VIPS
योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्
IN PURSUIT OF PERFECTION

VIVEKANANDA SCHOOL OF ENGLISH STUDIES

MUSELIT



August 2019 – July 2020

CONTENTS

1. From the Chairman

2. From the Chairperson

3. From the Vice-Chairman

4. From the Dean

5. From the Faculty Co ordinators

Articles

7. Gaia and Me *by Harleen Kaur Bajaj*

10. LGBTQ+ in Covid *by Supreet Kaur*

12. Gender Equality *by Arunima Saha*

15. Know Thyself *by Sonali Rawat*

18. Conflicts and Meta-Ethics *by Shubh Badhwar*

22. How to Process your Emotions *by Sveni*

Poetry

23. If there is a Light for Darkness *by Aman Yadav*

24. Alone in Crowd *by Harsh Pandey*

CONTENTS

26. Drowning *by Shivanchal Soni*

27. Nobody told me *by Prerna Chadha*

29. मजबूर मजदूर *by Priyanka Shorewala*

30. क्या मैं भी एक कवि हूँ? *by Itika Khera*

31. वे दिन भी कितने हसीन थे *by Muskan Khurana*

32. एक सवाल सबसे *by Nandita*

VSES at a Glance

33. Clubs - Vivekalam and Rangeet

34. Meraqi

Picture Articles

35. Choices *by* Nishant

36. Anatomy of Dancers *by* Sakshi

Short Stories

37. A House called Home *by* Sonali Rawat

CONTENTS

38. A new hope- Infernum *by* Isha Taneja

41. One in a million *by* Alokika Bhatnagar

44. We're All right *by* Isha Taneja

47. Facts about Literature- That'll blow your mind

48. Some Picture Riddles- To test your knowledge

49. A Literary Crossword

50. Literary Word Search

51. Academic Activites

52. The Students of VSES

53. Our Team

FROM THE CHAIRMAN



The power literature imbues in its readers is unsurpassable. Each book, being a microcosm of life, is a manifestation of thought and perspective, and its value in the modern world is perhaps beyond our comprehension. It is with the blessings of Swami Vivekananda that Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies has established Vivekananda School of English Studies in resonance with his philosophy of education. It was Swamiji's belief that perfection is innate in every person, and that education brings it forth. Literature does not only educate, instead it also enlightens the readers with Truth of life and empowers them with knowledge.

The first edition of Vivekananda School of English Studies' e-magazine *MuseLit* has brought us great pride. The articles and poems in this issue have expounded upon many critical issues of the modern day; they range from philosophies rooted in action to philosophies rooted in thought. It also touches upon intellectually stimulating subjects that pose a challenge to the entrenched beliefs that we harbor. It has given young students an opportunity to express and be the future of our country.

It is with much pleasure and pride that I congratulate them for their efforts and passion. *MuseLit* has become a valuable addition to Institute's achievements. I continue to believe that the students of the English Department will continue to bring glory to the Institute.

Blessings!



FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies has established Vivekananda School of English Studies (VSES), keeping in view the contemporary needs of society. Amidst a gushing river of popular culture, turbulent climate of politics, media bias, misinformation, the tornadic winds of education theory, the volcanic eruptions of screens and technology it is pertinent that one must read literature. Literature is of timeless significance, human nature is essentially unchanging, the purpose of literature is enhancement of life and encouraging human values.

It helps in the development of imagination which is an essential element in the development of an individual and helps transcend the environment. It is a proud moment as Vivekananda School of English Studies has come up with its first edition of E-magazine "Muselit", therefore, there is a lot to look forward to now. However, before that I would like to congratulate our authors, editors, organising team and reviewers all of whom have volunteered to contribute to the success of the magazine. Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies has played an pivotal role and has a significant influence in transforming education since its establishment.

Therefore we at Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies, Delhi are working towards making education more accessible, inclusive and diverse. We aim to shape students as socially responsible, empathetic citizens who work towards building of a congenial environment, so that we can achieve the objectives laid down by Swami Ji.

FROM THE VICE-CHAIRMAN



Creativity is a spring from which ideas and arguments flow and take on their ever-changing forms. Both of these are essential to mark today's date and time in history.

The modern youth is the best at generating globally relevant ideas and putting them to the test. Meanwhile, in light of Swamiji's teachings, it is our job to assist our students in not only bringing forth but also shaping these ideas through education and exposure. Vivekananda School of English Studies, founded with the same goal in mind, has always provided its students with a large array of knowledge in rigorous standards but beneficial ways.

Every idea conceived by a young mind is brimming with passion and the potential to impact the future. And to contribute to any school of thought via active discourse and debate is to feed its philosophy, the philosophy which has frequently fed us with tranquillity. Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies is happy to reflect on such thoughts which liberate human mind and free them from constrained theorization through "MuseLit."

I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the team of students and teachers behind this effort which deserves praise and commendation, and I hope to see many more editions of it in the future.

I am confident that, in keeping with Swami Vivekananda's teachings, the students of our English Department will continue to use their skill, philosophy, and zeal to bring us many more moments of pride. With the same confidence, I am certain of a bright future for every student in the department who contributes to projects like this magazine and engages in meaningful discussions that emphasise growth and personal development.



FROM THE DEAN

VIPS has been a pioneer and path breaker in the field of imparting quality education while nurturing holistic learning and all-round development of its students giving them the creative freedom to explore themselves. It therefore comes as no surprise to me that VSES, one of the recent additions to the VIPS family, has taken this initiative of bringing out the e-magazine within two years of its establishment. VSES has overcome all odds including the unpredicted, unseen and unimagined Covid lockdown. I congratulate the entire team of MUSELIT – the students and the faculty members for this accomplishment!

The idea of the magazine, the seed was long before sown
It took the untiring efforts of the team, the fruit is now borne
This creative journey was sure a long and uphill task
The enthusiasm and energy so great – more we couldn't ask
The magazine has come out so well,
As Dean of the School, my heart with pride swell
Artists are inspired by their muse
Writers have their ideas and views
This MUSELIT is a wonderful creation
The reflection of myriad voices in unison
This first edition of the magazine is here to ignite
Sleeping thoughts have turned alive and bright
Every page of this magazine aims to inform and inspire
Each contribution in it – we so proudly admire
MUSELIT is ready to engage and entertain
Showcasing the students' endeavour and pain
Every content is the editorial choice select
Presenting it before you to read and reflect

Literature was always there in the blood and soul of the students at VSES, but the kind of writing that I see here makes me feel so proud that I cannot but stop, just appreciating them for their creativity and originality. There isn't any Arnold in an Angrakha, a Byron in a Burqa, a Dryden in a Dhoti, a Joyce in Jodhpuris, a Keats in a Kurta, a Lawrence in a Lungi, a Pope in Pyjamas or a Shelley in a Salwar. You have proven that as English bred (pun intended) you are baked in the oven of Global English and yet carry your local, original, individual taste and essence here at VSES. Your English is yours; your views are yours and you have established your literary acumen so well.

FACULTY CO ORDINATOR

DR AVANI BHATNAGAR



Human beings yearn to be creative and creativity is the life generating force. Vivekananda School of English Studies, with this initiative of the magazine provides the students with a platform to explore the purpose of learning by exploring their creative side. The department thought about the idea sometime back with an expectation that the students shall blossom under the light of colours they would fill in with their ideas in the form of magazine.

It is a matter of immense honour and pleasure for me to write for the first magazine of the department. The young minds could learn and have a hands-on experience of the creative work of art through this platform. Students have tried to communicate and disseminate their hidden ideas using different forms of expression in the magazine. It is the students who infuse life into the department with their endeavours. I can proudly say that the students with their committed and sincere effort have been able to give shape to this magazine. I would also like to thank Ms. Shruti Gautam for guiding the team for Hindi content of the magazine. Her valuable support was encouraging for the students.

The magazine has been designed keeping in mind the essence of each section. The visuals enhance the understanding of each work. From the concrete expressive visuals to the more abstract and condensed images of the poetry section, one can differentiate between the impact of various forms of expression. To keep the literariness and fun amongst the students alive, a section for riddles has been added. Photo articles and short stories are some new forms the students have tried to explore. The magazine covers various forms and issues which are relevant and need to be addressed.

There is a poet inside us all, we all have a story to tell, we all can think to think and all can listen to the music of life around us in various forms. But only a few become conscious of it.

With this initiative, Vivekananda School of English Studies has tried to make the students believe in their capacity to refiect and express and also provide the students a holistic learning experience. Students should learn and not just study. Therefore, we embark this journey into the mosaic with them and allow the future to shine bright before us.

With a hope that this *Karvaan* of ideas will continue, I congratulate all for this first accomplishment.



FACULTY CO ORDINATOR

DR ANSHU GAGAL

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.

– Nelson Mandela

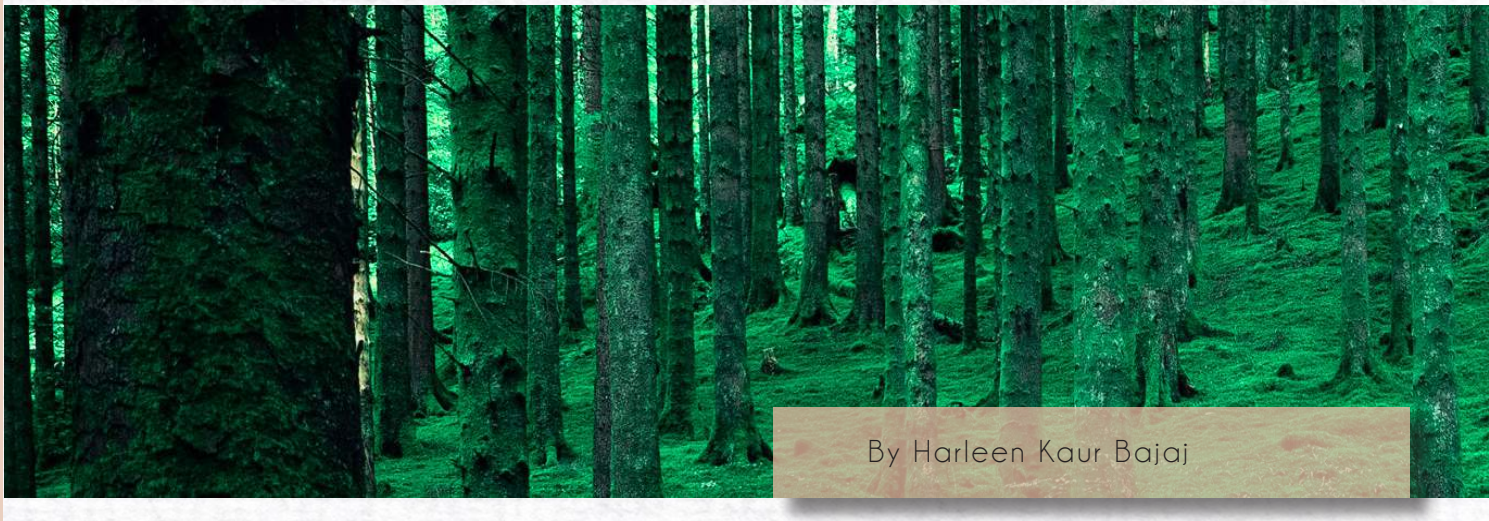
The much awaited creative task has now been accomplished with the help of our young talented minds. Indeed it gives me much pleasure to see such enthusiastic, talented, zealous bunch nurturing under the caring guidance and love of Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies. The students have added one more feather in the cap of VSES by taking out and contributing into the Muselit magazine of the department.

It is like a dream come true. The first step makes all the difference and I think it would not have been possible without the efforts and illumination of the guiding enthusiasts/visionaries around. The journey has actually started two years back and back then it started altogether with a different vision. Many people associated themselves with this project and many left in between as this task was actually demanding but then joined some new faces who have taken the burden on their small/feeble shoulders. They put their heart and soul into it and what we all have today with us is the effort and hard work of the team. I am really glad to associate with them as I believe that in a gentle way you can shake the world. I think this initiative by Vivekananda School of English Studies will provide a platform to all the budding writers and motivate them to embark on this journey of lifetime for lifetime. Muse lit is the beginning/ initiative for all those who believe in themselves and have an immense potential to voice out their concerns and unfathomable zeal to explore and implore deep beneath the realms of head and heart to bring the best out of them through their observations and writings.

