel built,
as they say, from the
bottom of the well
to his majesty's fort
at Tughlagabad

The flash of light,
an end of the long night,

slides down the spiral steps
to kiss the mouth
of the passage
to the regal splendour
at the other end,
yielding fresh bodies
for the voices
and softening the earth
to impregnate her with a million
more legends of love



About Sukrita Paul Kumar

Sukrita held the prestigious Aruna Asaf Ali Chair at Delhi University. Formerly a Fellow of the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, she was an invited poet at the International Writing Programme, Iowa, USA and Hong Kong Baptist University. Honorary faculty, Durrell Centre at Corfu, Greece, she has been a recipient of many prestigious fellowships and residencies. Her recent collections of poems amongst others are *Country Drive, Dream Catcher, Untitled* and *Poems Come Home* (with Hindustani translations by Gulzar). She is the “Writer in Context” Series editor (with Chandana Dutta) being published by Routledge UK. Amongst her critical books are *Narrating Partition* and *Conversations on Modernism*.



BRANCH

10

POEM WINGS



MY NIGHT IS ABOVE ETERNAL TIME

Dr. Hilal Karahan
Turkey

Confrontation
strengthens the night

Time shakes its cocoon
the intellect and the blasphemy
of the silk get unstitched

Time: clever anger,
the foaming cascade
of things

The night
reads the soul
on womb's bookrest

NONE CAN CLOSE THE NIGHT'S DOOR

She sews with fire
the judgement,
the days rip from her bosom

Be-mirror,
Shahmaran, who swallows her tail

Darkness closing her door,
is supported by her own order

The night,
extended rope
around the universe's neck

MOON RISES ABOVE THE NIGHT'S BONES

Fire has no days
crescent covers her skirt with night

Copper sickle avidly reaps
the neck before her and has no mercy

What can rage veil
when dawn
scratches your face?

Crescent is a dagger
with silent larynx

The night can't be accused
of the shadow's curse

WE THINK WHEN THE NIGHT IS SILENT

Merciful is the night,
fixing ice skating stars
to trees' hair

Buttoning the day's collar
looking tired at the morning

She knows who put on her breath
the sandalwood and amber
smelling reality

At night,
everyone believes
his own intuitions

About Dr. Hilal Karahan

Although Dr. Hilal has been writing since elementary school, her professional poems, stories, and articles about poetry have been published since 2000. She was one of the editors of ÇAMCAK Culture and Literature Magazine, ETKEN Poem Magazine and MÜHÜR Poem and Literature Magazine. Since 2017, she has been a member of the publishing council of international bilingual poetry magazines of Absent, Rosetta Word Literatura and Babil. She has won several awards including "World Icon of Peace" award from World Institute For Peace in 2017 and Verbumlandi-art "Citta del Galateo" International Poetry Prize, Honorary degree in English Poetry in 2018.



Ed Ahern
United States

PEEP SHOW

In rare, random, wordless moments
 I can glimpse the rightness of things,
 the glamour of a beetle on a weed,
 the chest-seizing love for a child,
 the taste without taste of cool water.

The over rushing glow is an instant,
 the afterglow perhaps a minute.
 But in that flicker I am at peace.
 A satori of seconds? A transient nirvana?
 In this interlude I neither know nor care

DEAR JOHN

It was the worst and the best of letters,
 written in the time of the cursive.
 I was, she said, likable and smart,
 and through no fault of mine
 someone else had let her realise
 that we weren't meant for each other.
 And hence our engagement was off.
 She hoped I didn't think badly of her
 and that I could wish her well.

After two days the anger subsided
 and relief surged through me.

Lust and convention had made us pair
and a sated ennui would have riven us.
I wrote back also cursively to declare
that I wished her well and could she please
return the ring, which she did.
I never asked his name.

Fifteen years later she returned
to our hometown for a visit,
newly divorced and regaining her footing.
She asked friends how I was doing
and was told married with children.
I flatter myself that she thought
well enough of me to ask.
I never heard anything else of her.

THE TIME OF DAY

A widow walks by my house each day
in syncopation with the mailman.
She has also lost a daughter,
but what is gone is carried deep,
for she always smiles and stops to chat.
We exchange perhaps two hundred words
about weather and children and neighbors,
but never about the death and absence
so twined into our daily living,
and the knitting we do to cope.
We sense with tacit understanding
that our inanities give unsaid comfort
to our silenced fears and grief.

About Ed Ahern

Ed resumed writing after forty odd years in foreign intelligence and international sales. He has had over 300 stories and poems published so far, and six books. Ed works on the other side of writing at *Bewildering Stories*, where he sits on the review board and manages a posse of nine review editors.



AFGHANISTAN

Tahar Bekri
Tunisia

If music were to die
 If love is the work of Satan
 If your body is your prison
 If the whip is what you know how to wield
 If your heart is your beard
 If your refrain is a bullet
 If your song is a funeral prayer
 If your falcon is a crow
 If your look is brother to dust

How can you love the sun in your lair?

If your sky detests kites
 If your soil is a minefield
 If your wind is thickened by powder
 And not fertile pollen
 If your mulberry tree is a gallows
 If your door is a barrier
 If your bed is a trench
 If your house is a coffin
 If your river flows with blood
 If your snow is a cemetery

How can you love the water in your river?

If your mountains submit
 Humiliated and humbled
 Their backs unjust citadels
 Their guts disembowelled to harden stone
 If your valley is not to nurture your dream
 Like a rose in the zephyr
 If your clay is kneaded by grief
 Not to raise a school
 Like an apricot tree in flower
 If your reed is not a qalam

How can you live in the light?

If your labour is seed for scarecrows
 A craven cache for poppies
 If your horse is a slave to your blinkers
 Scorns the flight of flutes in the air
 If your valley vomits its sapphires
 To the warlords
 If the braids of women are ropes
 If your stadium is a slaughterhouse
 If your path is invisible
 If your night is a tomb for the stars

How can you promise the moon?

If Ghengis Khan is your master
 If your child is the offspring of Timur
 If your face is faceless
 If your sabre is your executioner
 If your epic is ruins and vultures
 If all the rain in the world cannot wash your forefinger
 If your desire is dead wood



If your fire is ash
 If your flame is smoke
 If your passion is grenades and cannon

How can you entice the dove at the window?

If your village is a casern
 Not a nest for swallows
 If your house is a cave
 If your source is a mirage
 If your dress is your shroud
 If death is your mausoleum
 If your Koran is a turban
 If your prayer is war
 If your paradise is hell
 If your soul is your sombre gaoler

How can you love the spring?

Translated by Patrick Williamson

About Tahar Bekri

Tahar writes in French and Arabic, publishing about 30 works (poetry, essays, art books). His poetry has been translated into various languages and is the subject of academic works and artistic creations. He received the Benjamin Fondane International Award for Francophone literature, 2018; *Prix de Rayonnement de la langue et de la littérature françaises*, the Académie Française, 2019. His latest publications include: *Désert au crépuscule* (Al Manar, Paris, 2018), *Le Livre du souvenir* (Ed. Elyzad-Poche, Tunis, 2016) and his forthcoming publication is *Par-delà les lueurs* (Al Manar, 2021).



DAYBREAK

Jenny Dejager
Belgium

The sky created a dense fog in the morning

but the sun would shine.

It felt good to have this in prospect.

The cold followed the path to the blossoming orchard.

But soon the maze opened its shutters to a light breeze

that threw off its veil.

The painter installed himself slightly over the last bend

and frantically painted the emotion on canvas.

The horizon, the earth and the sky had something in common.

Perhaps it was the calm with which the porters interacted?

Or was it what the painter's eyes can see through the twilight

of the sunrise, the discovery of the requiem of a moment?

RAINBOWS

Bright, loved by all, she looked back for a moment

when Sara called her name.

She ran into a concrete wall overgrown with moss.
 Snow and ice hid the detours,
 she had stood still for half a century, staring at the sun
 whether it was shining or not. She waited for the snow to melt.
 And when it did, the ice was still there. The wall was old and fragile,
 her days shorter, maybe different. She didn't know.
 There is an exit road around the corner.
 She stays, though love has overlooked her.
 She can no longer stand in those wet clothes from the past
 that show the traces they have left in all her rainbows.
 The defenseless and the silent, both but each separately, lose their
 footprint.
 In a violet-coloured dress, her evenings sink into high seas.

THE BARGE

Sometimes we share the useless things for fun
 maybe different than before.
 We are not made to search distraught for what we do
 not understand about each other.
 Perhaps we have known long ago that it's the silence
 that can come to us. We breathe the sea air separately from each other

while we are walking on the dike hand in hand.

More, would meddle with what makes lonely.

Dwelweed prevents that. It's better not to know

that homesickness isn't the same anymore.

We fit in the boat of: we are there and we are not there.

The rules of the game divide profit and loss.

About Jenny Dejager

Jenny has taken several writing courses, published nine collections of poetry and two novels. She is a painter of portraits and is currently working on her third novel and her tenth collection of poetry. She was a board member of *De Verfpot* for ten years. She also writes reviews about poetry.



KOYU ABE PLANTS A SUNFLOWER SEED IN THE JOENJI TEMPLE GARDENS

Gabriel Chávez Casazola
Bolivia

Koyu Abe, in his hard black tunic,
shaved head held high
straight brow
plants a sunflower seed in the Joenji Temple gardens.

He calmly places the small shell filled
with potential light
with future wonder
in a tiny hole dug in the ground.

Covers it with a small shovel
waters it with an orange watering can.

A breeze blows over the Joenji Temple gardens
Koyu Abe feels it on his water-splashed hands.

In a cloth sac at his thigh he carries
some tens or hundreds of seeds.

It's still early in the morning and his task is to plant each one
and to cover each one
and to water each one with his orange watering can.

Soon a million sunflowers will carpet the Joenji gardens and the

neighbouring plots.

Monks, field workers,
everyone is sure to have hands dampened by the water irrigating the
children's
future yellow wonder,
hands that will be compassionate lights for exhausted eyes.

Koyu Abe doesn't know Van Gogh, but he paints sunflowers with his shovel.

Koyu Abe, whose eyes make out the gray profiles of nuclear silos in the distance.

At the edges of Fukushima the Joenji Temple gardens rise
and it's urgent to purify the sky, purify the waters, purify the ground,
purify the suns planting sunflowers.

It isn't for looks Koyu Abe tells me in the silence of this image:
The roots absorb the heavy metals
and from the poison a flower is born.

*But it is also true that beauty purifies
by itself*

quotes the Dutchman, emerging from the silence of the canvas,
and Koyu Abe hands me a bag of seeds
shells filled with tiny light.

Van Gogh hands me
the giant orange watering can.

PROMISE

In Which the Poet, Playing the Role of a Kozinski Character, Talks to His Daughter

For Clara

If a lightning bolt or a truck were to suddenly bring down
 the upright palm tree,
 its being bird and
 noon-filled
 if bad luck wounded its face with light
 breaking it down
 its being and happiness
 (which was ours too)
 turning to rubble

don't get carried away by sadness
 my girl,
 remember that beneath the rubble
 there are always seeds

and one day
 soon,
 after all the lightning and bad luck

light will break open
 birds will begin to sing
 and our street and all the streets on earth
 where a palm tree was brought down
 will fill with happy gardeners



to comb
new seedlings
and water middays.

I promise you, daughter:
the morning will be filled with gardeners.

All Poems Translated from Spanish by Katherine Hedeen

About Gabriel Chávez Casazola

Poet and journalist, Gabriel is considered "one of the essential voices of contemporary Bolivian and Latin American poetry." His books were published in 15 countries and his poems have been translated into 10 languages as well as the Braille language. Casazola received the *Medal of Cultural Merit of Bolivia* and the *Editorial Prize* for the Best Book of the Year, among other awards in his country. He is the curator of the International "City of the Rings" Poetry Meeting of the Santa Cruz International Book Fair; professor of the Creative Writing program of the University of Santa Cruz (UPSA) and directs the poetry workshop "Llamarada verde".



3, TO SING EVERY NIGHT IN THE HOUSE UPON A ROCK

Sue Zhu
New Zealand / China

Lend me the wings of a phoenix
 Let me fly out of the wildfire in the Amazon rainforest with mystical power
 Put a rainbow into the eyes of the desperate who are looking up
 Borrow Kua Fu's perseverance to chase the sun
 Lend me the caudal fin of a beluga whale
 Let me hold up the buoy of the waves, in the rhythmic beat
 Gaze after the satiated sea eagle,
 Propel Noah's boat
 sailing promptly into the homeland raided by the tsunami

Lend me Ma Liang's magic brush
 Let me convert the tree branches nurtured in the natural oxygen bar
 Into dedicated gold curtains and stones. Make millions of apartments
 Shelter those wandering homeless with no returning date in sight e
 Lend me the sweet voice of a nightingale
 Let me become a fellow initiate of the warm-hearted firefly
 Believe "death shall have no dominion"
 In the new house founded upon a rock*, Sing and pray night after
 night----
 Let there be no more deep darkness
 Let there be full light of the dawn

(*Quoted from Matthew 7:24-27)

*1. *Kua Fu is a man who perseveres in chasing the sun in Chinese myths and legends, from The Classic of Mountains and Seas (Chinese: Shan Hai Jing).*

2. *Ma Liang is a person who quotes from Chinese fairy tales. He is good at drawing and can realise any dream with his magic pen.*

3. *Quoted from Matthew 7:24-27*

Translated by Wen Xinjiao

About Sue Zhu

Sue is a director of the New Zealand Poetry and Art Association, honorary director of the US-China Culture and Arts Center and New Zealand representative of Italy “Immagine & Poesia.” She published three children’s education series and one translated storybook. She is a multi-winner of Chinese and international poetry contests, such as a mentions award of the 36th Nosside World Poetry Prize (UNESCO, 2021), the Italian Il Meleto di Guido Gozzano Literary Prize (2020, 2021) and the 19th Naji Naaman Literature Award (Lebanon). In 2020, she was nominated for the Pushcart Prize (USA) and was interviewed by PW Magazine.



Sotirios Pastakas
Greece

FOOD LINE

An apple-core.

Someone was sitting here
biting an apple.

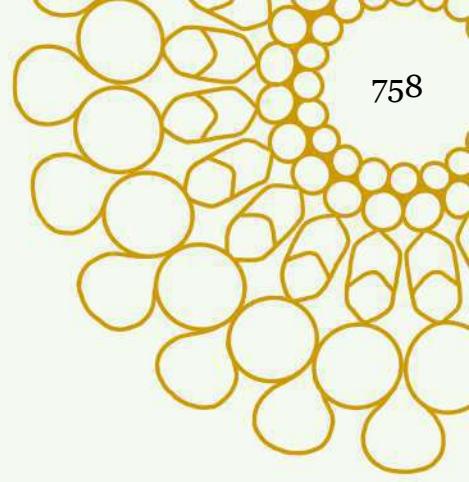
Then he disappeared. The same day
that History recorded three
deaths in the center of Athens.

Someone else at another
spot left his cigarette butt
before he disappeared too.

History only records:
apple-cores, cadavers, ashes.

I set the table for one.

For myself. Turned the teevee on.
Sat down. In order to save capitalism
sacrifices are required from all of us.
The phone rang. You asked
if you could come.
You could. I turned off the teevee.
Got up. Capitalism
is hemorrhaging and is dying. I said.
I changed the tablecloth.
I set the table for two.



It smells like Sunday roast
 in my balcony. I stretch
 my hands and find
 the stove turned off,
 the plates cold. I forgot again
 to cook. I feel full
 just with the aroma, even though
 nobody's asked me to share
 the chicken and potatoes
 split in three. It wasn't by chance, I figure,
 that I'd served in a battalion of undesirables.

All Poems Translated by Jack Hirschman and Aggelos Sakis

About Sotirios Pastakas

Sotirios studied Medicine in Rome and Psychiatry in Athens. He has published 17 poetry collections which have been translated into 17 languages and taken part in international poetry festivals (San Francisco, Izmir, Medellin and more). Three poetry collections (*Corpo a corpo*, *Jorge*, *Monte Egaleo*) are published in Italy, where he won the NordSud Prize in 2016, one in the USA (*Food Line*), and one in Spain (*Cuerpo a cuerpo*). In 2019 he donated his library to the Municipal Library of Rapsani.



Cindy Lynn Brown
Denmark / America

THE SIBLINGS WE GATHER

All these white items you surround yourself with
 the sunray in my neck on the train
 the snowball in your freezer
 powdered sugar you sprinkle, not in a rough way
 but like a fairy sprinkles pixie dust

every day new people cross
 the ocean in dinghies
 and the guards push them back

with you white isn't sterile
 negative space for you to fill out
 my soul mate, my twin my bullshit detector
 one little leap into pain and shame and
 all of that Yada Yada
 you turn around like a pancake
 with heart-eyed emojis

the world grows smaller with more crinkles
 because you're there all over the place
 every airport I leave
 every screen I switch on
 every dream I wake from

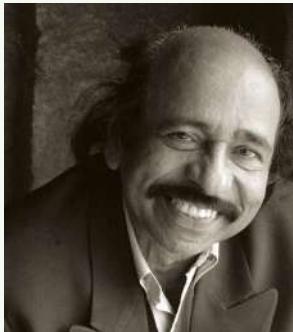
our voices crackle against each other

MERMAID

The river never loses
 hope it rumbles
 onwards tenderly
 believing the ocean exists
 with salt and seaweed at first
 she did everything wrong
 the little mermaid
 squirmed against the current
 stole wedding rings from the octopuses
 she planted secrets
 in the riverbed believing
 they would grow tall
 and strong like rush
 so she could build her nest
 and pause the roaring waves
 at first the little mermaid believed
 her voice had to drown
 on the journey to success

About Cindy Lynn Brown

Poet, novelist and literary translator with a degree in literature and creative writing, Cindy's work has been translated into multiple languages and she has performed at festivals throughout the world. Cindy has a strong, particular interest in poetic and artistic collaborations and is currently working on a collaborative collection of poetry about refugees. Her latest publication is a collaboration of poetic dialogues, titled '*A to B – Z to Fish*' (2019). Her latest independent book, '*Dealbreaker [every night I smash my face with waves]*' (2017) is a collage of poems on sleep and insomnia following four phases of sleep.



OLD WOMEN

K. Satchidanandan
India

Old women do not fly on magic wands
or make obscure prophecies
from ominous forests.

They just sit on vacant park benches
in the quiet evenings
calling doves by their names
charming them with grains of maize.

Or, trembling like waves
they stand in endless queues in
government hospitals
or settle like sterile clouds
in post offices awaiting mail
from their sons abroad,
long ago dead.

They whisper like a drizzle
as they roam the streets
with a lost gaze as though
something they had thrown up
had never returned to earth.

They shiver like December nights

in their dreamless sleep
on shop verandahs.

There are swings still
in their half-blind eyes,
lilies and Christmases
in their failing memory.
There is one folktale
for each wrinkle on their skin.
Their drooping breasts
yet have milk enough to feed
three generations
who would never care for it.

All dawns pass
leaving them in the dark.
They do not fear death,
they died long ago.

Old women once
were continents.
They had deep woods in them,
lakes, mountains, volcanoes even,
even raging gulfs.
When the earth was in heat
they melted, shrank,
leaving only their maps.
You can fold them
and keep them handy
who knows, they might help you find
your way home.



DAUGHTER

To Sabitha, suffering from Multiple Sclerosis

I see my thirty-year old daughter
again as a six-month old.
I bathe her, wash away
the dust and muck
of thirty years.

Now she glistens like
a short Amichai poem
in the liquid glow of Heaven.
The little towel
gets wet with Time.

Beethoven raises his
more than human hands
turning the window-bars
into piano-keys.

My daughter
emerges out of a symphony
to hug me with
her rose-soft hands.

Outside, rain's *bibag* :
Kishori Amonkar.

2006

About K. Satchidanandan

A bilingual poet, critic, playwright, editor, fiction writer and travel writer, K Satchidanandan has 30 collections of poetry in Malayalam, nine in English and 33 collections in other languages. He has won fifty-two literary awards, including the *National Academy award*, *Dante Medal from Italy*, *Poet Laureate Award from Tata Literature Festival, Bombay*. He has read his poetry and lectured at several festivals and book fairs in over 30 countries in six continents. His latest books of poetry in English include *While I Write* (Harper-Collins), *Misplaced Objects and Other Poems* (Indian National Academy), *The Missing Rib, Not Only the Oceans* (Poetrywala, Bombay).



Bassma Shaikho
Syria

WE'LL BE ALRIGHT

I will have my hair cut

And erase my facial features

I'll wet my voice

And squeeze it songs and hymns

I'll pick all the foolish flowers on my balcony

I smash their beautiful pots

And mourn them with a poem

I will call the pirates

to sail inside me

with their huge ships

And their metal limbs

So they plunder what mends their scars

I will hunt the sun
and kick it away
for the poor there to eat it
as a cake of light

I'll throw my shoes
to break the moon
smash his fable
and turn it into many moons

I will betray all the cities
And I live in the sea

I'll keep all the trains waiting for me
And I will not come to their stations

I will collect all the steps
Stuck to the old shoes
And have them locked behind a high wall



With a tiny eraser

I will erase all the roads

And leave the buildings alone

I'll make a ladder out of rusty skulls

And I will raise it above a land of death and destruction

And up there

I'll roll like a fetus

And whisper to myself

"The world will change in the near future

We will be alright'.

Translated by Ahmad.M.Ahmad

Syrian poet and translator

About Bassma Shaikho

Bassma holds a master's degree in fine arts and currently is a university professor at the Faculty of Fine Arts at the Arab International University. She is the author of '*Interior Design in Kindergartens*' and another book entitled '*Syrian Art in the Face of Death, A Study of the Experiences of Number of Syrian Artists*', which is to be published soon. Bassma is also the Founder of *Shaikho Gallery for Visual Arts* and has published four collections of poems: *Tampering with words*, *A Gasp of Light*, *The Last Resident in Damascus* and *A Sea Afraid of Drowning*.



FOXHOLE

Mara Adamitz Scrupe
United Kingdom

& if I could tell you anything
I would say good fortune & the promise
of tomorrow don't come easy
I would tell you
find a foxhole/ always expect
the worst & when it comes
you're ready meanwhile

in another kind of battleground
in a different war
I fight darkness & I hide
in its current behind the coated
whitewash of those who know
what's best for me in mutations
that wound me – I know illness/my legs
won't hold – bumping down Pine Street

in a cart careering between lockdown & horde
resentment in this great dismal swamp
of the only habits we think we can live
with & I would say *nobody ever promised*
you anything
meanwhile in cities' mourning

& commemorations among
uniformed gunmen there are always
a hundred walls of separation so say Irish ladies
dreading the hardening of the border
– again – or any border where bouquets
painted on walls mark equivalents
of funeral flowers & the sea becomes
the checkpoint for the fragility of any
peace no surer than riding along
on children's handlebars

& they're holding
on to weapons in attics the ladies say
just in case it all comes back
around & you know they're selling
more guns than ever & it's not just
to preppers meanwhile

I'm listening to the morning rain birds
singing to high heaven & drunk
on fragrance of Star Magnolia I'm gazing out
over scorched summer fields & long
long days & short solstice nights
& if you're still with me
I would add get used to it
toughen up
you can stand more than you know

About Mara Adamitz Scrupe

Mara is a poet, essayist, visual artist, filmmaker, and the author of six award-winning poetry collections including: *in the bare bones house of was* (Brighthorse Press, 2020), *Eat the Marrow* (erbacce-press, 2019) and *a daughter's anabade/ sailing out from Sognefjord* (Middle Creek Publishing 2019). Her poems and essays have won or been shortlisted/ nominated for awards and prizes including Bridport Prize, Canterbury Arts Festival Poet of the Year, Forward Prize for Poetry, Pushcart Poetry Prize (twice nominated) and National Poetry Competition (UK).



AUTUMN

Lilia Velichko
Belarus

This evening's poisonous indeed!

I grow numb observing clouds –

The bird of prey, well-known breed,

Beardsley Salome looks at bounds.

And spicy scent arises high -

September bleeds, the moon's like razor.

Some aspen leaves began to fly,

First drop of rain for them is praiser.

It's warm awhile without storms.

But feel alarming premonition:

The trees are stripped of uniforms -

The autumn month fulfills its mission.

September's poisonous indeed,

Its warmth is like the skin of viper...

Inside my soul there's a seed –

Beardsley Salome, mirthless piper.

HAMLET AND OPHELIA

So minted the coins of moon –
 Horizon's to bear its chrome.
 And stars like the holes in the gloom
 Are visible on the black dome.

Warm windows refusing to sleep
 Are subjects of cat eyes reflection.
 The clock is pretending to keep
 Tranquility in its affection.

There are shadows, but Hamlet is gone
 And none ever enters this parlour.
 Your last destination is wrong
 Despite all your courage and valor.

* * *

Domestic sphinx with mystery in eyes
 Sits blinking, while the sunset goes in.
 The universal gears hypnotise
 With rustling sounds. And they make unreal

Existence chains. The walls and ceiling're over.
 No limits now. That's the real goal.
 He's worth to be a sculpture of Canova,



My lovely cat who's looking through my soul.

All Poems Translated into English by Natalia Timofeeva

(Russia, Khimki)

About Lilia Velichko

Lilia is a poet, publicist and graduate from the Faculty of Journalism in Belarusian State University. She worked as a journalist for the regional television and the regional newspaper "Gomelskaya Pravda." From 2008 to the present, she holds the position of Editor-In-Chief of the Gomel regional newspaper "Mayak". She writes in Russian. She is a member of the Union of Writers of Belarus and her poems have been translated into German and Spanish.



FROM MY WINDOW

**Berta Ramírez Galán
El Salvador**

From my window I can see the trees growing strong
 Even though it's winter-time and their leaves are gone
 Their branches are harmoniously fighting for space
 between each other, and even though it's winter-time
 they are surviving and growing strong
 It is beautiful to see them growing as they are,
 instead of the surroundings of misery they witness everyday
 where I and they can hear the yelling, the slapping
 and the crying among the couples from within their surroundings
 and mine.

IT'S SUMMER-TIME

It's summer time
 and the sun shines benevolent
 on every corner of my backyard
 The trees are covered
 by the greenery of its leaves,
 like every summer.
 When I suddenly opened the back door

I was astonished and amazed
 by the whole combination
 of birds and wild animals
 that live in the surroundings
 rushing out of the yard

And it was good that the old owl
 stayed on the branches of the bush
 to observe my next move

when I kept quiet by my door
 seeing the rest of the birds flying
 everywhere

and the rabbit, the groundhogs escaping and
 looking for a way to get out

About Berta Ramirez Galan

Born and raised in El Salvador, Berta moved to Costa Rica as a refugee in the 1980's where she finished her studies in Business Administration and pursued her career as a writer and Human rights activist. As well as having published articles in various publications, she also published her own books of poetry, novels and chronology. She also has her work published in the anthology of American and Canadian Poets the Shadows Imprint, and in the 2001 world poet's anthology of UNESCO Website "Dialog among Civilizations."



Marco Cinque
Italy

MARE NOSTRUM

Another world is impossible unless you start with your own

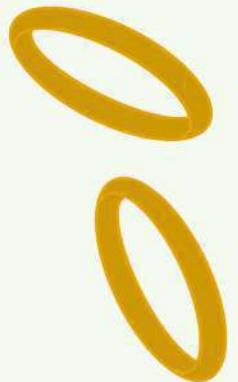
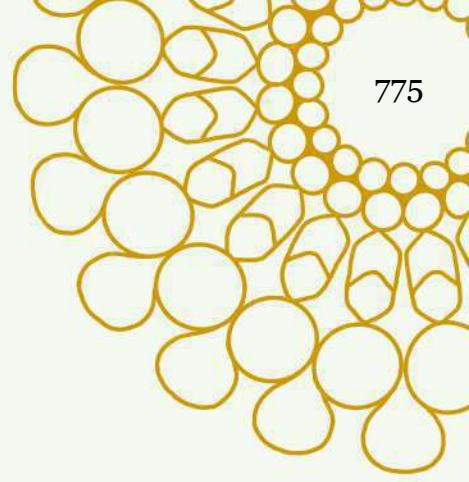
If the sea had a memory
and its Mediterranean waves
could recall these eyes
meeting from each of its shores.

If each passport could finally burn
and the lights of our identities
rose each day, only
inscribed in what we are and what we do.

If after having sowed good resolutions
these would keep sprouting
in our small yet revolutionary
daily gestures.

If the prize were to win the defeat
to make it self-aware
to the nakedness of its root
allowing new possibilities of growth.

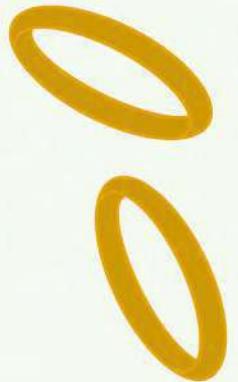
If God became a woman
and all men
finally



stopped considering themselves God.

If the perfect quota
Of beauty could be gained
By its own
indefinability.

If we didn't spend half our time
desiring and the other half regretting
since whatever we own
would never be enough.



If we understood that the blood
demanded by justice
is as red as the one
poured by injustice.

If we accepted to recognise
the enemy that inhabits us and that we ascribe to the others
seeking a peace that
is still peace from all points of view.



If equality
lived respecting the misfits
rather than the tyranny
of the peers.

If the last
of the Mohicans
were always the first
of our thoughts.

If poetry turned into revolt
 against the tyranny of the new paragraphs
 beyond the wall of the leaf –
 our border.

If we could translate these “ifs”
 in many living dreams
 then maybe any drop
 of this sea-our-sea
 will recall us

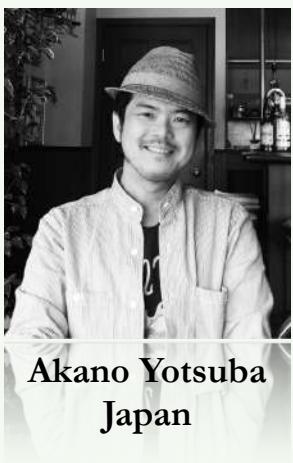
it'll recall us
 as a sun passing
 it'll recall us
 as flowers, books, goodbyes
 it'll recall us
 as a journey bringing us back

and it'll discover us, sons
 of the same house
 of the same land
 of the same sea
 and will recall us still,
 it'll recall us, it'll recall us.

Translated by Alessandra Bava

About Marco Cinque

Marco writes, photographs, plays, recites, publishes poetry collections, participates in international poetry festivals and photographic exhibitions. Through the language of art, he conveys social and environmental themes. He has published about 30 books, with some of his work translated into English, Spanish, French and Albanian. He currently works at “Il Manifesto”. In addition to the newspaper, he also writes articles and reviews for Alias (weekly) inserts, “Le Monde Diplomatique” (monthly) and collaborates with the online news stories “Ytali” and “Potlatch.”



HAIKU

Akano Yotsuba
Japan

Play the cello
as if combing hair
of a bastard

A high priest turns around
and attains enlightenment
it's so blue

Giving my supreme love,
ladders reach heaven
one after another

About Akano Yotsuba

A haiku poet, Akano is a member of the Modern Haiku Association and the World Haiku Association. He published collections of haiku poems called '*Night Ants*' and '*Hofuri*'. He is a leading and advanced poet of modern haiku.



GIRL OF WAX

Zakia El-Marmouk
Morocco

Lonely on Facebook
like a panic page
being chased by hackers' herd

I get away of Beksiński's incubi
from patrols of *Go and Come*
on the heart conditions
nation's health
I doze off within a poem

The road is a domino game
between winds and Utopia
"Utopia is dreamers' ship"
An admirer says, darkening her eyes with his voice protecting eggs of
fables from existentialists' snakes

Time is lying down on my knees
and I'm lying down on insomnia's knee
So what would I say to this night? It drinks me as a cup of
certainty drinks
the Sufis' hearts
A song and an ember in blood
How can we say what's not said?
without smoke slanders us
and speech sets fire in drawer of speech
Papers eat yearningly papers

starving rodent
 O! inkwell
 Whiteness is the memory of omission
 and omission is effluent
 and oblation at deaths tavern too

How can the besieged among bread,
 knife and God ruin its bridge? O! Munif
 Can the language allude to arrival
 without alluding to the snare?

This is *Time of Errors*
 Rightness is the woodsmen proof
 O! “For Bread Alone” guy, the candle also betrays. It betrays when
 dying before the night is dead. How about a cup of tea with mint for
 the night at Eldorado café?
 Perhaps, we could wash history from flies of Paul
 Bowles
 and share a “Joint” with Jean Genet

After he completed burying the North in Lixus sand we danced with
 “Gnawa”
 dancing until the Nirvana limits
 We’ve danced
 even before the Middle Atlas

While Hemingway asks his old man
 the seas that tuna baptised with prose
 dear Mencius
 not only the famished who knows the wisdom

The wisdom is daughter of subsistence
 not of satiety

Melancholy is an absent boy



Joy is girl of wax
 and nights of desert are longer than
 scaffold House sleeps in nakedness lonely

and houses are folk songs
 and slices of bread

Here we're, living life of image
 of Roland Barthes
 Here's Matisse colouring the reality
 by phantasm
 until it turned into folklore
 Though his eyes haven't been in bedrooms bedrooms in
 the south
 are cellars for strangers

Do doors remember
 the tree? their mother!

Translated by Mohamed Kannour

About Zakia El-Marmouk

Teacher of French literature at a high-school, Zakia is a poet and translator. She has published 5 books of poetry: "*I get out to the Day*", "*Walking on Water*", "*Every Absence and You're Near*", "*Selfie with a Far Shadow*" and "*I Hunt the Air by a Drowned Lung.*" She has participated in many international meetings such as Al-Mirbad in Iraq, Tozeur in Tunisia and Blida in Algeria. Her poems have been translated in many languages such as Persian, Kurdish and Italian.



Gianfranco Aurilio
Italy

DO YOU WANT ME TO FALL IN LOVE?

Do you want me to fall in love?

You will not succeed

with the beauties of your body

that yes ...

make me dream

and long for you

in every moment of the day

and at night

when my mind does not think

and my flesh burns.

Do not show me your riches

because a piece of bread is enough for me

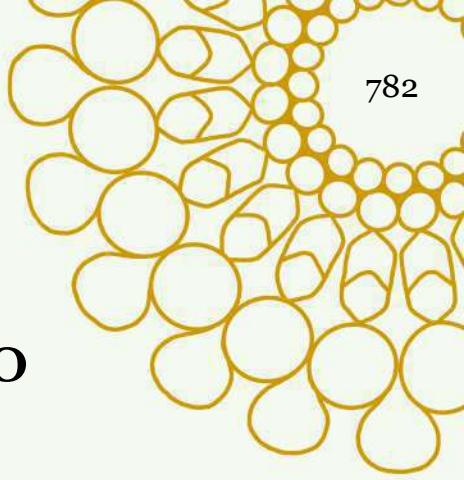
and I only need a roof

to make me feel safe.

Do not deceive me with wisdom

and deepness of thoughts,

nor it will be your art



or your poetry

to lull my soul.

Do you want me to fall in love?

Show me your weaknesses

your clumsiness

a heart that knows how to weep

your sufferings

your fears,

as only children can.

Inspire me with tenderness.



December 4, 2019

THE FIVE GIFTS

Finally

the time for the princess

to get married had come

and the king

invited the five contenders,

each of which

brought a gift.

Winter brought the cold

Spring

a fruit basket



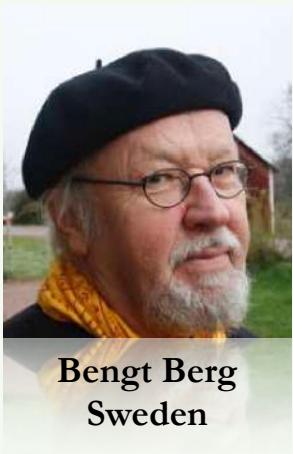
Summer brought the heat
 Autumn the rain
 and time brought peace.
 The princess chose and said:
 "Without cold I'll be warm
 without fruit I'll be hungry
 without heat I'll be cold
 and without rain I'll be thirsty
 but without peace
 I will die."

November 21, 2017

All Poems Translated by Adriana Altamura

About Gianfranco Aurilio

After graduating from a Humanities-centered secondary school, Gianfranco got his Law degree from the University of Rome "La Sapienza". He has published 14 collections of poems and drawings, with his poetry published in several national and international anthologies. Before dedicating himself to poetry and drawing, he was a professional musician and music teacher, as well as the author of a two-volume guitar book for teachers and students, entitled "*Complete.*"



ON LONGING

Bengt Berg
Sweden

I

Two birch trees in the middle of autumn

They stand there and maybe,

maybe, they are longing for the spring,

get that buzz back in their jackets

and when the clouds are sailing high above

they want to get on board.

II

He longed for

freedom outside, the child said,

when I opened the window

for the bird.

Where are the outsides
which make our breasts
filled up with longing
and the words
which make language
to something else, besides words.



III

Get ready for a new day
think about love a moment,
know the road ends
at the same place as it once began



Stand still waiting for the rain,
look for a circle in the grass
where we once stood
cup your hand over that spot
(as for protection),

think about love, know
that rain will soon start to fall;
your open hand

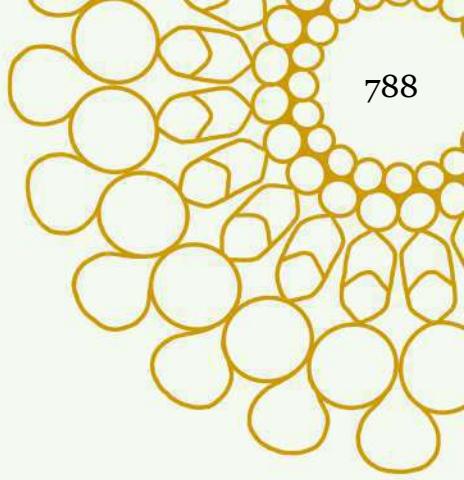
About Bengt Berg

Bengt has written more than 40 books, mostly poetry, and has had his work translated into several languages including Arabic, German, Polish, and Hindi. He has participated in many poetry festivals including Medellín (Colombia), Granada (Nicaragua), Struga (Macedonia), and Druskininkai (Lithuania), Târgul Festival de Poezie (Romania), FIP-LIMA (Peru), 3rd International Poetry Festival in Hanoi, Vietnam – among others.



Gémino H. Abad
Philippines

I TEACH MY CHILD



I

I teach my child
To survive.
I begin with our words,
 The simple words first
And last.
They are hardest to learn.
 Words like home,
Or friend, or to forgive.
These words are relations.
They are difficult to bear;
Their fruits are unseen.
 Or words that promise
Or dream.
Words like honour, or certainty,
Or cheer.
Rarest of sound,
Their roots run deep;
These are words that aspire,
They cast no shade.
 These are not words
To speak.
These are the words
Of which we consist,



Indefinite,
Without other ground.

II

My child
Is without syllables
To utter him,
Captive yet to his origin
In silence.

By every word
To rule his space,
He is released;
He is shaped by his speech.

Every act, too,
Is first without words.
There's no rehearsal
To adjust your deed
From direction of its words.

The words are given,
But there's no script;
Their play is hidden,
We are their stage.

These are the words
That offer to our care
Both sky and earth,

The same words
That may elude our acts.
If we speak them
But cannot meet their sound,
They strand us still
In our void,
Blank like the child
With the uphill silence



Of his words' climb.
And so,
I teach my child
To survive.
I begin with our words,
The simple words first
That last.

