

KALPA 2017

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Photo on the right: The Kalpa team with couple of missing faces | Photo credits: Chinmay Katke
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In the second edition of Kalpa (2008), the then chief editor Sisir C Anand pointed out that '...nothing in Kalpa is work. It's all fun', inspired by Oscar Wilde's, 'Work is the refuge of people who have nothing better to do'. It's only when we started putting Kalpa together this year, that I realised that his statement was not at all that straightforward. Nobody really knows where to put the line between work and play. All of us on this side of Kalpa take the fun quotient out in our own ways. Some of us would say that making this magazine is part of our work, part of the day, and that's how we love it. For others, it is play after the day is over.

Most of the team out here loves to create, to speak. Some of the designers are paranoid about the rectangle going a pixel off-margin and some of the editors are full-time grammar fanatics. There are artists who take days to make that one small illustration that they are satisfied with. There are some who would love to see their names printed in this edition, just to be part of defining what IISER looks like to the world. There are writers who want to stay anonymous and some who would not have their writings edited at all. Then there is the outgoing batch of students, some of whom offered multiple anecdotes when we asked for contributions for their farewell section.

We have had to run around a lot, bugging juniors and seniors alike. We have sat for hours deciding how to design each spread in Indesign, or have long crazy chats over a single editing suggestion on Google Docs. But at the end of the day, I believe we have managed to get Kalpa prepared, with each of our enthusiasms satisfied. We have penned down our frustration of the codes crashing and the antibodies misbehaving; the joy of that final neat gel-run, the time off while the column drips, the proof not making sense, the tiring day and the lazy day, the day of success and the day of failure; each has been etched on the pages of this magazine.

And while doing so, we have attempted to present what the community at IISER Pune has felt over the past year, to you, dear reader.

Swastik Mishra
Chief Editor

Ten years of KALPA@IISER Pune: Through the looking glass

- Krishna N Ganesh
Director, IISER Pune

It is hard to believe that Kalpa, the students' voice of IISER Pune (IISERP) is now in its 11th edition. I remember the excitement of the unveiling of the first edition of Kalpa on the first Annual Day of IISER Pune (3rd of April 2007). Since then, the release of Kalpa has been the most eagerly awaited event of the Annual Day (till 2010) and Foundation Day (since 2011) by the IISER community. In the very first issue (Kalpa 2007), Prof CNR Rao in his message wrote, 'IISER is an important new experiment and it has to succeed,' and the subsequent 10 years of IISER Pune have proved it. Prof N Kumar, the Founding Chairman, Board of Governors of IISER Pune, wrote about science at IISER Pune '...where science is to be taught as it is indeed done... feel and touch the unity of physics, diversity of chemistry, and complexity of biology, subtlety of mathematics, and immensity of computation...'. IISER Pune has experienced this wonderful view of science.

Sisir Anand, the first editor coined the term Kalpa - a hybrid of *kala* (time) and *kalpana* (imagination). He wrote in the first editorial that 'with strong effervescence of time, at IISER Pune we create science and science recreates us through time and imagination'. He also wrote about 'illusions of reality', pondering on why we believe what our senses are telling us.

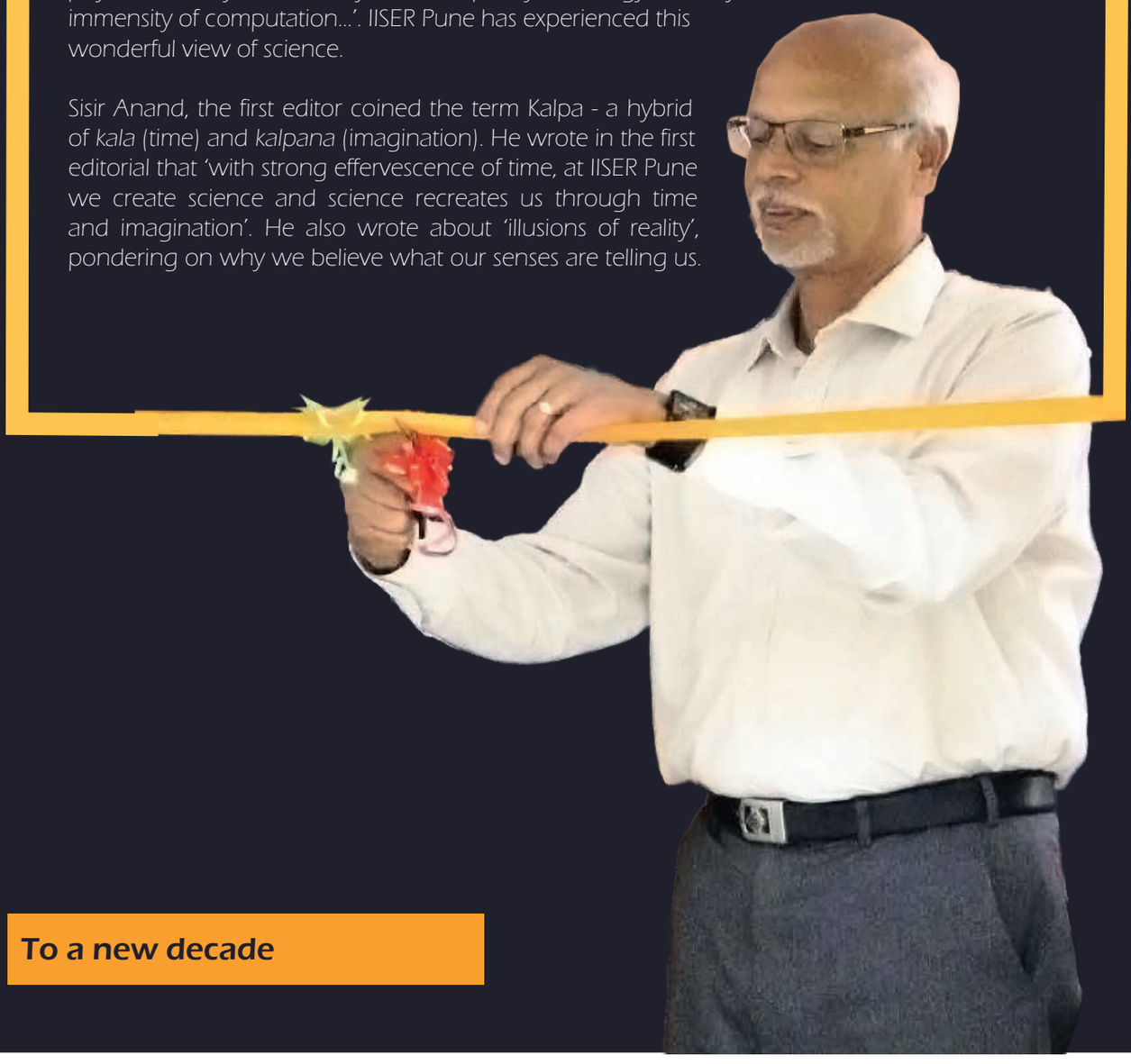

Photo credits : Physics IISER Pune

To a new decade

Sisir's editorials penned for the first three years, were always a literary enigma, imparting a strong character to Kalpa.

How many in the IISERP community must have wondered about the meaning of the logo of the institute: the unabated growth of lotus petals emanating from the pages of a book, embracing the stakeholders (students, faculty, and society) denoted as a black dot? In Kalpa 2007, Prof RG Bhat (RGB) gave a traditional, ethnic interpretation of our logo. This issue also had nice and memorable quotes about the lighter and more humorous side of science under the sections on physics, chemistry, biology, maths and engineering. The issue carried articles on a wide range of topics such as existentialism, extraterrestrials, the science of soccer, black holes, oil spills, topology, and space-time ripples, all written by the first batch of IISERP students, already weaving a web of science at the institute.

In the second edition of Kalpa (2008), Sisir began with an interesting statement 'Nobody gets an Oscar for the Best Nothing... working is the refuge of people who have nothing better to do,' to point out that 'nothing in (the making of) Kalpa is work, it is all fun.' Apart from several creative and imaginative articles and poems, this issue had two notable things: the absolute universal address of IISERP on Google Maps – '18.5477° N, 73.8076° E; elevation 1925 ft', and the beginning of the Hindi section of Kalpa.

In the Kalpa 2009 issue, Prof N Kumar wrote 'Kalpa has already become the inner voice of IISER... it is being heard now and may that it be heard far into the future' – a very farsighted wish that has become true in terms of its informally critical nature. The enigmatic editor Sisir then wrote about being a hero: 'do you happen to be a hero for yourself, or a hero for the work, remain a hero only on the field, or a hero for the fifty odd people in hundred yards... challenge brings out the real hero in yourself'. Kalpa 2009 saw a welcome new item: dialogues with inspiring people. The first one with Prof Shashidhara (LSS) gave glimpses of his passionate philosophy about research, pedagogy and evidence of thought leadership to emerge in later years, his penchant for reading classics and apart, his hairstyle, taste for south Indian coffee, and what he will do when he meets a genie. The other interview with Prof T Padmanabhan (Paddy) of IUCAA was about cosmology, the history of science and ideas, and teleology. These conversations brought freshness to Kalpa and pointed out the ability of our students to engage men with matters. This issue also highlighted another proud initiative of IISER Pune: Mimamsa. This unusual and challenging science quiz format conceived by Dr Sutirth Dey has now become a flagship event of the Institute. The lighter side of campus life found expression in Kalpa 2009.

Kalpa 2010 graduated from 'editor' to 'a team of editors'. It carried the memorable photographs of the unveiling of the foundation stone of IISER Pune by the then Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh in a historic event on 1st of April, 2010. The birdman of IISER Pune, Dr Ramana Athreya led a student expedition to the heights of Lama campus, and the issue engrossingly captured it through a report as well as lovely pictures of the trip.

Kalpa 2011 is a record of some type in the sense that it featured interactions with two visiting Nobel Laureates: Tony Leggett (Physics, 2003) with G Ambika and Venki Ramakrishnan (Chemistry, 2009) transcribed by Krishna and Neha. It also reported the visit of Mr Kapil Sibal - the then HRD Minister, and Prof Girish Agarwal (Oklahoma State University) – the first JC Bose Chair at IISER Pune. It was also special since it was the year the first batch of BS-MS students (2006 batch) graduated. The piece by RGB chronicled their memorable journey and experiences. Of interest was the depiction of all new students and faculty in frames of a movie tape.

Kalpa 2012 marked a distinct phase

change in the design of the student magazine with a new frame of creativity. The editor Alisha Pathak made it a 'thorough-student' issue, with articles, reports, images, texts, layouts, sections, and ideas – all written, designed, captured, and developed by students, indicating the skills of students from magazine composition to production; the PDF file of the issue created by students simply had to be printed as the design was already taken care of! This edition had articles from nine different languages, captured in the 'spirit of times' (Zeitgeist). This issue exuded freshness with high quality graphics, photos, paintings and sketches depicting 'persistence of memory'. I had the privilege of getting interrogated on 'then' (2006) and 'now' (2012), since I was appointed for a second term as Director, to talk about challenges, fantasies, sense of achievement and satisfaction.

Kalpa 2013 issue was thematic on 'emotions and expressions', melting into one of the '*rasas*' as depicted on the cover. The creative editorial team led by Rachana compartmentalized the contents into nine *rasas*: *shringar, karuna, hasya, raudra, bhbhatya, veera, adbhuta, bhayankara and shanta,* elevating the reader into higher realms of feelings and emotions. It also captured the memories of the first convocation of IISER Pune, in which the 2006 and 2007 batch of students received their degrees with Sam Pitroda as Chief guest. The credit for the first PhD from the Institute went to V. Reshmi (Guide: G. Ambika). Documenting the recollections of the outgoing batch of students was a new feature added and since then has become a regular feature of every subsequent issue.

The editor of Kalpa 2014, Sharvaree made a nice comment in her editorial on the experience of making Kalpa – 'when obsession or pleasure ceases, the feelings of happiness and sad mingle into one'. This issue chronicled the theme of shades and beautiful illustrations in white, grey and black. It not only provided the 'time-reel' of life on campus, but also was a 'club-special', along with contributions as a mélange of 13 different languages, including French. All of them were provided with an abstract in English for monolingual readers. It also offered, for the first time, space for IISER Pune alumni, in addition to bidding farewell to the outgoing batch.

Kalpa 2015 edited by Harini and Lavanya, appetized the readers with contents organized by different dimensions of taste – sweet, bitter, sour, spicy and salty. This issue reported the inauguration of the IISER Pune campus by Shri Pranab Mukherji, Honorable President of India on 14th of June, 2014, culminating the four years of major campus building activity that began in April 2010. The President of India also delivered the 3rd convocation address of IISER Pune. There is an excellent interview with the distinguished physicist Prof Ashoke Sen, who shared his thoughts on string theory. This issue of Kalpa covers the various festivities of IISER Pune, with some stunning and highly expressive photographs. The pick of the photos is the giant Warli painting the size of a football ground, done by more than 400 students in a stretch of 11 hours, work that has now become part of the Limca Book of Records. Talking about tastes as the theme, the issue illustrated the cartoons of Sidharth Café, Balaji Bhel, Rolla Costa, and Kadhai, which are some of the inspirational joints for IISER Pune students!

The most recent issue of Kalpa 2016, a special one titled 'Dekada', carved on the completion of 10 years of birth of IISER Pune, is a collector's edition. It has one of the most beautiful, subtle covers depicting space as time visible in a different way (Kalpaterra), with an elegant golden border and title lettering. The editors, Divya and Mekhala, have scripted this edition with 'a pen in hand and a purpose in mind'. This issue, celebrating 10 years of IISER Pune, has passionate remembrances of early days by those faculty who really witnessed it: RG Bhat, G Ambika, AA Natu, LS Shashidhara and Mayurika



Lahiri. I walked down my memory lane on scripting IISER Pune of the past 10 years, when nothing has mattered to me except IISER Pune. The issue has conversation with distinguished physicist Prof Ajay Sood, who has been connected with IISER Pune for several years. Appropriately, this issue documents the beehive of activities that happen at IISER Pune – Science Day, Math Day, Convocation, Foundation Day, Disha, Freshers' party, the Science and Beyond lecture series, Spread the Smile, SPIC MACAY, Mimamsa, Pinkathon, IISM, IPL, IBL and Prutha. A notable feature is Prof Raghuram's participation in the release of the film on Ramanujan, 'The Man Who Knew Infinity' at Goa and his photos with some famous film personalities attending the event. This opportunity presented itself to him because of his own making of the film about Ramanujan produced by IISER Pune.

The initial editions of Kalpa also served as repositories of the institute's data of events, but this has now been shifted to Annual Reports. Each issue of Kalpa has group photographs of the BS-MS, Int-Phd and PhD students who joined during that year, and this is a great treasure of archives for the institute. The Kalpa train has treaded a pleasant journey during the last ten years, with several passengers contributing to the pleasure of travel. The student editors, along with their teams, have passionately engraved each issue with their own styles. Kalpa issues will become a golden treasure of the Institute as they have a pot-pourri of photographs (some very rare) that captured the essence of life at IISER Pune, and many of them carry impassioned memories for many of us who witnessed the formative growth. The faculties Gouri Ambika, Richa Ricky, and now Kaneenika Sinha have carefully mentored the Kalpa editorial teams over the years to unearth their hidden creative expressions to fully blossom. Kalpa, the inner voice of IISER Pune, is now an inseparable part of our history, integrated with the institute's tradition, and will be forever heard. Personally, I have adored each of the issues, with a silent feeling of pride of the talent of students at IISER Pune, and cannot wait to see Kalpa 2017.

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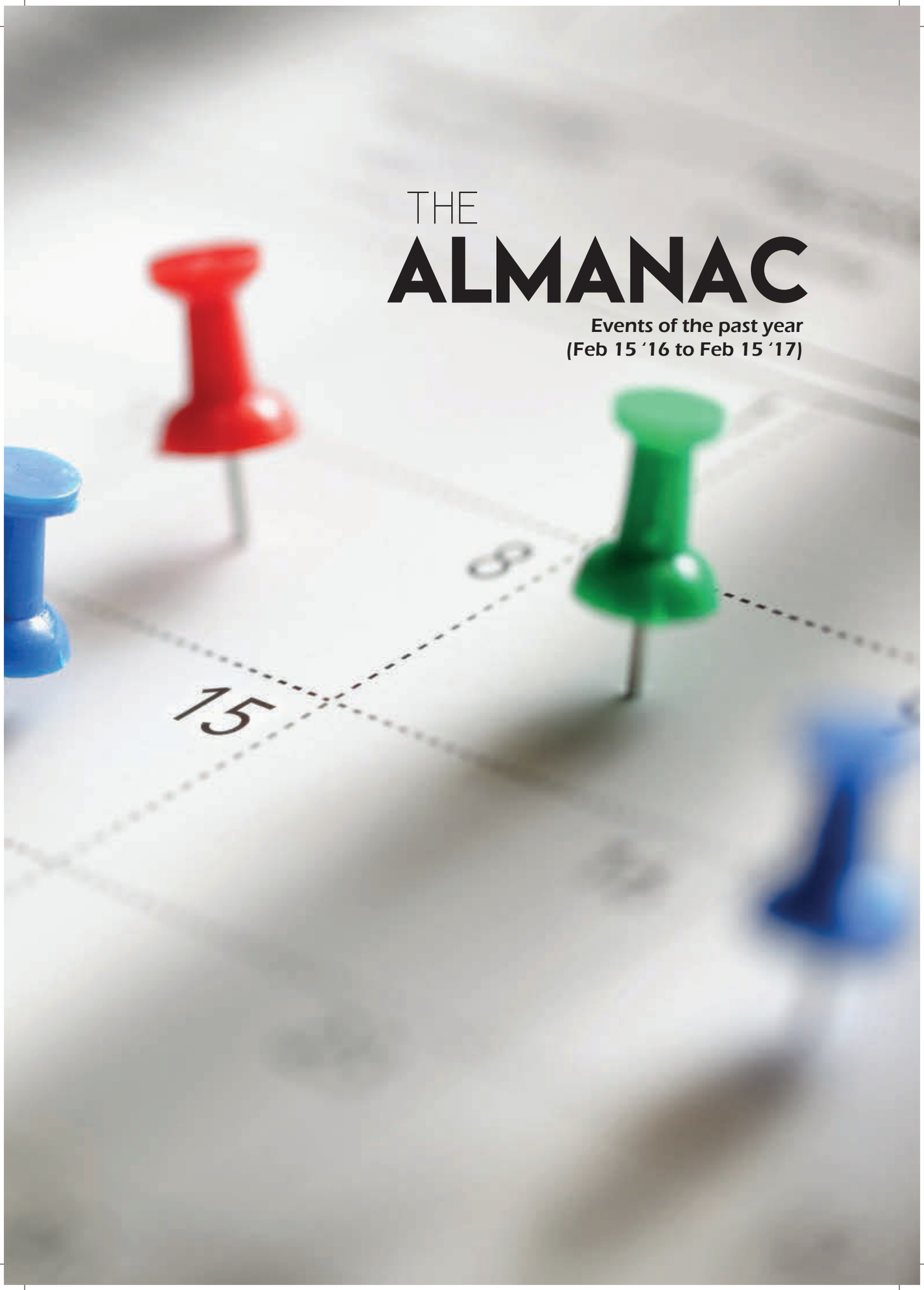


THE ALMANAC

Events of the past year
(Feb 15 '16 to Feb 15 '17)



DISHA 2016-17

–Reema Jamal

Disha has always been a channel for IISERites to reach out to the community they live in. We believe that we have a lot of learning to do beyond our lecture halls. This year, Disha was able to do that and more, with the help of our volunteers and other organisations that share similar values. On 17th of April 2016, we celebrated Disha Day to commemorate yet another year of our volunteers' efforts to take our programmes to higher levels. Volunteers shared their experiences of working with Disha. Dr Sudha Rajamani, Dr Nagaraj Balasubramanian, and Dr Sunil Mukhi lent their support, and rekindled our spirit. The evening was complete with a couple of performances by members of the Music Club and a sumptuous dinner prepared by the women's self-help group of Sanjay Gandhi Vasahat.

Disha, IISER Pune, and Bachpan Banao, a voluntary organisation working in the education sector in Chattisgarh came together to conduct the Jigyasa Science Camp from 21-24 July. Students from the Dantewada district of Chattisgarh were taken to the labs in the campus, Quest (a science centre in Aundh), and the Pimpri-Chinchwad Science Park. Students actively participated in the activities, including balloon car racing and liquid nitrogen experiments. Dr Anisa Chorwadwala did a 'Fun with Maths' session on the third day, followed by a physics experiment demonstration, and a movie screening. By the time the camp ended, the students had become emotional about leaving,

and so were the volunteers. We hoped to open a world of science up to them, and in doing so, we learned about their world too.

Our regular programmes have also been running parallel to our collaborations with other organisations. The Abhyasikas have been able to maintain a steady set of volunteers and regular classes. Our veterans decided that this was a good time to analyse the work that has been done and its impact. With this in mind, in April 2016, we started a survey of Sanjay Gandhi Vasahat ie where our Abhyasikas run. After setting survey questions, with the help of a large number of volunteers, we took to the streets. Most of the data showed that the community was open to the idea of primary and higher education, but was limited because of various reasons. When faced with the choice of sending the child to the market to sell papad for some much needed money versus sending her to school, the parent almost always chooses the former. A critical analysis and more data collection is yet to be done; we hope to do so over this year.

The Science Nurture Programme (SNP) took inspiration from the Jigyasa











Science Camp experience, and took their students to the Science Park as well. SNP classes are mostly within the walls of our lecture halls, so this outdoor session was a good way to break the pattern. The park's playground became a good site to learn physics while having fun. The screening of a 3D Science Movie was also a big hit among the students.

Disha has never shied away from reaching out to problems beyond that of education. This year we were



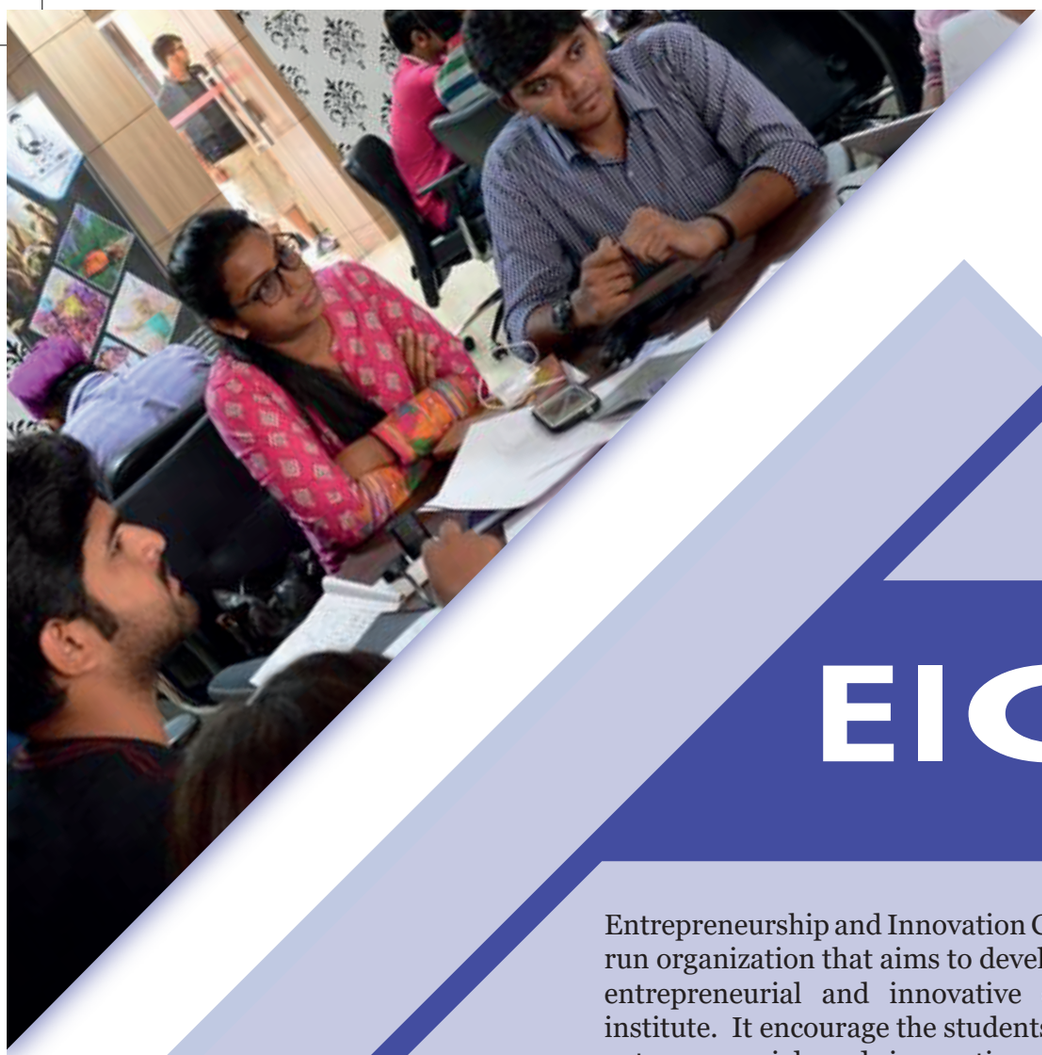


fortunate enough to work with NAAM on the matter of severe droughts in Maharashtra. 76 PhD students from IISER Pune, NCL, and SPPU helped NAAM with field work aimed at understanding the struggles of the farmers of drought hit villages of Maharashtra. We were also able to raise a good amount of money for NAAM, with the support of our fellow IISERites. With every year and every incoming batch of students, Disha hopes to remain a platform for our community to remain in touch with the difficult realities of the world we live in.



Photo Credits: The Disha team

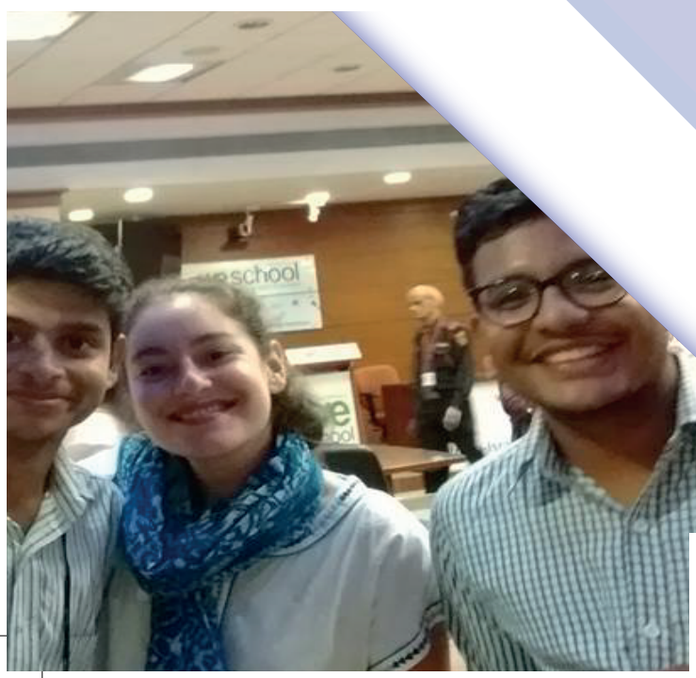




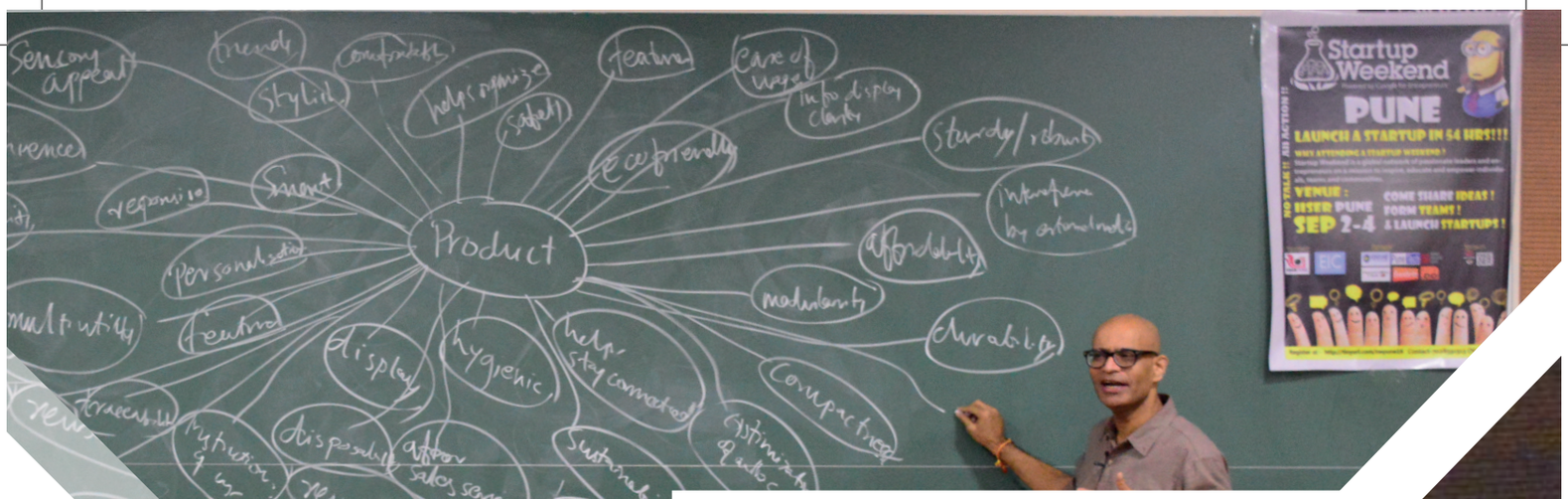


EIC

Entrepreneurship and Innovation Cell (EIC) is a student-run organization that aims to develop entrepreneurial and innovative environment in the institute. It encourage the students to take up entrepreneurial and innovative activities by raising awareness, creating a conducive environment for startups and innovators and by offering mentorship, guidance, seed funding and institutional support.