The world has a lot to offer to all of us and this is the platform where the whole world will meet. With this and many more rejuvenating ideas in my mind I once again congratulate the team for their efforts and determination to shape and color the very idea of Muselit in front of you all. We look forward to your insightful and thought provoking writings in the years to come and hope for new associations in the times ahead.

ARTICLE

GAIA & ME



By Harleen Kaur Bajaj

Humans have a tendency to develop and innovate and these traits have been unique to us since our existence. We have constantly thrived for excellence by using natural resources as the horses of our chariot of curiosity. We've always looked up to the environment for everything we require and, gratefully, the bountiful nature has never disappointed. The Homo Sapiens grew from tribes to civilization with natural resources as the foundation. As our cerebral capability developed, we started to realize how our survival is entirely dependent on nature and became grateful. Most civilizations have personified nature and treated her with the dignity of goddess. The Greek mythology has personified the Earth and called it Gaia, the earth goddess, who is the creator of all.

Mother Gaia was no less than a human, she was loving, caring and most importantly protective, not only for her children but for her dignity too. Legend says that once Gaia, the Earth goddess, was vexed by the Olympian gods for defeating her first born, the Titans. To teach them a lesson, she created the Giants but gods slew them easily. This enraged her even more thus she kept on causing hindrance in the way of the gods, but all in vain. Gods grew boastful and started exploiting Gaia and she silently kept providing the earth borne gods with what they wanted. The gods and their children started to call themselves invincible. When Orion, son of Zeus, the god of lightning, claimed that he could kill and control anything that Gaia produced, it infuriated Gaia. She produced the most ferocious of her creations, the Scorpion and sent it to Orion. Scorpion slew him and won gloriously. Her might was redeemed. She was revived.

This is just a story but if we perceive it differently, one can easily conclude it as a warning for the upcoming dangers. Gaia who is the Earth being exploited by the pseudo-strong earth born species. This situation isn't alien to anyone. To suit our needs and necessities, we looked up to nature again but this time we exploited it. Our species has been on this planet for less than three lakh years and it has still destroyed it the most. We are constantly testing its limits. If we talk about the current scenario, then seventy percent of total plastic consumption is discarded as waste which would be as much as fifteen thousand three hundred and forty two tones per day. At least eight million metric tons of plastic end up in the oceans and is mistaken as jellyfish by the sea turtles which they consume, causing the death of not only the organisms but also the spirit of the ocean.

Anemoi isn't found in any better condition. Our country hits the top of the charts when it comes to air pollution. Fuel and biomass burning are the major contributors to the poor air quality in India. Cow dung as fuel produces high amounts of Nitrogen Oxide, Sulphur Oxide, Carbon Monoxide and other Green House Gases. The population explosion within a decade has become the reason of ungovernable air contamination. Our day to day requirements have taken a huge toll on our chances of a fit survival.



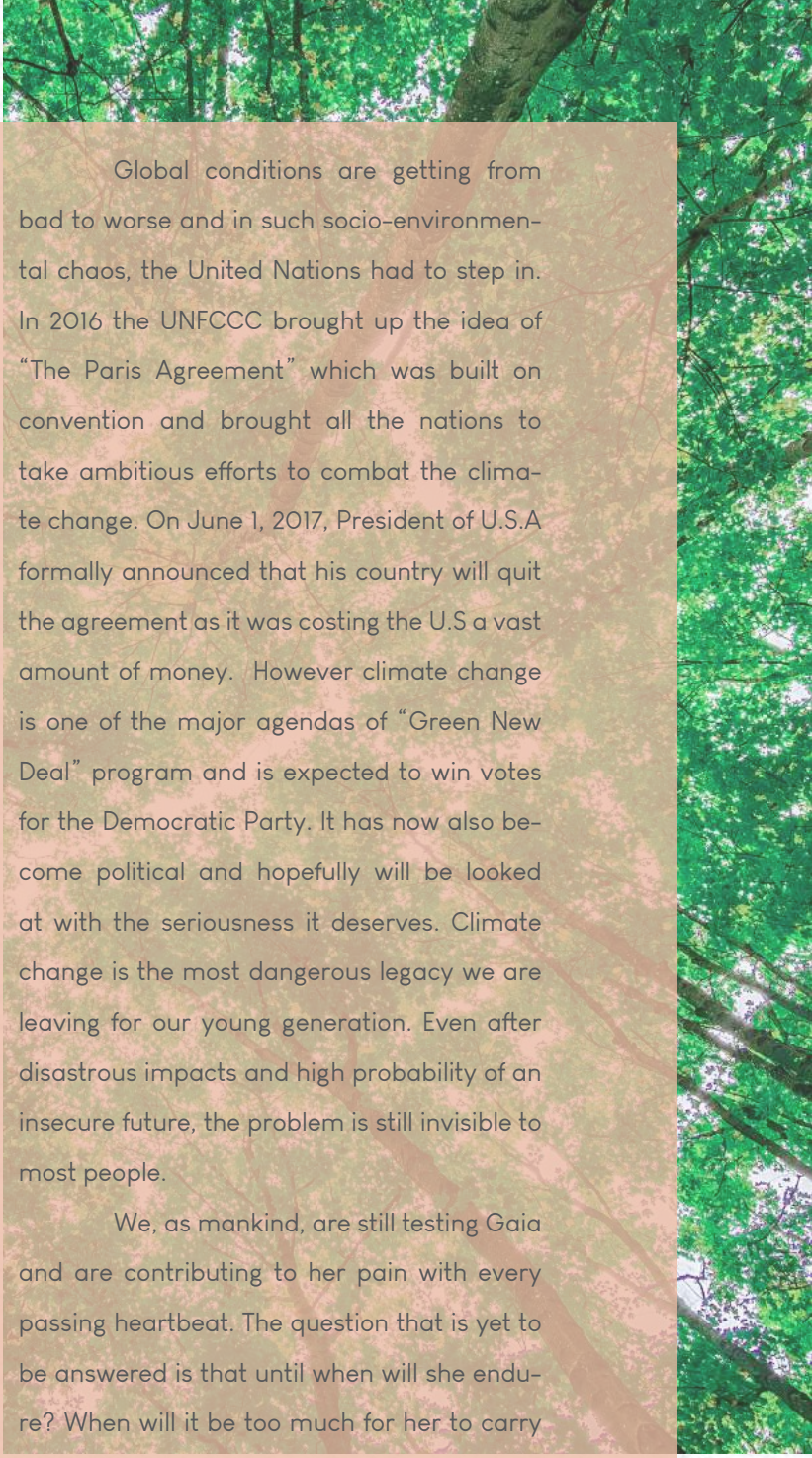
Global warming is much scarier than we think.

Climate change is Real

ARTICLE

Deodorants and hairsprays contain aAerosols which are the major cause for depletion of the Ozone layer, which protects us from the carcinogenic UV rays. As the population increases, so does the number of cars, refrigerators and air conditioners. They emit Chlorofiuorocarbons, which, when re leased into the atmosphere work as a catalyst in the process of depletion of the Ozone layer. Pollution in countries like India, China and Bangladesh have resulted in the formation of tThe Asian bBrown cloud which is a layer of pollution that covers parts of South Asia.

Climate change is real. Within last decade, our planet has survived numerous landslides, fioods and ecological disasters like coral bleaching and all of them contributed to the unnatural rise in the temperature. The global temperature has risen 1.5 Fahrenheit since 1880 leading to the increase in the sea level by 3.2 mm per year. One should keep this in mind that glaciers are the store houses for our accessibility of fresh water, the faster they run out, the harder it gets for us to quench our thirst. Global warming is much scarier than we think. As our world is heating up, there is a constant pressure on our ecosystem, which is struggling to maintain its balance. Flora and Fauna of both land and water co-exist in particular climatic zone and it is affected by the sudden change in temperature. It is said that by 2100, oceans as we know them would totally change as the population of phytoplankton will cut off due to warming of the oceans.



Global conditions are getting from bad to worse and in such socio-environmental chaos, the United Nations had to step in. In 2016 the UNFCCC brought up the idea of "The Paris Agreement" which was built on convention and brought all the nations to take ambitious efforts to combat the climate change. On June 1, 2017, President of U.S.A formally announced that his country will quit the agreement as it was costing the U.S a vast amount of money. However climate change is one of the major agendas of "Green New Deal" program and is expected to win votes for the Democratic Party. It has now also become political and hopefully will be looked at with the seriousness it deserves. Climate change is the most dangerous legacy we are leaving for our young generation. Even after disastrous impacts and high probability of an insecure future, the problem is still invisible to most people.

We, as mankind, are still testing Gaia and are contributing to her pain with every passing heartbeat. The question that is yet to be answered is that until when will she endure? When will it be too much for her to carry forward? We are hurtling towards the day when climate would be irreversible. Let us not burden Gaia with our follies. We all are a part of her as we are made of humus therefore we can never repay her debt. Countering climate change is not just about lowering global temperature. It is about protecting the blossoms, the chirping, you, Gaia and me.

LGBTQ+ IN COVID

By Supreet Kaur

Funny that I would use Trigger Warnings since a world that was still in the process of normalizing Trigger Warnings suddenly gets hit by a widespread pandemic that would soon start triggering more problems than ever. When one talks about escaping a stagnant crisis, a majority of the youth found their solace outside their house. But with the ongoing lockdown imposing our houses upon us, the four walls of our apartments have begun caving in.

These singular pieces of housing that we are now forced into have not only hindered our freedom, but have taught us that before a house becomes a home, there is a long way to go. The distinction can be very well illustrated by a staggering number of LGBTQ+ youth, trapped in invalidating households. Homosexuality, a sexual orientation distinct from "normal" in the world, is still a "complicated phenomenon" to be tolerated in Indian households. LGBTQ+ teens and adults have waged a long struggle to normalize the recognition of their gender and sexual identities, remaining unwavering in the face of heteronormativity. But because India still comfortably trudges on conventional beliefs, embedded in religious and cultural views and resulting injustice, reform can hardly be expected to come at a faster pace.



In addition to hampering this transition, the lockdown as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic has also effectively pounded it down to a mash of crushing anxiety, suppressed trauma, confused orientation questioning, invalidated labels, and resultant emotional and psychological problems. Again, funny that we can discuss psychological issues, because mental well being is probably the only thing treated more casually than the Coronavirus in India. The condition was still barely livable for LGBTQ+ teenagers in India as a result of casual homophobia. It was already a cause of loss of self-worth and forced dependency in young adults as well as growing youth to be financially reliant on intolerant adults, emotionally deprived and sidelined to "cure" them of homosexuality, and being stripped of anything more than basic necessities of life by parental figures and adults in authority. But being forced into the same space as their not so favouring authority figures, has surely done no less than wonders for their mental capacity of sustaining themselves.

The presence of a domineering homopho-





be in any family results in a constant violation of positive emotional space and mental peace for the youth that are still vulnerable in terms of emotional stability. Presenting itself in the form of inferiority complexes and multiple other problems later, this toxic upbringing impedes the complete personal development of individuals.

Homes were traditionally supposed to be safe spaces that have ironically become a hazard to many individuals' safety. In a country where heteronormativity hugs the pillars of privilege at every crossroad, the unconventionality of coming out irks the authorities again and again. To top that inability to accept multiple normals, the aggressive execution of discouragement under the garb of "upholding traditional values" dismisses the validity of identity at a very early age. Outward homophobia in households, ranging from nuclear to large families causes not only physical, emotional, and psychological struggles, but also personal safety issues.



The question of utmost importance is that how is society supposed to come up with a solution for something that is not even accepted as a problem? Curbed acceptance and validation can only be fixed when it is accepted as a problem first. The youth composes a large part of the society, but the LGBTQ+ youth still remains a minority. Unless and until the majority is convinced to address the problem on a whole, the society progressing anywhere but backwards is hardly possible.



GENDER EQUALITY

By Arunima Saha

At times, when there are more than a hundred cobwebs of heartaches of non-objectivity and intolerance in the world around me, I find myself a victim of questions that are hung closely from the hinges of tenacity: tenacity for answers of humanity, a p articular kind of it, molded in the ferity shaped morsel being fed to everyone, every single day. In all those times, I have questioned equality and balance synonymously because Earth would be a much more ideal had there been an existence of these two. To fall off the wagon of 'no gender bias', on certain occasions, is a forgivable thing but to disregard the wagon completely, even when you are not psychologically impaired, is an altogether different stratum of distortion of one's psyche. Maya Angelou had rightly spoken when she said that if there is equality, there is freedom. Exploration of gender orientation and sexual preferences aren't mandatory when a person's identity as a living being is being defined and during most of these times, there exists faces without identities, just social labels. Societal norms and conventions don't let people embrace their own selves and that is nothing but blatantly shameful. We are who we are, and for that we certainly don't need any approval. I am, I am, I am. To take this long term due discussion into a depth that lies beyond feminist views and nuances of gender fiuid or confiicts of the umbrella term, 'Queer Theory', I will present three arguments on – Gender Equity, Homophobia/Heterosexism and Equality as an agency to transmit balance and harmony in the world.

