



**Prakriti
Foundation**

**The Poetry with Prakriti Festival
(2013)**

About Poetry Festival 2013

'Poetry with Prakriti' is an annual festival featuring 25 eminent and emerging poets, each presenting four different readings of their poems to small, intimate audiences at several venues across the city – schools, colleges, cafes, IT parks, green public parks, shops, galleries, boutiques, banks and other commercial establishments. The festival is scheduled everywhere, to coincide with the famed 'Chennai Season'.

The aim of the Poetry with Prakriti festival is to get poets from varied backgrounds to read and share their poetry in various languages at different locations across the city. This allows multiple groups of people to enjoy creative expression rendered through poetry.

Over the years, we have presented 200 poets from across India, and from countries such as Spain, France, Canada, U.K, Denmark, Switzerland and the U.S.A.

This festival has featured poets such as Keki N.Daruwalla, Charles Stein (USA), Arundhati Subramaniam, Denis Mai R(USA), Sudeep Sen, Priya Sarukkai Chabria, Bina Sarkar Ellias, Anne-Marie Kenessey (Switzerland) Kalki Subramaniam, Parvathi Nayar, Renuka Narayan, Anupama Raju, Jeremy Woodruff, Raghavendra Madhu, to name a few.

As part of the festival, a Poetry Slam Contest has been conducted in the past. The top three poems are awarded cash prizes.

As one newspaper review stated: "It's a quiet revolution but certainly one that is gaining momentum." It is a practical attempt to make poetry available and for everyone rather than it being a privilege for just a few. This festival aims to liberate poetry from being condemned as elitist, obscure or abstract.

This year, for the 7th edition, we had poets from different poetry groups such as Kabir Kala Manch Poetry Panel, Telugu Resistance Poetry Panel and The Great Indian Poetry Collective participate. For the closing, we had a performance by Theatre Nisha of Anis Mojgani's poems from the collection 'Songs From Under The River.' The performance was directed by V. Balakrishnan of Theatre Nisha.

Schedule

Date	Morning		Evening	
	Poet	Venue	Poet	Venue
12/10/2013	Smita Sahay	WCC (9am)	Samudra Kajal Saikia	Hindu Senior (1:15pm)
	Samudra Kajal Saikia			
	Kabir Manch	MCC (10am)	Kabir Manch	Spaces (7pm)
	Smita Sahay	Ethiraj (11:30am)		
12/11/2013	Boey Kim	WCC (8am)	Kabir Manch	ACJ (5.30pm)
	Ankur Betageri		Ankur Betageri	
	Kabir Manch	Kalakshetra (8:45am)	Smita Sahay	
		Stella Maris (11:00am)		
	Smita Sahay	MCC (10:45am)	Samudra Kajal Saikia	
	Samudra Kajal Saikia			
	Boey Kim	Asan Memorial (11am)		
	Ankur Betageri	Ethiraj (11:30am)		
12/12/2013	Margaret Mascarenhas	WCC (8am)	Ankur Betageri	Asan Memorial (12 Noon)
		Anna Adarsh (11am)		
	Ankur Betageri	MGR Janaki (9am)	Boey Kim	Hindu Senior (1.15pm)
	Boey Kim	MCC (10am)		

12/13/2013	Margaret Mascarenhas	Kalakshetra (8.45am)		
		MCC (11.30am)		
	Minal Hajratwala, Ellen Kombiyil, Shikha Malaviya	SDNB Vaishnav (8:45am)		
		Anna Adarsh (11am)		
12/14/2013			Minal Hajratwala, Ellen Kombiyil, Shikha Malaviya	Viswas Kaapi House [Cholamandal Artists' Village] (5pm)
				Dasyam Pratibha (7pm) - cancelled
12/16/2013	Nirupama Dutt	MGR Janaki (9am)	Nirupama Dutt	Madras University (2pm)
		KFI (11am)		
12/17/2013	Nirupama Dutt	JBAS (9am) - cancelled	Nirupama Dutt	Samasta (4pm)
	Rangeet Mitra	Ethiraj (11:30am)		
	Nirupama Dutt		Rangeet Mitra	Madras University(3.30pm)
12/18/2013	Telugu Resistance Poets	Anna Adarsh (9.30am)	Telugu Resistance Poets	Madras Uni Telugu Dept. (3pm)
	Rangeet Mitra	DAV (10am)	Rangeet Mitra	Amdavadi (6pm)
12/19/2013	Telugu Resistance Poets	WCC (8 am)	Theatre Nisha performance: "Songs from Under the River"	Spaces (7pm)
		SDNB Vaishnav (10:30am)		

