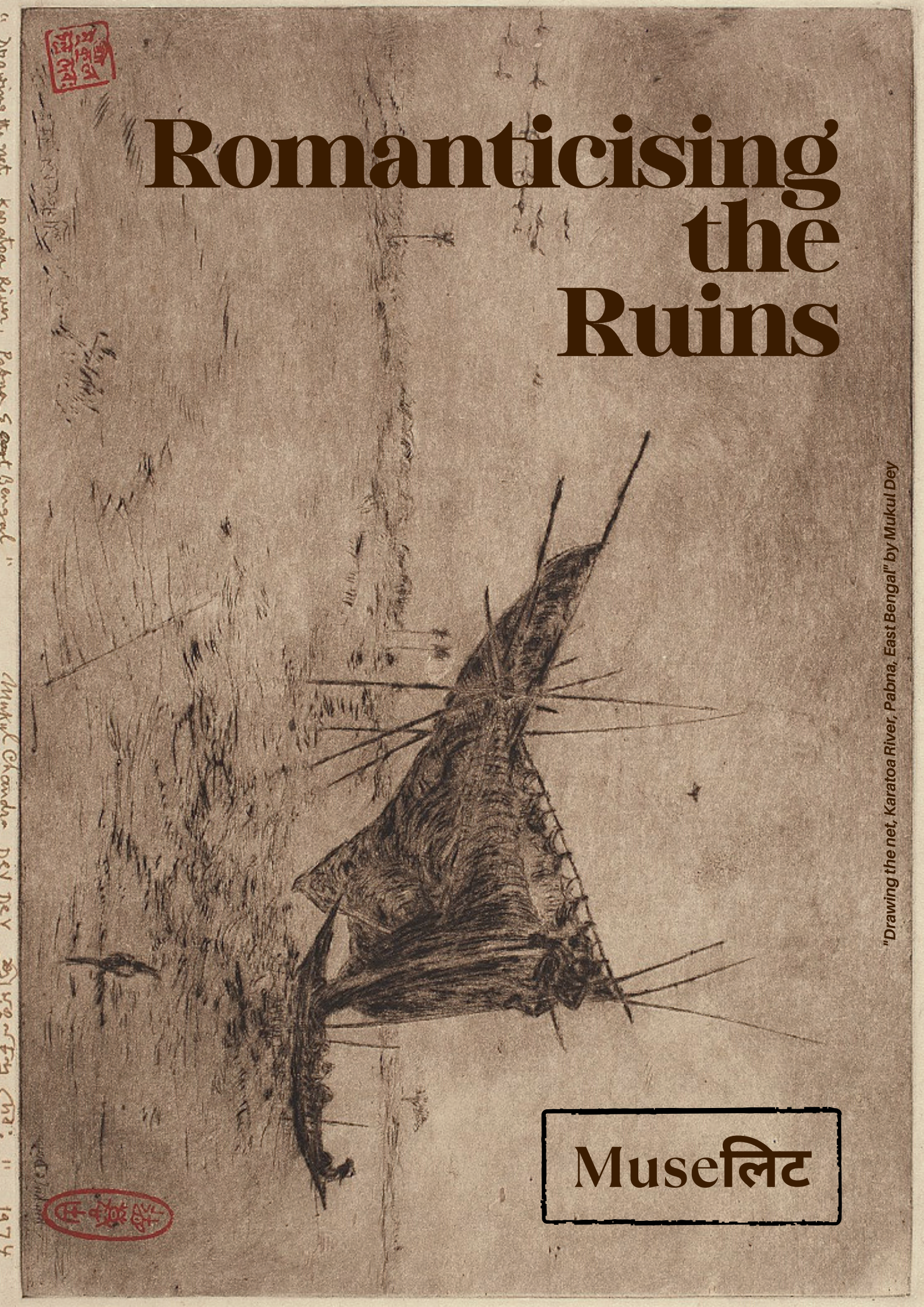
Romanticising the Ruins



"Drawing the net, Karatoa River, Pabna, East Bengal" by Mukul Dey

Museलिट

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Message from the Chairman's Desk



The influence that literature exerts upon its readers is both profound and enduring. It does not merely inform, but shapes perspective—encouraging us to engage with the world, its complexities, and its silences with greater sensitivity. At times, it even teaches us to pause and reflect on what has been left behind, finding meaning in what seems fractured or incomplete. Guided by the educational philosophy of Swami Vivekananda, the Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies continues to nurture such reflective thought. Swamiji's belief - that perfection already exists within us - resonates not only in achievement, but also in our ability to grow through uncertainty and rediscovery. It gives me great pleasure to present the fourth edition of MuseLit, the departmental magazine. This year's theme, "Romanticising the Ruins" offers a thought-provoking lens through which students explore memory, loss, resilience, and renewal. The writings in this issue engage with contemporary concerns while also uncovering beauty in unexpected places, within remnants, transitions, and unresolved spaces.

The magazine continues to serve as a platform that reflects the intellectual depth and creative strength of our students. It is particularly encouraging to see young minds not only question established ideas, but also reimagine them, often through the quiet power of introspection. I extend my sincere congratulations to the department for their dedication in bringing out this edition. MuseLit has grown into a significant academic and creative endeavour, and I am confident that our students will continue to bring distinction to the institute.

Best wishes!

-Dr. S.C. Vats

Chairman, VIPS-TC



Message from the Vice Chairman's Desk

"Take up one idea. Make that one idea your life; dream of it; live by that idea..."
– Swami Vivekananda

The teachings of Swami Vivekananda have long served as the foundation of this institution, guiding generations of students towards purpose, clarity, and self-realisation. In a world that is constantly evolving, it becomes essential not only to adapt, but to do so with awareness and authenticity. Growth is rarely linear—it often emerges from moments of disruption, reflection, and reconstruction. Recognising value in these moments is what shapes true individuality. At the Vivekananda School of English Studies, we encourage students to think critically, create fearlessly, and engage deeply with ideas. Creativity, in its many forms, allows us to reinterpret the world around us—sometimes even finding inspiration in what appears to be fading, forgotten, or broken. The fourth edition of MuseLit beautifully captures this spirit through its theme, romanticising the ruins. The contributions in this issue reflect a nuanced understanding of transformation—where endings give way to new meanings, and fragments become sites of imagination. It is heartening to see such a diverse range of voices come together, each offering a unique perspective shaped by thought, experience, and creativity. Initiatives like this magazine not only foster expression but also encourage meaningful dialogue and personal growth. I congratulate the students and faculty whose efforts have made this publication possible. I look forward to witnessing the continued evolution of MuseLit in the years to come.

- Mr. Suneet Vats
Vice Chairman, VIPS-TC

Message from the Dean's Desk



MuseLit has always been more than just a magazine—it is a space where imagination takes form, where ideas find voice, and where young writers begin to shape their literary identities. At VSES, we strive to create an environment that nurtures creativity in all its forms. This platform allows students to explore not only the worlds they create, but also the ones they inherit, engaging with both through reflection and reinterpretation. The fourth edition of MuseLit, centred around the theme romanticising the ruins, brings with it a compelling collection of works that explore memory, time, and transformation. The idea of the "ruin" here is not merely one of decay, but of quiet beauty, of stories that linger, of emotions that endure, and of meaning that emerges from what is left behind. The magazine stands as a testament to the creative and intellectual energy of our students - storytellers, poets, artists, and thinkers who continue to push the boundaries of expression. Each contribution adds to a larger tapestry of voices that is both diverse and deeply engaged. Bringing out this edition has undoubtedly required immense effort and dedication. I commend the magazine committee for their commitment to making this vision a reality. I congratulate the entire team of MuseLit, the students and faculty members, for this remarkable achievement, and wish the magazine continued growth as a vibrant reflection of the literary spirit of VSES.

- Prof. (Dr.) Salonee Priya
Dean, VSES



Message from the Faculty

“Ruins are never merely ruins; they romanticise the past, define the present, and shape the future.”

This is how we envision the theme for this edition of Muselit– “Romanticising the Ruins”. From the moment this idea was conceptualised, even the long-silent ruins seemed to find a voice. What once appeared fragmented and still began to resonate with beauty and meaning, each piece carrying within it a story waiting to be heard.

Literature, in itself, is a form of poetry–an expression that breathes life into the ordinary. When this sensibility engages with ruins, they are reimagined with renewed significance. Within them lies a timeless tenderness, and when woven into literature–through poetry, prose, art, and visual expression–it evokes awe and admiration. It becomes a testament to resilience, a reminder that even in fragments, there is strength enough to endure and be remembered. What seems like an end quietly transforms into a new beginning. Culture never truly fades; in a world defined by impermanence, this truth remains constant. Each generation inherits the past and reshapes it, not as a rupture, but as a continuum–an evolving dialogue between what was, what is, and what will be.

Through this edition, Muselit seeks to bring students closer to their heritage and to art in its many forms. Adopting an interdisciplinary approach, the magazine weaves together history, literature, and artistic expression, encouraging readers to engage with the idea of collective memory. It invites us to look beyond the visible, to uncover the layers of meaning that lie beneath the surface of ruins.

As the editor of this magazine, I am confident that this edition will inspire students to develop a deeper sensitivity towards the overlooked and the forgotten. It is an invitation to rediscover, to reconnect, and to find harmony with the fragments that surround us. For, as beautifully expressed by John Keats, “A thing of beauty is a joy forever.” The efforts and creativity of our students are truly commendable. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the entire team for this remarkable endeavour and wish them continued success in the many editions of Muselit yet to come.

- Dr. Meetu Bhatia Kapur
Associate Professor, VSES

Message from the Faculty



This issue of the MuseLit is special because the proposal for a theme, the idea came from students. They are thinking of culture, its transformations, and the framing of the practices of looking at the world. “Romanticising the Ruins” carries many connotations. It’s the zeitgeist of our times, to look into the past, as media increasingly depicts narratives of apocalypse, ecocides, climactic catastrophes, and the world is rife with wars, and the lingering crisis of survival ever since the last pandemic. With the vision of the future narrowing into standardized development models, the past feels abundant, rich, and a vast repository of our identities, desires, and passions. We look back not merely to learn, but with nostalgia, and romantic longing, often stripping away the many struggles of power that existed then. Ruins peak from another world, defamiliarising their own location to become a conduit between what was and how we see it. The act of romanticisation is itself historical, asking us where we invest our passions? It is created by conditions of the present. We look back in order to understand what we feel today. Our disorientations from the present make us look at the past through romanticisation. We locate our own lamentation into the tragedy and ruin of the past. We take solace in the fact that the traces from another time survive the onslaught of time. So that we too may make a life that survives, in ruins, into the future.

Our students have developed a critical nuance to realise that romanticising the ruins is indeed a testament to our complicated relationship with the past. As we saunter into a world shaped by technology, we simultaneously crave slowness, deliberate upon waste, and take note of what’s left behind. Walter Benjamin famously said, ”Allegories are in realm of thoughts, what ruins are in realm of things.” These ruins are the signposts of our language, poetry, and cultural life. However, romanticising is not escapism, it is neither naive, nor superficial. It bears witness to the capacity in humans to locate beauty in the most neglected corners. The capacity to bestow kindness, attention, and love to the forgotten. To nourish the idea of the broken, but resilient. We draw strength from these ruins, as well as wisdom, of the dialectic of the old and the new, of the withering and the sprouting.

And it is with this resilient, beaten wisdom that we are excited to offer this issue to you. It has been designed and curated with much care and effort and I’m very proud of the entire editorial team and contributors. They have brought their vision to life with both creative liberty and committed enthusiasm.

- Dr. Suniti Madaan

Assistant Professor, VSES



Message from the Editor

There is something tender about ruins, the way they hold time without resisting it. They do not demand to be restored; they ask only to be seen. This year, as we shaped "Romanticising the Ruins", I began to understand that a ruin is not merely what has fallen apart, but what continues to exist in fragments - quiet, persistent, and deeply human. Editing this magazine felt much like walking through such a landscape. There were moments of uncertainty, of pages that refused to come together, of ideas that seemed too scattered to hold. The process was uneven, at times overwhelming, but in retrospect, that very unevenness became its strength. What we have created is not a perfect structure, but a living one, shaped by revision, patience, and belief. I am deeply grateful to our teachers, whose guidance anchored this journey. Their insight helped us see beyond what was immediately visible, encouraging us to sit with complexity rather than simplify it. Their faith made this process not just manageable, but meaningful.

A special note of gratitude also goes to our design head, Ishita, who navigated every challenge with calm and clarity, and helped me through them as well; and the best assistant editor award also goes to Kashika who joined the core team very late but became an irreplaceable and essential part of it very quickly. To everyone who contributed: thank you. Your submissions did more than fill these pages, they expanded them. Each piece offered a new way of seeing, of understanding, of engaging with the theme. Through your words, I found my own perspective shifting, widening, deepening.

Perhaps that is what this magazine ultimately is - a collection of fragments brought into conversation. Not a finished monument, but a space where ideas, like ruins, continue to breathe.

- Gurleen Kaur Arora

MA (English)

Message from the Editor



Working on this magazine as the Head of Design has been as much a personal journey as it has been a creative one. What began as an opportunity to shape a visual identity gradually became a process of understanding how individual vision can coexist with collective purpose. I found myself constantly navigating the space between personal aesthetics and the broader academic and thematic requirements of the magazine —learning, along the way, that good design is not just about control, but about coherence.