Med4Dev India-Israel Medical Hackathon



Startup Weekend with TechStars: In 54 hours, participants learnt how to create a real company. There were mentors, investors, co-founders, and sponsors, who helped the participants to get started.



Course on Innovation and Entrepreneurship: A three month course was launched in mid August for IISER students to understand the process of development of a business plan.



The team





MATH DAY

—Nikhil Gupta

This year, Math Day wasn't just a day but a whole week wherein mathematics touched hearts and put a smile on every face. With the tag line of 'Math day is coming...' a week-long series of events managed to excite minds and build up the anticipation for π-day on which the Math Day was celebrated.

Various Fun-with-math lectures like 'Game of rational players', 'Maths behind Chess puzzles', and 'Jugglology!' were held in the week preceding the Math Day. Posters-with-posers, Essay-writing competition, and Math Everywhere Photo contest were some of the contests during this week. Another was the essay/comic strip competition with innovative topics like life in a country that has banned primes, or one where light moved in spirals, or where the value of currency decreased exponentially.

A bust of the great Indian mathematician Harish-Chandra was unveiled on the day preceding the Math Day. This was followed by a Video Lecture by Prof Robert Langlands, IAS and a public lecture by Prof Raghuram titled, 'Glimpses into the work of Harish-Chandra'.

Finally, the Math Day commenced on the 12th of March with the unveiling of a math-themed mural to inaugurate the Math Museum, by Prof Raghunathan. An apple pie was cut to celebrate the pi(e) day and the departmental Math Booklet was released followed by a Tree-planting Ceremony by Prof Raghunathan.

From then onwards, the real fun began. The Lecture Hall Complex bustled with activity as the Kings, Queens, Knights, Squires and

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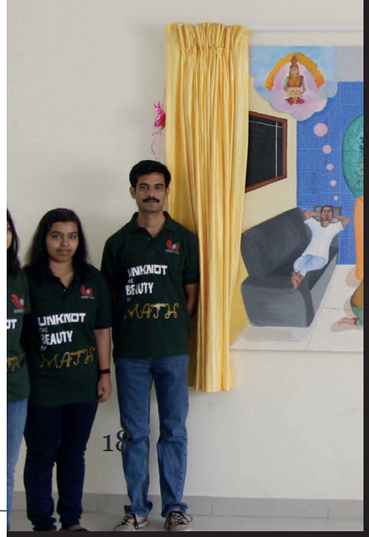
Girish K & Baskar B





Dames revealed the fun side of mathematics with the Game of Thrones themed math clubhouse. The Zome tools playroom gave the opportunity to put your skills at making wire-frame models to the test. What are four-dimensional cubes you ask? Well, you could see one here. Math Pictionary was loud and crowded and a perfect opportunity to bring out the artist in you while the mind boggling *Decode That!* left people silently scratching their heads puzzling over coded messages. Human Knot Theory was a game where students held hands knotting themselves into loops and then tried to unknot themselves.

The Room of Games was a perfect fusion of fun games and mathematics. The main attraction of the day was the World's Largest Hexaflexagon designed by IISERites. Rubik-mania saw cubers testing their speed with various platonic solid shaped Rubik puzzles and with the specially designed Game of Thrones cube. Pi-thon contest, Prime Number Bee (with the largest prime of the day reaching 433!), Math Quiz were some of the other events. Next up was a talk by Prof MS Raghunathan on 'Mathematics: Art that would rather be Science?'. After the talk, the winners of the events were announced. There was then an entertaining and informative lecture-demonstration by Prof Manish Jain of the Science Center at IUCAA.

The highlight of the evening was the Math Play 'Partition', based on the life of the great mathematician Dr S Ramanujan. Post dinner was the screening of a documentary, Ramanujan: The mathematician and his legacy, starring our very own Prof A Raghuram. And last but not the least, the cherry on the top, was the Math Treasure Hunt for mystery-lovers which began at midnight and went on till the wee hours of the morning.

Thus concluded Mathematics Day 2016. The math geeks among us of course had a great time while we hopefully managed to give at least some of those who have never liked math a new appreciation for the subject.





Groundwork

- Kumar Priyadarshi

Talking to friends is a luxury, especially if you are lucky enough to find the right ones. In one of my many Facebook conversations on the socio-economic and political status of this country on the global map and our contribution in the same, a friend of mine explained this to me:

'Facebook activism is a source of fake satisfaction, and a mere escapist attitude towards the problems that we are dealing with. Come out of it and try to do something on the ground, as small as it may be, rather posting intellectual status messages'

While scrolling through YouTube during the JNU issue, I came across an interview by Nana Patekar describing the seriousness of the problems in the drought-hit Marathwada region. Once I started reading in detail about this, I realized how severe the issue was, and although we were hardly a few hundred kilometres from the place, we were enjoying our life as if everything was normal.

Knowing that the drought had been declared way back in September 2015 and the situation over the past four years had been quite alarming, not much government aid was given to these areas. As I kept digging in more, and learning about the drastic situation in one of the most developed states of India, I realised that it was time to walk out of my study room and do something.

We did not get the kind of support we had anticipated, but it was still enough to start the initiative. Prasanth, Prachi and Abhijeet were a key part of all the meetings and decisions. We decided to contribute the money we raised to a recently established foundation called NAAM, whose authenticity was approved by the natives of the afflicted villages. When we delved into research, we came across various initiatives that NAAM had planned: distributing sewing machines to women, establishing schools for poor kids, spreading agriculture awareness to farmers, cleaning rivers to store rainwater, water harvesting and so on.

Thanks to IISERites, we collected ₹1,05,480 and donated the same to the NAAM foundation. In the future, we would like to visit these villages and see the situation, so that we can bring a change to thousands of lives.

It is time for us to see what challenges our society faces and what kind of betterment we can bring as we rise to overcome these challenges. If each one of us decides to help one needy person, I think our society would be a much better place to live in.

After the collection of funds, I replied to my friend,

'*Baat naa to samay ki hai, naa paise ki, baat naa to koshish ki hai naa sahyog ki, baat bus ye hai ki aap apne alawa aur kisi ke baare me sochte hai ya nhi*'





Taking the oath for Swachh Bharat Abhiyan before the Science Day celebrations.

SCIENCE DAY

- Sriram Raghunath

On the 28th of February, 2016, IISER Pune celebrated National Science Day to mark the discovery of the Raman Effect by the distinguished Indian scientist Sir CV Raman. The events of the day kicked off in the morning with the 2nd Linus Pauling Memorial Quiz conducted by the Quiz Club of IISER Pune. The participants, who were students from 8th to 12th standard, had to attempt a written preliminary round in order to qualify for the finals. The questions were based on an assortment of topics, from recent ones such as the Zika virus to Turing machines and even lightsabers. The finals consisted of innovative rounds such as 'Infinite bounce', 'What's wrong?' and 'Long Visual Connect', in the customary style of the Quiz Club. The team from Vikhe Patil Memorial School won the first prize by a wide margin. The second prize was awarded to the team from Dr Kalmadi Shamarao Junior College, and the third prize went to DPS Pune.

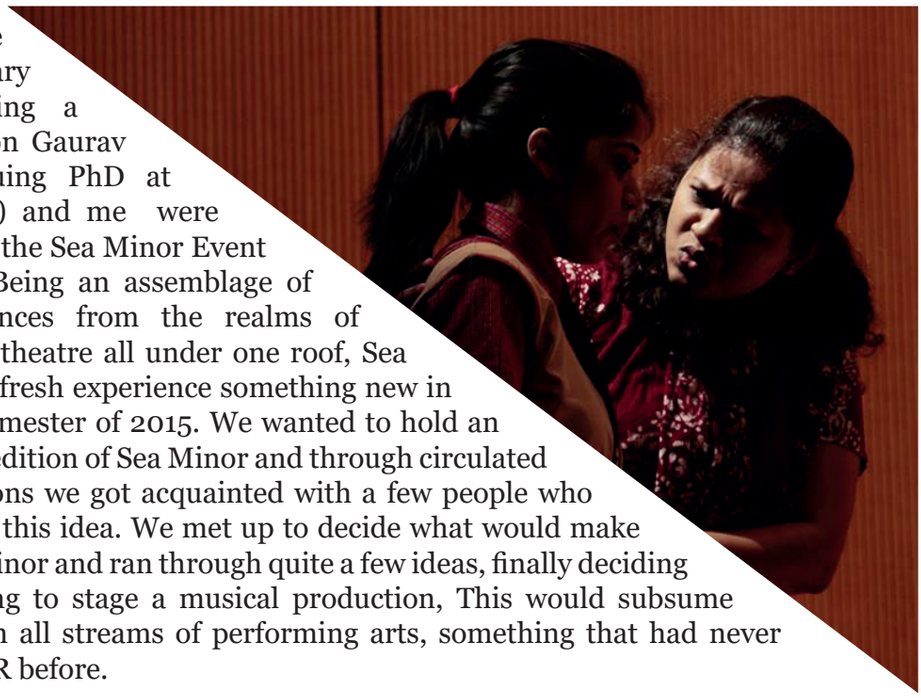
The afternoon saw a series of talks expanding on the role of basic science research in society, titled 'From Basic Science to Social Benefit'. The first speaker was Dr Chandrabhas Narayana from JNCASR Bengaluru. His talk was titled 'From Raman to Remedies' and he spoke about the Raman Effect and the applications of Raman spectroscopy to medical science. He also discussed his own research in which the high sensitivity of Raman Effect is put to use by utilizing Raman markers to identify and distinguish between different kinds of HIV viruses.

The next talk was by Dr Bhas Bapat of IISER Pune. He spoke on the topic 'From Microwaves to Mobiles'. In this talk, he detailed all the developments in physics that have made mobile phones possible. He wove a history of modern physics, and in the process threaded through the branches of electromagnetism, quantum mechanics and solid state physics. Without basic research in these fields, the mobile phone would not exist today.

Dr Nishad Matange spoke next on the topic 'From Darwin to Diabetes'. In this talk he described the contributions of evolutionary theory and genetics research in the development of commercially produced insulin. Scientists tried to insert the gene responsible for insulin production in humans into *E. coli*, a bacterium, and they succeeded in producing insulin in large quantities by using recombinant DNA technology. Starting with Gregor Mendel and Charles Darwin to Watson and Crick, there had been almost a century of scientific work behind this technological advancement that made cheap mass production of insulin a reality.

The next speaker on the list was Dr Jaikumar Radhakrishnan from TIFR Mumbai. In his talk 'From Primes to Privacy', he spoke about the applications of prime numbers. He explained the application of projective planes of prime order in communication technology to space the frequencies of a spectrum so that they do not interfere significantly. He then spoke about how prime numbers can be used for error correction. He finally discussed how prime numbers were used for erasure-coding which has become very relevant in today's age of cloud computing.

After the talks, the director Prof KN Ganesh asked us to take the oath for the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. He then expressed his gratitude to the speakers and congratulated them on their thought provoking lectures. The talks were a fitting end to a truly memorable science day.

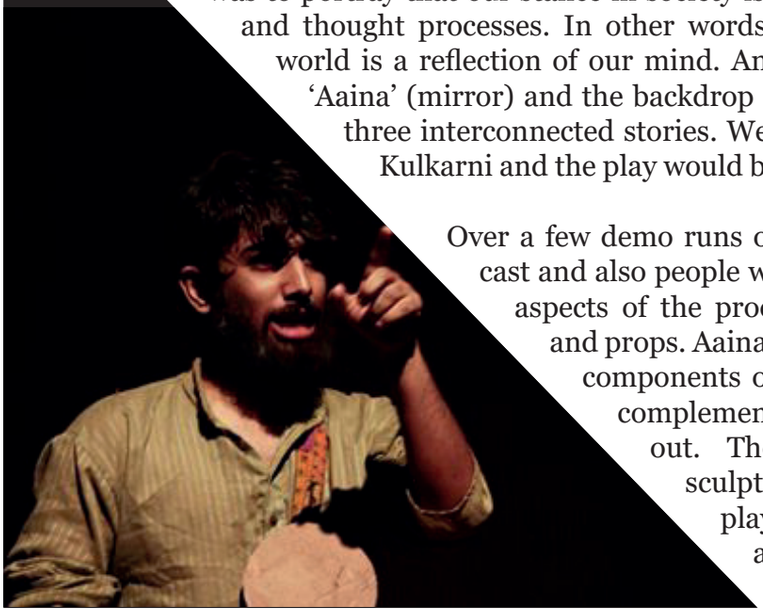


Sometime in the beginning of january 2016 while having a casual conversation Gaurav Isola (now pursuing PhD at McGill University) and me were reminiscing about the Sea Minor Event from last time. Being an assemblage of various performances from the realms of music, dance and theatre all under one roof, Sea Minor had been a fresh experience something new in the busy spring semester of 2015. We wanted to hold an ingenious second edition of Sea Minor and through circulated emails and auditions we got acquainted with a few people who were interested in this idea. We met up to decide what would make up this time Sea Minor and ran through quite a few ideas, finally deciding that we must bring to stage a musical production, This would subsume contributions from all streams of performing arts, something that had never been done in IISER before.

AAINA

A THEATRICAL PIECE

VRUSHALI RAO



Many ideas floated by for the theme that could relate to IISER's audience, could be portrayed through art and most importantly be practical enough to be done in the limited time we had. But the one that we decided to go forth with was a brain child of Sameer Thukral, Dinesh Bulani and Gaurav. The central idea was to portray that our stance in society is a manifestation of our beliefs and thought processes. In other words, what we see outside in the world is a reflection of our mind. And thus it was given the name 'Aaina' (mirror) and the backdrop of current social evils through three interconnected stories. We found our director in Amogh Kulkarni and the play would be scripted by Prabhat Prakash.

Over a few demo runs of lines we had our temporary cast and also people who would be involved in other aspects of the production such as lights, sound and props. Aaina being a musical had to involve components of live music and dance which complemented the scenes being played out. The entire choreography was sculpted by Dinesh Bulani, who also played a major role in the act. I, along with our producer Gaurav

took charge of the music and sound effects for the play. The songs of *Maati, Jhamura* from Coke studio were incorporated into the production as they were apt for the script.

Practice sessions used to start at 10 pm and go on until morning. Sometimes we used to lose track of time, but none of us really had an objection as we were enjoying the rehearsals and got to make new acquaintances. Finding time between academic stresses to attend the practices regularly certainly was a challenge but across a span of two months we made it! All components were in place including the costumes, props and we had finalised the date of performance to be towards end of April '16.

As a person who was a part of the cast as well as the audience, after watching the video I can affirm that Aaina turned out more beautiful than any of us had expected. The video recording of the play is available on YouTube. The lights and costumes gave it the final shine and created an impassioned atmosphere, as told by some of the people who witnessed the event. I am sure that like me, everybody is very proud of the performance that we put up as a team, and enjoyed every moment of the experience. My gratitude for every member of the production extends greatly for working sedulously towards weaving such piece of art.





Photo credits: Kajari Gupta



CONVOCATION 2016








IISER PUNE


ER PUNE











No longer just 12th pass

–Sharvaree Vadgama

'Do you have an extra pair of heels?', 'Why can't we wear western formals?', 'I am surely going to fall in saree!', 'Can you check if my saree is pinned properly?'
And a hundred more questions and suggestions could be heard, if you went by the eighth floor of girls hostel on the Convocation morning.

The rush of getting ready, double checking hat and robe, and clicking as many photos as possible. But honestly, none of us really wanted to rush. We were in no hurry to leave our campus after the amazing five years we had spent here. I was waiting in a queue for a final final check on my saree and to try to add more pins on it (as if that was possible!) and the clock was already ticking. While trying to recall all the instructions given during the Convocation rehearsal, I quickly tied my hair into a bun and headed towards the Lecture Hall Complex.

Adjusting my over-sized robe and aligning the yellow sash, I took my seat between two of my batchmates, registration number 20111048 and 20111050. Then began a long series of selfies. This was followed by parents entering the auditorium, anxiously looking for their proud baccalaureates.

Prof Raghuram, the head of Mathematics department, announced the arrival of the academic procession. The audience rose to the occasion. This procession, lead by the Director, comprised of some of IISER Pune's distinguished faculty and staff. After the procession took their respective seats, Prof Ambika, Dean of Graduate Studies, invited the Director, head of the procession, to declare IISERP's fifth annual convocation open. In his address, the Director mentioned IISERP's successful ten years of establishment. He also mentioned how IISERP had grown to be one of India's finest research institutions. With the success achieved by existing IISERs, new ones are planned to









come up. He then introduced Dr S Christopher, Secretary and Director of DRDO, who was the chief guest of the ceremony. Dr Christopher, in his speech, congratulated the faculty and staff for making IISERP one of leading research institutes in India. He also mentioned how the curriculum at IITs and IISERs are comparable to world class research institutes and that the science education in India is one of the best in the world. Along with showering praises on IISER, he motivated the graduating students with anecdotes from his earlier days at DRDO. He ended his speech congratulating all 70 BS-MS students and 11 PhD students who were graduating from IISER Pune.

I felt a sudden feeling of accomplishment, as I am sure most of us did, when it was announced that the degrees will be handed out in no time. To begin with, the PhD scholars were awarded their degrees, followed by the handing out of both the Bachelors and Masters of Science degrees to our batch of BS-MS students. The Director then urged us to take the *Swachh Bharat* pledge and with all the staff members, we took the oath as suggested by the Prime Minster of our country. We pledged to spend a few hours every week to keep our society and surroundings clean and also pledged to educate others about the same.

After the pledge, the Director announced the end of the convocation ceremony for the year of 2016 and we could wait no longer to get out of auditorium to go to the ground for our official photograph. We got a batch photograph with our convocation hats in the air as per tradition. The very same day we received an email from the Registrar asking to vacate the hostel rooms in two days; and we all knew our life would never be same again.



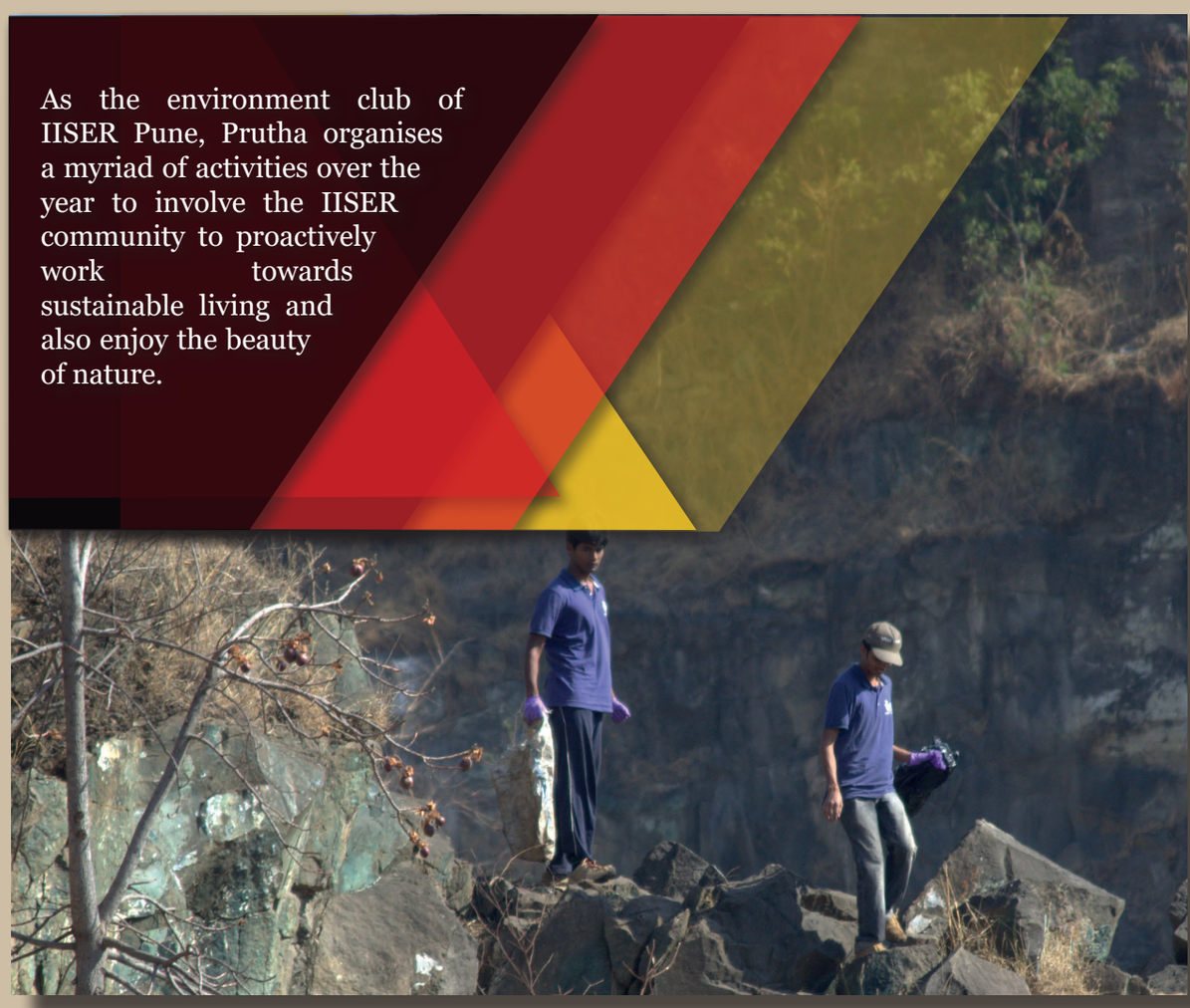


PRUTHA 2016-17



-BHARGAVI PARTHASARTHY

As the environment club of IISER Pune, Prutha organises a myriad of activities over the year to involve the IISER community to proactively work towards sustainable living and also enjoy the beauty of nature.





Paper sorting sessions

We've placed baskets at different parts on campus to collect the paper waste generated by the IISER family. We have regular sessions of paper sorting where we segregate the collected papers into piles of reusable and non-reusable. We give the non-reusable paper for recycling and reusable paper to Disha for their activities.



Plastic premiere league

A competition in which teams try to collect as much plastic as they can within a given number of days and the team which collects the most wins. This not only encourages people to segregate waste but also to save the plastic cups and wrappers that they otherwise would have thrown away. All the collected plastic is given for recycling.



Vastrasamman

Boxes were put up for collecting old, usable clothes for the month of March, 2016 and the collected clothes were donated to an NGO called 'Goodwill India'. This NGO collects used clothes and sells them to those in need at very low prices.

Campus clean up

We try to regularly organise clean-ups around campus. IISER students volunteer to make our campus cleaner by collecting plastic and other waste from different parts of the campus.

Bird-watching sessions

In the months of October and November, 2016, we organised bird-watching sessions. Students trekked to the Pashan hill armed with binoculars, early in the morning, to sight birds at the top of the hill. Following this, people were encouraged to help clean up the Pashan hill.

THE SEVEN SISTERS VISIT IISER PUNE

–Madhura J, with inputs from Apurva B

To bring selected school students from the North Eastern states of India in close contact with the best scientific institutes in the country, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has initiated the Ishan Vikas Shibir scheme. Under this programme, groups of students from class IX and XI visit various IISERs, IITs and NISER, in order to gain an exposure in science, research and life in academia. Prof AA Natu is IISER Pune's principal coordinator for the Ishan Vikas Shibir scheme.



As a part of this scheme, we played, for the fourth consecutive time, host to students from various north-eastern states in June and December 2016. Between the two batches, a total of about 80 students, from remote areas of Assam, Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh, accompanied by their teachers, spent around ten days at IISER Pune.

For most students, this was their first visit outside their home state. Some came from such remote areas that they had to travel for more than 24 hours to reach Pune from their home town, despite coming from Guwahati to Pune by air! A mix of interactive lectures and activities were planned to generate interest in science among the students, and for them to get a feel for both the campus and the city. There were talks by IISER faculty on a range of science subjects, computers and communication. The students were excited to be in the labs and thoroughly enjoyed the hands-on lab sessions. The December batch also practiced and gave demos of simple experiments to explain fundamental concepts like osmosis, Boyle's Law, etc. In addition, there were invited sessions by prominent scientists from NCL, as well as senior scientists like Dr Uma Shankar and Dr BD Chakradeo. Both batches had a short workshop on making science films, conducted by the Science Media Center at IISER. Weekends were reserved for outings to places like the PCMC Science museum, the Uttara School for Environment in Lonavala and the Joshi Railway museum. An evening of shopping and dinner outside campus was a much-looked-forward-to session to cap the weekend activities. The December batch also visited the campus of the Film and Television Institute of India, where they recorded a feature for the FTII Community Radio.

For both batches, we were fortunate to have Prof Jayant Narlikar, Founder-Director of IUCAA and a popular science communicator, who enthralled the students with his lucid explanations of arcane concepts in astronomy.

During these visits, a number of IISER Pune BS-MS students helped out as volunteers. From picking them up at the airport to showing them an insider view of the campus, the volunteers were with these students all along. The visitors quickly made friends with IISER students and could be found spending evenings in the music rooms or playing sports with the IISER fraternity. It was a memorable and enriching experience for both the organizing and volunteering teams.



Photo Credits: Avik Mukherjee



Photo Credits : Science Media Centre

SPIC MACAY

-VK Sirisha and Anwesha Maharana

SPIC MACAY, The Society for the Promotion of Indian Classical Music And Culture Amongst Youth, is an organisation that seeks to promote India's cultural heritage among the general public, especially the youth. SPIC MACAY at IISER Pune is a very active part of the SPIC MACAY Pune chapter and hosts a plethora of concerts and workshops for the various performing arts, public talks, heritage walks and movie screenings by eminent artists and maestros in their respective art-forms. The cultural journey of Fall 2016 began with the orientation program which featured a talk and musical demonstration on 'Introduction of Ragas in Indian Classical Music' by Dr Krishna B Athreya, Emeritus Professor, Department of Mathematics, Iowa University. He first provided us a pronounced exposure to the vast world of Indian classical and folk music. Starting from the major classical forms of Hindustani and Carnatic, he guided us to appreciate the origin of these classical music forms from our folk tunes. He spoke about the richness of our culture and inspired us to appreciate, pursue and preserve our heritage.The next event was the first concert of the semester, a magnificent evening of sitar recital by Smt Sahana Banerjee, one of the most outstanding and accomplished sitarist. She mesmerised the audience with her engaging and energetic performance and was requested for many encores.

Viraasat, was a two week long cultural extravaganza between September 26th and October 6th, 2016, featuring acclaimed artists from all over the country. We, IISERites welcomed the sculpture workshop, the first event of the gala. It was conducted by Shri Dinkar Thopte, a renowned sculpture artist hailing from old Pune, who takes interest in sharing his art form and inspiring young generation to carry it forward. The MDP Night canteen area in Dining Hall Complex was filled with people preparing clay, carving their designs, filling in Plaster of Paris into their mould. Once each step was completed Dinkarji

would meticulously instruct us to start the next along with a story about his experience. He shared with us the art of taking care of the subtle intricacies within the art form. Once the mould was ready, people were really excited to furnish marble powder and hardener along with some final ingredients to get the final model. The only thing that was more enjoyable than the sculptures themselves was the enthusiasm that was shown by the student and non student participants throughout the session.

The next event was an evening of concerts starting with a hindustani classical recital by Shri Sanjeev Abhyankar who left the audience spellbound with his deeply melodious voice. This was followed by a classical guitar concert by Smt Kamala Shankar who skillfully kept the audience's attention captured for more than an hour and a half and graced us a timeless performance.