Artiste Profile

1. Ankur Betageri

Ankur Betageri (b.1983) is a poet, short fiction writer and a visual artist based in New Delhi. His published works include a collection of poetry, *The Bliss and Madness of Being Human* (2013), a collection of short fiction, *Bhog and Other Stories* (2010); a collection of short fiction in Kannada, *Malavika Mattu Itara Kathegalu*, (2011) and two collections of poetry in Kannada, *Hidida Usiru* (2004) and *Idara Hesaru* (2006). His poetry has been translated into Hindi (*Basant Badal Deta Hai Muhavre*, 2011), Bengali, Italian and Korean. Ankur has participated as a Guest Writer at various National and International literature festivals including *The III International Delphic Games* (2009) at Jeju, South Korea and *Lit Up Writers Festival* (2010) at Singapore.

As a visual artist, Ankur has exhibited his photographs at various places including ICCR, Delhi (2012); St Stephens College, Delhi (2012) and Delhi University (2011). In 2012, he founded the Avant Garde public arts and social activist platform, *Hulchul*, advocating the use of Public Space (like road-side walls, public washrooms etc) and New Media for the dissemination, and democratization, of art and poetry.

Ankur holds Master's degrees in Clinical Psychology and English, and is currently pursuing PhD in Philosophy from IIT Delhi. He is also the Assistant Editor of *Sahitya Akademi's* literary journal, *Indian Literature*.

2. Minal Hajratwala

Minal Hajratwala is the author of award-winning epic *Leaving India: My Family's Journey from Five Villages to Five Continents* and editor of *Out! Stories from the new Queer India*. Born in the US and educated at Stanford and Columbia universities, she came to India in 2010 as a Fulbright Senior Scholar. As a writing coach and editor, she helps people give voice to untold stories. She is one of the founding members of *The (Great) Indian Poetry Collective*, a publisher based in Bangalore. Her poetry collection *Bountiful Instructions for Enlightenment* was published in 2014.

www.minalhajratwala.com

3. Ellen Kombiyil

A native of Syracuse, New York and a graduate of the University of Chicago, Ellen Kombiyil's work have appeared in *Beloit Poetry Journal*, *Cider Press Review*, *Cordite Poetry Review*, *Poemeleon*, *Silk Road Review* and *Spillway*, among others. Her first book "Histories



of the Future Perfect” was published in 2014. She is one of the founding members of The (Great) Indian Poetry Collective (www.greatindianpoetrycollective.org). For the past 10 years she has lived in Bangalore, India, where she leads writing workshops and teaches yoga.

4. Shikha Malaviya

Shikha Malaviya considers herself a morpher, having been born in the U.K. and raised in the U.S. and India. She one of the founding member of The (Great) Indian Poetry Project, an initiative to document, preserve and promote the legacy of modern Indian poetry. Her book of poems, *Geography of Tongues*, will be launched in December 2013. Shikha is deeply involved in the poetry community through events/initiatives such as organizing ‘100 Thousand Poets for Change—Bangalore’ in 2012 and 2013; co-founding ‘Poetry in Public India,’ a movement to bring powerful verse by Indian women to public places across India; and giving a TEDx talk on ‘Poetry in Daily Life’ at TEDx Golf Links Park, Bangalore, 2013. Shikha’s poetry has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize. She also founded *Monsoon Magazine*, the first South Asian literary magazine on the web. Shikha graduated from the University of Minnesota with BA and MA degrees in creative writing, mass communications and liberal studies. She lives in Bangalore, India, with her husband and two children.

