

A photograph of a pond filled with various koi fish. In the upper right, a large, colorful, swirling sphere, resembling a marbled ball or a piece of art, is partially submerged. The sphere features intricate patterns of blue, orange, and yellow. The water is dark, and several koi fish of different colors (orange, white, yellow, and black) are swimming around. The title "21ST CENTURY FLOW" is overlaid in a bold, orange, serif font.

21ST CENTURY FLOW

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SUBMISSIONS POLICY

The gratitude of the word is in its use. We look for someone or something to thank when inspiration pours out of us.

I started this online poetry magazine to get both my poetry and the poetry of other talented people out to the public. Five or six strong poems to mull over. Our first couple of issues featured some artwork too and I hope to feature this in the future as well.

In a creative writing class I am teaching to teenagers, we recently created a "color poem" The theme of the poem is determined by color assigned. The color green really seemed to produce a strong reaction with environmental poetry the obvious result.

The relationship between the word and the image is not such a big deal to me. Stories in writing, verse in writing, that is powerful in and of itself and requires no extra help from art. I have been a fan of comic books since I was a teenager and still read them now but those are stories with pictures, much different than words painting picture by themselves.

There are some striking written images in this latest issue which features poets from all over the world.

Regards and Happy Reading,

Raj Dronamraju, Editor

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS MAN? by Raj Dronamraju

They were a dedicated lot
Photocopying flyers until very late hours
Using PC's to upload his latest photo
Knocking on doors, posting flyers on telephone poles

He disappeared one day after dinner
He was answering questions and the next moment, there was nothing but silence
The space he ruled over still hugged his presence
But he no longer made a point of having to prove his existence

I know you by sight
You look the same whether it's in a self-induced coma or slipping out of the
house through the back door
Everyone else is scattered throughout the neighborhood with flashlights, candles,
holding hands and inquiring of strangers if they know of your whereabouts

Using such a literal approach, they will never find you
They could exhibit skin and bone if they wanted to
But that would be just the holding mechanism, composition of random trauma
In conflict with where you go and what you do

He couldn't tell you from an armchair
Where he'd gone
How they showed his face on the news
Self-preservation conducted an intervention and bundled him away
The point where it all went wrong is the point where it all went right

Raj Dronamraju is the editor of 21st Century Flow. He is the author of three volumes of poetry THE RETURN OF THE MAGNIFICENT NINNY, SOLIDARITY WITH THE FLESH-EATING MOSAIC, and TRAVELS WITH THE ANTI-JOHNNY APPLESEED which can be found her <https://raj-books.post-egoism.media/> along with several novels he has written. He is an American living in Malaysia where he teaches English and tries to enjoy life.

INTO VIEW by John Sweet

not blindness
but the sky gone dark

porch lights

bitter wind

in any story, you
are only the sound of
dead leaves down
sleeping streets

in any dream, i am
only the moment
of despair

we wake up
sweating and see with
absolute clarity how
all of our kingdoms
will fall

John Sweet, who is from upstate New York, is a firm believer in writing as catharsis, and in the continuous search for an unattainable and constantly evolving absolute truth. His latest poetry collections include HEATHEN TONGUE (2018 Kendra Steiner Editions) and A FLAG ON FIRE IS A SONG OF HOPE (2019 Scars Publications).

A TENTATIVE GIFT by John Sweet

and one of us was the emperor
of the city of dust and
one of us had wings

watched from a distance as the
naked man fell asleep in a
snow-covered field and i remember
asking if you believed in the future

i remember the
sound of your laughter

the distant pulse of
approaching trains

every day laid out before us in
infinite shades of grey

THE BEST FARMER by Aufie Zophy

I dreamed I was a farmer,
the best farmer in the world.
Do not worry, I am not boasting:
it was only in my dreams.

I was the only farmer in my country,
providing food for everyone living there.
I did not make any claims;
I did not try to get privileges;
I surely was in control,
but did not dominate;
did not try to abuse my position.

No one else was interested in farming,
except my only one apprentice.
I taught him the skills and tricks of farming,
but above all, not to make any claims for himself
and perhaps,
the latter was the most important thing I taught him!

Hans Van Rostenberghe is a Belgian, living in Malaysia for more than 25 years. He works as a neonatologist and professor at Universiti Sains Malaysia. Big sources of inspiration in his life have included Dr. Albert Schweitzer, Dr. Martin Luther King, and the Médecins sans Frontieres. He maintains a blog with simple inspiring ideas, called soul sprinkles. For his poetry, he uses the pen name Aufie Zophy. He is a reader of philosophy, a nature lover and considers himself to be a family man. He believes strongly that the world is heading towards harmony through an ever-increasing kindness revolution which is close to its sharp inflexion point on its exponential curve.

NESTS OF DEATH by Rafik Romdhani

Scarves that death rides
After abrupt mission and flies
Scarves as green as tomato
Plants which fairy fingers grow

And tuck deep in earth in one go
Just to harvest some months later
Under the same circumstances
Of whipping wind, of poverty fiend

Scarves: shields of war for bread
Now turn into nests for death
But take with them every sigh
The soul whispered to the head!

Rafik Romdhan is an English teacher from Tunisia and has been teaching for 13 years. He shares his poems and hopes to broaden the scope of his knowledge

SUBMISSIONS POLICY

21st Century Flow is always looking for submissions. We are interested in poetry (and art) with a strong POV from the heart and written in modern language. As we are based in Malaysia and governed by Malaysian law regarding sensitive material, we are not looking for poetry with any four letter words nor controversial political opinions.

All poetry submissions must be included in the body of an e-mail. Attachments will be deleted.

E-mail for submissions: raj_dronamraju@yahoo.com

While we do not pay for submissions as we are a free publication, if your poetry or art is selected, you can include one or more links for self-promotion which will be part of your bio.