Engaging with this year's theme, "Romanticising the Ruins", further deepened this process. I came to realise that ruins are not limited to the visible or architectural; they also exist in intangible, emotional, and intimate forms. This understanding shaped not only my own approach to design and artwork within the magazine, but also how I viewed the submissions we received. The theme proved to be expansive and generative, allowing contributors to interpret it across art, photography, prose, and poetry in deeply personal ways. One of the most unexpected and rewarding additions this year was the inclusion of mood boards. Initially introduced as a tool to help guide visual thinking, they evolved into compelling visual narratives in their own right, becoming an integral part of the magazine's storytelling.

This experience also pushed me to step outside my comfort zone. As someone who tends to hold closely to their creative vision, learning to trust others and delegate responsibilities was not always easy. However, it allowed the process to become more collaborative, and ultimately, more rewarding. There were moments of challenge, but they were equally matched by moments of clarity and satisfaction. Somewhere between deadlines and drafts, I also found something I hadn't expected—friendship. With Gurleen, our Content Head, and Kashika, our Assistant Editor, what began as collaboration quietly turned into a space of trust, support, and shared understanding.

Looking back, this was not just about designing pages, but about learning how to build something meaningful with others—and that, more than anything, is what I will carry forward.

- Ishita Ahuja

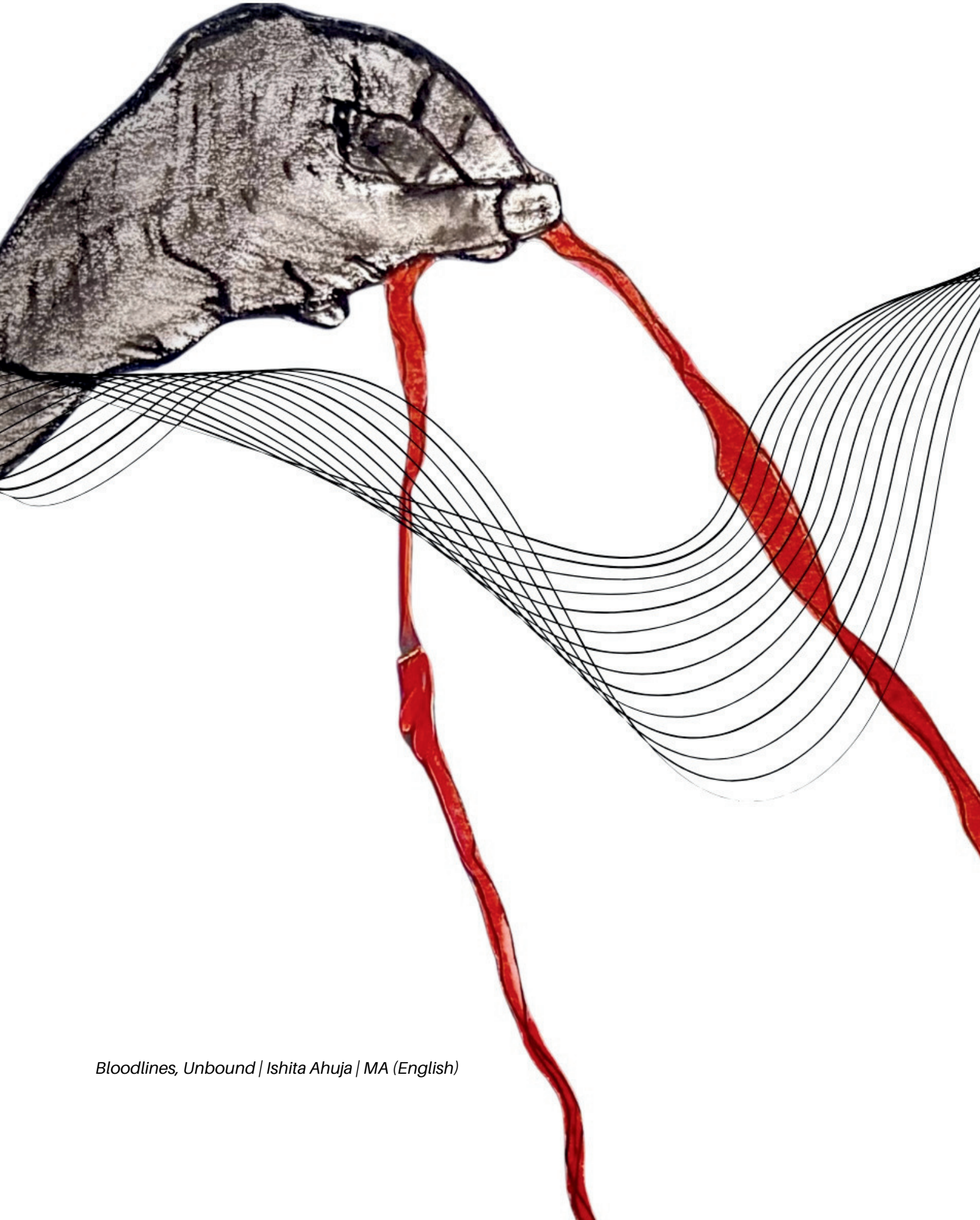
MA (English)

Art & Vision

Welcome to the Art section of our literary magazine, shaped by this year's theme, "Romanticising the Ruins." This collection explores the strange beauty we find in what is broken, fading, or left behind—memories, identities, spaces, and histories. Each artwork lingers in the tension between decay and desire, asking what we choose to preserve, aestheticise, or forget. From intimate fragments to haunting landscapes, these pieces reflect on ruins not just as loss, but as something we continue to reimagine and romanticise. Step into this space where beauty meets fracture, and where every ruin has a story still unfolding.

The Art section celebrates visual storytelling in all its forms. Whether through digital media, traditional painting, or mixed media collage, our student artists push boundaries and challenge perspectives. Each submission represents hours of dedication and a willingness to share something deeply personal with our community.

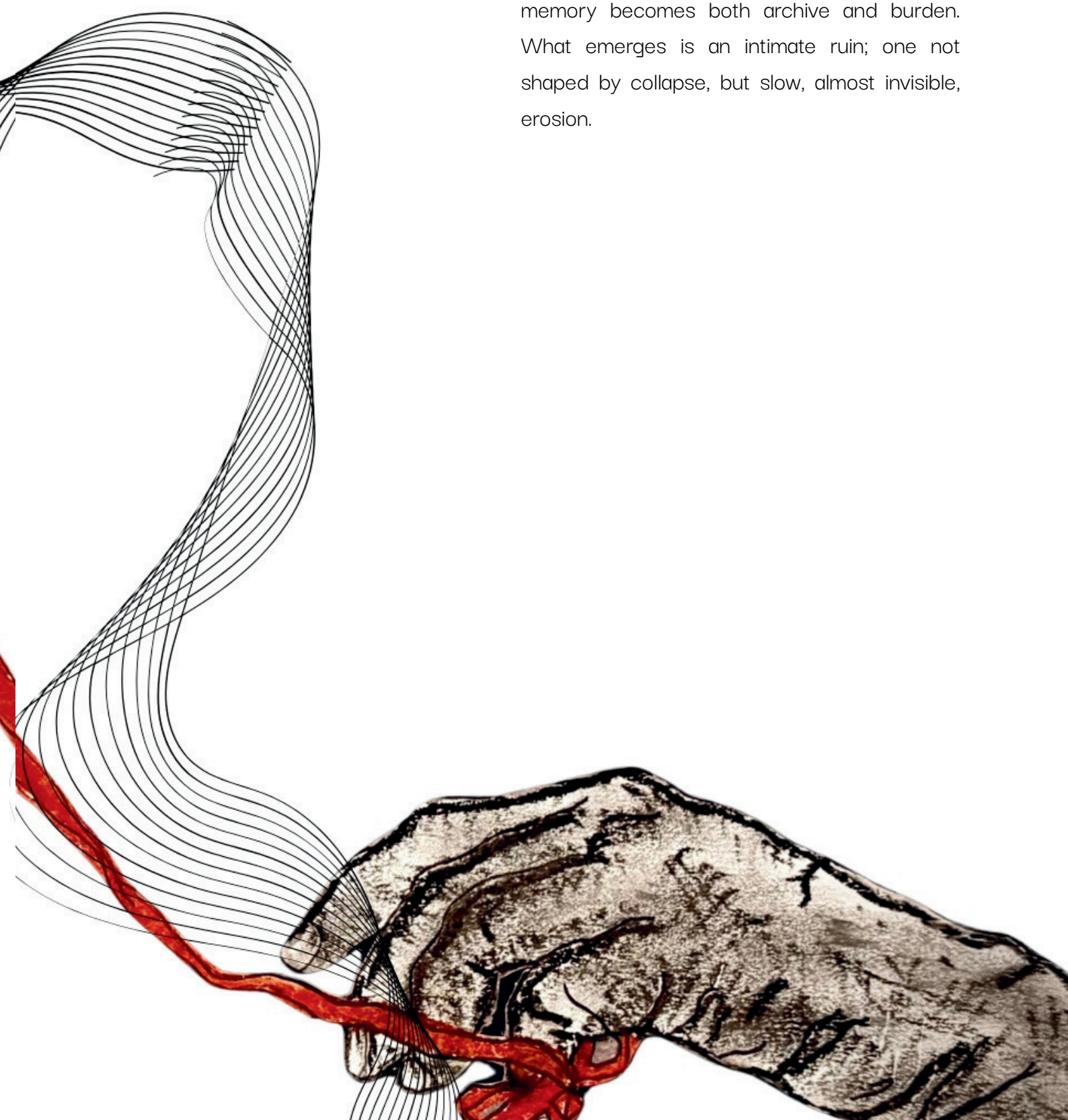
Art speaks where words cannot reach, transforming blank canvases into windows of emotion, color into feeling, and imagination into shared experience.



Bloodlines, Unbound | Ishita Ahuja | MA (English)

Bloodlines, Unbound

The mother - daughter dynamic is not loud in its rupture but heavy in its silences, where memory becomes both archive and burden. What emerges is an intimate ruin; one not shaped by collapse, but slow, almost invisible, erosion.





Shrine by Vidhi Jain | BA (English)



Bharti Priya's Peeking at the Past captures the quiet coolness of red terracotta, the gentle breath of air drifting through lush green trees, and an enveloping stillness that feels almost suspended in time. The work becomes a kind of portal, inviting us to pause and look back, to linger in memory just before being called away. In My Grandfather's Cycle, a simple knot of worn cloth holds everything together, suggesting that while time may fray and erode, the will to endure remains intact—binding past and present through resilience, care, and quiet persistence.

"Art is how I process the world around me—each piece is a conversation between what I see and what I feel."





My Grandfather's Cycle | Peeking at the Past | Bharti Priya | BA (English)



Coexistence between what was and what will be" | Bharti Priya, BA (English)

Coexistence between what was and what will be, is not a conflict but a quiet negotiation. The past does not vanish—it lingers in stone, in worn edges, in the persistence of form—while the future rises around it in steel, glass, and ambition. To stand between them is to recognise that progress does not erase history; it builds upon it, sometimes uneasily, often without acknowledgment.

In this shared landscape, ruin and renewal do not oppose each other—they exist side by side, reminding us that every future, too, will one day become a fragment of the past.



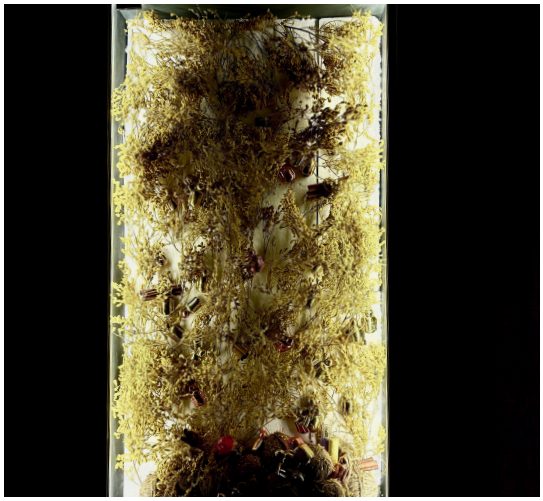
Heap of Broken Mmemories | Noor Taneja | BA (English)

It is human to bow to history, to honour what came before, even as we carve out space for ourselves in the present.



FEATURED ARTWORK: "A Window that Remembers" by Noor Taneja | BA (English)
An open wooden window frames a quiet world suspended between past and present. A bare-branched tree, touched with hints of bloom, stands against soft light and distant movement. The worn frame and stillness evoke a lingering memory, where decay and beauty coexist, inviting reflection on what endures beyond time's quiet passage.