After the trail of amazing concerts, it was time for another workshop, the Kathak workshop. It was conducted by Smt Rujuta Soman, a highly talented, graceful and a leading international Kathak dancer. Although trained by Guru Rohini Bhate of Lucknow *gharana*, she gave a glimpse of dance styles of Jaipur and Banaras *gharanas* as well. We started the first day of the four day long workshop, with footwork. She made us play numbering games which included reciting patterns of counting numbers, clapping and clicking accordingly. Wondering about the motive behind it, we realised she wanted to teach us to get a hold of the music beats and *taal* (tempo) and *laya* of the dance. We played another game in teams, of reciting *bol* (mnemonic syllables in Indian tradition) and composing *bols* of our own along with expression to tell a story. The next day we found it easy to perform the footwork, gestures and *nritta* (turns) in proper synchrony. She emphasized on the subtle intricacies like the sharp turn of head, clean finishing of steps and above all the beauty and grace in the motion. The next part was *nritya*, expressive aspect of Kathak. She choreographed an elegant piece depicting many birds and animals and this was a complete package of footwork and expression. Finally we were divided into groups and prepared a small dance piece combining everything we had learnt in the 3 days of the workshop. Although an art form takes years to master, she'd given us a glimpse of the vast, deep form of Kathak.



After the Kathak workshop, the Kathak concert was aptly planned. It was a mesmerising evening to watch Smt Rajashree Shirke along with Shri Aniruddha Shirke and Shri Shrirang Tembe. She is not only an exponent dancer, but also a researcher and academician in literature. She is living proof that for an artist, age remains just a number. She was as energetic and perhaps more graceful now than she was twenty ago. She brilliantly rendered recital of one of the oldest Indian classical dance forms. In each segment of the dance, she would explain the postures and story behind it. The *tatkars* (footwork sequences) were made more beautiful by the rapo between her *ghungroo* and the beats on tabla and pakhwaj. She explained to us different types of *bols* and performed elegantly some of them like *tora, tukra, parhant, paran*. Finally she presented a part of her literature research work from The Ramayana in the form of a dance drama.

SPIC MACAY, throughout the semester kept showing different aspects of our heritage and gave us an opportunity to get in touch with our underappreciated Indian arts.

Hakuna Matata

Our first semester at IISER began with several people trying the hostel life for the first time. Everybody took their time to adjust, but the cool seniors made sure nobody felt left out. In the first few days itself, they gave us their contact details in case we ever needed something.

Soon enough, they announced that our Freshers' Party would be on August 20. They divided the whole batch into fifteen teams, to put up performances from a list of topics decided by them. Preparations began a week before, but the real hard work was done at the very last moment, making me happy to realise everybody was as big a procrastinator as me. Every common space you could find in IISER was full of enthusiastic freshers in chaos and tension. However, when the D-Day arrived, everybody calmed down, hoping for the best.

The freshers' party, Hakuna Matata, had two parts: the programme in the morning and a DJ party at night. The first year's students showcased a variety of talents, such as drama, music, and dancing. The second year's students also set the stage on fire with their rocking performances and fun games. The highlight of the day was the video made by the seniors to introduce the freshers to life in IISER. We sang and danced till our legs gave way, after which we realised it was only 10pm! The party ended, leaving me thinking, "Is this how I'll spend the next five years? Sleeping at 10pm?" One semester down the line, I'm so happy to realise I couldn't be more wrong.









HINDI DIWAS

Keeping in tradition with the past years, Hindi Sabha, the IISER Pune hindi club, organized an evening of celebration on the occasion of Hindi Diwas on the 14th of September, 2016 at CV Raman Auditorium which is the most important event to be organized by the Hindi Sabha every year. But what made this year's programme special was the association of the famous urdu poet of current times, Waseem Barelvi, as our chief guest for the evening.

The evening began with a short introduction of our chief guest (who joined us through video conference) and distinguished guest Preyas Hathi, who anchored the session of *shayari* by our chief guest.

Shortly following the introductions, a devotional song was performed by students from second and third year of BS-MS programme and thus began the colourful revelry. Next was the session of poetry where students presented their works, not to forget our french language instructor Alexis Toussaint who found everybody dumbstruck with her knowledge of hindi beautifully penned down.

Following this, began the much awaited session of *shayari* by our chief guest. The auditorium lit up with cheer as applauds rolled one after the other as the wordplays, design and genius of the poet pierced the minds of the audience through and through.

The other half of the evening saw more music, dance and a drama reminiscent of old days spent listening to the static on radio. A cover of the *qawwali*, '*ye jo halka halka suroor hai*' by Ustad Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan was also performed. Prizes were distributed to the winners of competitions held previously and so, we reached the end with a vote of thanks.

The programme, which was first of its kind given the scale of organization, was a success coming out of collective efforts of a coordinated team, and the valuable and outstanding guidance of our faculty coordinator, Dr A Chorwadwala. It was an amazing experience for all. We hope to come up with better in future.

- Hindi Sabha





Photo Credits : Mayur Dhawale





KARAVAAN 2016

IISER Pune's much-awaited annual cultural fest, Karavaan with the theme 'Wonderland'—based on Lewis Carroll's popular works Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass—was a quirky blend of excitement and gravitas, with inspiration for various events taken from characters appearing throughout the books.

On the 4th of November last year, Karavaan kicked off with the first day of Showcase. Held at the C V Raman Auditorium inside the Lecture Hall Complex (LHC), the first day of the Showcase had a scintillating mix of classical and fusion music and dance performances, ranging from Bharatanatyam recitals to violin concertos. The previous year's organizing team was also felicitated on stage, to resounding applause.

Antakshari, and Malice in Wonderland, in which participants investigated a crime scene, interrogating witnesses and searching for clues to bring peace to Wonderland once again, were organised later that night.

The morning of the 5th of November saw numerous competitions and informal events set up in and

- Vruta Gupte



PRE-KARAVAAN

Leading up to Karavaan, various events were organized to acquaint everyone with the theme: Lewis Carroll's Wonderland, including a screening of Disney's animated musical Alice in Wonderland, the pre-Karavaan registration *mela*—to register for competitions taking place during Karavaan, a shared mp3 experiment, and a series of games that were part of *Adventures in Alice's Wonderland*.

A major event was *Alice in Murderland*, in which over 700 participants were given plastic knives with their victims' names. When a participant 'killed' their victim, they would take the victim's knife, and then set out to kill the person on their knife, and so on. In the end, the lone survivor, who collected everyone's knives, won.

Social initiatives included a clean-up drive at Sambhaji Park and JM Road, and a blood donation camp, which saw more than 500 donations.



around the LHC. In keeping with the theme, the iconic duo, Tweedledum and Tweedledee greeted visitors at the doors. A life-size chessboard adorned the floor, along with various other decorations—handcrafted by the students themselves—including an elaborately designed Rube Goldberg machine. Student-run food stalls were set up for participants and audiences alike, to eat their fill during breaks between events.

The prelims for Quiz-ire Cat, a quizzing event based on fantasy and fiction, were held in the morning, with the finals taking place in the afternoon. The BLAH-fest, wherein participants had to make up the weirdest of hypotheses to explain an everyday observation, was among the many competitions held during the two days of the festival.

‘A Snake’s Tale’, a talk by professional snake handler Mr Aditya Paranjape, shattered common myths about snakes and their behaviour, as he held the audience spellbound with various stories of his own encounters with these reptiles and the role they play in our environment. Listeners were allowed to handle the snakes as well.

The second half of Showcase, held at the cricket ground, comprised of dazzling group performances of dance and music. At the Neon DJ Party, DJ Namit enthralled the crowd with his foot-tapping originals and remixes. Various stalls selling neon props and and merchandise were set up.

The same night, six teams shortlisted from preliminary rounds competed in the Math Treasure Hunt, a mathematically magical journey through the mysteriously marvellous pathways of IISER.

On Sunday, 6th of November, the highlight of the day was *thesmallx*: A Mad Tea Party, held in the auditorium from 2pm to 5pm. Bringing seven







MUCHO GUSTO

- Jitesh Seth

Moving into a new city with new people can be very taxing. The newcomers have several inhibitions and doubts. Therefore the members of COSA and Karavaan decided to hold an anti ragging mixer, Mucho Gusto, as a pre-fresher event, to introduce the first year students to the seniors as well as each other. The event was held at the MDP night canteen on August 12, with several interactive games that helped break the ice. One of the most enjoyable sessions was the dance on the song 'Hello Hello Hello', in which everybody had to shake hands with everybody else, on the beat. The age old game of IISER was also played: that of distributing chits with different things on them, and to find the person with a matching chit as fast as possible. And of course, the party couldn't have been complete without dancing!

The second year students designed an anti -ragging logo to highlight IISER's strict policy against ragging. This logo was made into a sticker and was worn by the seniors to show their support for the same.

The event proved to be a great success, because it showed the juniors how welcoming their seniors are, and helped them settle down at IISER.

variegated fields together, this concourse sought to engage the audience in stories of wonder from the speakers' own lives, in an effort to emphasize the marvels of everyday mundanities.

Come evening, the main-stage was illuminated with kaleidoscopic arrays of floodlights, in anticipation for Karavaan's most awaited event—Pronite, presented by Coke Studio, and featuring Indian Ocean, the world-renowned folk rock band, and Murray Molloy, an Irish sword swallower and comedian from Spain. The Pune-based folk-rock/country music band After Acoustics opened for Indian Ocean.

In a refreshingly interactive and soul-stirring engagement, Indian Ocean presented a series of their most loved songs, including Tandanu, Kandisa, and a few tunes from the films Masaan and Black Friday. Their rendition of Ma Rewa saw the use of a somewhat unheard of instrument, called the *iktaara*.

After their riveting performance,



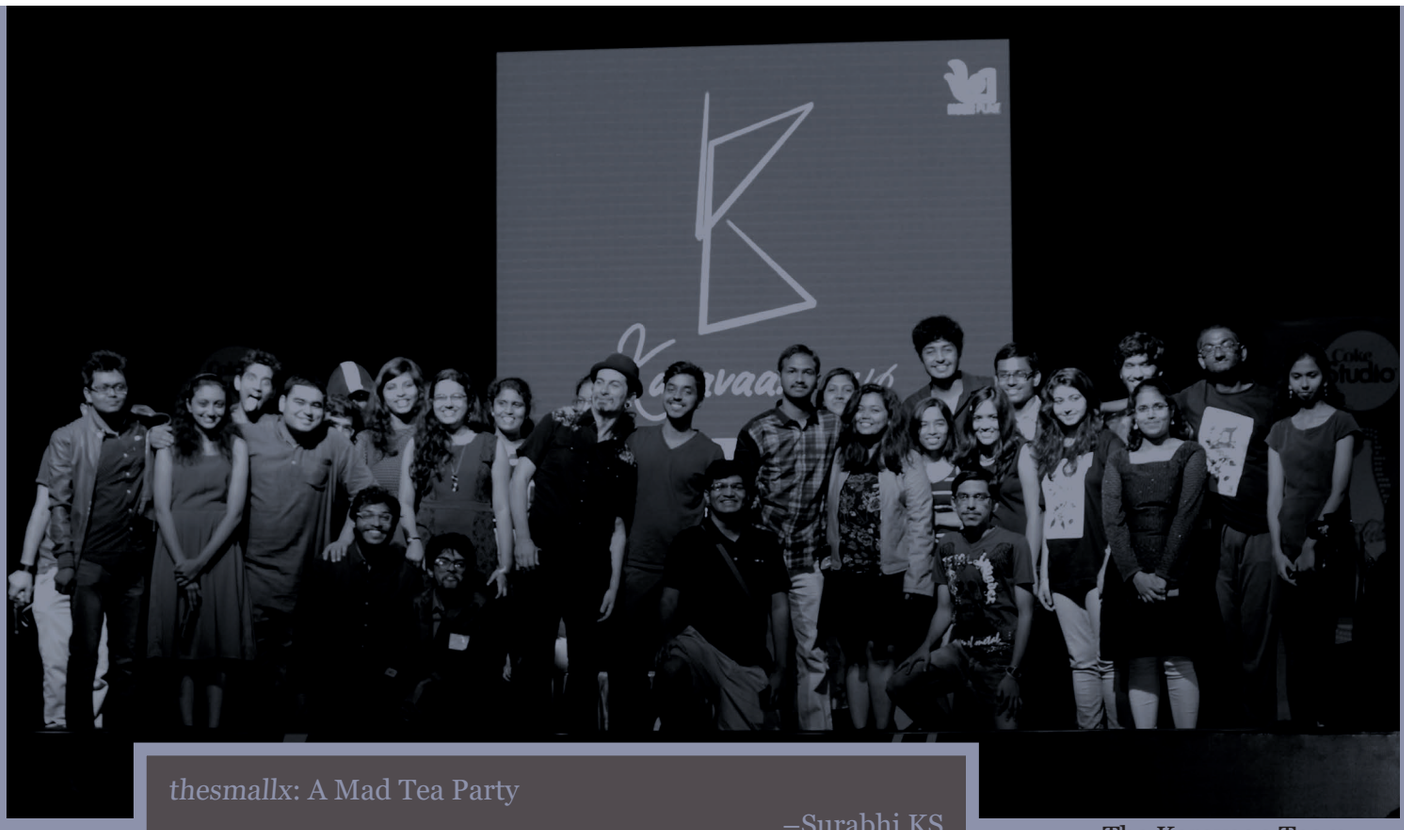




Murray Molloy presented his popular act, titled 'Born of Normal Parents', where he pushed his whole body through a toilet seat, and balanced a rod on a burning sword that he had swallowed—all while simultaneously charming the thousand-strong crowd with his sardonic wit and humour.

At the end of Molloy's show, Karavaan was wrapped up with a vote of thanks. The entire organizing team was called up on stage, and as the very last photograph was taken and pleasantries exchanged, everyone knew that these three days of breathtaking music, dance, competitions, games, and the numerous months of preparation that went into organizing such an amalgamate fest of science, art, and culture would remain etched in their memories forever.





The Karavaan Team

thesmallx: A Mad Tea Party

–Surabhi KS

This year's Karavaan witnessed a unique speakers' conclave. The event was unique in the sense that it comprised a diverse set of speakers whose talks were tied together by the theme, 'wonder'. Each of the speakers shared their perception of 'wonder' and its attributes to their life with a gripping talk in under twenty minutes. The list of speakers included Abhijeet Barse (Social Entrepreneur and Founder of Slumsoccer), Anand Gandhi (Filmmaker and Founder of India's first Virtual Reality Lab), Anil Zankar (Filmmaker and Film-writer), Mitali Panganti (Illustrator and Webcomic Artist), Prajakta Panshikar (Heritage Conservationist and Founder of 'Pune Heritage Walk'), and Sathish Narayanan (Designer and Entrepreneur). The event attracted a huge audience and was a prominent highlight of Karavaan '16.



Photo credits: The Karavaan Media Team



The great sitarist Vilayat Khan is believed to have once said that the job of a musician is to play a *raga* in such a way that within the first five minutes of the performance, the *raga* is present before the audience, almost as if it were a human, with its own charm, own scent, peculiarities, eccentricities and so on.

Indeed, Indian classical music is largely about this idea of *ragas* and *ragadari*. And an exposition of any *raga*, with or without *taal*, that seeks to flesh out the basic identity of it is called an *alaap*. The annual in-house Indian classical music concert was thus commenced in 2015 by erstwhile students of IISER [such as Harsha HR and Chaitra Agrahar] with the aim of presenting different Hindustani and Carnatic ragas before the audiences at IISER. The focal point was meant to be a slow tempo delineation of these *ragas*.

This year in November, we organized the 2nd edition of this kind, in the dance room of Hostel-II. Like last year, students from the BS-MS, Int PhD and PhD programmes performed from 7pm of November 11 to the wee hours of November 12 – this allowed us to cover the various *ragas* set aside for the different times of the day [though a few still escaped our purview].

This year, we had among the Hindustani vocalists, Avisikta, Arpith, Rishikesh and Farhan and new faces such as Neelay and Sailusha. Similarly, among Carnatic vocalists, we had Naren, Anuvind, Sriram and Abhishek and a new performer in Vibishan. The Hindustani flute was played by Mangesh, while the Carnatic one was played by Vishnu. Displaying his dexterity on the veena was Akshay Nair. We also had a number of accompanying artistes such as Wridhishom, Prasanna and Shridhar – all new inductees – on the tabla; Kapil and Sumeet on the harmonium, Harsha MB and Rushil on the mridangam and Arvind and Anuvind on the violin.
Two particular performances were especially noteworthy, even though every artist impressed the audience. The first was a new feature, a *lec-dem* on '*Kanada ke prakar*', started by a young vocalist of the Jaipur *gharana* and a faculty member in the Biology department, Nishad Matange. In this, Nishad himself, along with Neelay and Rutwik, both students in our Biology department, sought to present the different facets of the raganga Kanada – they began with a *dhrupad* in *'raga darbari' Kanada* and then each of these three sang individual compositions in the various derivatives of *Kanada* – *'nayaki' Kanada, 'abhogi' Kanada, 'kafi' Kanada,*

'hussaini' Kanada and so on. They concluded with a *chaturanga* in '*raga adana*' – *'hori hori hori khelata nandalal*' – a composition popularized by the late Veena Sahasrabuddhe.

The second was a very young child, Sai, who sang in both the Hindustani and Carnatic idioms of Indian Classical Music and concluded with the popular Marathi *bhakti-geet* – '*rama raghunandana*' – in the matutinal *raga* Bilaskhani Todi.

Endeavors such as this ensure that all of us have a learning experience – we all learn from each other and end up polishing our own skills. In a sense, this becomes a mini-conference of sorts. We hope to continue this beautiful tradition of in-house concerts at IISER and hope it grows richer and more diverse in the coming years.

In this context, it would be fitting to quote Rabindranath Tagore's mantra –

'Whatever we understand and enjoy in human products instantly becomes ours, wherever they might have their origin. Let me feel with unalloyed gladness that all the great glories of man are mine.'

–Farhan Amin and Kajari Gupta

[Photo Credits: Mayur Dhawale and Kapil Tirpuday]





IISM

Inter IISER Sports Meet 2016

Photo credits: IISER Kolkata

Inter IISER Sports Meet 2016

-Varun M

As the Fall semester drew to a close, there was an air of relaxation in IISER as the winter vacation was finally here. For the Inter IISER Sports Meet participants, however, these were the crucial final days of practice; the sort that could make the difference between gold and silver.

The contingent set out for the fifth edition of IISM on the 5th of December 2016. We arrived at the IISER Kolkata campus post-midnight, to see students of IISER Kolkata practising at this late, cold, foggy hour. We knew right away that they were going to give us a run for our money. Our spirits were undeterred nonetheless.

The other participating institutes - IISER Bhopal, IISER Mohali, IISER Thiruvananthapuram, IISER Tirupathi, NISER Bhubaneswar, CEBS Mumbai and the new addition IISER Berhampur arrived the following day. The meet was formally declared open on 8th, after the traditional torch relay, followed by a splendid march past display by the participating institutes. Prasanth Chandran led the IISER Pune contingent, securing us the 2nd position.

In Athletics, we finished 2nd overall with 5 gold, 6 silver and 4 bronze medals. The Badminton squad showed great resilience, earned hard-fought victories, and secured silver in all three categories- Men's doubles, Women's doubles and the Mixed doubles. In Men's Basketball, we entered the final undefeated. A close final eventually saw us lose 47-43 and win silver. The Women's Basketball team regained their title effortlessly beating Mohali in the final 33-20. We stayed unbeaten in the Chess tournament and won gold, successfully securing seven wins and one draw. In Cricket, after clearing the group stage, we performed under pressure in the semi-final, and in what was a nail-biting match, we won on the last ball! We secured silver in Cricket. Displaying an excellent performance in the group stage, we managed to enter the semi-final in Football, but despite our best efforts, we failed to qualify for the final. With the introduction of Women's Football to IISM, our team outplayed their opponents with calm composure and won gold by beating Kolkata. After dominating Kabaddi over the years, but suffering a loss and bagging a silver last year, we were determined to redeem ourselves. Thrashing one opponent after another, we regained the title displaying sheer supremacy. In Men's Table Tennis we beat the defending champions Mohali and made it to the final. However, we could not get past Kolkata in the final and won silver in the event. Although we failed to qualify for the final in Men's Lawn Tennis, impressive back to back performances led us to gold in the Women's Lawn Tennis. In Women's volleyball, we came back from a set down to beat Bhopal in the final to clinch gold.

The evening of 13th saw another IISM come to an end. Medals and trophies were given away in the closing ceremony. The collective effort of the athletes from every sport, their never-say-die attitude, and the willingness to give it their all, respecting the spirit of the sport propelled us to the top. We won the overall championship securing total points of 6880. This is the first time that an institute has won the IISM away from home. A commendable feat indeed! A crucial factor in our success was undoubtedly the ground support we created for ourselves. Our cheering energy was unmatched, and we made sure that in every sport, our participants were at ease, and made to feel at home. The seemingly ridiculous slogans were in fact real morale boosters!

Finally, we bid adieu to IISER Kolkata. The good times we had will be cherished for life. The success at IISM '16 leads to an even greater challenge, the challenge of defending the title at IISM '17. No institute has won two IISMs back-to-back. A tempting feat awaiting our conquest, surely? Game on.

VIJYOSHI

- Shambhavi S



The Vijyoshi-2016 team at IISc

After a long and arduous journey, nearly 20 students of IISER Pune reached IISc Bangalore on 2nd December 2016 to participate in Vijyoshi, the annual National Science Camp. Tired, we trudged along the sidewalks till we caught sight of the steaming hot lunch they were serving us. With the good food lifting everyone's spirits, the air was soon filled with friendly banter.

Over the three days of the camp we attended lectures on various topics ranging from 'String Theory and the Quest for Spacetime' to 'Active Matter matters'. We also attended a session titled 'Chemistry is Fun' where we learnt how chemistry can be used to explain seemingly magical tricks. We also got to go to various laboratories where we got to interact with various researchers and learn about their areas of interest.



On the second day, we set out to explore the campus. The sheer expanse of the campus left us in awe as we aimlessly wandered around, more often than not looping back to the same place. We also had the opportunity to witness a wonderful cultural programme put up by the students of IISc.

The program enriched our lives in various ways. We got the opportunity to interact with the professors and gain their invaluable inputs on various aspects of science. We also got to know what a career in science entitles. Apart from this we got the opportunity to forge new friendships and make new memories.



SCIENCE MEDIA CENTRE

-Zakhiya PC

Audio-visual media is an integral component of science communication. IISER Pune has established a Science Media Centre (SMC), with an aim of producing high quality media for science, scientific research, as well as science popularization. Another objective of the SMC is human resource development in the field of science communication. As a part of SMC activities, regular workshops are conducted for IISER students, training personnel, and even selected people from outside IISER. SMC also serves as an archive of activities of the institute.

The SMC was a vision of Dr L S Shashidhara, and saw an immense development under Mr. Vivek Kannadi (who joined it last year), with Yashodeep Matange and Parameshwar Singh Yadhav being there to help him. The activities that have been organized since include the workshop conducted in the summer of 2016, which was made worthwhile by the presence of people like Sudesh Balan from film faculty, IDC, IIT Bombay, and T V Venkateswaran from Vigyan Prasar, DST. The participants were given training on how to operate video cameras, audio recorders and still cameras; and also in script writing, dialogue writing, cinematography, etc.



Photo credits: Wridhdhisom Karar

The current focus is on video production. The first among the cancer research video series is out already. A short documentary on undernutrition based on Dr Sanjeev Galande's research, called 'Nature, Nurture and Culture', has also been released. This documentary has been shortlisted for the 7th National Science Film Festival and Competition 2017, under Ministry of Culture, Government of India.
The centre provides high quality facilities and equipment worth around 1.5 crores, all open to the students. It may be the first of its kind in a non-Mass Media Institute.

ART BAZAAR 2017

















Photo credits: Anwesh Bhattacharya



The experience I had was very unique. I have taught kids before, but teaching students from your own school is not at all the same as teaching students in village schools. Their enthusiasm is so much that you can't help but feel the same. The children from the village I went to were so competitive and energetic that conducting their games was a very fun time for all of us. One girl asked me, 'what do you get out of this' which had a very deep impact on me. Not only because of her innocence or her disbelief that anybody would be doing this without personal gain, but also because of the realization that the satisfaction you get out of it is the real gain. When you stay in an atmosphere completely different than your own, you get a hundred thousand reasons to complain, but when the children tell you to stay on a bit longer, to come again and get upset when they find out that you won't, it will make you forget all those reasons and want to come a hundred times, just to 'Spread the Smile' again!

- Sharvani Shintre



I thought that 'Spread the Smile' would be the same as abhyasika (regular weekday program run in the surrounding vastis), but the package was full of surprises. I was really overwhelmed by the response our team got. 70-80 kids in all three sessions! We succeeded in keeping them engaged and building interest about science. The villagers were also helpful and supportive. We really had an awesome Spread the Smile. Best part was when the kids requested us to come back for the next weekend of STS. I would definitely like to participate in more such activities. I wish we could have such programs each semester. It all started with a smile and ended with making it broader.

- Akash Chavan



I registered my name for Spread the Smile because all of my friends were going on at least one weekend and I thought I shouldn't be left out. Also I thought I might know the experiments better than some of the other volunteers as I was a part of the resource team which prepared the experiments for Spread the Smile. Now, after going for the last weekend, I think I made a mistake of not going for every weekend. Most of my experience is the same as others; enthusiastic kids, great hospitality, sixth graders enthusiastically watching experiments meant for older students, lack of icebreakers, wonderful sky-gazing session, drowsy journey, friendly staff, scenic beauty, dirty toilets etc. I thank Disha for making this program available and for giving us an opportunity to spread the smile.

– Hitesh Wankhede



Photo credits : qenyiudsh

StS '17 was one of the best experiences I've ever had because I had a great time with the kids as well as an awesome day in the village experiencing the life. I had a lot of fun when we were demonstrating experiments. Everyone were really enthused to take part in the activities as well as to know the scientific principle involved. The villagers were really hospitable and even the kids were really interactive even though I didn't know Marathi. They were actually trying to make me comfortable. The awesome homemade food by the villagers, the sky-watching sessions and the morning walks were added perks of STS.

-Akhila Mudunuri






IISER PUNE
IPL-2K-17
IISER
PREMIER LEAGUE
CHAMPIONS
2017







Photo Credits : Mayur Dhawale


IFL'17











Photo Credits :Mayur Dhawale

A glimpse of the work done by IISER Pune students during the summer of 2016

'And so with the sunshine and the great bursts of leaves growing on the trees, just as things grow in fast movies, I had that familiar conviction that life was beginning over again with the summer.'
–F. Scott Fitzgerald, The Great Gatsby

Aditya Kabra - BS-MS 3rd year
Sameer Honwad | **Agriculture Knowledge Transfer Among The Farmers Of Maharashtra**

Siddhesh Zadey - BS-MS 3rd year
Edward Hubbard - UW-Madison
Multisensory integration and substitution

Sayan Sarkar - BS-MS 2nd year
Debargha Banerjee - IISER Pune
Irreducible Representations, Frobenius Reciprocity and Mackey Criterion

Mayank Goyal - BS-MS 2nd year
Sulabha Kulkarni - IISER Pune
Localized Surface Plasmon Resonance in Anisotropic Nanoparticles

Shreeya Behera - BS-MS 3rd year
Anna Marciniak-Czochra - University of Heidelberg
Modelling of Feedback Mechanism of Acute Leukemic Cell

Swastik Mishra - BS-MS 2nd year
Richa Rikhy - IISER Pune
Evaluation of Calcium Regulation by Mitochondria in Neuroblast Differentiation of *D. melanogaster*

Vaibhav Vijay Ingale - BS-MS 2nd year
Bhal Chandra Joshi - National Center of Radio Astrophysics (NCRA-TIFR), Pune
Pulsating Neutron Stars Astronomy

Basila M A - BS-MS 2nd year
Kanchan Garai - TIFR Center for Interdisciplinary Sciences
Understanding Domain - Domain Interaction in lipoproteinE Isoforms

Mahendra Patel - BS-MS 1st year
Rajarshi Chakrabarti - Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay
Counteraction of Urea Induced Denaturation of S-peptide by Ammonium Based Ionic Liquid

Nazia V - BS-MS 1st year
Steven Spallone - IISER Pune
Set theory

Faseela E E - BS-MS 3rd year
Mayurika Lahiri - IISER Pune
Cloning of shApi5 into an inducible vector system

Haritha S Rajeev - BS-MS 2nd year
P. S. Anil Kumar - IISc Bangalore
Structural and Magnetic properties of Cubic Spinel Oxide Systems

Durga M Parkhi - BS-MS 2nd year
Pranay Goel - IISER Pune
Meal Simulation Model of the Glucose - Insulin System

Raghuram H V - BS-MS 2nd year
K R Prabhu - Indian Institute of Science
Synthesis of Derivatives of Salicylic Acid and Indole-3-Carboxylic Acids

Shubham Sohanlal Chhajed - BS-MS 3rd year
Lisa Donovan - University of Georgia
Physiological responses to low nutrient stress in cultivated sunflowers

Abhishek Das - BS-MS 3rd year
Jerome Solon - Centre for Genomic Regulation, Barcelona
Imaging and quantification of the mitotic compaction limit during *Drosophila* embryogenesis

Prachi Shinde - BS-MS 3rd year
Krishanpal Karmodiya - IISER Pune
Characterization of Histone deacetylase PfHDA1 from *Plasmodium falciparum*.