5. Nirupama Dutt

Nirupama Dutt is Chandigarh's home-grown poet, journalist, literary & art critic, translator, and of course a raconteur of many seasons who has written and edited several books. She writes in both Punjabi and English. She received the Punjabi Akademi Award for her anthology of poems, ‘*Ik Nadi Sanwali Jahi*’. Her poetry anthologies have also come out in English titled as ‘*The Black Woman*’ and in Hindi as ‘*Buri Auraton ki Fehrist Se*’. Her translations include *Stories of the Soil* (translation of 41 stories from Punjabi, published by Penguin) and *Poet of the Revolution* (translation of the memoirs and poetry of Lal Singh Dil published by Penguin). She has written the biography of a Dalit activist and singer called *The Ballad of Bant Singh*. Books edited by her include *Our Voices*, an anthology of SAARC poetry, *Half the Sky* and *Children of the Night* and two collections of Pakistani short stories. At present, she is translating three novellas by Amrita Pritam and an anthology of Hindi poems inspired by Kabir. She is also day-dreaming a novella of her own.

6. Samudra Kajal Saikia

Samudra Kajal Saikia is an Assamese poet, writer of cultural criticism and an artist working in multidisciplinary paradigms. His artistic engagement associates with theatre and performances, public art projects, book illustration, video and animation. After completing

BFA from Vishwabharati, Shantiniketan and MVA from M S University of Baroda (in Art History and Aesthetics), he is now working as the founder - creative director of Kathputlee Arts & Films, New Delhi. Samudra was the recipient of FICA (Foundation of Indian Contemporary Arts) Public Art Grant, 2010. He is a practitioner of a distinctive theatre practice that is coined as the Disposable Theatre.

As a poet Samudra Kajal Saikia has been introducing himself in Assamese periodicals and News Papers for more than two decades. "Hoon" and "Kankhowar Ghar" are two collections of Assamese poems published in 2009 and 2010 respectively from Guwahati. Earlier a book of Bengali poems was published from Kolkata, "Tabuo". Many of his poems have been adapted as performance texts and worked as thematic incentives for other mediumistic practices.

7. Boey Kim Cheng

Born in Singapore in 1965, Boey Kim Cheng is regarded as one of the best poetic voices to have emerged from the post-independence republic. His four poetry collections — three of which have won national awards, address his own disquiet about Singapore's rapid change, the sense of displacement and dislocation that have arisen from that. Kim Cheng received the NAC's Young Artist Award in 1996. He resides in Australia, where he teaches creative writing at the University of Newcastle, but is currently in NTU's College of Humanities, Arts & Social Sciences as writer-in-residence.

One of his collections has been a high school text in Singapore for the last few years.

8. Rangeet Mitra

Rangeet is a chemical engineer and a very young poet who likes to write poems in Bengali. His first collection of poems "Rumale Beerer Gandho" was published in the Calcutta Book fair, 2012 by Abhijan Publishers. His poems were published in The Sunday Indian, Bhasabandhan, Bartika, Kaurab, Krittibas, Kobisommelan, Muse India etc.

In 2006, he won the 3rd prize in the field of creative writing by Aanandabazar Patrika. He worked with ABP [Ananda Utsav] in the Durga Pujo festival, 2009. He also wrote songs in Bangla cinema.

He dreams of building an open society without discrimination.