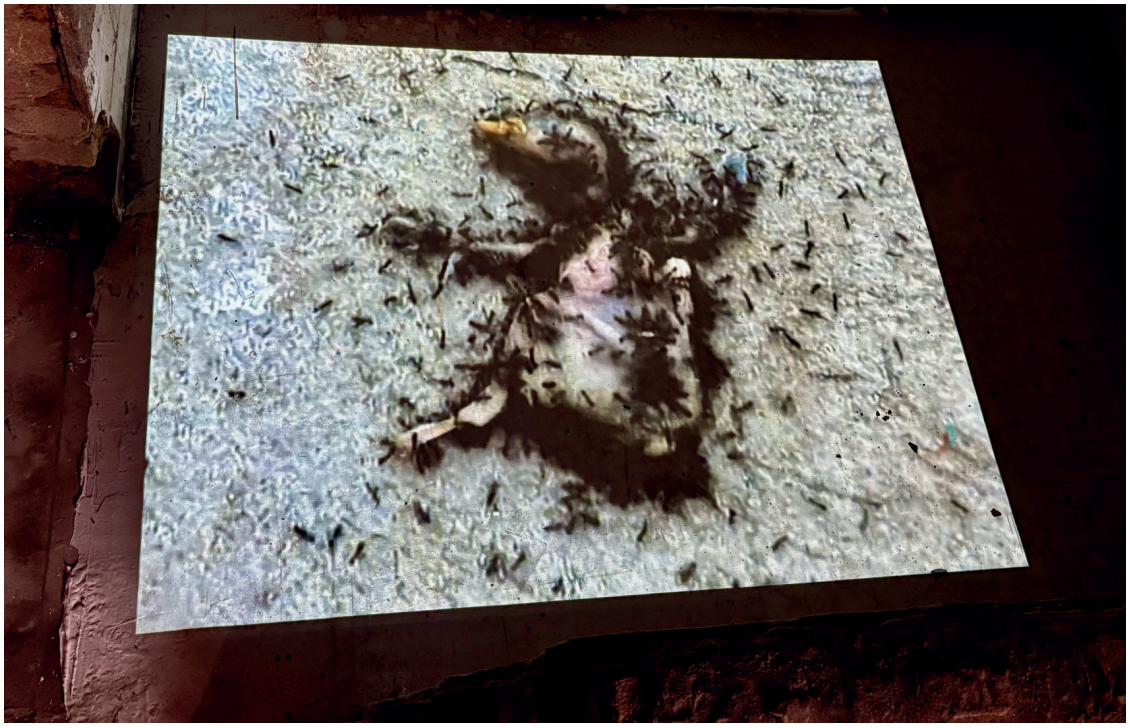
"I wanted to capture the feeling of walking through a new city for the first time—that overwhelming rush of color and sensation that makes everything feel possible."



Captured within a museum space, “Decaying Duck” stages decomposition inside a setting already marked by wear. A dying form is projected onto a deteriorating surface, turning the ruin into both gallery and participant.

”Decaying Duck”

The piece blurs where artwork ends and architecture begins, complicating the urge to romanticise decay by making it immediate, visceral, and quietly unsettling.





”Woman painting tribal art on a wall”

Against a plain wall, intricate forms emerge through practiced hands. The piece captures a moment where cultural expression interrupts blankness–suggesting that even in spaces stripped bare, creation insists on leaving a mark.

MIXED MEDIA EXPLORATIONS

Our student artists push boundaries by combining traditional and digital techniques. From collage to assemblage, these works represent the experimental spirit of our creative community.

This artwork showcases the diverse approaches Nandini Sabharwal (BA English) takes when working on canvas. Layered textures, unexpected materials, and bold color choices define these pieces. It tells a story of creative risk - taking and artistic growth.





Jagdish Temple : Where Devotion transcends Time

By Vidhi Jain | MA (English)

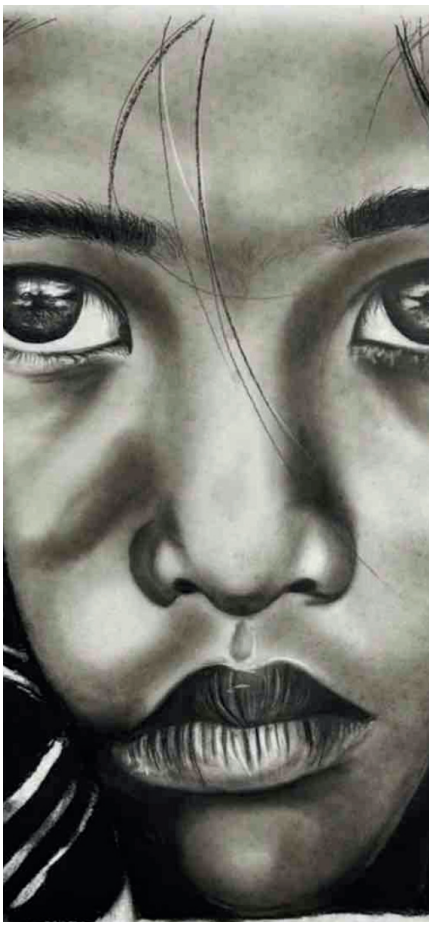
From the grandeur of palace to eternal serenity of temples, the stone, a so called ruin, takes its shape into scripture.

Anatomy of Memory

These artworks by Vanya Guglani (BA English) move through the body as a site of memory, tracing what lingers between presence and disappearance. Faces emerge and dissolve, gazes hold more than they reveal, and the skeletal form reminds us of what ultimately endures. Together, they shift from the emotional to the elemental—suggesting that even as identity fractures and fades, something deeper persists, quietly inscribed within us.



Beautiful Ruin



The Ruins Within



Bone Memory





Mood Boarding- The Vision

Moodboards felt inevitable this year—almost demanded by a theme that lives in fragments, textures, and afterlives. "Romanticising the Ruins" isn't something you can explain in a straight line; it gathers itself in pieces—faded colours, worn surfaces, archival scraps, and quiet juxtapositions.

This section plays with that impulse. Think of it as a collage of moods rather than meanings —where decay becomes aesthetic, nostalgia becomes material, and the past keeps slipping into the present. Nothing is whole here, and that's the point.

RELIC

Top Right

Kashika Chugh (BA English) portrays a creation in progress, where ideas are shaped, paused, and reshaped over time. The unfinished pieces show that art grows through patience and effort.

ECHOES IN SEPIA

Top Left

Simran Alung (BA English) displays a textured collage where time feels layered rather than linear—cracked statues, fading facades, and vintage remnants drifting through muted sepia tones. Decay is softened into something almost tender, where memory clings to objects and ruins hold a quiet, melancholic beauty that refuses to disappear.

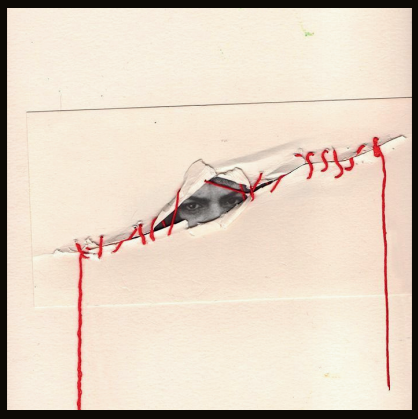


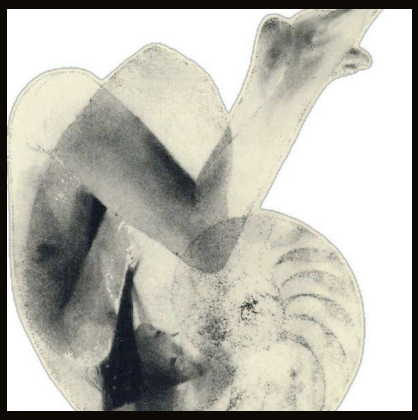
Bharti Priya (BA English) showcases that Memory is embedded in surfaces, in objects that outlive their contexts, quietly holding histories that resist being forgotten.



ECHOES OF THE PAST

Rashi Anand (BA English) captures the beauty of old, ruined places and how they still feel alive and peaceful. Through sunlight, nature, and human presence, that decay is not always sad—it can be calm and meaningful. The photos focus on textures, light, and quiet moments to create a soft, vintage feeling.





Bloodlines, Unbound | Ishita Ahuja | MA (English)

Muselit



“The City Palace: Anchor of Memory
by Vidhi Jain | MA (English)

PROSE: Words Unbound

"The City Palace: Anchor of Memory
by Vidhi Jain | MA (English)

The Privilege of Composure

By Ritika Jain | BA (English)
Artwork: "Morning Sun" by Edward Hopper

When people around me began commenting on my emotional intelligence and the level of maturity I seemed to have reached in building relationships, I accepted it almost unquestioningly. It felt like evidence that I had done something right, that I had evolved in ways that were visible and admirable. I had learned how to regulate myself in moments of tension, how to listen without immediately defending my position, how to interpret what someone meant even when they struggled to articulate it clearly. Over time, those skills stopped feeling like practices I was consciously applying and started to feel like fixed parts of my identity. Being "the strong one"



slowly became less of a compliment and more of an expectation. People leaned on me during conflict, assumed I would remain calm when others reacted impulsively, and trusted that I would understand them even when they failed to understand me.

There is a certain authority that comes with that role, a quiet sense of moral steadiness that places you slightly above the emotional volatility of a situation. I would be lying if I said I did not appreciate that position. It gave me value. It made me necessary. It shaped the way others approached me. Being “the strong one” slowly became less of a compliment and more of an expectation. People leaned on me during conflict, assumed I would remain calm when others reacted impulsively, and trusted that I would understand them even when they failed to understand me. There is a certain authority that comes with that role, a quiet sense of moral steadiness that places you slightly above the emotional volatility of a situation. I would be lying if I said I did not appreciate that position. It gave me value. It made me necessary. It shaped the way others approached me.

I remember one evening sitting across from someone who was unravelling in front of me, their voice shaking, their words collapsing into each other. I nodded at the right moments. I reached across the table. I offered measured reassurance. I chose my language carefully so it would steady them. And while I was doing all of that, I was aware, almost clinically, that I had not allowed myself to unravel in front of anyone in a very long time. I could hold space effortlessly. I just did not know how to occupy it. What I am only beginning to question is whether that strength was always a choice. The more I was praised for being composed and emotionally aware, the



more I internalized the idea that my own visible vulnerability would somehow contradict the image I had built. I became careful with my reactions, sometimes filtering them before I fully experienced them myself. I told myself that this was growth, that maturity required restraint, that being emotionally intelligent meant knowing when to silence parts of yourself for the sake of harmony. But harmony can sometimes be another word for slowly disappearing. The role of the strong one offers something subtle in return: control. When you are the steady presence, you are rarely the one being examined. You interpret rather than expose. You hold space rather than occupy it. And in maintaining that role, I began to realize that I was not simply fulfilling an expectation placed on me. I was also preserving a position that benefited me in ways I did not initially recognize. It protected me from being seen as unstable. It kept me enthralled. It kept me safe.I was not only expected to be strong. I learned how to benefit from it.

DESTINY? JUST AN ILLUSION.

By Shreya Raghav | BA (English)
Illustration by Lily Thornwood

"Maybe in another universe, our destinies would bring us together."

I never thought about how a place, a face, or a desire coming to life could actually lift me up and change my pace of living. I never noticed how my mood could shift so subtly, just by watching the changing hues of the sky or witnessing an unexpected goodbye.

People say everything is written and destined, but is it an inevitable question, an answer, or merely an excuse for someone's grief, resentment, or the pain hidden behind pretended smiles? I always stay calm, believing everything is pre-decided. Yet, when I sit in a quiet place, I can't stop myself from wondering if I could control whether a wish or a wish comes to me at the right time? Was it truly written, or do we just use destiny as an excuse to lead a peaceful, regret-free life?

I always make my decisions by flipping a coin, yet I often toss it twice or thrice until I get the result I truly desire. Deep down, I already know what I want before the coin even lands, but we humans have a tendency to align our choices with what we believe the universe wants for us. I've always questioned the theory of destiny. It might be controversial, but is it truly fate, or are we just hoping for the coin to land the way we





want? Possibilities are endless, so are our imaginations and desires. In the name of destiny, we live our lives peacefully, hoping that one day, the universe we exist in will collide with the universe of our dreams. And when that moment comes, everything will fall into place effortlessly, and we will finally be able to say, "Yes, this is our destiny". A destiny not just to dream but to witness its collision with reality, and to live it in real time, not just in our tosses and prayers.

There will always be a void when we contemplate the concept of destiny, a void that can be filled with hope, choices, and endless possibilities.

My inner child could never fully accept the idea of destiny because, in the end, isn't it just us hoping, praying, begging or flipping the coin repeatedly, for a person, a situation, a place, or a life that feels like a gigantic maze?

I've heard people say, "Maybe in another universe, our destinies would bring us together." This phrase is interpreted differently by everyone, but if I had to decode it, I'd say the universe we speak of is the one we create in our minds, the universe we build in our hopes, our tosses, our manifestations, and our dreams. Knowing this, we find peace in the thought, "Maybe it didn't happen here, but it happened there."

Medusa: Victim or Icon



By Tanya Chawla | BA (English)
Artwork by Anushka Songra BA (English)

Today, Medusa's face can be seen everywhere. It is shared online as a description of female rage and strength. She is no longer just a monster from Greek mythology. Instead, she has evolved into a symbol of resilience and empowerment. However, this portrayal is just one aspect of her story. In Greek myth, Medusa was a terrifying creature whose gaze turned men to stone. Since Medusa was the only Gorgon who was mortal, Perseus was able to kill her by cutting off her head.

In later retellings, her story developed and she is seen as a tragic survivor of sexual assault and patriarchal cruelty at the hands of Poseidon (God of Sea, Earthquakes, Storms, and Horses) and Athena (Goddess of Wisdom, Warfare, and Handicraft) During the Renaissance and Baroque periods, Carravagio's painting "Medusa" powerfully captures the horror associated with her beheading at the hands of Perseus. Over time, she became a feminist icon and her narrative remained fluid and ever changing. Each era changed its view on Medusa which reflects its own fears, values and desires.

