

HELLO THERE!

MY NAME IS

**21ST CENTURY
FLOW**

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The other day I read an amusing story that was being passed around in social media. A disgruntled customer wrote a complaint letter to a local food chain. However, he put his complaint in the form of a poem. The food chain responded with a poem of their own and they went back and forth. What I liked about this was how natural this exchange was using verse, not forced and labored at all.

The poems this month share a natural flowing style even if their meanings are very different.

To be able to communicate the most trivial of concerns, the most base of emotions in verse and to make it seem unforced and part of the living thrust of writing is a large part of the writing battle.

I hope you enjoy these works from American and Asian poets.

Regards and Happy Reading,

Raj Dronamraju, Editor

THE ERSTWHILE AMERICAN FREAKINESS PARTY by Raj Dronamraju

The clouds massing high above our best and brightest
Our weak and most idiotic
It shakes, buzzes, and booms but never produces anything
It's never an object of a direct discussion; only comes up in sideways diatribes, little pissy comments,
memorized monologues

They are all together but not in any sort of deliberate way
Random togetherness is the only way I know how to explain it
Biology could perhaps only give half of the information you are seeking

There's an invisible language some are born to decode
Others will forever fish feebly for a connection that does not come
And hope for another's cluelessness or desperation to find satisfaction

In addition, they struggle with the desire to feel miserable
Pleasure derived from not getting what you want and then moaning and complaining about it
The conditioning not to attempt to approve all this

We take on the lives of people who are not us
We take on these lives through public performance
Because we want to fit in and we want material wealth

But you deny yourself you and in doing so deny yourself a good time
So you become seedy
That's a life that was bright now is moldy around the edges

And when your life is in ruins, someone invites you to a party
A party wherein the guests are people just as freaky as you
Letting their guard down, they share their secret passions

Letting their hair down, they no longer care what others think
You don't foresee how this will cost you
No longer care how this will cost you

The damned no longer know discomfort
Because they have removed themselves from America
One evening's pleasure cancels out a lifetime of fitting in

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 here <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.

1930'S NEW HAVEN WESTINGHOUSE CLOCK by Luke Harvey

From mantle-top to unforgiving brick
and down the dust-thick basement steps it sunk
like bone, fossilized beneath a stack
of Reader's Digest
deep in the house's
strata.

With feline curves the whisker second hand
arches its back to scrape the foggy glass,
warped by what it counts —

The oak-wood stand
is coated white with years.

The door in the back
ajar, rust-red gears are interlocked
in arthritic prayer, and footsteps up above
are all that mark the rhythmic tock and tick
of time:

another thing, like me,
that breaks itself.

L.R. Harvey currently lives in Chattanooga, TN., where he teaches high school English and coaches baseball. His desire is that his poems, as Joseph Campbell writes, “see the life value of the facts round about and deify them, provide images that relate the everyday to the eternal.” He holds his BA in English and his MA in Teaching, and he is hoping to pursue his MFA within the next year. His most recent work has been accepted by After the Pause, Street Light Press, Ancient Paths Literary Magazine, The Write Source, The Tennessee Magazine, Eunoia Review, The Showbear Family Circus, WestWard Quarterly, and others.

LOVE DONATION DAY by Yoonoos Peerbocus

Smoke silvery as guided missiles
spirals sun ward
from flawed flue of power flu
smudges rat grey
the dove cooing olive grove
soots as coal war sky's blear-all black
causing black out to the mind
of those in high position. too late
and too dim their insight comes
when dust of dinghy atoms
pulp innocent flesh
fanning a hurricane of fire.
pain shrieks from the scalded
the great agony of lack-
of something human
and peace of understanding
to summit a world's love donation day
for a love alliance of human race
to avert such fearfully.

Yoonoos Peerbocus is from Mauritius, a tiny island in the Indian Ocean, and publishes poems on several poetry sites including Poem Hunter. By profession, he is a teacher of English language and French language. His hobbies are swimming, mountaineering, walking, reading and writing poems on fundamentals

UNCLOUDED THOUGHTS, RAINS OF DESPERATION by Gisele

A love so big,
Thy soul speaks of nothingness
Whilst the agony screaming in my bones
Struggling to escape
From the ocean-deep pain,

Wildflower smells of freedom
Though, we humans fear,
Fear to compete.
; the taste of my choice
So bitter yet so sweet

A day so long
In the dark, we grief,
Life's too short in the eternity of
Impermanence,

Heavy reliance on others,
Stinks of unhealthiness,
I don't need droplets of rain
Give me heavy downpour!

Gisele is a third-year journalism student whose passion for poetry started growing when she was 18. She likes to explore different styles of writing, from classics to modern and has come to realize that despite the differences, they convey their own unique values. Apart from that, she enjoys taking photographs and hopes to grow as a poet-photographer someday.

FLOOR SHOW by Gladys Nguyen

“We are closing in five minutes” says the man with the earpiece

The mannequins seemed posed for the evening’s social scene

And I am late and far from home

But am walking around this department store instead of being at home

The smoothness of the cheeks of the mannequin - I feel someone is winking
at me

Maybe this is an invitation to join in night dances

Smoother than you thought

Happier that you thought

Dance with a plaster and paste partner

At peace as part of the floor show

The morning will come too soon

Gladys Nguyen lives in Vietnam and has had her poetry published in The Indo-Asian Review, Green Rice, and other poetry publications as well as academic journals.

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.