Raghavendra - BS-MS 1st year
Manikandan Paranjothy - IIT, Jodhpur
Electronic structure theory and classical chemical dynamics simulations

Shraddha Lall - BS-MS 2nd year
Sheeba Vasu - JNCASR, Bengaluru
Effect of Sleep Deprivation due to Mechanical Perturbation on Reproductive Output in *Drosophila melanogaster*

Ashwin Gopal - BS-MS 1st year
Arnab Mukherjee - IISER Pune
Theoretical Work on Blactamase and drug interactions

Sruthy J Das - BS-MS 2nd year
Basanta Kumar Nandi - IIT, Bombay
Study of Pseudorapidity distribution of charged Pions and Kaons at 200 GeV using AMPT event Generator

Bhargavi Parthasarathy - BS-MS 2nd year
Shanta Laishram - ISI, Delhi
Primitive Roots and Quadratic Reciprocity

Yogesh Mahor - BS-MS 2nd year
Vaidhyanathan R. - IISER Pune
Porous materials for catalysis

Amruta Priyadarshini Nayak - BS-MS 3rd year
Manish Patankar - University of Wisconsin-Madison
Repurposing drugs obtained from natural sources and drugs already in use for different diseases for treatment of ovarian cancer

Dilip V - BS-MS 2nd year
Neena M. Joseph - IISER Pune
Indian Monsoon Systems

Manish Kumar - Integrated PhD
Emeritus Prof C. R. Babu, Vijay Kuma - University Of Delhi
Amelioration of Air Quality in Urban Ecosystem of Delhi: Role Of Avenue Trees, and Use of Birds as Biomonitors

Sandeep Joy - BS-MS 2nd year
Kalobaran Maiti - TIFR, Mumbai
Electronic Structure Calculation of IrO_2

Umesh KP - BS-MS 1st year
Deepak Barua - IISER Pune
Interspecific variation of Stomatal traits and its habitat significance.

Bharath Krishnan - BS-MS 3rd year
Juergen Kurths - PIK, Potsdam
Synchronisation in neuronal networks

Spandan Choudhury - BS-MS 3rd year
Thushara Pillai, and Karl M Menten - MPI for Radio Astronomy
Molecular Line Observations of High-Mass Star Forming Regionsand Indole-3-Carboxylic Acids

Lokesh Tayade - BS-MS 2nd year
R K Shyamasundar - IIT Bombay
Mathematical modelling and Defending against Internet Worm Attacks.

Anwesh Bhattacharya - BS-MS 2nd year
Anwesh Mazumdar -
HBCSE (TIFR), Mumbai
Asteroseismology of Red Giant Stars

Nikhil Gupta - BS-MS 1st year
Supriya Pisolkar - IISER Pune
Group Theory

Prashant Uniyal - BS-MS 3rd year
Sharmila S. Mande - TCS - TRDDC, Pune
Analysis of Metagenomics Time Series Data using Dynamic Time Warping with insights from Network Analysis and Bayesian Modelling

Prathamesh Datar - BS-MS 3rd year
Thomas Ludwig - Ohio State University
Obtaining cancer cell lines resistant to chemotherapeutic drugs in vitro

Rahul Biradar - BS-MS 3rd year
Nagaraj Balasubramanian - IISER Pune
Role of Fibulin1 protein in different cancer cells

V P Gokul - BS-MS 3rd year
Vijay K Sharma - JNCASR
Correlation of phase of emergence of fruit flies *Drosophila melanogaster* with circadian clock properties and desiccation resistance

Yash Joshi - BS-MS 1st year
M.S. Santhanam - IISER Pune
Quantum mechanics



Artwork by: Shubhalaxmi Mukherjee



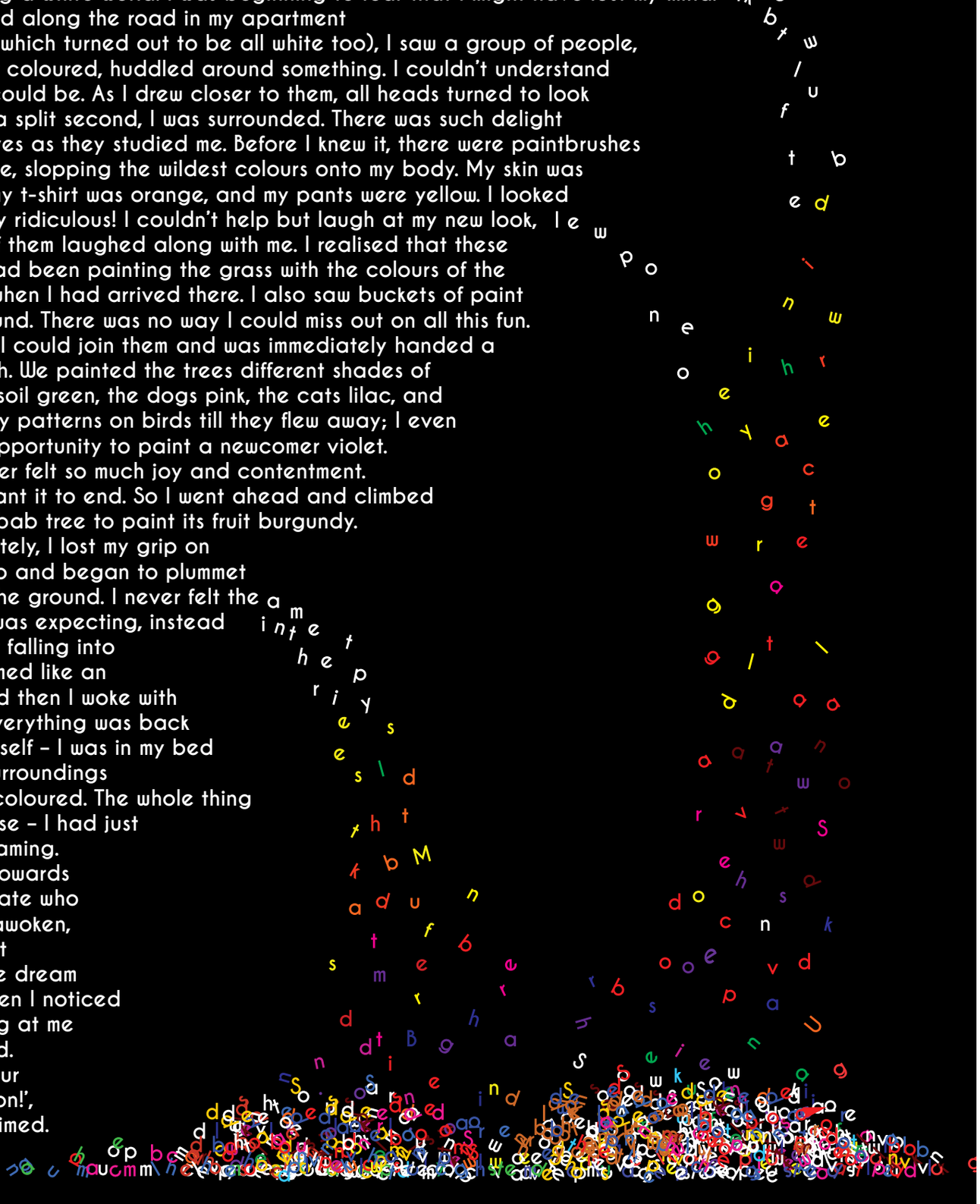
COMMUNITY

SECTION

Festek

—Maxin

I woke up to find that everything around me was bright. So bright that it was blinding. On opening my eyes completely, I realised that it wasn't just bright, but everything was white! There was no colour at all. It was absurd. And I was white too!
I got out of bed and began to walk around, only to bump into something every few steps. *This is going to be a task*, I thought. I decided to go out of my apartment to see whether the colour had disappeared everywhere, and also to ensure that I wasn't the only one seeing a white world. I was beginning to fear that I might have lost my mind.
As I walked along the road in my apartment complex (which turned out to be all white too), I saw a group of people, all vividly coloured, huddled around something. I couldn't understand how this could be. As I drew closer to them, all heads turned to look at me. In a split second, I was surrounded. There was such delight in their eyes as they studied me. Before I knew it, there were paintbrushes all over me, slopping the wildest colours onto my body. My skin was crimson, my t-shirt was orange, and my pants were yellow. I looked absolutely ridiculous! I couldn't help but laugh at my new look, and all of them laughed along with me. I realised that these people had been painting the grass with the colours of the rainbow when I had arrived there. I also saw buckets of paint lying around. There was no way I could miss out on all this fun.
I asked if I could join them and was immediately handed a paintbrush. We painted the trees different shades of blue, the soil green, the dogs pink, the cats lilac, and drew funny patterns on birds till they flew away; I even got the opportunity to paint a newcomer violet.
I had never felt so much joy and contentment.
I didn't want it to end. So I went ahead and climbed up a Baobab tree to paint its fruit burgundy.
Unfortunately, I lost my grip on my way up and began to plummet towards the ground. I never felt the impact I was expecting, instead I just kept falling into what seemed like an abyss. And then I woke with a start. Everything was back to its old self – I was in my bed with my surroundings normally coloured. The whole thing made sense – I had just been dreaming.
I looked towards my roommate who had just awoken, to recount my bizarre dream to her, when I noticed her staring at me wide-eyed.
'Why is your skin crimson!', she exclaimed.



Oidhche mheath

-Shreya Lakhera

Lazy mornings
Hazy nights
As the lights go off
It's a world of delight
Tired, pressured
Work switches off
Off with thoughts
Reason scoffs
Dreams come flying
The world sifts through
Transient beauty
Softened hues
Slip into a daze
As she enchants you
Numbs you, she's fickle
Abandons you at rise
Leaving behind the ghost of a touch
A tender memory
Of could-have-been's
As you struggle
To leave the warmth behind
She pulls you back
Lulls you into her embrace
Desperate, demanding
She lets you go not
She whispers, mumbles
Promises makes
Unkept which remain
What a cruel mistress you are,
Oh beautiful Sleep!

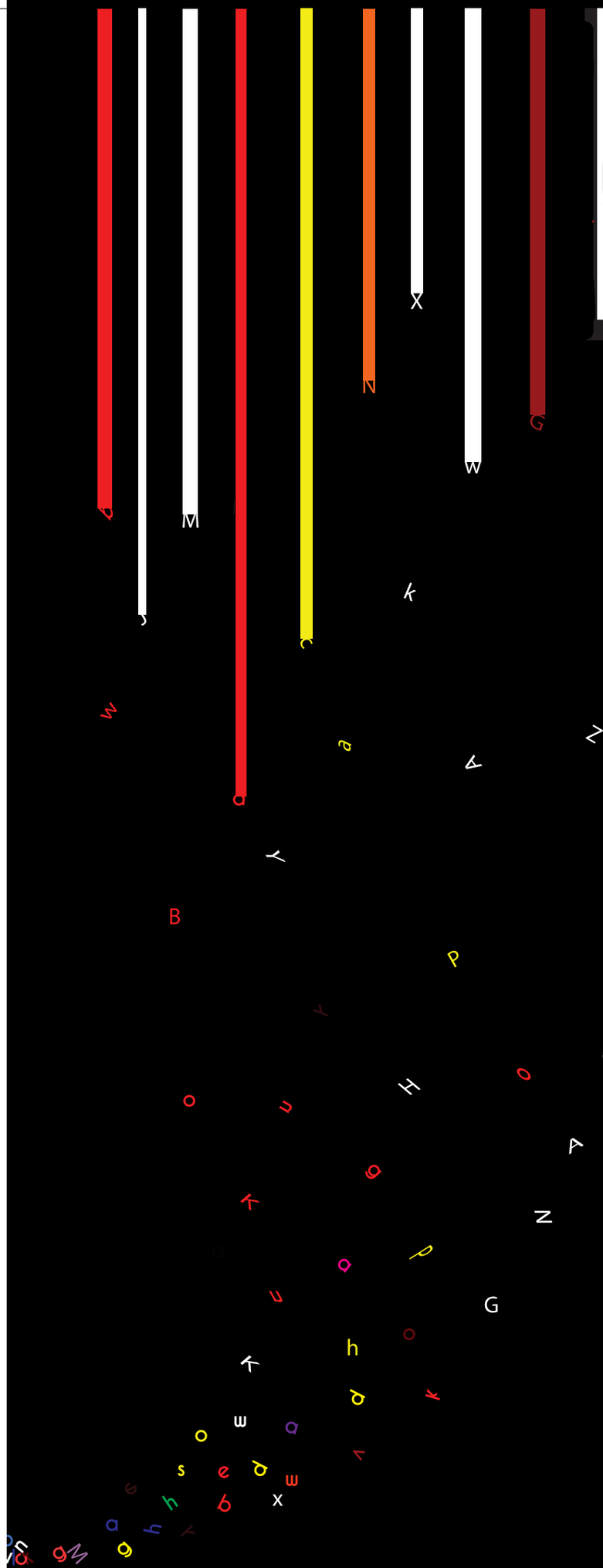
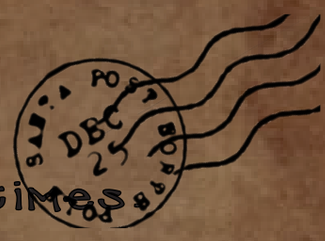


Illustration by : Adithyan P

I wish I were a pebble, sometimes



Estuary the Eleventh, 2017
3:15 pm

Dear Mum,

Hi. You won't believe how long it has taken for this pen to touch this paper after the thoughts materialized. I have been sitting on the staircase in the isolated middle parking lot behind LHC pretending to read, 'The Principles of Biological Understatements' by Dudin. In reality, I have been trying to get over my crippling fatigue to move and, needing to cease to exist, throw up the overly sweet ginger tea I had about an hour ago. It truly is a pity that I've lost my appetite for even tea. Right now, I just wish someone or something would carry me over to the hostel and deposit me on the bed.

A river bed, maybe. How easy would it be to live as a pebble in a river? You just lie there and do nothing or let the water take you along. It's so simple. How much easier it would be to simply not exist.

I'm questioning everything these days? Ha. Look at that unintentional '?'. Do I really want to be in Science? Do I really want to be 13 on the 13th? Do I really want to be? Do I really have to go to the Divination class from 1-3 pm today? I didn't want to. I sent the teacup I had borrowed from Parvati with Harry because I didn't want to go if there was no attendance. If there was, I asked him to give me a missed call so I could go.

But was I recovering? I really don't know. But something changed and I felt different at that moment. I started combing my hair and lazily walking towards LHC and went and sat in the class about 5 minutes late. I was paying attention, I was not paying attention, I was writing notes.

All this time, whenever I was hitting a new low and thinking life couldn't be worse, I never considered that it couldn't be anything if I was lifeless. I really want to be a pebble. Oh, and I'm also thinking this would make a nice Kalpa article after I make a few changes and make it anonymous.

If I'm thinking all this, am I really recovering? I want to be. But the anxiety is evoked by the status of future. I don't want to do anything. I just want to lie on my bed all day, but I'm also fighting it. I just want to be like a pebble. Of course, my bed is more comfy than a riverbed, but still.

Ok, now my fingers are aching, my right foot feels numb, and I've stopped crying. I better go back to my room.

Bye.
Pebble Wannabe

Tidy trickles

- Eilen

Shouting round the clock,
Working all around the block.
She made her way down the roads,
Smirking at the big billboards.
'Hey!', she said, to the one on the right,
And took in the beautiful sight.

The sun shone brightly bringing her to smile.
Making her forget the apple-laden basket for a while.
'Oh! Such a wonderful spring.', said the customer next to her.
She obliged and passed a bunch of apples onto her.
With a hop here and there,
She strode ahead with her head held fair.

She made her way across the grasslands,
Singing along with the marching bands
That sang, 'We owe this freedom to you, my Lord'.
She questioned that, stood her ground, and pulled out her sword.
For she conquered the place with just a smile,
And of course, her poisoned apples vile.



Illustration by : Swastik Mishra

हे भारतमाते

-अनिरुद्ध देशपांडे
(Aniruddha Deshpande)

अतिरेक्यांच्या न्यायासाठी,
आज हा देश लढ़तो आहे,
माफ कर भारत माते,
आज विद्रोह तुझा होतो आहे ।

फुकटच्या ह्या स्वातंत्र्याने,
लोक आता माजले आहेत,
काहींच्या मनात तर आता,
देशद्रोहाचे विचार घोळत आहेत ।

सियाचिनच्या बर्फामध्ये,
अनेक अहमद लढ़त आहेत,
आपले नेते मात्र तिकडे,
बुड खाजवत बसले आहेत ।

माते तुझ्या गर्भामधुनी,
कित्येक आले आणि कित्येक गेले,
पण मातृभूमीस प्राण देउनी,
ते हुतात्मे धन्य झाले ।



Illustration by: Swastik Mishra

रात और बात

- यशवंत कुमार
(Yashwant Kumar)



रात के इस पल में, आँखों में आज नींद नहीं है ?

आँखे तो छत पर टिकी हैं,
पर ज़ेहन में ख़यालों की उड़ान दूर सितारों के बीच तक पहुँच गयी है।

मद्धम साँसों की भी शायद कोई भाषा है,
जिसने धड़कनों को दिल की गहराईयों तक पाटा है ।

इन झींगुरों की आवाज़ सुनो,
कटती पिटती ज़िन्दगी शायद ऐसे ही शोर के साथ घिसती है ।

बचपन में लगता था की ये आवाज़ें सितारों से आती हैं,
जो शाम चढ़े आती हैं, और सुबह होते हे चली जाती हैं ।

वक़्त बदल गया, हालात बदल गए और अब इन झींगुरो की आवाज शोर लगती है,
तारों की टिमटिमाहट को जैसे जवानी की भागम -भाग ने गुंगा कर दिया हो ।

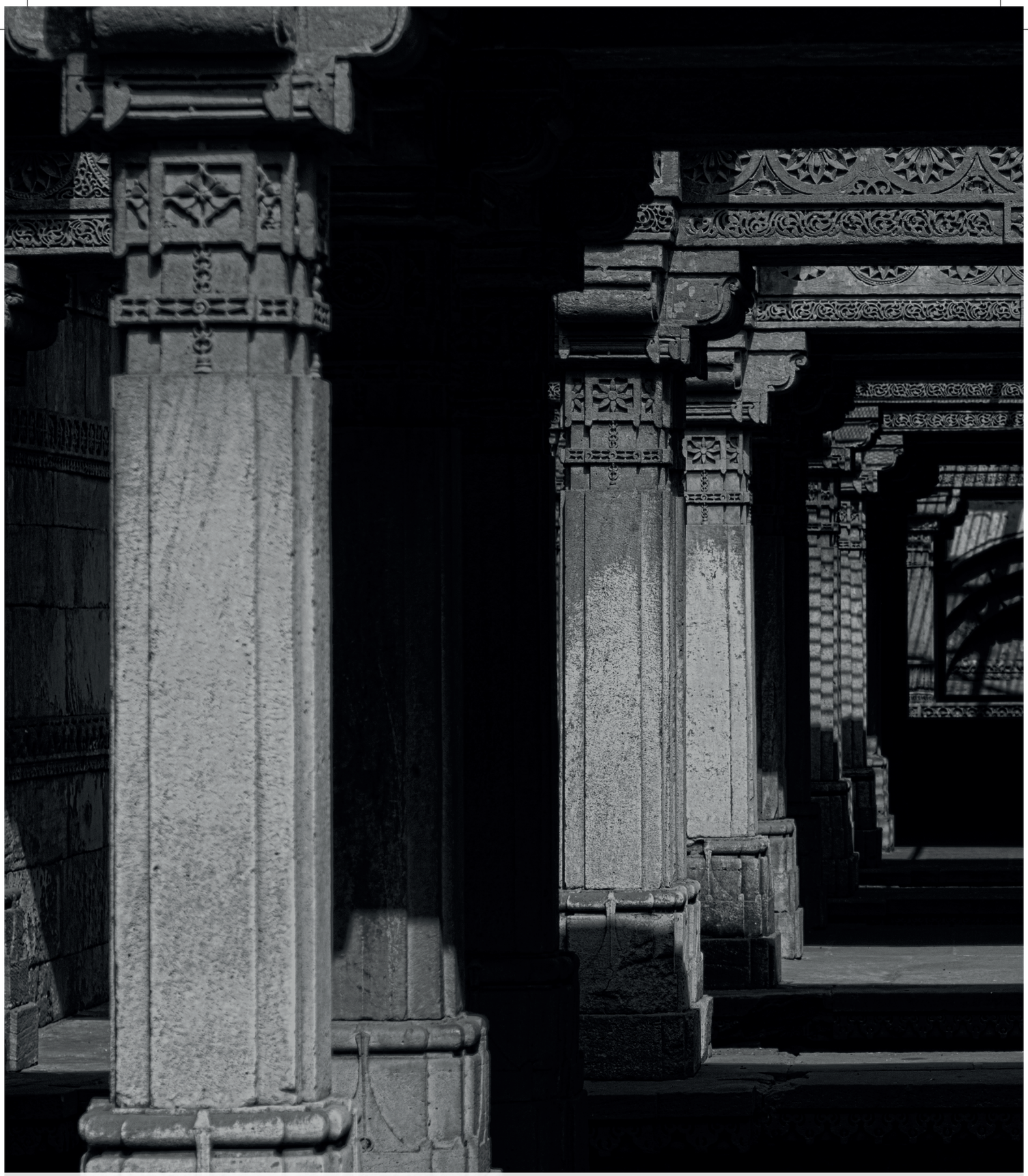
क्या वो भी रातें थी, जब माँ के साथ आँगन में सोते-सोते तारे गिना करते थे,
तारों को तारों से मिला कर आकार बुना करते थे, और चाँद की रौशनी में बागों में जुगनू गिना करते थे ।

अब न वो आँगन की खाट रही, और न जीवन में वो बात रही,
अब तारे छुप चुके है किसी चकाचौंध में, जिसे सब आज प्रतियोगिता कहते है,
और आकार बुनने वाले तारे उलझ गए है द्वेष-क्लेश की कुरूपता से ।

वो रातरानी के फूलों की महक अब तक याद आती है, ठंडी शीतल बयार अब भी चेहरे से टकराती है,
कहा गयी वो फूलों की क्यारियां जिसे माँ ने प्यार से बनाया था,
और कहा गया वो मेरा क्रिसमस ट्री, जिसे गंभार के पेड़ पर जुगनूओं ने सजाया था ।

क्या वो भी रातें थी जब हम सपने बांटते थे, और अब की उलझी जिंदगी हाय रे हाय,
कुछ न सोच ऐ मेरे दोस्त चलो अब रात काटते हैं |

Illustration by: Swastik Mishra



'We shape our buildings; thereafter they shape us.'

–Winston Churchill

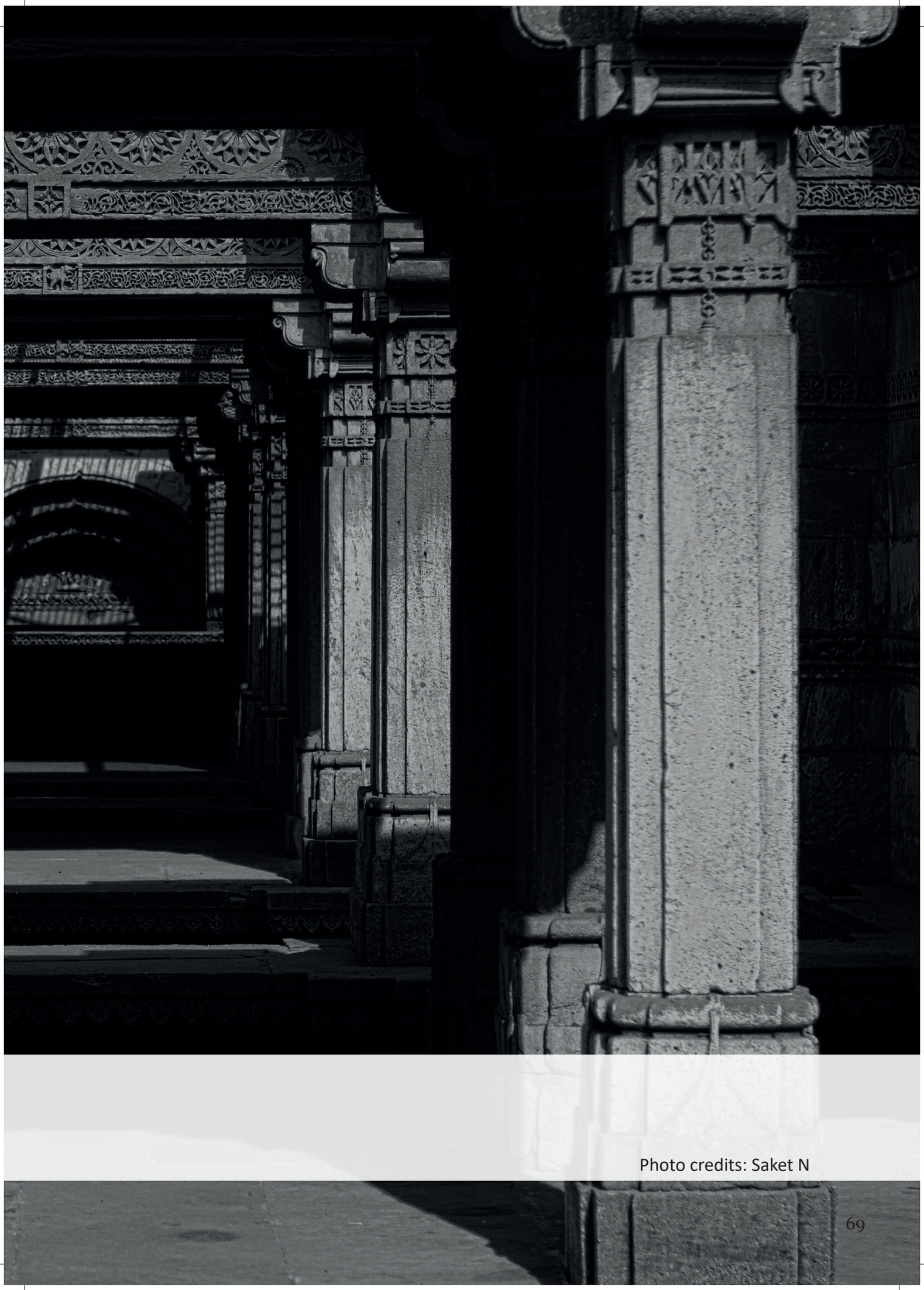


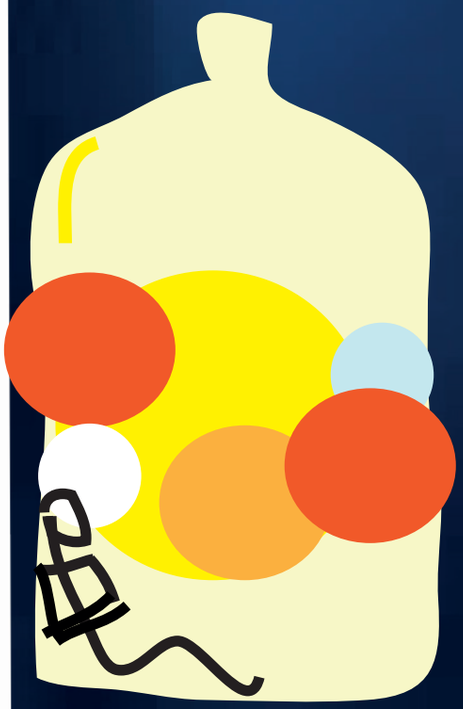
Photo credits: Saket N

हा काळ वाट बघण्याचा

-मयूर ढवळे

हा काळ वाट बघण्याचा,
अपेक्षांचा आणि अनिश्चिततांचा
गोड स्वप्नांचा आणि भयंकर वास्तवाचा
परमोच्च आनंदाचा आणि अत्यंत दुःखाचा

हा काळ वाट बघण्याचा,
प्रवाहात वाहात जाण्याचा आणि प्रवाहाच्या विरोधात पोहण्याचा
वैचारीक गुंत्यात अडकण्याचा आणि मानसीक चिंतांमध्ये गुंतण्याचा
अपेक्षापुर्णतेच्या आनंदाचा आणि अपेक्षाभंगाच्या दुःखाचा



हा काळ वाट बघण्याचा,
सततच्या अतिविचारांचा आणि निर्वीचारीपणाचा
सकारात्मक परिणामांचा आणि निकाली लागण्याचा
जिंकण्याच्या ऊत्साहाचा आणि पराभवाच्या निराशेचा

हा काळ वाट बघण्याचा,
हृदयाचे ठोके चुकण्याचा आणि ठोके तिव्र होण्याचा
जागेपणी स्वप्न पाहण्याचा आणि रात्र रात्र जागण्याचा
तुझ्या येण्याच्या अपेक्षेचा आणि तुला गमावण्याच्या भितीचा

हा काळ वाट बघण्याचा...