In early Greek mythology and artistic representations, Medusa was not seen as misunderstood, neither was she victimised. Instead, she was seen as a trademark of fear. In art, her visage, known as the Gorgoneion, was featured on shields, armour, doorways and even temples. The most common interpretation of Medusa suggests that she was a symbol used to protect against evil, much like the modern evil eye. She was



Artwork: Hampstead Heath by John Constable

described as having wide, unblinking eyes, and hair made of snakes. Every aspect of her appearance was designed to disturb and intimidate. Medusa personifies chaos, danger and abnormality.

The story of Perseus killing Medusa was not meant to create sympathy for her. Instead, it was meant to highlight the bravery and cleverness of the hero who managed to conquer such a terrifying creature. Perseus was victorious through not only strength, but through strategy. The focus of the myth around Medusa lies in his success rather than her pain.

As time went on, the focus of Medusa's story shifted from her depiction as a monster to the dramatic moment of her demise. During the Renaissance era, rather than portraying her only as terrifying, painters depicted her exact transformation from life to death. Her face is frozen in shock, her mouth slightly open, and her eyes are wide in horror. The brutality of the moment is rendered beautiful through meticulous artistic detail, lighting and composition.

In these artworks, the focus is placed on Medusa's severed head. Her suffering is transformed into a spectacle and a source of fascination. The monster who once represented chaos is now depicted as both tragic and visually powerful. Her downfall becomes something to look at, to study and even to admire.

However, this raises a complex question–Is Medusa truly being given a voice or is her narrative once more being altered to align with contemporary ideals? Just as Ancient Greece portrayed her as a signal of chaos, Renaissance artists fashioned her into a spectacle, modern society might also be utilising her as a token for its own challenges. Even as a feminist icon, her identity remains fluid and constantly reinterpreted.

> *In contemporary society, Medusa experiences a new evolution. She is no longer seen as either a monster or a tragic victim. Instead, she is embraced as a symbol of female rage, resistance and survival. Many interpret her narrative as one of injustice, where a woman is punished for violence committed against her. Because of this, Medusa has become a powerful image for those advocating against patriarchal domination and violence based on gender. Her image now appears in tattoos, art and clothing. Instead of representing fear, she symbolises strength.*

REVIVAL OR REINVENTION ?

By Lavanya Sachdeva | BA (English)

Handicrafts are more than objects; they carry time, skill, and repetition–hands learning slowly, then doing something again, a little better, a little different. Pottery, weaving, crochet, jewellery, and folk art were never made to be perfect, but to be used, to exist within everyday life. Machines did not arrive all at once; they entered industries gradually. In India, many handmade practices began shifting during the colonial period, as traditional methods were replaced by mechanized production. This change altered livelihoods, pace, and the meaning of making itself. Objects once shaped by the rhythm of the artisan became part of an industrial system. The definition of value has evolved with mass production, where uniformity became the norm, and the uniqueness of handicrafts diminished. Although handicrafts still exist, they are less frequently used, leading to a decreased appreciation for them.

Currently, there's a generational shift towards valuing objects with stories and processes behind them, as consumers seek meaningful connections rather than identical items. This reflects a fatigue with fast consumption and a desire for lasting emotional significance, paving the way for a renewed interest in handicrafts, albeit in a different form. They return as experience. As something "real"–closer to nature and memory. The appeal is no longer just in what an object does, but in what it makes you feel. A handmade object is not just functional; it becomes warmth, identity, familiarity.And yet, this revival is not simple. Most handicrafts today are not used the way they were. They are displayed. A clay pot sits on a shelf instead of a stove; a woven piece becomes décor instead of daily wear. Even scented candles–carefully shaped and styled–exist as much for visual appeal as for use. The shift is clear: from utility to experience. So the question emerges quietly–are we preserving handicrafts, or reshaping them to fit current taste?



Artwork: "Tailor" by Nandanlal Bose

Because revival today is also influenced by trends. Certain crafts rise because they suit a particular aesthetic—a kind of space or lifestyle image. What disappears often returns, but altered, curated, consumed differently. Revival, in that sense, is not neutral. And yet, it is not entirely surface-level either. There are real systems supporting it. Artisan clusters are being formed. Craftspeople are selling online. Technology, which once replaced handmade work, is now helping it reappear innew ways. In Karnataka, Channapatna toys continue to survive, even as many artisans leave the profession due to low income. In Chhattisgarh, Dhokra metal casting—one of the oldest forms of handicraft—still takes days, sometimes weeks, to complete a single piece. Not all crafts adopt equally.Some remain on the margins—quiet, delicate, easily overlooked.



Artwork: "Resting" by Amrita Shergill

Crafts like stocking flowers and tatting continue in smaller pockets. Their survival is not driven by trends or large markets, but by continuity—by someone choosing to keep practicing them, even when there is little visibility or reward. Still, the gap between creation and consumption remains." In a small workshop, a woman works on a handcrafted piece. The process is repetitive—shape, adjust, refine. The pattern must stay consistent, but her hand cannot be mechanical. A slight shift changes everything. She does not speak of "revival" or "aesthetic value." For her, it is work. Income. Skill carried forward because it has to be. The object she creates may later be sold as something "authentic," something meaningful. But the meaning is added later.

The labor was always there. That difference matters. Because handicrafts today exist in a in-between space – between labor and lifestyle, necessity and choice, authenticity and presentation. They are supported, but also shaped. Valued, but also curated.So this is not a simple return to the past.

It is a movement shaped by emotion, market, memory, and need—all at once. Handicrafts are not fully back. But they are not lost either. They exist in this in-between space—less about survival, more about significance. And perhaps that is what defines them today: not perfection, not pure tradition, but something that still carries the trace of a human hand, even when the world around it prefers machines.

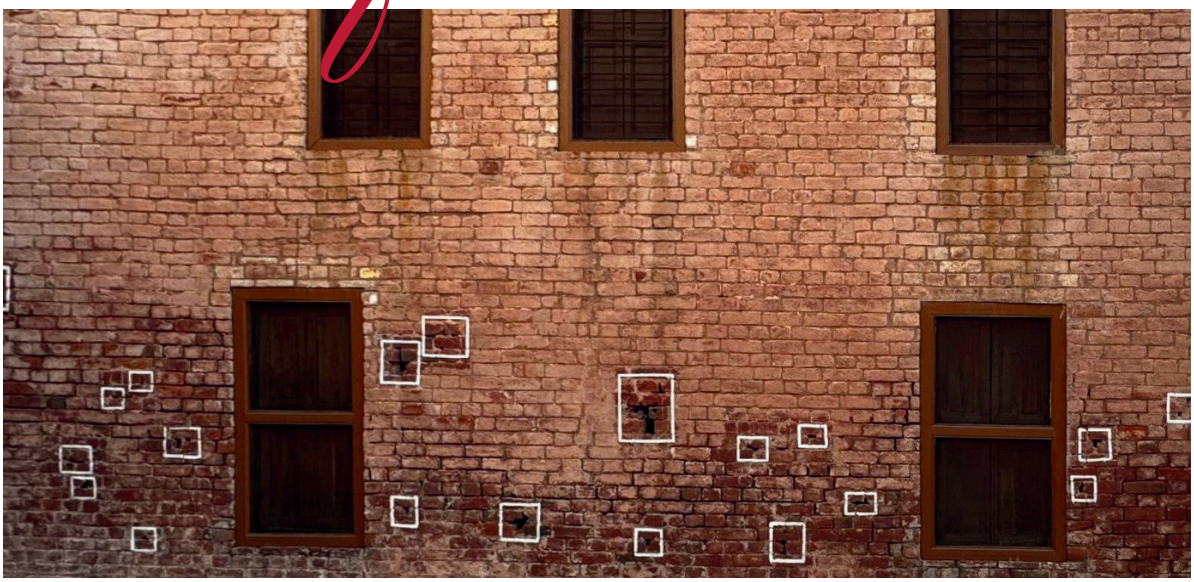
ROMANTICISING RUINS

By Bhuvi Khandelwal | BA (English)

Sometimes the dark patches in our lives reshape us into an even better version of ourselves, which we didn't even realize back then- one who is no longer fragile, strangely unbothered by others' opinions, who once used to break down and felt overwhelmed. Just as nature initially looks ordinary, unreal too fades and withers with time. Seasons shift, climate changes, soil erodes, glaciers melt. This whole situation makes us uncomfortable, causes distress and burdens our lives. Similarly, our bodies re no different. Even these are not stable, even if we try so hard to not expect any kind of unwanted changes, something or the other happens. It grows, adapts and sometimes just surprises us for something which we are not even prepared for. So this whole idea is completely unrealistic. Now here comes a moment when this general idea becomes deeply personal, the "ruin". At first it was quite an awareness of what is about to happen. What once felt ordinary began to demand attention. I found myself looking into the mirror back forth because couldn't accept it, perhaps I was still in a denial or simply struggled to recognize this version of myself. I found myself looking into the mirror back and forth because I couldn't accept it, Not just at home, even at public places, I hesitated. I tried to conceal it but it just became even as much as I could to not get much gazes. These scars increased all over, and not just physical, they echoed all over my mental place as well.

as much as I could to not get much gazes. These scars increased all over, and not just physical, they echoed all over my mental place as well. My thoughts were crowded with irregular, almost rhetorical questions about the unfamiliar loneliness that slowly crept in, appearances and ability to regain that perfection and flawlessness. I felt as if I were a problem waiting to be solved. At that point I felt that my body took me for granted. It wasn't the change alone that troubled, reactions surprised me the most. Some treated with sympathy, others chose humour, while simply formed their own assumptions which either were too exaggerated or inaccurate completely. Moreover, there were moments when it seemed that society was more uncomfortable with it than I was. These felt heavier than the situation itself. People rarely know how to respond to something unfamiliar. This phase quietly tested the strength of friendships, because family, without hesitation stood by me through thick and thin. Yet, mirrors felt uncomfortable no matter what. This struggle did not remain limited to how I saw myself. It slowly began to enter into my other aspects of life. Other than my appearances, academics and opportunities began to feel heavier than they should have. Sitting in classrooms or preparing for competitions that once excited me, I often found my thoughts drifting back to the same insecurities. Instead of concentrating on what was being taught, my mind was preoccupied. What once felt like a fracture slowly began to feel like a lesson indeed. Yes, it took time to adapt, to understand and to grow with, but it wasn't the end of the whole world. like a fracture slowly began to feel like a lesson indeed. Yes, it took time to adapt, to understand and to grow with, but it wasn't the end of the whole world. Yet through patience and a gradual sense of self-acceptance, I began to recognize this whole new optimistic version of myself. What I had once considered weakness, gradually became a source of resilience. Ruins are often seen as a symbol of tragedy, burnouts, damage, yet are sometimes beautiful. I was able to inhabit that change in my body. That ruin made a whole new persona of myself which I could never think of, wounds became identity. Gradually, the meaning of flaw changed, it no longer represented failure. Instead it taught that acceptance is more important than being extremely perfect. The self doubt that once companioned me, slowly faded. Alienation that once separated me from myself, felt no more like an enemy. What once I thought diminished my beauty eventually helped me redefine it. I even regained my focus and found myself back on track.

THE ARITHMETIC *of loss*



"They drank tea that tasted of oranges and something floral and unnamed."

There are people who carry the world inside them like water in cupped palms - warm, trembling, perpetually on the verge of spilling. She was one of these people, though she would not have said so. She would have said nothing. She had always been more comfortable with silence than with the vast, embarrassing theatre of her feelings.

The grandfather smelt of camphor and old wool. He called her Little Trouble – a name that fit her the way a house fits the ghost that haunts it, snugly, without question. In the evenings, when the light turned the colour of old brass and the world became briefly unbearable in its beauty, she would sit beside him and feel the solid, unassailable fact of him: the papery skin, the hands like roots, and the breathing that was as slow and regular as a tide she had always known. She did not think, then, about the sea eventually going out. One never does. One assumes the tide.

Featuring work by Navya Bhateja | BA (English)
Photograph by Khushi Jain | MA (English)

"In those rooms, - small, close, smelling of rosewater and accumulated decades – something loosened in her chest. Something she had been holding the way one holds breath underwater

The neighbour was a small woman, ancient in the way that certain trees are ancient - not decrepit but condensed, as though time had pressed her down into something dense and essential. She moved through her terrace with the careful deliberateness of someone who has made peace with every object in their life. There was a fig tree in her garden that she watered each morning with the gravity of a sacrament. She called her - but no. The name doesn't matter. What matters is that she was called. What matters is that the knock on that door became, for a time, a reason to move through the afternoon.

They drank tea that tasted of oranges and something floral and unnamed. The old woman's hands shook around the cup but her eyes were steady, lit with a private amusement, as though she had long ago been told the punchline to a joke the rest of the world was still waiting for. In those rooms, - small, close, smelling of rosewater and accumulated decades – something loosened in her chest. Something she had been holding the way one holds breath underwater

.

Then the fig tree was still.

Then the door did not answer.

She learned of it the way one learns of most catastrophes: obliquely, from someone else's mouth, in a corridor, in passing. The world did not pause. This was the first indecency. The world continued its revolving, indifferent as a machine.