Often, I am reprimanded for being a tad too loud or for not wrapping my words with a humble apology for crimes I am not aware of. To



wait and to wait and to wait is what I have been taught to do when in line with society and that grieves me to a point when my faith is shaken in numerous, uneven ways. I have grown up to hide my menstruation under whispers and mumbles neatly folded in corners, and the onus of this conditioning can be aptly placed on me being a female. I have been scolded many times for laughing a little louder in the metro with the boy from the next block. Being from the oppressed and marginalised gender in a country with a prominent history of patriarchy and female infanticide/female foeticide, I have tried to unlearn and resolve the society's constant dehumanization of my gender and thereby, gave them the power to justify and validate my existence in the universe. I have grown up to hide my opinion in meticulously ironed poetry since there was never enough space in my surroundings for a female's voice.



I have secluded myself from activities after a man groped my thighs on a bus; I have tormented myself to a level where mental peace became a myth. Our eyes have seen it all, our bodies felt it all- just like men who can't cry because public display of emotion is a sign of weakness. And we know that frailty is the name of a woman, just like men who are sexually harassed in workspaces and yet can't stand against it since there are no laws to back them up. A household is a cemetery of dead decisions made by matriarchs and other females, that make a lot of commotion behind closed doors. If equality is the puzzle, then, equity is the means to solve the puzzle. A nation's need for gender equity stems from social issues regarding the persistent and pertinent aestheticism when it comes to defining a woman's bodily freedom and such has been the scenario for centuries. The solution is to provide a balance of shares between men, women, transgender and intersex people, by pro-



viding a fair distribution of economic opportunities, of social/cultural liberties and of familial authoritative decision-makers, as an initiative towards a global progress.

Since the christening of terms like Homophobia and Heterosexism, gay people, lesbian people, bisexuals and transgender have felt more and more like strangers in their own bodies. To simply put in words, they are entrapped in the reclusive box of self-loathe. Society's rethinking of sexual orientation was crystallized in the term homophobia, which heterosexual psychologist George Weinberg coined in the late 1960s. Weinberg used homophobia to label heterosexuals' dread of being in close quarters with homosexuals as well as homosexuals' self loathing.

The word first appeared in print in 1969 and was subsequently discussed at length in Weinberg's 1972 book, Society and the Healthy Homosexual. (Reference to psychology.ucdavis.edu) Around the same time, heterosexism began to be used as a term analo gous to sexism and racism, describing an ideological system that denies, denigrates, and stigmatizes any non-heterosexual form of behavior, identity, relationship, or community (Herek, 1990). Using the term heterosexism, we can highlight the parallels between antigay sentiment and



other forms of prejudice, such as racism and sexism. At certain trajectories of dilemma over whether love is the same for same sex couples as it is for male-female couples, I have come across first and second hand accounts from unseen identities who have struggled and fought a battle every single day with their own selves, just because their choice to present in a certain way or own their identity wasn't accepted globally.

But, evolution of thought is taking place and the proof is that in India, a five-judge bench at the country's highest court ruled that a 160-year-old law banning sex "against the order of nature" amounted to discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, and thus was unconstitutional. "Criminalizing carnal intercourse under section 377 Indian Penal Code is irrational, indefensible and manifestly arbitrary," said the chief justice, Dipak Misra, in his decision.

Misra stated: "Social exclusion, identity seclusion and isolation from the social mainstream are still the stark realities faced by individuals today, and it is only when each and every individual is liberated from the shackles of such bondage ... that we can call ourselves a truly free society."

The concept of Gender Equality is a bane mostly, because inherently prejudiced and unaware people see it as competition and not as a medium to ensure transmission and inculcation of justifiable fairness. We need to realize the intensity and severity of the situation because we, frequently, muddle up equal distribution of cookies at home as a step towards gender equality.

ARTICLE

KNOW THYSELF

By Sonali Rawat



A question that would leave us blank for a solid minute, followed by the feeling of frustration of not being able to describe yourself. Your name, your habits, your nature, what do you think exactly defines you? It's pretty hard to fit oneself in a 'category' of people.

Sorting and labeling others by characteristics, on the other hand, is quite an easy task. One chat with a stranger and an adjective pops up in our head. Sweet, arrogant, shy, friendly; it sometimes seems like people are not that hard to figure out but one look in the mirror and we're left with empty hands. Who is this individual you see in the mirror? Are they a familiar being, or a total stranger?

Maybe we're all yet to find a label that perfectly fits us or maybe sticking labels to oneself is hard because we have so many faces, so many unknown sides to ourselves. Some known to all, some kept hidden. As for me, I feel like everyone in my life knows a different side of me and they are all my real selves, but each side is so weirdly different from the other that I feel like no one truly knows me. I don't truly know myself yet.

Identity is a funny thing, but it's not a brick wall. It is like a river, fiuid and free. Every second, every experience holds the power to reform our ideals. Change is universal and therefore "Being yourself" shouldn't be morphed into "Being how everyone perceives you as." The unspoken societal pressure to keep liking the things you used to like, to keep dressing the way you usually do, or never to question your beliefs can be pretty restricting. Not all changes are bad; recognizing this requires letting go of the urge to conform to other people's ideas of you and once you do that, iSWho is this individual you see in the



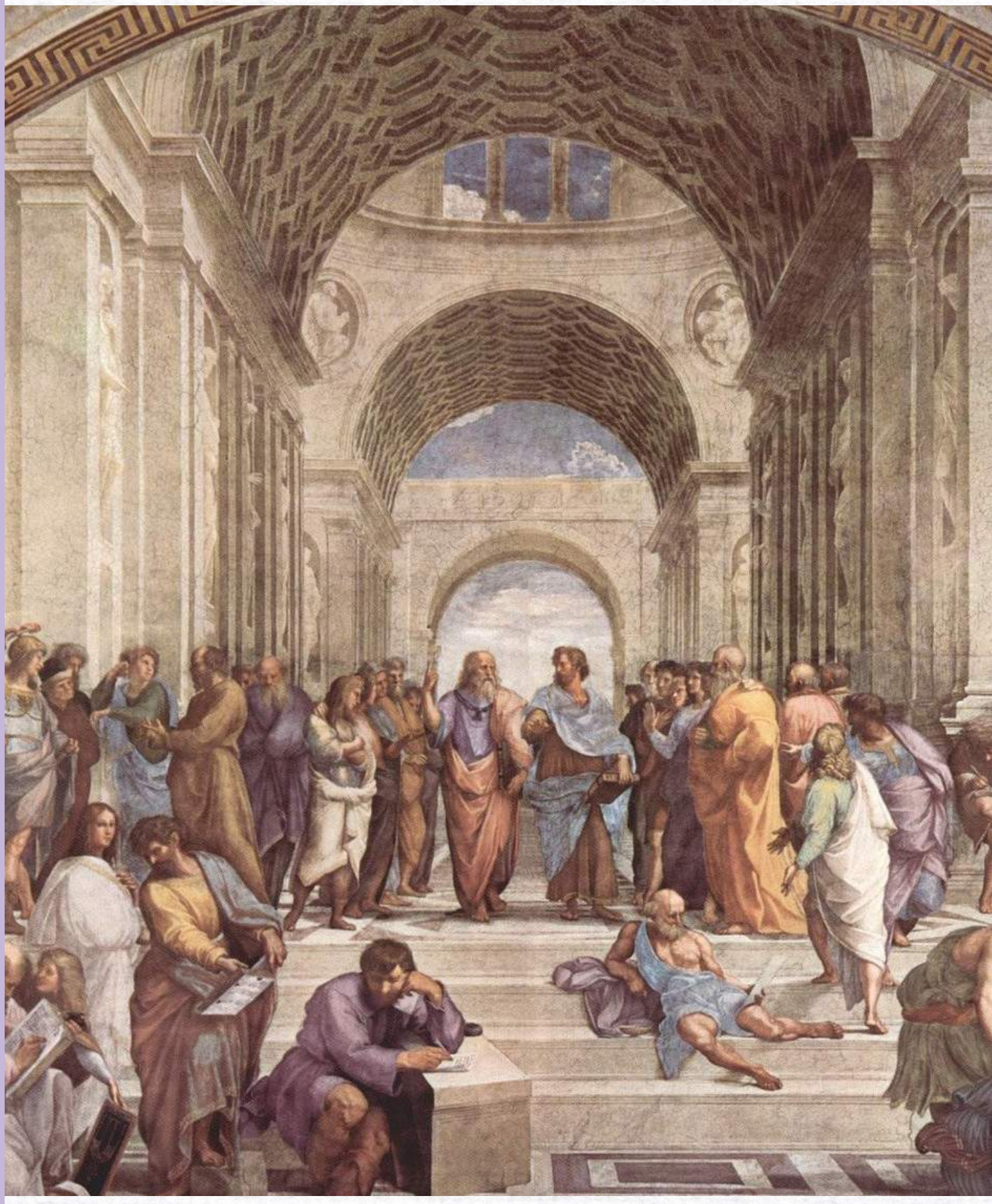
mirror? Are they a familiar being, or a total stranger?

Maybe we're all yet to find a label that perfectly fits us or maybe sticking labels to oneself is hard because we have so many faces, so many unknown sides to ourselves. Some known to all, some kept hidden.

As for me, I feel like everyone in my life knows a different side of me and they are all my real selves, but each side is so weirdly different from the other that I feel like no one truly knows me. I don't truly know myself yet.

Identity is a funny thing, but it's not a brick wall. It is like a river, fiuid and free. Every second, every experience holds the power to reform our ideals. Change is universal and therefore "Being yourself" shouldn't be morphed into "Being how everyone perceives you as." The unspoken societal pressure to keep liking the things you used to like, to keep dressing the way you usually do, or never to question your beliefs can be pretty restricting. Not all changes are bad; recognizing this requires letting go of the urge to conform to other people's ideas of you and once you do that, it invites a very comforting sense of inner peace.

The thing is that 'you' are someone you're going to live with for the rest of your life, so why not try knowing more about ourselves for a change? Figuring out oneself leads to figuring out where exactly we belong in the world, making it easy to find people with common interests and forming close bonds. Introspection is a good habit; it helps us weave a journey through life that brings us happiness, even in monotony. As the Ancient Greek aphorism says: "know thyself, for it may answer questions you never knew you had".





CONFLICTS & META- ETHICS

By Shubh Badhwar

It becomes our prerogative to examine the unexamined when we foresee the problems that will be caused when, at once, we confront what we do not know, or have not examined. With a stagnant rise in multilateralism post the world wars, we've seen cosmopolitanism being favoured progressively more and more; even if we look at cosmopolitanism as an extreme measure, no one can deny the inherent existence of a perspective favouring globalisation and multilateral endeavours. Then why do we stray further away from one-ness?

One reason why we stray further is because Cosmopolitanism and globalisation rest upon very shaky, and continuously debilitating, foundation of Meta-ethical Moral Relativism. Moral Relativism is the view that moral judgements, and by extension moral statements, are rendered true or false only by sheer subjectivity: one's own identity, be it collective or individual. For example: Would you consider polygyny/polyandry morally sound, just, and right? If you're a Sub-Saharan African, you would find polygyny morally justified; if you belong to the Jaun-



sar-Bawar Region of Uttrakhand, you'd find polyandry justified; if you belong to a posh locality in New Delhi, you probably find them both detestable.

Whether we should support polygamy of any sort is not the question I aim to tackle. You might choose a deontological, virtue ethicist, or a utilitarian approach to get your answer. What I aim to tackle is the existence of the concept of morality as we know it. We know morality exists: we've been taught moral lessons jovially throughout our playschool and kindergarten. What I aim to tackle is morality's veracity, with a special emphasis on relativistic approaches in meta-ethics.