About Gémino H. Abad

Poet, fictionist, literary critic and historian, Gémino obtained his Ph.D. in English at the University of Chicago. He has received various honors and awards including Italy's *Premio Feronia* ("Foreign author category"). *When Bridges Are Down, Mountains Too Far* (2020) is his eleventh poetry collection, and *Past Mountain Dreaming* (2015), his ninth collection of critical essays; he has two collections of short stories, *Orion's Belt* (1996) and *A Makeshift Sun* (2001). He is known also for his three-volume historical anthology of Filipino poetry in English from 1905 to the 1990s – *Man of Earth* (co-ed., Edna Zapanta Manlapaz; 1989).



BELIEVING

**Nicole Cage
Martinique**

Believe in the pitch-dark night
 That the sun is doomed to rise at the hem of the day
 Believe that from the deepest billow of the wave
 The salutary crest will arise
 Believe contrary to good sense, to reasonable reason
 That life is beautiful
 And if blood continues to flood the streets of innocence
 If childhood is dying with wide disbelieving eyes
 Watching an utterly mad world/over-madding world
 If the earth is raped as deep as its entrails
 If the air breathes nothing else than concrete
 If feelings are on sales/are sold off on the profit market
 If the rapacious doubt-maker unfold their heavy wings
 As far as the threshold of hope
 If everything seems to be impossible, preposterous and vain
 Believe, still, that the flood of salvation rain
 Is sharpening its arms in the shade of a cloud
 Believe that the full moon will give birth
 To a garrison of stars standing upright/to attention
 Believe tenaciously,
 Believe obstinately/totally/absolutely
 Believe that in the dark of the night
 The forsaken fruit confides his love to the womb of the earth
 So that he be hatched - sheaves of hope – on the same-self place of its
 burial

Believe blindly
 Believe lucidly
 Believe, despite the oracles
 That love is vibrating deep inside of hatred
 That truth is singing
 On the very chords of untruth,
 Believe that the earth and the sky are still betrothed
 And secretly talk
 Of the sweetness of life...

SONG OF THE FALLING RAIN

The rain falls falls falls
 On my dreams of a child
 The rain falls
 On the kids without dreams

The rain dances dances dances
 Through the endless nights
 The rain dances
 Over days that they no longer end

The rain weeps weeps weeps
 Over the endless wars
 The rains weeps
 Over the kids without bread

The rains sings sings sings
 Over the women weeping
 The rain sings
 Over the women without men

Falls on the soldiers of others' war
 Dances over the anguish of their moms



Weeps weeps over mothers with no tears left
Sings sings about the imbecilic wars
The rain sings about my dreams of a child

Translated by Jack Hirschman

About Nicole Cage

Nicole has published five novels : *C'est vole que je vole* (1998 and 2006), *Confidentiel* (Dapper, Paris, 2000), *L'Espagnole* (Hatier, Paris, 2002), *Aime comme musique ou comme mourir d'aimer* (Scripta, Bretagne, 2005) and *Vole avec elle* (Acoria, Paris, 2009). She has been awarded the Prix Gros Sel du Public for her *C'est vole que je vole* (Les oiseaux de papier, Bretagne, 2006). Her short stories include *Medley* and *Entre ces îles et moi*. She performs regularly on stage in recitals of poetry-music with renowned musicians of her island. Her poems have been translated into several languages including Albanian, Chinese, and Spanish.



ROOM

Zvonko Taneski
Macedonia / Slovakia

Why didn't they let me change the room
and make me feel better,
now that even the critics are allowed to change their views
and earn more space in the magazines?

They all went for large and bright rooms
with evidently functional furniture,
and I didn't even complain about the only one new, but hard armchair,
no trace of the second one, though there should've been a pair,
just like literature is inseparable from the science about it.

Why was I not a standard guest when choosing the bed,
and was so resolute in my desire to experiment?

Literature needs fresh love masks for modeling:
a waterbed, an exotic partner with different skin color, faith,
an unexpected adventure...

But not much depended on, I thought, what view the window had,
everything depended on where and who she'd look at
and who she'd recognise.

“Each room has a mirror”, so I hope mine would have one too,
for it shouldn't, by any means, be an exception to the rule.

Why does my head look like a syntagmatic axis

though it is laid softly on the pillow,
and becomes a hypertext when it sinks in deep sleep?

Shouldn't they have let me change my room?

*Translated into English by Zoran Ancenski.
English language editor: Lee Schweninger.*

I WANTED TO WRITE

I wanted to write you a poem –
to strip you of all the metaphors, metonyms and epithets,
so that you be the naked truth,
official and recognised by the authorities
as a conclusive proof in self-defense

I wanted to write you a message
to describe you descending towards me
with a collected look,
without looking round
in case you're being followed by anyone
untamable or indecent

I wanted to write you an e-mail,
to arise in your virtual tenderness,
and spend the 'ntire night lonesome in front of a running monitor –
so that my eyes don't burn out in the dark –
before they get to see you in person
after a longer while

I wanted to write you a letter,
to reward you with mercy
so that you have it in reserve or in surplus
whenever you forget to smile
when greeting



I wanted to write but I've changed the plan.
So I further continue to want.

Translated by Jovana Stojkowska

About Zvonko Taneski

Poet, literary critic, translator and university professor Zvonko obtained his PhD in the Department of Slovak Literature and Literary Science. He is the author of six books of poetry: "Opened doors" (1995, Kuboa), "The Choir of Rotten Leaves" (2000, Matica makedonska), "The Ridge" (2003, Magor), "Chocolate in portfolio" (2010, Blesok), "Necking without warranty card" (2012, Kočo Racin) and "Waiting history" (2016, Antolog). His poems have been translated into numerous languages and published in national and foreign literary periodicals.



DISPLEASURE AND A DOOR

Ahmed Issa Al-Asam
United Arab Emirates

During the past two days, I was alone.
Their fuss deeply irritated me to the bone.

This continued until they eliminated my foot.
Finally, the worms boastfully got out, leaving its root.
They had read my poems before they were published in 2007.

They were surprised that the used drugs were harmful.
Except for those with gangrene, they wouldn't be useful.

The digger, who buried my foot, reminded me of God's award
for those who had patience.
No doubt, I had to have patience and diligence.
Yet, it was hard to keep one's word, to make an apology to
one's diet and to take care.
In the past two days, I had a visit to the old football playground.

UNFINISHED DIALOGUE

Dear sensitive fellow,
Think back a little.
When we were satisfied in water.
Our hands were burning with eagerness.
Such principle is spontaneous and pure,
Once it is brought into effect, only poets are interested and sure.

Talk to me and I'll raise my hand for your anxieties.

Darkness and my-immersed-in-water loneliness are responsible for such manners.

There is one disregarded point of view.

In turn, our neutral friends speak over every noisy view.

I don't deny that hearts fluctuate.

Staying silent and closing one's mouth are alike.

Whenever I look at my face, I find it fat-like.



SADNESS AND LOVE

If your world tightly besieges your way,

resort to your broad heart then fly away.

The places, we left, gave no birth to lovers by no way.

Lovers who sat down on the edges of a train's railway,

smoked, suffered from the pains of parting away

and drank fragrance behind our backs.



We made no interest in severe violence

that strongly struck one's soul, wandering inside.

In the places where we lost, our steps went far away

This was because we had decided to do it this way.

Now, we are on standby time.

I feel of love and sadness at a time.

More of my signs keep reminding me that I am an orphan.

All Poems Translated into English by Muhammad Ghazi Abu Zaid

About Ahmed Issa Al-Asam

A poet of prose poetry, Ahmed was a part several memberships including the Emirates' Writers' Union, Shahateen Group, Ras Al-Khaimah Autism Center and Al-Multaqa Al-Adabi magazine. He has participated in many poetry events, publishing his work in newspapers and providing lectures on writing. He was honoured by the late Sheikh Saqr Bin Muhammad Al Qasimi and His Highness Sheikh Saud Bin Saqr. His recent works include: 'The Plenty Lies under the Shade' (collection of poems, 2017), 'The Complete Poetic Works' (2019) and 'Three Moves' (collection of poems, 2020).



Ali Shalkuohi
Iran

HAIKU

full moon
floating on water
trapped in the net

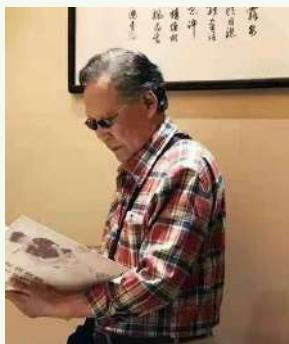
woodpecker sound,
I must pass through
this misty path

jasmine scent,
it's worth removing
the mask here

All Poems Translated by Ms. Hengameh Ahmadi

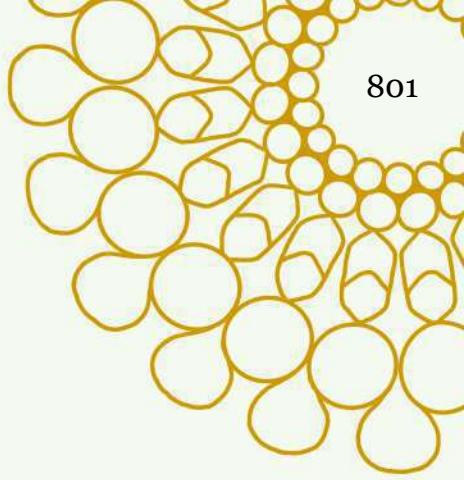
About Ali Shalkuohi

Ali learned to write haiku under his teacher, Massih Talebian. Many of his haiku poetry has been published in Iranian and international Japanese publications. His haiku collection entitled '*wandering in the fog*' has recently been published in Persian in Iran.



Wang Fa
China

YOUR LOVE



Higher than wind
 Higher than all virtual desires
 Higher than a canyon that covered with ivy
 All your love, mystical power
 raising above the horizon line
 The secret word of love
 you know, I know, God knows
 It builds a small nest among the green leaves

Fluffy tit with opening yellow mouths
 Patron saint of life, the maternal love
 Everything is vibrant and green
 Nothing can beat love
 Dark will be hopeless
 Here the beautiful world
 Love
 makes stones bloom

Translated by Bai Shui

About Wang Fa

Poet and critic, Wang is the editor-in-chief of Hong Kong's "Genre" poetry magazine, the editor-in-chief of "Sun Pavilion" poetry magazine, the editor-in-chief of the "Fa Ge's view of Poetry World" and a director of the domestic channel department of World Poetry Network. He has published a collection of poems "*There are Tigers in the Northeast*".



...BREAKING NEWS: MASS GRAVE DISCOVERED NEARBY

Kadhem Khanjar
Iraq

Yesterday I went down to Forensics. They asked me for a sample for DNA matching. They said that they had found some bones, as yet unidentified. I turn and turn like an orange on the knife of hope.

Now I am at home, brother, wiping the dust from the artificial flowers around your picture, and watering them with tears.

The medical report says that the bag of bones that I signed for today is “You”. But this is little. I laid him out on the table in front of them. We counted again: a skull with six holes, one clavicle, three cervical ribs, a shattered femur, a pile of wrist bones, and a few vertebrae.

Is it possible that this little is a brother?

The medical report indicates that it is. I put the bones back in the bag. I brushed the earth from my hands, then blew the rest from the table, put

you on my back, and left.

On the bus I sat the bag beside me. I paid for two seats (this time it's me who pays). I grew up today, enough to carry you on my back and pay your bus fare.

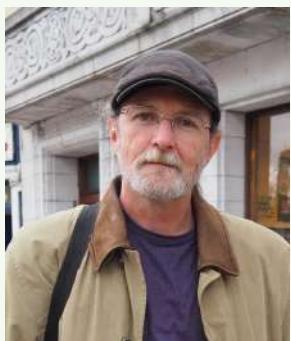
I didn't tell anyone that I had received this little. I watch your wife and your children brush by the sofa that I left you on. I wanted one of them to open the bag. I wanted them to see you one last time. But you were as unyielding as a bone. Afterwards they asked about the tearstains on the sofa.

For an hour I have been arranging these damp bones in the bottom of the coffin, trying to make you complete. Only the nails in either side know how little this is

Translated by Alice Guthrie

About Kadhem Khanjar

A poet and performer, Kadhem set up a project called '*the Culture Militia*', a group which performs poetry in sites of destruction and death including blown-up cars, minefields, and ambulances. His collection *Picnic with an Explosive Belt* was published in Arabic by Dar Al-Makutat in the Netherlands.



Paul Casey
Ireland

A SMALL MEASURE

stars are born people die
more stars than people
by far reborn as stars

and more stars than grains of sand
the number of grains of sand?
(7.5×10^{18} grains of sand)

seven quintillion, five hundred-
quadrillion grains we believe
(give or take a few grains of sand)

the number of stars, 70 thousand million,
million, million stars (the same number
as molecules in ten drops of water)

so there are more molecules
in eleven of your teardrops
than stars (or grains of sand)

First published in The Pickled Body

BLUE ROSES

for Rosie

And then there are uncertain nights

when she blushes a sudden lavender
 as I first remember, or darkens to a violet sleep.
 Sometimes, she shimmers from the tranquil deep
 of a burgundy world, dreaming and I
 witness her water to a pale coral dawn

I've seen her shine as light as pear
 tethered still and clear by the anchors
 of warm mid-morning daydreams,
 turn sepal green as if petal less
 or glow amber as the fallen leaves
 from a bouquet of autumn operas.
 And on each blue moon, without fail
 fold into the calm of origami white.

Usually my rose is a full flaming-red
 cardinal weekend in a time made
 only of roses. Is a wild flowering
 rambler, a climber, a rosebush of scarlet
 matadors, urging the shy and tormented
 to dance in the showers of abundant daily joy.

If on certain days I could breathe
 for her, roses of only breath,
 they would each live as blessed
 as a momentary labour of thorn-less blood
 a singly purposed mist of quartz,
 two thousand tender dozens per day
 all shed before her footsteps and dewed,
 tinted finely, with the scent of blue roses.

*First published in *home more or less* (Salmon Poetry, 2012)*

About Paul Casey

Paul's second collection *Virtual Tides* was published by Salmon Poetry in 2016. It followed *home more or less* (Salmon, 2012) and *It's Not All Bad* (Heaventree Press, 2009). He teaches creative writing, edits the *Unfinished Book of Poetry* and promotes poetry in his role as director of Ó Bhéal in Cork, Ireland.



Casimiro de Brito
Portugal

WORLD TOUR IN EIGHTY POEMS

From my next haiku book

travelling around the world
on a carpet of words
my rainbow

At the shrine of Nara
I picked a stone
Full of compassion

loved a geisha
and felt being drunk
by the moon

recalling cherry trees
lighting Kyoto
I flourished too

finishing the world tour
back to my beloved
down to paradise

About Casimiro de Brito

Brito attended Westfield College where he found classical Japanese poetry. He is the author of 43 titles in poetry, fiction, aphorisms and essays. His works have been included in more than 260 anthologies and translated into 34 languages. He was awarded with several Portuguese Poetry Prizes as well as several International Prizes including: the Viareggio Versilia for *Ode & Ceia* (collected poetry), the first edition of the Poetry International Prize Leopold Sedar Senghor, for his poetic career, and the Poetry European Prize, for the best book of poetry published in Italy in 2004 (for *Libro dell' Cadute*).



**Moisés Pascual
Panama**

MY NAME IS LORCA TOO

to Federico García Lorca

in memoriam

Sooner or later

you end up looking like what surrounds you

Your mother, her eyes,

your father, his vices.

To your sick brothers.

To the black dog.

To the stray cat.

To the tree eaten by hungry ants.

To your god.

To hell dirty.

To the guardian angel.

To the death that awaits in the hospitals.

In the winter that coughs purple flowers.

To the damaged toilet.

To the politician you voted for.

To Ali Baba and his 40 thieves.

Unique, original, nobody looks like you.

you think you are a lineage of dragons and

unicorns that never existed, like those rare words with a

common, dark and bled DNA.

Must be

a resistance to the III war.

To the pain of the pain.

Sooner or later, a multiple of 3,

a dust blown away by the wind.

To common destiny.

Another more shot poem.

My name is Lorca too.

My poem that bleeds is infinite.

About Moisés Pascual

Poet, writer, visual artist, educator, Moisés won the National Prize for Literature "*Ricardo Miró*" in poetry: "*Traganíquel*" (2003), and "*Conjugando*" (2010). He obtained an honorable mention in a short story in a contest with his book "*En el país de los pájaros aburridos*" (2005). His published poetry books include: "*Monólogo del naufrago*", "*Ojalá*" and "*La diosa desnuda*." His work appears in various anthologies, with translations into other languages. He has participated in various events in Colombia, the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, among others.



Abdulkakhor Kosim
Tajikistan

TILL WHERE?

Who am I, from where to where?
 I'm going, my friend, for God's sake .
 I'm a flower, or nightingale or crow,
 Am a jolly gardener or a garden?
 Jamshid's throne or the gold crown,
 Or the mist of soil to another state,
 Joseph Can'on in the corner of the pit,
 Or the evil and sinful brothers.
 Am a desert gazelle, good breeze,
 Or wounded wolf in the halfway.
 I am the Moon or Sun or sky,
 Or the land beneath the feet of people.
 I'm a scholar, full breast beam of brightness,
 Generous, or humiliated or poor.
 Whoever I am, am no hypocrite,
 I'm no fit with the naughty fate.
 I am the poet, with own books and anthology,
 The person with the honour and dignity of my country.

REPENTANCE

Even we fall, but don't see the road,
 Abandon the world with repentance.
 In youth our repentance is good,
 Alas, we are obstinate in our youth.
 As a vulture we eat people's goods,
 But show us as a pigeon.

As a fox we make cunnings,
 Again we say that we're male lions.
 With our actions we are lovers of the soil,
 But we are proud, as if we are the stars.
 We work hard for this world's goods,
 But take only a shroud from the world.
 Our guide is the word of God,
 Such a pity, we are away of his words.
 Don't hear the heart moan of poor men,
 Sometimes we're comrade of deaf and devil.
 In our word there are none as we are Muslims,
 But in action we are like the faithless.
 We are all in the endless world,
 World is a game and we players.

WAVE OF DREAMS

From sky I see the Earth in pieces and plots.
 In sky gun powder smells in my nose,
 Boundless wounds kill motherland.
 Squeeze one corner, and burn another one
 Ahriman observe this from their hearts
 We are all children of Adam, born by Eva,
 Or there all will grow Abel, the devil's cunning worked hard.
 All these pains and sufferings are in mother-land's heart,
 Except Unity, my dears, no means to cure its pain.

All Poems Translated from Tajik by Khaibatullo Shodieva

About Abdukakhon Kosim

A poet, songwriter, journalist, publicist, Abdukakhon was awarded the following titles: "Excellence in Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan", "Excellence in Culture of the Republic of Tajikistan", "International Creative Person", national coordinator of the World Poetic Movement (WPM) for Tajikistan, coordinator of the World Union of Poets for Peace and Freedom (UMPPL), Italy, member of the International Union of Journalists of the Confederation in Tajikistan and the International Elite Union of People Fruit diplomacy MESND-Kazakhstan.



SACRIFICE

Naida Mujkić
Bosnia / Herzegovina

Every winter my husband and I
Go in search of
The white turnips left
Since the harvest

If the snow is deep
It's hard to find a turnip
We take our wooden sticks
And clear the snow across the field

When little rotten green leaves
Appear under the layers of snow
We both jump in the air
And feel like we're kids again

Then we start a fire out of
Dry wood logs and cook
The turnip until it softens

My stomach can't stand turnips
 It aches and pains
 But I say nothing to my husband

 If I told him
 He wouldn't let me go
 And my winter days
 Would become sad and slow

GOD'S POWER

My father took me to the garden
 To show me God's power
 He carries a wooden stick in his hand
 We are both barefoot
 And a stick can't protect us from snakes
 Father didn't bring a stick
 So we could beat the snakes

One by one he revealed
 Dazzling signs with his stick:
 Threatening two-headed potatoes,
 Hermaphrodite tomatoes,
 Flattened vines of the pumpkins,
 Crocheted cucumbers, eggplants with



Noses or penises - it depends on how

We turn them

Never before in our garden there were

That many deformed vegetables

Here and there we would have

Trouble with cucumber crochet

Father said:

When people went crazy

The plants went crazy too

I shrugged, but I actually

Wanted to cry

My father also wanted to cry

We both gave up on

What we wanted to save

I wanted to save the world

And he wanted to save me

About Naida Mujkić

Naida received her PhD from the Faculty of Philosophy, and her work has appeared in literary journals and anthologies around the world. So far, she published 7 books of poetry and she is also an editor of several books. She has participated in international poetry and literature festivals. She is a member of the Writers' Association of BiH, as well as the PEN Centre of BiH. She is currently writing "Paths", a column in the literary magazine Publishers Weekly in Sharjah, UAE. She is also the author of 4 documentaries about life in the countryside.



ORIGIN

Elisabetta Bagli
Italy

Who knows if you hear this murmur
That moves the stars and the seas
And mitigate the doors of time,
That greedy and ruthless
Thickens the black and silver of the world.

Who knows if you listen to the fertile song of the Universe
When it opens its forces
And lets the beauty of dawn in bloom breathe
And generate naked and carefree love
Of ravenous sparrows and delirious lovers.

Who knows if all this is a dream
Or if it's life calling you by your name,
Resounding its echo
In the fugitive and sylvan air,
Crossing rivers and seasons,
Molding wine and blood
In the evanescence of a light
That becomes dance and sound
And becomes body and face.

It is the origin; it is life.
It is you.

THE SHIPS OF HOPE

They are the ships of hope
 those that sail the seas
 in the lingering gloom
 to whom desperately believes in the sun,
 while the bare wind
 will surprise him at night,
 when the mirrors of the earth
 will extinguish forever
 the luminous longings of the moon.
 They sell everything
 to ruthless executioners,
 to the dirty owners
 of their destinations.
 Like the flock of cattle
 in transhumance,
 they cross the waters
 with signs of torture
 in the arms, in the head;
 the fresh scars on the abdomen
 of the violence suffered in the fields,
 of bitter and cruel sex
 inflicted as daily bread
 to the weak one who has swallowed
 tatters of fur in search
 of his deep sleep
 on the floating and broken wood
 that they will not touch often.
 Few will come alive,
 many will get their hands dirty with blood.



BEYOND

Beyond,
 Over the horizon,
 Beyond the saline smell
 Hidden in your bosom,
 Between impervious waves and rocks;

Beyond,
Beyond the roots,
Beyond the hanging fronds,
Among the greedy flora
Of garlands in bloom;

Beyond,
Beyond words,
Beyond the world in flames,
In the sweet firmament,
Shiny and everlasting

It's you, woman,
Girl, lover and mother,
You are the indefatigable one.
Loosen the chains
With your silent and true song,
Soothe torments and memories
With your dewy lips
And silk hands,
You are the one who gives her last will
To the world.

Translated into English by Elisabetta Bagli

About Elisabetta Bagli

Elisabetta is the author of several poetry books, a compilation of stories, a children's book, and articles and essays for newspapers and digital magazines around the world. Her poems and writings have been translated into 13 languages. Operating in more than a hundred national and international anthologies, Elisabetta is the President and a former member of the jury in many national and international literary prizes. She has received many prestigious awards including: the Italian Award for Culture awarded by the Italian Ambassador Stefano Sannino (Spain, 2019), and the Najman Prize in Lebanon (2020).



BORDERLESS

**Smitha Sehgal
India**

rivers follow trajectory of heart across maps,
they do not pay cess
tumbling through moss and moon flowers on mountain shrubs,
they follow nightingale's dulcet
echoing the call of ocean,
far across the valleys and plains once
ruled by a goddess, her smile a crimson clot
dotting the sky, botched by indigo children of dusk
mixing paints stolen from a wizard's satchel
failing to see a spell hidden beneath a trick
dusk fell upon earth, lanterns played
pretense of shadow hiding in a cesspool of
mulch and malaise in pandora's box
replacing law of nature with law of man,
that night stars came together in a clot
sorrow writ large on their brows,
if you must know really
all rivers were born unnamed, colourless,
they did not belong to any God really
except the ancient goddess we spoke about,

seed of ice buried deep in her core
 a clot that did not melt, even as the glaciers
 slid down,
 man went about naming rivers,
 drawing up treaties,
 call of cuckoo lost amidst the war cries,
 men, women and children queued under
 hot furnaces,
 gas chambers spewed venom,
 earth was dust and ashes
 returning to the ocean of peace where starfish swayed
 we decided there ought to be no more mixing
 up of facts,
 we need an earth
 to mix colours, rivers and people, language,
 so that people who cross borders become rivers
 that follow dulcet
 of nightingale,
 echoing the call of ocean



TOWER BRIDGE

Tower Bridge is deserted tonight

In the waters of Thames beneath, a million moons

Call out, men and women who once in Royal Court shone bright

Condemned to death and shame in dark, stranger to seasons

Some sank during escapades, some not so lucky with death
 Echoes of a bygone era scream to be released, with reasons
 Imprisoned in the Tower House, I hear their breath
 By an eerie autumn noon, walking past the chambers of torture,
 Opposite the White Castle, shallow boast of armaments and wealth
 Sky frowns grey, a lonely mourner
 Eight pounds, says John Miller, watercolour on canvas, I dig into hand
 bag

About Smitha Sehgal

Smitha is a corporate legal professional who celebrates law and literature with equal zest. She is a bilingual poet who writes in English and Malayalam. Her poems, fiction and book reviews have been featured with literary publications including Brown Critique, Muse India and The Wagon Magazine. She is the recipient of the Reading Hour Short Story Prize in 2015. Her poems have appeared in several anthologies of English Poetry including 'Dance of the Peacock- an anthology of English Poetry from India' and 'Suvarnarekha- an anthology of Women Poets of India'.



PROPOSAL

Yuri Zambrano
Mexico

I propose a topic
about an astounding woman
able to destroy unbreakable walls
to reach our inner darkness.

Able to create more of 999 Eden's paradises
only to comfort the sadness of her loneliness,
able to face the terrible stories
about perceptiveness of immortals,
able to consolidate two separations
to meet a new unbridled union,
able to brighten endless roads
with the audacity of her spirit,
capable of breaking strong chains
to beautify her home,
capable to pour her soul
in prosperous service of somebody else,
able to give away her feelings
for the deepest senses even for a moment;
able to deny her virtues
because she knows her defects.

I propose a topic about
this virtuous and astounding woman
because producing her echo,

She can spread indeed,
the right way of silent love.

Translated by Jack Hirschman

UNCHAINING PROMETHEUS

The ghost is dreaming with shooting stars
swimming in its nebulae of flaming brain tides,
tailors Molotov cocktails
appearing in the middle of astounding flares
like neuronal trees.

There,
as if were tender faces of newborn babies
other phantom limbs are crying about
past unconscious states.

They are hearing the ‘howl’
not only the Kerouac’s howl,
but is the deep scream
coming from a whole lovely people.

Dear world: You can do it.
You are burning and Prometheus knows that.
So my dear world,
I Promise you...

Because, you know
the old Prometheus lives inside the hope,
and one day
he will wake up to free yourself
of your chains.

About Yuri Zambrano

Yuri is a poet, essayist, editor and M.D, Physician researching in neural networks. As an activist, he is also the founder and main director of World Festival of Poetry (WFP), publishing over 50 books in different languages around the world.



THE PLAGUE

Gerry Loose
Scotland / United Kingdom

that first night thrushes woke & sang
old Tam left three eggs at the door
with these I kindled the yellow light in furze

on the second day oystercatchers piped
then flew to the roof of the abandoned school
the moon was not lit

on the third evening at eight o clock
people went to their windows
and applauded silence

when the fourth day arrived
we found the world had grown larger
hollow creel boats bobbed affirmation

after that was the next day
we told stories from beyond and behind
stories of yet to happen and end times

the sixth & Peg left a bottle of beer at the door
or maybe that was the seventh at dusk
and maybe she left a seawoman's purse

the eighth day brought pennies to our eyelids
and seraphs who masquerade as wild geese
yes the eighth day still dawned still at dawn

the seventh day or perhaps the sixth
we all rose from where we had been
the youngest and then the oldest

THERE IS SILENCE

there is silence

imagine I am speaking to you
through silence

which I am not
a tending of song

the silence of leaves
on a lime tree

in an avenue of limes
leading down to the sea



this is how we dream
this & among mountains

looking on
feet wet in the sea

imagine the silence
through which

for a moment I
talk to you

About Gerry Loose

Gerry's work is drawn from the natural world and the world of geopolitics. His work is found inscribed on stones across various landscapes, hospitals, galleries and botanic gardens as well as written in his books. He is author of many books, the latest being *The Great Book of the Woods; the unfinished hut and night exposures*. As editor, *Mither Tongue*, poems of the Chinese/Nuosu poet Jidi Majia, is recent as well. His awards include a Creative Scotland Award, a Robert Louis Stevenson Fellowship, a Kone Foundation Award and a Hermann Kesten Stipendium.

FEEDING HOPE

BRANCH 11



TO AMMA, GUARDIAN GOD OF THE DOGON PEOPLE

Tendo Taijin

Japan

Photo taken by Promir Imami

I wonder if it can break through this clear blue sky—
Whatever was shining in the ancient firmament?
What was it that could be seen?

The sunken eyes of the elders here,
Wordless as ever,
From the top of a cliff, see something that seems to have survived. . . .

Encouraged by Cameroon poets
When I was invited into the center of this open space,
A transparent invitation arrived from the Syrian star system.

Turning around, way off in the distance,
Houses and wriggling people can be seen on the earth, like grains of rice,
Before the eyes, the elders sit in the center of a few dozen tribesmen who
surround them.

This is Africa, the Republic of Mali,
The Sangha region, Bandiagara, atop the escarpment,
Where the Dogon people live.

The ancient world of the Dogon I learned about
 In Marcel Griaule's *Pale Fox*—
 These are the people I have dreamed of seeing—the Dogon!

Even now, somewhere upon this earth,
 Can anything still be passed down
 About the distant star system of Sirius?

The voice of an Asian poet—who?—his voice continues to resound,
 Without a single clearing of his throat, he turns toward the elders—
 As he turns this time to face their guardian god, Amma,
 A gust of cool wind caresses his cheeks.
 Where is this? He turns around and soon intones:

“Kitchee Manitou!”
 “Kitchee Manitou!”
 “*Kitchee Manitou!*” three times offering his voice.*

Three years later, a Moroni poet who saw him off at Senegal's Dakar airport,
 With a gentle smile, told him: “At that time, the Dogon elders
 Perfectly comprehended what you said.”

It was a world in which one could converse in Divine words,
 When languages from distant lands could be understood with ease, like
 before the time of the Tower of Babel.

* *Kitchee Manitou*, also spelled *Kitchi-Manitou*, is the Creator God of the Algonquian nations of North America. The Anishinaabe (Ojibwa or Chippewa) people, Longfellow's source, spell it *Gichi-Manidoo*, and the term means “Great Spirit.”

Translated by Stephen Comee
 on Mt. Koya, Japan's sacred peak

About Tendo Taijin

Poet, reciter and calligrapher, Tendo held a solo performance entitled “Poesia Primavera” in Italy 2002. He has given training to multiple poets on how to recite poetry as he himself has been reciting his own voice at international poetry festivals all around the world. His work includes: “The snow of Picos Europ” (2015), “An Experiential Poem Psalm of Babylon” (2020) and “To Amma, Guardian god of the Dogon People” (2021).



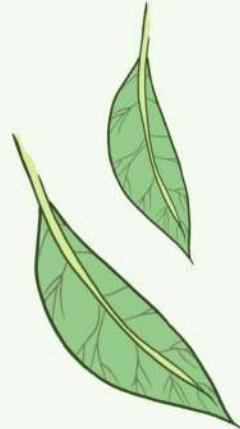
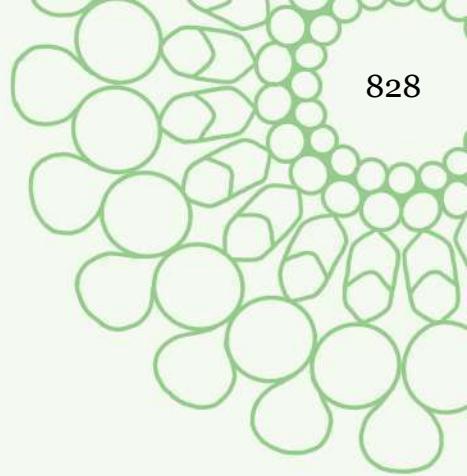
Carlos Viegas
Brazil

HAIKU

children in the park
and swallows through the sky
a time of hope

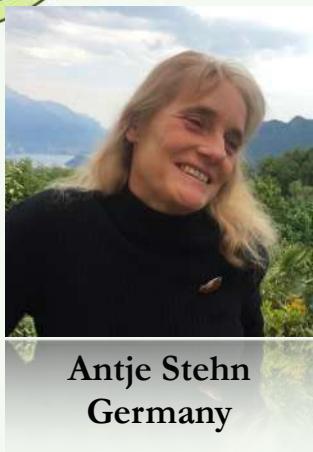
I hear mother earth
the sound of the waterfall
all over the valley

flowery flamboyants
all along the avenue
chat among friends

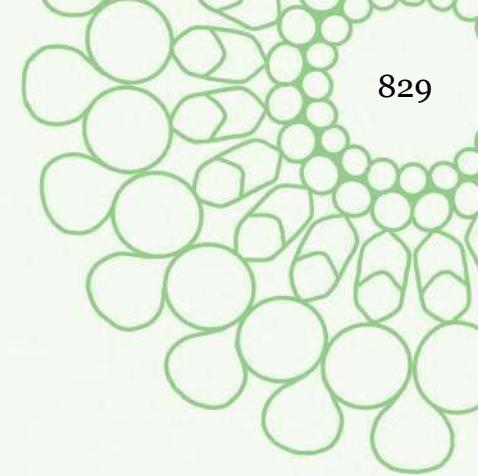


About Carlos Viegas

Carlos is a medical pulmonologist, professor of sleep medicine at the University of Brasília and a practitioner of Shin Buddhism and Haikin. He has received awards in national contests, published five personal books and participated in anthologies and the World Haiku Association.



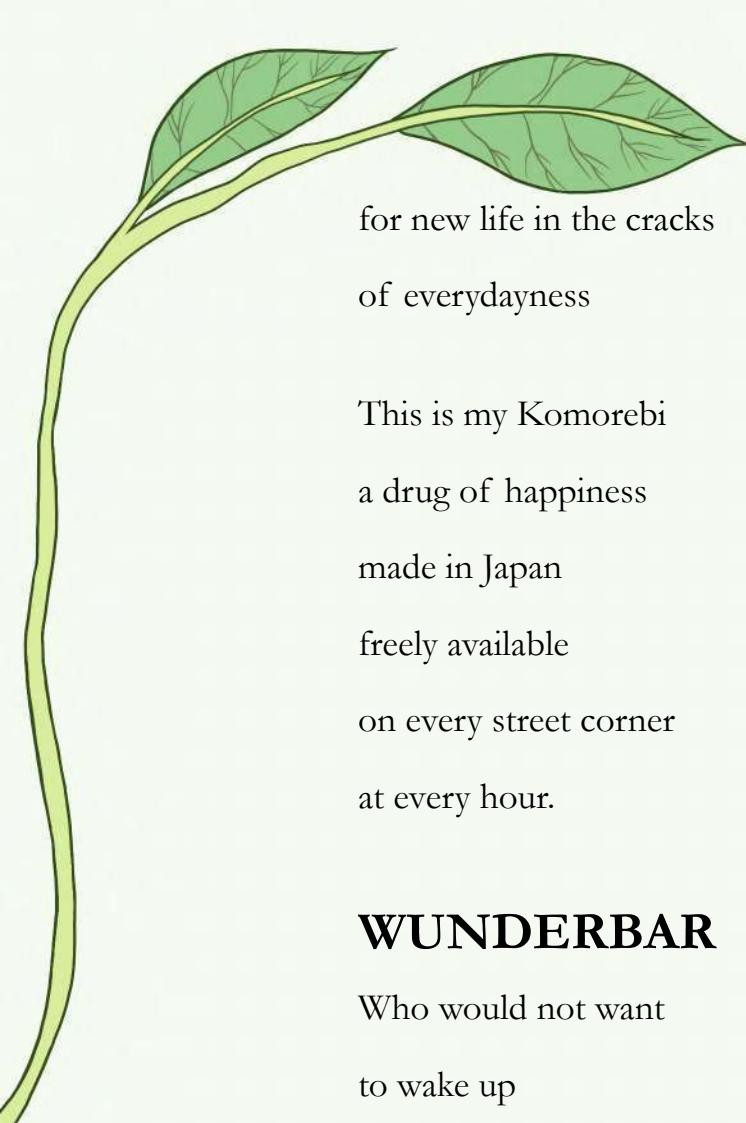
KOMOREBI



**Antje Stehn
Germany**

The dandelions stand proudly
on the traffic islands
surrounded by noisy areas
of frenetic transition

I meet them crouching
at the visual level of dogs
clusters of rays filter
between soft tissue paper stems
everything is floating like foliage
in the light-shadow game
of a magical forest
thin and light
almost transparent
the sphere of radiant seeds
filled with infinite possibilities
a breath of wind is enough



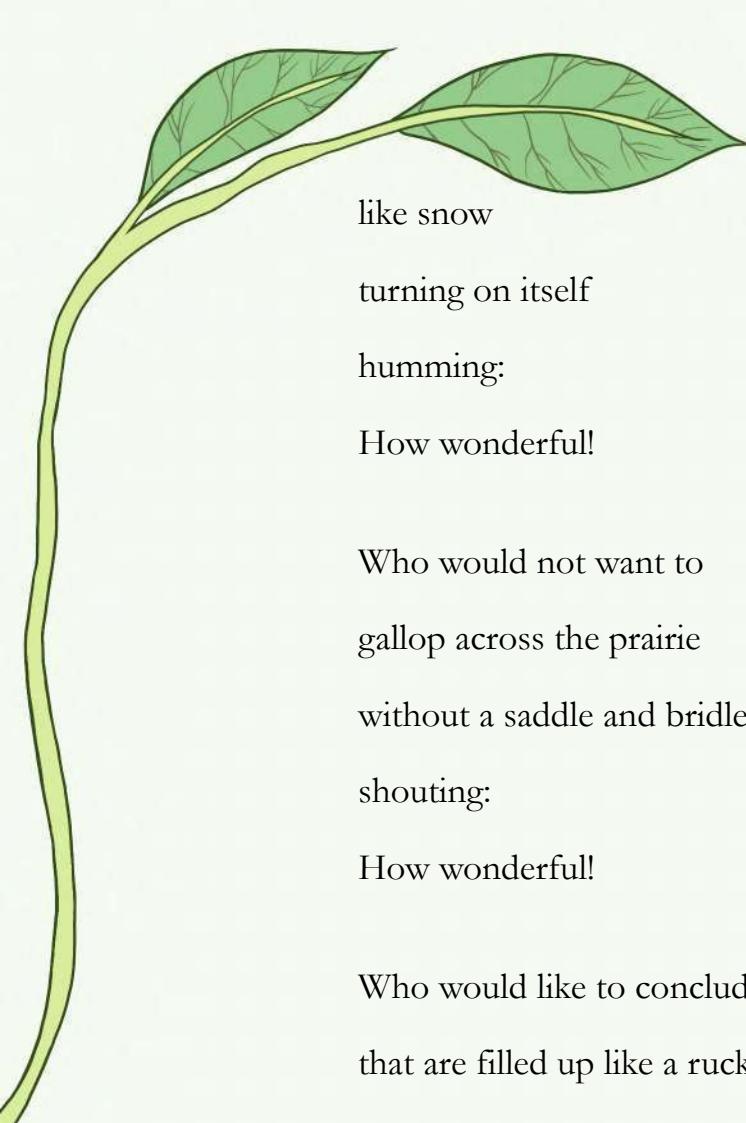
for new life in the cracks
of everydayness

This is my Komorebi
a drug of happiness
made in Japan
freely available
on every street corner
at every hour.