Here I would like to take a little space to bid farewell to our beloved Multipurpose Hall, otherwise known by the codename C-201. C-201 lived up to its name, working as the Quiz Room, Movie screening hall, meeting room for Karavaan, Mimamsa, and practically every other club activity. Most importantly, C-201 (B) used to be the Kalpa room through the spring semester every year. Although the Kalpa team isn't complaining about this given that we got a new Kalpa room in G1, we miss C-201 and we cherish all the memories associated with it.

People who joined 2015 onwards may not know this but C-201 was also the lecture hall for the BSMS students, before all lecture sessions were moved to the Lecture Hall Complex (LHC). Many of the seminars and meetings organised otherwise, were also held in the same room.
Today, C-201 has been reborn as





Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya Seminar Hall, as part of the National Mission for Teachers and Training. Right across the corridor is the new Centre of Excellence in Science and Mathematics Education. All club activities and meetings are now usually held in the LHC or the CV Raman Auditorium.

-Chief Editor

MIRAGE

Scaling across rugged terrain,
With worn out shoes and dried blood,
Dragging each step after the other,
When scorching sun had sucked all that was left of me.
Mocking my judgement, I spotted it,
Was it a mirage? Or really an oasis?
Yes! It was the saviour,
Heart pumped, feet raced, to life.
With palms calling and water pulling,
I had found the unfound energy.
For me, survival was the mission,
And oasis meant nonetheless.
And then there was my fate and there was me,
She had planned on a game or two.
I wasn't the one with a choice,
For the game had begun way before my knowledge.
However the further I dragged myself,
Date palms refused to come any closer.
It was time until I doubted my judgement
And I realised it was a trap of fate.
Elating my hopes with the sun and flooding them with twinkling stars,
A mirage during the day, and oasis at night.
Just an illusion challenging my sight.

-Sujay Paranjape

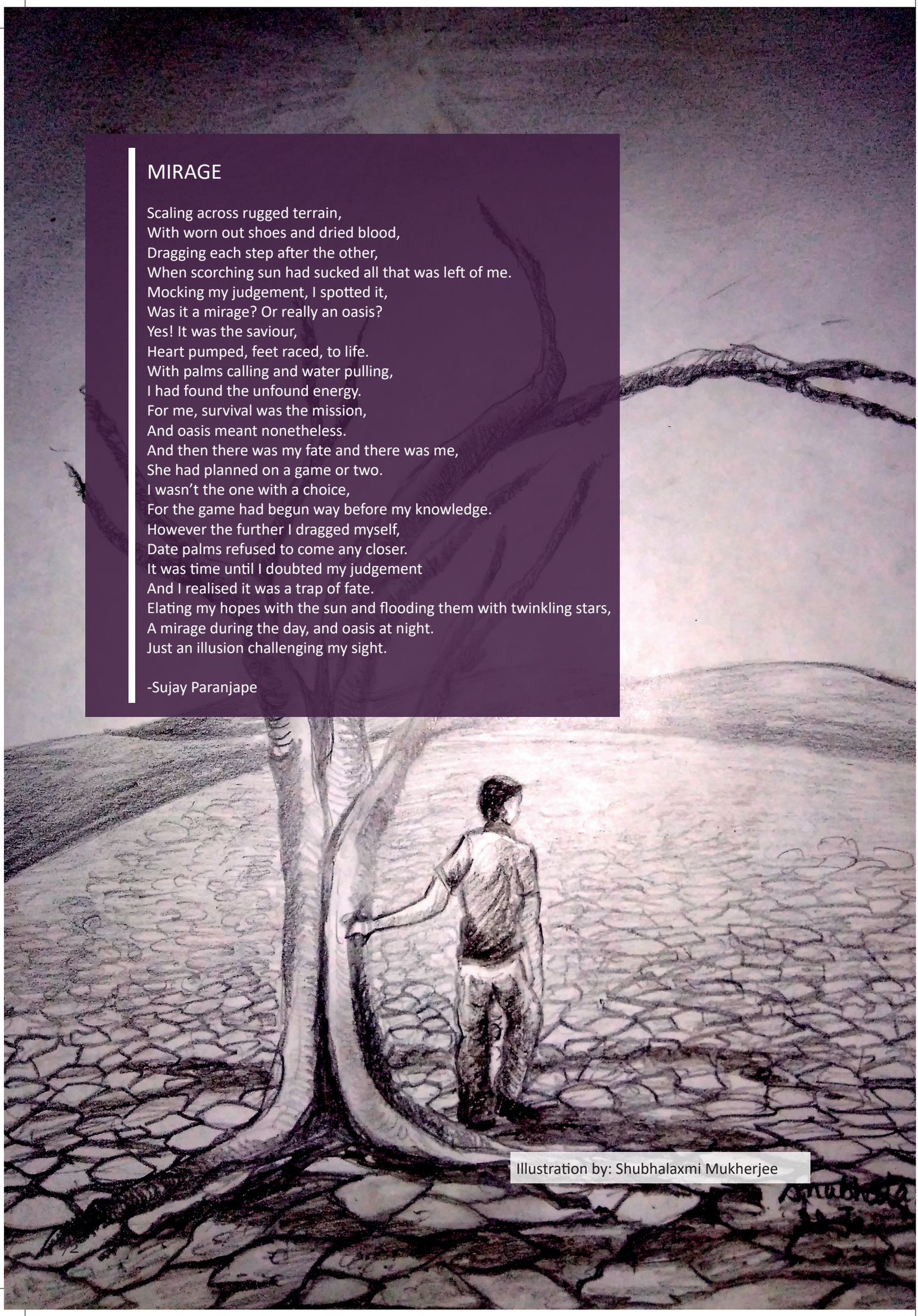
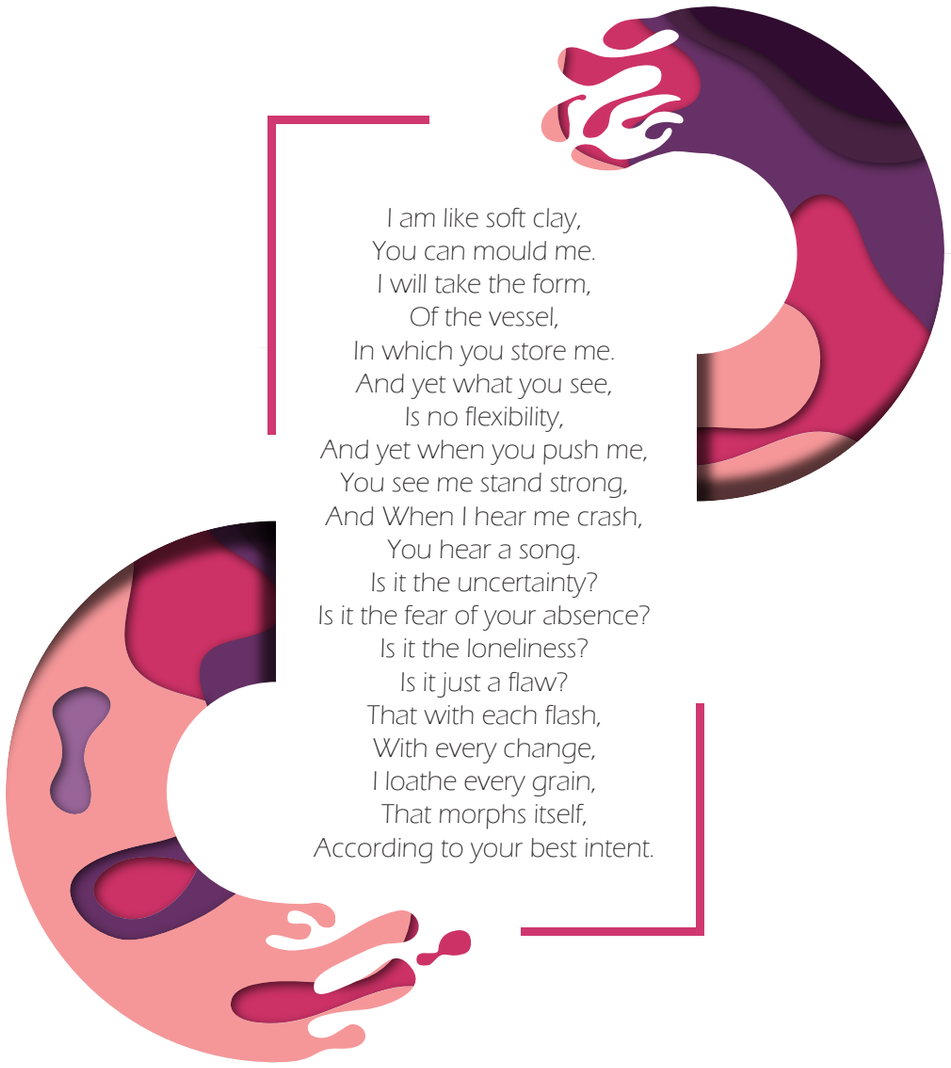


Illustration by: Shubhalaxmi Mukherjee

ADAPT

- Jhelam Deshpande



I am like soft clay,
You can mould me.
I will take the form,
Of the vessel,
In which you store me.
And yet what you see,
Is no flexibility,
And yet when you push me,
You see me stand strong,
And When I hear me crash,
You hear a song.
Is it the uncertainty?
Is it the fear of your absence?
Is it the loneliness?
Is it just a flaw?
That with each flash,
With every change,
I loathe every grain,
That morphs itself,
According to your best intent.

Illustration by: Jiffin Benjamin



A few years ago, I was out with some friends of mine. We were at a restaurant inside one of the city's more inconspicuous (at the time) malls—the kind of mall you would pass by without much thought, since the building itself was quite dull and grey, back then, what with the many rows of wooden (somewhat rotten) scaffolding still present in front of the glassy bluish windows.

It was almost as if the builders were expecting the structure to fall down any minute. That was probably why most (sane) people didn't visit it too often, save us angsty teenagers: brash, loud fifteen-year-olds that we were. Three years ago, the only places on the first floor of that mall we frequented were a McDonald's and a Westside outlet. The latter was of no interest to me; I was there only for the food. Eventually, after my endless pestering—as well as the embarrassingly ear-splitting stomach rumbles a few of my classmates discharged—we ended up at McDonald's, and promptly stuffed ourselves with burgers and soda. It would be safe to say that McDonald's was the default obsession of our entire batch, mostly because it was so close to school.

At this point, I began eating the ice cubes left over inside my glass, one by one, not unlike a giraffe thoughtfully chewing acacia leaves, contemplating its existence. Understandably, my friends all turned their heads toward me:

'Are you alright?'

I gazed back, perplexed, forgetting about my cold fingers for a moment.

'Why are you eating the ice, Vruta?'

'Er—doesn't everyone?' I glanced around the room, waiting for something earth-shattering to happen, so that the glare of the spotlight burning my corneas could focus itself somewhere else instead. The spotlight, however, was a figment of my imagination: as such, it could not be shifted, much like my classmates' attention. After a few seconds (they really did feel like an eternity) of slightly invasive stare downs and uncomfortable shifting in our seats, everyone went back to slurping their drinks, making as much noise as was possible, in an effort to paper over my resentful awkwardness.

That awkwardness persisted until today, when my brother declared with an air of having had another one of his historic epiphanies, 'I think you should eat the ice, actually, you've paid for it anyhow.' For about two seconds, I was happy that he had come up with such a startling revelation all on his own, then the fiend inside my mind chose to remind me of this particular happenstance, upon which I figured it would be quite nice if I were able to somehow infuse it into this tea-like condensation of thoughts, before it evaporated into oblivious nothingness.

It then occurred to me that not all of us like condensing things. Some might rather weave themselves out like a tapestry, stitching more words in, gradually and slowly, two by two—resembling a continuous spectrum from the outside, when in actuality, they are made up of discrete wavelengths that become clearer as you zoom in. Maybe their tapestries are in monochrome, or in earthy shades and pastel colours.

The somewhat more adventurous ones amongst us might not believe in tapestries at all, choosing instead to stare the world right in the face with its narrow, winding, pitch black alleys and blinding white sunlight. The rest of us prefer to delude ourselves into looking at everything through rose-coloured glasses. Glasses, too, are not always rose-coloured; they can be blue, for instance. Maybe someone has dark blue glasses, navy blue ones, almost like the colour of the evening sky; for them, it would always be night. Speaking of the night, some of us associate it with silence, and conversations with longer pauses than clauses; others might think of loud music, parties, drinks spilling over, and shattering glass.

Some may love oversimplification (however inadequate it may be)—to distill paragraphs into small, unbreakable sentences: to encapsulate; others might want to adorn their writings with flowery descriptions and icy metaphors—but there are also people I've met who reside somewhere in between. It would be quite unappealing if everybody looked, thought, and felt the same. The real challenge, though, would be accepting that each one of us has reasons to believe what we believe in: to not dismiss others' viewpoints as being the result of some form of bigotry, or inherent prejudice.

After all, not everyone likes eating ice.

MONOCHROME

- Vruta Gupte



Photo credits : Dr Sourabh Dube

IT WOULD BE QUITE UNAPPEALING IF EVERYBODY LOOKED, THOUGHT, AND FELT THE SAME

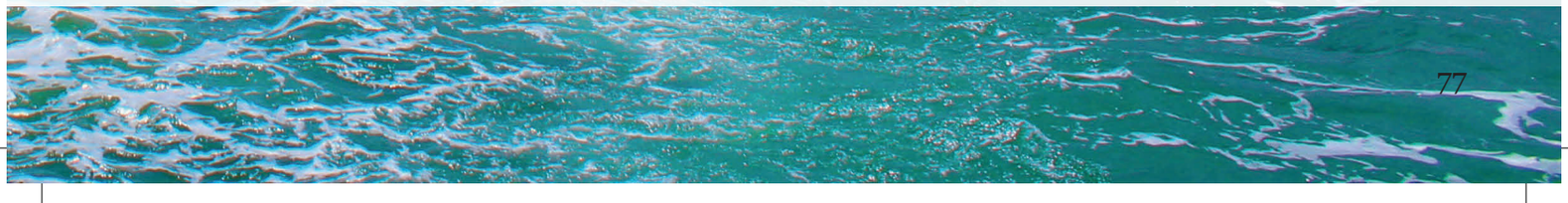


'Mere color, unspoiled by meaning, and unallied with definite form, can speak to the soul in a thousand different ways. '

–Oscar Wilde



Photo credits: Sujay P



THE DREAM

(OR REQUEIM FOR A DREAM)

- Koustav Halder

['The Dream' was the last work of the enfant terrible of contemporary short fiction, O' Henry. Envisaged at a time when O'Henry's popularity was on the wane and he had increasingly turned to the depths of destitution, alcoholism and despair, O' Henry strove to make this story different from his earlier efforts; the beginning of a new series in a style he had not previously attempted whilst retaining a touch of his trademark humor. On this change of direction, he said, 'I want to show the public that I can write something new - new for me, I mean - a story without slang, a straightforward dramatic plot treated in a way that comes nearer to my idea of real story writing'.
Only one thing prevented him from doing so - the cold hand of death. As of today, the story remains incomplete.
The following is but an altogether feeble attempt to bring the works of a venerated master to a close.]

Murray dreamt a dream.

Both psychology and science grope when they explain to us the strange adventures of our immaterial selves when we wander in the realm of Death's twin brother, Sleep. This story will not attempt to be illuminative, it is no more than a record of Murray's dream.

Murray was waiting in his cell in the ward of the Condemned, or 'Limbo Lane' as it was commonly referred to by its denizens. The electrocution was set for eight o'clock in the evening.

In prison everyone claims to be innocent. A particularly strange and fascinating spectacle, perhaps indicative of some last, invisible vestige of human prestige; a social custom to which all residents strictly adhered. Not that Murray was any different, he was just as innocent as the rest. But that being said, it really made no difference, for the bloody details of his heinous crime were splashed over the pages of all the newspapers worth their money, glaringly and unapologetically visible to the discriminating eye.

And yet something bothered Murray, something that relentlessly swirled in the back of his head, like an ill-defined dream, depriving him of his sleep and niggling him during his waking hours. Not that Murray was feeling the heavy hand of guilt, of course not; any sense of remorse had long since withered away. No, the problem was that Murray could not, for the life of him, remember his crime.

Human memory is a strange beast, fickle yet unforgetting, kind to the years but unforgiving. To Murray, his memory was neither kind nor forgiving. He knew the details of his crime all too well; it had been relentlessly hammered into him by a vindictive prosecution and by the dailies that had made a pantomime out of his trial.

What Murray could not recall was the actual physical sensation of committing 'The Unforgivable'. This was what plagued Murray, a quandary whose answer lurked just over the horizon, just beyond the infinite of thought, like it plagued old Tantalus of yore.

Murray might have achieved what he was in pursuit of, had he been left to his own device but his macabre ruminations were interrupted by a spectral shape looming out of the gloam.

It was the regular guardian of Limbo Lane, an immense, rough, kindly man who went by the name of O' Malley. He drew a pint flask of whiskey from his pocket and proffered it to Murray saying:
'It's the regular thing, y' know. All has it who feel like they need a bracer. Liquid Courage. No danger of it becoming a habit with 'em, y' see.'
Murray drank deep into the bottle:
'That's me boy! Just a little nerve tonic, and everything goes smooth as silk.'
Pity the jury had not shared O' Malley's sentiment.
The hour had come. He wondered with what credit to himself his own heart, foot and face would meet his punishment.

Murray wondered at his own tranquillity and near indifference, but then again his obscured memory of 'The Unforgivable' had perhaps earned him a reprieve from the fear of the consequences.
There was a sea of souls inside the execution room: the prison board, news reporters looking for their next big scoop and those lucky onlookers who had succeeded, in a desperate fervour, to obtain ringside berths to the bout between man and noose.
A plethora of heads. A babel of tongues. A cacophony of voices.
All of which subtly upset Murray. He did not know why, neither did he care.



Illustration by : Kasturi Lele

He stepped out into the corridor and glanced at his feet. They stared back unwaveringly at him. Time and prison had worn them down.
As Murray marched down the aisle, the other residents lined up against their bars to watch him pass by silently. A ragtag honour guard, if you will.
It's a short walk from an honest life to one of knavery and violence and a shorter walk still from thence to the gallows. Before Murray knew it, he was in the execution room, blinking at the harsh lights focused on his countenance.

At which, a portly, wig-laden, bespectacled man, presumably the Director of the Limbo Council, stepped up onto a podium - dressed in full formal regalia - and stared down sternly at Murray. He hemmed his throat before reciting what was expected of him:
'The man standing in front of my visage has been indicted on two counts of murder, one of that of his paramour and the other of the genteel man in whose company she happened to be at that unfortunate moment. He has in accordance with the righteous

laws laid down by our governing fathers and the power invested in the great State of Arkansas, been sentenced to death by electrocution.'

A short pause while he dabbled perfunctorily at his eyepiece.

'Should any member of this gathered congregation have any concerns, they should voice them now.'

Another pause. This time a long one. None in the crowd present there demurred - it was one thing to have a fit of jealous rage and yet another altogether to go after your sweetheart with a cleaver.

The human brain is a most miraculous creation, capable of thinking miles ahead, responsible for binding nerve and sinew and yet its most spellbinding ability is its propensity to pay a wanton and complete disregard for the slew of stimuli assaulting the senses. Daydreamers would attest to the fact being expressed here, I'm sure. But then I digress.

It was not as if the world had dimmed around Murray. Rather it was as if a blazing torch had ignited in his mind, the flames of which flickered with blinding clarity. For there in front of Murray arose a vision. The details were too hazy to make out clearly but Murray hoped it was what he hoped it was.

The Director of Limbo Council withdrew from the stage in as pompous a fashion as with which he had laid foot on it. Right on cue, two guards stepped up to expertly lead Murray to the electric chair. To their abject surprise, they were not met with any resistance, for Murray had long since left the game.

The vision languidly slid into focus like an overripe fruit dropped forth by the Tree of Hesperides. Murray smiled. In that vision lay his path to redemption and forgiveness.

Murray feeling yet unfeeling, his eyes seeing yet unseeing did not notice himself being secured into the contraption.He witnessed neither the priest's increasingly sombre intonations nor the growing anticipation hanging heavily in the air.

For there in front of him was a little country cottage, all bright and cookie cutter, nestling in a bower of flowers. Honeysuckles crept over its sunbaked walls. Butterflies flashed their vibrant wings, tracing out colourful patterns in the air. He did not recognize the place but it felt serene. On the other side of the bower, resting on the slope of a low ridge was She. She had her back turned to him but there was no mistaking Her. Often had he dreamt of that slender nape, that lucid small of the back and that gorgeous marble skin. It was exactly like he remembered. Not a day had passed. Beyond Her was a small child, running about in the meadow chasing its imaginary friend. Round and round in circles, occasionally stumbling, occasionally tripping but never growing tired. He should go up to them. He should hug them and promise Her that it'll all be right as rain. But he didn't. He simply stood there, watching them for an interminably long time. The sun shone down on his back. A light summer breeze wafted in, bringing with it the buzz of the miracle that is life. He was content. He was happy. Home was where the hearth was.

The executioner made his final call. The congregation had devolved into a raucous affair and had long since given up any sense of propriety. The executioner stole a look at the motionless Murray before focusing on the Director. The Director shook his head almost imperceptibly.

The final nod.

A plethora of heads. A babel of tongues. A cacophony of voices.

The executioner flipped the fatal switch. The clamour of the crowd rose to a bloodthirsty roar.

The pain was but fleeting. Then reality merged with the dreamscape. Murray had made his peace. With his memories, his demons and his God.

Despite having dreamt the wrong dream.

Solemn

- Surabhi KS

Here we sit among the vast and wondrous,
trying to comprehend the infinite Universe.
A small speck of dust,
in a world that's seemingly just.
They say truth is an illusion.
And that all that we do is to make sure we're occupied,
from the eventuality that's so certain,
that it cannot be defied.
But as we gaze up at the stars,
and the moon at times,
it doesn't seem forlorn,
like the mourning of hope's demise.
For in the few seconds of that tiny glimpse,
it's nothing but wonder and all of solemnity,
a grand decour and exemplary finesse,
that fills you with humility.
Oh, you seek to understand!
You beckon your mind,
to decipher the secrets and then behold,
the story that shall not remain untold.
For in those answers that you seek,
you'll find the delight you need.
And the sorrow slowly ebbs away,
because it doesn't matter anyway.
The world invites you to understand it.
And there is naught another form of beauty.
Yes, there is an eventuality,
but bigger things than you, me or time.
This omnipresent world shall harbor,
no laurels, records or spite,
against anything or anyone,
be it day or night.



ತೀರ

-ಆದರ್ಶ ಬಿ ವಸಿಷ್ಠ
(Adarsh B Vasista)



Illustration by : Nazia V

ನೇಹಾ ತನ್ನ ಕಾಲೇಜು ಮುಗಿಸಿ ಎಫ್. ಸಿ ರೋಡಿನ ಬಸ್ಟಾಪಿಗೆ ಬಂದು ನಿಂತುಕೊಂಡಾಗ ಸುಮಾರು ಹನ್ನೊಂದುವರೆ ಆಗಿದ್ದಿರಬೇಕು. ಸೂರ್ಯ ಆಗತಾನೆ ತನ್ನ ಕಿರಣದ ಪಂಪನ್ನು ಒತ್ತುತ್ತಾ ಬಿಗಿಯಾಗುತ್ತಾ ಸಾಗಿದ್ದ. ನಿನ್ನೆ ಸುರಿದಿದ್ದ ಸಂಜೆಯ ವರ್ಷಧಾರೆಗೆ ತನ್ನನ್ನು ಒಡ್ಡಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದ ರಸ್ತೆಯ ತುಂಬೆಲ್ಲಾ ಮರದ ಎಲೆಗಳು ಒತ್ತೊತ್ತಾಗಿ ಸರಿದು ನೀರು ಓಡಿದ ದಾರಿಯನ್ನು ತೋರಿಸುತ್ತಿತ್ತು. ನೇಹಾ ಕಾಲೇಜು ಬ್ಯಾಗನ್ನು ಬೆನ್ನಿನ ಒಂದು ಬದಿಗೆ ಸರಿಸಿ ಹೋಗುವ-ಬರುವ ವಾಹನಗಳತ್ತ ಕಣ್ಣುಹಾಯಿಸತೊಡಗಿದಳು. ಅವಳಿಗೆ ತಾನು ಏರಬೇಕೆಂದಿರುವ ಬಸ್ಸು ಬರುವ ಮುನ್ನ ಕಾರಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾರಾದರೂ ಬಂದು ತನ್ನಡೆಗೆ ಒಂದು ಓರೆ ನೋಟ ಬೀರಬಹುದೋ ಎನ್ನುವ ಆಸೆ . ಕಾರು ಬರಲೂಬಹುದು, ಅದರಿಂದೊಬ್ಬ ನವಯುವಕ ಇಳಿದು ಇವಳ ನಡು ಸುತ್ತಿ ಬಳಸಿ ಅನಾಮತ್ತಾಗಿ ಎತ್ತಿ ಅವನ ಬಿಸಿ ಅಪ್ಪುಗೆಯ ಮುದ ನೀಡಬಹುದು. ಕಾರಲ್ಲಿ ಕೂತು ಅವಳನ್ನು ನೇರ ಒಂದು long drive ಗೆಂದು ಲೋನವಲಾಕ್ಕೆ ಕರೆದುಕೊಂಡು ಹೋಗಬಹುದು. ಡ್ಯೂಕ್ ನೋಸ್ ನ ಮೇಲೆ ಇಬ್ಬರೂ ತಬ್ಬಿ ನಿಲ್ಲಬಹುದು, ಕೆಳಗಿನ ಕೆಫೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಫಿ, ಜೊತೆಗೆ ಅರಳು ಹುರಿದಂತೆ ಅವನ ಮುಖ ನೋಡುತ್ತಾ ತಾನು ಹರಟುಬಹುದು. ಆಮೇಲೆ ಸಂಜೆಯ ಮಳೆ, ಒದ್ದೆ ಮಣ್ಣು .. ಕಣ್ಣ ಮುಂದೆ ಹುಯ್ದಾಡುವ ವೈಪರ್ ನ ನಡುವೆ ಕಾಣುವ, ಉದ್ದಕ್ಕೂ ತನ್ನನ್ನು ಮಳೆಗೆ ಒಡ್ಡಿಕೊಂಡು ನೆನೆಯುತ್ತಿರುವ ರಸ್ತೆ. ಪಕ್ಕದಲ್ಲಿರುವ 'ಅವನು' ಹಚ್ಚಿರುವ ಸಿಗರೇಟು, ಸಣ್ಣ ಹೊಗೆ. ಅವನ ತೆಕ್ಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನಾನು... ' ಅಬ್ಬಾ ... !! ಎಂತಹ ಕಲ್ಪನೆ. ಆಗಲೇ ಅವನು ನನ್ನ ಬದುಕಿನ ಭಾಗವಾಗಿಬಿಟ್ಟನಲ್ಲ ! ' ಎಂದುಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾ ತಲೆ ಕೊಡವಿಕೊಂಡಳು ನೇಹಾ. ಹೊಸ ಕಾರೊಂದರಲ್ಲಿ ಒಬ್ಬನೇ ಹುಡುಗ ಸೆಟೆದು ಕೂತು ಓಡಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಹೋಗುವಾಗ ಆ ಕಾರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ... ಅವನ ಪಕ್ಕದಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಖಾಲಿ ಸೀಟಿನಲ್ಲಿ ನಾನಿರಬಾರದೇ ! ಎಂದು ಕಲ್ಪಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು ಅವಳ ದಿನಚರಿಯ ಭಾಗವೇ ಆಗಿಬಿಟ್ಟಿದೆ. 'ಅವನು' ನೇಹಾಳ ಜೀವನದಲ್ಲಿ ಬರದೆಯೇ ಇರಬಹುದು. ಆದರೆ ಈ ಕಲ್ಪನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸಿಗುವ ಸವಿಯನ್ನು ಮಾತ್ರ ನೇಹಾ ಬಿಡಲಾರಳು.