Can any individual deed be intrinsically good or bad? If I claim that genocide is unconditionally wrong, I seem to propose the existence of a 'moral fact' that the act of genocide is intrinsically bad. An explanation for this moral fact could be the inherent value of human life. In this case, the existence of moral facts seems plausible, but the whole edifice of Relativism stands upon the graves of the concept of moral facts. Relativism promotes acceptance of other truths, because there is no one truth.

Truth exists only in relative terms: to a certain culture or an individual. A controversial example for illustrating this is Nazi Germany. Moral Relativism would be accepting of the Nazi culture because their beliefs are true too, thereby allowing genocide. One may say that we could draw the line somewhere, such as 'no harm to any human being', but how can we suppose to know that to be a moral fact and not just a relative truth? There still exists the concept of justifiable homicides in many countries, which can be ordered by the court of law.

This is one of the many problems regarding Moral Relativism. Naturally, the simplest way of ensuring harmony would be to adopt the view called "Moral Objectivism", which is accepting that there is a moral fact. However, many Platonists interpret any form of objectivism as an obscure, hidden aspect of an objective reality. They propound that there does exist a universal, objective morality, but our statements cannot capture their essence.

This is often called the "non-cognitivist" perspective and poses a somewhat sceptical glance at the concepts of morality as we know it. With this view we're stuck at the same problem: we cannot claim any statement



as a moral truth; however, the "cognitivist" perspective, which claims that objective morality does exist and can also be captured by the moral statements/judgements, can come of use. Moral cognitivism purports to be a sigh of relief until it is looked at in the larger context of this world, where there exist a plethora of variables which are interdependent with whimsical contingent in and by themselves. When a Cognitivist proclaims "Stealing is bad whatever be the predicament", he exclaims that it is an objective truth, which has to be abided universally whatsoever be the circumstances.

But we've all heard of Robin Hood, and he stole from the rich to give to the poor. I am purposely taking contradictory examples to drive home the complexity of the subject at hand. If any statement of any moral substance is true, what makes it true?

No answer to "what makes it true?" has, as yet, been agreed upon, or even come close to being agreed upon. One might say that "Don't kill people" might seem like a good proposition for an objective moral stance but hardly so. "Don't kill people" stands true in cases of malevolence, but if you kill a serial killer who is on a spree, this wouldn't stand true. Your action saves many lives.

Naturally then, one would propose an alternative: "Don't kill people who have good intention", then what about Robin hood, or Batman, whom we all adore so much? I obviously do not propose that "Don't kill people" should not be adhered to in normalcy, but what I currently am doing is testing the limit of what we can know.

This branching, with innumerable possibilities and eventualities, will always exist, and its existence fails the universality of any statement because it creates an unsustainable and infinitely refiexive chain of moral code. The purpose of such a dialectic is not to bring about a change but to test the extent of any given theoretical framework, in this case moral cognitivism.

What, then, are we left with? Within this quandary, there seems to be no viable option, unless there was no moral truth, no moral fact whatsoever. This is precisely what AJ Ayer proposed; in his theory called Emotivism, more affectionately called the "Hurrah/boo" theory, he proposes that moral judgements are not propositions, rather they are just emotional reactions to how one feels towards a particular deed.

For example, if I say "Hoorah, Robin Hood is such a great guy", it isn't di-





fferent from exclaiming his deeds are objectively moral because nothing of such sort exists. This theory presupposes morality as a form of social construct, allowing complete overriding of deviant behaviour as an excuse of following a rigorous moral code. This theory too, however, is a double edged sword; as much as it takes away the excuse of deviant behaviour resulting from a rigorous moral code, it gives deviant behaviour the excuse of the inexistence of any moral code whatsoever, stating that whatever one wishes becomes their ethics or morality.

This theory invites helter-skelter and convoluted state of affairs, which is why not many people claim to follow this code of meta-ethics. Perhaps Shakespeare, through Hamlet, defined it roughly: "There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so."

This is an eternal debate and the answer to this may be what Krishnamurthi calls the "unknown". The answers may always be subjective and speculative responses, but it greatly affects how we live our life.

With the ongoing confiict in Syria and Afghanistan, Yemen Crisis, Rohingya Refugee crises, rising South-Asian military tensions, Armenia-Azerbaijan confiict, and countless other issues around the world, Meta-Ethics becomes of paramount importance because it tries to tackle the uncertainty that arises when such confiicts are looked at as a part of a bigger pattern, rather than being looked upon from a microscope. The intention and purpose of this bigger pattern of incessant violence remains obscure because we continue to be overwhelmed by the sheer scale of each of these confiicts. These wars are being fought on a meta-ethical ideological basis: one side blames the other for a certain act, which cannot be tolerated. Therefore, the answer to this question promises to prevent irrational prejudicial violence.

HOW TO PROCESS YOUR EMOTIONS

By Sveni



It is a quirk of our minds that not every emotion we carry is fully acknowledged, understood or even truly felt. There are feelings that exist in an unprocessed form within us. A great many worries may for example remain ignored and uninterpreted manifesting themselves as powerful directionless anxiety. Under their sway we may feel a compulsive need to remain busy. We start fearing spending any time on our own hence clinging to activities which ensure we don't meet what scares us head on (these might include internet pornography, tracking the news or exercising compulsively). A similar kind of disavowal can go on around hurt. Someone may have abused our trust, made us doubt their kindness or violated our self-esteem but we are driven to feel a frank recognition of an appalling degree of exposure and vulnerability.

The hurt is somewhere inside, but on the surface, we adopt a brittle good cheer (jolliness being sadness that doesn't know itself). We numb ourselves chemically (Drugs) or else adopt a carefully non-specific tone of cynicism, which masks the specific wound that has been infiicted on us. We pay dearly for our failure to 'process' our feelings. Our minds grow unoriginal from a background fear about their contents. We grow depressed about everything because we cannot be sad about something. We can no longer sleep, insomnia being the revenge of all the many thoughts we have omitted to process in the day.

We need compassion for ourselves. We avoid processing emotions because what we feel is so contrary to our self-image, so threatening to our societies' idea of normalcy and so at odds with who we really like to be. An atmosphere conducive to processing would be one in which the difficulties of being human were warmly recognized and charitably accepted.

We fail to know ourselves not out of laziness or casual neglect but because it simply hurts a lot. Processing emotions requires good friends, deft therapists and ritual moments like philosophical meditation, in which our normal differences can safely be put aside and unfamiliar material ring fenced for investigation. The outcome of processing our emotions is always an alleviation in our overall mood. But first we must pay for our self-awareness with a period of mourning in which we gradually acknowledge that in some area or other life is simply a lot sadder than we would want it to be.

IF THERE IS A LIGHT FOR DARKNESS

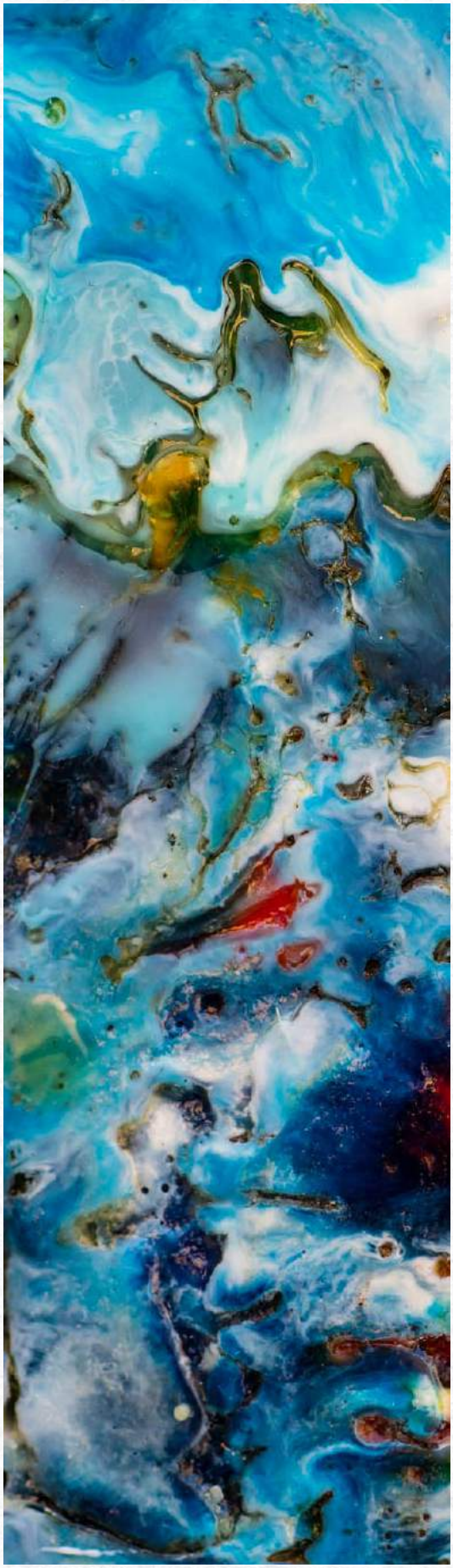
By Aman Yadav

If there is a light for darkness
Tell it to stay still in the shadows
For it shall dispel its fragments
That are all but scattered shallow.

Say to it that it should stay awhile
It has to stay awhile, its rays
And all that is in this mile
Have to be seen in their true ways

All ways of being always,
Or if mortal still in light
Be life for days and days
Till the end is in sight.

Some endings are thought of
Giving beginnings to time,
And so be it with the love
For darkness, calmed this wintertime



ALONE IN THE CROWD

By Harsh Pandey

The disparity, the end of it all,
Is feeling alone amidst this noise,
The scars you're dying to reveal
Get lost in the pretence of joys.

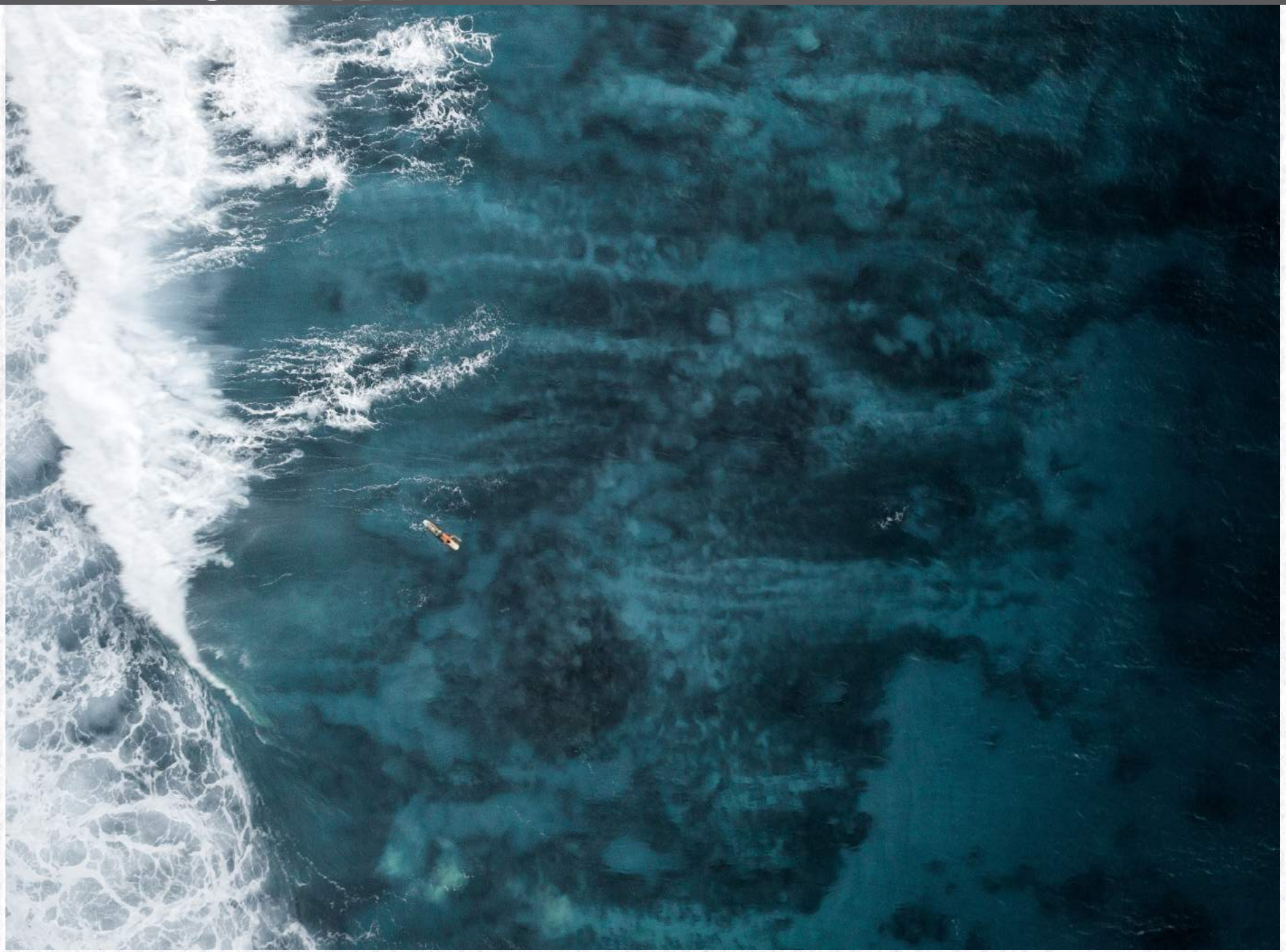
It's ludicrous how laughing with them can make you cry,
And being among this crowd, disconnected from the world,
You almost convince yourself maybe it's worth a try
To get it all out there and get burned.