She went back to her grandfather. Of course she did. She climbed those familiar stairs and sat in that familiar chair and breathed that familiar smell of camphor and wool, and she thought: here, at least. Here. She pressed herself against the fact of him like a child pressing against glass to see what is on the other side.

He left in November. November has always known how to be cruel about it - grey and colorless, stripping the trees of any last pretense of softness. He left quietly, the way good men do, without fuss or spectacle, as though departing were simply another form of consideration. She stood at the window of his bedroom and watched the ceiling and thought of nothing. Thought of nothing for a very long time.

There are griefs that hollow you. There are griefs that calcify you. And then there are the griefs that arrive in threes, which do something else entirely – which begin to feel, after a while, like information.

The uncle came in Febuary. He was the one who had given her the name she kept like a stone in her pocket, smooth from handling - mini fairy , he had called her, for reasons she no longer remembered but had stopped needing to understand. He was loud and laughing and smelled of chemicals and the particular irreverence of a man who finds life genuinely funny, not despite its darkness but because of

it. He called her mini fairy on a Tuesday and by Wednesday the word had become a relic, a word that existed now only in the interior of her, with no one left alive to speak it into the air.

Six months. The whole arrangement had taken only six months. She had timed it, after - had laid the dates side by side like specimens on a tray, examining them with the terrible detachment of someone who has passed beyond the point of ordinary feeling into something cleaner and more dangerous. The old woman. The grandfather. The uncle. Three coordinates. A pattern.

She was not superstitious. She was, in fact, rigorously the opposite - she had always trusted the evidence of things, the cold eloquence of cause and effect. And here was the cause. Here was the effect. The evidence was incontrovertible: everyone she loved, died.

She sat with this for a long time. She sat with it the way one sits with a diagnosis. She turned it over. She looked at it from each angle. She considered the exceptions and found none.

And then - and this is the part that would have disturbed a reasonable person, if there had been anyone reasonable left to be disturbed - she felt something shift. Not despair. Something quieter and more purposeful. Something that had the texture of a decision.
If everyone she loved, died. If love was the variable. If she were both the constant and the cause -Then perhaps the question was not how do I stop losing people.

Perhaps the question was something else entirely.

She stood in front of the mirror - the one in her bedroom, narrow and slightly foxed at the edges, that had reflected her face every morning for as long as she could remember. She looked at the face in it. She looked at it the way one looks at a stranger one is about to approach. With assessment. With something almost tender.

Mini fairy, she thought. Little trouble.

She would have to be very careful. She would have to learn to do it slowly, methodically, with the same patience the old woman had given to her fig tree. She would have to learn the precise and devastating art of turning love inward, aiming it at the soft, unguarded center of herself - the place she had always left unguarded, having been too busy lavishing its contents on others.
The logic was flawless. The logic was airtight. The logic was a door she had opened and intended to walk through.

Outside, the street continued. A child laughed somewhere below the window. The light moved across the floor in its old, unhurried way, as though it had no opinion about any of this.

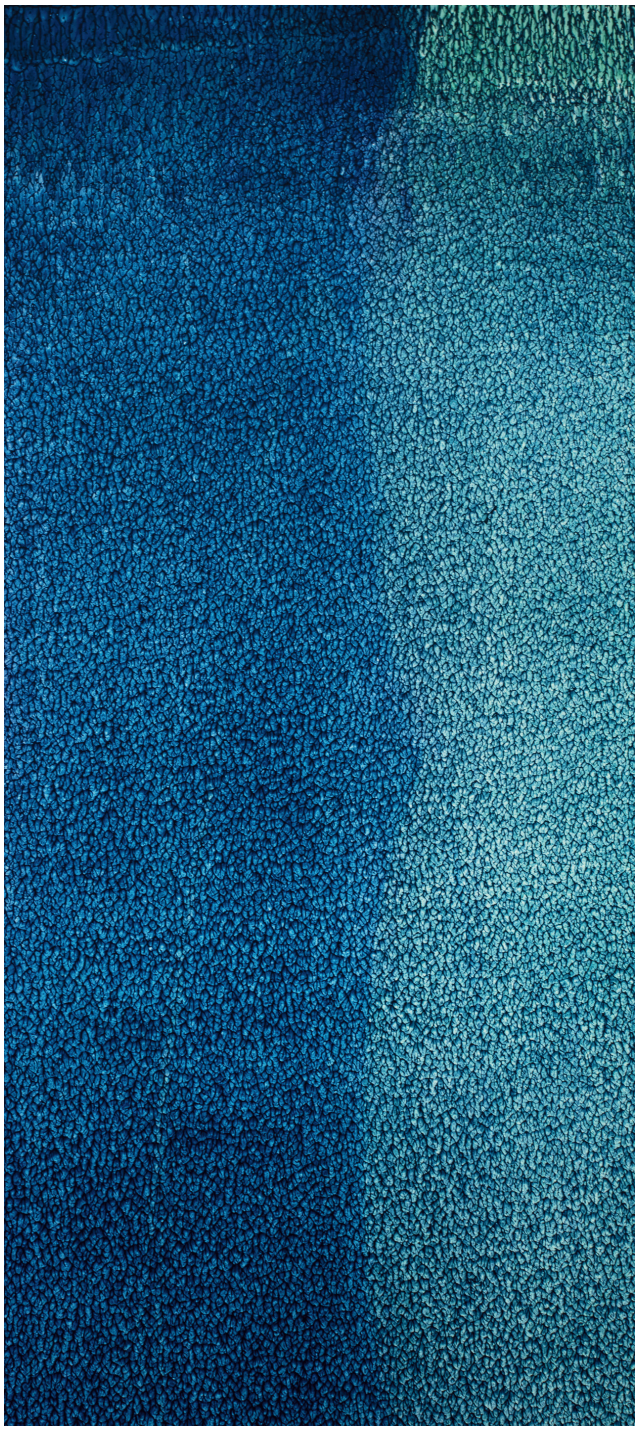
She smiled at the face in the mirror, and the face smiled back, and for a moment it was impossible to tell which of them had done it first.

WHAT WE CHOOSE TO LOVE

By Muskan Gandhi | MA (English)

We look at yellowed letters and imagine passion. There is something deeply human in this instinct—to search for significance in what remains. We are afraid of emptiness, so we translate destruction into symbolism. We tell ourselves that the fracture is beautiful because it carries memory.

But romanticizing ruins is also an act of control. We soften the harsh edges. We smooth the violence that caused the collapse. We dim the hunger, the neglect, the exhaustion that led to the breaking. We crop out the suffering and keep the symmetry. In doing so, we reshape reality into something digestible. Ruins become aesthetic rather than painful. They become metaphors rather than warnings.



We frame them carefully, choosing the angle where the light falls kindly and the shadows hide what is unbearable. We edit history the way we edit photographs, adjusting contrast until the story looks survivable. The result is not false, but it is incomplete. It preserves beauty while muting brutality.

There is comfort in believing that destruction produces beauty. That heartbreak produces art. That burnout produces brilliance. These ideas allow us to endure our own collapses with the hope that something luminous will rise from them. We cling to stories where loss refines the soul and chaos clarifies purpose. We repeat them like promises whispered in the dark. Sometimes this is true. Sometimes pain does transform into poetry. Sometimes ashes do fertilize growth. History and literature are filled with such alchemies. Yet transformation is not guaranteed, and survival does not automatically become symbolism.

Sometimes ruin is just ruin—unfinished, unframed, unworthy of metaphors. Sometimes a broken thing is simply broken. Not every loss carries a lesson. Not every wound deserves to be curated into art. There are collapses that leave only absence, and that absence does not owe us beauty. To insist otherwise is to demand performance from pain. It is to expect suffering to justify itself through elegance. But devastation does not exist for our inspiration. It exists because something ended.

To love the ruins honestly is to look at them without filters. To admit what was lost, not just what lingers. It is to sit with discomfort instead of rushing to redeem it. It is to resist turning every fracture into decoration. Beauty may survive collapse. But so does the truth. And perhaps the most humane act is to hold both—the fragile glow and the unvarnished ruin—without forcing either to become more than it is.

THE LAST THREAD

By Jasmeet Kaur | BA (English)

I walked into the court where the murmurs of anxiety and the stale smell of paper lay heavily in the air. That was when I noticed an old woman murmuring some prayer, seated quietly as she waited for her turn. Her chants escaped her lips in a loop - a rhythm that mirrored the way her eyes scanned the room in slow spirals, as if she were waiting. As if someone who never quite arrived. She sat with an unsettling calm. Her eyes carried a peace that seemed less like comfort and more like surrender, and her smile suggested she had learned something the hard way. Time flowed like a steady stream as I continued to observe her.

Eventually, I gathered the courage, adjusted my coat, and walked over to her.

"Can I ask what matter you're here for?"

She smiled at me. Her words came out slow and tired, mirroring her age.

"I come here every month," she said softly. "For my maintenance."

She continued, "I'm divorced. My husband refused to keep me with him."

I asked politely, "How much maintenance do you receive?"

"One thousand rupees now."

My eyes widened. "That's it?"

She nodded calmly, "Earlier it was five hundred. The magistrate increased it after the court learned my husband had married for the third time."





”Third time?“ I asked, unable to hide my shock.

”Yes,“ she replied. ”Before me, he already had a wife. I only came to know once the case began.“

I swallowed and dared to ask again, ”Since when have you been coming here?“

”Twenty-six years,“ she said, in a matter-of-fact tone that made it sting even more. My throat tightened. ”Then why do you still come here for just a thousand rupees? Someone else could help you. You could get more.“

She looked at me. There was no bitterness. ”It isn’t about the money,“ she said after a quiet pause. I waited for her to explain.

”As long as this continues,“ she added slowly, ”there is still something that ties us.“

I must have looked confused, because she went on, ”At least this way, he is reminded that I am his wife.“

”I’ve learned one thing- pain is constant. Sometimes it comes in the form of parents, sometimes in the form of a husband, sometimes a child.“

A voice interrupted the moment, calling out her name. She stood up with support and slowly made her way inside the courtroom. The bench she left stayed warm, as if her presence lingered there a little longer.

The ruins of her story stayed - held together by a thread too thin to see, yet too strong to cut.

The Call Between Two Stations

Some losses stack up on one another: you lose the timing, the closure, the chance to say some last things you think of, you'd say just if you only had one more moment.

Ridhima Singh | BA (English)



Last October, I found out that my grandmother had passed somewhere between two metro stations. My mom and I were walking in Chandni Chowk, in and out of the narrow lanes, the voices blurring, vendors screaming out their prices, and the constant noise. We brought a couple of shopping bags with us, bumped into stalls, and discussed fabrics and colors, just normal conversations that seemed important a few hours earlier.

Later, we jumped into the Delhi Metro, totally exhausted but totally happy with our haul. The train doors closed, and the entire city simply melted into tunnels and buzzing lights. Right around Pul Bangash Metro Station, my phone started ringing.

It was my dad. I thought it would be a simple question about when we would get back, or if we would get were we done buying everything. But his tone was far away, sort of heavy. He told me my grandmother died away.

For a moment, it was as if everything in my head just froze. The metro was going by, there were people around us scrolling through phones or just hanging onto the poles, but his words were hanging in the air like a pause in my day and the world. I was at a complete loss for words.

> *“Grief had arrived in the middle of public transportation, with nowhere private to exist.”*



After some time, I handed it over to my mom after a couple of seconds. She listened quietly. At first, her expression did not change. It was as if the meaning of the words had not fully reached her yet. But when it did, something inside her seemed to collapse.

She began to cry. Not the loud, I'm breaking! kind of loud, but more low-key, what's happening? kind of loud. Those tears ran down her cheeks, and everybody else around us was scrolling or talking - didn't even notice this quiet collapse happening in front of us. Grief had arrived in the middle of public transportation, with nowhere private to exist. When we reached home, everything moved quickly. We changed our clothes, gathered ourselves, and left again this time to see my grandmother for the last time.

By the time we got there, the house was already full. My mom's siblings were sitting in quiet clusters, some of them talking to each other quietly. Others just stared at the floor, in deep thought. When my mother came into the room, no one said anything. We really didn't have time for long talks or explanations. She went right where her mother was lying and held her.

Then she began crying in a way that seemed deeper than the tears people cry on the metro, an aching grief that is open and stands to years of memory inside it. It was not just referring to that one day. My mom had not been in close contact with her side of the family for some time, so she did not hear the news immediately. By the time she arrived there, the opportunity to hold her mother's hand while she was still alive had passed.

Some losses stack up on one another: you lose the timing, the closure, the chance to say some last things you think of, you'd say just if you only had one more moment.

Maybe that's why the grief weighed so heavily.Since that day, my mom's kinda changed a lot.

Grief rarely presents itself as we think it should. It's not always that quiet, sad, or slow tears. Sometimes it strikes out as restlessness, frustration, or falling out of sudden bursts of emotion.

Ruins are often described as poetic reminders of history. But the ruins that exist inside families are different. They are made of silences. Of strained conversations.

Sometimes the weight of her grief finds its way into our daily conversations sudden, raw, and heavier than the moment itself. But slowly, I have begun to understand something about grief that people rarely explain. When someone loses their mother, they do not just lose a person. They lose a kind of emotional ground beneath their feet.

A mother is often the place where a person returns when the world becomes too heavy. When that place disappears, the world itself feels less stable. The emotions that once had somewhere safe to go begin to spill into other spaces.
My mother is not angry. She is grieving.