9. Margaret Mascarenhas

Margaret Mascarenhas is a multi-lingual and transnational writer, consulting editor, and an independent curator of Indo-American origin with a background in comparative literature at UC Berkeley. She received her training in Indian Art from art historian Dr Saryu Doshi, with whom she worked as an assistant editor for several years at Marg, and subsequently as a consulting editor. She is the author of the diaspora novel, Skin (Penguin India 2001),

which is being taught in many colleges and universities and is highlighted in numerous academic papers on post-colonial literature in India, Portugal and the USA. Recently, *Skin* became a part of the discourse at a conference at Yale, "Goa: a post-colonial society between cultures" where the author was a keynote speaker and coordinator. Her second novel, *The Disappearance of Irene Dos Santos* (Hachette USA 2009), set in Venezuela, where she grew up, was the recipient of a Publishers Lunch award and was a Barnes and Noble Discover Pick in literary fiction. She has contributed literary essays to numerous journals and anthologies, which include *Coloquio Letras*, the literary magazine of the Gulbenkian Foundation in Portugal, edited by the poet and literary critic Nuno Judice. She was the founding Director of Sunaparanta Goa Centre for the Arts through 2011, and remains as the Convenor of its advisory board. She is currently the Founder and Director of the Blue Shores Prison Art Project at the Central Jail, Aguada in Goa, where she teaches a 4-year curriculum of poetry, performance art and visual art that explores the relationships of image, movement and text, and the ways in which they function, independently and inter-relatedly, in the creative process to express and/or elicit emotion. Although she has been writing poetry and sketching for over 20 years as part of her daily journaling regime, *Triage--casualties of love and sex* (Harper Collins India 2013), is her first published collection of poetry, spoken word poetry, flash memoir and sketches. Mascarenhas lives most of the year in Goa, where she has ancestral roots, and where she maintains a residency in the picturesque village of Calvim for working artists and writers from all over India.

10. *Smita Sahay*

Smita Sahay is a writer, poet and editor based in Mumbai. Her short stories, poetry and book reviews have appeared in *Ripples*, *Asia Writes*, *Pedestal Magazine*, *Celebrating India*, *Muse India*, *Cha Journal*, *Women's Web* and *Misty Mountain Journal*. A Computer Engineer by education, in another lifetime, she worked for Accenture as an SAP Consultant. She was born and brought up in Dhanbad.

She is currently co-editing, with Dr. Charles Fishman, *Veils, Halos and Shackles: International Poetry on the Abuse and Oppression of Women*, and working on her first book of fiction.

11. *Kabir Kala Manch Poetry Panel*

Kabir Kala Manch was formed in Pune in 2002 in the wake of the Gujarat riots, and is made up of students and young professionals from exemplary academic backgrounds, who performed protest poetry and plays in slums and streets, shaking up the cultural scene in Pune as they presented a voice for the voiceless. Through music and poetry, Kabir Kala Manch took up the cause of social inequality, exploitation of the underclasses, farmer suicides, female infanticide, Dalit killings and the widening net of corruption. The Kabir Kala Manch Defence Committee is made up of civil society activists. Kabir Kala Manch members are at an impressionable age where their ideological thinking is still in process

and their work covers a wide spectrum of political ideas such as Ambedkarism, socialism and Marxism. They have never taken up arms.

They believe that the existence of the group is crucial as it creates space for dissent through shayari and songs that are much more effective than speeches. They are responsible artists who interpret art as a catalyst for social change. Unfortunately, for the State there is no distinction between Dalit protesters, activists and Naxalites.

- Dhawla (Deepak) Kama Dhengle
- Rupali Kaluram Jadhav
- Ramdas Santram Unhale
- Dada Walhba Waghmare
- Laxman Narsayya Kalleda

12. Shaik Yakoob

Yakoob is a well-known name in the world of Telugu letters. A College teacher by profession, he is a poet, researcher, writer and singer by choice and natural propensities. Born in a remote village of Rottamakuru Revu in the district of Khammam, Andhra Pradesh, Yakoob did his schooling and undergraduate studies in Khammam district before moving to Hyderabad to pursue his higher education. He completed his Master's degree in Telugu from Osmania University in 1987 and went on to do his M.Phil and Ph.D subsequently.