Dilemma ruining my peace, alas,
You choose your silence and solitude,
Afraid of the judgement they will pass
That too with such conviction and no gratitude.

And when jury part their ways,
The four walls conceal your muffied shouts,
For this time again you failed to say
What's killing you, the voices of doubt.

Can anyone see you with such desperation?
Can anyone hear you as you shout?
Oh, they fight their own battles in isolation,
You become a part of this jury, but still alone in the crowd.

POETRY



Drowning

By Shivanchal Soni

The last few breaths escape out
as the memories play in front of my eyes.
I swim deeper
Into the memories
The touch, the rush
The feeling, the gazing
The highs, the sighs
My feet touch the end, as I reach the end.
My thoughts dissolve
Sensations fade
Soul drowns
Heart shatters.
For the last time,
I look over her
Smiling and baking my favourite dish.
Hiding away the new glitters under the bed.
Waiting for me to come home and unwrap them.
I touch her cheeks
Coming back to her
Lifting myself up
Born this day with a new heart
I push myself up
Feeling the air
Living the care
Ready to love

NOBODY TOLD ME

By Prerna Chadha

When I fell off the wet pavement
From that very tiring journey
Called Emotional Void,

I got rescued by some hopes, laughter, smiles, and lights.
Nobody told me I could turn
Yellow Dahlias into Grey Dahlias,
And Powdered Donuts into Raspberry Donuts,
Full of love and affection and
Not the grainy layers of being mean.

I wanted to wear my pride,
My words, my essence, my smile,
My hopes, my emotions, my knowledge
And my gratitude around my chest
Like a Sash.
But nobody told me it'll turn into a noose
Full of thorns and suffocate my throat.

I spent days, playing the game- "I'll be Happy Someday"
With Pink Floyd's-"Coming back to life" in the background,
Hoping to do what people told me to-
"Pretend you're happy, and then,
You'll forget that you were pretending"
But nobody told me I could actually
Sit and do nothing about it.



I wanted to say those thorn-like words,
Essays full of emotions,
The emotions that made my skin crawl
When people used to shower me
With blatant and brazen words,
Which made my throat pain, because I could not cry,
But rolled my words from the tip of my tongue,
Back inside till it bled so profusely.
Nobody told me I could just let Karma do its job
And sit back and drink an Espresso.

Hardy told me, Body takes over the Mind

As same as Mind takes over the Heart,
Where life is not in any harmony
And you die not once but every day.
But he did not tell me that Jude was you,
Jude was her and Jude was him.
The Jude who went at the top of Epochal Disa-
ppointments
And just kept falling back
Into the colossal darkness.

When I was travelling on the train
With my bag-pack full of knowledge,
Nothing that I successfully applied to my life,
I felt that Beckett was right-
Maybe he created Lucky and Lucky is me.
How I was waiting
To speak my heart out
But my problems/Pozzo's
Never gave me the chance to.

But in the end
Nobody told me that
"Everyone is looking at you but No-One actually
sees you".
Nobody told me I have to be there for myself,
Picking up my skull
And do right by this life.
Not be a Sisyphus or a Jude or a Lucky or a girl.
But, to let myself be a Human.



मजबूर मज़दूर

-प्रियंका शोरेवाला

वो घर जाने को तरस गए
लाखो आँसू भी बरस गए

हालात की थी मजबूरी
पर उम्मीद भी थी पूरी

तेज गमी में वो भूख प्यास भूल
खाली हाथ चल पड़े
कोई सहारा न मिला तो वो
पैदल ही निकल पड़े

एक बेटी, पिता को साइकिल पर बिठा
मीलों पार कर गई
वही दूसरी अपने बच्चे के साथ
दामर पर ही पिघल गई

जाना था कही और पर रेल गाड़ी
कही और ही पहुँच गई
दो वक्त की रोटी की आस में
ना जाने कितनो की जान निकल गई

थके जो पर पटरी हारे
हमेशा के लिए सो गए
ना जाने उनके इंतज़ार में
कितने अपने रो गए

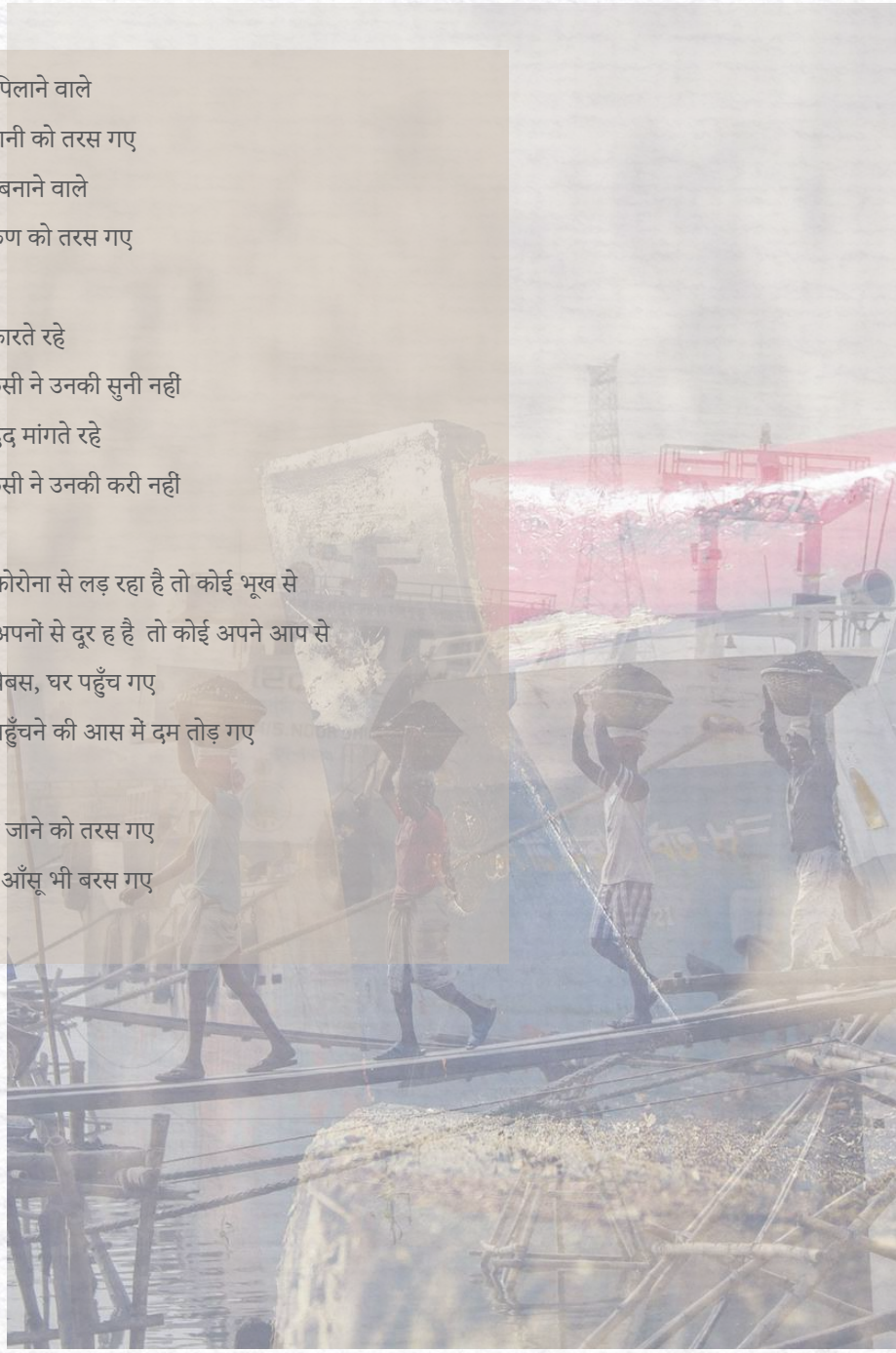
वर्दी वालो का सहारा अत्याचार
और खाई उनके डंडो की मार

पानी पिलाने वाले
खुद पानी को तरस गए
खाना बनाने वाले
खुद कण को तरस गए

वो पुकारते रहे
पर किसी ने उनकी सुनी नहीं
वो मदद मांगते रहे
पर किसी ने उनकी करी नही

कोई कोरोना से लड़ रहा है तो कोई भूख से
कोई अपनों से दूर ह है तो कोई अपने आप से
कुछ बेबस, घर पहुँच गए
कुछ पहुँचने की आस में दम तोड़ गए

वो घर जाने को तरस गए
लाखों आँसू भी बरस गए



क्या मैं भी एक कवि हूँ?

-इतिका खेरा



एक आवाज़ है कहीं दबी हुई
एक आवाज़ है कही अनसुनी
मगर डर कुछ ऐसा है की शायद वो आवाज़,
आवाज़ ही नही|
महज़ कुछ शब्द है, जो बोझ तले दब गए है
बोझ है उनपर, दुनिया के कानो तक पहुँचने का
बोझ है उनपर, उन्हें समझे जाने का
है इस समंदर में कई शायर, कवि, कविताएँ
है कुछ आवाज़ें जो कही दूर से कुछ बयां करना चाह रही
मगर हम सुनते है उन्हें , जिन्हें हम सुन ना चाहते है
शब्द सुने जाते है वही, जो कविता बन जाते है
और एक आवाज़ सुनाई देती है, जब वो एक कवि को जन्म देते है
ये उस कवि का समंदर है : एक 'अग्निपथ'
एक विचार है मन में , और मेरे उस विचार में
हर कलम पकड़ने वाला , 'निराला' है
है 'अमृता' का अमृत हर आवाज़ में
है 'प्रेमचंद' की सोच हर वाक्य में
है 'मीरा' का दुःख हर शब्द में
है 'फैज़' सी बात हर अफ़साने में
है 'गुलज़ार' सी रचनायें
है 'दिनकर' सी कवताएँ |
डर बस इतना है कि मेरे शब्द इस समंदर में डूब ना जाए
कई किनारा मिलने से पहले,इनका दम घुट ना जाए
इन्हें यूँ ही जोड़ कर एक आवाज़ देनी है
यूँ ही मुझे एक कविता प्रस्तुत करनी है
और अंत में बस यही पूछना है,
क्या मै भी एक कवि हूँ?