ನೇಹಾ ತನ್ನ ಬಾಲ್ಯ ಕಳೆದದ್ದು ಸಾಂಗ್ಲಿಯ ಹತ್ತಿರದ ಒಂದು ಪುಟ್ಟ ಹಳ್ಳಿಯಲ್ಲಿ. ಕೇವಲ ಎರಡು ವರ್ಷದ ಹಿಂದೆಯಷ್ಟೇ ಪುಣೆಗೆ ತಮ್ಮ ಸಾಮಾನು ಸರಂಜಾಮೆಲ್ಲವನ್ನು ಒಟ್ಟುಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡು ಪುಟ್ಟದೊಂದು ಟಂಟಂನಲ್ಲಿ ಹೇರಿಕೊಂಡು ತನ್ನ ಊರನ್ನು ಬಿಟ್ಟು ಅಪ್ಪನ ಕೆಲಸದ ರಾಜಧಾನಿ ಪುಣೆಗೆ ಬಂದಿದ್ದರು. ಸಣ್ಣ ವಯಸ್ಸಿನಿಂದಲೂ ಶಹರದ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ವಿಶೇಷವಾದ ಸೆಳವು ನೇಹಾಳಿಗೆ ಇದ್ದೇ ಇತ್ತು. ವಾರಕ್ಕೊಮ್ಮೆಯೋ ಅಥವಾ ಹದಿನೈದು ದಿವಸಕ್ಕೊಮ್ಮೆಯೋ ಅಪ್ಪ ಮಂಡಕ್ಕಿ, ಭಜಿ, ಬರ್ಫಿಗಳನ್ನು ಪೇಪರಿನ ಪೊಟ್ಟಣದಲ್ಲಿ ಕಟ್ಟಿಕೊಂಡು ಬಂದಾಗ ಉರಿವ ದೀಪದ ಮುಂದೆ ಮೊಣಕೈ ಊರಿ ಅವನ ಪುಣೆಯ ಸಾಹಸಗಳನ್ನೆಲ್ಲಾ ಕೇಳುತ್ತಿದ್ದಳು. ಇವನ್ನೆಲ್ಲಾ ಕೇಳುತ್ತಾ ' ಅಪ್ಪನಿಗೆ ಒಂದು ವಿಶೇಷವಾದ ಶಕ್ತಿಯಿದೆ. ಆತ ನಮ್ಮೂರಿಗೆ ದಿವಸಕ್ಕೊಮ್ಮೆ ಡುರ್ರ್... ಎಂದು ಬರುವ ಬಸ್ಸಿನೊಳಗೆ ಕೂತು ಅದನ್ನು ಓಡಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಅದರ ಸ್ಟೇರಿಂಗ್ ಹಿಡಿದು ತಿರುಗಾಡಿಸುತ್ತಾ ಮುಂದೆ ಕಾಣುವ, ದೂರ ದೂರದವರೆಗೆ ಮೈಚಾಚಿ ಮಲಗಿರುವ ರಸ್ತೆಯ ಮೇಲೆ ಬಸ್ಸನ್ನು ಓಲಾಡಿಸುತ್ತಾ ಬಿಡುತ್ತಾನೆ ' ಎಂದು ಮನದಲ್ಲಿ ತಾನೂ ಅವನ ತೊಡೆಯ ಮೇಲೆ ಕೂತು ಬಸ್ಸು ಓಡಿಸುತ್ತಾ ದೀಪದ ಎದುರು ಕಣ್ಣೆವೆಗಳನ್ನು ಮುಚ್ಚಿ ನಿದ್ರೆ ಹೋಗುವಳು. ಆಮೇಲೆ ಅವಳನ್ನು ಅವಳ ಅಜ್ಜಿ ಅನಾಮತ್ತಾಗಿ ಎತ್ತಿ ಒಳಕೋಣೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮಲಗಿಸುವಳು.ತನ್ನೂರಿಗೆ ಇರುವುದು ಒಂದೇ ಬಸ್ಸು. ಅದೇ ಬಸ್ಸು ಮತ್ತೊಮ್ಮೆ ಸಂಜೆಗೆ ತಿರುಗಿ ಬರುವುದು. ಅಪ್ಪನ ಶಹರದಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ರೀತಿಯ ನೂರಾರು ಇವೆಯಂತೆ. ಎಂತಹ ಅದ್ಭುತ... !. ಅಪ್ಪನ ಶೆಹರಕ್ಕೆ ನೇಹಾಳ ಮಾನಸಿಕ ನಂಟು ಯಾವಾಗಲೂ ಬೆಸೆದುಕೊಂಡೇ ಇರುತ್ತಿತ್ತು. ಹಠ ಮಾಡಿ ಗಣೇಶನ ಹಬ್ಬಕ್ಕೆ ದಗಡೂ ಶೇಠನ ಗಣಪತಿ ಮಂದಿರಕ್ಕೆ ಬಂದು ಹೋಗಿದ್ದು ಬಿಟ್ಟರೆ ಆಮೇಲೆ ಎಂದೂ ಅಪ್ಪನ ಶಹರದ ದರ್ಶನ ಭಾಗ್ಯ ನೇಹಾಳಿಗೆ ಒದಗಿ ಬಂದಿರಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಬಂದಾಗ ತಿಂದಿದ್ದ ಬಿಸಿ ಬಿಸಿ ಮಿಸಾಲ್ ಪಾವ್, ಮಂಡಕ್ಕಿ, ಭಜಿಯನ್ನೂ, ಕೆಂಪು, ಹಳದಿ ಬಣ್ಣದ ಮಿಠಾಯಿಯನ್ನೂ ತಿಂಗಳುಗಟ್ಟಲೆ ನೆನಪಿನ ಬುತ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಜೋಪಾನ ಮಾಡಿಟ್ಟಿದಳು ನೇಹಾ.

ಇಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಬಂದಮೇಲಂತೂ ಕಡಲನ್ನು ಸೇರಲು ಹಾತೊರೆದ ನದಿ ಕಡಲು ಕಂಡಾಗ ನೊರೆ ನೊರೆದು ಉಕ್ಕುವಂತೆ ಪುಣೆಯನ್ನು ಇಡಿಯಾಗಿ ನುಂಗಿಬಿಡುವಂತೆ ಅಡ್ಡಾಡಿದ್ದಳು. ಅವಳ ಯಾವಾಗಲೂ ಗೊಣಗುತ್ತಾ " ಯಹಾ ಕಾ ಪಬ್ಲಿಕ್ ಸೆರ್ವಿಸ್ ಫಟಿಯಾ ಹೈ " ಬಸ್ಸು ಕಾಯುತ್ತ ಮೂಗು ಮುರಿಯುತ್ತಿದ್ದರೆ, ತನ್ನ ಆಸೆಯ ಕಣ್ಣಲ್ಲಿ ಶೆಹರದ ವಾಹನಗಳನ್ನೂ, ಅದರ ಸವಾರರನ್ನೂ ನೋಡುತ್ತಾ ನೇಹಾ ಮಂತ್ರಮುಗ್ಧಳಾಗುವಳು. ' ಇಷ್ಟೊಂದು ಬಸ್ಸುಗಳು ಓಡಾಡುವಾಗ ಇವರಿಗೆ ಬಸ್ಸೇ ಇಲ್ಲ ಎಂದು ಹೇಗನ್ನಿಸುವುದು ? ' ಎಂದು ಲೆಖ್ಖ ಹಾಕುತ್ತಿದಳು ನೇಹಾ. ಬೆಳಗ್ಗೆ ಎದ್ದು ಶಹರ ಓಡುವ ವೇಗಕ್ಕೆ ಆತುಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಆತರದಲ್ಲಿ ಬೆಳ್ಳಂಬೆಳಗ್ಗೆ ಕಾತ್ರಾಜ್ ಇಂದ ತನ್ನ ಕಾಲೇಜಿನವರೆಗೂ ಬಸ್ಸಿನಲ್ಲಿ ನೇತುಹಾಕಿಕೊಂಡು ಬರುವುದು -ಕಾಲೇಜು ಹಿಂದು ಮುಂದೆಲ್ಲಾ ಕಲ್ಲು ಬೆಂಚುಗಳ ಮೇಲೆ ಕೂತು ಒಬ್ಬರನ್ನೊಬ್ಬರು ತಬ್ಬಿ ಪ್ರಣಯಿಸುವ ಪ್ರೇಮ ಪಕ್ಷಿಗಳ ಕಲರವ ಕೇಳುವುದು ನೇಹಾಳ ದಿನಚರಿಯೇ ಆಗಿಹೋಗಿದೆ. ಒಂದೆರಡು ದಿವಸ ಸ್ವರ್ಗ ಸದೃಶವಾಗಿ ಕಂಡ ಅಪ್ಪನ ಬಸ್ಸುಗಳು, ಬರಬರುತ್ತಾ ನೇಹಾಳಿಗೆ ಬಡವನ ವಾಹನ ಎಂದು ಅನ್ನಿಸತೊಡಗಿತ್ತು. ಶಿವಾಜಿನಗರದ ಸರ್ಕಲ್ ನಲ್ಲೋ ಅಥವಾ ಸ್ವಾರ್ಗೇಟ್ ನ ಸಿಗ್ನಲ್ ನಲ್ಲೋ ಬಸ್ಸು ಟ್ರಾಫಿಕ್ ಜಾಮಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಸಿಕ್ಕಿ ಎದುರು ನಿಂತ ನೂರಾರು ವಾಹನಗಳ ಮಧ್ಯೆ ಕಣ್ಣು ಮಿಟಿಕಿಸುತ್ತಾ, ಗುರುಗುಡುತ್ತಾ ನಿಂತಾಗ, ಅದರ ಗರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಬೆವರು ವಾಸನೆಯ ಕಂಕುಳುಗಳ ಮಧ್ಯೆ ನಿಂತ ನೇಹಾ ತನ್ನ ಕನಸಿನ ರಾಜವಾಹನವೆಂದು ನಂಬಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದ ಬಸ್ಸುಗಳ ಮೇಲಿನ ಆರ್ಷ ಪ್ರೇಮವನ್ನು ಹೂರಹಾಕತೊಡಗಿದ್ದಳು. ಆಸೆಯಾಗಿದ್ದ ಬಸ್ಸಿನ ಪ್ರಯಾಣ ಬರಬರುತ್ತಾ ಕೇವಲ ಯಾಂತ್ರಿಕವಾಗುತ್ತಾ ಹೋಯಿತು. ಸುಡುಬಿಸಿಲಿಗೆ ಹಿಡಿದ ಕನ್ನಡಿಯಂತೆ ತನ್ನ ಮನೆಯೂ - ವಾಹನವೂ ಏಕತ್ರವಾಗಿ ನೇಹಾಳು ನಲುಗಲು ಆರಂಭಿಸಿದಳು.

ತನ್ನೊಂದಿಗೆ ಕ್ಲಾಸಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಪಕ್ಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೂತು ಮೊಣಕೈಯೂರಿ black boardನತ್ತ ಕ್ಷೀಣ ದೃಷ್ಟಿ ಹರಿಸುವ ತನ್ನ ಸ್ನೇಹಿತೆಯರೆಲ್ಲರೂ, ಕಾಲೇಜು ಆವರಣಕ್ಕೆ ಬಿದ್ದೊಡನೆಯೇ ಜೀನ್ಸ್ ತೊಟ್ಟು ಕನ್ನಡಕ ಏರಿಸಿ ಮೀಸೆ ತುದಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸಿಗರೇಟು ಸಿಕ್ಕಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಹುಡುಗರೊಡನೆ ಕಣ್ಣು ಮಿಟಿಕಿಸುತ್ತಾ ಬೈಕಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಹತ್ತಿಕೂತು ಆಂಟಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವಾಗ ನೇಹಾಳಿಗೆ ' ನಂಗೂ ಹೀಗೊಬ್ಬನೇಕಿಲ್ಲಾ ... ? ' ಎಂದು ಕೈಹಿಸುಕಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದಿದೆ. ಹೀಗೆಲ್ಲಾ ಅಂದುಕೊಂಡಾಗ ತಾನು ಚಿಕ್ಕ ವಯಸ್ಸಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಅಜ್ಜಿಯ ಹತ್ತಿರ, ಅವಳ ತೊಡೆಯ ಮೇಲೆ ಕೂತು, ತಲೆಯನ್ನು ಅವಳ ಭುಜಕ್ಕೆ ಆನಿಸಿ ಕೇಳುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ರಾಜಕುಮಾರನ ಕುದುರೆ ಸವಾರಿಯ ಕಥೆ ನೆನಪಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾಳೆ. .. ಹಿಗ್ಗುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ' ನನ್ನ ಹುಡುಗ ಕಾರು... ಕಾರಿನಲ್ಲೇ ಓಡಾಡುವವನಾಗಿರಬೇಕು. ಇಲ್ಲದಿದ್ದರೆ ಮತ್ತದೇ ಚಾಳು , ಅದೇ ಬಸ್ಸು ... ' ಎಂದುಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾ ತನ್ನೊಳಗೇ ಕನಸಿನ ಮನೆ ಕಟ್ಟುತ್ತಾಳೆ.

ಗುರ್ರ್ ... ಎಂದು ಶಬ್ದ ಹೊರಡಿಸುತ್ತಾ ಬಂದ ಬಸ್ಸನ್ನೇರಿ ಕುಳಿತಳು ನೇಹಾ. ಇಂದು ಬಹಳ ಬೇಗನೇ ಕಾಲೇಜಿನಿಂದ ಹೊರಟದ್ದರಿಂದ ಅಪವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅಷ್ಟು ಜನಸಂದಣಿ ಇಲ್ಲದೇ ಬಸ್ಸು ಖಾಲಿಯಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಯಾವತ್ತೂ ಬೆಳಗ್ಗಿನ ಪೂಜಾ ಮಂತ್ರದಂತೆ ಕೇಳುವ ಕಂಡಕ್ಟರಿನ

‘ ಪುಡೆ ಸಲಾ ..ಸರ್ಕಾ ಪುಡೆ ‘ ಗಳು, ಇಳಿಯುವ ಸ್ಟಾಪನ್ನು ಗುರ್ತಿಸಿಕೊಡುವ ಘಂಟಾನಾದಗಳು ಇಂದು ಕೇಳಿಸುತ್ತಿಲ್ಲ. ನೇಹಾ ಕಾತ್ರಾಜಿಗೊಂದು ಟಿಕೇಟು ಪಡೆದು ಕಿಟಕಿಯಿಂದ ತನ್ನ ಯೋಚನಾಲಹರಿಯ ಬಲೆ ಹೊರಚಾಚಿ ಕುಳಿತಳು. ಮಂದವಾಗಿ ಚಲಿಸುತ್ತಾ ಬಸ್ಸು ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿ ನಾರಾಯಣದ ಸರ್ಕಲ್ ಬಳಿ ಸಿಗ್ನಲ್ ಲೈಟ್ ನಲ್ಲಿ ನಿಂತುಕೊಂಡಿತು. ನೇಹಾಳ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಬಸ್ಸಿನ ಪಕ್ಕದಲ್ಲೇ ನಿಂತಿದ್ದ ಕಾರಿನೊಳಗೆ ಹರಿಯಿತು. ಒತ್ತೊತ್ತಾಗಿ ಕುಳಿತ ಜೋಡಿ ನೋಡಿ ನೇಹಾ ಆಕರ್ಷಿತಳಾದಳು. ಇನ್ನಷ್ಟು ಅವರನ್ನೇ ನೋಡುತ್ತಾ ಕುಳಿತಿರಬೇಕೆನ್ನುವಷ್ಟು ... Sunday hangout ಎನ್ನುವ ಮಿರಿ ಮಿರಿ ಹೆಸರಿನ ಸಂಜೆ ತಿರುಗಾಟಕ್ಕೆ F C ರೋಡಲ್ಲಿ ನೇಹಾ, ಹುಡುಗಿಯ ಸೊಂಟದ ಮೇಲೊಂದು ಕೈ ಬಳಸಿ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಕೈಲಿ ಕೆಂಪು ಬಣ್ಣದಿ ಚಿಮಣಿಯಂತೆ ಹೊಗೆಯುಗುಳುವ ಸಿಗರೇಟು ಸಿಕ್ಕಿಸಿ ಕಾರಣವಿಲ್ಲದೆ ನಗುವಂತಹ ಹುಡುಗರನ್ನು ನೋಡಿ , ‘ ಅವಳ’ ಜಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ತನ್ನನ್ನು ಕಲ್ಪಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಿದ್ದಳು. ನೀಳ ಕಾಲುಗಳನ್ನು ರಾತ್ರಿಯ ಝಗಮಗದ ಬೆಳಕಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಆಡಿಸುತ್ತಾ, ನಿಕ್ಕರ್ ತೊಟ್ಟು ಮುಖದ ಮೇಲೆ ಬೀಳುವ ತಿಳಿ ಕೂದಲನ್ನು ಎಲೆ ಎಳೆದು ಸರಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಪುಣೆಯ ಸುಂದರಿಯರಂತೆ ತಾನೂ ಆಗಬೇಕೆಂದು ನೇಹಾ ಎಷ್ಟೋ ಬಾರಿ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನಿಸಿದ್ದಿದೆ. ದೂರದ ಕೋರೆಗಾವ್ ಪಾರ್ಕ್ ನ ಬೀದಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಅಡ್ಡಾಡಿ Benneton ನ ಮಳಿಗೆಗಳಿಗೆ ನುಗ್ಗಿ ಚಡ್ಡಿಯ ದರ ನೋಡಿ ಇಷ್ಟೊಂದನ್ನು ಅಪ್ಪನ ತಿಂಗಳ ಸಂಬಳವನ್ನು ತೆತ್ತೂ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳಲಾರೆ ಎಂದು ಅರೆಬರೆ ಮನಸಲ್ಲಿ ಹೊರಬಂದದ್ದಿದೆ. ‘ ಅಪ್ಪ ನನಗೂ ಒಬ್ಬ ಹುಡುಗನನ್ನು ನೋಡಿಯೇ ಇರುತ್ತಾನೆ!ಗಾಡಿಯ ಓನರ್ ಅಲ್ಲದಿದ್ದರೇನಂತೆ, ಡ್ರೈವರ್ ಆದರೂ ಆಗಿದ್ದಾನು. ಕಾರಿನ ಒಳಗೆ ಇವರಿಬ್ಬರು ಕೂತ ಹಾಗೆ ನಾವೂ ಕೂತು ಲೋನಾವಲಕ್ಕೆ ಹೋಗಬಹುದು !’ ಎಂದುಕೊಂಡಳು.

ನೇಹಾ ಕಾತ್ರಾಜ್ ಬಸ್ ಸ್ಟಾಂಡಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಇಳಿದು ಅಲ್ಲಿಂದ ಅರ್ಧ ಮೇಲಿರುವ ತನ್ನ ಮನೆಗೆ ಹೆಜ್ಜೆ ಹಾಕತೊಡಗಿದಳು. ಮಧ್ಯಾಹ್ನದ ಸೂರ್ಯನನ್ನು ಮೋಡ ತನ್ನ ಹೊದಿಕೆಯ ಒಳಗೆ ಎಳೆದುಕೊಂಡು ಬಿಗಿಗೊಳಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಿದ್ದ. ಬೀಸುವ ಗಾಳಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ತೇವದ ಅಂಶ ನೇಹಾಳ ಮೂಗಿಗೆ ಬಡಿಯಿತು. ‘ ಅಯ್ಯೋ .. ಮಳೆ ಬಂದೀತು ! ‘ ಎಂದ್ದುಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾ ಹೆಜ್ಜೆಯ ವೇಗ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿಸಿದಳು ನೇಹಾ. ಮೆನೆಯ ತಿರುವು ಬಂದೊಡನೆಯೇ ಜೋರು ಜೋರಾದ ಆರ್ತನಾದ ಕಿವಿಗೆ ಬೀಳತೊಡಗಿತು. ಅಜ್ಜಿಯ ಧ್ವನಿ ಕೇಳುತ್ತಲೇ ನೇಹಾಳ ಎದೆ ಧಸಕ್ಕೆಂದಿತು. ಅವಳ ವೇಗ ಕಮ್ಮಿಯಾಯಿತು. ತನ್ನ ಮನದೊಳಗೆ ಎದ್ದ ಸಾವಿರ ಮುಖಬಿಂಬಗಳು ನಗುತ್ತ, ಅಳುತ್ತಾ ನೇಹಾಳ ತಲೆಯನ್ನು ತುಂಬಿಕೊಂಡವು. ‘ ಅಪ್ಪನಿಗೆ ಏನಾದರೂ ಆಗಿದೆಯೇ ?... ನಿನ್ನೆ ಏಕೆ ಅವನು ಮನೆಗೆ ಬಂದಿರಲಿಲ್ಲ? ಬಸ್ಸಿಗೇನಾದ್ರೂ ಆಕ್ಸಿಡೆಂಟ್ ? .. ಛೇ ಛೇ .. ‘ ಎಂದುಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾ ಮನೆಯ ಕಡೆಗೆ ಹೆಜ್ಜೆ ಕಿತ್ತಿಡ ತೊಡಗಿದಳು. ಇವಳನ್ನು ಕಂಡೊಡನೆಯೇ ‘ ಅಯ್ಯೋ ... ಈ ಹಾಳಾದ ಪಾಪಿ ವಯಸ್ಸಿಗೆ ಬಂದ ಮಗಳು ಇರುವಾಗ ಇನ್ನೊಬ್ಬಳ ಹಿಂದೆ ಓಡಿ ಹೋದ್ನಲ್ಲಾ .. ಇವಳ ಗತಿಯೇನು ? ತಾಯಿನೂ ಇಲ್ಲದ ತಬ್ಬಲಿನ ನಾನು ಹೇಗಪ್ಪಾ ಸಾಕ್ಲಿ ? ಇವಳ ಮದುವೆ ಹೇಗೆ ಮಾಡ್ಲಿ !! ‘ ಎಂದು ಅಜ್ಜಿ ಜೋರಾಗಿ ಕಿರುಚಿ ಕೊಂಡಳು. ಇದು ಕೇಳಿದೊಡನೆ ನೇಹಾಳ ಮನದಲ್ಲಿ ಎದ್ದಿದ್ದ ಒಂದಷ್ಟು ಸಂಶಯಗಳಿಗೆ ತೆರೆ ಬಿದ್ದಿತಾದರೂ ಅವಳಿಗೆ ಅಳುವ, ನಗುವ ಯಾವುದೇ ಭಾವನೆ ಉಂಟಾಗಲಿಲ್ಲ. ‘ ನನಗೆ ಅನ್ನಿಸಿದ ಹಾಗೆ ಅಪ್ಪನಿಗೂ ತನಗೊಂದು ಜೋಡಿ ಬೇಕು ಅನ್ನಿಸಿತೇ ? ‘ ಎಂದುಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾ ನಿಧಾನ ಬಂದು ಅಜ್ಜಿಯ ತೊಡೆಯ ಮೇಲೆ ತಲೆ ಊರಿದಳು. ಅವಳ ತಲೆಯ ಮೇಲೆ ಹನಿಯುತ್ತಾ ಮಳೆ ತನ್ನ ಆಟ ಆರಂಭಿಸಿತು.

নামহারা

-সাগ্নিক ঘোষ
(Sagnik Ghosh)

১.
স্বভাবকবি সেই ছেলেটা
ছোটোখাটো চেহারা তার,
ঘূর্ণিপাকের দূর্বিপাকে হঠাত আলাপ হয়েছিল,
হাটবাজারে চোখ টানবে এমন তাহার লাবন্য় নয়,
মোটের উপর তবুও সে সৌম্য় ছিল .

অথচ তার কলমখানার বাহার বড়
স্বভাবকবি প্রেম প্রকৃতির ধার ধারে না
অপুর মত দীঘল চোখে সমাজজোড়া দুঃখ দেখে
কলমধারায় কাব্য় ঝরায় হাল ছাড়ে না
বইপাড়াতে সব ছায়ারাই দীর্ঘতর,
সব কবিদের পাখনাজোড়া একই পালক,
স্বপ্নজোড়া যৌথখামার হার মানে না..

২.
দূরের কোনো গঙ্গাপাড়ের রাজবাড়িতে
এক বালিকার চুল উড়িয়ে বাতাস বহে--
প্রাচীন চিঠির অবশ লিপি সরিয়ে রেখে
রাজকন্য় লিখতে বসে,
বাহারি সব আঁকিবুকি
অর্থ কিংবা অর্থবিহিন
মনের ভিতর যা এসেছে,
তুলোর পুতুল, ঘুলঘুলি আর চৌকো আকাশ
তাহাই লেখে
লেখে এবং ভাসিয়ে দেয় নদীর জলে.

উড়োচিঠি ভাসতে থাকে নদীর প'রে
বাতাস ফুঁড়ে , মেঘের প'রে
কোলকাতাতে হঠাত তখন বৃষ্টি পড়ে ,বৃষ্টি পড়ে..
কবি হঠাত অন্য়মনা--
কান পেতে রয় নীল আকাশে,
খসা পাতায় সেথায় তখন গঙ্গাপাড়ের গল্প ঝরে.

ন্য়াংটো শিশু ফুটপাতেতে ইতঃস্তত
সমাজজোড়া দুঃখ ছিল, থাকবে, আছে
ভাতকাপড়ের সংগ্রামেতে বাঁচতো মানুষ, আজো বাঁচে
তবুও তো হেমন্ত যায়, শিমূল রাঙায় পূবের আকাশ
মধ্য়রাতের বইপাড়াতে একলা মোদের ফিসফিসানি
বহিয়া যায়, বহিয়া যায় ক্লান্ত বাতাস...

স্বভাবকবির নুন প্রয়োজন পান্তাভাতে
দিন ফুরানোর শেষ পিদিমে ক্লান্তি আসে
ক্রপল্লবের আহ্বানে আজ তার ই আভাষ..

Illustration by: Nazia V



TWO OR THREE THINGS I KNEW ABOUT HER

-dit7ya

You never bother to capitalize the first letter of a sentence. A fake orchestral tune haunts you repeatedly. You throw an apparently nonchalant gaze towards almost everything. You are growing up. Rapid. Swift. Abrupt. Deft. You perceive things around you. Perceptions nowadays carry surplus meaning, unlike before. You ask, unlike before. You seek answers, as you have always believed every question's true manifestation is its answer. Trading your moments with nostalgia has now become a routine. Yet, intonations fluctuate inadvertently, when you to attempt to make a conversation with yourself. You used to think you're the one in control. Touche. Morose and silent, that's how you describe yourself, to yourself. False innocence doesn't bug anymore.

You try to type linguistically coherent statements involving rhetoric which are not culturally relevant to you. A true cacophone, is what you've always wanted to become. You keep a list of brittle things in a tiny maroon purse. You prefer effortless judgments. Being unusual the most usual way, is what you hope for. You hope for miracles, too. You believe you're significant.

You have never cared to read The Magic Mountain or to watch Take Care of Your Scarf, Tatiana. You believe there's a happy way, a painless way. You convince yourself that you seek nothing but happiness/peace, yet your cognitive dissonance often reminds you of the ghastly nothingness you're submerged in, unsatisfied. You understand your current persona is a construct and is disparate to your real selves. You reckon you're confused.

You never met the woman from Italy. You never met the man in the tan jacket. You always walk with precise attention to your gait. You think you're contemptuous, highbrow and idiosyncratic. Snowfall has always been blunt to you. Often, on clammy afternoons, in an endless hallway, a few stabs of happiness baffle you. Often, on rusty weekends you find yourself in a solitary abyss, sobbing, for unknown reasons.

[*Texts which could have influenced this writing: Music of Alias Conrad Coldwood, Cristobal Tapia de Veer and Disparition, Writings of Charles Bukowski and Jeffrey Cranor & Janina Matthewson, Films of Lars von Trier and Chantal Akerman, Visuals of Jessica Hayworth and Rhoda Penmarq.*]

Illustration by: Shraddha Bhurkunde

காதலில் விழந்தேன்

பகலவன் மறைந்த பலநாழிகைகள் கடந்திரக்கம். நான்க மாதங்களக்க மன் அறிமகமான நகரத்தின் மத்தியில், தணற்காற்ற நாடியையே உறைக்கம் நோக்கம் கொண்ட எனத மெல்லிய உடலக்கள் ஊடரவப் பார்த்தத. நாய்கள் பாராளமன்றத்தப் பேய்களைப் போல் மற்போர் பரிந்த கொண்டிரந்தன. மனிதர் மன்னிலையில் உலகிலேயே சாதவான நாய்கள் அவைதான்! இங்க இசைத்தமிழைப் பரக ஒரேவழி, கைபேசியில் இசைப்பயல் அடித்தக்கொண்டிரந்தத. இன்பமோ தன்பமோ, ஒவ்வொன்றம் ஒரவிதக் காதல் பாடல்தான்!என்காதலக்கள்சிந்தனைசென்றத.நிகழ்வகளைப் பரட்ட காலத்தின் பின்னோக்கிச் சென்றேன்.

வகப்பில்(அரங்கத்தில்)200மாணவர்கள்உடன்பயில்கின்றனர். மதியைக் கலக்கம் சவால்கள், ஏழ அறிவியல் பாடங்கள், வழிநடத்த ஆய்வாளர்,ஏழ ஆசிரியர்கள், அணவம் பழவம், ஆதியம் வேதியம், சித்தமம் சகலமம், அறிவியலே வாழ்வ! உண்மைக் கணிதம் பயின்றோம், கணிணியம் கற்றோம், உலகத்தைப் பொடியாக்கிச்சிந்தித்தோம்.
சில தோழர்கள், வெக சில தோழிகள், ஆட்டம் பாட்டம், விளையாட்ட எதற்கம் பஞ்சமில்லை. 6 மணி நேரத் தூக்கம், எழந்ததம் ஓட்டம். ஊர் சற்றினேன்; தனிமையில் ஆடினேன்; களியலில் பாடினேன்.