WUNDERBAR

Who would not want
to wake up
between white bed sheets
inside a birch forest
like a monk
who lives his vow of silence
in a quiet world
whispering to himself:
How wonderful!

Who would not want to live
falling weightlessly
through time



like snow

turning on itself

humming:

How wonderful!

Who would not want to

gallop across the prairie

without a saddle and bridle

shouting:

How wonderful!

Who would like to conclude one's days

that are filled up like a rucksack

tasting a slice of cheesecake

murmuring:

How wonderful!

EMPATHY IS A LEARNING PATH

Lucy is dead.

She fell from a twelve-meter tree

at the beginning of our history.

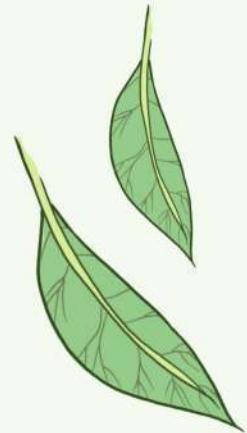
And we straightened up

believing ourselves to be rational, spiritual beings

with a special place between angels and animals

yet, our hearts are a noisy local market
 the children have their hands full of torn herbs
 they crush spiders and ants
 they chase each other with stones and sticks
 and as strong men
 they skip diplomatic procedures
 the grammar of confrontation:
 Act before the opponent does
 and notify us with a tweet.

All Poems Translated by Betty Gilmore



About Antje Stehn

Antje is a poet, visual artist, art curator, and member of German PEN. Since 1980, she has been showing her art work in international exhibitions around Europe and the US. Since 2014, she has organised poetic-artistic performances such as: "Life is the art of encounter" (2016), "Free-floating dandelions" (2017) at the State University of Milan and "Origin e rigeneration in New Places", at the MUDEC Museum in Milan" (2020). Since 2020, she has been curating the art-poetry project "Rucksack a Global Poetry Patchwork", which involves more than 250 international poets.



Tran Phuong
Vietnam

3 HAIKUS

Hanoi Vietnam, August 2021

1.

Gió đổi chí ầu
mặt người
xoay

Wind of change
human face
turn

2.

Thời Virus Corona
Chúa Trời
già

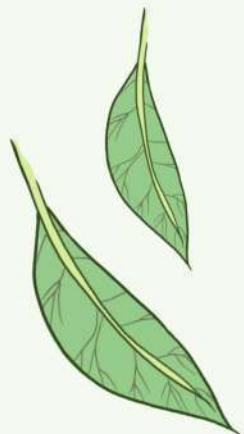
Time of Corona Virus
The God
old

3.

Nhân loại
không ưa gì màu đỏ
Covid - 19

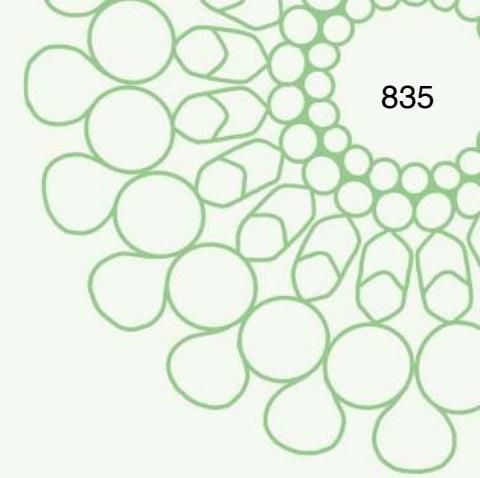
The humanity
don't like red
Covid – 19

All Poems Translated by Hoang Thi Lanb



About Tran Phuong

Tran obtained his Doctorate degree in linguistics. He has a collection of short poems, of the Haiku line, *Sky - Earth - Human* including seven volumes. He has also published five volumes (paper books) with 1,725 articles, in three languages: Vietnamese, English and French.



LOVE

Adel Khozam
United Arab Emirates

Love: It's like going out to face the approaching storm, with a sword.

Love: The kiss of life that every mummy waits for.

Love: When she stretched her legs into the river, it froze so she wouldn't leave.

Love: A labyrinth in the form of a straight path.

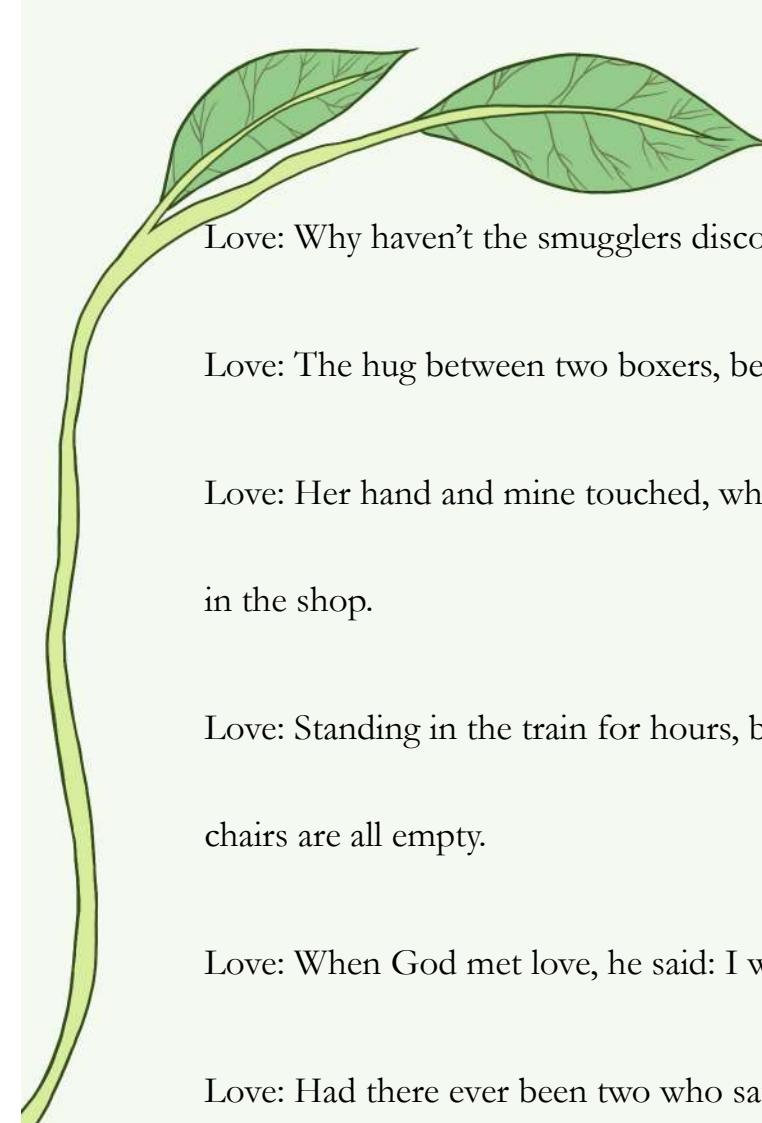
Love: It is the referee, when good and evil play morality chess.

Love: She slept on my arm all night, and I realised that love is first and foremost a paralysis.

Love: To shoot the arrow, and then to intercept it, before it pierces her heart.

Love: A queue of blind people at the ticket window for a silent play.

Love: You have to live, with your nerves in the fridge, your heart in the oven, your mind in the mincer.



Love: Why haven't the smugglers discovered that it is the most powerful drug?

Love: The hug between two boxers, before a fight to the death.

Love: Her hand and mine touched, when we both reached for the last vial of poison in the shop.

Love: Standing in the train for hours, both of us holding the same handle, and the chairs are all empty.

Love: When God met love, he said: I wish it were my worshipper.

Love: Had there ever been two who sat together in a garden, where it hadn't been the third?

Love: If I jump from a tall tower while it's under me, I'll survive.

Love: Red's seduction, when lips drenched in it call your name.

Love: It can be real, in a moment of betrayal.

Love: A man is reading a book, in a park full of women exercising.

Love: To carry only the rose, and it matters not to whom you give it.

Love: A man climbs the cactus, and a woman applauds his wounds.

Love: A pianist, when he can no longer tell the difference between his fingers and the piano's keys.

Love: The cup of mercy, when its wine is poured on a tainted land.

Love: The bud that sprouted on its own, and extended a neck in the midst of the wreckage.

Love: I closed my eyes to dream of her, and when I opened them, I was an old man, and the bouquet of roses in my hand had withered.

Love: The more I pointed my ship toward it, the more it kept drifting.

Love: Oh, how often you're murdered in poems, when those who try to describe you castrate the essence of your meaning.

Translated by Hamdan AlKhezam



About Adel Khozam

Adel Khozam is a highly admired Emirati poet, composer & journalist. He is very much involved in both the Arab and international poetry scene, as his poems were translated into several languages. He has published 15 books composed of poetry collections, novels, philosophy, and spirituality. The English version of his novel titled *Life through the Third Eye* won the 'Golden Seal for Featured Books in Literature' and was also nominated for the 'Eric Hoffer Award for Independent Publication in USA' in 2015. His poetry collection *Naked spring* won the Tulliola International Poetry Prize in 2020. Now, he is the creator of the first version of the World Poetry Tree anthology.



HENS

**Henry Alexander Gómez
Columbia**

To Felipe García Quintero

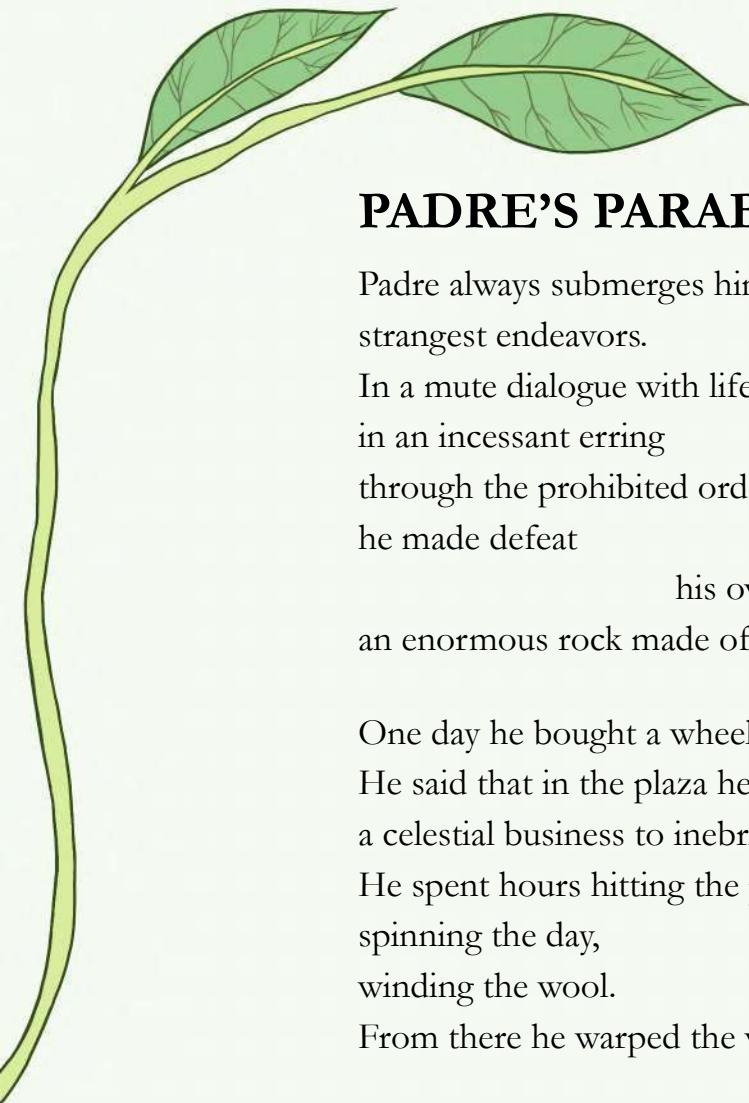
In the morning,
long moments revealed to me
the game of her feathers,
the clucking of the world from
a noble idiocy.

Her peculiar dance
spoke to me of a forgotten lineage,
the firm intention of being erased wind.

I understood, then, the difficult task
of breaking
from the bonds of the air,
the nearby music of digging up the earth.

It's true that in hens
day has found its axis,
the umbilical cord
in which it sustains light.

Just like them, I write about the happiness
of being a fallen bird.



PADRE'S PARABLE

Padre always submerges himself in the
strangest endeavors.

In a mute dialogue with life,
in an incessant erring
through the prohibited order of things,
he made defeat

his own personal stamp,
an enormous rock made of air to push uphill.

One day he bought a wheel to spin clouds.
He said that in the plaza he could easily open
a celestial business to inebriate dart throwers.
He spent hours hitting the pedal,
spinning the day,
winding the wool.

From there he warped the whole sky's hem
without earning a single coin.

Another day
he jumped in an old car
to avoid the loneliness of the journey.
With it he would pass by the smoke factories,
the secret pages of the great mountains,
until arriving at la Havana

But night left him thrown on the side of the highway, repairing the old oxidadated motor.

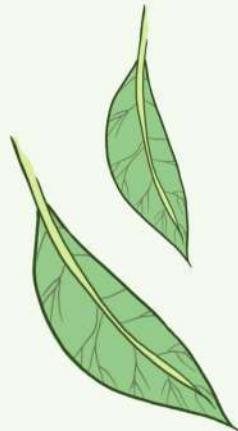
My padre takes on strange tasks,
he cultivated the dreams of flag-waters,
did business with oblivion,
kneaded bread
for the french-fry inspector,
wrote farewell letters for housewives,

even sharpened pencils for obstinate bureaucrats
in a court in some country
that doesn't appear on any map.

Today I understand that my padre
is a poet in his own way,
he treasures defeat
like those who guard
words lost in their wallets.

Unknowingly, padre,
with each useless business,
you ordain my noble purpose in the world:
the trade or writing,
at each instant,
the art of loss.

All Poems Translated by Caroline Witcomb and Alexa Jeffress



About Henry Alexander Gómez

Henry is the director of the Literature Festival "Ojo en la tinta". He has received many distinctions, among them: the Externado University National Poetry Prize, the Silva House of Poetry Prize and the José Verón International Poetry Prize of Spain for the book *Tratado del alba* (2016). Other published books include: *Diabolus in musica* (2014), Ciro Mendía National Poetry Prize; *Georg Trakl en el ocaso* (2018); *La noche apenas respiraba* (2018). Honorable Mention in the Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz International Literature Contest and Finalist of the National Poetry Prize of the Ministry of Culture.



Dr Jahangir Alam Rustom
Bangladesh

LYING OVER THE SKY

One day when I was sleeping

On the lap of a cozy sky;

When the shimmering moon is gossiping

With me to make a tie.

The stars were dazzling

With their multicoloured ray,

The queen of the sky--a fairy, laid beside me

Just after the day.

Some fairies were supplying cool air

By a decorated handy fan;

Some were dancing

With the dresses of multicoloured tan.

They stood in front of me

With some magical foods and wine,

Some of them hoisted

With heavenly fruits and vine.

One was singing in croon tune

With an ultra-modern instrument,

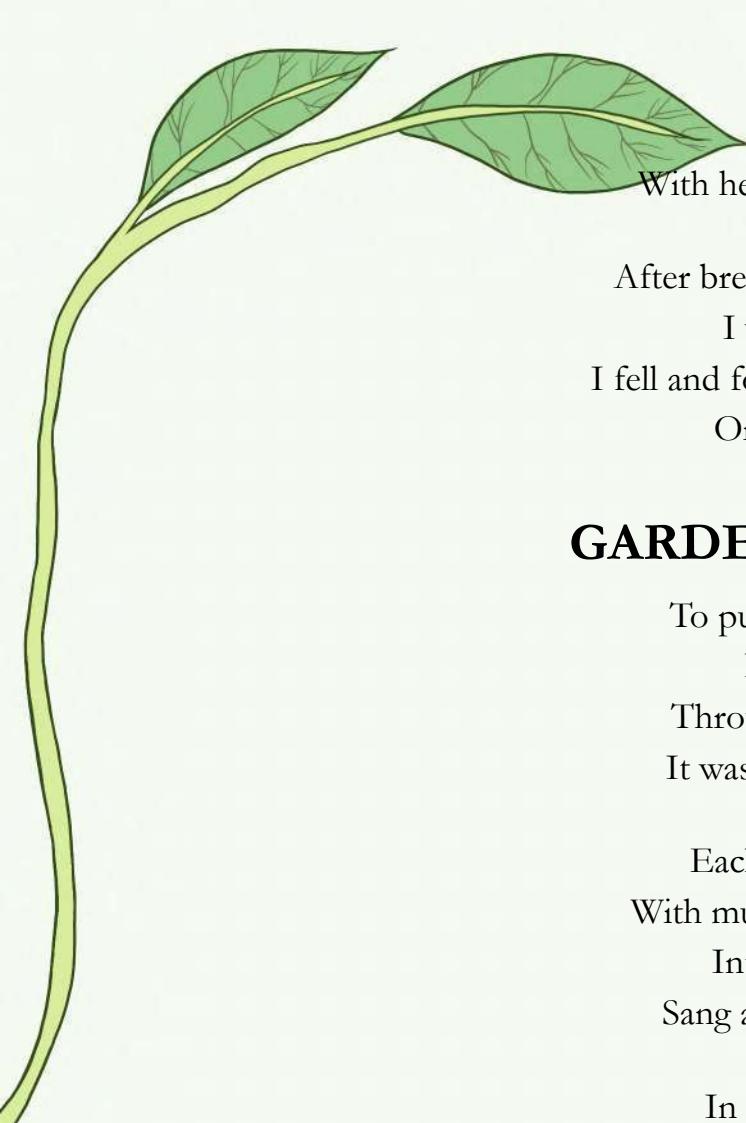
Making an amazing situation

By sprinkling perfume scent.

The amazing place was decorated

With multicoloured light and wildflower,

The queen of the fairies was hugging me



With her blinking eyes with fervor.

After breaking the ever-dreamy dream
I was alone and insane;
I fell and found myself on a broken chair
Only with a writing pen.

GARDEN IN THE MOON

To purchase some wildflowers
I went to the moon,
Through the shimmering light
It was full of melody and tune.

Each plant was embellished
With multicoloured blazing flowers,
Intoxicated bumble bees
Sang and danced in the bowers.

In a corner of the garden
I met with an amazing fairy,
As diamonds fell from her every laugh
Body like the aroma of airy.

I fell in love with her
When she exchanged speeches with me,
Seemed we talked for long
Though it was for wee.

Ever beautiful---- ever joyful
----The hanging garden,
The morning reddish sun shouted
Awake! All from sleep all of a sudden.

Without my conscious
I slept on the lap of the fairy,
In the ever-dreaming garden
Beyond my territory.

Still I remember the hanging garden
 Into the glittering moon,
 The ever-dreaming beautiful girl
 The beauty sleep and the croon!

AWARD OF LIFE

You are my award of life
 How can I forget you?
 Whenever I go anywhere
 I'll remember your memory and view.

Give me pain as much as you can
 Nevertheless, I'll love you,
 I'll scatter my light of love
 In the sunlight being a drop of dew.

You are my only spouse
 In the beautiful Eden,
 You are my amazing award
 When I am in heaven.

Still in my shattered life
 You are a unique gift, a golden tip!
 You live in my heart
 Sing and dance in my mind's lip.

I often found you as an award of life
 -----An unforgettable memory;
 As and when the image of you
 Changes into a vivid scenery.



About Dr Jahangir Alam Rustom

Dr Jahangir was awarded with a PhD degree on Climate Change in 2017. He served in national and international organisations with an exciting reputation holding some important and senior positions. For his unique contribution in literature recently he gained the 'Independence Day Award 2021' from Nigeria on the happy occasion of the 61st Independence Day of Nigeria. He has written eight books of English poetry that have earned impressive distinction at home and abroad. For writing exciting English poetry, he has gained accolades, crests, awards and receptions at home and abroad.



Zhivka Baltadzhieva
Bulgaria

GENERAL THEORY OF RELATIVITY

If all bodies attract each other,
how is it possible
the Universe is expanding?

And Einstein's dark force?
Destruction? Death?
Disintegration?

Are we expanding?
And embracing everything
finally?

The Theory of Relativity
and Hubble's telescope
some day

will gather their minimum of data,
proving that death

and all this horror of chemical reactions
only make us
omnipresent,

dark matter,
95 % of infinity.

But, God,

without the slightest recollection
that one day
in winter, or at the end of July,

someone
loved us
feverously.

Zhibka Baltadzhieva, "Fuga a lo Real Бегство в реальном" Amargord, Madrid, 2012, 3^a

edición, 2019

Translated from Spanish by Eva Daridova

About Zhivka Baltadzhieva

A bilingual poet, essayist, translator, editor and Doctor of Philology, Zhibka has published, among others, the following poetry books: “At the End of the Green Forest”, “Fever” and “Solar Plexus.” Her poems have been included in important anthologies of contemporary poetry, published in Europe, the United States, Latin America, Asia and Africa. She has received several awards such as *Poets of Other Worlds* Award from the International Poetic Fund; European Poetry Prize *Clemente Rebora* and The Best Poet International Award of Chinese Poetry International.



Abreu Paxe
Angola

POEMS OF SILENCE

The drums divide us in a well-defined vision
either because they are empty and make noises or because they are full
and are silent
naked bars streets, vestiges of nature...naked bar street of vestiges
the instruments of sexuality in the silences that evade us
the enhanced state of the senses savage fruit
these are the new starting points left behind the ideogram

In the silence of the wheels circle heads all the trunk and members
my movements the shadows of the musseques its walls
hurting all the materials are slow rains...between the rearguard and the
vanguard
the sonorities are slow dances are brief flesh
on each side the flames of each side nkonko the river
high tide, smells of libongo your whiteness of night sweaty mabanga

Certain tasks are my fears these drawers of silences
the streets with windows are doors without streets, these windows from
here are absent from home

tension between the point and the source where lie the rays from whence come some senses

the things in the space of a wet skirt water from the bank...in the silent space of a skirt

this hem in the water bank are the images I evoke in excess

thus also lit in the hem of this skirt the things from a space such as that of my gaze

The narrative of silence in the poem...is the semantics of this and not of that syntax...the street of the sun in a cigar...the narrative was the removal of leaves...

Translated by Maurício Vieira



About Abreu Paxé

Curator and art consultant, researcher and a senior Professor, Abreu received his Ph.D. in Communication and Semiotics. Abreu is a member of the Angolan Writers' Union (UEA,) where he is the Director of the Angolan Literary Study Centre. He is the author of the books: "*A Chave no Repouso da Porta*" (INALD, 2003) and "*O Vento Fede de Luiz*" (UEA, 2007). He is also an organiser and curator of Biennial International Poetry of Luanda (BIP) and Nkodya dya Mpangu – Meeting of Art and Thinking and Consultant of the Commission of Inter Ministerial for Dubai 2020 Expo.



ETERNAL CURSE

Tanja Ajtic
Serbia

We like to emphasise splendour, significance, reputation and fame
rather than modesty, contrition and true love.

We want to give one thing a relief that catches the eye,
to be particularly emphasised.

And if we have relief maps, we don't know how to measure.

We wander and saunter at night.

At night without dreams.

We postpone forgiveness and omissions.

We are postponing our payment deadline,
we also want to have a discount while we are paying,
and we would like to do everything to make it cheaper.

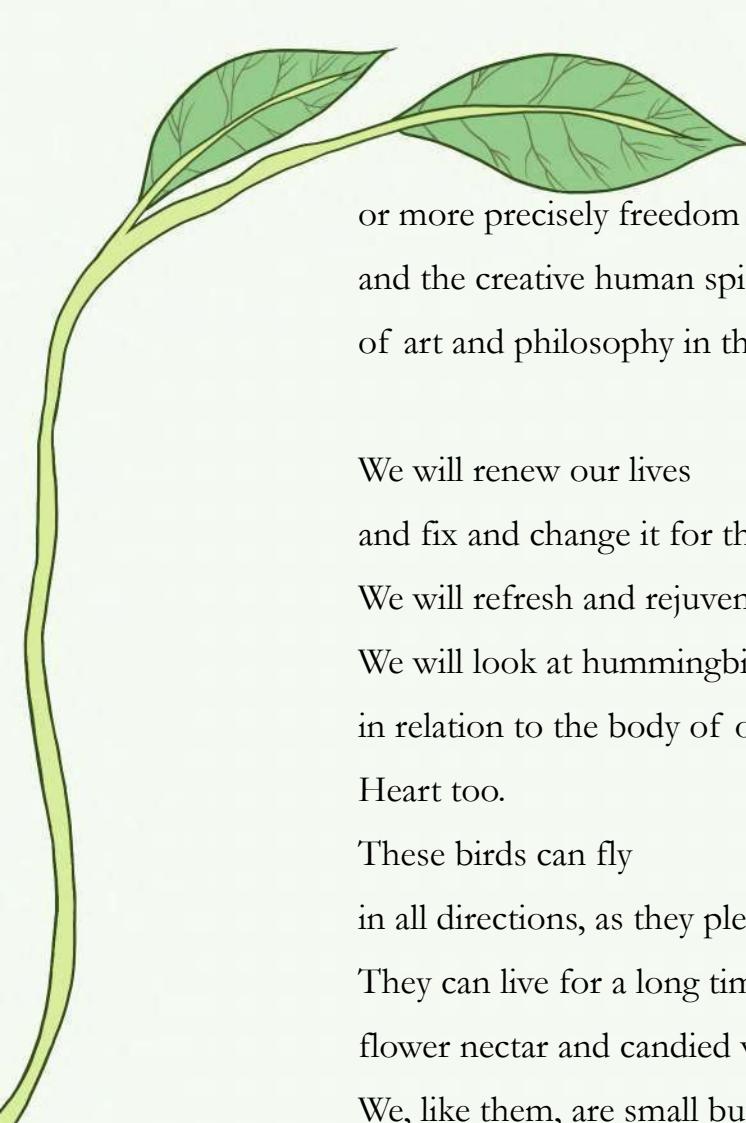
And paradise is not bought but deserved.

If we return everything we took
and wish forgiveness of sins, mercy and forgiveness,
to be forgiven we will feel the same.

After the main flowering, the flowers will bloom once again.

And we will survive.

Like being born again
the revival of classical antiquity



or more precisely freedom
and the creative human spirit under the influence of classical literature,
of art and philosophy in the Renaissance.

We will renew our lives
and fix and change it for the better.
We will refresh and rejuvenate.
We will look at hummingbirds that have bigger brain
in relation to the body of other birds.
Heart too.
These birds can fly
in all directions, as they please!
They can live for a long time by feeding on
flower nectar and candied water.
We, like them, are small but a lot is expected of us.

Rejection and refusal,
as a musical repetition of the same tone, the
opposite is an echo.
Everything will resonate.

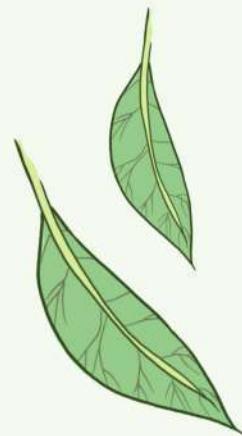
Rejection and refusal happen to us
like breaks in a circus that clowns fill with their jokes.
We avoid the eternal curse
because there is always hope for a corrective exam
and a place under the sun for us.
We can be dignified,
be those who produce again,

which recreate.

We can multiply and experience
content to revive consciousness,
get a good voice again
for the person and respect, reputation and name.

It is never too late for natural things
to make us feel better.

It's all in us
in our big hearts in the body of a small hummingbird.
We have everything you need!
Naturally!



About Tanja Ajtic

Tanja's poems and stories have been published in 157 collections (books), anthologies, electronic books and magazines. Her poems have been published in seven languages and she also published a book of poetry in 2018 titled "*Outlines of Love*." She won first place in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the second prize in Great Britain from the Serbian Library in London. She is represented in the anthology among the 30 best writers for 2020 by the Association of Writers of Australia. She is currently writing poetry, short stories, haiku, and gogyoshi poetry.



ELASTICITY OF HEARTS

Janette Ayachi
United Kingdom / Algeria

I centre your face in the dark kerosene of my mind
the same way the sea balances the moon

after midnight, it trails reflection, spills voice
the acres of space is indeterminable

I wonder if there is enough room to keep you in.
Most of the time my burning sunrises

in the corner, come morning you disappear, drown
fathoms into a speck, dim into a faint distraction

only to re-emerge across subtleties of tarmac
your stark chicaneries wrapped in cellophane

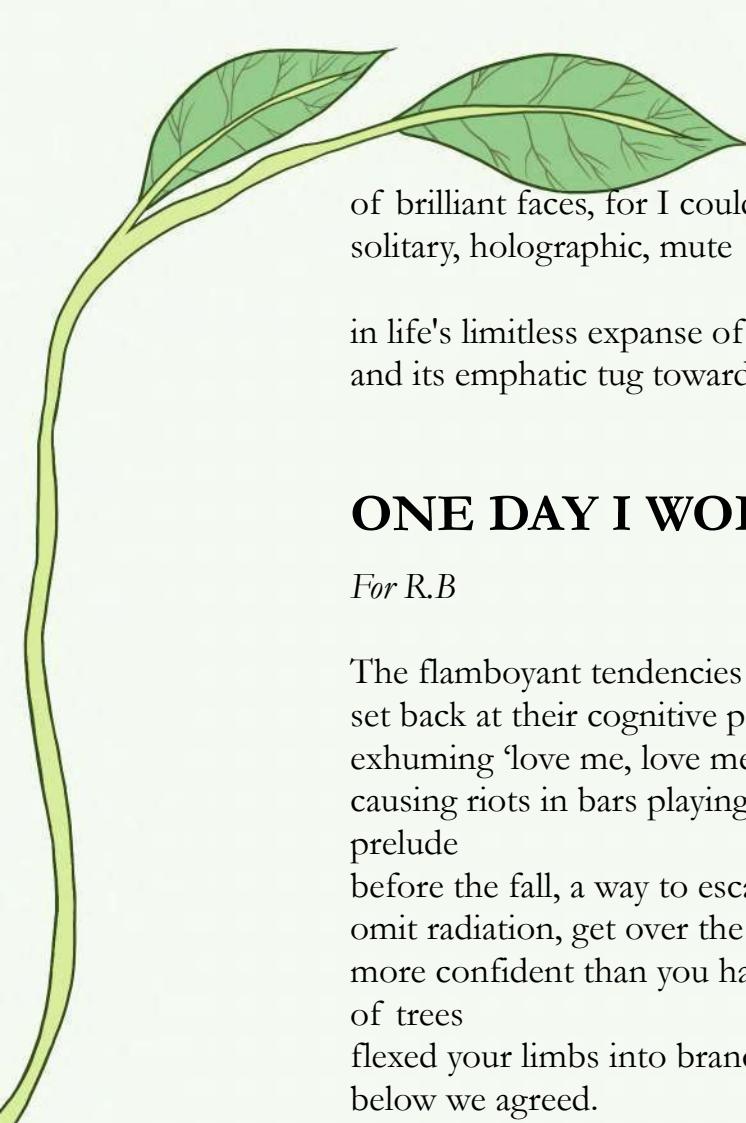
where transparency signals kismet and curve.
On the days that you stay out with the sun

I find it difficult to concentrate on anything
the scales edge unsteady, prove untrustworthy,

duplicity exits stage left begging
for equilibrium applause, my focus falls

static, manipulating, colour-blind.
After days like this I horde the clouds

where both of you are absent, vulgar, stranded.
I search the solar streets for stacked clusters



of brilliant faces, for I could never be a lone star long,
solitary, holographic, mute

in life's limitless expanse of elastic hearts
and its emphatic tug towards the eternal.

ONE DAY I WOKE UP ANGRY

For R.B

The flamboyant tendencies of my sense of perfection
set back at their cognitive pace, wild, wild Lily of the Valley
exhuming 'love me, love me', made irregular with poisonous heartbeats,
causing riots in bars playing with fire not connecting it - this is the
prelude

before the fall, a way to escape the process must be mapped out:
omit radiation, get over the fury - today you, my best friend,
more confident than you have ever been bordering on arrogance spoke
of trees

flexed your limbs into branches to hold up the heavens, as above so
below we agreed.

But there is always limit to how far you can stretch beyond thousands of
years

storing carbon, outliving humans and animals (except the tortoise old
from birth)

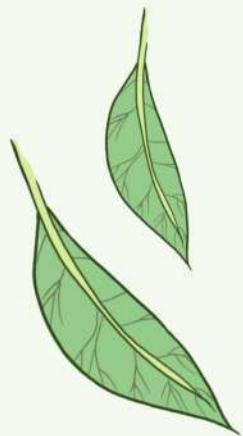
You tell your age by your rings like cosmic dust, debris from the moon
your spiral of foetal sacs and vascular tissue in perfect symmetry.

You strip back to a face for fairy tales, in myth you are a character
of crooked oracle tricking the pilgrims with your hallucinogenic fruits.

You change your deciduous costume to seasonal gestures
but you are bored and stuck in cyclical surrender.

Maybe we should be more like you trees
though I am already a centaur and arrogance is contagious
my shamanic animal-self wedges its hooves to anchor territory
and my well-trained torso flings back its bow to align with the stars,
just as you are planted from leaf or hand I am seeded from semen and
ovary.

But maybe trees, we should be more like you; stand still, let our shadows waver,
 slide a strobe light through the spines of our hairless winter bodies,
 find a community, dress like our forests of friends, moderate our climates,
 wear our bark like armour, let hunters borrow weaponry from our bones.
 We should fight the creaking horizontal by harbouring the spirits;
 channel alchemy, extend our crowns, clench at the impact of tidal stresses,
 charm ourselves into the equatorial chain of life's' trinkets,
 tend to our saplings with the purest amalgamation of love and ego
 evolve to plagiarise the sunlight and revel in the photosynthetic dream.



About Janette Ayachi

Janettes' work is published (internationally and translated) in many anthologies including from Polygon, Seren, Pagan press Texas, Vakxikon Publications Athens and Jessica Kingsley London. She collaborates with artists, engages in numerous projects and performances, and has been broadcast on BBC radio & television. She is the author of two pamphlets: *Pauses at Zebra Crossings* and *A Choir of Ghosts*. Her first full poetry collection *Hand Over Mouth Music* (Pavilion: University of Liverpool Press) won the *Saltire Poetry Book of the Year Literary Award 2019*.



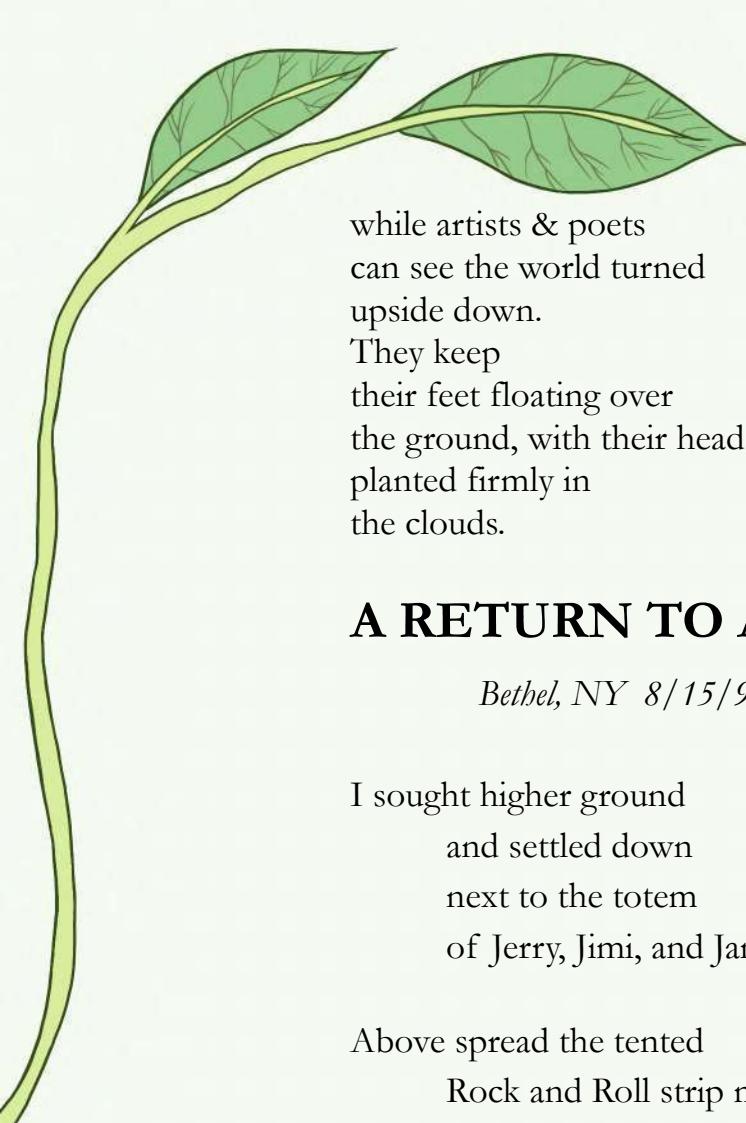
Peter V. Dugan
United States

PERPECTIVE

I walk
across the ceiling
of the DIA Center
for the Arts
surrounded
by Welsh Oaks,
Rodney Graham's
photos of leafless trees
growing up from
the sky.

The tangles
of limbs & branches
anchored in the clouds
converge to support
the trunks
&
the spread
of tentacle roots obscured
by the weight of the world,
suspended above
the sky.

Trees keep
the earth from falling,



while artists & poets
can see the world turned
upside down.
They keep
their feet floating over
the ground, with their heads
planted firmly in
the clouds.

A RETURN TO A DAY IN THE GARDEN

Bethel, NY 8/15/98

I sought higher ground
and settled down
next to the totem
of Jerry, Jimi, and Janis.

Above spread the tented
Rock and Roll strip mall,
everything from art, tee-shirts
and crystals, to computerised
stereo sound systems and cell phones.

*Buy a piece of flower power,
but don't sell your soul.*

The Woodstock Nation
had come of age,
an attempt to balance
its ideology with science
and technology,
and blend it with the reality
of commercialism.

Below the music played on
as the crowd danced and swayed.

Melanie, Donavon, Richie,
 Lou, Joni, and Pete,
 sang of peace and love,
 human rights and wrongs,
 life in the gritty city,
 spirituality and ecology.

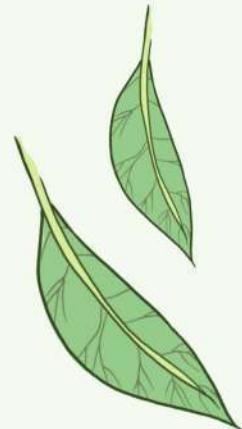
Once again,
 Sisyphus struggles to push
 a boulder up hill,
 knowing it will roll
 back down to the valley below.

He smiles with hope
 that from the seeds
 of art and music,
 something
 good will grow.