वे दिन भी कितने हसीन थे

-मुस्कान खुराना

वे दिन भी कितने हसीन थे,
कभी हंसाते, तो कभी रुलाते थे,
कितनी यादें हैं उन दिनों की,
कुछ अच्छी हैं तो कुछ बुरी,
लेकिन जो भी है, जैसी भी है,
दिल से है जुड़ी ।
वहाँ जब पहली बार अपने नन्हें कदम रखे थे,
आँखों में आँसू थे, हम फूट - फूट कर रोए थे,
और जब वहाँ से बाहर निकले, तब भी रोए थे ।

अब चेहरे पर बड़े होने की खुशी थी,
तो दिलों में जुदा होने का ग़म भी था,
उस दिन दुश्मनों को भी गले से लगाया था,
क्योंकि उन्हें भी आखरी बार देखने का समय आया था।
कहने को तो बहुत कुछ था ,
पर ज़ुबां साथ न थी,
सभी उस लम्हे को अपनी आँखों में बसाना चाहते थे,
अच्छी-बुरी यादों को संजो कर ले जाना चाहते थे।

उस जगह ने प्यार करना भी सिखा दिया और दोस्ती निभानी भी,
लेकिन ग़म तो इस बात का है कि
खुद से हमेशा के लिए कर दिया जुदा
क्या अजीब खेल है यह भी जज़बातो का,
पहले स्कूल न जाने के लिए रोते थे,
अब वहीं जाने के लिए रोते हैं।

काश कि हम दोबारा बचपन में जा पाते,
काश कि हम फिरसे उन्हीं पलों को जी पाते।



एक सवाल सबसे

- नंदिता



कल आसिफा थी, आज मधु है।
कल फिर एक आसिफा होगी,
फिर एक मधु होगी।

एक खरोंच तुम्हें कितना तड़पाती है,
उनकी तो पूरी जिंदगी ही तुमने
खरोचों से सजा दी है ।
तुम्हारी बहन भी तो बाहर जाती है,
फिर क्यों तुम्हारी इज्ज़त पर बन आती है ।
चाहे हो सूट या हो साड़ी,
दुपट्टा सरकते ही तुम्हारी हैवानियत
क्यों अपने रंग दिखाती है ।

जिन हाथों से दुर्गा और सरस्वती को पूजते हो,
उन्हीं हाथों से क्यो उसकी का
दम घोटते हो ।
उसकी आवाज़ से तो पूरी दुनिया कतराती है,
फिर उसकी चीखों से क्यों वो ही दुनिया
अंधी बन जाती है।

अपनी इंसानियत को ऐसे न छुपाओ तुम,
छुपाए रहे अगर तो यूही अंधे बने रह जाओगे।
आँखों पर से पर्दा हटाओ, होश में आओ,
कुछ आगे तो बढ़ो, अपनी रूह से पूछो,
इज्ज़त और आज़ादी के फर्क को बूझो।

क्योंकि वह भी दिन आएगा,
जिसे आज तुमने जलते,
तड़पते देखा है,
कल वो ही तुम्हारी वस्ल की
अरज़ी लगाएगा |

CLUBS

Vivekalam

-the Literary Club



Vivekalam is the literary club of VSES which started in 2018 and has been organizing co-curricular activities related to theatre, poetry, art, and more, for over two academic years. The club consists of wings that focus on performing arts, poetry, ecology and its awareness, expansion of classic and modern literature, text and movie analysis, and activities that are a cornerstone in the development of intellectual and literary aptitude. Vivekalam also maintains a board in the college that displays an array of creative talent by students of VSES.

Rangeet

-the Translation and Adaptation Club

Rangeet: Confiuence of Language and Culture, is a translation and adaptation club of the department which began in 2018 and has been organising various creative events since then. Through the club the students are exposed to an interdisciplinary practice of literature and also learn the contemporary ways of interpreting the same. The club aims to introduce the students to the medium of translation which allows them to understand the process of translation with its nuanced understanding of cultural semiotics. The club also incorporates the idea of adaptation at the level of practicing and experiencing literature through various forms.



MERAQI

The Vivekananda School of English Studies (VSES) at Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies, IPU, organised their first ever annual literary festival-event, Meraki'19 on 25 and 26 March, 2019. The germ of the festival was planted early that year with the vision of celebrating creativity and literature in all its forms.

In the opening ceremony, the hosts welcomed our chief guest of the day, an internationally acclaimed novelist, Ms. Tina Biswas. Ms. Tina Biswas spoke a few words about her endeavours and her life experiences. She encouraged the students to read more. The lecture captivated the audience's attention and was followed by an interesting interactive session.

The festival featured a whole lot of events. Events like creative writing "Ink'redibles", singing competition "Alankaar" and debate "War of Words" were organized on the first day of the festival; while, the second day had Slam Poetry, visual arts competition called "Draw Raw", "Lit quiz", and 'Penlighten'.

For the closing ceremony, the students of the English department came together to put forward a musical play of, "My Fair Lady". My Fair Lady is a musical adaptation of George Bernard Shaw's critically acclaimed work, "Pygmalion". It is a witty, funny and musical homage to the ultimate "Rags to Riches" story.















CHOICES

By Nishant



Credits- N

When you live in a city, you never see it from the eyes of a tourist. A tourist is vulnerable, vulnerable to the idea of the very city and to the existence of it. So, a vulnerable friend of mine came to the cultural khichdi of Delhi to explore and capture memories. He had heard about this part of Delhi which was isolated from the cultural farrago yet so close to a serene feeling of peace; the Yamuna Ghat.

We were intrigued by this ironically peaceful place which was close to the busy city life. It was the go-to place for all avid photographers as we saw photos of this place on our Instagram feed.

We decided to reach the Ghat number 24 at the 'Golden Hour' to get the best possible photographic quality but alas! Delhi's traffic simply didn't let me deliver on my time-related commitments. We reached the ghats of Yamuna and we shot this at probably the worst time considered by photographers but as soon as I made the frame through the viewfinder this image became amongst my favourite shots. Since art is subjective I got into viewing the image and on closer look, I could see the image divided into the depiction of choices. To be or not to be is the question. To exist or not to exist is the dilemma. If exist, then fiy high or lie low?

ANATOMY OF DANCERS

By Sakshi



Credits: Sakshi

We dance to live. We dance to breathe. We dance to be free. We dance to be who we are. This is what makes us feel blessed about the dance. It's not just for the entertainment. It brings relief to the soul with each beat and step. It is meditation. It is not only the quintessence of beauty and power of our eternal culture, but it's primarily an intense prayer to reach out to the divine bliss, peace and happiness. When a dancer dances, the one gradually becomes the dance. This unification of art with the artist is the ultimate form of unification.

The rhythms become the heartbeats. The stage becomes the body in whom this heart beats. Dance is our first love ever.

It is the only language we've ever learned. The music transports us to some other world. As Wordsworth says, "the purpose of poetry is to give immediate pleasure", similarly, the purpose of dance is also to give pleasure. Our soul feels pleasure. The derivation of the pleasure from the dance is our sacred prayer. A blessing. Sometimes, it pains. But, this sweet pain enforces us to dance with more joy, more passion, more enthusiasm and with more strength. With pain comes pleasure. In dance, we lose ourselves. In dance, we find ourselves. And this is how we intend to live our life by dancing through all the ups and downs.



A HOUSE CALLED HOME

By Sonali Rawat

It was a soothing Sunday morning. The sun was shining brightly. On Sunday, we all gather sharp at 9 in the morning to have breakfast. It's an unsaid rule. Surprisingly, that day it was only two of us, my sister and I, present there, eagerly waiting for the breakfast to arrive. I, somehow, managed to take a break from the never ending 'The Hunger Games' series to witness the spectacular display of nature. The clattering of plates, murmuring of voices and the sun rays streaming into the room through the window caught my attention.

After a while, I heard a few noises coming from the other end of the kitchen. I thought it to be the clinking of cutlery, breaking my train of thought. But, soon, I realized that it was my Baba shouting at my mother for not adhering to the rules he had made yesterday when he was all drunk. A stream of strong words ran through my head. I was angry at my own subservience.

I tried counting till 100 to calm myself down and stopped after four failed attempts. Finally, the breakfast arrived in brass plates with really small bowls.

One look at the plates was enough to figure out the quantity of food. It wasn't enough but we were okay. My sister and I exchanged a look. We fixed our gaze at the plates and pretended to act normal as we continued eating in complete silence because we knew there were more important issues than the "quantity" of food like mom and dad fighting. So, we continued pretending as if nothing bothered us. Well, isn't it something we all have learned ? "Pretending is an art." "Fake it till you make it."

At 3 in the afternoon, I saw my mother applying an antiseptic cream on her forehead.

"Aai, what's the matter?", I asked.

She hurriedly hid her fresh wound and also her face which had a reddish impression of four fingers on her left cheek.

"No, no, nothing, I fell from the stairs and see what I have done to myself. Don't worry this is going to be fine. I'll apply turmeric paste and see how it will disappear in a few days", she told me in the most convincing tone she could.

"I know how you got this wound. I know that you won't talk about it. I also know why you don't talk to neighbors like you used to. I hear those voices at night, which makes it impossible for me to sleep. I also know that it is not the stomachache as you describe it to be because stomachaches don't leave impressions in the form of wounds on neck or other parts of body that

you manage to hide so easily. I can hear your silent weeping, moaning, begging to your man to leave you alone. But he doesn't. He wants to rip your soul apart, shatter your integrity into million pieces just to experience the false pride of being a 'man'. Oh ! Why don't you tell anybody anything, mother ? Why do you think we understand nothing ? Why ?", I heard myself saying all this to my mother in my head.

The funny things is that people call us 'perfect family'. You know, a family which fulfills all the characteristics of an ideal family set by the society. I laugh at their sensibility and admiration to consider a group of people living under the same roof as 'family'. And label every house made out of bricks as 'home'.



A NEW HOPE
INFERNUM

By Isha Taneja

It is a tale as old as time. When justice is served cold by the hands of sinners. When the distinction between good and bad is thinned to a non-existent thread. The age where the world is run by sons of the devil himself. It's a tale as old as time. It's how god worshipping sinners rule. And she had been caught up in the crossfire, with no way out.

"Look alive", a voice boomed in the empty hall. She looked around, expecting to find herself in a desolated place. And she did, although it wasn't empty, it was congregated. And it wasn't a hall, it was a church. Her eyes locked with the speaker's- pale brown and lifeless; yet very malign. Today they bore into the pages of Romans 12:19, and Father Dolus quoted-

"Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God. For it is written 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay', says the Lord."

His eyes roamed the crowd and finally landed on her. As if to pro-



claim how powerless she was in front of the clergy, how her voice would never be heard. She thought so too, it was a dark tunnel of thoughts and it pulled her right back in. She was standing in a dark corridor, in front of an ornate door, her ears straining to hear what was going on behind it.

Her eyes admired the gold doorknob before she could reach down to twist it, a gush of wind creaked it open. Little did young Lyssa knew what she was about to witness would change her life forever. At first, she could not believe that it was father dolus, she shut her eyes and forced herself to believe that it could not be true. But the cries of the young boy compelled her to look more into the horrifying reality of the man who was like a parent to her orphan self.

Pulling herself out of the nightmare, she recounted the days that followed. It had taken her a lot of courage to do what she had done, and a lot of pain too. Today, talking about the seven deadly sins, the pastor could not have landed himself into a better irony. He was always wary of one- Ira(wrath), something about anger scared him. And today he would face the wrath of those he wronged.

Lyssa looked around the church, at the faces of the devotees, they had no idea. Nobody knew that the man in front of them, who ought to be the messenger of God himself, could stoop to horrendous depths of debauchery. They were unsighted fools, who accepted everything that was taught to them, who never, once questioned the preacher. She had once been told that, "only when you take off your blindfold of faith can you truly witness the wrath of humanity", and that she had. It was her belief that shielded her eyes from reality, protected her from the appalling deeds of those around her. And now that it was gone could she see the truth. The cold, hard, unforgiving truth.

Feasting her eyes over the priest, Lyssa almost felt Dante's spirit coursing through her veins and she whispered, "Hope not ever to see Heaven. I have come to lead you to the other shore; into eternal darkness; into fire and into ice.".

Lyssa remembered the night again. It was cold and she could feel goosebumps on her skin. But it wasn't because of the frost; the weather had nothing to do with the hellfire that bore down her skin. As she crawled nearer the breach of the door, her heartbeat quickened. Finally, with as much courage as she could muster, she yanked it open. And there it was: the truth. The one that shattered her world forever.

Closing her eyes, she could hear her past self scream, her memory still had that picture, almost as if burned into her conscience- the image of an old man standing naked on top of a young weeping boy, doing outrageous, indefensible things

to him. Not even Dante's Inferno could have a ring deep enough for deeds of such nature.