In the months since that day, I have begun to understand ruins differently. They are not only broken buildings or
abandoned places that people photograph for their beauty.

Sometimes ruins live quietly inside families in pauses between conversations, in emotions that surface without warning, in the small ways people change after losing someone who once held them together. When I think about my grandmother now, I don't only remember the house where we went that evening. I remember the geography of that moment, the moving metro, the crowded metro coach, the strange contrast between personal tragedy and the ordinary rhythm of the city.
The metro continued to the next station. Passengers entered and exited. Announcements echoed through the coach. Outside, nothing had changed. But inside our family, something had quietly collapsed. People often romanticise ruins. Ancient buildings, abandoned palaces, broken monuments, these places are photographed, admired, turned into symbols of

beauty. Ruins are often described as poetic reminders of history. But the ruins that exist inside families are different.

They are made of silences. Of strained conversations.

Of the small ways people change after losing someone who once held them together.
My grandmother's absence exists not only in the space she left behind, but in the ways my mother moves through the world now in the tiredness that sometimes sits behind her voice, in the emotions that surface unexpectedly, in the invisible weight she continues to carry.

Grief does not disappear. It settles quietly into daily life.

And sometimes loving someone means learning how to move gently among the ruins they are still learning to live with.





Written by Aanya Kapoor | BA (English)
Photograph by Kashika Chugh | BA (English)



The Beauty of What Remains

Perhaps ruins attract us because they remind us that something meaningful once existed. A faded photograph still holds laughter.

An old message still carries the warmth of someone who once cared. These fragments prove that love, friendship, and moments of joy once lived there.

We hold on to these ruins not because they are perfect, but because they belong to our hearts. They remind us that even after things fall apart, the feelings they created never truly disappear.

Sometimes we revisit these ruins quietly, like walking through an old house of memories. We trace the echoes of laughter, conversations, and promises once spoken there. The walls may have cracked, but the emotions still stand strong. In remembering them, we honour the life they once held.

Ruins teach us that beauty does not only live in beginnings, but also in endings. And perhaps that is why the heart keeps returning to them, gently, again and again.

Ruins are not always broken buildings or abandoned cities. Sometimes, ruins live quietly inside our memories. They exist in old photographs, letters, screenshots, diaries. These small fragments hold pieces of a life. With time, we begin to romanticise these ruins. The pain that once seemed overwhelming gradually diminishes.

Conflicts become distant memories, heartbreak transforms into a narrative. Humans have a gentle way of reshaping the past so that it becomes easier for the heart to carry. In today's world, even sadness has an aesthetic. People post pictures of rainy windows, dim study lamps, and late-night playlists, turning exhaustion and loneliness into something almost beautiful.

But behind that beauty is a real human feeling – someone remembering, someone missing, someone trying to understand what was lost.

OF STRINGS, SILENCE, AND SURVIVAL

BY ANANYA ARNEJA | BA (ENGLISH)

"We are the music makers,
And we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lonely sea-bakers,
And sitting by desolate streams; –
World-losers and world-forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams;
Yet we are the movers and shakers,
Of the world forever, it seems."

Ode; Arthur O'Shaughnessy



Artwork: "Apollo Playing the Violin" by Dirck van Baburen

With these lines, Arthur O'Shaughnessy introduces his 1874 poetry collection 'Music and Moonlight', commencing on a journey exploring and commemorating his love for the beauty of the titular constituents. He was of the idea that music and divinity are but not too far away from each other – "O men! It must ever be/ That we dwell, in our dreaming and singing,/ A little apart from ye." Shelley expressed a synonymous thought only a few years prior, wrote, "A tone/ Of some world far from ours,/ Whose music and moonlight and feeling/ Are one." In 1984, musician-poet Leonard Cohen expressed yearning for a lover, simultaneously feeling defeated in love, by invoking a similar association – "I've heard there was a secret chord/ That David played and it pleased the Lord/ But you don't really care for music, do ya?"

Music's perceived proximity to sanctity is not an exclusive notion when one gauges at the common conceptions throughout musical history, inherently serving as vessels of direct expression, connecting the human experience to the greater universal existence. Apart from the ever-evolving notion of Music's spiritual essence, and occasional contradictions, a great part of its spirit is situated within its materiality wherein instruments substantialize the ephemerality, amplifying the act of mutual creation, amalgamating the human spirit and the sacramental, to transform into the metaphysical. Instruments, leading an existence akin to the human self, their birth into existence, which ultimately requires them to fade away into the continual evolution; buried alongside the vibrations of the past, the myriad echoes of sounds, once having rung in full bloom, now clutching their remnants within the ruins of soil. In the year 1738, Johann Sebastian Bach composed a Cantata named 'O Jesu Christ, Meins Lebens

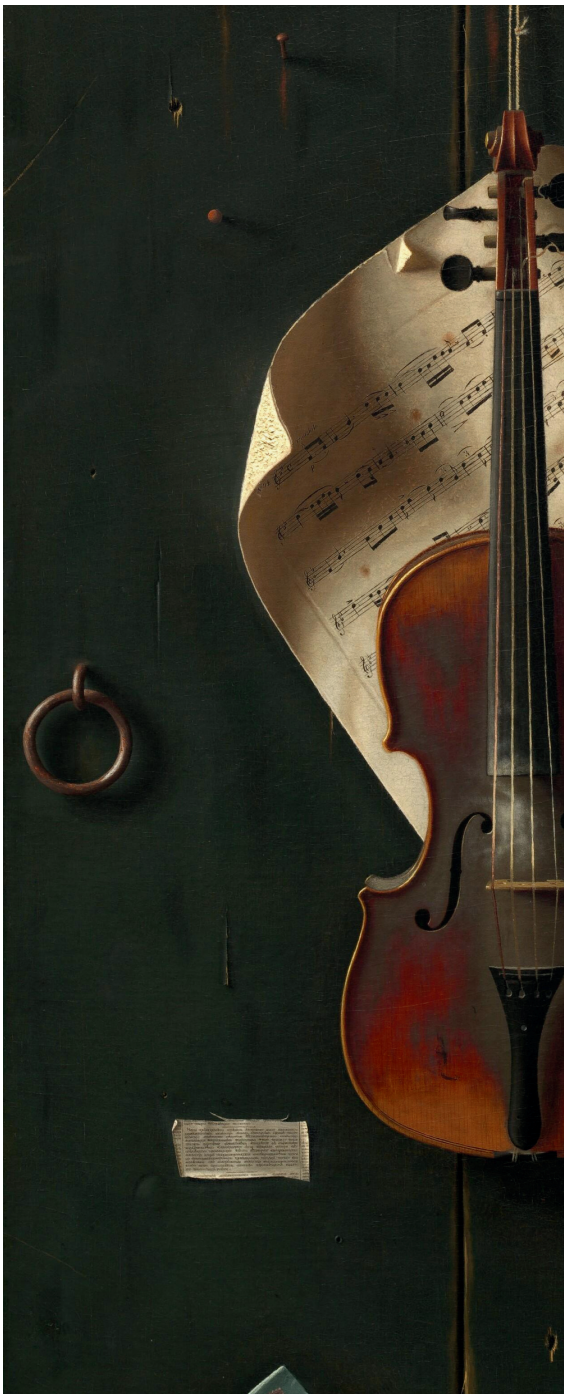
Licht', wherein, within the instruments required, are two 'Litui'. Lituus, as called in its singular address, is an instrument which no one seems to be familiar with, nor does anyone knows what its true appearance was, having earned no illustrations in its lifetime. It served as a military signaling horn in the ancient Roman era. The haunting quality of its voice is a reverberation of war-laden Roman domination over Europe, and Bach's celebration of God in the eighteenth century. In the same century as Bach, when Joseph Haydn was being upheld as 'Father of the Symphony' and 'Father of the String Quartet', the Baryton was being championed as 'King of Instruments', and yet encountered obscurity towards the end of the centenary. Baryton is an instrument which amalgamates the quality of both the Lyre and the Lute. Haydn himself composed over 126 trios featuring Baryton, alongside Violin and Cello. The Baryton's front strings constituted of the ones found on Viola da Gamba, an instrument which, instead of fading away, became the predecessor to one of the most important instruments in Music today, that is, Cello, developing its already soft, deep, and resonant tone even further.

Now, there tends to be an inclination towards romanticizing ancient Greco-Roman sensibilities, especially in modern times, with a great deal of myths and tales resurging as they are, as well as in the form of retellings. The Lyre, embellished with a prosperous amount of those, seeps into one of the saddest mythological stories of the Greco-Roman oeuvre, that is, the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice. His Lyre, a gift from Apollo, the God of Music, is what charms Hades enough to grant him a chance to get his lover, Eurydice, back. This instrument is an ode in itself to the beautifully melancholic and the ethereal.

The Lyre family includes the Yazh, the Indian Lyre. A Tamil instrument, almost Harp-like in appearance, is nearly 3,000 years old. Its curved neck featuring a peacock, and resonator covered with goatskin, bears religious connotation and is associated with the Tamil Goddess Yali through its presence alongside her in Tamil temple sculptures.

It is a fascinating coincidence that all of these instruments share something which forms threads of association, stitched together over the globe. Perhaps, this is the universal call which has had such a hold throughout centuries – the sense of a belongingness, and stitched existences. Something that gets buried and reincarnated still. One to dissipate, but never to evanesce. Like divinity itself.

At moments in time, music or instruments can become such reminders of certain elements in life, that the presence of one becomes entangled with the other. Thomas Hardy's father was a violinist, after whose death, Hardy's sight of the un-played instrument tempted him to enter a conversation with it, in order to relive his presence, wherein he writes, "He might liven at the sound/ Of your string, revealing you had not forgone him/ But a few yards from his grave,/ Did you, tucked beneath his chin, to his bowing/ Guide the homely harmony/ Of the quire." It is an elegy identifying itself with the thin veil of materiality discovering the lost remembrances; the remnants of a sound one may not hear, but can still feel. A kind of beauty that echoes only in abandonment and ruination.



Artwork: "The Old Violin" by William Michael Harnett

Between the Warp

Written and Illustrated by Gurleen Kaur Arora | MA (English)

Before a textile becomes cloth, it is first a conversation.

On the loom, two forces come together to create fabric: the warp and the weft. The warp is the set of vertical threads, stretched tight, held in place like a disciplined spine. The weft moves horizontally, weaving in and out of the warp, softer, more fluid, giving the textile its body, its movement, its breath. One holds. The other wanders. Together, they create continuity. It is in this crossing that Indian textiles have always lived. For centuries, the warp has carried the weight of inheritance—skills passed down through generations, techniques refined across time. From the looms of the Indus Valley to the flourishing ateliers of the Mughal courts, this tension has remained constant. Cotton, silk, muslin—threads drawn tight with intention. Zardozi and Chikankari emerging as delicate embellishments upon this structure, each stitch an extension of memory.

The weft, meanwhile, has always been more restless. It carries stories across the warp—motifs, colours, and symbols that shift with geography and time. In Ajrakh, it moves through deep indigos and reds, mapping a universe where sky, earth, and stars coexist in dye. In Phulkari, it loops unevenly, its irregular stitches holding fragments of migration, of homes left behind and remembered through thread. In Kantha, it returns again and again in quiet repetition, transforming worn cloth into something that feels like breath made visible. Together, they do not simply produce fabric—they produce time.



And yet, something has changed.

and the Weft

The loom, once thunderous with movement, now often stands in stillness. The warp loosens where it was once pulled taut with purpose. The weft finds fewer paths to travel. Techniques fade—not abruptly, but gradually. A dyeing process is forgotten. A motif is simplified. A craft survives, but in fragments. This is where the idea of ruin enters—not as collapse, but as quiet erosion. Indian textiles today are often framed as remnants of a living past. Draped against crumbling architecture, photographed in fading light, they are made to echo the visual language of ruins. The jaal of Banarasi brocades mirrors the geometry of abandoned palaces; the translucence of Chanderi carries the delicacy of something almost vanishing; Patola, once reserved for royalty, persists in rare perfection, its symmetry now bordering on disappearance.



In these moments, the textile becomes both object and metaphor. Modern fashion has learned to speak this language fluently. Designers draw upon these traditions, reworking Banarasi, Pashmina, Jamawar into contemporary forms. Sustainability becomes a narrative. Craft becomes luxury. The irregularities of handwork—the very signs of labour and time—are reframed as beauty. The ruin is no longer something to mourn. It is something to admire. But admiration is not neutral. For the artisan, the slowness of craft has never been an aesthetic—it has been a condition. The unevenness we romanticise is often born of constraint. The sustainability we celebrate has long been necessity. Between the loom and the runway lies a distance where labour softens into texture, and survival is translated into style. And yet, to dismiss this romanticisation entirely would be to ignore its strange power. For in looking at these textiles as ruins, we also refuse

to let them disappear unnoticed. We begin to see them—not just as fabric, but as repositories of knowledge. Each thread carries more than colour; it carries ways of knowing—of ecology, of community, of time itself. When these crafts fade, it is not only material that is lost, but memory. Revival, then, is not a return. It is a reweaving. The warp remains, though altered. The weft finds new routes, new patterns, new meanings. A traditional motif enters a modern silhouette. A regional craft travels beyond its geography. What emerges is not the original fabric, but something else—an afterlife, where the ruin is not erased but incorporated into the design.