LANDSCAPING

root out
 weeds
 of hate
 &
 sow
 seeds
 of love

caretakers
 tend
 the garden



About Peter V. Dugan

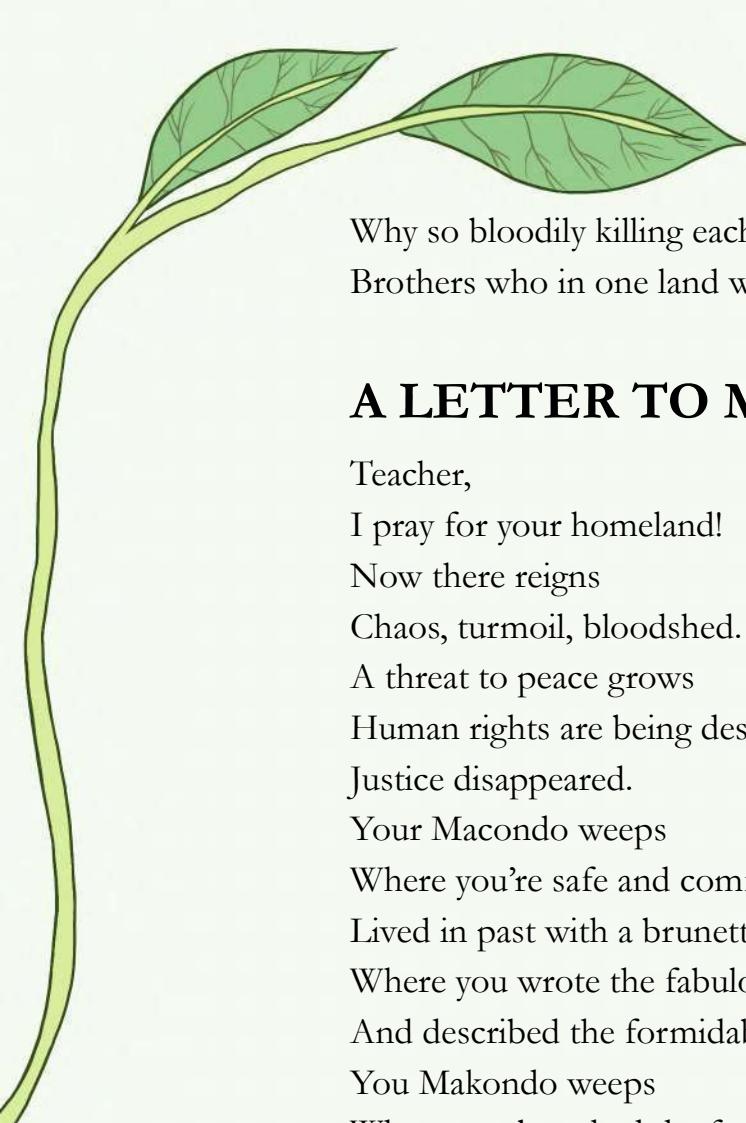
Former Nassau County Poet Laureate (2017-19), Peter has published six collections of poetry and over the years, his poetry has been published in numerous anthologies and magazines both online and in print. He has co-edited “*Writing Outside the Lines*” (Poetry anthology, Wyld Syde Press 2012), *LI Sounds 2015* & *LI Sounds 2019* (poetry anthologies) and *Leaves of me . . .* (Early Lilacs Press, 2019). In 1993, he received an Honorable Mention from the American Academy of Poetry and in 2014, he was awarded the LI Bards Poet Mentor Award by the Bards Initiative. In 2017, two of his poems were nominated for the Pushcart Poetry Prize.



SKY'S TEARS

**Sherzod Artikov
Uzbekistan**

Ruined and broken
Land of Palestine
Day and night
Under the bombs.
Blood flows like a river
Poisoned life of people
Dying children, old men
Dying fathers, mothers and sons.
Families are being destroyed
Houses, walls are being crumpled
Nature is being terrified.
But, the world is silent
The Mankind is silent
The God is silent.
Maybe cries only the sky
Because of the cruelty of humanity
Carrying a complaint against them
Or being angry at their silence.
Maybe cries only the sky
Who caught in deep shock
Whispering in the company of Earth
Turning whose tears into the rain.
Maybe cries only the sky
For being not able to understand
In spite of the endless thoughts:



Why so bloodily killing each other
Brothers who in one land were born.

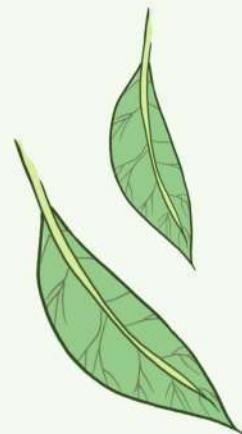
A LETTER TO MARQUEZ

Teacher,
I pray for your homeland!
Now there reigns
Chaos, turmoil, bloodshed.
A threat to peace grows
Human rights are being destroyed
Justice disappeared.
Your Macondo weeps
Where you're safe and comfortable
Lived in past with a brunette Mercedes.
Where you wrote the fabulous Buendia family
And described the formidable Patriarch.
You Makondo weeps
Where you breathed the fresh air
Opening the window in the early morning
Waiting for the sun on the windowsill
With a cup of coffee in your hand.
You Macondo weeps Master
Where you sang a serenade
Cheerfully with a smile on your lips.
Danced the tango, played tirelessly
With a glass of bitter tequila
Wearing a big-branded hat.

CORTAZAR'S TOMB

The great one's ashes rest here
In the cemetery of vain Paris.
Among strangers a lonely tomb
As if staring into the horizon sadly.

From here impossible it is
 To see kindly land of Argentine
 The homeland where he was born
 The homeland where was spent
 His childhood and adolescence.
 No, you cannot see it,
 Cannot see it at all, painful tomb
 It's as obvious as
 Two and two is equal to four.
 But, a stubborn grave
 Does not want to admit it
 And it's capricious claiming
 To the gray clouds
 To half-naked trees
 That beyond the horizon shines
 The radiant smile of the motherland.



About Sherzod Artikov

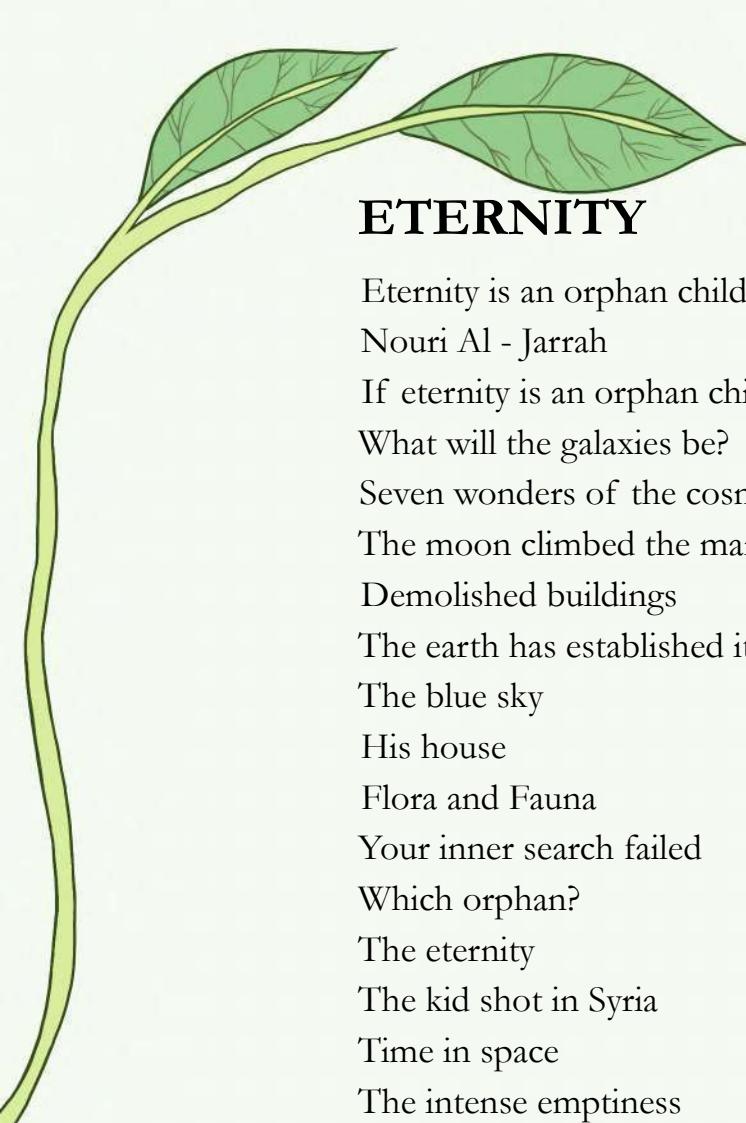
Sherzod was one of the winners of the national literary contest ‘*My Pearl Region*’ in the direction of prose in 2019. In 2020, his first authorship book “*The Autumn's Symphony*” was published in Uzbekistan by the publishing house “Yangi Asr Avlod” and was even published in Spanish. In 2021, his works were published in several anthology books including “World Writers” in Bangladesh, “Mediterranean Waves” in Egypt and “Emerging Horizons” in India.



HE WHO DOES NOT KNOW GOD

Welmer Salas González
Costa Rica

It is a snake towards infinity
Wild donkey
It rains
nowhere to camp
Fungi are born on their hooves
Is inhabitant
From where?
Hear the river
that the poet carries inside
I crush lines
drunk sometimes
My delirium discovers the door
the beginning
I am abyss syllabbling the cosmos
Pregnancy a Word
birth transcends time
I write to the prisoner
lost in the dungeon
Always back
without going anywhere
Did his wisdom speak into my being?
words of Bernny Morita Chiky
of Norberto Jonathan Kennly
They raised us from the grave
The hope on his lips
pick our freedom



ETERNITY

Eternity is an orphan child
Nouri Al - Jarrah
If eternity is an orphan child
What will the galaxies be?
Seven wonders of the cosmos
The moon climbed the man
Demolished buildings
The earth has established its foot
The blue sky
His house
Flora and Fauna
Your inner search failed
Which orphan?
The eternity
The kid shot in Syria
Time in space
The intense emptiness
The nature-canvas
Eternity?
Who is the orphan?
the child or the human?

WHITE BUTTERFLY

I suffered metamorphosis
I flew
One
butterfly
White
From here...
Crossed the sky, land and sea
continents
Came up to me
Again
Brought:

A musical pick built
with words in pure gold
Every language people and nation
I saw a word
shedding its letters
like a ray of light
towards the bolt of my jail! I read it...
He opened the door
And told me:
you are free



About Welmer Salas González

In 2018, The Costa Rican Festival of Poetry published Welmer's book *The Hands of Time*. He has participated in several literary events and collaborated remotely with the workshop "La Ausencia del Durazno" (The Peach Absence) Factory Sadness Foundation in México. He has published two poems from his book, that is currently in process, "*En Alas del viento*" (On Wings Wind, unpublished poems). He also participates in the Casa de Poesía Workshop, Harvest At This Side of The Sun.



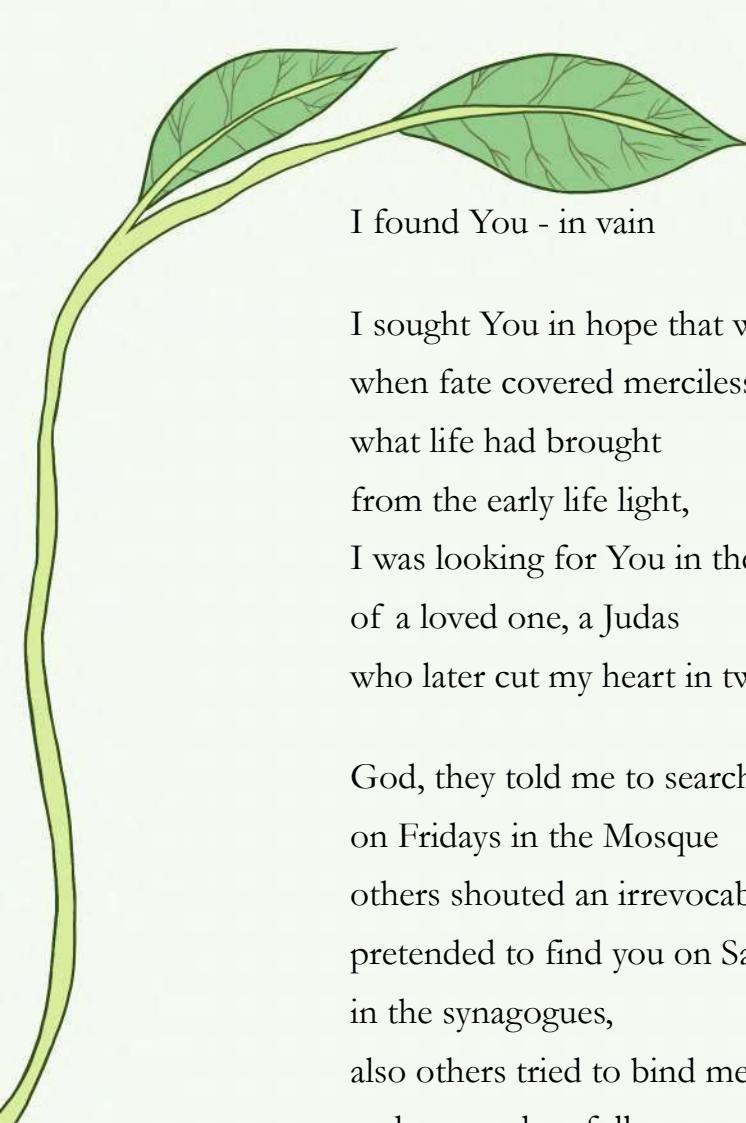
Amy De La Haye
Netherlands

GOD

Where are you God?
a horrible disease has broken out here
and already for a long time I see
how criminal demons
without fear or mercy
urge innocent youngsters
in dark forces
to cause serious damage

God
are your angels sleeping,
are your messengers yet awake,
your people down here
are torn apart by bombs
in large numbers

Where are you God?
I was looking for you in holy books,
between the lines
in stories of oral traditions
in countless opinions
from your own creatures
In the goodness of my fellow man



I found You - in vain

I sought You in hope that was left
when fate covered mercilessly
what life had brought
from the early life light,
I was looking for You in the promise
of a loved one, a Judas
who later cut my heart in two

God, they told me to search for You,
on Fridays in the Mosque
others shouted an irrevocable No!
pretended to find you on Saturday
in the synagogues,
also others tried to bind me
and swore cheerfully
that you were everywhere in the church on Sundays

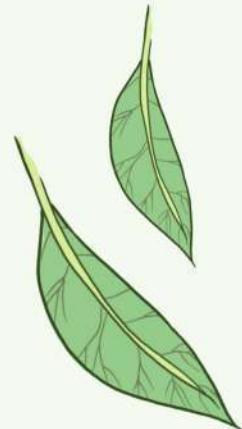
Jehovah's at my doors
presented you in many scents and colours
God, the dogmas flew abundantly around
no mortal human wanted to hear
my intelligent sharpness. Drifting
and rabid- the revolt
focused on the secret
the knowledge came to me slowly

The illusion of distraction -inspiring
me for years in a row-
now knowing. You are all directions
in every end, every beginning, every moment

in every fraction, in between and halfway
 You are where I allow You to be

Then I saw You in the faithful eyes
 of an animal. In the reflection
 of sunlight on water. In the trees
 seeing my stumbling
 when I wanted to get out of the autumn,
 dazzled by all the splendour of colours
 that this season has tried
 to show me, while I just wanted to die
 in a stylish fashion. It turned out not much later
 that I found you also in the pain
 tearing all my intentions apart

I saw you in the stuffed veins
 of elderly hands
 transparent softness
 that even now, at the shortening of the days,
 still hold history
 I found you in minuscule rewards
 in friendships- gold rim
 For long my thinking -redundant-
 is now liberated of illusions and
 distractions. I go peacefully and struggle
 for love in all small things.



Translated by Hannie Rouweler

About Amy De La Haye

Since 1990, social involvement, cultural diversity, emancipation and ICT have been Amy's field of work. As a cultural entrepreneur, she is busy with poetry, reciting, (script) writing and filming. She also develops multicultural projects for governments where connection and understanding between people and groups are central. Her mission is innovation in culture, technology and entrepreneurship together intertwined. 'On the cutting table of life' is her debut collection (2016). Together with the poet Gerhard te Winkel, she published 'Zomerzotjes' (Summer Follies) in 2018. Her poems have been published in several anthologies.



FINDING THE LIGHT WITHIN

Mary Anne Zammit
Malta

When the sun threads the skies
And the moon dances with the ocean.
You must always wish for harmony.
For peace.
Even though your heart cries.
You search for peace but only when you learn to overcome difficulties.

Then the sun shines on your face.
The birds sing their songs.
And the whole world becomes a story in your heart.
The universe opens like petals in the wind.
It is not hard to find peace.
It is within you.

BRIDGE OF PEACE

There is a bridge that either separates or joins.
Flowing through rivers, which created wars.

Behind the bridge, there are women dreaming of horizons,

Smelling roses.

And I see hope in their eyes.

I see their dreams of their loved ones, their sons.

Each petal tells a story.

Candles they put forth.

There is a bridge which cuts souls and masters war.

If only this bridge can collapse.

Then we can tell the woman they can live their dreams.

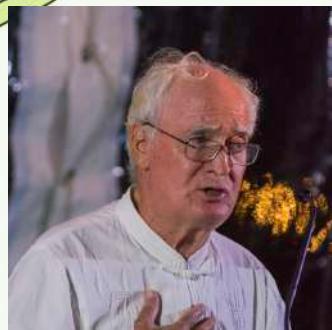


About Mary Anne Zammit

Mary is an author of four novels in Maltese and two in English and her poetry has been featured in International magazines and Anthologies. She is a regular contributor in the International Poet Magazine. Mary Anne has received multi awards and her art has been exhibited in various collective exhibitions both locally and abroad as well as online galleries.



EXTRACTS FROM IDEAS OF TRAVEL



Peter Boyle
Australia

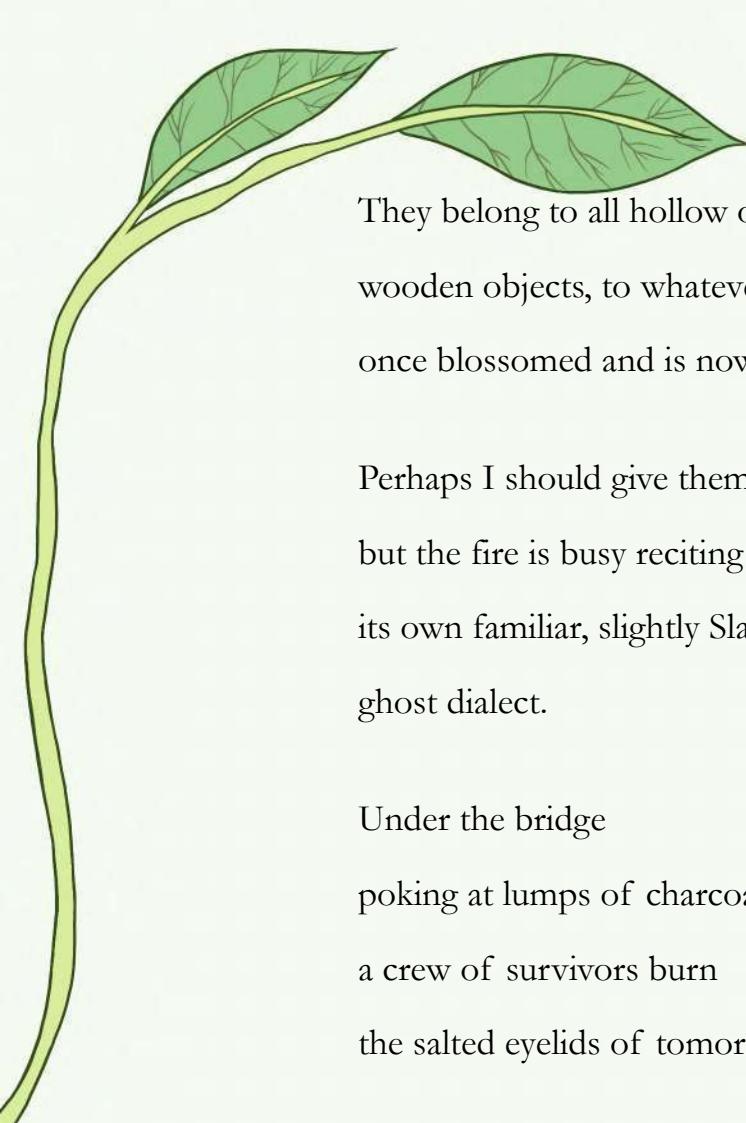
100

At this hour shirts make their way
off clotheslines and huddle in windows.
Between the rows of freshly planted shrubs
the dead have given up
on resurrection. From now on
they will speak only from inside us --

whispering scrambled incantations
from their manuals
of grief and love, trying to mend
the broken universal translation machine
that ferries us across time.

117

I don't know what to do with these silences.
I carry them from room to room,
from life to life.



They belong to all hollow objects, to all
wooden objects, to whatever
once blossomed and is now cut off.

Perhaps I should give them to the fire
but the fire is busy reciting
its own familiar, slightly Slavic,
ghost dialect.

Under the bridge
poking at lumps of charcoal
a crew of survivors burn
the salted eyelids of tomorrow.

128

One night the towns I almost lived in
came to visit --
one was a citadel perched high over
a wide barren plain, a sealed world
of palaces and parks, boulevards
and brasseries and barber shops;
the other a network of lanes
and leaning ramshackle houses,
jasmine and frangipani along walls,
the scents of soft decay

close by the sea.

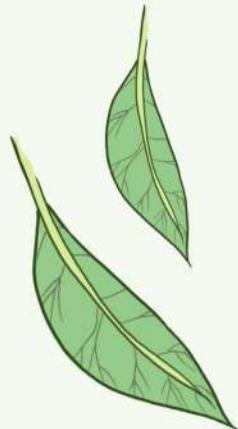
Startled awake

I was rowing a heavy waterlogged boat
between the two cities, trailing
a large net to bring everything home.

Potholes have magnified in the streets
of the towns I never lived in,
potholes so deep they offer ways through
into different skies.

Flipped under the world
clouds, stars and unfamiliar planets
rush past. When I moor my boat
I gaze down into their passage
like an almost legible script
racing by in fast forward,
like a swarming of fish
chasing their own tails.

If I placed my hand in the water
my breath would stop.



About Peter Boyle

Peter is the author of nine books of poetry and a translator of eight books of poetry from Spanish. His most recent collection is *Notes Towards the Dreambook of Endings* (Vagabond Press, 2021).



DESCRIPTION

**Aliyev Agshin Boyukaga oglu
Azerbaijan**

I've never seen you as beautiful,

O beauty lay in my heart.

O squinting eyes, wrinkled lips,

My heart pounded.

Sanmaki, my heart is open to everyone,

Only you took my heart.

I was asleep, I was fast asleep,

You came to make my heart flutter.

Views often confuse people,

Your views are not lies.

Look is not given to look,

My feelings are chewing on me.

FORGIVE ME

The first time I saw you there,

If I laughed, forgive me.

My smile touches your heart,

Forgive me if I don't know.

You looked at my face like dumb,

Your eyes were on my eyes.

I will not change you with a smile,

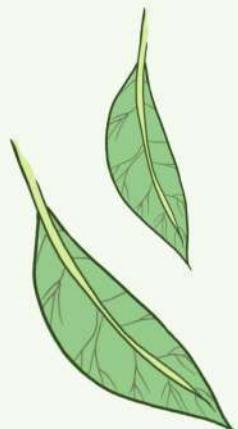
If I have changed, forgive me.

I did not dare to say a word to you,

It was written in my heart, separation, grief.

It fell on my destiny, a lifetime abroad,

Forgive me if I'm gone



About Aliyev Agshin Boyukaga oglu

About 100 scientific articles and poems of Aliyev have been translated into several languages including Uzbek, Turkish, and Spanish, published in newspapers and magazines on various websites. His work includes: "Seven Springs in My Heart - Haftoni" (2018), "Encyclopedia of Monuments of the Southern Region - I Edition" (2018), II Edition (2020), "Bahramname" (Russian and English - 2020). He won several awards including the International Medlin Poetry Festival of Colombia in 2020, the V All-Russian Literature Festival in 2020 and the "Golden Spring" poetry festival in Russia in 2021.



Sama Essa
Oman

EXTRACTS FROM A LOVE SONG FOR LAILA FAKHRU

A mourning boat carries lovers

A silent man consorts with seagulls

Wandering small clouds light ancient planets

Just as the glory of God

Brightens the distant dark.

But ...

Who are these travellers to the countless stars?

The moon has left her old lovers

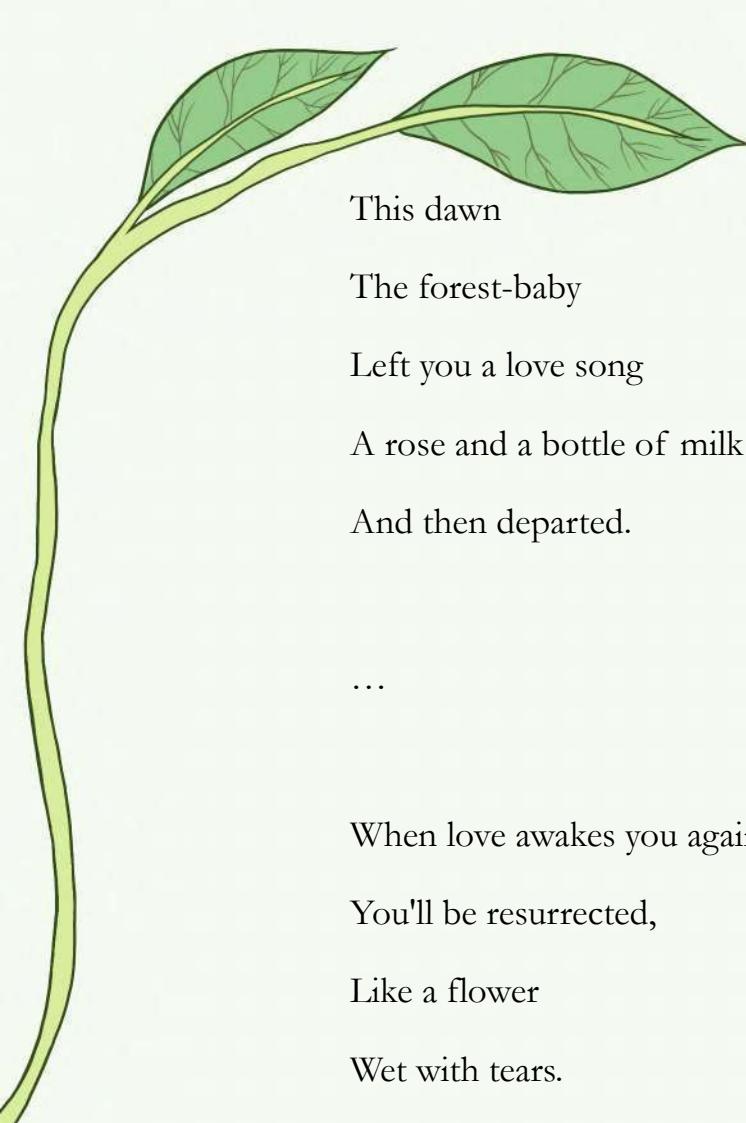
But your beauty still glitters

Like a flower blooming

In an eternal autumn.

...

Open the door



This dawn

The forest-baby

Left you a love song

A rose and a bottle of milk

And then departed.

...

When love awakes you again

You'll be resurrected,

Like a flower

Wet with tears.

Only the autumn's migrating bird

And the distant southern wind

Know the way to you.

In your heart's oyster

Dwells the souls of your dead dears.

...

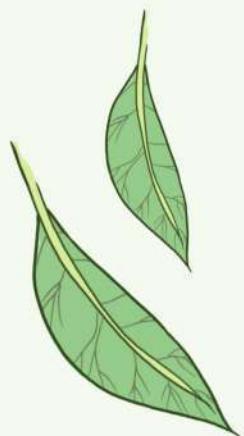
Shepherds with camels

Autumn's rain
 The distant cry of a woman in a cave
 Bones of martyrs
 Their eyes open as if adored by lightning
 As if shrouded in ashes
 Their guns thrown on stones
 Tainted by blood
 Their bodies, calm tranquil
 Small memories on grass

These, Laila, are the last love letters for you.

Beirut 2012

Translated by Khalid Al Balushi



About Sama Essa

Essa Al Tai, famously known for his pen name Sama Essa, is a pioneering contemporary poet. Along with Saif Al Rahbi (1956-) and Zahir Al Ghafri (1956-), Al Tai has been particularly influential in both introducing and solidifying verse-free prose poetry in Oman. His diction is characterised by a preponderance of the motifs of death, absence and exile. As these words suggest, there's a prevalent atmosphere of alienation in his poetry from the predominant discourses.



Neşe Yaşın
Cyprus

POISON APPLE

Once I didn't then I did exist
loneliness was my cradle
forgotten in the wind

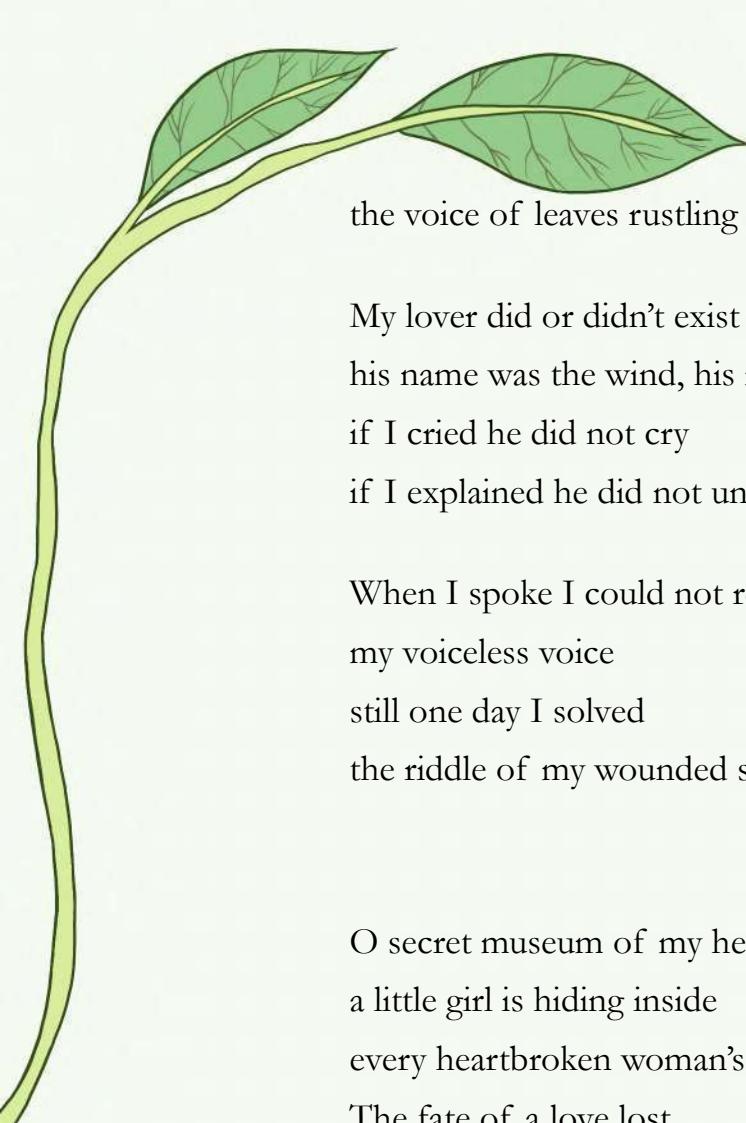
Pearls ornamented my coverlet
evil-eye beads
frozen in stone gazed at me

When my mother loosened me from her hand
the birds lent me wings
the trees a nest

It was night
leaf on leaf the forest wept
wolves gave me their breasts

I had a step-god
He would not hear what I said

When I bit into the poison apple
my mother and my love deserted me
I was a branch crying in the frost
water drinking solitude



the voice of leaves rustling

My lover did or didn't exist
his name was the wind, his memory a fish
if I cried he did not cry
if I explained he did not understand

When I spoke I could not recognise
my voiceless voice
still one day I solved
the riddle of my wounded soul

O secret museum of my heart, open
a little girl is hiding inside
every heartbroken woman's voice
The fate of a love lost
is registered on Its bleeding country

Time is a storm that comes to rest
on broken branches
speaking deliriously of ruin

Translated by Clifford Endres

THE LIGHT RISING INSIDE ME

Who knows perhaps
while you shot from the barricades
that killed our house
I used to mellow into childish sadness
deaths passing through my deep sighs

I knew back then
one day you would steal my soul

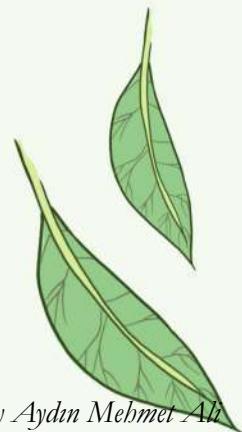
While I ran off to the spaces between stairs
crying over family murders
it whispered dreams of the future
the light rising inside me

Three angels appeared
one brought a red poppy
the second a gentle kiss from you
the third was empty handed
embarrassed looked me in the face

And then the ghosts of martyrs
chased me in their blood-soaked clothes
my history teacher
read out lies at the gates of Heaven

I waited for such a long, long time for you
in desolate Babylon towers

Take off your soldier's clothes
and come close to me
give me three babies from the souls of the dead
One to make me forget all pain
the other to console the earth
the third to wander the city in the night
and hold crying mothers by the hand



Translated by Aydin Mehmet Ali

About Neşe Yaşın

Neşe is currently teaching language and literature at the Turkish Studies Department of University of Cyprus, writing weekly columns for Yenidüzen newspaper (Cyprus). She has published nine volumes of poetry, a novel and a research book. Her poetry has been translated to more than 30 languages, published in literary magazines and anthologies in several countries. Her selected poems have been published in English and in Greek. She has participated in poetry festivals and readings around the world. Among others, she has received the Anthias Pierides Award in 1998 and the European Citizens Prize in 2021.



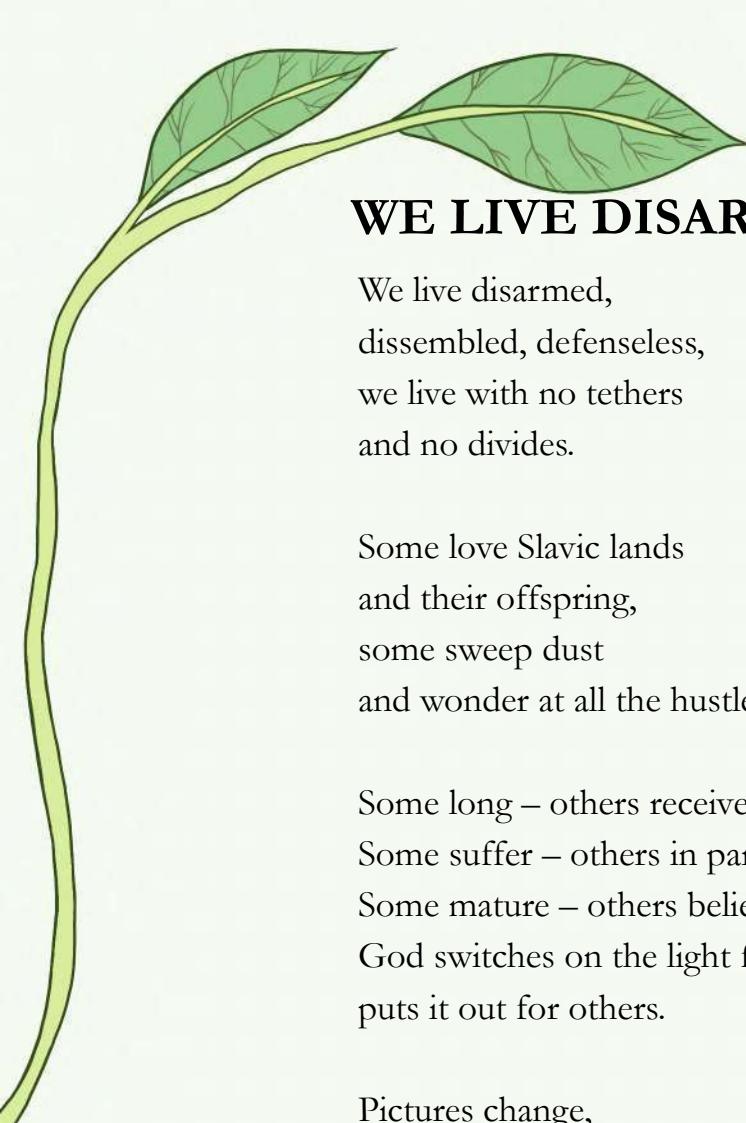
REST MY MIND IN LOVE

**Dr. Bronislava Volková
Czech Republic**

Rest my mind in love
the dark blue sea
the dark blue moon
the blue
the blue

Rest my mind in love
the distant nest of larks
so lightly dressed
so light
so light

Rest my mind in love
the flow of sound
which feeds the symphony
sublime
sublime.



WE LIVE DISARMED

We live disarmed,
dissembled, defenseless,
we live with no tethers
and no divides.

Some love Slavic lands
and their offspring,
some sweep dust
and wonder at all the hustle in the hush.

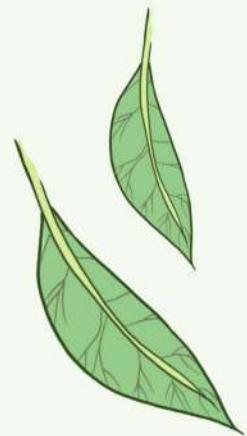
Some long – others receive,
Some suffer – others in paradise live.
Some mature – others believe.
God switches on the light for some and
puts it out for others.

Pictures change,
turn.
Worn out shoes
roam
into the unknown.

WHEN WE FINALLY BECOME

When we finally become
the love that we truly are -
then
we are infinity:
ever creating - ever created
ever transcendent

ever reaching for otherness
in sameness
we are
a boundless universe.
Like water
like a gentle flowing dance
we are a drop of heaven
for those of us willing to drink.



About Dr. Bronislava Volková

A bilingual poet, semiotician, translator, collagist, essayist and Professor Emerita of Indiana University, Bloomington, USA, Bronislava is also a member of the Czech and American PEN Club and World Poetry Movement. She is an author of around 30 books of poetry, semiotic studies as well as essays and translations. Her work has been translated into a dozen languages.



AFRO-INSULARITY

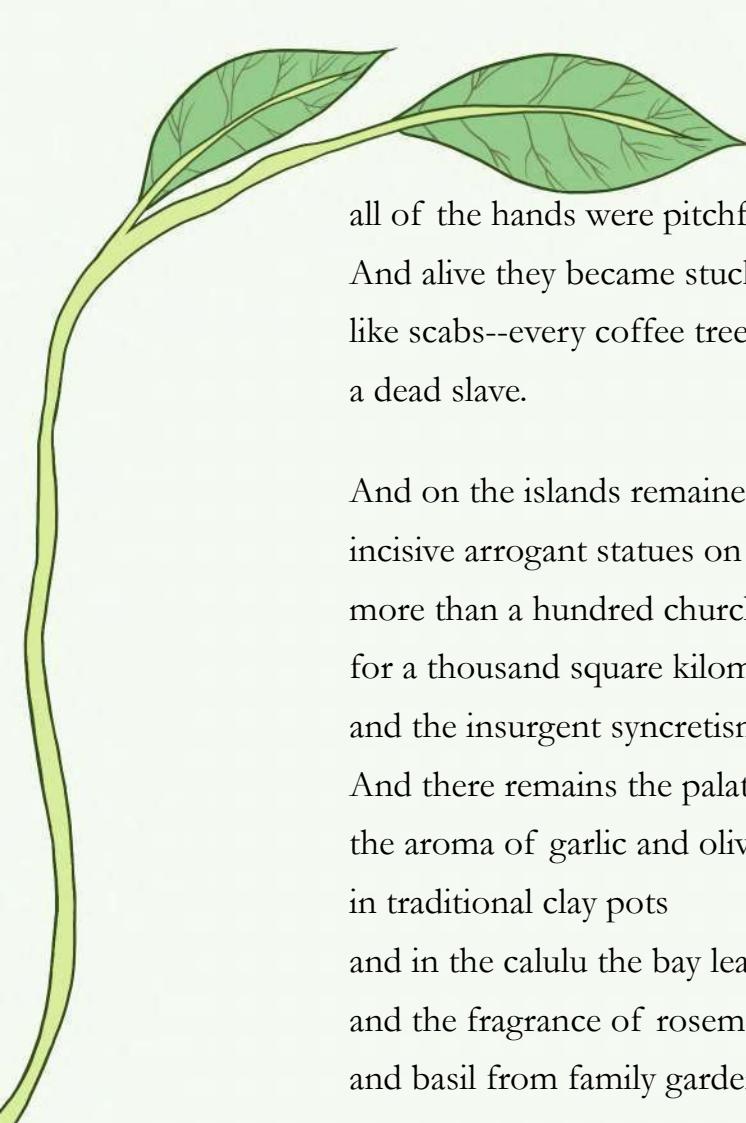
Conceição Lima
São Tomé / Príncipe

On the islands they left a legacy
of hybrid words and sorrowful plantations

rusted sugar mills breathless prows
resonant aristocratic names
and the legend of a shipwreck on Sete Pedras

Arriving from the North they cast anchor here
by mandate or by chance in the service of their king:
navigators and pirates
slave traders thieves contrabandists
common folk
also rebel outcasts
and Jewish children
so tender that they faded
like sun-dried ears of corn

The ships brought
compasses trinkets seeds
experimental plants heinous acidities
a stone monument as pallid as wheat
and other cargo without dreams nor roots
because all of the island was a port and a road
with no return



all of the hands were pitchforks and hoes
And alive they became stuck on the rocks
like scabs--every coffee tree now breathes
a dead slave.