During his college days, as a student activist, Yakoob lent expression to his anguish, angst, frustration, feelings and emotions through the medium of poetry and soon became a popular poet on the Telugu literary scene. Yakoob's early poems go back to 1985 and his first anthology, "Pravahinche Gnaapakam" published in 1992, earned widespread accolades and has already gone through two reprints.

His next collection of poems, "Sarihaddu Rekha", comprising more than a hundred poems was published in 2002. According to the reputed editor and critic, Gudipati, "Yakoob's individualism and uniqueness came to be firmly established with "Sarihaddu Rekha". Incidentally, this anthology was released by Gnanakootan, the eminent Tamil poet and was chosen as the topic for a Ph.D dissertation by a research scholar of Sri Venkateswara University.

In the year 2009, the publication of Yakoob's next anthology, "Yedategani Prayaanam" marked another milestone in his literary career.

Yakoob's early poems were translated into English and published under the title "Arc of Unrest" in the year 2000. At a memorable function, the book was released by Dr. K. Satchidanandan, former Secretary of Central Sahitya Akademi.

Yakoob has edited twelve books and has authored seven books to his credit, of which three are anthologies of his verses, while the others fall under the domain of literary criticism. Yakoob's poems have been translated in Hindi, English, Malayalam, Tamil and Kannada. Yakoob has been the recipient of several awards and honors over the years.

Currently, he is an Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Telugu, Anwarul Uloom (Autonomous) College in Hyderabad.

13. Vimala Morthala

Vimala, script-writer for ETV-2 Sakhi, a program about women, is a poet and writer of short stories. She is a consultant of Aman Vedika Rainbow homes for children from marginalised and stigmatized backgrounds and without adult responsible care. She conducts sessions for care-givers of the children to help them improve and deepen their perspective. She also helps the children edit their own magazine.

Vimala's literary works have been translated and published in Hindi and English. Some of them have been published in Anthology of Women's Poetry by Penguin Books, Women Writings in India, edited by Susie Tharu & K. Lalitha, Indian Literature- Sahitya Academy's Bi-Monthly Journal, Interior decorations - Edited by Ammu Joseph, Vasanta Kannabiran, Ritu Menon, Olga, Sweeping the Front Yard - Poems and Stories of Women - Edited by Sampurna Chattarji, among others. 2 of her poems have been included in the BA curriculum in Andhra Pradesh, and in the curriculum of Bachelor of Arts by the Ambedkar open university of Andhra Pradesh.

Ms. Vimala's participation in prestigious events include:

- Represented South Indian Poets in International Festival of poetry "Kriya" 2011 in Nagpur, and chaired one session on "Gender Writing".
- Participated in "An evening of Poetry" conducted by Alliance Francaise of Hyderabad along with Amadou Lamine Sall.
- Poetry recital in Kendra Sahitya Academy conferences in Kerala and Bhopal.

Ms. Vimala has co-authored 'Maakodhee Chandaalam' (Lives of Manual Scavengers in Andhra Pradesh), with Gita Ramaswami, published by Hyderabad Book Trust (HBT). A collection of short stories 'Few stars and some tears' is under publication.

Her best known published works include:

- Adavi Uppogina Rathri (The Night of the Forest's Uprising) - Anthology of poems in Telugu.
- Mrugana (Searching) - Anthology of poems in Telugu.
- Maa (Mother) translated to Hindi and book published.

14. Katta Srinivas Rao

Hailing from Sattupalli Village in Khammam District of AP, Katta Srinivas is a Post Graduate in English and Telugu and is one of the very active administrators of "Kavisangamam Group" on Facebook.

The present poem is taken from his recent anthology "Mattivellu (మట్టి వేళ్ళు)."

He has another anthology to his credit of Haikus "MooDu Binduvulu" (మూడు బిందువులు). He is an English Language Teacher by profession and is presently working as a Personal Asst. to an MLC, Gov. of Andhra Pradesh.