Perhaps this is what makes Indian textiles such compelling ruins: they do not sit behind glass. They move. They are worn. They age with the body. They soften, fray, and persist.

A motif shifts material.
A texture finds a new body.
A ruin in one form becomes a beginning in another.
Somewhere, even now, the warp waits—
still, but not broken.
And the weft, though quieter,
still remembers how to return.

Photograph by Gurleen Kaur Arora | MA (English)

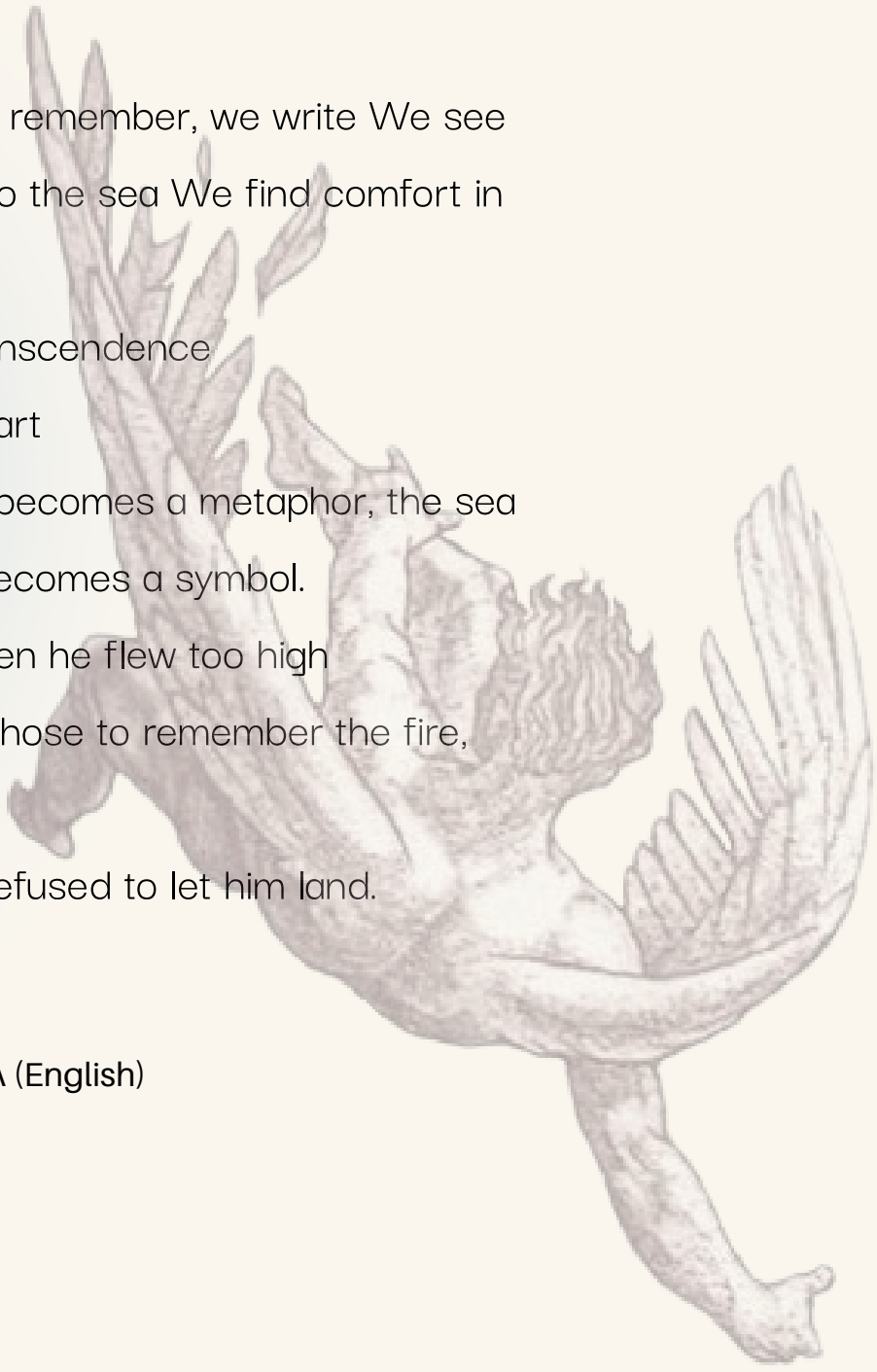


POETRY: Verses Unveiled

Icarus' Curse

But has one ever wondered,
What if Icarus didn't fly close to
the sun?
What if he listened for once?
Would it not have caused his ruin,
one way or the other?
Or would he have survived,
comforted the weeping father?
But has one ever wondered,
Had he chosen caution, would he
be remembered?
Had he silenced his desire, would
he be a myth?
Perhaps it was not the ascent that
immortalized him, But the fall.
Perhaps the sun melted his wings,
But remembrance had been the
price of it all tatues would not have
been carved, The sea would have
remained unnamed, Desire would
have been preached without
consequences,.

The ruins of mankind would just have been ruins,
So high, had Icarus not aimed.
And history is always kinder to the fallen, than to
the careful.
So we remember, we remember, we write We see
his ambition falling into the sea We find comfort in
our fright.
Tragedy becomes transcendence
Wreckage becomes art
The wax that melted becomes a metaphor, the sea
that swallowed him becomes a symbol.
Icarus did not fall when he flew too high
Icarus fell when we chose to remember the fire,
not the flight.
Icarus fell when we refused to let him land.



By Pragyajanli Sahoo | BA (English)

Facade in Visage

By Aditi Sabharwal | BA (English)

I Was there something lurking behind?
A dark truth, a hidden lie
waiting impatiently,
to spring forth...
the impending doom.



Was it a facade?
Or a mask
shrouded in secrecy
Silence prevails.

Fear, Anger, Disgust
are not lip service
But intense emotions
that remain concealed behind,
the innocent smile.

Life is a loop
Not a trap
Be yourself
And break the invisible cages,
Of worn-out masks,
Forced smiles,
Hollow eyes,
Cracked lips,
And the Countenance,
that forgot its name.

Among the Ruins

By Vanya Gandhi | BA (English)

We left things broken where they fell
and told ourselves it was for the best.
Time passed, dust slowly settled there,
but some memories just refused to rest.
Now when I think of that place again,
I remember how it used to feel.
Strange how the heart keeps holding on to things
we never tried to heal.

Almost

By Ishika Garg | BA (English)

To be free in death
Is it a curse or a blessing?
I stand at its doors In borrowed dressing
Thinking of all my chores
Ever so pressing
Is this who I am?
Standing at death's door,
Guessing.

Cremation

By Drishty Goel | BA (English)

When they burn my lifeless body,
I hope the smoke rising from my pyre
rises high above the clouds,
and leaves a part of me there,
to glide with the birds.

When they burn my lifeless body,
I hope the ashes that they sprinkle in the river
travel to the ocean,
and leave a part of me there,
to flow with the fish.

When they burn my lifeless body,
I hope my soul floats around
to catch a glimpse of everyone I've ever loved,
and leave a part of me there,
to dwell in their hearts.

And when they burn my lifeless body, I hope the body rests in peace,
but the life I've lived stays behind.

Unbecoming

By Pawani Kher | BA (English)

I come undone,
a quiet war no one has won.
Your warmth spills softly through my skin,
and blurs the lines I held within.

The girl who lived in ink and flame,
who wore her solitude like a name,
grows faint beneath your steady gaze,
dimmed by love's consuming blaze.

I want your hands, your voice, your eyes,
the hush of shared and sacred sighs.
But I want my nights of silvered page,
my restless heart, my private stage.

I cannot hold both fire and air,
your tender home, my fierce despair.
Each beat with you feels sweet and wrong,
each written vow a fractured song.

I ache for children, love, a place
where time moves slow in gentle grace.
Yet fear that choosing warmth and light
will steal my shadow from my sight.

That I will soften, small and still,
reshape my edges to your will.
Be loved, be safe, be understood,
yet lose the wildness in my blood.

I do not know which hunger stays,
which longing survives the coming days.
I stand between your living touch
and words that ask for just as much.

I do not want to disappear,
to trade my flame for comfort here.
Yet when you hold me close and full,
I feel my truest self grow dull.

How do I love and still remain
the girl who built herself from pain.
How do I live when love is full,
and both my hands are beautiful.

Echoes of a Forgotten Dream

By Vibhor Verma | BA (English)

The moment reality hits us with a closed fist
We begin to question our existence, that's life's gist.
We build these walls of dreams to live inside our brains,
And that ultimately leads to us being trapped in those pesky chains.

We dream when we love,
We dream when we lose.
We dream when we panic,

And when it's tough to choose Between accepting our fate,
Or living in denial–
Escaping from the tenuous grasp of reality,
Which is nothing but a clever ruse.

For when it finds out about our evasion,
It pulls us back in with another situation.
Life is too short to be spent on futile attempts at fame,
To just dream on and on is how we play this game.

But to snap out of it is easier said than done,
For countless centuries have passed in the pursuit of the one
Thing that lets us know how we truly feel inside–
Little do we know, it is the blade to which we're tied.

Happiness is a dream we all are stuck in–
The purest image of absolute bliss.
A mere moment of weakness, and it grabs on tight.
A hold so strong, it does not budge, even with all our might.

It shows us the perfect glances of our future–
Of a place we'll never reach.
But we get so lost in the promise it offers us,
It ends up with us forgetting our purpose.

Hope is lost when we come to our senses,
Our own naivety causes us misery.
But that's life–what happens, happens.
The night will come, and we'll dream once again..

A little white thing

By Divya | BA (English)

Would a white crow live?
Among the sea of deep waters,
In a place where Icey chills take over– Or
blend with the colours performing public
slaughter

Would you live?
An anomaly among others.
A face once desirable
A face now making you suffer

Would you be held too?
Questioned and chased.
Would they treat you–
The same as they treat the apes?

Would you rise along?
With the wind to support your claims
Or would it push you far behind and away?
In clutches of the hell of despair

Would you feel cold?
For a world set in the north–
Or would you perish with fire
The same that you held forth?

Would you blame her?
The creator of all?
Would you blame her–
The one who made you so odd?

Rise and Shine

By Anshika Jindal | BA (English)

When darkness falls and hope seems low,
Remember, its the will that helps you grow.
Each tear you shed, each sleepless night,
Builds your strength, your inner light.

Dreams may tremble, paths may bend,
But every fall, will help you mend.
The mountain's high, the climb is long,
Yet every step makes you strong.

The sun will rise, the clouds will clear,
Hold on tight, your goll is near.
Doubts may whisper, "you can't win",
But true courage shouts, "try once again!"

Trust the fire that burns inside,
Let faith and effort be your guide.
With every step, your wings will grow-
There's nothing you can't learn and know.

To life your chin, and face the day,
Your dreams are real- you'll find your way
Set your heart ablaze.

The Ruin That Speaks

By Dhwani Malik | BA (English)

They stand before me, tracing every crack,
Calling the fractures a map.
They speak of the damage as a grace,
Like the collapse has carved my face.
They love the way the ceiling fell,
How open skies invade the shell.
They praise the silence in my halls,
The way no echo fully calls.
And maybe I, too, play my part,
Frame every ruin like fragile art.
I polish rubble, sweep the floor,
Make wreckage something to adore.
But somewhere past the ivy's spread,
Beyond the rooms declared dead,
There waits a door I never show,
A place no visitor can know.
For ruins can be staged to seem,
Like tragic sets in a softened dream.
Yet even broken walls confess:
They wanted repair, not tenderness

Ashes and Moors

By Nandni Sabharwal | BA (English)

“The world is indeed full of peril...
and though in all lands love is now mingled
with grief, it grows perhaps the greater.”

– J.R.R. Tolkien

Ink spills from the page, love dies,
but never dies.
Time bows to the dead.

Their words are a gift and a curse.
Wuthering Heights is passion without rest–
wild, violent, and unkind.
Heathcliff and Catherine never touch;
they collide,
leaving ash in the path of their storm.

I wonder – what if their fire healed rather than destroyed?
Could their love outlast sorrow,
without serving to ruin?
Would the moors whisper with the dead,
or hum with peace instead of despair?

Maybe this is your genius–
you didn’t write a comforting love.
You wrote love that endured,
a fire fiercer than the storm,
more obstinate than the moors.

Marigolds and Deaths

By Yuvna Tandon | MA (English)

Aghast stood an aghori,
Staring at the pyre,
What sound made the flute,
What's melody of the lyre?
Burning up in flames,
Laid down his last string,
No worse could've befallen,
No verse can name the thing.
Down on his knees, sat,
Altogether cried, smiled,
Warmth of the ashes--
Gathered, in his hands piled.
Smeared upon his face,
He became one with the dead,
What are marigolds or roses,
To a dying nuptial bed?

Despite practicing the art,
Detachment learnt through years,
The hands became a palate,
Of paint with the mixing tears.
All the guilt lay heavy,
Upon the aghori's mind,
Had he not forced time,
To rush into the rewind.
To be or not to be,
Was not the question anymore,
To see or not to see,
The scavengers coming ashore.
Piece by piece was torn,
The aghori's last breaths,
What is another body to,
The pyre who saw a million deaths?