'தனிமை', இந்த நோய் என்னையம் விட்டவைக்கவில்லை. இதனை ஒழிக்க நான் யாரிடமம் அன்ப பாராட்டிப் பழகவில்லை. ஆகா! சரிதான். இத எனக்க மட்டம் ஏற்பட்ட நோய் அல்ல! ஒர வரடத்திற்க மன் யார் மறைவிற்காக நான் உட்பட இளைஞர் சமதாயமே கண்ணீர் சிந்தியதோ, அவர் வாழ்வைப் பற்றி எண்ணினேன். அவர் தனிமையில் வாழ்ந்திரந்தாலம் இலட்சியம் எட்டத் தணிந்ததார். இன்ற கோடிக்கணக்கானோர் மனதினில் ஆலயம் கொண்டள்ளார். பத்தயிர் பிறந்தத. காற்றைக் கிழித்தக் கொண்ட ஓடினேன்.
விழந்தேன்! காதலில் விழந்தேன்; வானின் மீதம் மண்ணின் மீதம் காதலில் விழந்தேன்; உடல் மீதம் உயிர் மீதம் காதலில் விழந்தேன்; பரந்த உலகம், பரம்பொரளம், பெரம் ஆற்றல் அரள மாபெரம் சோதனைகளிலம் வாழ்வில் வெல்லவம் காதலில் விழந்தேன், பெண்ணின் மீதல்ல, நான் அறியாச் சிறவனய்யா... எழந்தான் பகலவன்.

இப்படிக்க,
பகலவன் (தமிழில் Dinesh)
அறிவியல் மாணவன்.
நான் வித்தியாசமானவன். பணத்திற்காக அல்ல பகழக்காக அல்ல, மனத்திற்காகவே வாழ்கிறோம்.

-Dinesh PR

Illustration by: Ankur Panchal

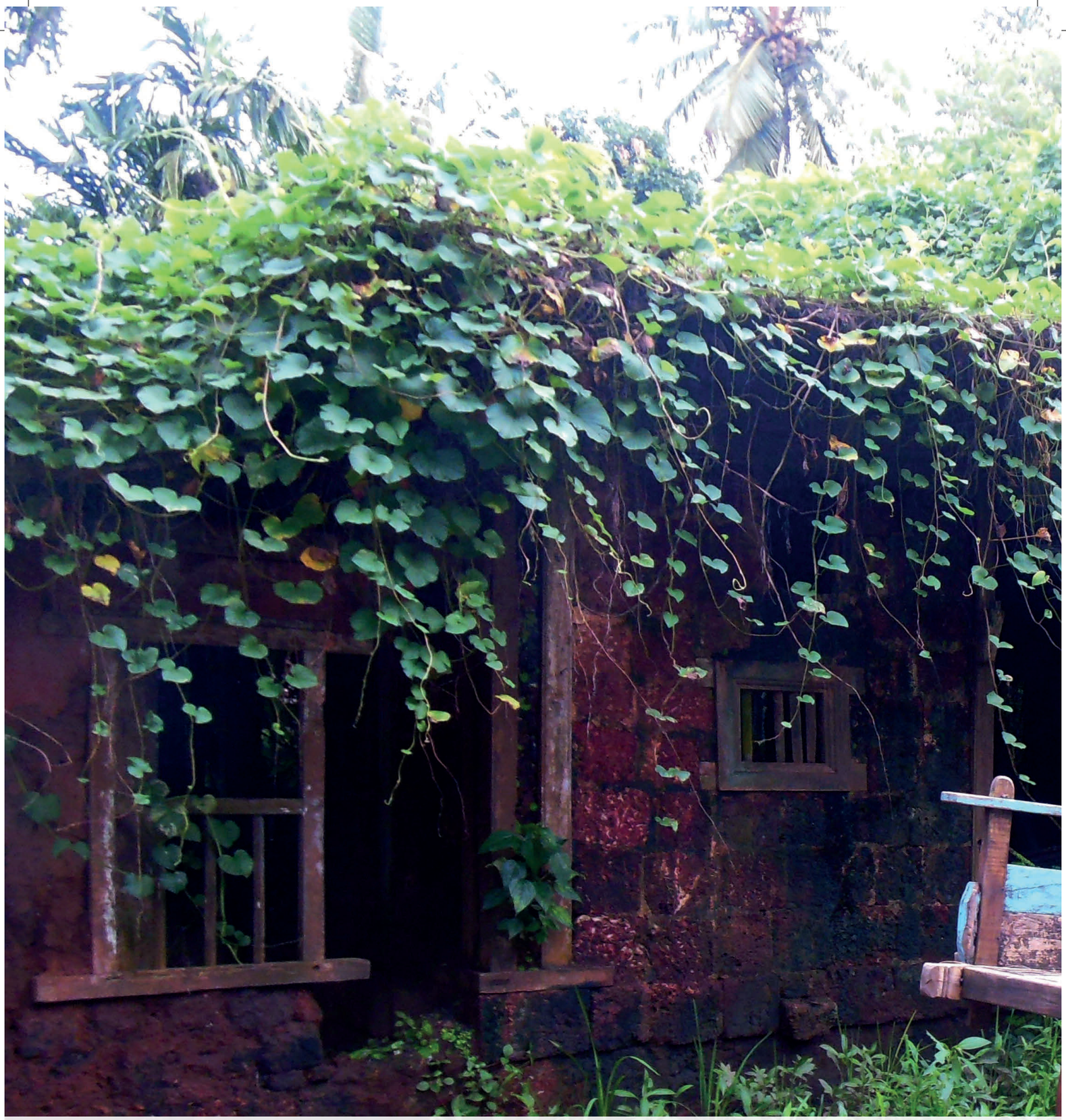
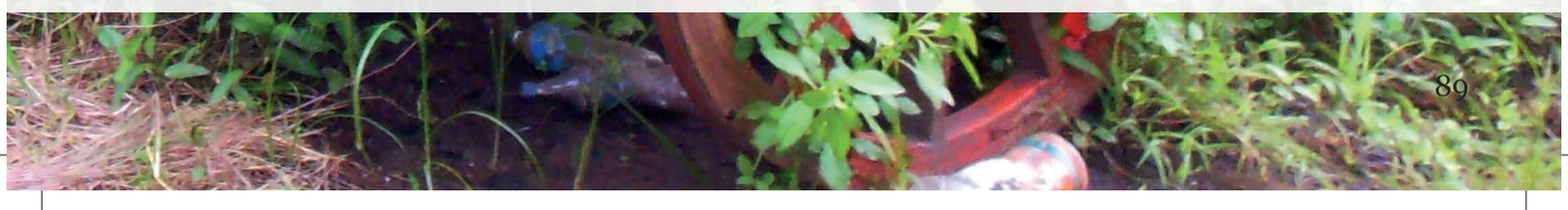


Photo credits: Sharvari T



'In life, a person will come and go from many homes. We may leave a house, a town, a room, but that does not mean those places leave us. Once entered, we never entirely depart the homes we make for ourselves in the world. They follow us, like shadows, until we come upon them again, waiting for us in the mist.'

-Ari Berk, Death Watch



BARRIER

-Sahana Srivathsa

Annoyed with the world as a whole, with a torrent of thoughts and opinions rushing about in your head, and positively brimming with ideas, you eagerly sit down in front of your laptop, raring to go on a nice, long satisfying rant. You laugh at the minimum word limit, almost mockingly expressing concern about not writing twice the required length. The blank new page beckons, as enticing as a double-chocolate fudge sundae on a rainy day. Your fingers poise over the keyboard as a myriad of ideas clamour for attention, each striving to be recognised first and attain that all-important honour of gracing the top of the article, but also with the responsibility of captivating the reader and drawing them in. Fingers race across the keyboard as quickly as IISERites leaving the mess upon noticing brinjal on the menu, hitting backspace as often as not, rewriting that essential first sentence, until it simply clicks, almost audibly in your head. The perfect paragraph pours forth effortlessly, the words melding into one another as seamlessly as an orchestra symphony in Carnegie Hall.

You sit up straight, pleased as punch with your initial paragraph. You adopt a suitably solemn demeanour, as your thoughts begin to gain some semblance of structure, and resume writing, only at a slightly more sedate pace. You choose and discard words with the finesse of a matronly housewife inspecting apples at the local market, aware that just one or two poorly constructed sentences could ultimately result in the downfall of your masterpiece. As your article progresses and paragraphs build, the framework begins to arise out of the foundation. As flashes of new ideas pop into your head, as often and erratic as lost and found emails in your inbox, each seemingly more brilliant than the former, you end up retracing your steps, adding and expanding your foundation.

Amidst your earnest contemplation of your article, an errant distraction sneaks past your well-constructed mental defenses, as stealthily as a cheetah stalking its prey, slowly weaning your mind away from the topic at hand. It's just a momentary lapse, and you deserve a break, you justify to yourself, little realising that you're entering- a void of unproductivity and procrastination, with the power of a million black holes. That one wayward thought leads to another that leads to a simple Google search, that links to an innocent blog and ultimately, traverses an endless path of articles and into the vortex of YouTube. You end up dipping your toes into the pool of social media with Facebook and Tumblr, until you're hopelessly entrapped and engrossed in some article explaining the science behind whether a dress is blue or white, having completely forgotten the original topic at hand or even the existence of your deadline.

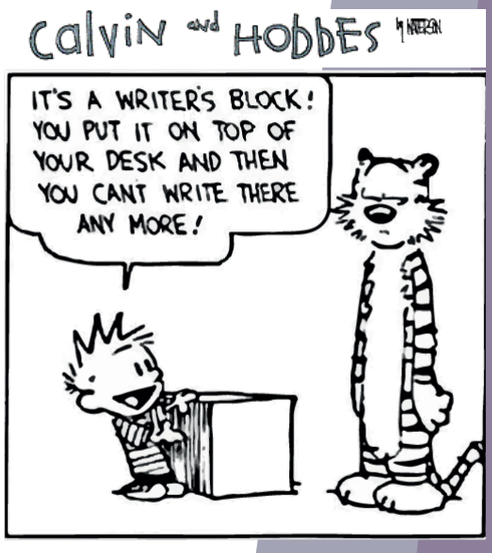
Gradually, a niggling feeling of guilt builds up, enough to make you return to the draft in a valiant attempt to resume writing. After realigning your thoughts, which have been scattered like dust in the wind, you strive to achieve that smooth uninterrupted flow of thoughts, but quickly realise, after a couple of haphazard sentences written over a span of nearly a quarter of an hour, that your mind is simply far too distracted. Reasoning that another ten minutes of meandering aimlessly across the captivating cyberspace can do no harm, you return to your surfing with the occasional cry for attention from your phone, which has also suddenly grasped your attention. Happily lost in limbo, oblivious to time, you resurface an hour later, slightly panicked, but you squash those seeds of worry with the determination to complete your task.

Except, when you resume, you find that your outlines are now as dispersed as debris from the aftermath of a tornado. You struggle in vain to form a coherent and relevant thought, and you even try listening to a tune or two to jog your memory but your mind remains resolutely blank on the subject. Deciding that a quick search on the history and the reasoning behind a writer's block might prove useful, you depart on yet another diversion. You reason that perhaps a change of venue might do the trick, only now your attention, already as fickle as Peter Pettigrew, is enamoured by the minutest detail in your surroundings, and your mind begins building fanciful tales around even the stream of ants laboriously trudging past your feet.

Once more, you strain and strive, wracking your brains for some continuity, clinging to the mere ghosts of those bold ideas which filled your mind at the beginning. A

stray sentence or two emerges feebly and your mind sinks back into oblivion, tired by the effort. While your brain remains resolutely blank on the topic at hand, other ideas steadily creep into your head and side plots emerge, sowing doubt as to whether this was the right topic to choose or not. Frustrated and running out of comfortable positions to stretch about on your chair, you give into the progressively increasing pangs of hunger and depart for yet another break, refusing to acknowledge your impending deadline, comforting yourself with the words of Douglas Adams, 'I love deadlines, I love the whooshing sound they make as they go by'.

Fortified with enough junk to clog your arteries, rubbing your tired eyes, you return to your essay whose previously laughable word limit has now reached proportions the size of Mt. Everest. Arduously, you trudge through the rest of the article, the weight of creating each sentence increasing rapidly, culminating in the feeling of facing the burden of Atlas. Forget masterpiece, satisfied with a merely acceptable article now, your sluggish spirits begin to rise as they see the word limit approaching. The last few sentences are again a blur, emerging just as fast as your first few, only chosen with a great deal of less care. As your fingers press that last full stop, you actually jump out of your seat with a cry of triumph (which sounds a like gibberish war cry to everyone around you) and want nothing more than to slam your laptop shut and crawl off to sleep. However, slowly from the other side of the mountain, having finished the mammoth task, your patience stretches a little further, enough for you to give it another cursory glance before you realise that you are well past your deadline. You send off your article with notes of apologies, fervently vowing to start writing well before the deadline next time, knowing full well that you'll end up back at the top of this article once more.



A VERY NEAT ARRANGEMENT

-Prashastha Mishra

As soon as the bus came to a stop, the passengers tumbled out of their seats, pushing and swearing. Ani stayed on in her seat, waiting for the pushing crowd to get out. Stupid, uncultured people, she thought. Can't they go one by one, silently? She was the only non-native in the bus, and the two hours of journey had been hell. The mountain roads that curved and curved uphill had been unnerving enough, but no, it was the people. You could feel their eyes on you, all the time, with curiosity or sometimes with plain derision filled in them.

She stepped out of the bus after the commotion was over, with more than a little trepidation. The colour of her skin would always lead the touts to think of her as an easy target. She was not an easy target, but she was a helpless one – she never knew how to shake them off. And she did not know now either, when half a dozen swarthy faces surrounded her, aggressively peddling their services in barely intelligible English. Ani walked on, pretending to take no notice, hoping to tire them out before long. It was quite a long time before they went away. Even then, one chap kept on pursuing her, persistently advertising a certain hotel.

'Central heating, ma'am, central heating,' he recited. 'Very cheap, very cheap.'

'I'm sorry, but I'm not interested,' said Ani, exasperated. Please go away.

He just smiled in response and stopped on his way. Ani walked on, thinking she had shaken him off, and hailed a passing autorickshaw. But the rickshaw didn't stop for her, adding to her irritation. She'd have to wait before one more passed by, and probably there weren't many in a sleepy, mountainous town like this. Ani felt a pang of regret as she remembered her mother's warnings when she had declared her intent to travel alone through this poor, mountain country. But she looked up at the clear, sunny sky, and the mountains that stood in all their glory, unhindered by clouds. The regret was gone.
'Ma'am, ma'am,' said a voice from behind her. It was the same tout who had been pursuing her. Ani stared at him in a mixture of annoyance and helplessness, and could find nothing to say.

'We'll give you special discount, ma'am, please,' he said. He was a tall, wiry man who couldn't have been more than thirty, she supposed. Didn't he understand her? She thought he did, as he grinned toothily, a mocking grin that was reflected in his slanted eyes. She felt he was just taking a perverse pleasure in hounding her. How disgusting he is, she thought.

'Please, I don't want your hotel,' she said, slowly. 'Do you understand? Go away, please.'

He feigned to not understand and recited again, 'discount for you, only for you, ma'am, please, ma'am.' He was smiling all the while.

Ani walked away, as fast as she could, hoping that an autorickshaw would come and haul her away from his unsettling creature. But there wasn't any in sight, and she could hear the supremely annoying voice behind her, ma'am-ing away relentlessly. She must have walked at least a hundred metres, but he was still there, giving no signs of taking leave.

'Don't you trouble her,' said another voice behind her, a female voice. It was a woman in a nurse's uniform. She was white and her accent had a trace of French in it.
'I was just trying to help her, ma'am,' said the man.
'No, you were not. You were following her and troubling her,' said the woman. She turned briefly to Ani, giving her a sympathetic glance. 'Don't you see, it's people like you, who harass tourists and put them off. Now go away, leave her alone.'

The man rolled his eyes cheekily, shrugged and walked away, hands in pockets. Good riddance, thought Ani.

'Thank you so much,' said Ani to this unexpected benefactor.

'Oh, no problem,' said the nurse with a kind smile. 'I've seen away many pests like that. Anyway, you new here?'



ILLUSTRATION BY: AMRUTA SWAMINATHAN

'Yes, yes, I arrived just a fortnight ago,' replied Ani. The woman looked like she was at the brink of her thirties and was quite striking in appearance, despite her unkempt hair and uniform. She had a very pleasant manner, warm and protective. Besides, she was white, a foreigner just like her. Ani felt like she'd found a kindred soul, stranger though this woman was. The woman started walking and Ani followed her, hoping to make an acquaintance. She had been very lonely since she had landed in this alien land. Not that it was any different back in her own country.
'Been hiking, eh?' asked the woman.
'Yes.'
'It's a lovely country. Don't you think so?'
'Yes, it is indeed. Very lovely.'
'Are you having a good time? Oh, so rude of me! I forgot to ask you your name!'
'That's alright,' Ani replied, smiling. 'I'm Ani. What's your name?'
'My name's Marie. Marie Poulin. I'm from Quebec, you see.'
'Oh, that's nice. Do you work here?'
'No, no. I work in the capital, for a small charity. I was called here for a month, because of a little outbreak in these parts, you see. I only have a week left now.'
'It's nice of you to come and work in such a place when you could've been working in Quebec.'
'Well, nice of you to say that, but it's not much. Only a year, you see.'
'But, anyway —' Ani began, but Marie gave a sudden exclamation.
'Look! It's that same man who was hounding you. There, there, staring at you.'

And indeed, he was there, staring unmistakably at Ani's direction from behind an electricity pole. Ani met his mocking eyes for a second and he made no effort to look away. She shuddered.

'Look, he seems to be quite a creep. Why don't you come with me to my house? You could wait at my place for some time. Just to shake this creep off, you know. Have some coffee and then you can leave for your hotel.'

Ani nodded her assent, while a dread lurked in a corner of her mind. She remembered her mother saying that tourists had been getting murdered in the country, that it might not be safe for her. Ani had laughed away her mother's fears, but she had been spooked enough to do a little internet search about the murders. It had been only four or five tourists, and even then, nobody was sure that they were murdered. Nothing to really worry about, she'd thought then. But this man, this man was distinctly unsettling. Ani had no trouble imagining him as a killer.
'Thanks, you're very kind,' said Ani, sincerely and a trifle belatedly.
'Oh, don't mention it. It's no trouble and it's a bit necessary, looking at that man. Besides, it's nice to talk to a person who doesn't belong here – you know what I mean right?'
'Yes, yes, I do.'
'Are you all alone? No friends to join you here later?'
'No, I came alone.' Ani had no choice but to come alone – she had only a few friends and none would have been willing to accompany her to a third-world country to look at mountains.
'Well, that's brave of you.'
'Why?' Ani thought the woman was referring to

the serial killings, or the purported serial killing.
'Because it's so different here! Barely anyone speaks English, barely any decent hotel around. So much of chaos, too. If I were you, I'd rather go off to the Alps than come here for a holiday!'
'Oh, I suppose you're right. But I wanted to see something new and I didn't have much money. The Alps are expensive, you know. It's much, much cheaper here.'
'Ah, that's sensible enough.'
They fell silent. Ani took off her attention from her companion and looked around her. They had long left the main road and were now walking in an empty lane that was encroached by garbage. The sun was right above their heads and it shone with surprising heat. Ani took her jacket off.
'It's rather dirty, this lane,' said Marie, as if she'd guessed Ani's thoughts. But the place I've been given is quite charming. It's an old cottage, quite far from the other houses and with a nice little garden too. You get a lovely view of the mountains from the garden.

Ani smiled and muttered something about everything being so lovely. She quite liked this woman and was grateful for protecting her from that nasty man, but she couldn't help finding her boring. She let the conversation wane.

Before long, they reached a little house, indeed quite apart from the other houses, and barely visible behind the lush, close-growing trees in the garden. Marie opened the rusted iron gate and it creaked painfully, its sound lurking in the still air.

'Come in,' said Marie, as she opened the door to the living room. It was spotlessly neat and quite bare, except for a few wooden chairs around an ancient tea pot, and a painting on the wall that Ani thought she'd seen before. It had a shapeless man looking like he was screaming.

'Sit down, while I make some coffee. I guess you'll like some cookies with it too? You must be hungry,' Marie said.

'Yes, that'd be very nice. Thank you so much,' Ani said. She was taken aback by such kindness. She hadn't seen much kindness in her life.

Ani looked at her phone. There was no signal. And it was very quiet; there were no sounds from the kitchen either.

There suddenly came a knock on the door, a sharp one, followed by two more staccato knocks that were rather startling in effect. Marie rushed to the door with marked quickness, as if she'd been expecting this particular visitor.

She opened the door and a man came in. Ani looked on, her heart sinking into horror. It was the man who had been following her, the man Marie had been sheltering her from. He looked around him and smiled with utmost satisfaction when he met her shocked eyes. She didn't hear Marie turn the key into the door's lock.

'Well done, darling,' said the man, looking on at Ani.

'Oh, you put on a much better performance,' Marie replied, her face echoing the same sinister smile the man had. 'Now, let's hurry. Did you buy new ropes?'

DRUNK

—Sayantani Choudhury



The goblet beckons me with its silver gleam
To taste the glory of flame
The world's not what it should seem
To be; no, it's not the same.
The shots go down, down the lane
To the borderline of what's insane and sane
Until they flow into sparkling fireworks,
Then explode into a cacophony of curse.
Basking in the euphoric glory of drunken nights
Star-struck in the illusions of doubtful sights
Inhibitions melt far, far away
Somewhere in the middle of next day.
I lose myself in the party lights
I float in the midst of oblivion
I stagger from the scrapes earned in fights
But I am far from being done.
Fire burns its way through me
My eyelids droop down heavily
I don't know what I feel, hear or see
I'm falling, falling ever so slowly.
In the midst of the dark
Perhaps in a stranger's arms
The icy fire finds its heated mark
Somewhere in my mind, ending his charms.
My senses flood my battered beaten brain
To remind me of losses far greater than any gain
The pain stabs me all over like a killer's bloody knife
The agony it offers brings me back to life.

ILLUSTRATION BY: NAZIA V

দ্বিতীয়া

—মেঘমালা সরকার
(Meghamala Sarkar)

প্রতিবাদী মন আজ হঠাৎ-ই অসম্ভব -
যেন সে এক মহাপ্রলয়ের সম্মুখীন!
খোঁজে পালাবার রাস্তা;
পিঠ ঠেকে গেছে অভেদ্য পাথুরে দেওয়ালে।
পথ নেই !!
স্বীকারোক্তি নামছে আজ কান্না হয়ে,
বড় বড় ফোঁটায়, শিশিরবিন্দু রূপে;
নিম্নচাপের বোবা অসহায় দহনে-
সাক্ষী আজ কেবলই অর্ন্তদ্বন্দ্ব ।।

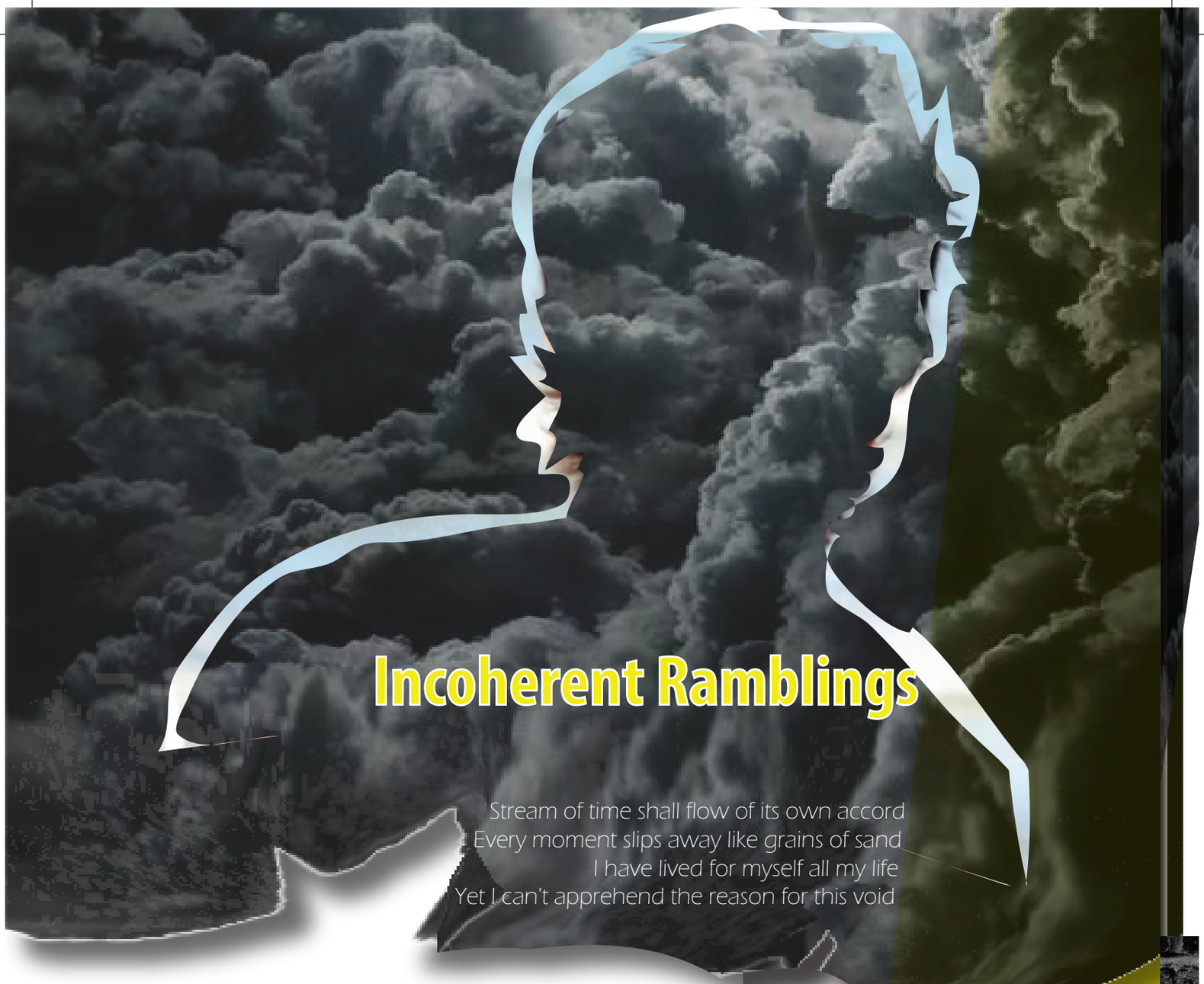
ಕಡಲ ತೀರದಲಿ ಹುಣ್ಣಿಮೇಯ ಓಂದಿರುಳು

–ರಜತ ಆರ ಸಾವಂತ
(Rajath R Sawanth)

ಬೆಳದಿಂಗಳ ಛಾಯೇಯಲಿ, ಹಾಲು ನೋರೆಯ ಕಡಲ ಅಲೇಗಳಲಿ
ತೇಲಿತು ಮನವು ಸುಖದಲಿ, ತಂಬೇಲರ ಜೋತೆಗೇ.
ಪೂರ್ಣಚಂದಿರ ಪ್ರತಿಬಿಂಬ, ತೆರೆಗಳ ಝಳುರುಝಳು ಸಪ್ಪಳಗಳ
ನಡುವೇ
ಬೇಗುದಿ ತುಂಬಿದ ಚಿತ್ತ, ತಲುಪಿತು ಶಾಂತ ಸ್ಥಿತಿಗೇ.

ತಿಳಿಗಾಳಿಯಲಿ ತೇಲಿಬಂದಿದೇ ತಂಪಾದ ಸವಿ ಮುರಳಿಯ ಗಾನ
ಸುಂದರ ಕನಸೋಂದನು ಮೂಡಿಸಿದೇ ಈ ಮಧುರವಾದ ಮೌನ
ಸಾಗರ ಚಂದಿರನ ಮಿಲನ, ಓಂದು ಸುಂದರ ಪ್ರೇಮಕವನ,
ಈ ಹುಣ್ಣಿಮೇಯಿರುಳು ಶೃಂಗಾರ ರಸದೌತಣ

ಆಹಾ! ಏಂತಹ ಮೋಡಿ, ಕಲ್ಲು ಹೃದಯದಲ್ಲೂ ರಸಿಕತೆಯ
ಹರಿಸಬಲ್ಲಂತಹ ಮೋಡಿ
ಏಲೈ ಕಡಲೇ, ಕಲಿತೇಯೇಲ್ಲಿಂದ ಈ ಮನಮೋಹಕ ಕಲೆಯನ್ನು
ನಾ ಏನೇಂದು ಹೇಳಲಿ ನನ್ನ ಮೌಢ್ಯವನ್ನು
ಪ್ರಕೃತಿಯಿಂದಲ್ಲವೇ ನಾವು ಕಲೆತದ್ದು ಸಕಲ ಕಲೆಗಳನ್ನು!