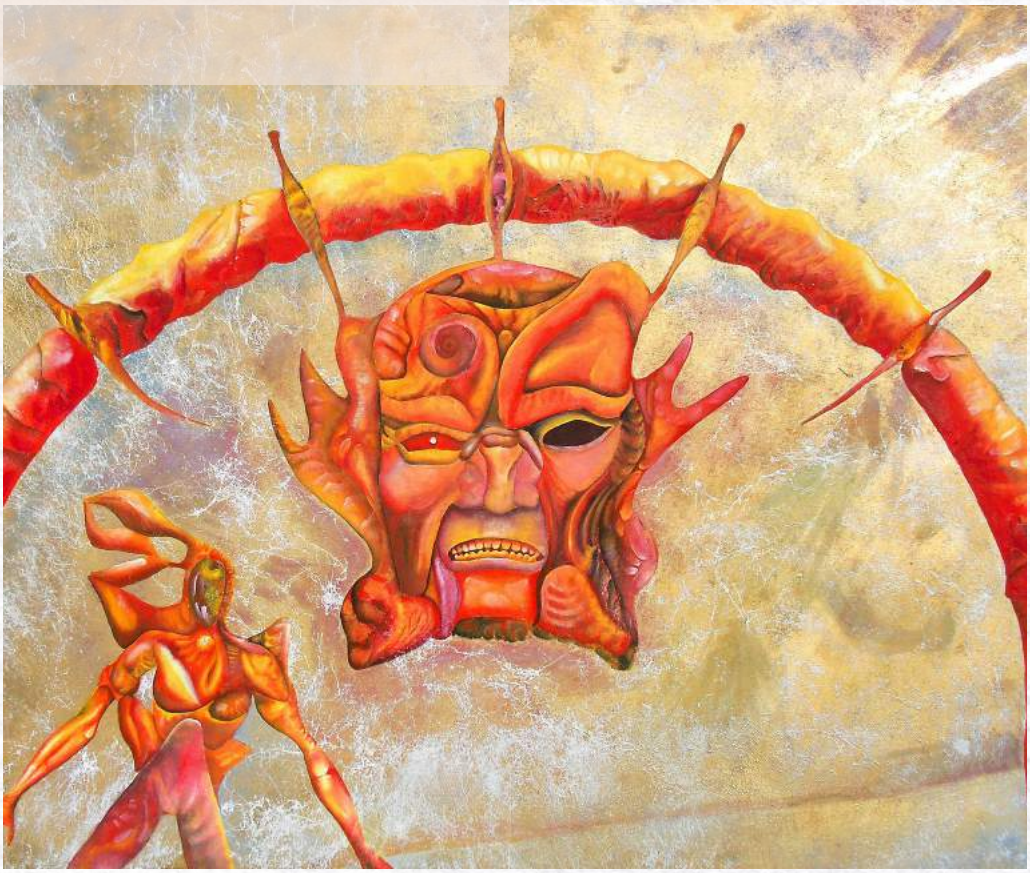
Lyssa had been rendered numb with agony for days, she remembered Virgil, how his words, "At grief so deep the tongue must wag in vain; the language of our sense and memory lacks the vocabulary of such pain" made so much sense now.

She had been castigated and coerced, Dolus threatened her that nobody would ever believe her, and he was right. Words would never be enough for the society to accept the truth against their will, they needed to be shown how horribly they have been misled by those they trust. And Lyssa had done exactly that.

She had gone to extreme ends to make sure that justice was served, and now was the time.

At exactly 10 am every cell phone device in the entire city pinged. Every news channel suddenly broadcasted breaking news. Every journalist in the city massed in front of St. Mark Holy Church. Eyes widened in shock as people saw a video that shook the foundations of their beliefs. Finally, a squad came thundering down the altar, with handcuffs in their hands which they placed on the wrists of the messenger of God.

Their eyes met and he understood what had happened. The once menacing eyes pleaded and begged for mercy, but there was no one to receive it.



It had taken Lyssa a lot of courage to do what she had done. It wasn't exactly easy either. But she was determined for justice. The secret surveillance, broadcasting the footage to every network device, everything done under the watchful eye of her 'father' had not been simple. But now the world knew. They knew that father dolus was a child sexual predator.

Alas, justice was far from over. The Catholic Church had undergone hundreds of allegations, and still, they stood strong. The world would again succumb to those who held power; after all, church and court had gone hand in hand since the beginning. Believers all over the world, the theists who put their faith in the laps of invisible deities would again come forward and reject the cold truths of their preachers. Victims would be blamed and ragged all over, society would still defend the sinners, as they had done for ages.

Nevertheless, standing against power had never been easy. Few possess the ability to bring about change. And even failing is better than inaction. After all, "the darkest place in hell are reserved for those who maintain their neutrality in times of moral crisis."

ONE IN A MILLION

By Alokika Bhatnagar



Yawning, squeezing his eyes, he gets up from the bed; same old schedule, same old office awaits him. Getting ready, he sat down to eat his breakfast. Samara his wife plates down the breakfast, smiling at him.

"Omelet with toast, enjoy"

He digs in the breakfast returning the smile, looking at his wife thinking how she gets up way before him to make breakfast and lunch for both of them. He knows that he cannot handle, household and office work simultaneously as his wife does.

Samara got ready for her office and went out of the house telling him she will be late because of a meeting. He picked his bag and departed to his office. Blowing horn he sighed, seeing the same frustrated look on everyone's face that he could see in the traffic he was stuck in.

He does not know what he wants but he for sure knows that this is not what he spent his nineteen years of life on education for. He felt as if he is a part of a herd, not an individual; just a person who is blindly running in the same direction where everyone is running to. He felt like he is part of a million not "one in a million."

Entering the office, he sat on the same chair doing the same thing, he did not feel joy or contentment at all. He did not feel like giving his all in the work he is was doing, even though the salary given to him was very high. He started typing in the computer like he was expected to do, his mind working in a monotonous way as if it has blocked every creative idea that could come to him and being in a department of management it was not good for his job.

"Kshitij, the boss is calling you"

He looked up at his colleague who informed him, nodding he walked towards his boss's office and knocked. He entered when allowed in and took a seat, his boss, a man of gentle temper never gave a hard time to any of the employees.

"Kshitij, I have seen you are not into the work for almost a year now. We have warned you about your performance quite a lot but there is no improvement and I am sorry to inform you that you are fired"

He was fired but he did not feel bad about, actually, he felt kind of relieved as if someone had taken a burden off of him. He was handed the letter which he expected accepted without any argument or plea of for having another chance. He collected his things from his work cubicle and walked out.

Keeping his things in the car, he called Samara wanting to tell her but this time he felt insecure not

knowing what would sheshe would feel about this. She picked up the call and without giving him any chance to talk she started with a cheerful voice.

"I was just about to call you, I got promoted!!!!"

"Congratulations, come home soon then we will celebrate"

Their conversation was cut off after she said yes to his request. Kshitij looked down at his phone. He had tried very hard to be cheerful for her when while talking, but right now he was feeling everything except happiness. His insecurities increased, and he did not want to tell her about him being fired, knowing that will ruin her mood.

Going home, he decorated the whole house, making her favorite food and buying her favorite wine, he completed the work. His work paid off as Samara enjoyed everything he did for her. After their short house party, they both started to clean., Kshitij went up to the second fioor's washroom and just then his phone rang.

Samara knowing it will take time for him to come down picked up his phone. The person calling was their mutual friend who worked in the same office as her husband. They both talked and it was then that she came to know about Kshitij being fired.

She hanged hung up the phone seeing Kshitij coming down, she smiled at him, and they both went back to cleaning. She discreetely messaged her boss about not being able to make to work tomorrow.

"Hey how about we go to the vineyard, I don't have a working day tomorrow. Please take leave from work"

That was the moment he was so tempted to tell her that he has been fired but he could not, he did not want to ruin her happy moment. He replied with a smile and said 'why not'. They both retired to bed and slept instantly as soon as they hit the bed.



Next morning, they both set for a drive to vineyard early in the morning enjoying the morning breeze. They stopped their car and walked out., Cool breeze kissed their cheeks making them breathe deeply. A subtle smile came on both of their faces.

They both started to walk hearing the rustling of grasses, they took a walk in the vineyard quietly not wanting to break the comfortable silence between them. After a few hours, they both sat at top of a hill

looking down at the vineyard.

"Kshitij, I know you are fired"

Kshitij gulped a deep breath looking at her, who was looking at the vineyard; but did not say anything and let her continue.

"I knew you were not into your work for some time but I thought it is just the pressure you are feeling. I should have talked to you then"

This time Kshitij could not help but cut in. (They both were talking while not looking at each other).

"Are you not angry with me ?"

Samara chuckled on his innocence.

"Why would I be, I will always support you Kshitij. I am here to be with you in whatever decision you take. Take as much time as you want to think about what you want to do after this"

"I want to pursue my Ph.D. and then start my own business" Kshitij replied with hesitation. He thought about what he wanted the most- to pursue his Ph.D. which he had to give up due to family issues.

"Then so be it, never hesitate to be what you want. It is never too late for anything"

Kshitij smiled with tears in his eyes, he felt like a big rock has been lifted up from his chest. He let himself cry freely knowing he can be himself in front of his wife, he does not have to be 'masculine' in front of her. He spoke up, still being in tears," But what about money"?"

Samara this time looked at him, hugging him, she answered with a soothing voice which calmed his



heart.

"I just got promoted and my salary is twice of what I earned before. So do not worry about anything and just follow your heart"

They both sat hugging each other covered in a blanket of cool breeze and fragrance of fiowers. This was the time Kshitij got free from all the insecurities he was feeling.

WE'RE ALL RIGHT

By Isha Taneja



Even before he fell into the gaping pit, Oscar was having a bad day. He woke up on a school bus, hand in hand with a really pretty boy. That wasn't the bad part, what was disturbing was that he did not know who the stranger was, in fact, he could not remember anything at all. His own identity was unknown to him. It freaked him out. Looking outside the window he realised they were in a wilderness. Around him were trees, some so high he had to strain his neck to see the canopy. What was a school bus doing in the middle of nowhere he wondered.

"listen up cupcakes", boomed a voice from the front of the bus. It was a mean-looking lady. For someone calling them cute dessert nicknames, she wasn't very cute herself. She wore a baseball hat combined with a neon orange shirt that gave Oscar a headache to even look at. Around her neck there hung a whistle, which left no doubt that she was a coach.

"we will be stopping soon. Fill out your worksheets about what you observe, and no shenanigans. If I catch anyone doing anything stupid, I will make sure you get a week's worth detention."

Then her eyes locked with Oscar's and her mouth curled, "I will be watching closely".

Despite the cold winds, he could feel sweat trickle down his back. He could still feel her eyes on him as he once again, looked outside as if to cry for help.

"are you okay?", came a soft voice from beside him. It was the pretty boy. He had dark messy hair and a lean frame and something about his eyes made Oscar feel weird in the stomach. They were light brown and piercing, but very kind.

"looks like you saw a beast, man", the pretty boy's lips curved into a lopsided grin. Oscar was not sure how to feel. He had woken up among strangers not knowing anything except his name. but something about this stranger made him feel comforted.

"I'm not sure how this is going to sound but I don't know who you are. in fact I seem to have lost all memory. Where are we? Who was that mean lady in front? What are we doing here?"

Saying it all out loud was somehow even scarier. He looked in the front and the mean lady was looking right at him. Her beady eyes were unfiinching. The wrinkled skin on her face stretched as her mouth turned into a sneer. She could be almost 70 years old, he thought.

"it's okay. It happens to you sometimes. You'll get back I promise", the pretty boy assured.

"and as for the mean lady, she's our P.E. teacher, Mrs. Hector. she hates you.", he said as a matter of fact.

Before Oscar could ask the boy to introduce himself, the bus lurched into a halt and started to smoke. The kids all groaned as if an accident in the middle of nowhere was

a minor inconvenience.

As he stepped outside, a blast of cold wind hit his face. he could smell sulfur, which was weird because he didn't know what sulphur was. The pretty boy held his hand again. He looked into Oscar's eyes and winked, "she hates it when we do that"

"Alfred!", a voice barked behind them. The mean lady was pointing at his companion. For a second Oscar could swear he saw her face fiicker; Her nose had elongated into a snout. But that couldn't possibly be true, he thought.

"I want to talk to you two love birds. Come.", she snapped and went into the corner. The kids, sensing an oncoming show started to gather around. Some were taking bets on what would happen; Some were hooting. As what teenagers are specialized in, they were looking at the humour in someone else's misery. he didn't mind. His mind was still preoccupied with what he had seen. Alfred, on the other hand seemed to be annoyed at this little performance.

As Oscar walked towards her, the smell of sulphur increased. After halting in front of the coach, he realized it was her. The smell was coming from her.

"you have been very naughty", a growling voice came from deep inside Mrs. Hector, whose lips hadn't moved. Suddenly she started molding into herself, as if starting to transform. Her face remained the same but her arms grew wings, and where her human body was, stood the elongated frame of a lion.

"you're a sphinx!", Oscar exclaimed. His entire body started to tremble, beads of sweat were trickling down his spine, the pupils of his eyes dilated. There was a thumping sound coming from inside of him, reverberating his chest. He felt more petrified than ever.