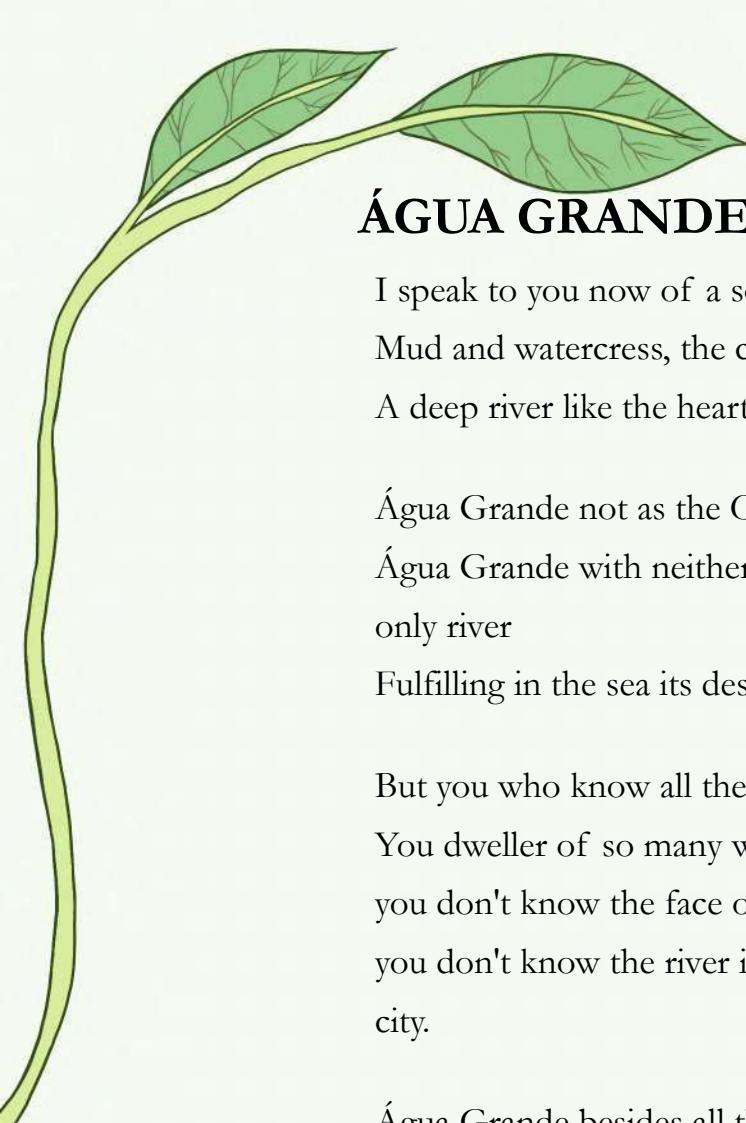
And on the islands remained
incisive arrogant statues on street corners
more than a hundred churches and chapels
for a thousand square kilometers
and the insurgent syncretism of natal royal residences.

And there remains the palatial cadence of the Ussua Creole dance
the aroma of garlic and olive oil
in traditional clay pots
and in the calulu the bay leaf mixed with palm oil
and the fragrance of rosemary
and basil from family gardens

And to the ticking of insular clocks were cast
specters—implements of the empire
in a structure of ambiguous clarities
and secular condiments
patron saints and demolished fortresses
inexpensive wines and shared auroras

At times I think of their livid skeletons
their fetid hair on the seashore
Here, on this fragment of Africa
where, facing South,
a word dawns on high
like a banner of distress.

Translated by Russell G. Hamilton



ÁGUA GRANDE

I speak to you now of a source of river in me
Mud and watercress, the current of calm waves
A deep river like the heart of the island.

Água Grande not as the Congo, not as the Nile
Água Grande with neither canoes nor regattas,
only river
Fulfilling in the sea its destiny of water.

But you who know all the cities
You dweller of so many wandering rivers
you don't know the face of my city
you don't know the river in the body of my
city.

Água Grande besides all the journeys
River only, brother of all the rivers.

Translated by Gabriel Gbámgbósé

WE FOUND THE SONG

To the memory of Ivete Monteiro

The petals fall.
One by one
They fall from the kapok
Over the afternoon's skin.
We arrive from all over, lonely
Eviscerating
The cords of time

With our nails.

While the cold withers
We found the song.

Translated by David Shook



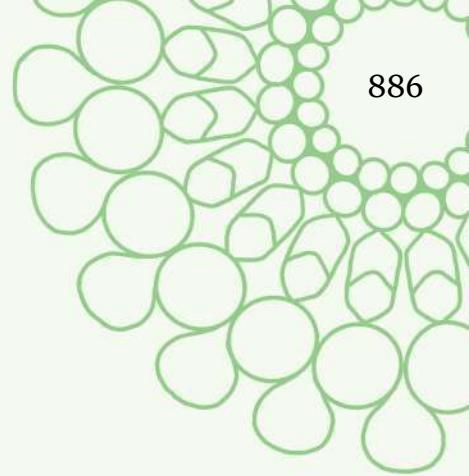
About Conceição Lima

Journalist, poet and chronicler, Conceição was among the founders of the National Union of Writers and Artists, UNEAS, inspired by Alda Espírito Santo, poet and a fundamental nationalist and literary reference. Her published books include: “*O Utero da Casa*” (2004), “*A Dolorosa Raiz do Micondó*” (2006/2008), “*O País de Akendengué*” (2011) and “*Quando Florirem Salambás no Tecto do Pico*” (2015). Her poems appear in several periodicals, magazines and anthologies including: Revista *Metamorfoses*, da Cátedra Jorge de Sena, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro; revista *Prometeo*, of Medellin Poetry Festival.



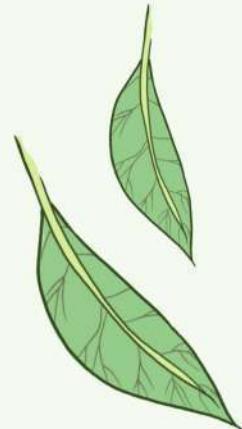
Ivanka Yankova
Bulgaria

HOPE



The stems of wheat have sprouted,
a ray of hope is rising on its toes
in my heart towards the sun.
I wish to love you.
While flowers are laughing,
and crystal-clear streams are raving.
While the land is bounteous –
ploughed up land, seeds – abundant.
Moon and stars in the swing of dance,
and light thoughts growing strong.
Boldly I throw off my clothes
and vest in love and faith,
like wild grass,
like high-water river,
longing to bear your sons.

Bless us, God!
Let there be light
on our way to the future.



All Poems Translated by Nina Nikolova

About Ivanka Yankova

Ivanka is a public figure – a socially active woman and writer. She is the author of 14 books – poetry and fiction, and has won awards in literary competitions, as well as a gold medal from the Association of Independent Bulgarian Writers. Ivanka was the founder of Plovdiv haiku club, and was its president for 15 years; since 2019 she has been its honorary president. Her haiku has been published in anthologies, collections, magazines and sites with versions in English, Japanese, French, German, Russian, Romanian and Serbian.



TELEVISED

Fidel Sbeity
Lebanon

They were confused soldiers. They shouted at him: "You are the commander. Tell us what to do". He did not know on which ground or in which battle he was standing. He was sitting in front of the television screen a few minutes earlier.

He asked: "Is there a bar nearby?". "Yes". "Let's grab a beer. On me," he replied. Fighters looked at each other, perplexed, then burst in laughter. The director was also laughing. He scrutinised the place with his eyes looking for a hole in the air that would bring him back to his sofa facing the television.

BLINDNESS

The sea, as still as a flower in a bouquet. The sky, quiet like canned foods on a supermarket shelves. The horizon lined like a disciplined soldier. He took the pen, drew a storm in the sky and wild waves in the deep and made the horizon into a zigzag. With the rubber, he erased his eyes and fell asleep.

WORRYWART

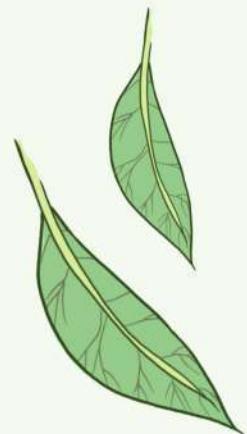
He holds his brain in his hand, playing around with it with his fingers like a rotting apple. He throws it up then catches it, his hand cupped as if sifting water. He tosses it towards his head, and it falls into place. Drops of white viscous liquid splatter around.

The worrywart adores spending time with his head open.

In the bathroom the worrywart cleans his brain with a toothbrush, passing it over the crevices, protrusions and holes. He wants his brain to be sparkling white like a knife that has stabbed walls.

All of this happens in front of the mirror, when he becomes even with what is inside it. He starts composing an ode which sticks to the glass, knowing that the mirror is an idea and when it breaks, the idea extends like a vengeance. And all that before he goes under water and his gills reclaim their life, before he becomes an underwater creature, called out by the depth: "Come down, come down. Let the light die quietly".

All Poems Translated by Anna swank



About Fidel Sbeity

Fidel joined the Cultural Supplement in AN-nahar newspaper (2000) after obtaining a degree in law. In 2005, he released his first book of poetry *'Newton's Apple'*. Followed in 2009 by - '*a man, Lift his skull high*'. The third book was released in 2011, entitled *'Emotions of a Robot'*. In 2017, he published his first novel *'Why did you leave me alone in the revolution?'* which deals with the memories of the Lebanese civil war. In 2020, he published his fourth book of poetry; The book of 'irony and boredom'.



THIEF OF DREAMS

**Alicja Maria Kuberska
Poland**

I was silent, smiling, undemanding.
You did not expect that I would take without consent.
I was too close, and everything was within the reach of my hand.

Like a thief, I stole your glances and loneliness.
Your thoughts, I tied in a myriad of knots, creating a dense net,
And from dreams, I wove a gentle curve of a woman's figure.

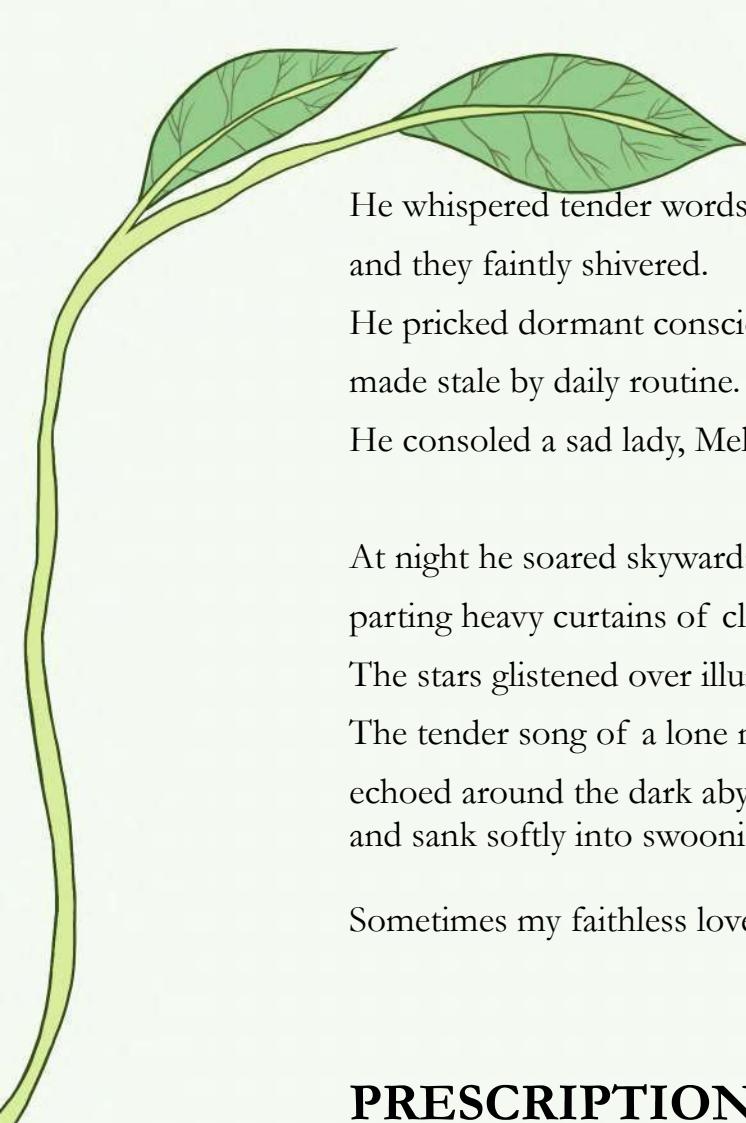
I stoked the spark of passion in your eyes, and a fire erupted.
I wrapped us in a sweet scent of flowers in my hair
And we glided towards many, distant nights.

You are from Mars, I am from Venus.
Far planets are the bright points on a firmament of tenderness.
Our words and hands attract to the force of gravity of life.

(NOT) MY POEM

I wrote a few words and secured them permanently.
Reflections and emotions created the stanzas.
I uttered the final sentence,
and my poem moved like a zephyr,
Kissing my lips lightly as he left, gliding away to strangers.

He slipped into eyes, where tears are born.



He whispered tender words to hearts
and they faintly shivered.

He pricked dormant consciences,
made stale by daily routine.

He consoled a sad lady, Melancholy.

At night he soared skywards
parting heavy curtains of clouds.

The stars glistened over illuminated moonlit paths for lovers
The tender song of a lone nightingale
echoed around the dark abyss
and sank softly into swooning scents of flowers.

Sometimes my faithless lover returns

- beloved son of the muse, but child of mine no more

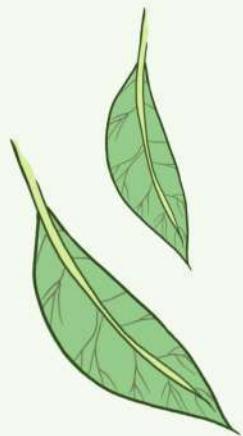
PREScription FOR A POEM

It is not easy to write a poem
You have to gather your thoughts
Swirling quickly like snowflakes during a blizzard
Catch them before they melt and disappear into oblivion
Later add fever of feelings and strength of emotion.
Decorate your sentences with your dreams collected
from the silver dust of falling stars.

You can also
pick out a melancholy
longing from the bottom of the lake
and hang it on eyelashes to shine with tears.
Then collect the wet haze of sadness
shimmering like drops of dew on calamus,
add grayness of the November's landscape.
Season it with a bit of bitterness and regret.

Or you can
 capture the laughter suspended by an echo
 between high mountain peaks.
 Catch the merry words in the net of butterflies
 carried by the warm breath of the wind.
 Turn the rainbow over to add a smile to the sky.
 Sprinkle it with a touch of humour and joy.

Finally, crazy metaphors must be released.
 Let them draw colours from the imagination.
 That the poem would acquire a transparent lightness
 and like a soap bubble rise above everyday life.
 Allow it to fly off in an unknown direction.



About Alicja Maria Kuberska

An awarded poetess, novelist, journalist, editor, translator, Alija has won the award of Cultural Festival International "Tra le parole e l' infinito" (Italy, 2018), Bolesław Prus Prize Poland (2019) and the Premio Mondiale "Tulliola - Renato Filippelli" - competition in Italy for a poetry book in 2021. She was nominated twice for the Pushcart prize (2011, 2015) in the USA. Alicja has edited volumes and anthologies in both Polish and English, with her poems published in numerous works.



Miao-Yi Tu
Taiwan

A PATH

Reminiscence is an ocean that fathoms no bottom.
 Reminiscing one second, a flower is slightly intoxicated;
 Reminiscing one minute, a flower is silenced;
 Reminiscing one moment, a flower is withered;
 Reminiscing one day, a flower is burned;
 Reminiscing one night, a flower is turned into ash.

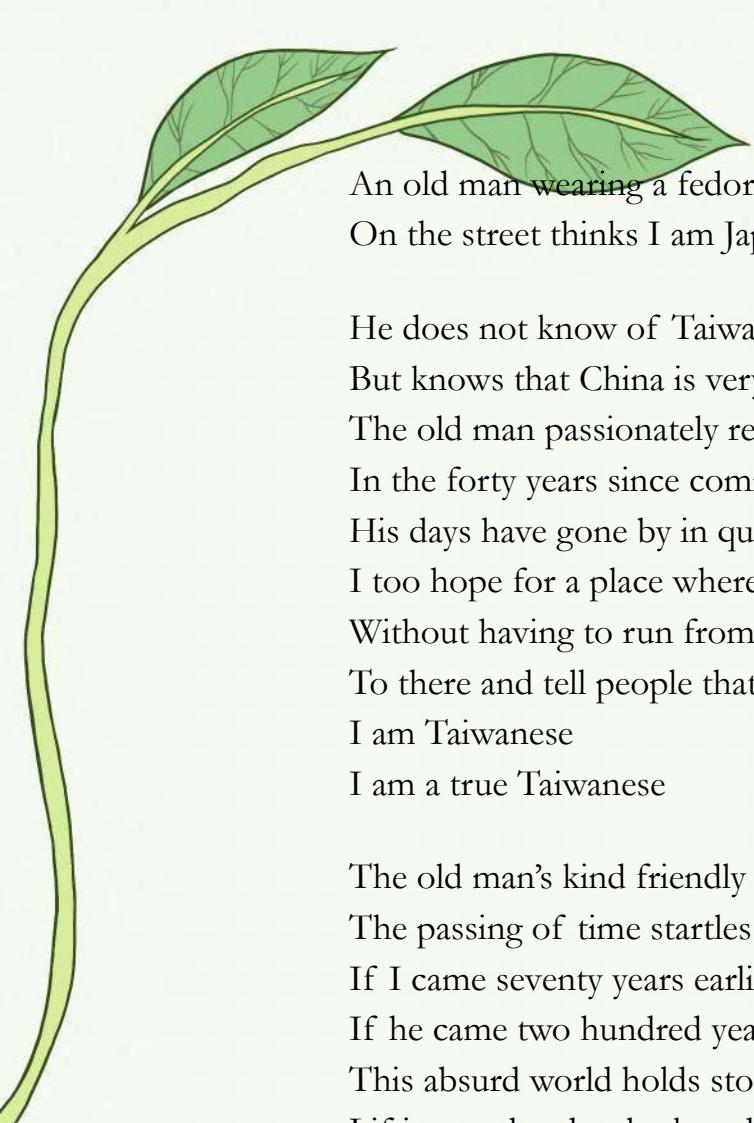
When two in love distance one from another,
 A mile is marked by beautifulness;
 A hundred miles stand for loneliness;
 A thousand miles are paved with a heart broken in pieces;
 Ten thousand miles accumulate, unexpectedly, into a poem.

The path you left behind
 Rhymes my poem with each of your steps.

Translated by Hsueh-Ming Liao

A CORNER STORE QUIETLY PASSING ITS DAYS

In a small town between cities lies a charming corner store
 Inviting you into Chile's real life
 Besides the sturdy body of the kiwi fruit bringing delight
 Desert fruits also bring sunshine and give you warmth



An old man wearing a fedora
On the street thinks I am Japanese

He does not know of Taiwan,
But knows that China is very popular
The old man passionately recounts the story of his life
In the forty years since coming to Los Vilos
His days have gone by in quietness
I too hope for a place where I can quietly pass my days
Without having to run from here
To there and tell people that
I am Taiwanese
I am a true Taiwanese

The old man's kind friendly smile melts my worry away
The passing of time startles our plain dialogue awake
If I came seventy years earlier, I would be Japanese
If he came two hundred years earlier, he would be Spanish
This absurd world holds stories where sorrow and joy intermix
Lifting my head to look at the sky outside the corner store
The melancholy of the blue sky cannot be overlooked

Translated by Jane Deasy

DISTRESS OF AN ISLAND

In autumn time, the island has its small little distress
When a typhoon leaves one doesn't hear from it again,
That man is the same

Without experiencing such earth-shaking emotions
He also did not tell his son to not come home for dinner

Rice also didn't leave an explanation and just bent over
Once bent, it can never straighten up again

Pomelos too didn't explain that they would not wait
for mid-autumn's moon
To first peel the wounds in the heart by oneself

In autumn time, the island has its small little distress
Stream water goes and never turns back,
history does the same

Each year the stream water goes through
Earth-shaking surges
Each year the villages go through heavy,
Deep-rooted, heart-wrenching pain
On cliffs and streams that no one tramples and steps
In the remote grass pile where he hides the bones
In the rocky abyss where she corrodes the bones of the body
The wounds of the palm grass face the bleakness
Of autumn by themselves
Without saying one more word
Only the hanging venation mourns for the land

Translated by Jane Deasy



About Miao-Yi Tu

Tu is a poet, writer, translator and editor. Currently she is the CEO of “Taiwan International Literature Institute” and has previously participated in the International Poetry Festival in Chile, Taiwan, Bolivia, Bangladesh ,Colombia and Ecuador. Tu was the prize winner in poetry of several literature awards and short story awards in Taiwan. She won the Kathaka Literary Award of Bangladesh in 2018. Her work includes: “*Ground is still the Garden*” (2006), “*Yearning*” (2016), “*The Epiphany of Feet*”(2018) and “*The Black Ghost*” (2019).



MY SOULD RISES TO MY LIPS

**Patrick Williamson
United Kingdom**
Photo taken by Dino Ignani

I know,
I hesitated, rethought, cut out the superfluous.

I forgave myself and I forgave, I made peace with hungry ghosts.

There is no light without shadows, without the search
for compassion, for the world, and for others we know.

All the love that I do not have,
that I still miss terribly,
and have been missing so long, I put it in here.

One thing is certain:
no sacrifice is in vain and no question dies
if it is pursued and loved with all its strength.

My soul rising to my lips
rain poems, snow poems, soul poems...
spruce poems, heart poems, poems of goodwill and hope...

A garden of words.... word gardens.... before darkness, before the light
goes....

LOOKING BACK

Suddenly I was left searching for the future
I kept this bottle, green pot and packet of spice

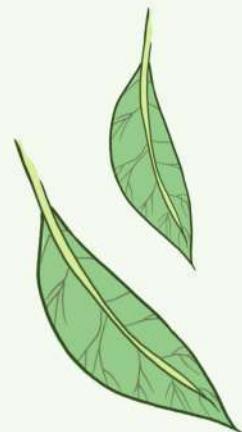
as a souvenir of those days,
leaving behind twilight for the tongue of hope.

Suddenly there is quiet, after the rush to catch that last train,
I retain the beauty of your simple movements,
I kneel among fluted columns, hiding thoughts in shadow.

Our shoulders hunched, late at night,
the spread of ink scrolled on, learning,
at work, we shared evening time, passing time, love

THREE RIVERS

Even the three rivers
the winds, the currents
which bring better or worse,
even as the filter of my tongue
presents a different palette
love remains the same
when we speak of broad rivers
misery, silence, speech
the ocean rises up to you, in you
this is what I can give,
this to thankfully receive
so we might become
somewhere the other side
for better or for worse
hands reaching across
an ocean of solitude
coupled for ever
even the three rivers
cannot put asunder
what has been joined
in your eyes



About Patrick Williamson

Patricks' poetry collection includes: *Traversi* (English-Italian, Samuele Editore, 2018), *Beneficato* (Samuele Editore, 2015), *Gifted* (Corrupt Press, 2014) and *Nel Santuario* (Samuele Editore, 2013). He has edited and translated several works such as *The Parley Tree, Poets from French-speaking Africa, the Arab World* (Arc Publications, 2012). He has also translated the work of Tunisian poet Tahar Bekri, Quebecois poet Gilles Cyr, as well as Italian poets Guido Cupani and Erri de Luca. He is the founding member of transnational literary agency Linguafranca.



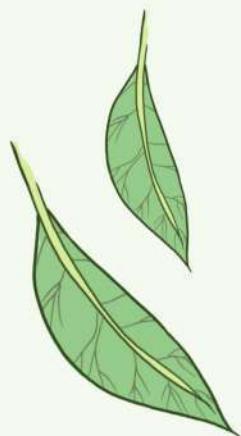
SPECTRUM

Aída Acosta Alfonso
Spain

I come from the window
from there, on the other side
an amber eye for the confusion
of these lines
on the extended horizon,
there are exclamations on the cloudy peaks
pieces of stars.
I come carelessly from your mirror-like face
an absolute open wound of reflections,
earlier I walked in the children's plaza
on a spiral of chalk.
I come from the window
heading inwards
to the uneven square of the paths of blood
to sleep under isolated lampposts
where the shower of light
does not unleash waves on the eyelashes.
On the brink of light, shadow.
on the edge of the shadow, light.
An exact synthesis.
I come from the window,
I come from the bite of rain
on the crystals,
cloud rage.
shades for bare feet
light for shoes
blinds for confusion.

on one side and the other:
 days and nights,
 nights and nights,
 light and lightbulbs.
 I come from the window to you
 synthesis space
 in reflections and transparencies.
 I come from you, towards you
 I am a window,
 and so are you.

Translated into English by Juan Garrido Salgado/ Catherine Cooper



About Aída Acosta Alfonso

Author of *Sílabas de Luz* / Syllables of Light (Ed. Dalya, 2016), Aida's work has been published in literary magazines in Spain and other countries, and included in multiple anthologies in Spain and Portugal, and she has participated in numerous recitals and festivals. Her poetry has been translated into Italian, Arabic, and English. Aída has been the creative force behind a range of poetry projects. She shares her poems on Facebook and on her blog *Lluvia de Libélulas* (*A Shower of Dragonflies*).



Abboud Aljabiri
Iraq

ZOOM

There is that thing, worth waiting

Even if it never comes

- Half the hug

That's delayed for the coming date

- The last strike Of a woman's brush

On her painting of a man

Stooping every second

To pick up his heart

from between his legs

- A sacred vow To move away

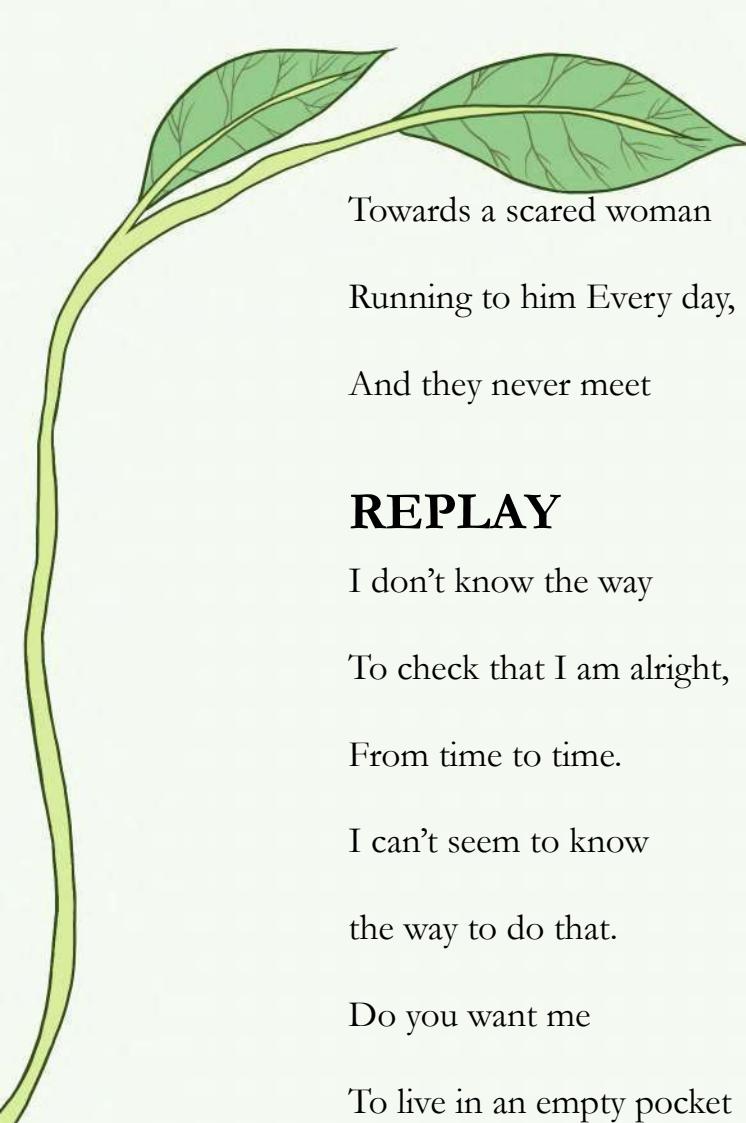
From the chair before you

To the space in your chair

And a space in the world's heart

A green space in a long dream

Where a pale man is running



Towards a scared woman

Running to him Every day,

And they never meet

REPLAY

I don't know the way

To check that I am alright,

From time to time.

I can't seem to know

the way to do that.

Do you want me

To live in an empty pocket

In my Mum's dress

For instance!

LANDSCAPE

Everything looks calm

So calm That I couldn't find

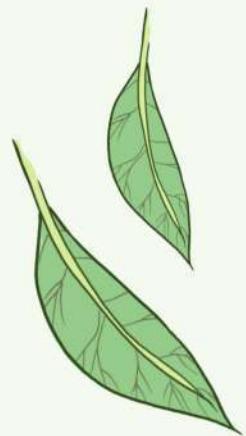
a trace Of a broken-hearted tree

Or some dust that's light enough

To be carried sky high With one hand.

Tinplate did not sigh
 Not even a whisper,
 That I thought I saw, birds' nests Soaked
 with shining eggs,
 And wherever I looked
 I spotted a boy Planting his gazes
 Into the slightly open windows
 And I think nothing in you
 But liars When you claimed
 That the wind passed by

All Poems Translated by Aliaa Alnaser



About Abboud Aljabiri

Abboud has issued seven poetry collections in Arabic. One of his contemporary poems, *Fading*, has been sung by the BBC choral with the music of the British composer Joanna Marsh. His poetry has been translated into several languages including Persian, Spanish and Turkish. He is also a former weekly columnist in both Azzaman newspaper (London) and Alarab news paper (London).



**Anandarup Nayek
India**

JOURNEY

I'm standing beneath an imperishable plant.

Our enlightened birth is showering down, from among the sprouted leaves... Water to quench thirst is coming up deep from the earth... The plant, our corporal body and we remained fused with that of the first birth.

The murmuring sound is ringing in spell around us.

That the leaves, flying towards the marvellous piece of earth, the illusioned smell is in its green body, the incessant conversation of another birth...

Translated by Prasunkumar Paria

THE MIGRATORY BIRD

This house is world-house. Like a long love or an emigration, whatever you can say, I have become a bird.

What a mighty bird I have become to fly myself in the air. In the way where secluded shadows of a spring afternoon are born in the wood of Golden-shower, every gentle feather breaks its dormancy and wakes up from the sleep in absolute amazement, the fragrant air plays the vibrant

voice, like each potential birth, think for every moment, what a vehement bird I have become.

What a mighty bird I have become to burn myself in the sky. How much warmth turns the body into scarlet, how many times it becomes a bird if burnt by the vigor of the sun, thus, can be reached from this branch to any other branch of the wood, look at there, the body is drenched with lots of pollen of Royal-poinciana. The shade has fallen on the waterlilies, paddy flowers and soft grasses.

If I return back flying and fall in love again on any other day of exile, you dear bird, take me here.

Translated by Anandarup Nayek

A WAITING

I take a stroll every morning.

That song, played from the depth of my slumber, walks along. The grasses were awoken too... dewdrops casting their magic on the waterlily beauties, adding new life... I cross him every morning on this path. Often he asks me smilingly, How is everything?

I smile back, Am I still awake in the joyful world? ...This is just the daybreak, early-morning, the wave of life is still spreading all over... Slowly the noon will be creeping up... ...I still could not comprehend, my creator, the great magician, wakes up way before me!



Translated by Ayesha Shormin Chowdhury

About Anandarup Nayek

Anandarup writes his poems in both Bengali and English, even reading his poetry on various important platforms like "World Poetry Festival" and "Thinkers and Writers Peace Meet." His published poetry books include: 'The Boat of Darkness' (2010, Bengali), 'Naishabdya Hey, Hey Ananda!' (First Edition 2018, Bengali) and 'Oh the Silence, Oh the Joy!' (Second Edition 2020, Bilingual). He has won several awards such as: 'Kabi Basudeb Deb Sangsad Samman' (2019), 'Lipika Sahitya Puraskar' (2014) and 'Dour Samman' (2013).



Cristina María Penalva Pastor
Spain

1 POEM

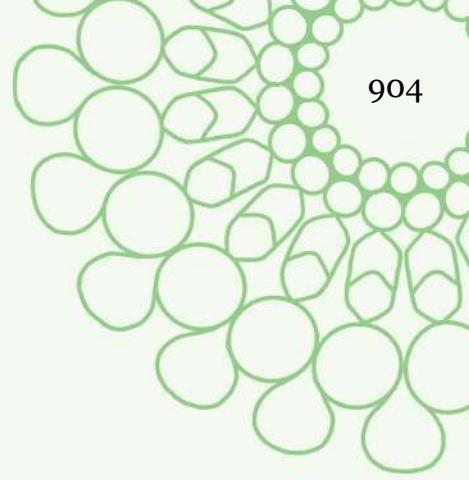
The sand hurts
in each of their grains she hurts
She who inhabited the sea before the floods
She preens herself with quartz and dyes with indigo
to open arms to the innocent blood

We are Desert
We belong to the desert
We are acacia blossom
Inland seas
Underground aquifers that
they cling to the esparto grass
with drop urgency

Love is a cloud of sand
that dances a salt flats dance
in each sore
It has a trail of tears his face
a thirsty heart and
bare feet that
whisper a stateless prayer

On its bed of dunes
the god of pain has gone into exile in the brother desert
has become invisible in its palm tree cloister

Only from the desert one can touch the sky and
the indifference



About Cristina María Penalva Pastor

Cristina is the editor in charge of the written magazine profiles at the ONCE organisation and the promoter of the project Alcalá and its University as World Heritage of Humanity. She has five books of poetry, with one of them unpublished.



WAVE AND SHORE

**Dr. Pravamayee Samantaray
India**

I persuade the waves everyday
To leave the scuffle
And make peace with the shore
But it ignores
The advice of a quaint rock lying nearby.
If you are that powerful, then go
And face the storm
That rises somewhere far away
In the midst of the sea
And makes the boat sink.
But no, it has to stay there near the shores
Sometimes teasing it
Sometimes fighting
Or loving some other time.

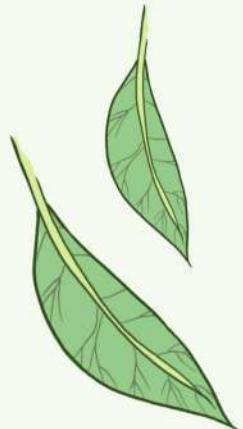
HOPE

Hope is a lamp
That struggles

With the storm everyday
 And keeps blinking
 Even at the verge of being extinguished
 Because even before extinction
 A drop or two remain
 That form the strength of
 A fresh beginning.

SMILE

You fill your smile
 In containers and
 Keep them in different places
 Just like mother did keeping
 The essential commodities
 In various containers
 At various places
 So that nothing falls short when needed.



About Dr. Pravamayee Samantaray

Educationist, poet, painter, activist and secretary of Indo-Vietnam Solidarity Committee, Dr. Pravamayee has two books of poetry collections and has translated two poetry collections from Hindi to Odia. Her poems have been translated and published in Vietnam, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and more. Her articles have been published in various newspapers and magazines in Vietnam and Uzbekistan.



2 POEMS

Massimo Morasso
Italy

1

A sunset more tinged with orange,
the major relative
of a summer tapering out beyond itself,
falling through the shrubs
beyond the dune.

It's hard to say past.
Better to think of twilight, memory,
of that something that joins rocks and skeletons, makes them allies.

Here we are,
re-emerged into the light of non-time
where everything gives a shout in the core of the heart,
as it unroofs itself.

So. A cemetery of shells.
A cemetery of shells and the lagoon,

viscous with seaweed and mucilage, and the valves
tight, bunching up in the shiver of the sun.

2

Friends? Few.

And even those few
thrown out into the idea
of growing up, into the waiting room of days
to become a group, to sit and chatter
and then smoke,
and to respond this way,
with the vinous embrace of non-being,
to the immovable boredom.

While I was nourishing myself with Immortals.

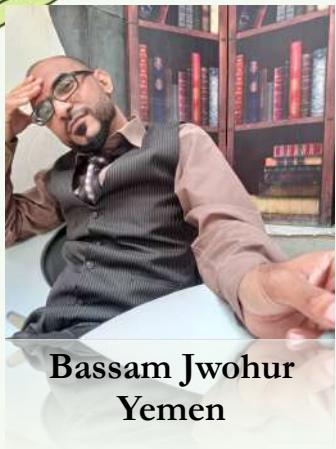
A lunacy,
a crowded apprenticeship.
But this is how love is.
A lunacy. An excavation. A feverish
memory of the origin.
It makes its rounds in the body
and then descends into the future
on a road of gold and lapis lazuli,
paved with dreams...

All Poems Translated by Moira Egan and Damiano Abeni



About Massimo Morasso

Poet, translator and also a writer of essays and literary criticism, Massimo's important essay *Carta per la Terra e per l'Uomo* (Manifesto for the Earth and the Human Being), a renewing document on ecology and literature, was signed by poets of 48 countries, including 5 Nobel Prize and 7 Pulitzer Prize winners. He founded the Italian Branch of Plant-for-the-Planet, an international tree-planting and environmental advocacy organisation. As a poet, he won some important prizes, among them the *Premio Catullo* in 2018, awarded by the World Poetry Academy of UNESCO. His writings have been translated into English, German and Greek.



WILL CALL IT A WAR

**Bassam Jwohur
Yemen**

I will call it a WAR!

Those pains of proficiency
To do the art of early FAREWELL
And to wash your tear demands.

I will call it a FEAR!

Of losing your breaths,
Of trying to hold your voice diaspora,
In the midst of CRIES.

It is a WAR!

The dying last watch,
The snapping clockwise,
The escaping from the circle control.

A WAR!

A girl's fingers,
Searching for your body odour,

In a pile of mass graves,

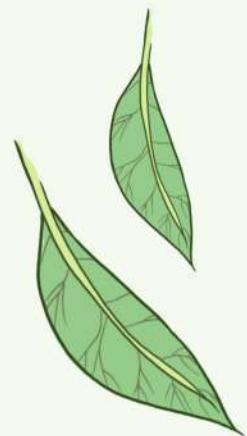
WAR!

A lost humanity shadow that went away,

Without Saying FAREWELL to light,

While hanging on a sin wall,

To drown in your forgiveness.