She Belongs to Another Planet

By Tanyaa Sharma | BA (English)

She lives inside her own small sky,
Where clouds don't sweat and people don't cry.
In her world, there's glitter rain,
No body aches and zero pain.
She says, "Why must humans eat?
Three times daily? That's defeat.
And don't get me started on biology class, Why does the body do all this. stuff? It's crass."
She wrinkles her nose at normal things, Like breathing loud or stomach rings.
"Why must we blink? Why must we sneeze?
Can't humans function with a little more ease?"
In her kingdom, queens don't yawn, They wake up pretty, always on.
No messy buns, no awkward phase,
No "excuse me" moments through the days.
She wants a body that runs on vibes,
No maintenance checks, no human bribes.
Just sparkle thoughts and fairy tea, And WiFi working perfectly.
But secretly we all must say,
Her weird little world makes our day.
Because while she protests human design, Her dramatic rants are pure gold - divine.
So here's to the girl who rejects biology, And thinks she deserves better technology.
If aliens come, they'll take her first - Because clearly, Earth is not her universe.

The Crucified Reflection

By Disha Bhardwaj | BA (English)

I left her dead somewhere
In the back of my mind
You can still see her reflection crucified there
And i never dreamt to meet you here

I read that you kept a room empty for me
What if I came back this year
And i had a change of mind
And thought to wait for some more time,right?
But what if I don't
Cause I know I won't
So just Throw away the receipts

I think I ain't deserving of the last ounce of hope and breath that you've been holding onto
I can't find it in myself to not spit poison at your face
Look around there is no grace
Resent me just like you loved me gently
There is a dead end down this road
It's a lost case
I can't close this chapter without staring at your haunted face

You know we ran back and forth all this time
The lustre of our teenage fading down the line
Like a baggage we have been carrying all around
It's a facade

So i lock the door and escape out the window
Cause i can't afford to hold onto your hand again
Just to let it go at the end
I can't turn back
Life doesn't goes like that
And i won't be such a woman
So just forget me for once
I know you aren't holding on
But you aren't even letting me go
I know it's love and that's what it does
But I lost you
And a part of myself too

The things you warned me about
Will be the first one in my to do
I will say everything you are scared of
The battle was rough
And I am done being tough
No we can't stay in touch
You are better off
And I am happy alone
Cut the call and ties and feelings

So stop wishing for things
That i fight against
You don't need to wait
You don't need to hold out for me
I will rub it in your face
And no i ain't sorry
Just buzz off
The past is a ghost
My touch is cold
And our sacred town is now haunted

Light Within

By Phalak Marwah | BA (English)

When morning breaks and skies are gray,
Remember, sunshine finds its way.
Through storms and clouds, your heart can gleam,
A guiding force, a hopeful beam.

Each step you take, however small,
Builds your journey, conquers all.
Mistakes may come, but do not fear,
They whisper lessons meant to steer.

Dream big, reach high, let courage lead,
Plant seeds of love, perform good deeds.
Your strength resides inside your soul,
With faith and passion, you are whole.

So rise each day with open eyes,
Embrace the world, the lows, the highs.
For life is yours, a canvas wide,
Paint it with joy, and let hope guide.

Wither Away

By Ananya Arneja | BA (English)

The desolation of these times, of the new times
Walking on cracked glass of the rear-view mirror
Of your mind; where the wilderness survives
But on the barren land, Do you see the map of those dreams
Shining in your hand; as you collect the pieces?
The ship was wrecked the moment it sailed
Why be surprised now that the storms have withered it away?
A torn sail barely holds the air, the untied raft barely the water.

The Picaro of the Modern times
Hold it down, Your roguish ways
Will inevitably be bound; the monarchs of which
Don't Crack like the glass; On which you once walked blindfolded,
Even the Prince of the Air has his eyes open
Over the horizon; it dares to float over.

Do you behold the reflection of the rascal
That you are; or like Narcissus, justify
The visage that stares back winking at this all?
Even David strung the strings to soothe the God,
While Bathsheba hid in the curtains
Your breath never did sling Goliath,
Nor birthed Solomon who tore through Jerusalem.

The fences you climbed to gather the view
Of the Eternity; that lies thither beyond,
Mocks the audacity you surrendered to,
Did Zephyrus extinguish the Phoenix
You resurrected inwards; or did the candle drip burn your wood?

Aye, you whose joust is the jest for the cosmos,
When will thou hold thy breath and exhale?
"I'm the clown of my own incredulous circus,
An imbecile who'd rather drown in the
Desperate freedom; for thou art
Daedalus, and I, the Icarus
Who loved the Sun."

Aesthetic Burnout

By Muskan Gandhi |
MA (English)

I wear exhaustion
like vintage perfume.

Call it "dark academia,"
call it depth–
no one sees the unpaid sleep,
the quiet control
stacked inside my ribs.

I have mastered
the art of looking composed
while something in me
keeps collapsing softly.

Collapse is prettier
in warm lighting.
Soft shadows forgive
what daylight would expose.

I frame my breaking
like curated melancholy–

No one smells the smoke.
They only compliment
the glow.

Normalised Collapse

By Lavanya Sachdeva | BA (English)

Four hours of sleep.

The sky was still dark when I closed my eyes,
and lighter when I opened them.

Time feels thinner lately.
Like it's fraying at the edges.

They say we have everything.
Resources.
Access.
Awareness.

As if suffering expires with technology.

"You don't know what we went through."
Maybe we don't.
But why does pain have to compete?
Why does theirs have history
and ours have hashtags?

Anything off becomes a phase.
Anything heavy becomes "Gen Z."
Burnout at twenty? Gen Z.
Exhaustion? Gen Z.
Refusing to smile through it?
Definitely Gen Z

But why does pain have to compete?
Why does theirs have history
and ours have hashtags?

Anything off becomes a phase.
Anything heavy becomes "Gen Z."
Burnout at twenty? Gen Z.
Exhaustion? Gen Z.
Refusing to smile through it?
Definitely Gen Z.

It's easy to turn a generation
into a personality flaw.

Easier than asking why we're so tired.

We learned to romanticise the wreckage.

Late nights become dedication.
Anxiety becomes ambition.
Isolation becomes independence.

If it looks polished,
no one asks if it hurts.
I wish the old would grow old enough
to stop measuring us against their scars.
I wish strange things weren't normalised
just because they're common.

I wish exhaustion wasn't proof of worth.

Four hours of sleep.
Not because it's beautiful.
But because somewhere along the way
we were taught that rest is indulgence
and survival is success.

And we believed it.



"Hushed" by Anushka Songra | BA (English)

Clubs of VSES

Vivekalam: The Creative Cohort

Vivekalam is a vibrant and dynamic club established to showcase the diverse talents of students at VSES, fostering a culture of excellence in both extracurricular and co-curricular activities. The club serves as a nurturing platform for students to hone their skills and unlock their potential in various disciplines, with a particular emphasis on communication and creative writing. Vivekalam's mission is to provide students with opportunities to explore their talents, refine their abilities, and gain confidence in a wide range of fields, contributing to their holistic development.

One of the key areas Vivekalam focuses on is the enhancement of students' communication skills, which are essential for success in both academic and personal spheres. Through activities such as debates, speeches, and extempore speaking, the club helps students sharpen their ability to express thoughts clearly and persuasively. These opportunities allow students to not only build their confidence but also develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Whether delivering a speech in front of an audience or engaging in a lively debate, students gain the tools necessary to articulate their ideas effectively, setting them up for future success in various professional and academic environments.

A significant focus of Vivekalam is nurturing the creative writing talents of its members. The club encourages students to explore their creativity through the composition of verses, fiction, articles, and essays. With an environment that promotes experimentation with language and storytelling, students can develop their unique voices and refine their writing skills. Vivekalam regularly organizes writing workshops, competitions, and peer review sessions, where students can receive valuable feedback from mentors and fellow writers. These activities help budding writers improve their craft, whether they aspire to become poets, novelists, essayists, or journalists.





Rangeet: The Translation and Adaptation Club



Rangeet- The Translation and Adaptation Club of Vivekananda School of English Studies aims to foster a deep appreciation for languages and literature while promoting cross-cultural understanding. Through engaging discussions, competitions, and shared experiences, the club supports the exploration of the intricacies of translation. It embraces the dynamic world of adaptation, where stories are transformed and reimagined across different media. The club envisions creating a space where students and enthusiasts can come together and learn the art of translation and adaptation, gaining insights into how languages shape outlooks and facilitate global relationships. The mission of Rangeet goes beyond teaching the technical aspects of adaptation and translation, it aims to introduce a life-long passion among the students.

Through interactive theatrical and film screenings, numerous translation activities, and adaptive events, Rangeet has worked towards equipping the students with the knowledge of understanding the sophistication of adaptation and the complexity of languages. By encouraging modern forms of adaptation, we encourage students to go beyond the traditional forms and boundaries. We believe that translation is much more than a change from one language to the other, it carries a message, a vision, a context, and a culture.

Mimansa: The Research Club



Vivekananda School of English Studies (VSES), Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies, (VIPS-TC), New Delhi, has taken initiative to inculcate critical thinking abilities among the students through the medium of academic and research writing under the umbrella of Mimansa: The Research Club of the department.

In the field of Humanities, research fosters the creation of dialogue between multiple knowledge systems. This helps in establishing fresh relationships with theoretical, and aesthetic models of intellectual development by formulating appropriate research questions, and coherent arguments.
This platform is dedicated to student to explore their ideas, thought and notions relating to the study of literature in the present socio-cultural scenario. The research club was formally inaugurated in April 2021 and the activities planned for the upcoming academic year were taken up right after the inception. Mimansa, the research club of VSES, is involved in conducting various workshops, seminars, conferences within the department in order to will students broaden their research acumen in a hands through intensive learning, and hands-on training sessions.

Signature Event:
Academic Odyssey: Best paper Award 2024 - Mimansa organized an intra-department event named "Academic Odyssey: Best Paper Award 2024" to reward and announce remarkable research of/ by the students of VSES on 8 April 2024. This event took place in FDP & GDPI Room, A Block at 2:30 pm.

Nazariya: The Visual and Cine Club



Nazariya: The Visual Arts & Cine Club of VSES is a dynamic and inclusive club designed to create an engaging space for students passionate about art, cinema, and storytelling. The club serves as a platform for students to explore and expand their creativity through various forms of visual arts while challenging conventional perspectives and embracing innovative approaches. It has been working under the supervision and guidance of our esteemed faculty - Ms Swarnika Ahuja, Ms Anukriti Bajpai and Dr. Anjali Dawar where it fosters collaboration and artistic exploration. Considering the popularity of the tools and methods of Visual and Cinema Studies , Nazariya is dedicated to providing a critical and immersive experience that goes beyond traditional academic boundaries. The club seeks to be a leading platform for creative expression and critical thinking through visual arts and cinema.

By inspiring students to delve into the power of visual storytelling, Nazariya connects artistic practice with academic learning, enhancing both the creative and intellectual growth of its members. Our past events include movie screenings and discussions of both nationally and internationally acclaimed feature films such as zAnkhon Dekhi (dir. by Rajat Kapoor), The Supermen of Malegaon (dir. by Faiza Ahmad Khan) as well as the cinema of Wong Kar Wai, Wes Anderson and so on. One of our most successful events includes The VMAs (VSES Music Awards). It challenged participants to justify why their favourite music video deserves to top the charts, encouraging critical engagement with visual music content and tropes. The students made presentations analysing and appraising the popular genre of the " music video" as a visual medium. Our other signature event, 'Click and Run' was a photography competition. It gave participants a time limit of 30 minutes to capture a compelling story through a single photograph, clicked from the campus. These events provide members with hands-on learning opportunities, enhancing their technical skills and artistic sensibilities.

Darpan: Lens and Life

Darpan: Lens and Life – The Photography Society of Vivekananda School of English Studies, VIPS-Technical Campus, New Delhi, through the art of photography, aims to cultivate a passion for visual storytelling and creative expression. The society provides a platform where students can transform their ideas, emotions, and perspectives into powerful visual narratives. By encouraging creativity and innovation, Darpan strives to help individuals capture the world as they see it and bring their imagination to life through the lens.

Through workshops, photo walks, exhibitions, and interactive sessions, Darpan promotes the exploration of different styles and techniques of photography. The society believes that photography is not merely about capturing images; it is about preserving moments, expressing perspectives, and communicating stories that words sometimes cannot convey. Students are encouraged to experiment, learn, and develop their own unique visual language.nDarpan envisions creating a collaborative space where photographers—both beginners and experienced enthusiasts—can come together to learn, share ideas, and inspire one another. The society nurtures creativity by encouraging members to observe the beauty in everyday life and translate their thoughts and visions into compelling photographs.

Through various competitions, thematic projects, and collaborative events, Darpan seeks to build a vibrant community of visual storytellers. By providing opportunities for creative exploration and artistic growth, the society hopes to inspire students to see the world differently and express their perspectives through meaningful imagery. Darpan stands as a reflection of creativity, where every photograph becomes a mirror of the photographer's vision, imagination, and story.





BATCH PHOTOS

Batch of 2023-2026



Batch of 2024-2027



Batch of 2025-2028



BATCH PHOTOS

MA. English

Batch of 2024-2026



Batch of 2025-27



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PARLE
PARLE
GHANTA
Chuthi
CHAVI
Camel
SCHOLAR







Artwork: "Untitled (Darjeeling Market)" by Abanindranath Tagore