Before he could take it all in, Mrs hector lunged at him, pinning him down easily. Her weight was enough to crack his ribcage. He tried to get up, but it was useless. She was laughing now, taunting him. All around him, the students had started to scream, some were shouting his name, some were running for help. Mrs hector smelled of sulphur as if she had trapped lightning inside her claws. The atmosphere itself seemed to change, dark clouds were threatening to burst over, the wind had taken it upon itself to cause pandemonium. It was total chaos.

Oscar looked to his right, there





was a chasm, a pit so deep it could house an entire city; on his left were the school kids screaming. He wondered if he could somehow topple the 20 ft monster into the pit. Even that idea was far fetched and impossible to execute. There was nothing he could do. His eyes locked with Alfred's, he was crying saying "wake up!". Now that seemed insane. Before he had any chance to even open his mouth, Oscar felt razor-sharp claws dig into his chest and the next thing he knew; he was tossed like a puppet. She towered over him, her beady eyes shining with malice.

He was plummeting downwards. His body felt weightless. The wind around him seemed to accelerate his fall. Everything was blurred but he could still hear the words 'wake up' echoing in the air. Oscar looked upwards into the laughing face of the sphinx, but she had turned back into Mrs. Hector and was whistling loudly. He was very confused. There was rain.

As the water hit his eye, he jolted upwards, opening his eyes. He was in a field, surrounded by kids playing football, a woman was yelling at him, calling him a delinquent. It was a warm, sunny day. Alfred's face came into view, he was laughing and calling him a sleepy head.

Mrs hector had poured water on his face to wake him up. He was back to normal.

SOME FACTS

Facts About Literature

That'll blow your mind

Sherlock Holmes never said, "Elementary, my dear Watson".

'The Mouse Trap' by Agatha Christie is the longest running play in history.

A Language dies every 14 days.

'Dreamt' is the only English word that ends in the letters 'mt'.

The first novel ever written on a typewriter was Tom Sawyer.

No word in the English language rhymes with month, orange, silver, and purple.

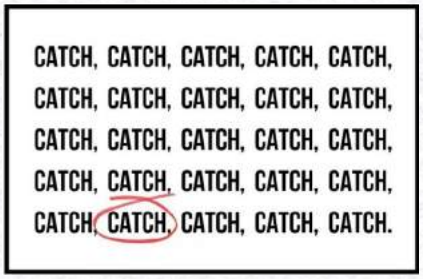
"I am." is the shortest complete sentence in the English language.

John Milton used 8,000 different words in his poem 'Paradise Lost.'.

Some Picture riddles
to test your knowledge

1. 

2. 

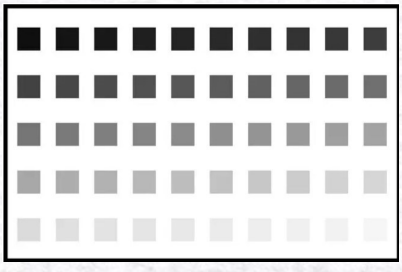
3. 

4. 

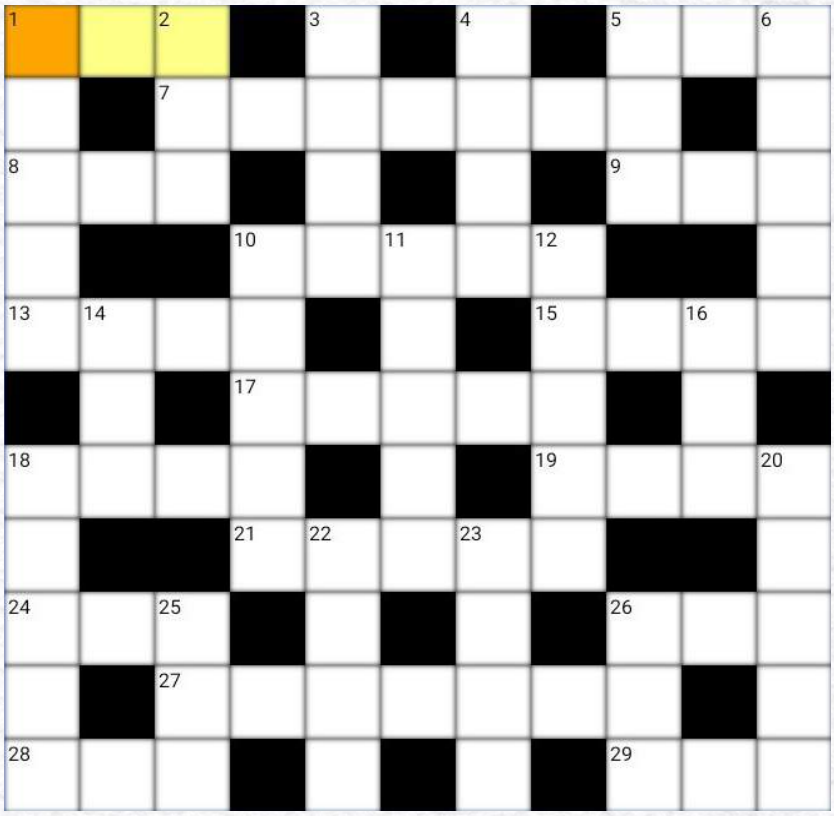
5. 

6. 

7. 

8. 

A literary Crossword



ACROSS

1. By way of.
5. Ventilate.
7. 'Alice in Wonderland' author's pen name (surname).
8. Decay.
9. Author of 'The Tell-Tale Heart' and 'The Raven' (initials).
10. US poet (1902-1971), _____ Nash .
13 Always
15. Shakespearean villain from Othello.
17. English poet and ordained priest, John _____ (1572-1631).
18. Antonym for a body of water connected to Wordsworth and Coleridge.
19. Italian poet and translator (1507-66) Annibale _____.
21.US poet and writer, F.D. _____.
24. Untruth.
26. Tolkien's goblin-like being.
27_____ Kipling, poet and author, 'The Jungle Book'.
28. Visual organ.
29. Auditory organ.

DOWN

1. Poetry.
2. Play division.
3. Amphibian, much portrayed in literature.
4. English poet, Alexander _____.
5. Beer.
6. Facsimile, replica, in short.
10. Command.
11. Italian poet, 'The Divine Comedy' .
12.Female relative. (Brother's daughter)
14. Compete.
16. Italian opera composer, 'The Barber of Seville' and 'William Tell' (initials).
18. 'Winnie-the-Pooh' author (surname).
20. _____ Wilde, Irish playwright and poet.22Christian Science founder and poet, Mary Baker _____.
23. Medicine container.
25. Before, poetically.
26. '_____ to a Nightingale', Keats .

Classic Literature Word Search Puzzle

D	N	N	Y	J	R	E	N	R	A	M	S	A	L	I	S	R	O	R	K	D
L	U	W	I	A	K	O	E	F	T	S	Z	L	Y	J	R	E	E	R	C	N
E	G	D	Z	S	J	C	M	U	E	W	F	U	M	X	R	T	W	S	I	A
I	R	B	A	T	W	W	O	I	U	J	F	T	Z	Y	T	B	N	T	D	L
F	E	F	J	H	C	C	R	L	L	P	N	R	E	E	E	N	A	H	Y	S
R	A	L	O	G	Z	R	F	Y	I	M	L	E	L	R	I	L	C	E	B	I
E	T	O	X	I	U	Q	N	O	D	V	N	T	S	F	I	F	N	O	O	E
P	E	R	C	E	M	C	A	A	K	A	E	Y	Y	T	G	D	X	D	M	R
P	X	O	F	H	G	X	H	C	J	L	V	R	T	K	A	V	S	Y	A	U
O	P	B	K	G	Q	X	T	Y	R	K	R	L	T	Y	J	I	K	S	N	S
C	E	I	F	N	A	E	E	A	S	E	E	W	R	W	O	H	O	S	I	A
D	C	N	J	I	V	D	C	C	B	W	C	T	H	F	I	W	J	E	N	E
I	T	S	I	R	G	S	Z	E	O	H	N	A	V	I	Y	S	D	Y	E	R
V	A	O	L	E	E	L	L	M	O	E	P	D	I	T	T	X	T	Q	R	T
A	T	N	D	H	E	K	E	S	F	C	A	G	P	A	L	E	A	L	A	B
D	I	C	T	T	C	N	X	H	Q	H	A	I	M	V	P	Q	F	W	K	T
D	O	R	W	U	A	W	W	C	S	A	Z	H	X	W	T	P	P	A	A	R
C	N	U	H	W	P	U	H	A	I	P	W	H	M	M	Q	D	K	I	N	F
B	S	S	C	A	R	E	G	R	E	B	E	D	O	N	A	R	Y	C	N	G
X	R	O	A	T	A	L	E	O	F	T	W	O	C	I	T	I	E	S	A	M
S	J	E	S	C	U	K	G	F	R	T	Y	C	A	W	J	W	V	B	H	T

SEARCH :

1. A Tale of Two Cities
2. Anna Karenina
3. David Copperfield
4. Great Expectations
5. Little women
6. Wuthering Heights
7. The Odyssey
8. Huckleberry Finn
9. Jane Eyre
10. Silas Marner
11. Oliver Twist
12. Great Expectations
13. Treasure Island
14. Moby Dick
15. The Scarlet Letter
16. Robinson Crusoe
17. Ivanhoe
18. White Fang

Answers to picture riddles :

1. Black Beauty by Anna Sewell
2. Alice in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll
3. Catch-22 by Joseph Heller
4. Middlemarch by George Eliot
5. The Fault in our Stars by John Green
6. The Color Purple by Alice Walker
7. The Long Goodbye by Raymond Chandler
8. Fifty Shades of Grey by E.L. James

Answers to cross word

Across :

1. Via
5. Air
7. Carroll
8. Rot
9. EAP (Edgar Allen Poe)
10. Ogden
13. Ever
15. Iago
17. Donne
18. Mere
19. Caro
21. Reeve
24. Lie
26. Orc
27. Rudyard
28. Eye
29. Ear

Down :

1. Verse
2. Act
3. Frog
4. Pope
5. Ale
6. Repro.
10. Order
11. Dante
12. Niece
14. Vie
16. GAR (GioAchino Rossini)
18. Milne
20. Oscar.
22. Eddy
23. Vial
25. Ere
26. Ode

ACADEMIC ACTIVITES





















THE STUDENTS OF VSES

Batch 2018-2021



Batch 2019-2022



Our team



Shubh Badhwar MuseLit has been a journey. This issue tries to encapsulate the varying shades of thought in our students, and it strikes back against the hegemonic belief that art's existence depends heavily upon its monetary value. I believe it is only through the support of the editorial team and our designer, with his keen artistic eye, that we have been able to put forth this issue. Moreover, if it hadn't been for the keen interest and knowledgeable recommendations of our faculty coordinators, and the constant support from dean ma'am, this issue could not have been possible.



Dhwani Gupta Interested in all things literary and aesthetic, MuseLit was a gift to me. It was the perfect let out for all my creative desires. The freedom with just the right amount of guidance that our teachers, Dr. Anshu Gagal and Dr. Avani Bhatnagar, gave us was vital in our growth - not just as the editors of the magazine, but also as humans. Truly grateful for this opportunity!



Shan Gupta Muselit aggrandizes the creativity our students have to offer, giving their amorphous ideas a definite shape. Designing a full-fledged e-magazine was something alien to me before 'Muselit' and without the constant efforts of the team, achieving this feat was like a distant dream. It was also the artistic perspectives of out co-ordinators that made this magazine take form of what we now know as 'Muselit'.



Supreet Kaur The way the different view points echo within the writings enclosed in this very first edition of our literary magazine is proof to the reciprocity of ideas amongst our writers. While editing parts of this magazine I found each nascent thought evolving into a purpose, an action. Having said that, the works elaborated with the help of distict and active ideas enclosed henceforward advance into a tapestry of critical imagination and creativity.



Prerna Chadha The pieces in this very first issue navigate the expression, construction, and inception of self, through a variety of nuanced lenses and traces the journey our talented writers and artists have undertaken to speak their hearts out and color the literary canvas: rainbow, with their creative juices flowing. While it still leaves room for growth to cultivate, I hope our magazine speaks to you in ways unimaginable and makes you feel human and un-alone.

I hope our magazine speaks to you in ways unimaginable and makes you feel human and un-alone.



A VIVEKANANDA INSTITUTE OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES PUBLICATION