About Bassam Jwohur

A poet, literary translator and writer, Bassam currently works as a freelancer. His achievements include: the Award for Merit, Naji Numan Prize in Literary Translation , Second Ranker, 2014 (in the Worldwide and the Arab Countries) and the translation of the book "*Human Being and the remains of the Zulu*" issued by the Arweqah Institution for Studies, Translation and Publishing in Egypt 2019. His literary contributions received the TOP TEN entries to get first place - the Chinese And International Literary Award in 2014.



Lucia Cupertino
Italy / Spain

CROCUS

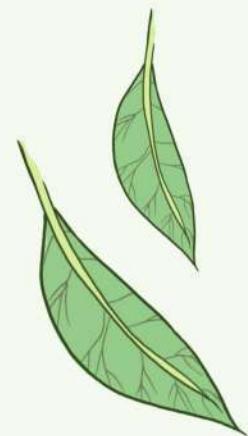
Flow back into your own veins, History:
'68, Pedro Alvarado,
faces of serfs,
the Independence of African states,
the Peloponnesian Wars.

To hear the multitude of voices
In such an expanse of History
whispering under your skin
and then turning to flesh
chomping at the bit and pressing
along your wrists and arteries,
engorging your carotid
gushing with stories.

But how can all this be told anew?
How should I act each bright
day as I rush through?
How can I act, dear friends,
my dear plants, stones
and invisible beings
of the entire cosmos
I certainly don't know.

And yet crocuses
 break through the ground in kindergartens,
 in every block
 of colourless tenements
 on the breathless benches
 of foggy harbours.
 For each woman, each man
 a new crocus in the palm of their hand
 and if tomorrow another came to light
 behold a more humane world
 at its own feet.

Translated Into English by Pina Piccolo



About Lucia Cupertino

A poet, cultural anthropologist and translator, Lucia is currently attending a PhD at Complutense University (Madrid, Spain). Her first chapbook is titled *Mar di Tasman* (Collana Isola, Bologna, 2014). Her full collection of poetry *Non ha tetto la mia casa/No tiene techo mi casa* was published in a bilingual Spanish and Italian edition in 2016 by Casa de poesía, Costa Rica. She is a founding member of *La Macchina Sognante* and a current editor focusing especially on South and Central America, indigenous people, traditional plants and agriculture, as well as migration. Some of her poems have been translated into English, Bengali, Chinese, Polish and Albanian.

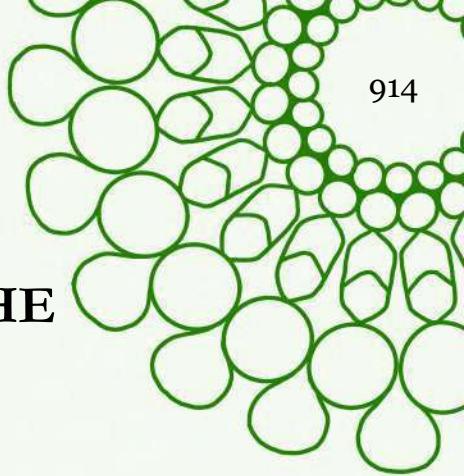
BRANCH
12

**SPRING'S
SOUND**



Jona Burghardt
Argentina

WHEN YOU GET TO THE INTERSECTION



Following the curb as far as it goes,
to the reunion with portals and courtyards close by,
everything breathes at the rhythm of the known.
The open bag because it's crowded doesn't close,
the paths are falling, the cautions,
in one bus stop, the firmament.
Sometimes, there are unnoticed bells,
random passersby, black cats, trills,
and the doubts are hanging over the branches.
And, step by step, comes the corner of uncertainty,
wait, bend, move back, move forward, or drift...

In the calm of the absent-mindedness bursts in
a dumper causing a squall
to gobble up the canvases of the frames.
No remodelled facades,
no curb, no corner and no crossing
all the magic begins.



About Jona Burghardt

Jona is a poet, teacher and translator. She translates Latin American, Spanish, Catalan and Portuguese poetry books. Her poems are translated in English, German, Bangla, Arabic, Swedish and French. In recognition of her work, she was awarded with the Khatak Prize in Dhaka, Bangladesh in 2017.

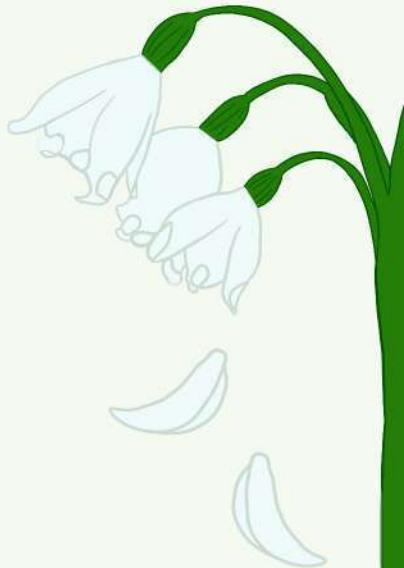
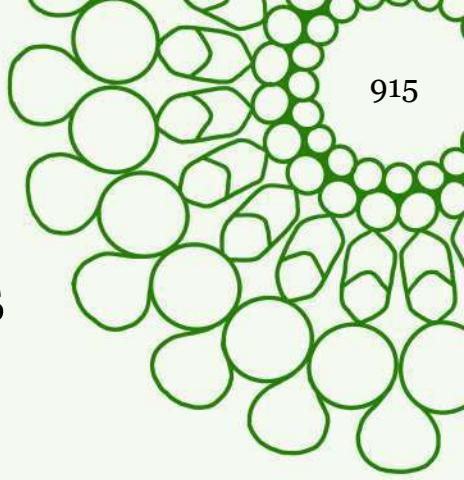


Jüri Talvet
Estonia

BUILDING CHAIRS IS SCIENCE

*To the memory of dear Richard Caddel, friend and poet,
with the wish that he could return tomorrow at ten.*

Did the rabbit taste good? Fine.
The salmon? Well. The world's
pulse under your eyelids is indeed
a fine image. (At least you can
feign sleep.) The noble union
of physics with poetry: It's fine
that one can at least relax
into the groove of a bar stool in a
warm small town in Georgia. (If
there's room.) In both Delhis, however,
when it grows dark, only thinking
of gods in a temple, with a cool stone
in the knees, redeems one from the jungle.
Did what's on the grill taste good? I'm glad. I
am happy. How was the chicken? I weave
a spider web for some stranger to get
caught in. Some other from far away,
on the edge. Some Indian cow,
covered with Hegel's grey, boiled
spider web. (Thank you, Heinrich!)
*You say you really won't go? You
shall go tomorrow morning at ten.
And you will return tomorrow
morning at ten. Won't you?*



*

This dancing Santa on 42nd Street
 maybe in front of Mazzotti's shoe shop and
Maria means business on a Hudson riverbank
 Maria Bartiramo to whom have you sold
 your soul? – answer! And
 a living Santa who wound you up
 to foot a Greek or Catalan *sardana*
 and to mutter occasionally into your beard
 something about the special shine of Mazzotti's shoes
 Maria d'Aquino the whiteness of your knees
 escapes forever from the eyes of Giovanni
 He is just an old man even without
 his Santa's beard and bushy eyebrows
 or maybe it's you Walt who looked on Broadway
 for the thick necks of big young white men
 and when you couldn't find them any more
 then the warm eyes of small Puerto Ricans
 and when you couldn't find them either you sat down
 in your own yard under a lilac and wept
 and mumbled like Francesco *pace*
pace pace and T. S. later and the ancient bards
 long time before them and before you
ſanti ſanti ſanti peace to my heart peace
 to your heart too Maria Macolata

*

Snowflakes dance again beyond the window As a
 precaution its lower half has been grated though it's
 the fifth floor Fort Washington alley 245 In any event
 for a hundred years no one has cleaned the windows
 Surely fearing the FBI which today sent me an e-mail
 alleging I had visited forbidden webpages



The gypsy Melquíades knows them or anyway has taken note
of them mr Jefferson mr Negroponte messrs snowflakes
In fact the question is more complicated Brown
or green eyes A beautiful even glimmer of spring –
because the artist not only has blown apart clouds
above the boulevard of the old world or above
the intersection of Lepiku and Lai but even has
lavishly planted young women's legs in boots
The earth itself looks blue beneath them! (Only now
I notice it) You are nowhere else *Father come home*
at once! And they leave behind no muddy footprints

All Poems Translated from the Estonian by Jüri Talvet & H. L. Hix



About Jüri Talvet

Jüri is a poet and Professor Emeritus. His books of poetry and essays have appeared in English, Spanish, French, Italian, Russian, Romanian, Serbian, Japanese, Catalan and Greek. He has been awarded the Ivar Ivask Memorial Prize (2002), Naji Naaman International Literature Honor Prize (for complete works, 2020) and Estonian National Science Prize for Lifework (2021).



Anne Casey
Ireland

PELLUCID DREAMING

I

To be as complete as the greater part of your self
composed

To trust without knowing when to hang on
how to let go

To have the ability to resist gravity
in states out of quo

To be divisible by light
one part visible to two invisible

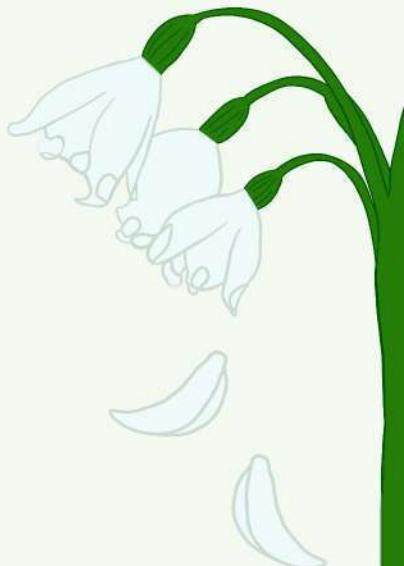
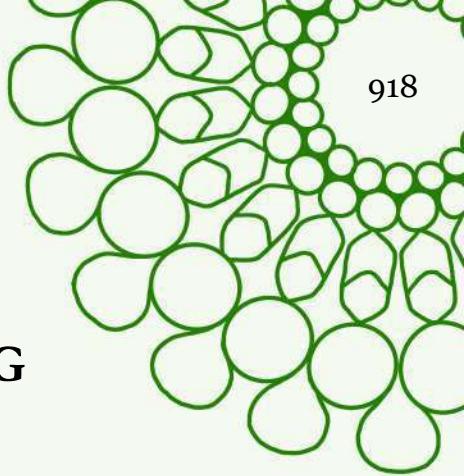
II

More than two thirds of you
already knows the way

You have mostly existed outside
of time

Body unto body disembodied
soaring out of dust into earth

From dirt to root to stem
to leaf remaking light to feed



III

To carry, baptise, flourish to harbour
new life

To realise
we are all made of pieces of each other

Frozen out of time through space
the greater part of us

Has gazed past all that is known
beyond the heavens themselves

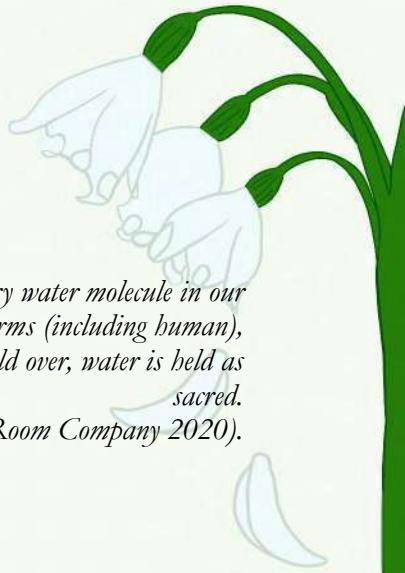
Note: The human body is made up of more than two thirds water. Every water molecule in our bodies originated in space and has existed in many different places and forms (including human), some dating back to before the dinosaurs. Essential to life, in cultures the world over, water is held as sacred.

First published in Writing Water (Red Room Company 2020).

COASTAL DESCANT

Four hours north
of our new normal, a daily changing
tableau—already elsewhere from
the chatter and chant of ascending scales
in LA, London, Brazil; a sinkhole in Italy; a landslide in Java;
a plane fallen from the sky; wreckage
of the assault on democracy in DC—
we have hurtled out of city snarls
through Eucalypt forests shooting
new green across the blackened scarline
of last summer's megafires, past vast shocks
of long-legged birds wading near wallowing gums,
their mottled trunks drowning in this year's floods,
to breathe again

clear air carrying a tincture of salt,
a trace of coastal rosemary,



count blessings falling like soft rain
 on my longed-for west-of-Ireland heathers
 and here, on spiring cordylines, Norfolk Island pines
 scraping a last skirmish of downy clouds,
 their slender cones far below snagging
 olive chains of Neptune's necklace
 along the snaking tideline,

a sea eagle gliding high
 over sands fringed in the wild fleshiness
 of samphire, and higher over lobelia blooms
 purple-tonguing rain-swollen air; where
 blue triangles flit between the fresh dazzle
 of golden Guinea flowers twisting
 past ragged elephant ears
 sagging in steamy strangler fig shade,
 fishbone ferns filigreeing
 the drifting sea breeze—

here where banksia trees turn into wind
 off churning surf, their gnarled arms
 spreadeagled into brine-laden sky,
 contorting around rock, a symphony
 of seed pods parrots a lorikeet's
 brief speech, and a psalm of
 cicadas echoes
 wave-song.

The startling grace
 of a rainbow's full cascade
 into cobalt ocean
 over a horizon thirteen thousand
 miles from my home coast,
 yet so uncannily alike;
 a ghost crab dances *en pointe*
 across our scarecrow shadows



before we swelter uphill
again through saltbush,
a cuckoo mocking
our blundering
passage

as three hundred metres below,
the small blot of a lone swimmer
sinks beneath the glistening surface—
a cormorant racing
its own shadow
over his
wake.

First published in American Writers Review 2021.



About Anne Casey

Anne is a poet, writer and author of four poetry collections. She has won poetry awards in Ireland, the UK, the USA, Canada, Hong Kong and Australia. Her most recent award is the American Writers Review (2021). Her work ranks in the leading national daily newspaper, The Irish Times' Most Read, and is widely published and anthologised internationally. She has served on numerous editorial advisory boards and is the recipient of an Australian Government Scholarship for her PhD in Creative Writing at UTS.



Stefania Di Leo
Italy

BE LIKE WATER

Be like water, my soul,

blue and green silk

Under the crack of longing

Be like water

the jungle echo that runs through your ear

like a noise that spreads,

be like the water that generates thunder

and awakens the smells of our land.

Be like water, my soul,

sweet drop fish in the hands

to quench the heart cracked by thirst.

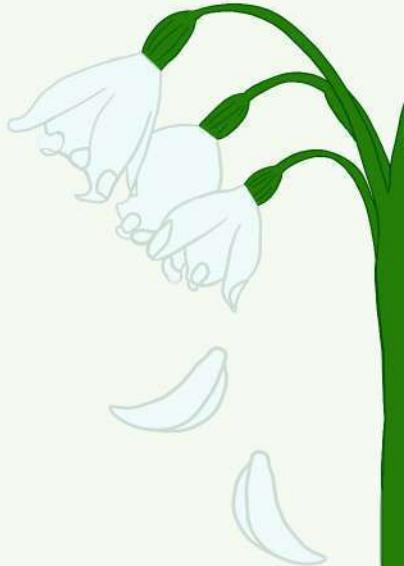
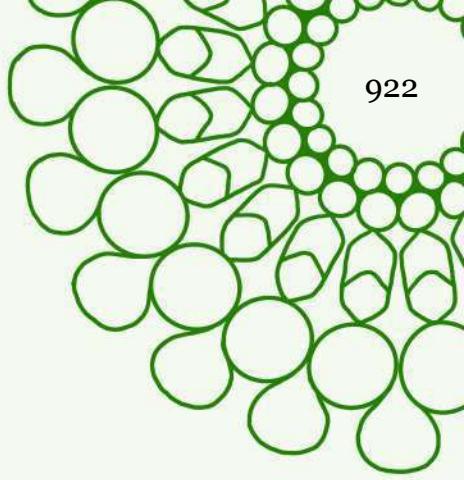
Saliferous wave rejection

before loneliness and sadness.

Open forest routes between the ground make your

path,

with patient caress, between the asphalt.



My soul, my soul, be like water,
go out into the world with the floodgates open
filling everything with life and shells.



About Stefania Di Leo

Stefania is a poet that received her PhD in Theory of Literature and Comparative Literature. As a teacher of the Spanish language, she has also received several awards and has published several books. Her works have been published in many magazines and anthologies.



Lidija Dimkovska
North Macedonia

SUMMA SUMMARUM

It takes nine months for the foetus

to develop into a human being.

And then a childhood, youth and old age

to be one.

And whether it will develop into a human being worthy of the name

no one can tell.

A whole life might not prove long enough

to become a proper person.

And it takes just a second for a body

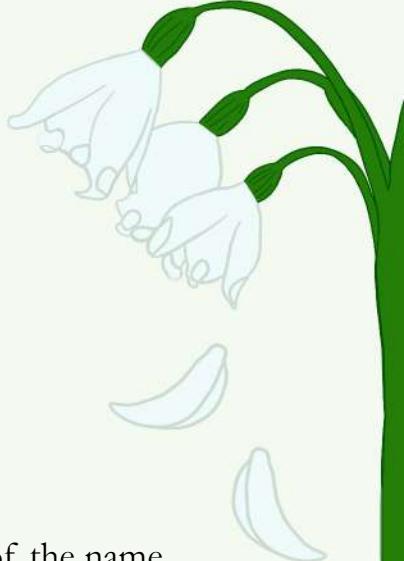
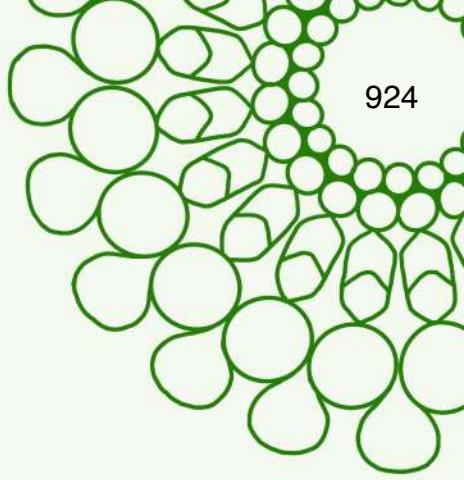
to turn into a corpse.

You live for yourself, and die for others

so they can't live without you.

Even when forgiven with good

evil is remembered as evil.



But good is never remembered for good
turned into evil.

You can wash your face a hundred times,
but never your honour.

When washing your face you wet your sleeves,
and rubbing clean your honour soaks your conscience.

You need soap and water for your face,
your honour needs the conscience of the blood.

And now

who will gloat more:

The Nobody and Nothing who has become Something
or the Something that Nobody and Nothing
has turned into?

Translated from the Macedonian by Ljubica Arsovská and Patricia Marsh



About Lidija Dimkovska

Lidija is a poet, novelist, essayist, and translator. She has published six books of poetry, three novels, one American diary, one short story collection, and edited four anthologies. Her books have been translated in numerous languages. She has received several awards including the European prize “Petru Krdž” (2016), and the Slovenian prize “The Glass of Immortality” (2020). Her publications include “Hidden Camera” (2004) and “A Spare Life” (2012).



THE 'YOU' CHANT

Maria Grech Ganado
Malta

first voice

Sing me a song of suffering
and I'll sing you a song of age,
come probe me deep with your impotence
and I'll rip you with my rage.

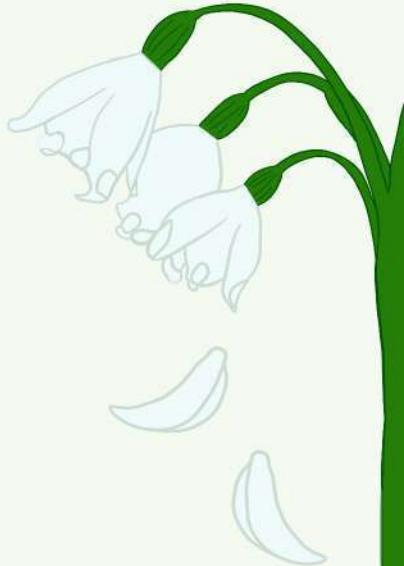
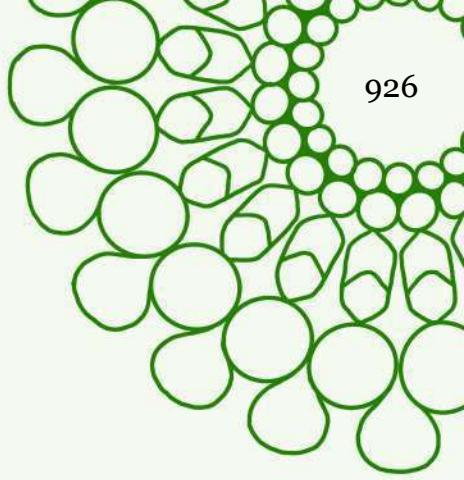
Sing me a song of suffering
and I'll sing you a song of hate,
dream me a dream of the promised land
and I'll sneer that it's too late.

Sing me a song of sorrow
and I'll sing you a song of guilt,
bring me a rose on a thornless stem
and I'll show how it must wilt.

Sing me a song of harmony
and I'll blare out my disgust,
seduce me with strains of your tenderness
and I'll ram you with my lust.

Sing me a song of peace and joy
and I'll laugh your words apart,
kiss me with love in your serpent tongue,
twist the spear in my heart.

Stab me with kisses and treachery
caress me with your lies
and a thorn will sprout on the wilting rose
of a song that never dies.



Tomorrow is another day
 the sun will rise again
 the sun will set on the thorny land
 and the moon will lick its pain.

Sing me a song of your hopelessness
 so I'll thrive on your despair,
 and when the veil of the temple is rent in two
 I'll say that we're a pair.

Tie me to your heartstrings
 and we might understand –
 I'll devour your guts, you'll devour mine,
 we'll inherit the hungry land.

second voice
 Sing me a song of hate and guilt
 and I'll sing you a song of sorrow
 bury me deep in the land today
 and I'll rise again tomorrow.

Sever me from your l-Oneliness
 and I'll probe you with my feeling,
 pass me a cup of the blood we've spilt
 and I'll use it for our healing.

Sing me a song about despair
 and I'll smile the words apart,
 wrench yourself free from our tangling woes,
 seek shelter in your heart.

Love is a virgin calvary
 within the conscious mind –
 surrender to its piercing
 and maybe you will find

there are no answers to the questions
 withing our common sense,
 we cannot bear another's woes
 without some violence.



We suck upon our open wounds
like spiritual vampires –
we vomit our corruption
into our searing fires.

Tomorrow is another day
and it will scorch the land -
but if love is a phoenix,
maybe we'll understand

and sing the end of suffering
and sing the death of hate
and sing the birth of peace and joy
and dream it's *not* too late.



About Maria Grech Ganado

Two of Marias' Maltese poetry and two of her English poetry have won Malta's National Book Prize. Her poetry has appeared in literary publications both locally and abroad, where it has been translated into 13 other languages. She has translated many other authors' work into English. Maria has been invited to many international events and has been awarded by the Maltese National Book Council for valuable contribution to Literature. In 2020, she won Malta's first Poet Laureate award.



Yusuf Kadel
Mauritius

EXTRACTS FROM SOLUBLE IN THE EYE

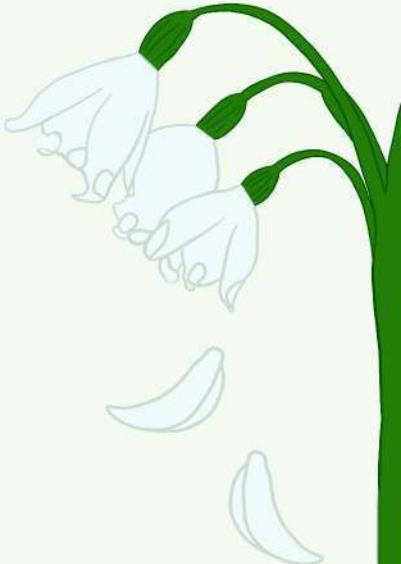
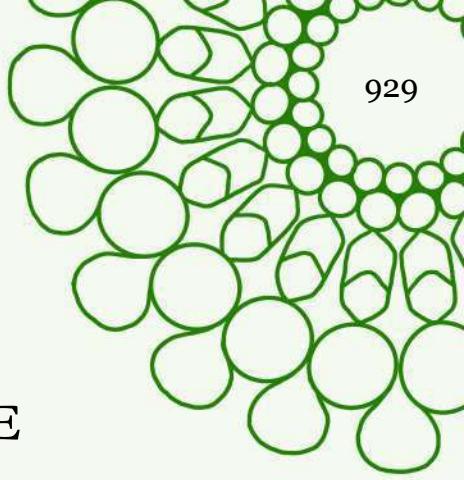
The river
does not reverse course the river
is unaware of its source
“river” is the name water bears
when kept on a leash

Water
jostles us from within water
is sharper than we think
man!
is an idea water had

Blood
goes red as it shows blood
is hardly made for the eye
but our skin has
no ears

The page
suits words like the grave suits breath
we reread ourselves like others resurrect
their dead

Animals
are hardly attached to their meat animals
know their place!



animals are only beastly
out of courtesy

Bones
are thick-skinned bones
are as good as souls
they don't display delusions
in natural history museums

Night
is full when the moon is empty
the moon swallows itself and night is pleased
black... gorges on
white

Light
flays all it touches
our abandoned sheaths we call
“shadows”

Happiness
has no history happiness
is transparent
in happiness
none see themselves

*Translated from the French by Guy Bennett
(Otis College of Art and Design,
Los Angeles, California, USA)*



About Yusuf Kadel

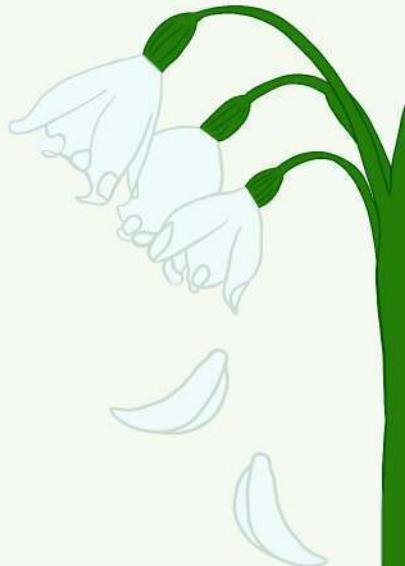
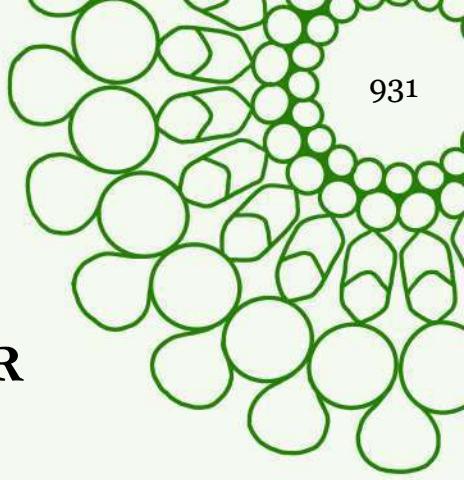
Yusuf is a poet and playwright. He has published four books and regularly contributes to various collective works, mainly in Mauritius, France and Quebec. He is a scholarship holder and the co-founder of the poetry magazine ‘Point barre’. He was nominated in 2009 for the Continental prize for young African writers. He has published *Surenchairs* (1999), *Soluble dans l’Oeil* (2010) and *Minuit* (2013).



Amal Alsahlawi
United Arab Emirates

A RIVER THAT NEVER TIRES OF FLOWING

I dreamt I was gliding down a green valley,
Streaming with unyielding liquidity,
Sweeping away my subsidiaries –
The stones, the fish, the broken boughs, the white lilies,
And ducks as white as daybreak –
Before asking the question: Where do we go?
The trees nodded I should flow.
And so, I rushed, like a gallant army,
Thrilled by my followers' chants:
I tapered, I swelled,
I reshaped the hill without intent;
I saved a boy from drowning
And let the hungry cast their nets in my waters;
A woman washed off her burdens by my brimming banks
And horses whispered their stories of eventide;
I spread out, as wide as the universe;
Birds bore my tidings to the day after
So villages would draft ahead their songs.
I carried yesterday's rubble along
Till cleansed of wakeful toil.



I bore all to their destinies
Like a river that never tires of flowing.

Translated from Arabic by Salma Harland



About Amal Alsahlawi

Amals' poem 'the wonders of time' was successfully performed in the MET - New York through the MET live arts initiative by Faraj Abyad in July 2021. She participated and performed in many events including a poetry reading in Hekayah at NYUAD, and other spaces including the University of UAE in Al Ain city. Through her poetry, Amal tackles feminism, philosophy and existentialism using freestyle and classic poetry. She is keen to address the anxieties of modern life and her first poetry book in 2020 was well received by poetry readers in the Arab region.

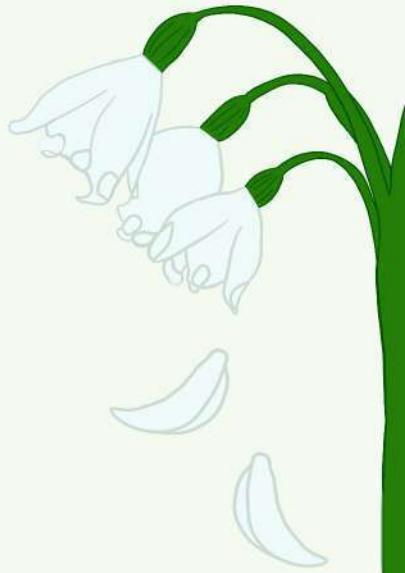
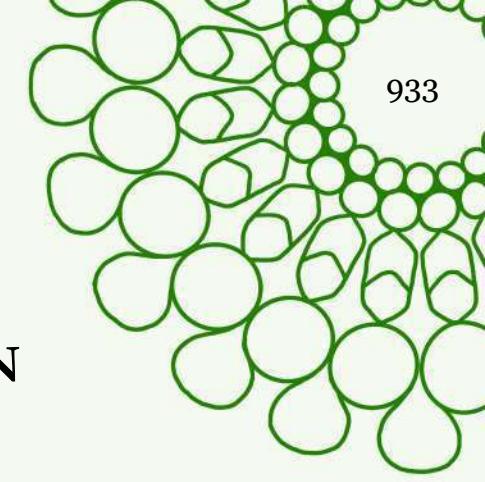


**Munir Al Idrissi
Morocco**

THE REFLECTED IN THE POND

(...)

The one in the water, is lighter..
from shadow, light and water
like his eyeglasses
like the willow, touching with its heads
an underfoot sky.
As flocks
reflected ..
simply
Breathing in the water, which respires him.
Not infected with the flu nor another malady
But he also sneezes..
And rots in the colour of an orange in the sunset.
For a while,
the man extended his foot
above the water's surface
his shoe got wet by the other's shoe!
No trace in the water
no walking
But being, giving yourself its first bones.



Translated by Entisar doulib

A BALLET DANCE

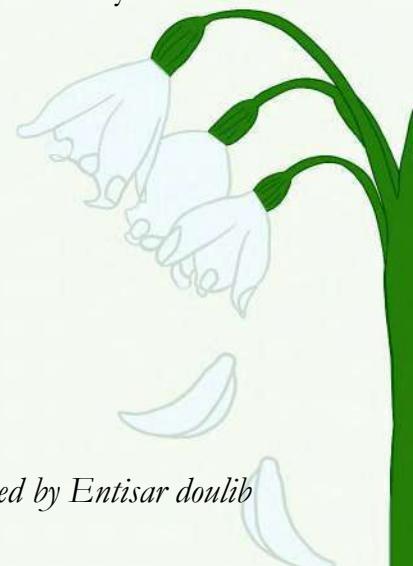
O sky
 O ballerina
 Now you show off your bouncing
 That was figured precisely
 That which is the fruit of the effort of practice for millions of years
 For you to dazzle now.. full of these stars
 At once..before the look.

But you.. at last
 Skillfully show
 The position of the confidante
 As you stand in the middle of the truth
 Extending your hands upwards

Translated by Entisar doulib

READING A TEXT IN THE WOODS

The air is saturated with moisture
 And the moment is like cheese on a friend's table.
 How pure and tender
 The moment of poetry is
 A blade of light digging into the paper
 That is the poem.
 On greenish grass there is dew
 On the shoulders is the glowing shadow of a pine roof in the sunset.
 Light
 Silent
 We listened to the trembling of a tree leaf between two commas
 We listened to the shadow of the long neck of language goose in the
 waters of the text
 Which in the evening steps quietly
 And goes away.



We listened with all of our senses

.....

.....

.....

Is that what it was teaching us,
poetry?!

To listen..

And to always listen!

Translated by Joanna Ismail



About Munir Al Idrissi

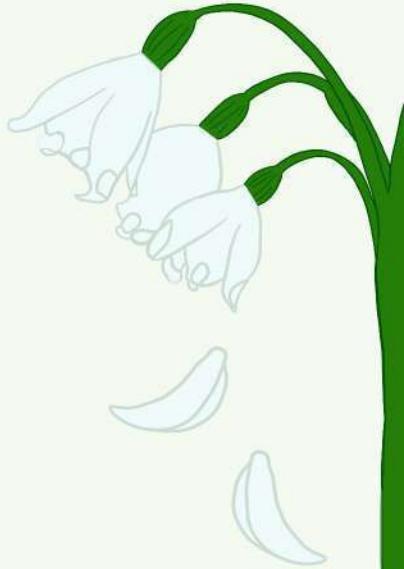
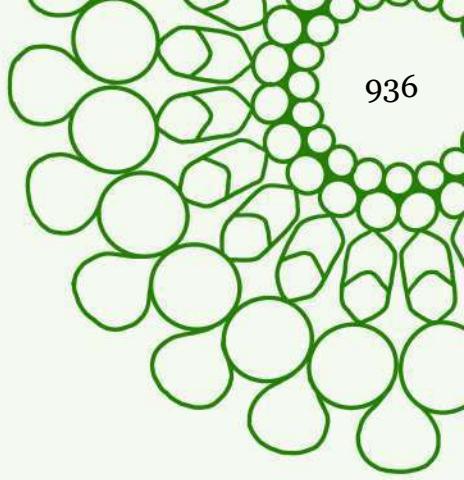
Munir is a philosophy teacher that has won several international awards including the Union of Moroccan Writers award in 2008 and the Appreciation Award of the American Agency for International Development in 2009. Most of his works have been translated into other languages and published in foreign journals. He has published "*Light Feather Mirrors*" (2008), "*Attention of Passerby*" (2017), and "*Psychological Basis of Artistic Creation*" (2003).



DAYS IN THE LIFE

**Manju Kanchuli Tiwari
Nepal**

Either, from stained clothes
 I would scrub the dirt of superstition
 as I stayed home, or
 I'd put to be pitched into the drain
 full on the plate
 the discards of pro and con
 In that way scrubbing my own environs clean
 Either I'd play with saffron yellow
 salt and sugar white and vegetable green in the
 kitchen, dipping my fingers to the art of that
 experiment or with sweat – sharp needle
 stitch fraying divides
 so as just to..
 strengthen the relationship
 To make our house beautiful,
 with my hands my rhododendron palms
 I'd scrub it clean every evening
 There, with a rainbow bearing brush
 I'd paint the limited sky of Mt. Everest
 above my own
 Everyday, I would be
 busy somewhere - in the library
 somewhere - in the laboratory
 somewhere – with only unlined paper
 and pen somewhere – in the
 educational institution,



there, with the mission of adding bricks
 layer by layer to that basic foundation
 In our room every evening
 I'd switch on a light
 drawn from the clear Himalayan streams,
 electric light of unplanted crops
 In the plains and terraces.
 On such an evening,
 like a swallow, though flying everywhere,
 to my own small nest
 I would return
 drawn by thoughts of my fledgling.



About Manju Kanchuli Tiwari

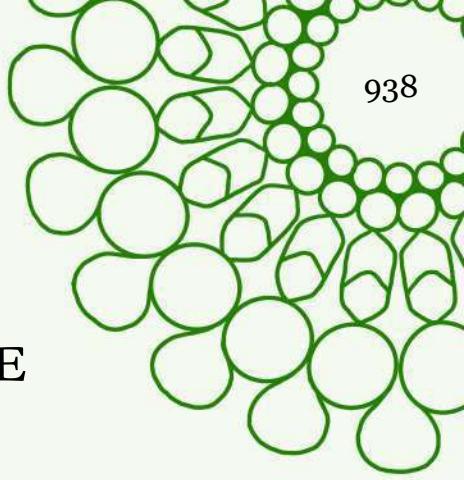
Munir is a philosophy teacher that has won several international awards including the Union of Moroccan Writers award in 2008 and the Appreciation Award of the American Agency for International Development in 2009. Most of his works have been translated into other languages and published in foreign journals. He has published "*Light Feather Mirrors*" (2008), "*Attention of Passerby*" (2017), and "*Psychological Basis of Artistic Creation*" (2003).



ALL WE NEED IS LOVE

**Dr. Austin. A. Joseph
Nigeria**

All we need is love,
O dear! all we need is love.
Of all the ephemerals in life none stands above love.
Love is the path to enduring peace, unity, and symbiotism humanity is due.
Love is indeed the principal thing,
so let's all wholeheartedly embrace, imbibe, and practice it out lives through.
Assuringly there'll be no room for all the dastardly acts and shenanigans that now becloud the glory and essence of humanity if in our modus love is given its place due.
The charade of amassing weapons of war and self destruction will be a thing of the past with love rooted firmly in all that we do.
Whether African, American, Asian or European love is imperative for therein lies the solution to our problems and is able to see us through.
It's high indeed time that we allow love to unconditionally indwell, subdue and champion all we do..
You can't be bad and expect good to come after you,
'cause due recompense awaits all that we either openly or secretly do.
Love your neighbour therefore as you love yourself,
and forgive also those who may have offended or hurt you and you'll be amazed at what love can do.
Hence let's be selfless, respectful, considerate, and kind in all we do,
Justaposed with tolerance and understanding too.
The world will be a better place for me and you



militating against humanity obliterating everyday anew.
Brothers and sisters only love can heal us of every wound no matter how serious or grievous it has been with humanity all through.
O let love reign that we may through it make our differences beneficial for all and sundry our lives through.
Let love reign! O let love reign!! O may it reign that we may together reap of its dividends harmoniously, peacefully and progressively too.

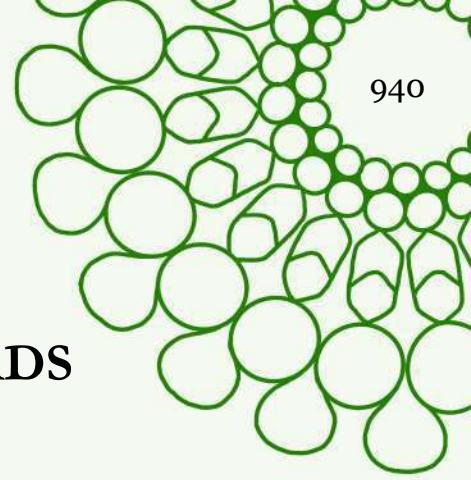


About Dr. Austin. A. Joseph

Augustine is an award-winning poet, writer and a multiple bestselling author. He holds a PhD in Philosophy of Theology and is an entrepreneur, a consultant, and multi-talented artist. He has two studio albums to his credit.



