



21'ST CENTURY FLOW

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SUBMISSIONS POLICY

I would like to announce that I have recently started uploading poetry readings to Facebook wherein I read my works and the works of others and frame them in discussions of different aspects of poetry. The videos can be found on the 21st Century Flow Facebook page.

With much of the world in lockdown due to the Coronavirus, we can still share and enjoy each other's work. As always, this issue features poets from around the world.

What we share is the desire to bring what we see in our world and in the worlds we explore (books for one) to others in the form of verse.

I hope the poems in this issue help transport you away from wherever you are isolating.

Regards and Happy Reading

Raj Dronamraju, Editor

HE VOLUNTARILY PUT ON THE SHIRT OF NESSUS by Raj Dronamraju

He voluntarily put on the shirt of Nessus
He knew about the poison in the fabric and what it would do to him
He was part of the cycle and this was conscious knowledge
He felt guilty, he felt untouchable, he felt this was perfection

He knew there was no point in running
If it wasn't this, he would meet his end in some similar fashion
So when she handed him the garment, he didn't even bother searching
her eyes with suspicion

The poison burned him and he felt less like a god and more like a man
When he tried to remove the shirt, his skin came off like print off a wet
newspaper
The panic passed and the pain he wanted prompted him to build a funeral
pyre

And onto a pyre started with the spark of an ego that sustained itself
through victimhood
He dove headfirst
The fire burned off his martyr's flesh
All that was left was the melted middle
The outside shell was naturally flammable
The inside shell was small, damp, squishy

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

IRON AND SALT by An Irrelevant Girl

A tug on the strings of my heart –
A harp, or barbed wire
Stiff and bloodied –
Perhaps the web I
 spun,
The heavy chains that bind my life;
And yet the invisible weight pulling on my life...
But no metaphor can describe how
I want to cry out the

emptiness

of my soul

Under the pseudonym 'an irrelevant girl', this 17 year old contemporary poet often reflects on personal experiences, feelings and ideas and also explores other styles of poetry. Her interest in poetry stemmed from her passion for writing songs which began at the age of 11. Check out more of her poems at anirrelevantgirl.wordpress.com

DEAD GIRL by Platonic Poetry

Dead girl's charm,
I kissed her forehead,
I remembered the touch of decayed flowers of last spring,
she carried all in her bags
to understand death.
She tried and she understood
death is not the cruellest gambler
loving is the absurdity we create
in the end, we destroy everything
with sorrow and grief
that when you can release
love out of your life.
And death is never a stranger
it is always a part of you.

Platonic Poetry's poetic works can be found here
<https://whereelsemypoeetryfalls.blogspot.com/>

THE PLEAD by Falana Idowu Zion

I lay my soul like the breeze
Within me flow the river of peace
My heart a den of harmony
Like the exasperated god sitting in the tree

I'm a life, present like the air
Humility lies around my chest
I'm a fountain of holiness
Called for justice, love and happiness

For peace I stand
A warrior in the garden earth
I've sworn with my life
To protect you with my last breath

Listen to my word and pleas
My heart is beating in distress
Like a furious tiger, I lost my rest
I'm drenched by a river of tears

I plead with the last breath in my soul
Through the man seated on the throne
Cast your nefarious acts to the cloud
Let it flow with the river of past

I am a warrior of peace not war
I lay myself at your door
With our hearts sealed with God's love
I doff my hat, love from your friend, the peaceful one

Falana Idowu Zion published his first work in the year 2017. He aims at making the world a better place through the use of his talents and skills. Above all, he loves creativity and Impact.....

GOURDS ARE JUST THE BEGINNING by Janet Mwangi

I cannot help but stop and look at the funny catalpa.
Does the catalpa make you shiver?
does it?

Cabbages, however hard they try,
Will always be motherly.
Do cabbages make you shiver?
do they?

When I think of persimmons, I see a woman
"Howl", said the persimmons,
And "howl" then "howl" again.

Like imbeciles, the sapodilla likes to include.
Are you upset by how woolly it is?
Does it tear you apart to see the sapodilla so addled?

I cannot help but stop and look at frumpish zinnias.
Now unstylish is just the thing,
To get me wondering if zinnias are dowdy.

Don't believe that the cardoon is achromatic?
the cardoon is black beyond belief.
Now evil is just the thing,
To get me wondering if the cardoon is dishonourable.

Janet Mwangi is from Nairobi, Kenya and is currently working towards earning a Master's Degree in TESOL. She is the editor of her university's literary magazine and hopes to have a career where she can combine education and writing.

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.