15. K. Siva Reddy

K. Siva Reddy taught English for thirty-five years in Vivek Vardhini College, Hyderabad, and retired as the principal of the same college.

A few of his published works are Charya, Ajeyam and Raktam Suryadu. He has translated African and European poems into Telugu.

The awards and honours received by him include the Central Sahitya Akademi Award, Siddartha Kalapeetham Puraskaram, Dr. Somasunder Sahitya Puraskaram and Visala Sahiti Award.

He has also worked on an offbeat film called 'Pratusha' as a scriptwriter.

16. Satish Chandar

Satish Chandar is a known Dalit poet, a TV Host and an editor. As a poet, he has published four anthologies of poetry namely Panchama Vedam, Nanna Cycle, Pasupu Jabilli and Adiparvam. Satish Chandar's 'Panchama Vedam' was the first anthology of Dalit Poetry exclusively of one poet in Modern Telugu literature as critics like K.Srinivas have rightly observed. Research was done on his book by the University of Hyderabad on his books of poetry 'Panchama Vedam' and 'Aadiparvam' for both M.Phil and Ph.D. His book, 'PANCHAMA VEDAM' was Prescribed for M.A (Telugu Literature) by Andhra University, Vishakapatnam and the poems in the book always figure in the Curricula of Telugu

Literature in most of the universities in Andhra Pradesh. The English Version of 'PANCHAMA VEDAM' (The fifth Veda) is part of syllabus for English Literature students in St. Berchmans College, Kerala. It was adjudged as one of the hundred best Telugu writers in the last century by TANA. Other works too drew the attention of poetry lovers and critics received laurels.

17. Koduri Vijaya Kumar

Koduri Vijayakumar is a Deputy Director with AP Electricity Regulatory Commission. He entered the Telugu Poetry world in 1990 and took up poetry writing as a serious affair. The agony of the poet about the growing distances & diminishing love in human relations can be traced in his poetry, which has made him known as a 'sensitive poet' in contemporary Telugu poetry. Many of the poems revolve around the evil effects of the market on the Indian urban middle class (post introduction of economic reforms in the 90s) and the need of moral support for People's Movements. He strongly believes that today poets need a new language to write poetry on the current complexities in human relations.

He has three poetry anthologies to his credit, namely Vaathaavaranam, Aquarium lo Bangaaruchepa and Anantharam. Some of the poems got translated to English, Hindi, Kannada and Malayalam. Apart from poetry he has penned about 8 short stories, 2 stage plays and has also written a few literary reviews in prominent Telugu magazines.

He received awards for his poetry, including the 'Telugu University Award for Best Poetry.'

18. V. Balakrishnan

V. Balakrishnan is an alumnus of Sri Ram Centre for Performing Arts and the prestigious National School of Drama (1998). He was later awarded the Charles Wallace Scholarship to attend the International Residency for young directors, hosted by the Royal Court Theatre, London. He has taught over two thousand students in the past decade with his chosen method of teaching acting - the Meisner Technique. As an actor, he has acted in over 150 plays since he started his career in 1994. He is the artistic director of Theatre Nisha.

Press

The Hindu, Chennai, 18 December, 2013 – Poetry in motion

<http://www.thehindu.com/features/metroplus/nxg/poetry-in-motion/article5474012.ece>

The Hindu, Chennai, 20 December, 2013 – A parallel universe

<http://www.thehindu.com/features/metroplus/a-parallel-universe/article5482717.ece>



Live Mint, Chennai, 5 December, 2013 – Lyrical evenings

<http://www.livemint.com/Leisure/zoMmnqoejsP1uzU2AuD5bL/Poetry-With-Prakriti--Lyrical-evenings.html>

India Today, Chennai, 10 December, 2013 - Prakriti Foundation hosts annual poetry fest from 10th to 20th December 2013 in Chennai

<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/prakriti-foundation-hosts-annual-fest-poetry-with-prakriti-in-chennai/1/328653.html>