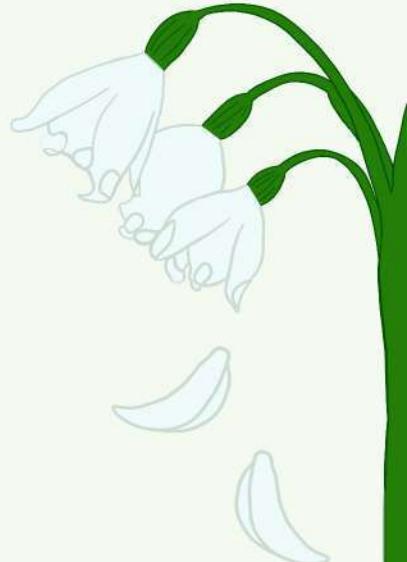
DOMESTICATED WORDS



Daniela Andonovska-Trajkovska
North Macedonia

Inspired by “The Little Prince” by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

I was giving you the essential oils of the words
every morning
to keep you hydrated
but you wanted me to have you
in the bell jar of my glimpse
because you were afraid
of other people’s breath



And then I thought
that you will kill all of my volcanoes
with which I am breathing in the century’s womb
as if they are my lungs
and I left you
so you could feel the pain
of the heated chlorophyll

I see your sky differently now
when I am finding myself out of myself
with the serpent under my tongue
landscape with watery roses in my eyes
and a flower full of thorns on my lips

I am yours, my darling,
and I am finally coming home
with grey hair and wrinkled heart.

DROPS

I love to sit by the window
 with all of my eternity
 and to watch the multiple facets of God
 that are running down on the human's soul of glass

I love to see the sky in happy tears
 as it fertilises the valley
 with soil in the look

But what I love the most is to sit
 on the inner side of my consciousness
 because all the human drops
 live there in the amniotic fluid of the century
 and that is the only place in which my "I"
 breathes with its own lungs

THE WORLD OF LIGHT

In my binary world
 the light fights with its own absence
 to gain a victory over itself

In your magical world
 the light breaks down in colors
 and lives in its own presence

My metonymical and your metaphorical world
 are living together
 in a book with a laser print
 The sun gets freckles, too,
 when looks directly into the book's eyes



About Daniela Andonovska-Trajkovska

Daniela is a poet, scientist, editor of two literary magazines, literary critic, doctor of pedagogy, and a university professor. She has published one prose book, nine poetry books and one book in the Arabic language published in the United Arab Emirates. She has won several important awards for literature such as *Abduvali Qutbiddin* (Uzbekistan, 2020), *Premio Mondiale "Tulliola- Renato Filippelli"* (Italy, 2021) and the *Award of excellence "City of Galateo -Antonio De Ferraris"* (Italy, 2021).

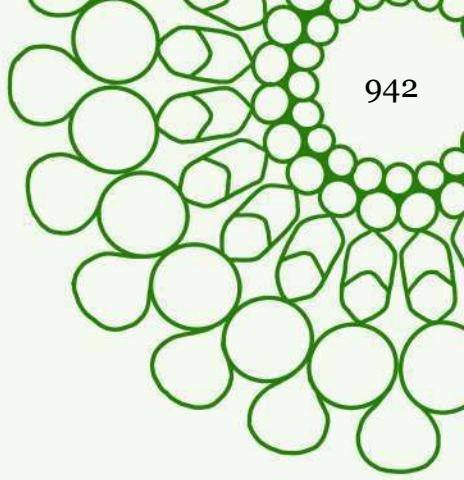


Juljana Mehmeti
Albania

IDENTITY

The leaves turn green and I wake up in thousands of buds
as I observe this confection of the soul
that is generated
in endless fragrances
Resuming of a new journey
across the spring garden
that opens a gate
and sends me to collect daisies
you make a garland
to my dreams
and to transform into the hairdresser of troubled desires
there in the lawn of my passages.

I was before
Perhaps at the roots of the earth
at the extreme ends of the age
perhaps in a star collapsing to the lake
to be extinguished, dead and reborn,
empty frames
the eclipse of genesis that raised us
to walk
sitting on the carved platform
castles that murmur inside.



I look beyond the reflex in the mirror
 I ask for more courage
 To conquer the daily displayed image
 and shine the emeralds in the eyes,
 not memories of silent fantasies
 neither bodies turned into ashes
 but the flourishing of the graces of nature
 to learn the identity of the soul.

STOP AND GO

I would love to get lost
 somewhere between the unknown dreams
 visions descended from the afterlife
 in un-deciphered colours
 sometimes as an approach to touch the light
 unbridled imagination
 and sometimes raised above the planted anxiety
 displacing plumes of smoke
 playing with neurons
 and put them to a temporary sleep
 enraged,
 to awaken the instant effort again
 and return to the escape of the soul.

I do not know from whom, why and when?!

I would like to leave
 now more than ever
 as I move around the illusion
 jumping paces;
 stop and go!



NANKURUNAISA

I always seek for imaginary balance
 Arm stretching of bones and blood
 to upraise the body to the feet
 and displace it far away
 seeking for a point of support.

Vibrating sensations of invisible air
 I feel them to the skin
 the capricious slide of the universe
 that ignites the pores
 in a perfect fusion
 of unbridled imagination
 of the lost consciousness
 shapes of leaves detached from the trunk.

I like to lie down
 To the sunlight reflection
 the iris of a bud of dew
 the daisy flower embedded in the ground
 the crown of a wandering cloud dancing in the sea-sky
 The aura that surrounds the discovered body ...

In time, everything goes to the right place!

** Nankurunaisa - everything is systematised over time*

Translated Into English by Arben Hoti



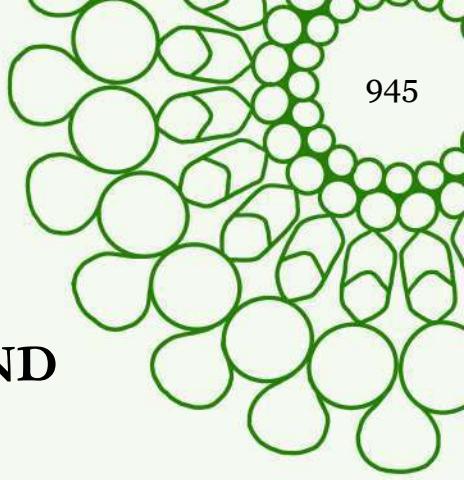
About Juljana Mehmeti

Juljana became fond of literature and writing, especially poetry, from her childhood. She views poetry as a way to better express her ideas, thoughts, visions and metaphysics. The collection of poems "Oltrepassare" is her new book, which presents itself with the new tendencies of Albanian literature, postmodernism and universal consciousness, from experimental currents to absurdity.



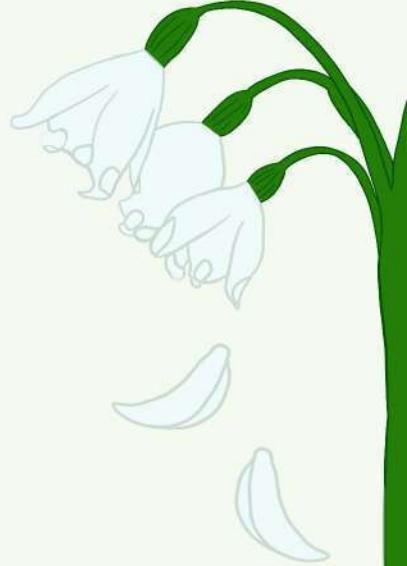
Julio Pavanetti
Uruguay

BETWEEN HEAVEN AND SEA



Between heaven and sea, a line.

A sword pierces the guts of the night
with lights of spume
-deep and mysterious in its muteness-
liquefying pearls in the dome,
as the lute cries its tears of blood
withdrawn from its memories.



Between heaven and sea, a line.

Caresses getting wet without cover.
Kisses protecting themselves from kisses
while impatiently our thighs quiver
as the moon among crystals interrupts its stroll,
since love always survives
the feverish dark moment.

Between heaven and sea, a line.

Translated by María Juliana Villafañe

EXILE HURTS

Far away, freedom calls
and here exile corrodes,
threatens us, envelops us,
penetrates us, and stabs
as if it were a dagger.

The exile enters the depth of the soul
and pains, so much,

as if one has before him
the woman he loves,
but is not allowed to kiss.

Translated by Germain Droogenbrodt and Stanley Barkan

LIFE

Like any abrupt excess,
so surprising as unexpected,
life does not rest in the mirrors.

It is needed to keep some summer
hidden in the cheeks,
and a cloaked song in a corner of the pulse,
before graffiti
-which the years painted in the soul- fade
and before the wind leaves the eyelids.

Life is no more than a sigh,
a motel rented by the hour.

Translated by Annabel Villar & Gabriela Pavanetti



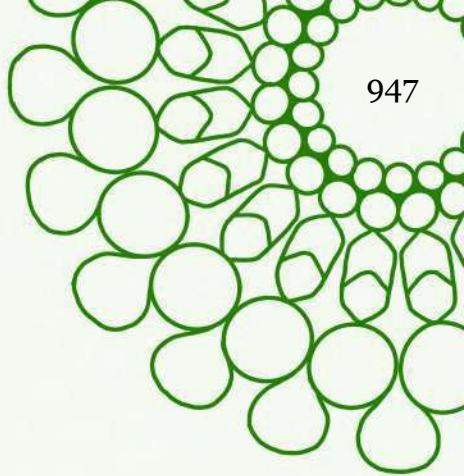
About Julio Pavanetti

Julio is a poet, cultural promoter, founder of the international poet's association "Liceo Poético de Benidorm" and a Honorary Member of the American Academy of Modern Literature. He has published 11 books of poetry. His book "*At the touch of a silent flesh*" won the first prize in the contest of Aspe, Spain, in 2015. Recently, he has won the 1st prize for foreign poets of the VIII Edition of the "Città del Galateo - Antonio De Ferraris" International Excellence Award, Rome, Italy, 2021. He has participated in several international summits and poetry festivals and has taken part in more than 80 international anthologies.



Svetlana Gritsenko-Makarova
Russia

WAR STORY



Mom used to tell us war's misfortunes,
About longest hunger days,
Mariyka-sister's dying torture,
And brother crying on her chest...

The blizzard screamed and hit the windows.
Dreams did not knock the starving door.
The trains were loud, howling lingers,
As if to take away from war.

And fumbling through the kitchen – wasted...
No food for long, just spoons and knife,
They found and ate the soap that tasted
Like bread by then, like pain – for life.

I dreamed of their bluish faces,
Teenager-girl, deluded, lone.
Her Mother in the front-line trenches
The blizzard-death is never gone.

A fog rolled over sleeping mounds,
The silence hung its fragile spell.
My heart still feels the wounded sounds
Of war, that mother used to tell.

Translated by Liudmila Murashova



About Svetlana Gritsenko

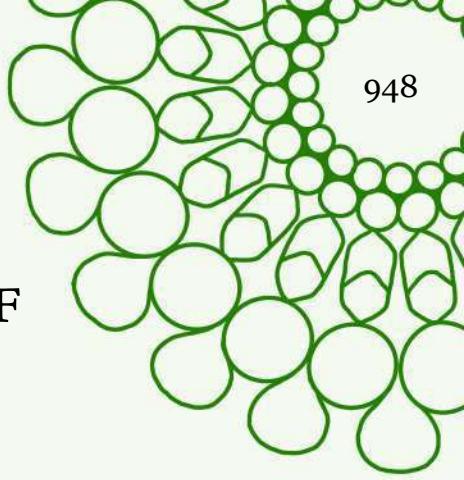
Svetlana is a poet, novelist, publicist, a secretary of the Union of Writers of Russia and a coordinator of the project "World without Walls" in the Southern Federal District. Svetlana is an honoured art worker of the Kuban, laureate of the Publishing House "Russian Writer", laureate of the All-Russian Orthodox Literary Prize of the Holy Blessed Prince Alexander Nevsky and laureate of the International Literary Prize of I.V. Narbut (2014). Some of her novels include "Deaf years", "Leopard's Leap", "Domes" and "Rain in a large cage."



I BURY THE SEEDS OF POETRY INTO THE ENEMY POSITION

Tang Chengmao
China

I draw a map in my diary, and every inch of land is territory.
 I bury the seeds of poetry into the enemy position,
 Turning hatred into water,
 Burying gunpowder and swords.
 The only thing left
 Is the light of crops
 My parents use the same hands that have cut rice and wheat to touch
 My poetry and life.
 In my diaries my parents
 Talk to the flying birds, and amid the quiet barks of the big yellow dog,
 let the thrushes
 Fly lowly to the large baskets containing millet and wheat and beans.
 Full of mirth, they are leading the blossoming white clouds and the old
 cows
 And travelling around the world which is filled with peace and warmth.
 My big brother, second brother and younger brother in my diaries
 Are digging holes and spreading manure in the potato fields. They are
 Burying hatred and quarrels bit by bit, turning sparrows and shields
 Into farming tools, planting the whole village
 With crops and smiles, sharpening the sickle,
 Giving every dog
 A human-like life, straightening every seed
 To walk upright, letting the dark nights maintain



The posture of light, covering all the callused hands
With sunlight and dignity, making all the lives
Healthy, beautiful and moist

Translated by Tian Shuo



About Tang Chengmao

Tang is a poet, editor, national first-level writer and deputy secretary general of the Chinese Poetry Society. He has published 11 literary monographs and won the “Pushkin Poetry Award” by the Russian Writers Association, the Spanish “International Poet Laureate Award”, the Chinese Contemporary Poetry Award and the Top 100 Most Influential Poets of New Poetry in 100 Years. In 2020, he received the “Top Ten Poets of the Year” and the “Lu Xun Poetry Award.”



Katarina Sarić
Budva / Bulgaria

EMBRYO

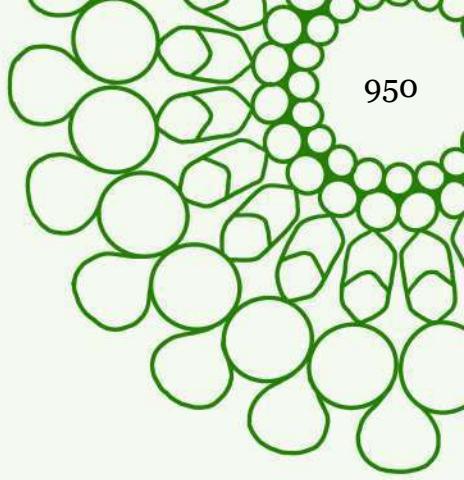
On the day when Crnjanski over Nadia comes into my life
like child born awry
by forceps
it snipped my last efforts to fit into a prescript
regulated standards

(Nadia is a Russian peeress on an imaginary throne)
She supports living sewing cloth dolls
in London
at a time that heedlessly rushes
hisses

She
the joy
that one wilderness that broke into civilisation
that wantonness that does not see the matrix
pieces her corrupted genocidal gapes
proud, silent and enduring

The day I am born through Nadia
the day on which I release rats
down the sewage
I burn the paper boats
I spit on European ghettos
- but, actually, the day of my biological birth
marked by shooting and planting a svetle pine
by the hand of my drunken father
the avenger for the mongrel life

(They said they'd never rejoiced a Montenegrin as they did me)



And that I was given the noble name
so that it lasts
memory on that measure of responsibility
- There must be always someone to defy
but it was long before the ability to choose
persecution or prophecy
- In your village never be that sheep
the burning victim
The day I dye my hair and sew the slots in my cavities
is the day that the cloth doll
I become
I pretend I am dead

- There is always someone from above watching us
I give
it
to the girls to dress it
throw it
to the boys to play with it
- Some events just scar us for life
The day I start embroidering a shrine
the hell of a day
the day for the witches on their brooms
the newcomers who've cut
that pine on the corner of our street
(it interfered with the entrance to the new five-story building)

Never have I showed my real face again
Never have I let my natural hair grow
or a step across that nook cut away
I've eaten all the dark
when I stopped my word on honour
- Some events just scythe us
in a moment
and for life

Translated by Ilija Stanković

About Katarina Sarić

Katarina is a writer, poetic provocateur and performance artist. She writes socially-engaged poetry, prose and essayistic. She is a graduate of philosophy and language. She is the author of 13 independent editions, represented in numerous co-authors, anthologies, collections, on all major regional portals. Scientific works have been written about her poetry and prose. Her works were awarded, translated and published in the region but also on the global literary scene.



REFLECTION TOWARDS THE SOUTH

Jorge Etcheverry Arcaya
Chile

English translation of the opening pages of the book 'Reflexión hacia el Sur'

We are a people strangely endowed by nature. I've never liked comments that suggest ethnocentrism

But we have to acknowledge we Chileans have been shaped by a set of determinants that are out of our hands. Geographic features, an elongated coast, a couple of mountain ranges, stretching from the tropics to the pole

We have asked ourselves while writing these prolegomena, the pen hovering over a piece of paper covered with horizontal lines what made the Araucanians resist the conquistadors for so many centuries

As a people we've not been denied a double brightness, like the moon reflected in a pool, of military victories, of cultural accomplishments at a universal level

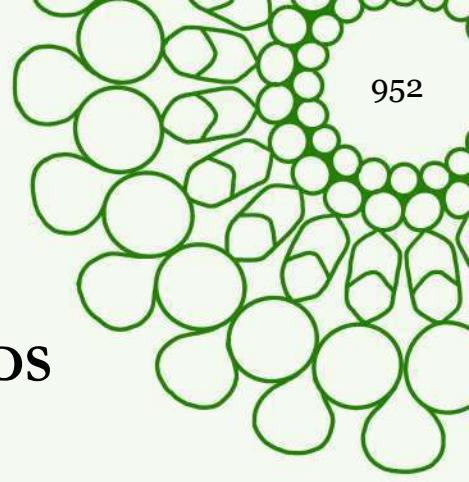
Social upheavals, martyrs, a utopia nearly at hand. Strangled by her own umbilical cord. Abandoned in the wastelands of history

The impression I've always had is that of a kind of a seedbed needing lots of water and sun to bear fruit

Under the calm surface of the earth vast movements are gestating

At times the affluent classes believe they're able to perceive this rumour, part tremor, part snore, which doesn't let them sleep in peace, that paralyses fingers holding glasses in the midst of parties and social reunions, looks fixed and vacant

As if an enormous bird, invisible and sinister, had flown overhead,



making the entire Barrio Alto of Santiago pass through the perimeter of a tip of a wing

Like that, vast and slow, mute for decades, like healthy children of long gestation who suddenly start to walk

Like that, profound and terrible are not only the social movements but their signs

Certain displacements of the structures of power, some cultural manifestations

Are no more than the signs of those underground movements

As if Earth near the South Pole were a woman sleeping and dreaming the profound dream that comes with the heavy digestion of historical events, after the ingestion of a good many currents of blood

At the coast the sea turns red. Seagulls fly overhead in circles, excited The molten lava that warms her skin flows through her veins. Her fingers move spasmodically as a reflex and she whimpers in dreams

Which is the vast fabric of sayings, maxims and refrains, the music created and the poetry written in the four corners of Santiago, in the far North, flat and desert-like, in the far South, rugged, cold and scattered over islands

We are a people strangely endowed by nature. We adapt easily to other countries though we never integrate

The adventurous nature, the laconism of the South, the British calm of some people in Valparaiso, the quick speech of the North and their liking for simple, abundant food

The beauty of woman, the slanted olive eyes, the thick mane of hair, the sensuality, the angular face

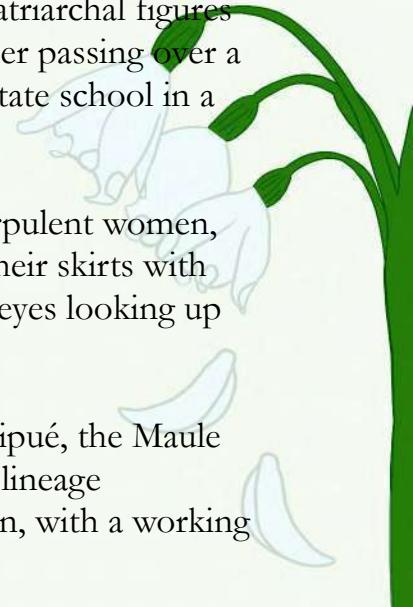
Long before the feminist explosion in North America, a flower of ambiguous petals, many ladies in Santiago were separated or had their marriages annulled

Like burlap protecting incipient sunflowers against the onslaught of the sun, the ice and the frost, safeguarding the growth of children later sent out into the world to carry out the diverse tasks of men

Justicia Espada was the first female engineer in Chile. Magaly Honorato, the first woman to be tortured and killed in jail at the beginning of the seventies

Innumerable Metis women with enormous eyes and ample bosoms trace their lineage from the Araucanians, from the angular profile of Ines de Suárez, from the myth of La Quintrala, red-haired and shrouded in fog

Violeta Parra flies up singing, entangling several other matriarchal figures as she takes flight. The young Gabriela Mistral watches her passing over a stone wall in the Norte Chico as she walks towards the State school in a white pinafore, her hair tied up in braids



The historical events stain with blood the bosoms of corpulent women, providers for huge families who grow up hanging onto their skirts with small hands like those painted by Pedro Lobos and dark eyes looking up in wonder

Señora Marta is the center of power and social life in Coipué, the Maule River region, together with her children of pure Spanish lineage preserved in this botanical garden of boldo and hawthorn, with a working husband you don't even notice

She brings together singers and overseers in her adobe house of inscrutable depths, distant ceilings and tiny windows

Nilda Silva, may she rest in peace, works as a water carrier at age seven. Registers herself in the school run by the priests, sees the ocean for the first time in Tal Tal, throws herself face down on the floor trembling with wonder

Raises fifteen children and others she takes in. Cares for a fallen angel of a husband who dreams and mumbles about lost treasures, who develops a form of sculpture like a scrap-iron filigree

Protects her daughters against prostitution with the Bible and the rod. Dies blessing her enemies. The hills of Coquimbo dressed in mourning

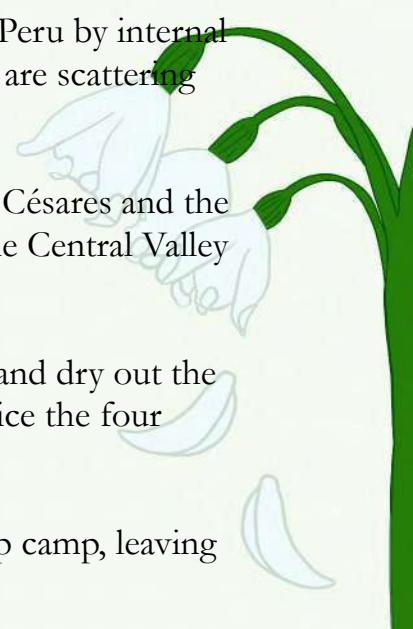
Nana Arcaya leaves the mansion, stops attending high society dances, and hangs up her ballet slippers at age twenty after the dictator Ibáñez banishes her father, the colonel, to the Juan Fernandez Islands

She works for decades and raises two children who cannot obliterate the nostalgia

But before that, the machis, possessed, twist convulsively, as through magic they keep themselves suspended on the top of the cinnamon tree, uniting that race of broad face and strong torso and high-pitched bird-like voice, with the sky, the Earth, the sun and the mountains

Crossing the Cordillera are the Collela Ché, multicoloured birds that keep their queen, a girl of seven, afloat in the air

Then the lethargic conquistadors, forced out of opulent Peru by internal strife among leaders, bearded, in rags, harquebuses rusty, are scattering towards the South in the grip of a weary greediness



Their inner eyes caressing the legends of the City of the Césares and the bodies of the Indian maidens as they spill out towards the Central Valley and the far South

As their concubines cook for them in improvised ovens and dry out the powder wet from the last rain and they gamble away at dice the four corners of the world

They have been spreading their seed wherever they set up camp, leaving behind children with sensitive, perplexed eyes

The skies of the South shake in turbulence as they advance through bogs and forests, those four-legged machines whose upper part is made of metal and spits fire

For some Emissaries of God the region is the lower vertex of a triangle, one point sunk in the chest of the divinity, the other in the Crown of Spain

Later they will make an inventory of the voices of the despised language while discussing theology in an atmosphere that smells of horse dung

Four hundred thousand conquistadors lie buried, fertilising the region called La Frontera

In the final years of the nineteenth century General Bulnes launches a campaign to root out the Araucanians. The border is crossed. Those older than eight are put to the knife

Since long before, Caupolicán carried an enormous log on his back for two days and two nights. Now the children of the Araucanians load sacks of flour in the bakeries

Lautaro did intelligence work, learned military techniques, incorporated the Spanish horse into battle

After having his hands amputated, Galvarino fought with the stumps

Like a field sown with brown grain razed by a fire that cannot burn its roots, these people sit waiting on the steps of the Government Building

Five hundred years isn't that long for people who measure time in seasons and natural catastrophes

The Indians wander among their dwellings on the humid fertile ground of Arauco, taking care of flocks of hens that lay blue or greenish eggs, eating flour with water, raising children with high-pitched voices who talk with birds and one fine day migrate to the cities to look for work

Small, well-formed hands and feet, strong torsos, eyes big and brown, prominent chests and singsong voices, an aptitude for silver work and the indisputable role of women in religious and social life

A poor metabolism for wine

They sink their feet firmly in the humid grass of the South. The official accounts downplay the size of the indigenous population. They prepare themselves to wait another couple of centuries at best

*Translated from Spanish
Edited by Sharon Khan.*



About Jorge Etcheverry Arcaya

Jorges' texts of poetry, prose and criticism have been published in various countries. His books include Clorodíaxepóxido (poems, Chile, 2017), Canadografía, antología de prosa hispano canadiense, (Chile, 2017) and Los herederos (science fiction novel, 2018). He has appeared in several anthologies including 26 poètes d'aujourd'hui (France, 2021). His latest publications in magazines are in La Pluma del Ganso, Mexico, where he was a guest writer in issue 105 (2018). He is also the Canadian Ambassador for Poets of the World.



Shahid Abbas
Pakistan

LOVE'S PURITY

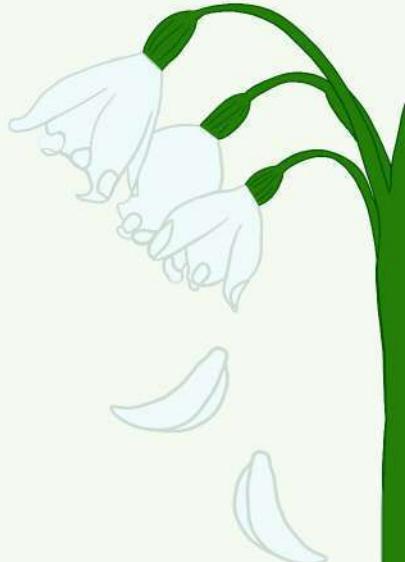
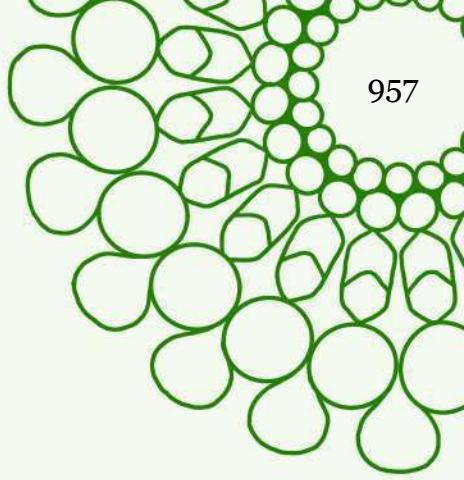
When every word is love
How is it possible

The tongue speaks deceit

When the chest heaves
From a heavy heart
Can you speak of love's purity

Redeem me
in my suffering
Vindicate me
in an unspoken covenant
Forgive my iniquity
aspiring to fly to angels
I plummet in free fall to earth
with the mighty heft of stone

Point to the new reality
Turn to me in gratitude
I am lonely
Afflicted
Remorse imprisons
Release me from anguish
Look kindly upon my distress
Set my heart at rest



Let me not drop into the pit
 Where lies deep shame
 In you is my refuge
 You protect me
 In your promise is my hope

Redeem me
 A lost man stumbling
 Mumbling words of despair
 I surrender my anguish to you
 Ecstasy and joy my sole rewards
 My trouble sacrificed at your feet

Dance me to the moon
 And please never ask why.....



About Shahid Abbas

Shahid began writing poetry when he was 19 years old. He has received many writing awards and his stories have been published in many international newspapers. He is the co-author of “*We speak in syllables*”, “*Words with wings*” and “*Tears of despair*”.



Eduard Harents
Armenia

LOVE

Trough the 30 dawns of my life,
from flower to flower,
leaving all my sins aside,
by the time I arrived,
she had already left,
leaving the Supper table behind...

And I
laughed the words
inwards until yesterday
like
psychotropic fish...

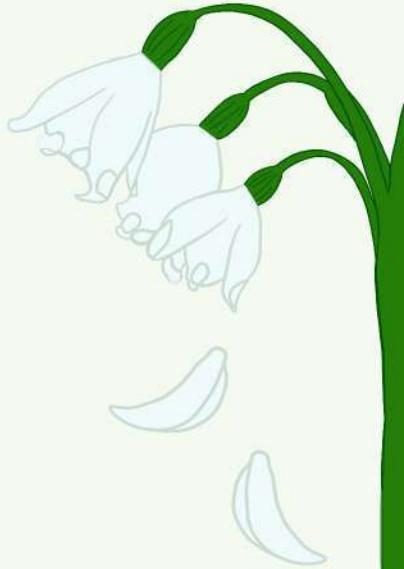
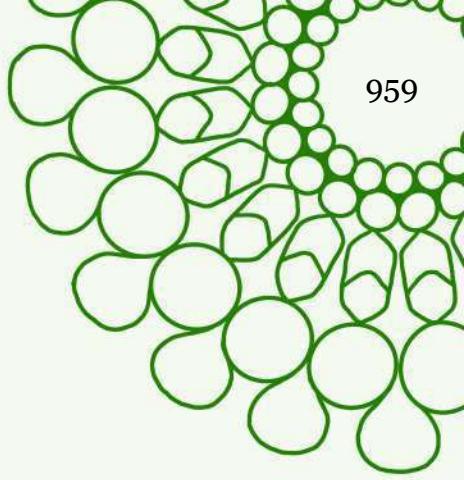
It turned out 33 was too many...

Translated from Armenian by Anna Talalyan

YEARNING

The shadow of colour
is scaling
the scars of day;
walking the serenity
of an encountered dream...

The flower is the secret
of pain;
an introspective smile.



The scion names the sin.

Beyond personal bandages
of prayer,
the self-denial of a tree
is as much bright
as warm are the hands
of night.

I am freezing... your name.

Translated from Armenian by Harout Vartanian

THE ELEVENTH COMMANDMENT

When you let Love go from your hand,
give a clap to
your soul's weakness.

And to forgiveness of the light that flew
from your eaves
give a clap -
with palm to your cheek
from which you tore the flute of aroma.
Give a clap to the flute...

One hand gives a clap too...

Translated from Armenian by Ani Hakobyan



About Eduard Harents

Eduard is the author of 10 poetry collections. He has been published in numerous Armenian and foreign periodicals and anthologies. He is a quintuple prize winner: in 2007, 2009, 2011 and 2013. He was awarded Best Poetical Series and Best Translation nominations. Eduard's poems were translated into more than 50 languages, and he is the most translated Armenian poet of all time. He has published "The life lives me" (2016) and "Lethargic Vigilance" (2017).



WOMEN'S BUS

**Tincuța Horonceanu Bernevic
Romania**

The bus is full of old women
whispering and gazing out the window
with indifference

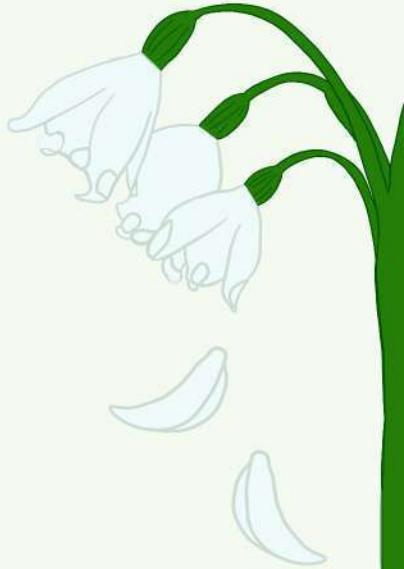
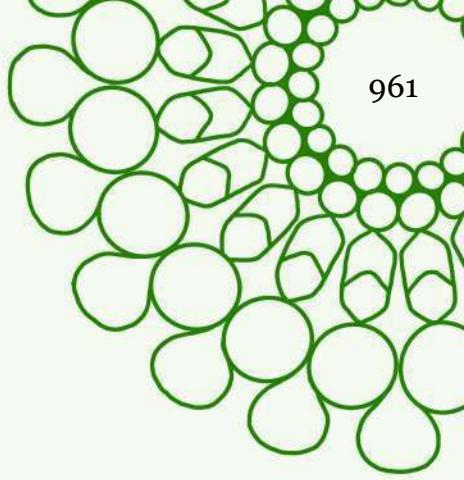
one carries in her heart, an emerald gown
in which she still waltzes

another, a black and white photo
tranquility does not have a place here

the elderly woman with a wool shawl
keeps a forest in her heart

a white, Birchwood forest
into which she goes every night
with thoughts of forgetting

the one by the window
keeps her violin in her heart



where it is safe

hearts of old women are inhabited

inside there is cleanliness and peace

as in a forgotten hermit's dwelling

locked doors guard simple things

so love wouldn't unravel

so wind gusts wouldn't enter

Translated by Alexandra Avram

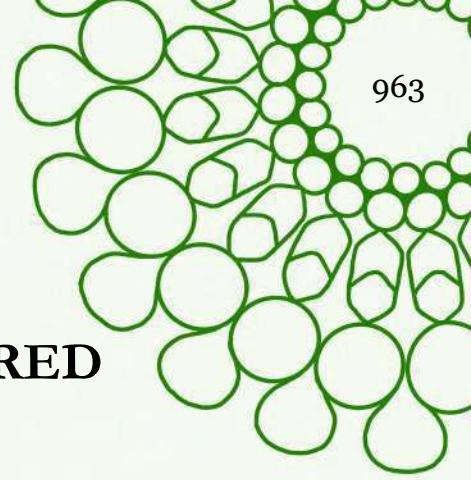


About Tincuța Horonceanu Bernevic

Tincuța is a poet, editor, member of the Writers Union of Romania, museographer at the George Bacovia Memorial House and editor for Plumb culture magazine. She writes poetry, short prose, plays, and children's literature. She has also received many literary awards.



PROMISES, WEATHERED



Achim Wagner
Germany

behind bushes
and barbed wire
i promise you
a carousel
with three layers of rust
horses who
lose their heads
planks which
creak beneath us
and finger-thick
dust for
our initials

Translated by Mark Terrill



About Achim Wagner

Achim is an author, photographer and translator. His most recent poetry books are "*bafış coğrafya*" (Nika Yayınevi, Ankara, 2013) and "*von grün bis halb sechs*" (Hochroth, Berlin, 2017). His photo documentary "*Şiir Sokakta*" ("the poem is on the street") is about poetry as a form of public protest and street art (2014). Wagner received numerous awards and fellowships.

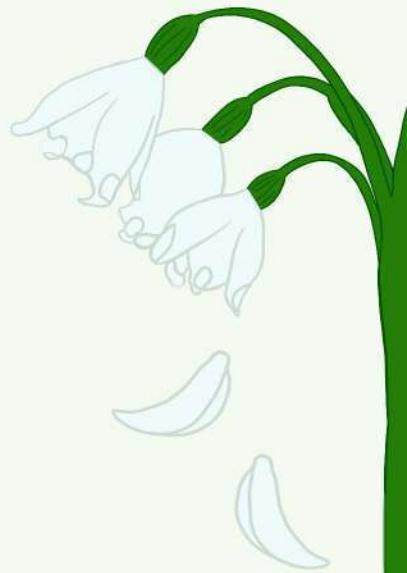
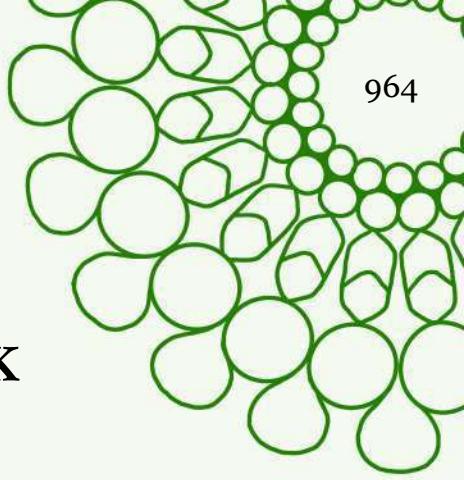


AFTER COMING BACK

**Hassan Hegazy Hassan
Egypt**

The past visited me
in the tender voice of love.
I crossed hundreds of years
to tomorrow.
I abandoned the dream
and forgot the thirsty wound
for the blood of the heart.
So I sank into the sea of love.
The waves lifted me up
to your eyes, to the beach.
I intended to cross the seven seas
to bring you the mystery of
the beautiful roses,
to bring the mother pearl for you
to decorate the most beautiful neck,
Your neck!
To guard the most valuable fruits
if the night falls or
the beach betrays.

I intended to come back,
carrying the seven Moons
that are cultivated with roses,
to bring for you Joseph's fat cows
to graze in the wheat fields
on the beach.
But I am sorry my love,
My life is too short to achieve the dream.
So, I'll plant my age a tree,
producing the sweetest flower,



to take care of the brightest chest,
 your chest!
 Hedged by the years of my life,
 bearing the best fruit in the garden
 of honesty.
 Sorry, my love,
 the gain from my first journey is honesty,
 Is it enough for your dowry?!

BECAUSE YOU ARE FANTASTIC!

Because you are fantastic like a dream,
 like the cheeks of roses,
 like the dew of the morning,
 When lovely, it spreads the parcel of silver,
 On the face of the morning:
 I love you!
 I have made my age a poem of love
 to sing it for your eyes .
 I have made my age a necklace of sincerity
 for your sake.
 Because I love silence ,
 I love you in silence!
 Do you know that you are fantastic,
 charming, like a dream!



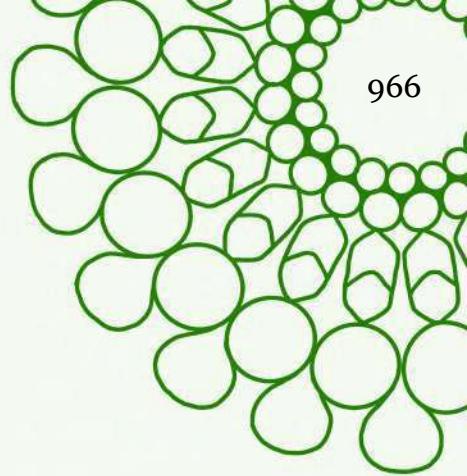
About Hassan Hegazy Hassan

Hassan is a poet and translator. He is a member of several groups: the Egyptian Writers Union, the Egyptian Translators and Linguists Association, the Arab Internet Writers Union and the Literature Club in Sharkia. He has also published several publications on poetry and translation.



Zoran Doderovic
Serbia

HAIKU



fallen magnolia petals
the little girl makes
a new flower

a stormy sea
in the refugees' eyes
hope shimmering

scent of hyacinth
fills the empty room –
mother's birthday



About Zoran Doderovic

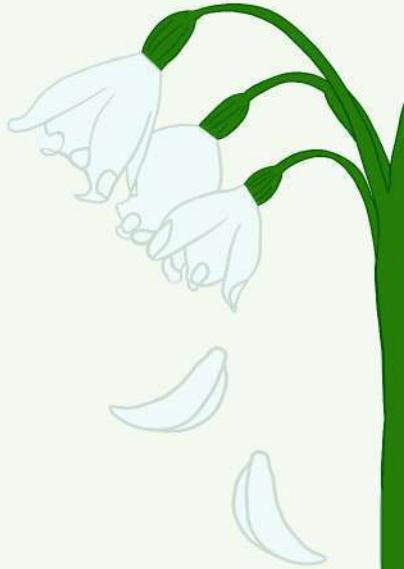
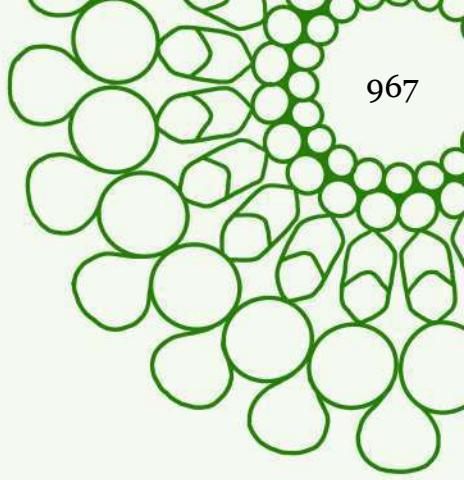
Zoran is a writer of short stories, aphorisms and haiku. He was editor of Haiku Moment and Haiku Informator. He received many awards and his works have been published in many magazines and anthologies. He published a book of haiku, *Poisoned River* (2000), and co-authored *Crosswinds* (2003), with four haiku poets, and *PreZENT anecdote* (2006).



BARCELONA SONG

Aleš Mustar
Slovenia

Warm Mediterranean air
in late December
hot rhythms
melodious speech
aromas of seafood and fish
vibrant colours of citrus
the lively pulse of the streets
pierced by police sirens
and flashing blue lights.
At every step law enforcers with machine guns
defend the achievements of civilisation.
I prefer to lead my family to the haven
of the Sagrada Família that has stood unfinished for one hundred and
thirty-five years
and ask the Lord for spiritual asylum.
To enter you need a printed e-ticket
or the right app on your mobile phone
while applications for spiritual asylum
are accepted only on papyrus rolls,
a facsimile will not do.
Thus, among the trunks of a heavenly forest
bowing before the giant of new art
I pray for a miracle
that would turn the boats in the local harbour
into our own Noah's Ark.
But there is no time to complete my prayer.



The sharp stare of a baton-toting security guard
is a sure sign that it's closing time.
He whisks me, my family in tow, out to the street,
among the market stalls.
There is no way to buy new tickets online
before we depart for home.
So I just buy a calendar with Gaudi's works
that next year will be an icon on the wall
of our small family home.
When the architect's canonisation process is complete,
I shall embark on the first pilgrimage of my life.

Translated from the Slovene by Manja Maksimović



About Aleš Mustar

Ales is a poet and literary translator that works as a freelancer. His poems have appeared in translation in many foreign languages and are included in many anthologies. He is translating literature from Romanian and Macedonia and so far, has translated more than 25 volumes. He has participated at poetry festivals and readings in the Netherlands, Denmark, Macedonia, Romania, Montenegro, Croatia, etc. He has published “*Court Interpretations*” (2005) and “*Middle Age*” (2017).



HOPING FOR PEACE AND UNDERSTANDING

Shabbirhusein K Jamnagerwalla
Tanzania

My life is full of fun and tranquility

Having been born in a family of pious and positive minded parents

There were norms and regulations to be followed here

Just like in any recognised society or club

I was raised in a family where faith and culture was practiced at every corner

My parents tutored me about my heritage and generation

The standards to be adhered to

And from where our kindness and love for Mankind derived

Yes my life comprised of divineness in my soul and purity in my belief

And my happiness was a process of doing good to others

And my strength was a result of positiveness in my thoughts and actions

My friends were selected purposely

Being from clean and educated families

Where there was no selection of caste and creed

And where religion was discussed and respected by all

I shared my salient moments openly

And I helped others without having any selfish intentions

And I was always taught to amicably bow down

And forgive others

And respect all honest opinions and positive vibes.

Here was an exemplary family

Who believed that Allah was instrumental in whatever happened in our lives

Allah was a part and parcel of our every action and deed

And there was a need to thankfully submit to Him only

In our temporary abode on mother earth

Where the thunders struck and the floods came and the earthquakes shook

That brought misery and anguish to us all;

And there were days in our lives when the horizons brought joy and laughter through cascades of brilliant sunshine.

He has presented Mankind with natural forests and fauna

To tend and care for

With attention and love

For these natural presents to Mankind

Bring fragrances of natural beauty and freshness to us all.

And through all these peaceful upbringing and notable moments

There was always hope

Through these trials and challenges

That yes indeed there was a bonded emerging faith

That Allah would always grant us better days and a happy future.



About Shabbirhusein K Jamnagerwala

Shabbirhusein first started writing poems around 50 years back. Since then, he has passionately been writing in several poetry groups and getting recognition. Shabbirhusein has been bestowed with honourable certificates by Motivational Strips and India's Gujarat Sahitya Academy for literary excellence for with global Literary standards. He is awarded with Kairat Duissenov Medal for Poetic Excellence for his tribute poem, *Kairat, You Are Missed!* His poem, "Dancing into our lives" is featured in Chaotic Times by Authors Brenda Mohamed and Florabelle Lutchman.



Tanja Bakic
Montenegro

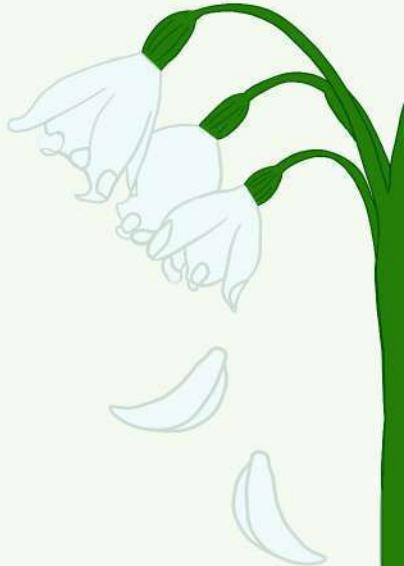
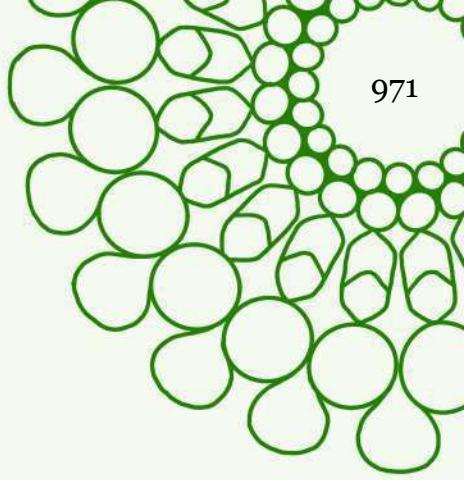
HYACINTH - GIRL

Your sensory mind,
Like a laser beam,
Draws black rings
Upon my breasts

I'm a clockwork orange

I wake up at dawn
And watch
through my window
White butterflies
from Hyde Park

I'm a hyacinth-girl,
Your 3D lover,
In the desert-land
Of harpsichord and dandelions



WALNUT SHELLS

I was five years old
when I planted walnut seeds
together with my granny.
I put the seeds
deep inside the ground
and watered them
with a bucket.
In that way the tree
grew in a distant glade
and sometimes I would
walk there to see it.

In the meantime
it grew taller than me,
developing a thick
crown of leaves and
bearing fruit.

The last time I saw the tree
was twenty years ago.
Its sweet fruits filled the slope
of that glade
from top to bottom.
I picked some
and carried them
with me far away.

But I did not return
to the same town,
or the same place
ever again.

And I did not crack open
the walnuts I'd picked back then
to taste the nuts inside.

I left them standing
on the top of the wardrobe
in my new home,
not to remind me of the tree
I had planted as a five-year-old girl
with my granny, but to listen
to the beat of my granny's heart
hidden inside its shell.

My granny is now
sleeping beneath the ground.



About Tanja Bakic

Tanjas' first poetry volume was released when she was 15 years old. She has produced four poetry volumes. Her poems, apart from being frequently anthologised, have appeared in *Live Encounters*, *Words without Borders*, *Modern Literature*, etc. She was an invited guest at numerous international literature festivals and gatherings and served several international Artist-in-Residence programmes.



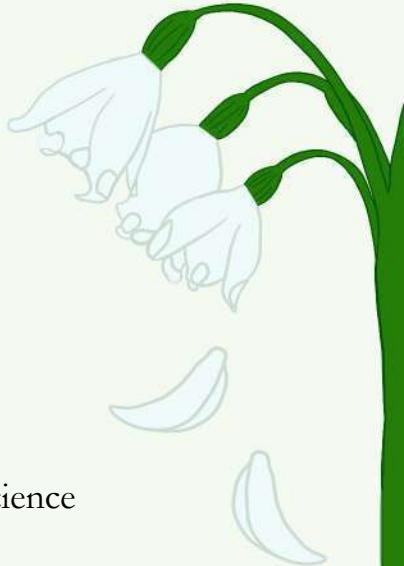
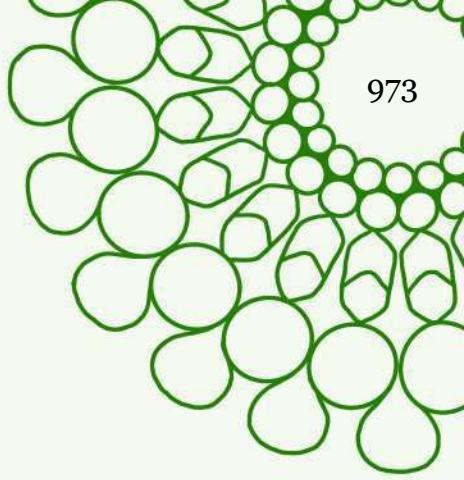
ILLUSION

**Jamal Hossian
Bangladesh**

God alone is sitting on the throne
 From there, came the message-
 You are on the wrong path, O' the world's people
 By which illusion you are trapped in is the 'modernity'
 Spreading spider webs
 You are standing in the mouth of an eternal pit
 But in the unending darkness, the frightened cry of conscience
 Can't you hear?

God alone is sitting on the throne
 From there, came the order-
 Throw your arrogance on the surface of the abyss
 I did so
 From the depths of extreme darkness
 Came up a terrible monster
 Strong sting in the skull of existence
 The heart turned blue with gigantic inflammation
 The fire blazed in the brain
 The ashtray was burnt by the bone ashes
 Eyes, ears, voice, neck, nose, buttocks are burning
 The tongue is burning, the whole body is burning
 Everything I touch is burning.

Through the transparent darkness of the constellations
 God came down and said-
 'You have become the meat of the swine'



You are suicidal
 You are arrogant, you are dispelled from the truth
 If you want to live-
 But, be human at the end. '

CRACKS ARE GETTING LONGER

Are we getting naked like our primitive ancestors?
 Living in the mountain caves?
 Wearing the leaves and bark of trees?

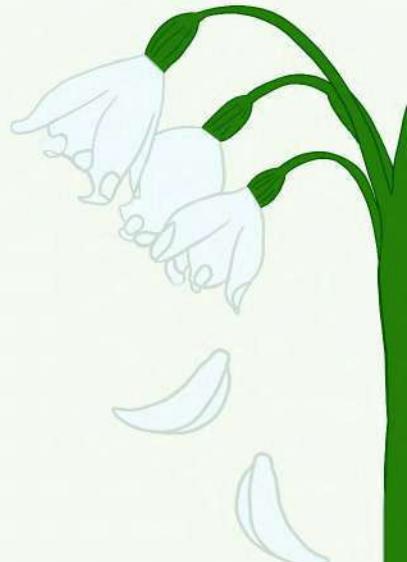
Cracks of nudity are getting longer day by day
 Prehistoric skeletons are coming out of the cracks
 Germs were sleeping under the skeleton
 They woke up today.

The enemy attacked my wrecked home

Crossing the rivers, canals, haor, and marshy lands
 Walking and walking in the shade of the palm trees
 I do not know where I am going
 Walking on the axis with a white stick in hand

The flame of death is flickering
 Like a firefly on the buttocks of darkness
 And I'm looking for my forefather's footprints

With the touch of my palm, now it will
 Burn like a fiery prairie fire
 The indomitable fire will burn the palace
 Diamond, Jewelry, Gold, Grains, Silk, Muslin
 Trees, malls, roads, and the states
 Mountain high arrogance, invincible pride, beauty and the youth



Standing on the minaret of accumulated ash
The last legacy of Homo sapiens
A lonely skeleton faded in fear.

All Poems Translated by Professor Dr. Azizur Rahman



About Jamal Hossian

Jamal is a poet, painter and a diplomat. He currently holds the position of ‘Consul General’ at the Consulate General of Bangladesh in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. He is mostly known for his unique style of portraying a humanistic view of nature and life in his poetry. His first poetry book was published in 2016 and titles of his poetry books include: *Pronoti Grohon koro Pita* (2020), *Nil Lefafar Chithi* (2021) and *Ekmutho Polimaati* (2021).



SEPTEMBER OBSERVATIONS

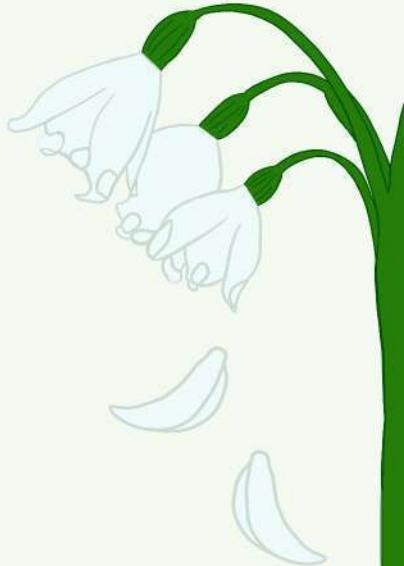
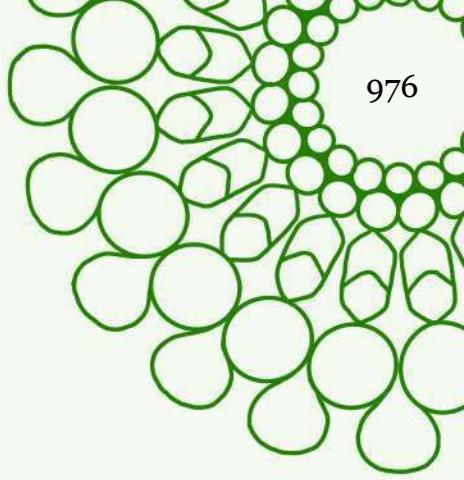
Vasyl Makhno
Ukraine

Its warmth seeps into homes from outside:
here is the September I wanted
and the ocean with its faint horizon
at arm's length pot-belly tankers
sail along the shore – to refill splashing oil
they line up at the New York port

A man and a woman in lounge chairs
a seagull nearby cleans its beak
Conversations about life before the pandemic
the opera season the Mexican beach
the green Catskill mountains
They sit together with the waves until dusk

Air that turns cinnamon
with geese's wings, with the feathers of sickle wing swallows
it smells of smoke from chimneys and stacks
You turn over the hourglass
like the unsure and simple rhymes
of faded grass and dried nettle

Above a single engine plane sputters
finds night above the island once again
perhaps blindly hauling something
won't it take a right turn all the way to the moon?
It ceaselessly looks for a place to land
and the fuel from its nozzle drips and drips



You walk from the shore through fog up to your ankles
 to the door of your house – Time becomes shorter—
 you think – like the rhymes in verse –
 like pilings in the ocean – a shadow on the shore
 like seagulls wrinkled and twisted like monograms
 on sands blackened by rain

Does our life become shorter? He has that thought?
 And calligraphy won't change that
 nor the quiet of quiet – nor sound – nor the noisy
 flight of migrations – nor a string of tankers
 on raids – nor swarms of insects
 or even a lone seagull on the sand

Translated from the Ukrainian by Olena Jennings

IN THE FLOOD PLAINS

not from the rain, but from the single drops
 heron's nests are soaked among the reeds
 in the coastal lakes of lagoons
 there is a station with a private shop
 for cans of gasoline, for emergencies
 we will find room in the boat

in the overgrown flood plains
 in the shallow water, in the dying grass
 white herons and pintail ducks
 their nest, impossible to see
 their magistrate in the Palace of Doges
 yellowed like folds of fat

in the reeds they sparkle like brooches
 like silver spoons in a case
 the necks of herons, their wings.
 Pintail ducks with neck scarves
 with bangs, hoods, hats
 of gold coiled threads



and when imagining an orchestra
 transfer the birds into a Fellini film
 where the brocade is thick and the water thin
 for the rusty croaks of the white herons
 for the single drops
 drumming on the metal of the boat

in these flood plains, in bird orchestras
 in the Venetian cities and beyond
 pintail ducks – herons out of water
 between their morning awakening and fear
 hiding their heads beneath a wing
 and on their thin and almost wiry

exquisitely crafted wooden legs
 in capes, dress-like, delicate
 peek out from the walls of reeds
 timidly, out of bird grief
 over the floodplains of July, white herons
 and behind them, overgrown thickets



Translated from the Ukrainian by Olena Jennings

THE PRODIGAL SON

if as in the Biblical parable that is read in the village church—
 the father runs out to greet his son and orders the servants to change his
 clothes
 and slaughter a lamb for him

then for me there should be at least a dim light shining in one of the
 rooms on the sixth
 floor

but it's dark—no one is waiting—either they're sleeping—it's past
 midnight—or they went somewhere
 and neglected to leave the key with the neighbours

maybe go to your closest friends: they greeted me so joyously for a night's stay

before they got married and listened so appreciatively to my poems
however my notebooks were confiscated at the border (the war with
terrorism) and

from memory alone I don't remember either addresses or telephone
numbers

if they're reading the parable of the wayward son in the village church
then someone must be hearing the most poignant words
as they stand outside with an uncovered head
upon which snow is furiously falling

Translated from the Ukrainian by Luba Gavur



About Vasyl Makhno

Vasyl is a poet, prose writer, essayist, and translator. He is the author of 14 collections of poetry and a book of short stories. His works have been widely translated into many languages; his books have been published in countries such as Germany, Romania, and the US. In 2015, he received the BBC Book of the Year Award (2015). He has published *The Eternal Calendar* (2019), *Biking along the Ocean* (2020) and *One Sail House* (2021).



Tareq Samin
Bangladesh

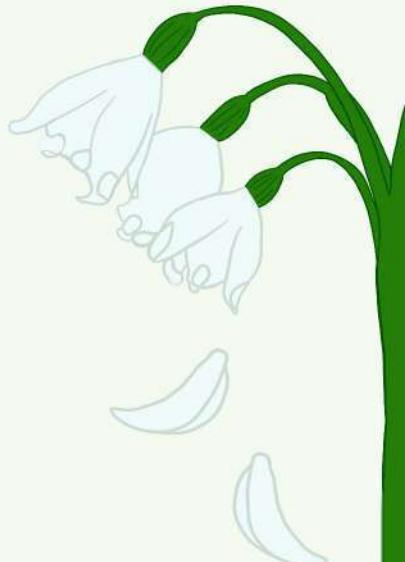
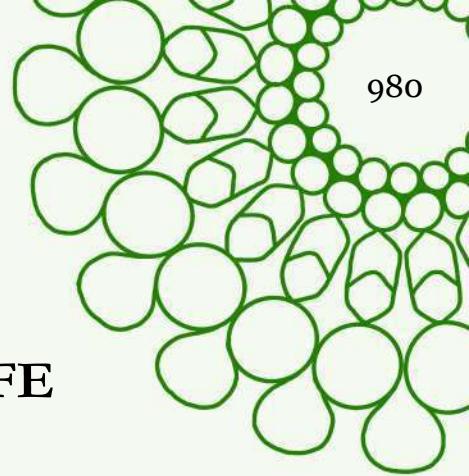
THE JOURNEY OF LIFE

I lost my path
and I found
the beautiful roses the vibrant rivers
the melodious singing of unknown birds.
I found friends
them; I have never met before.
Actually, this was my path
I was searching for it.
to know the unknown
to love the fallen flowers.
Yes, the journey was bitter
harsh and wild.
the hardship, the suffering
and all the tears.
Yet, it is I think,
the glory of human life
to lose our path
for something great to discover.

I MISS YOU A LOT

Your beautiful smile
is like the Monsoon rain
washed away all my pain.

You speak so soft
like the Himalayan snow
softened by Morning sun's glow.



Your eyes are like
morning dew
reflecting the freshness of Pokhara's lakes.

You touch my heart
like the mountaineer touches his rope
while falling from the top cliff, with a hope.

You are like sunshine
after a cold winter night.
I miss you a lot.

I miss you a lot.

MY HUMANHOOD

O mother earth,
you are my homeland
with different languages and culture,
I love you though as my mother.
I understand your pain
I understand your unspoken vibes
I have no country no race
I am a Humanist; my religion is love.
I am free from the boundary of so-called nations and enemies,
Trees are my brothers
Mountains are my sisters
Rivers are my aunts
Animals, insects and birds are my neighbours.
I am a universal traveler
in this limited human lifespan.

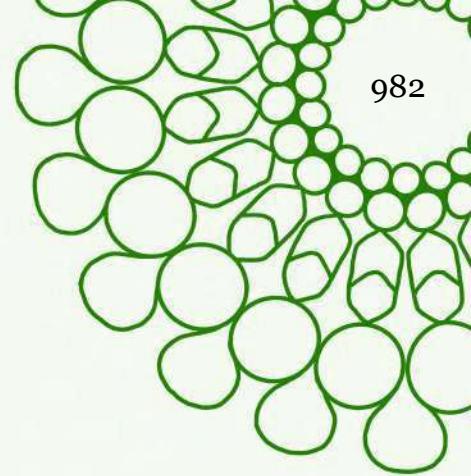
About Tareq Samin

Tareq is a bilingual writer and editor. He is the author of eight books and some of his poems are translated in English, Spanish, Chinese, German, and many languages. His poems, short stories and articles are published in more than 25 countries. Tareq has received the 'International Best Poets Award-2020' from The International Poetry Translation and Research Centre (IPTRC), China and the Greek Academy of Arts and Writing.



Taniya Chakraborty
India

INFATUATION



For you touched — crescent upon the touch
 I have risen from the water to the body
 An ogre has entered the body
 A god has entered the body
 From the body exude together god and ogre—
 Adding to subtract
 The flower blooms to wither...

Translated by Nam Hussain Begg Mullick

RICE AND FISH PLATE

I don't eat fish that much
 Fish is your favourite
 You learnt to catch with a spear
 I also think of debt to eat meat
 I know they will eat my soil (flesh)
 You call me crazy
 And save your words more & more...
 Don't put pieces of fish on my rice
 Don't take care of me as you are in love
 Let me sweat from now on
 Keep my tears with the fish in your rice & fish plate

Translated by Arunava Chatterjee

About Taniya Chakraborty

Taniya has published seven poetry books and has edited special books in the Bengali language. Some of her published books include: *Aamish Bibabo* (2017), *Junipokar aaloi badha ghor* (2018) and *Putul manush* (2019).





Chen Xianfa
China

ODE TO AUTUMN

Autumn. Flowing water gurgles on loud. White clouds seem almost real.
On bent knees I hung myself upside down from a tree, watching wild
bees flying around in the yard.

I knew you are coming to me. Softly you
pluck a white flower from the grave mound to decorate the hair at your
temples.

I am waiting for your arrival, wishing you end the monolithic, shameful
life I am leading now as an idler.

Low chants of wind brush crowns of pine trees, bringing an irrevocable
oracle. And I knew you will come any minute.

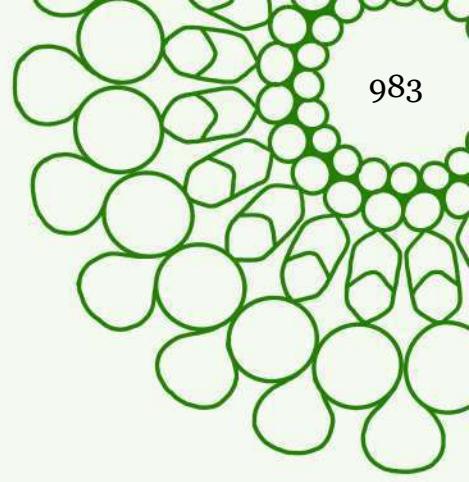
The instant I broke apart you seemed most real.

ACME OF ORDER

In prison I took pleasure in practicing headstand.
On my hands as I stood, the mountains had to follow suit.
Behind the bars, prison guards' faces were dangling down.
The tiger in the distance
Couldn't help but appear upside-down. All through the autumn,
I kept staring at its bottomless throat.

SOLITARY PEAK

The solitary peak spins alone, at the top of the top whipped by our
everyday existence.
There is a motionless table
spread over with everything it has witnessed and is always excluded from.



What it has experienced, is level with our knees.
 Its colour is hidden in sunset clouds.
 It is named the Solitary Peak,
 but in fact one can't even take one step on it.

A sloppy breakfast is ordered from outside the walls,
 to catch up with the lesson that has already been lost.

It is called the Solitary Peak,
 but as a matter of fact there is no spring scenery for one to see.

The continental shelf subsides in my wine cup.

The ripples in it conceal fears.
 The tabletop claims it is solitude that makes the peak a peak,
 but in reality it is a lonely man, with no space for him to turn around.

Like language adhering to a blank sheet of paper.
 In truth, the whipping top has an overlarge head,
 and yet cannot forgo its whiteness altogether.
 Tonight I stayed in the capital. One man going on a long journey is not in
 a position
 to articulate the difficulty of being invisible.

All Poems Translated from the Chinese by Li Hai



About Chen Xianfa

Chen has published several books of poetry, including “*The Heart of Writing Steles*” (2011), “*The Problem of Raising Cranes*” (2015), and “*Poems in Nines*” (2017). He has received well over a dozen poetry prizes, including the October Poetry Prize, the 2008 Poet of the Year Award, among others. In August 2018, he won the seventh Lu Xun Literary Prize for Poetry. His works have been translated into English, French, Russian, Spanish, and Greek. He has translated several books from English to Chinese.



Seeta Maya Rai
Bhutan

HYMNAL WAVES OF SEA

I walked miles on the path of solitariness
Weaving thoughts of an eternal happiness
To earn in winsome life without weariness
Holding it as my finest and daily business.

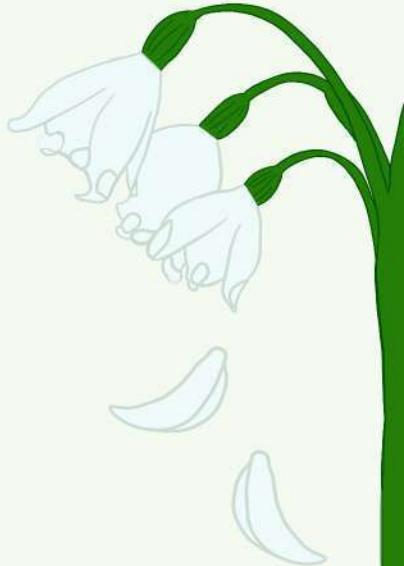
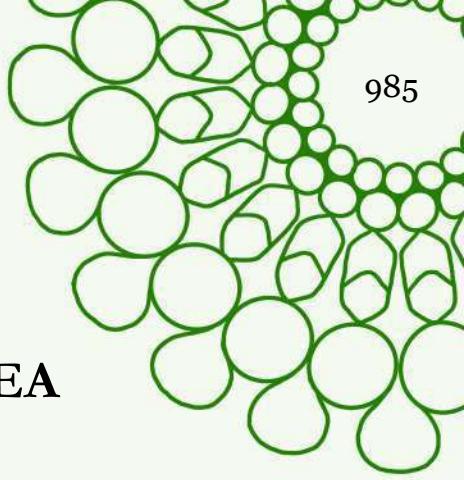
Bathing ocean full of sweats with sickness
Kept I walking without denying the darkness
Punching the little heart woven of braveness
Breathed I the cool atmosphere of fairness.

On nearing the seashore of cleanliness
Saw I thousand heads in sweet friendliness
Walking more nearer crowned I with craziness
Of the holy hymnal waves of sea in likeness.

Nature is the finest source of speciousness
Where one finds endless joy without hardness
So did I join the happy sea flowing in calmness
And lived I in the world of endless happiness.

VICTORY OF SILENCE

Silence is the golden hours of beatitude
To the men wearing distinct views of
attitude



Enjoy to the fullest like a little buzzing bee
In the coming of sweet spring on young tree.

Silence is the moment of self-realisation
To figure out the well-woven cherished
action
And to nurture the poorly grown sensation
In living the life of greatness with good vision.

Silence is the golden hours of interactions
With the green grown nature of various seasons
Fills the heart with happiest greenery around
That stays alive generating rustling sound.

Silence is the moment where ideas are born
Like the falling of snow from high sky to doon
For stepping the bright zone of greatness
And to bask the hued rays of eternal happiness.



UNFOLDING RAYS OF MORNING SUN

I rambled near the open window of ages
After ploughing the field of thousand pages
Filled with sobbing words of bitter sorrow
Written many years back in the silent morrow.

In the midst of bathing buckets of tear
Saw I young smiling golden sun in less fear
Beckoning me with its long soft hands
That passed through clouds for good sense.

Gazing her for hours pinched my heart
With ever owned eternal ecstasy since birth
The more mature she became with time
The more rays of tranquility did she sublime.

The sorrow that remained alive in me
Faded away slowly like the waves of calm sea
Crowning my head with courage, passion
And ecstasy did I live happily in every season.



About Seeta Maya Rai

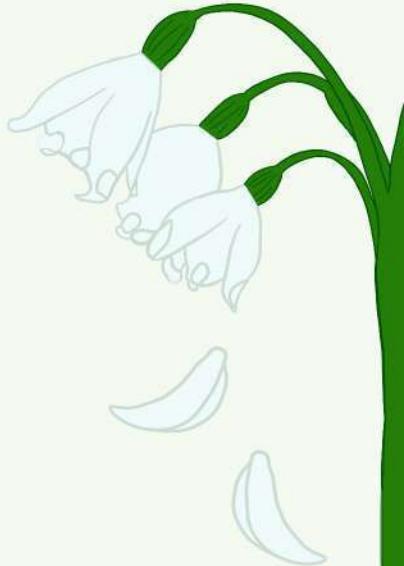
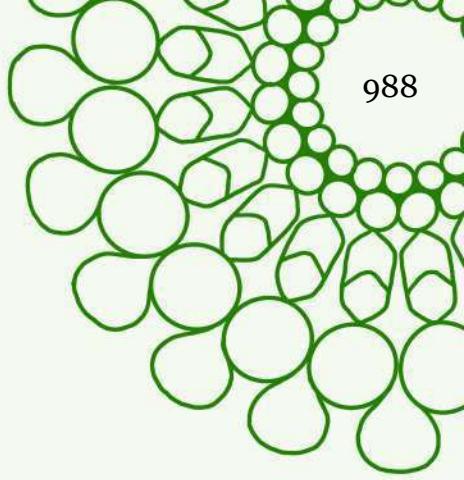
Seeta has written a number of poems and articles, with some being published in anthologies and translated into multiple languages. She has received many prestigious awards from different writing forums due to her excellence in writing, including: Golden Badge Award, SLF Youth Icon Award, Best Reader's Award and Award of Winner in Poetry Contests.



YOUR HONEY

Eldar Akhadov
Russia

“Do take me! Love me! Get inside!”
 My body almost screamed, startling,
 A trickle of honey on your chest did slide,
 A small drop on your lips was sparkling.
 The whole bed, the world is full of honey,
 Of honeysweet and tireless delight.
 “I love you! Will take you! I’m coming!”
 I’m saying to your eyes, so much beloved.



THE SWEET FLOWER

You are my precious flower, I love you so much,
 I’m longing for your beauty I’m hurrying there to touch.
 I so well remember the taste of your sweet lips,
 Half-open, with a promise of absolute full bliss...
 A day has only passed since I was there with you,
 But I began to perish when far away I flew.
 My blood will get unfrozen, and I’ll be alright,
 With you, my precious flower, so beautiful and bright.

I WANT YOU

I want you so much! Without you, my pain is so overt!
 The world is dark for me, but light isn't what I want!
 Let me embrace, hold you, and kiss until it hurts!..
 Your legs, your arms – that's what I really want!

Do scream, do bite, do show me the bliss.
 But look again a virgin in the morning,
 After a whole night of passion's deep abyss,
 My only one!.. But not my wife, without belonging!

I want you so much! With you I want to merge!
 I wish I wouldn't ever have to part with you!..
 May many years pass, may I be on the verge
 Of perishing, but I will always feel you, only you!

All Poems Translated by Lili Berkush



About Eldar Akhadov

Eldar is the author of 67 books of poetry and prose. Laureate of the State Literary Prize of the Governor of the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous district, laureate of the National Prize "Silver Feather of Russia". He also received the Silver medal of the IV Eurasia Literary Festival of Festivals - "For the preservation of national identity when creating works on a different language basis". He was a participant of the 31st International Poetry Festival in Medellin (2021).



VOLUNTEERING

**Abdelghani Rahmani
Algiers**

Take me away
Discover places, countries
show me every corner
Its door, its entrances.

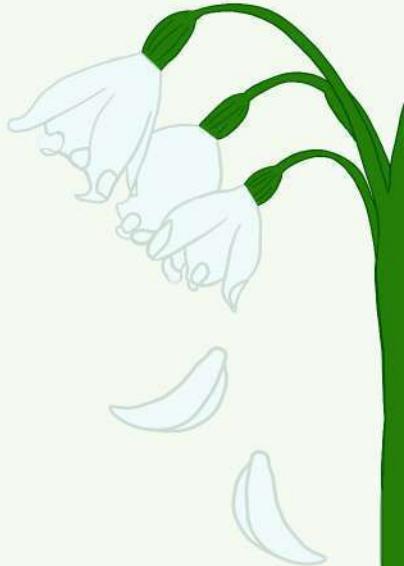
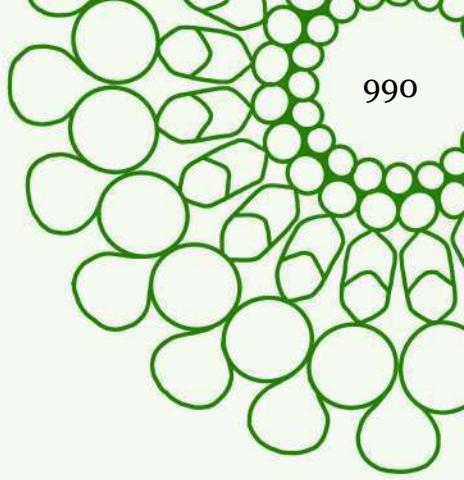
Take me running.
Gift in my hands
Donation to the suffering body
without waiting for tomorrow.

You are beautiful, unique
Unprecedented act
A benefit without iniquity
Pure decent sharing.

Window open to the world
Art, living harmony
Annihilate the inconvenient
Give without parsimony.

Proud of your interlude
Lots of useful offerings
Who introduce remedy
To harmful ailments.

Man! Be sated
Share your inheritance
atone for the corrupt soul
You will earn more.



GREATNESS OF LOVE

In your ocean
 My night will write
 your sweet name
 where the heart will shelter

Ridge tree
 Full of dreams of love
 The unsatisfied soul
 Looks for you around

Your voice full of life
 With the learned gaze
 Sparkle, delighted
 your dancing reflection.

Dazzling rose
 To the consoling soul
 The door ajar
 Reception and service.

Life does not hold
 That against him
 Wish, perennial art
 Only one does not know to wait.

Hope does not replace
 The moment of joy
 Where love takes place
 From his majesty the King.

The passing moment life
 Enjoy, love filled
 Its wind blows light
 Makes the beautiful supple.



Shadow of love is beauty
Scent of dawn, foam
Gardens of Eden, serenity
The heart shines assumes.

Oh! Love, you are tall
Offer you my life, its goûts.



About Abdelghani Rahmani

Abdelghani Rahmani holds a degree in management studies. He has worked as an Executive at a Large National Company where he has contributed to the internal review of articles related to employee health and safety in the Company. In this context, he has also published numerous articles in the national press. Since retiring, he has devoted himself to poetry and writing. Abdelghani has a collection of poetry and a work entitled: *'From one meeting to another'*.

Countries that have participated

Albania

Luan Rama
Mimoza Ahmeti
Kujtim Morina
Gaqo Apostoli
Hamdi Meça
Juljana Mehmeti

Algeria

El-Khidr Choudar
Samira Negrouche
Hamid Larbi
Abdelghani Rahmani

Angola

Abreu Paxe

Argentina

Hugo Alberto Costa
Carlos Vitale
Ricardo Rojas Ayrala
María Chapp
Jorge Alberto Giallorenzi
José Muchnik
Jona Burghardt

Armenia

Eduard Harents
Lola Koundakjian

Aruba

Quito Nicolaas
Rosabelle Illes

Australia

Les Wicks
Christopher Kelen
Peter Boyle

Azerbaijan

Tarana Turan Rahimli
Umid Neccari
Akshin Aliev

Bahrain

Qassim Haddad
Layla Alsayed

Bangladesh

Tareq Samin
Aminur Rahman
Shakhawat Tipu
Partha Sarkar
Rudra Acharya
Aysa Jhorna
Dr Jahangir Alam Rustom
B M Jamal Hossain

Belarus

Lilia Velichko

Belgium

Germain Droogenbrodt
Jenny Dejager
Yuri Zambrano

Bhutan

Seeta Maya Rai

Bolivia

Homero Carvalho
Gabriel Chávez Casazola

Bosnia

Naida Mujkic

Botswana

Kenneth Maswabi

Brazil

Francis kurkiewicz
Mirian da Silva Cavalcanti
Carlos Viegas

Bulgaria

Katarina Saric
Minko Tanev
Alexandra Ivoilova
Nadejda Kostadinova
Stoianka Boianva
Lilia Racheva
Zlatka Timenova
Zhivka Baltadzhieva
Ivanka Yankova

Canada

Honey Novick
Catherine Graham
Chad Norman
Tanja Ajtic
Issa Hassan Al-Yasiri

Chile

Oscar Saavedra villarroel
Jorge Etcheverry

China

Dr. Zhang Zhi
Ming Di
Guanyu Chen
Zhou Duanzhuang
James Tian
Dr. Tian Yuan
Xu Chunfang
Qiao Hao
Shen Youjun
Sue Zhu
Wang Fa
Tang Chengmao
Chen Xianfa

Colombia

Fernando Rendón
Consuelo Hernandez
Eugenio Sánchez Nieto
Pedro Licona
Winston Morales Chavarro
Henry Alexander Gómez

Congo

Kama Sywor Kamanda

Costa Rica

Álvaro Mata Guillé
Welmer Gonzalez

Croatia

Silvija Butković

Cuba

Yolanda Felicita Rodríguez
Toledo

Cyprus

Angelos Sofocleous
Neşe Yaşın

Czech Republic

Jana Orlová
Dr. Bronislava Volková

Denmark

Poul Lynggaard Damgaard
Thorvald Berthelsen
Cindy Lynn Brown

Egypt

Ahmed Sweilam
Mahmood Qurani
Azmy Abdelwahab
Momen Samir
Hassan Hejazi

El Salvador

André Cruchaga
Berta Ramirez Galan

Estonia

Jüri Talvet

Ethiopia

Alemu Tebeje Ayele

Finland

Inger-Mari Aikio

France

Huguette Bertrand
Samantha Barendson

Georgia

Shota Iatashvili

Germany

Tobias Burghardt
Ron Winkler
Dr. Aprilia Zank
Gino Leineweber
Antje Stehn
Achim Wagner

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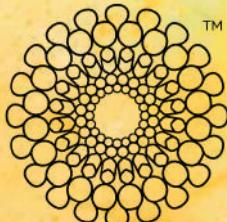
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