Incoherent Ramblings

Stream of time shall flow of its own accord
Every moment slips away like grains of sand
I have lived for myself all my life
Yet I can't apprehend the reason for this void

When shall I understand that I am lost
Lost like a candle among the bright lights
I traverse like a gypsy on a distant land
Disconnected and detached from myself

Like an October leaf carried around by gusts
I've lost the track of my mind and soul
Wandering around endlessly
Seeking something that I couldn't ever get

I feel like the porter in Macbeth
Entangled in the gateway to life and death
Incoherent ramblings that sound like a distant cry
Would shake the principles that you've stood by

Abhijit Ghosh

నా స్వప్నం

—నర్సి (Lakshman Teja)

స్వప్నం- అందుకోలేనిది అందుకోగలనన్న నమ్మకం
తెలియని ప్రశ్నకు కావాలన్న జవాబు
కాగుతున్న కట్టె మీద పొసిన నూనె నా స్వప్నం
తెలవారుతున్న సూర్యుడే నా స్వప్నం
జరుగుతున్న వాస్తవం, ఊహకందని నిదర్శనం
సాగుతున్న కాలం ప్రతిరూపం ఈ స్వప్నం
మరుజన్మ సాధ్యమనే ఆశ, మరో రోజు
ఉందన్న మేల్కొలుపు నా స్వప్నం
ప్రేమికురాలి చిరునవ్వు నా స్వప్నం దానిని
ఒడిసిపట్టడానికి నేను చేసిన ప్రయత్నం మరో స్వప్నం
నిశి రాతిరి తనలో దాచుకున్న అందం
ఎడారిగా మారిన జీవితం ఓ స్వప్నం
సామ్యమనుకునే చెలిమి, విద్వేశంతో రగిలే బుగులు
నేను మంచోడిని అని గుర్తుచేసే స్నేహం ఈ స్వప్నం
నాలో చెడుని యెత్తిచూపే అద్దం ఈ స్వప్నం
చిరుగాలి తాకిడి, పెనుతుఫాను అలజడి
అన్నీ నా స్వప్న సారాంశం



Illustrations by: Nima Rose Manjila

Just another airport experience

-Janani Ananthanarayan

At least, my life wasn't boring.

After waving goodbye to mom after security clearance from the other side of the glass wall way inside the Chennai Airport, I walk towards Krispy Kreme and get myself a Large Vanilla Caramel Americano. I walk towards Gate No. 1, after stuffing my boarding pass into my bag. I make my usual stop at the bookstore and check up on all my favourite authors. Judge some books by their cover, read up the synopsis and snap a quick picture of the book if I wanted to read it later. I get so engrossed in Veronica Roth's new book 'Carve the Mark' that when I hear an 'Ahem', I ignore. Then someone pokes my arm and something warm touches my skin. The kid I had asked to hold my coffee while I dug around my bag looking for my cellphone, was looking mildly annoyed, and was still holding my coffee. I mutter a horrified sorry and thank you to the kid and run-walk out of the store. Then I realize I still hadn't taken my coffee from the kid, and get back in to see him laughing.

After mentally face-palming myself about 20 times, I resume my journey to the gate. On the way, I look at all the other stores I never noticed before because I never came so far inside. A café named 'Coffee beans and Tea leaves' makes me stop dead on my tracks. As I mentally tasted all the items on their menu, I casually glance around. Lady with nice hair, customer, dude with Skullcandy headphones, Gautham Menon, customer, wait, Gautham Menon? It really was Gautham Menon! He was one of the very few Tamil movie directors I knew and he was chatting with someone. A crazy-happy grin materializes on my face as I stare at him for a few seconds, and he keeps pointedly ignoring me. So I turn around with the still crazy grin on my face, and start walking away. How many people get the chance to meet Gautham Menon and then just walk away from him? That's right, not many! And I am one of them. I am so pleased with myself that it takes me a few seconds to realise that I am walking in the wrong direction. Oops.

About 10 minutes later, I get up and walk towards the gate as the official guy starts making the boarding announcement. It takes the others a while to notice so I am the first one in the line. As a huge queue starts forming behind me, I remember stuffing my boarding pass into my bag. As I frantically swing my bag around to look for it, I spill some of that really hot coffee on my shirt. Ouch! It's still really hot! I realise I am holding up the line. So I move to a corner, put down my coffee and bag, and kneel down to search for it. Half the queue later, to my relief, I find it neatly tucked in between the folds of a scarf. I get it scanned, walk through the aero bridge, and stow my hand luggage and settle into my seat with a sigh. I could finally finish my coffee. As I lift the cup to my mouth, I notice the words 'Caution-Hot' on the cover. Like I didn't know that. *Sorry, cup, you're too late.* I irately lean back into my seat. I do it so suddenly, that I spill more coffee onto myself. It's still hot.

I take my phone out and choose a random playlist. Not that random. It's always from the 'Recently Played' list. I close my eyes and pretend to not care about the alarming speed the plane always picks up and try to revel in the experience. As it takes off, I keep looking outside the window. As the plane rises higher and higher, I notice the buildings, the roads, the trees, people, everything become smaller and smaller. Like toys. The whole world looks like a giant land of toys, and when someone flew this high, whatever happened below, was beneath them. Would they care if someone tripped and

fell? No. Would they care if someone spilt coffee on themselves? No. Would they care if two cars crashed in an accident? It would seem cold of them if they didn't, but they don't have to. In fact, the exact same thing could be happening in millions of parts of the world, at that particular moment, but nobody cares about that, do they? So it wouldn't really hurt to allow some room to make mistakes, I tell myself.

We are amidst clouds now, that look like white cotton candy. They look so solid and so real, that I can almost imagine falling on them and feel the fluffiness against my face; taste the sweet mouthfuls of sugary softness melt on my tongue. I can roll on them all day, with the sun shining on my face and with warmth seeping into my skin. But the more and more I try to think of it as a field of cotton candy; the more and more contradictory it feels. What's outside the window isn't a field; it's an ocean. It's an ocean of clouds. The thought of walking by foot all over an ocean of clouds make my lazy bones weep. So, maybe I can navigate it with a ship. A ship with which I can set sail to the Sun. And I'll be to the clouds what Jack Sparrow was to the sea. I'll name my ship the White Pearl, and 'Snap!' goes inside my mind as the window closes shut by the dude next to me.

I literally snap back to reality at this moment. Several alarming contradictions come to me all at once. The clouds aren't solid. I won't fall on them, as I'll fall through them; down into the giant land of not-really-toys. The clouds aren't sweet and soft cotton candy; they are colloids of dirt and water vapor. If the sun kept shining on me for too long, I'll get skin cancer from all the UV rays my skin is likely to absorb. It is an ocean of clouds, yes, but I can't navigate it on a ship. I will need a submarine. And I am in a submarine right now. The plane is kind of a submarine. And the ship I need to set sail to the sun in, would be of a totally different kind. And I would get cooked to death upon reaching there, if I weren't already dead of old age.

I take off my earphones and curse at everything; the dude who shut off my view, the clouds, the heat of the sunlight, me, everything. We are at a safe cruising altitude, and there is no more mandatory seatbelt or open windows. That's why that dude must have kept it open this long in the first place. I sigh and come to a conclusion that it isn't good for me to dream with my eyes open. With eyes closed, at least my dreams are safe, even if just as dreams, in the haven of my sleep.

I can't help but smile and chastise myself on my way back to hostel in the prepaid auto. Yes, things around me always get weird, anxious, alarming and funny in the end, and no day is a normal day. But at the least, it isn't a boring life.

DO WE PERCIEVE WHAT WE SEE?

-Dr G S Grover



Sheila got up in the morning and as usual, went straight to the kitchen to make tea for herself and her husband. She poured water in a pan, lit the gas burner and kept the water for boiling. Within a minute, she spotted a few cockroaches escaping out from the hot surface of the gas burner. Sheila was known for her clean habits and the sight of tiny cockroaches early in the morning made her furious. She immediately pulled out a *HIT* canister from the cupboard and spontaneously spray pumped the insecticide at the running cockroaches to annihilate them. But then, *Oh No!!*, the fire from the gas burner flashed back at her face and engulfed her face, upper body and clothes. She was screaming and crying for help. She was moved to a hospital with 40% burns.

But how and where did the things go so horribly wrong? She was just spraying the insecticide on the insects. But then, she (like most of us) did not read the labels properly and did not know that the insecticide from the canister comes out with a force due to a propellant inside. That propellant is a highly flammable gas – propane that can catch fire, even from a distance. Similar is the case with several of the deodorant canisters that we use so regularly. These also contain a propellant to pump the perfume or fragrance out and freshen us up.

We are surrounded by chemicals. The food that we eat, the water and juices that we drink, the air that we breathe are all chemicals in some form or the other. We take medicines to get well and use cosmetics to enhance our appearance – all chemicals or their formulations. At home, we use LPG for cooking. We also use insecticide sprays for controlling insects and pests. Generally, all of these help in making our lives comfortable. But sometimes, they can also threaten our health, wellbeing and safety.

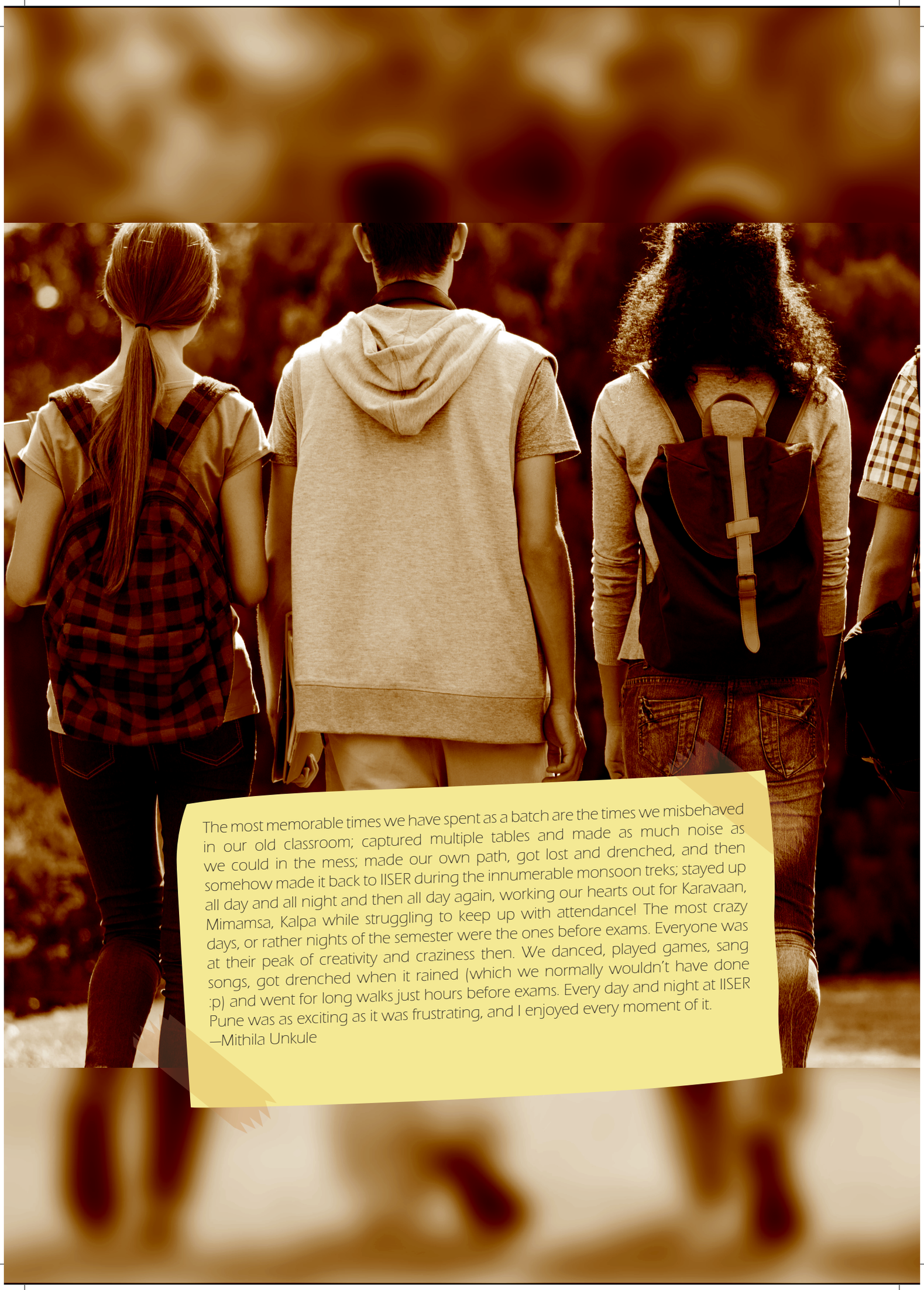
The problem is that we just do not have the habit of reading labels and understanding their implications. For example, chemicals like acetone, hexane, ethyl alcohol, tankers carrying petrol etc. have labels which indicate that they are 'flammable'. It further conveys that to prevent it from catching fire unintentionally, we must keep it away from flame, spark, or any

source of ignition. Bringing flame to the content or taking the flammable material towards the flame will have the same effect – *fire*. Do you have any idea of how small an ignition source is required to ignite flammable materials? You do not need a big flame from a matchstick, a candle or a cigarette lighter. Recall that in the ancient times, man used to rub two stones to create a spark! Nowadays, all of use LPG and we ignite a flame every time with a piezo gas lighter. Just turn it around and press the trigger to see how tiny the spark is to ignite the LPG. Yes, it is true that such a small and miniscule thing can do wonders or create havoc. You must have also read about fuel tankers catching fire, due to spark generated by the friction of the materials being transferred.

Labels are simple pictograms meant to convey a lot even to the layman. But do we care? Cigarettes have several warning labels on them that explicitly tell us about the effects of smoking. But even if we read a label, the message does not trigger the response it is intended to! Similarly, the yellow 'Wet Floor' board, kept when the floor is being cleaned, is meant to warn us that we may trip and fall on the wet floor. We must train our minds to respond to such labels with an effect that is equivalent to a response when we see a red signal at a crossing, where we immediately respond by stopping the vehicle.

Every packaging has a label. How often do we take the time out to read a label? We must make a habit of reading a label well. Let it be a mineral water bottle, a chocolate, cool drink, shoe polish or even *Kurkure*. It will enlighten us like never before. Had Sheila read the label on the HIT canister and understood the nature and hazards of the chemicals, she would have been safe today, making another cup of morning tea.

Finally, we also have a social obligation to propagate this information to the sections of the society, who do not have access to it. Share your understanding and experiences with people around you to benefit them. Share your stories and adventures of success. You will be their proud master.

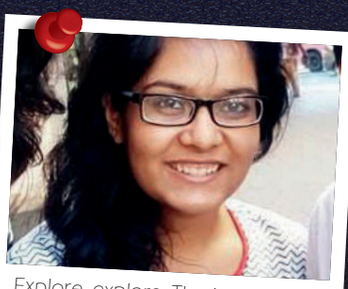


The most memorable times we have spent as a batch are the times we misbehaved in our old classroom; captured multiple tables and made as much noise as we could in the mess; made our own path, got lost and drenched, and then somehow made it back to IISER during the innumerable monsoon treks; stayed up all day and all night and then all day again, working our hearts out for Karavaan, Mimamsa, Kalpa while struggling to keep up with attendance! The most crazy days, or rather nights of the semester were the ones before exams. Everyone was at their peak of creativity and craziness then. We danced, played games, sang songs, got drenched when it rained (which we normally wouldn't have done :p) and went for long walks just hours before exams. Every day and night at IISER Pune was as exciting as it was frustrating, and I enjoyed every moment of it.
—Mithila Unkule


NOSTALGIA

After five memorable years filled with moments bitter and sweet, it's time to bid goodbye to the batch of 2012. Over the next few pages, immerse yourselves in their antics and fun-filled memories, and celebrate their uniqueness with their farewell quotes, either original or borrowed from people they know or from a source of inspiration.

This section is dedicated to you, batch of 2012! Here is to the amazing five years, and a hope for an even more amazing future!



Explore, explore. The journey just started
Shipra Kumar



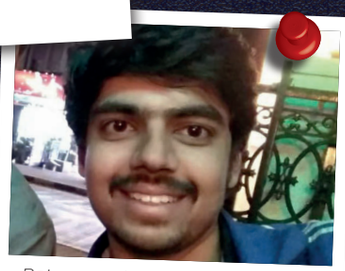
'Abandon all hope, ye who enter here.' - Dante
Vishak Sagar



Hai srishthi! main tera abhaari hun
Dinesh Bulani



'How odd I can have all this inside me and to you it's just words.'
- David Foster Wallace, The Pale King
Chris John



Baba remained vegetarian for 5 years!
Girish



'It is our choices that show us w
we truly are, far more than o
abilities.' - Albus Dumbledore
Mithila Unkule



If you want to be happy in life give up three things - fear, shame and lust.
Kunal Mozumdar



Enjoy every moment of life
Surya R



'The woods are lovely, dark and deep, But I have promises to keep, And miles to go before I sleep, And miles to go before I sleep' - Robert Frost

Prasanth P Chandran



'It was the best of times, it was the worst of times'

Subhadra Mokashe



I stopped telling myself that I'm lost. I'm not lost, I'm on my way.

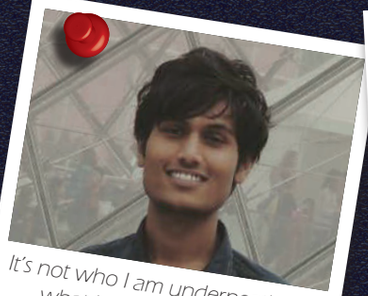
Debarun Ghosh

One day, in our second year, I was sitting in Chris' room and he left the room to go to the washroom. At this point, I hid myself inside one of the lower shelves and thought I would scare him once he entered the room. When he did enter, he started moving one of the beds and finally put it against the shelf I was hiding in. I was inside for about 10 minutes during which, he just wouldn't let me come out. —Dileep A



IISER has given me many opportunities to think differently.

Nibrasul Haque



It's not who I am underneath, but what I do that defines me.

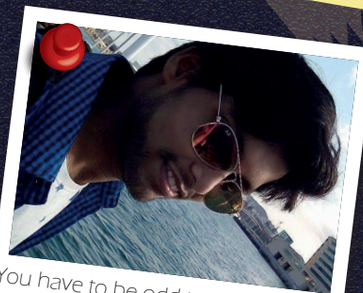
Abhijeet Fulkar



IISER is my reality distortion field. I was scarred and unscathed at the same time.

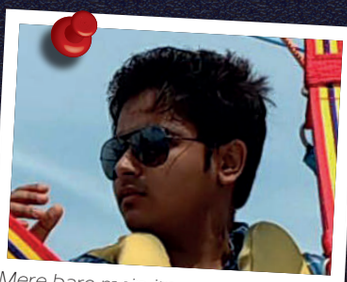
A R Anandapadmanabhan

Every single Karavaan dance party, irrespective of the ability of the DJ, has been spectacular. People who love to dance, dance crazy and people who claim that they can't dance, dance crazy. People who don't like big groups or dancing are persuaded by their friends to dance crazy. Our dance parties have everybody flailing their arms and happily stepping on people's feet, headbanging, and spinning around on the spot. I haven't seen that anywhere else, neither at other college festivals, nor at dance clubs here or outside Pune. We have something special. - Darshini



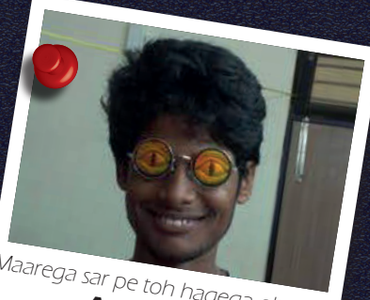
You have to be odd to be number 1.

Anand Kumar



Mere bare mein itna mat sochna. Dil me aata hoon, samaj me nahi

Vished Kumar



Maarega sar pe toh hagega ghar pe.
Aseem Rajan



'Everything not saved will be lost' - Nintendo quit screen message
Ketan Rikame

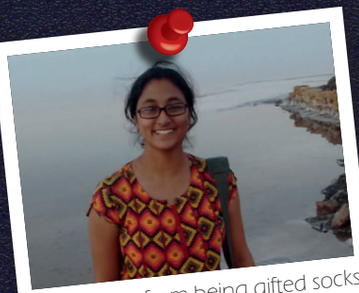


Pande hun main.
Varad R. Pande



The greatest gift of life is friendship and I have received it. :D
Deeksha Adil

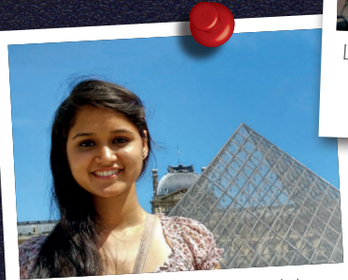
In our first year, every Saturday, most students from IISER used to catch the 11:00pm bus from FC Road back to IISER. The bus always turned into an IISER students' bus. The poor conductor shouted himself hoarse trying to quieten us. Everyone used to be very loud, yet it was great company while walking back to the hostel from the bus stand, with a few too many detours in between. Thankfully, there was no chance of running into faculty or the Director back then. —Papia Bera



'The joy got from being gifted socks goes up exponentially with age' -Anonymous **Darshini R**



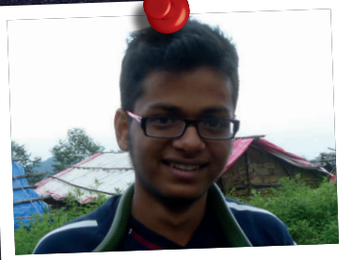
Live local, global optimization will follow.
Saikat Bera



A wanderer, who strolled the corridors in hopes of finding banana chips. **Divya Gadkari**



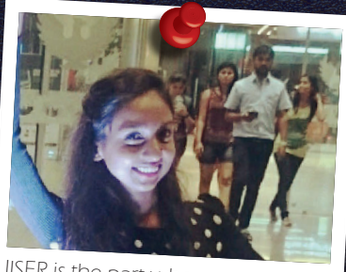
Craziness is the key to surviving IISER
Papia Bera



Feeling blue
Sumeet Kulkarni



Knowledge speaks, but wisdom listens.
Suvidyakumar Homkar



IISER is the part where you will find out who you really are
Aishwarya Bhosale

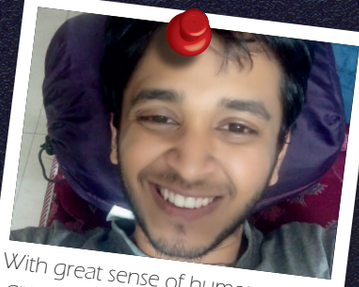


'Suyash being Suyash' -Tunktunk Homkar
Suyash Naik

Dance parties on the 7th floor! From time to time when the semester's workload got too much to handle, all the girls gathered to dance off all the stress. It all started with a couple of us just putting on music and dancing like crazy. Slowly it became a common gathering, as more people became interested and we organized them more often. Deeksha was in charge of music, Sukanya was in charge of putting colored cellophane paper on the lights (for a disco-like effect), while the rest of us were laborers taking out the beds and chairs from the assigned venue, which was usually a very neat person's room, to ensure minimal work. Those used to be the most fun three hours of the semester! —Divya Gadkari



Live every moment, Laugh every day, Love beyond words :)
Sukanya Jogdand



With great sense of humour comes greater responsibility to troll stupid people
Omkar Manjarekar

We used to go on treks around Pune, mostly during the first and second year, in large groups. The Rajmachi trek was particularly memorable as around 42 of us went from our batch. It was the beginning of the 4th semester and we all trekked in the evening and camped overnight. Next morning we swam in a pond and got a truck ride on our way back. Another memorable trip would be Dudhsagar, with 15 people from our batch in the summer of 2015. The three day trip involved everything; camping, trekking and chilling at the beach. It was one of the best trips of my life with a bunch of crazy friends, who I don't expect to find anywhere else. —Deeksha Adil

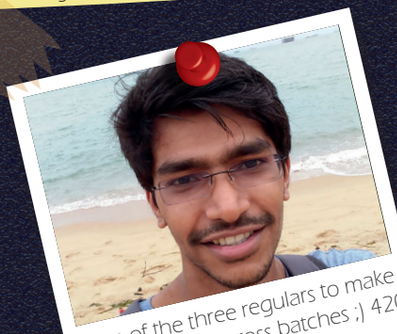


All science is either physics, column, gel, flies, or stamp collecting.
Harshvardhan Jog

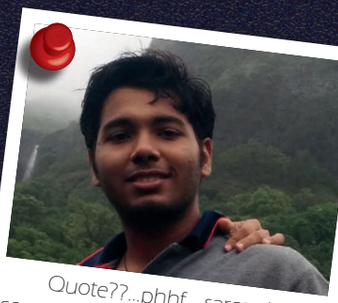
It was Gaurav Bhole's birthday in the second year. Talele and I designed a poster similar to the birthday posters of politicians and pasted 10 to 15 of them around the campus. It was fun to see embarrassed Bhole, and people laughing at the poster. Similarly, once we had organized a 'satkar' ceremony on Katti's birthday. One of the best thing to do at midnight on someone's birthday was playing 'Tunak Tunak' loudly on big speakers and dancing like crazy till three to four guards came to stop us. There used to be around twenty to thirty people dancing in my room. We used to then proceed to different rooms doing the Harlem Shake and destroying the rooms by putting all the stuff on the guy who used to live there. —Aseem Rajan



Come forth into the light of things, let nature be your teacher
- W. Wordsworth
Rajath R Sawant



One of the three regulars to make people happy across batches ;) 420 for life!
Aditya Katti



Quote??...phhf... sarcastic comment??.... now we are talking!!
G Aniruddhan



I am hungry
Shree Sruti



Sab moh maya hai.
Shrinidhi Mahishi



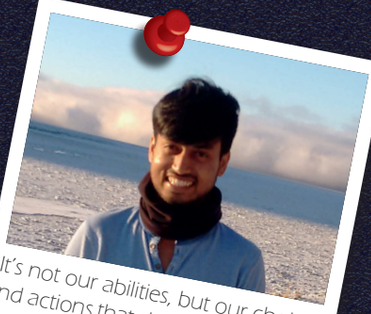
Reinvented Hindi diwas (2013) :P and last *dahi haandi* organiser.
Abhishek Anand

We took a trip to Mahabaleshwar. There was a specific point for tourists where we were all standing and looking down the cliff. Suddenly a troop of monkeys came there from the wilderness. We all backed away from the cliff except this one guy, Varad Pande, who was looking down the cliff lost in some deep thought. One of the monkeys came and patted on his back, as if asking him - 'Bhai, kya soch raha hai?'. We were all silent, waiting to see what would happen. So Varad turned casually assuming it was one of us. As soon as he saw the monkey, he shrieked at the top of his voice and ran from there and so did the monkey. We had a great laugh after that. —Kunal Mozumdar



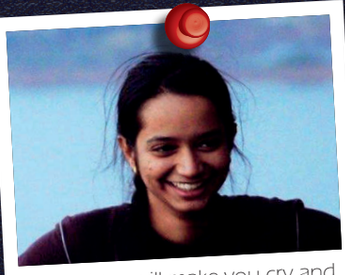
Why walk through life, when you can hop, skip and run? (or trip, slip and fall)

Sahana Srivathsa



It's not our abilities, but our choices and actions,that define who we truly are

Saket R. Bagde



A laughter will make you cry and a joke will encourage others to kill you.. :P

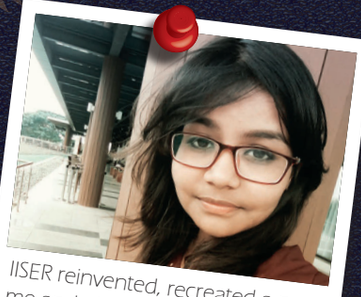
Prachi Atmasiddha



A dollar for every pun made from my last name and I would be a millionaire.

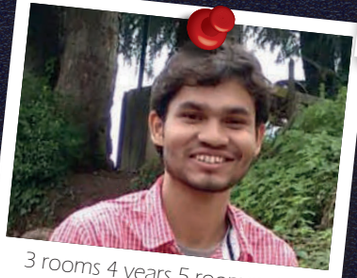
Saurabh Talele

Back in the days when the campus extended only till h-cross, we used to take post-dinner walks along that road. As G1 rose beside it, the angels responsible for its construction left a mammoth amount of bubble wrap at the end of the road, enough to mummify the building itself. No wonder, more and more of our batchmates joined these walks to immerse themselves in the joy of popping it. It became a ritual. As we ravaged it, we realised its true delight only after the last bubble had been popped. We thought it would never end. Just like life at IISER. Quoting Andy Bernard from The Office, 'I wish there was a way to know you're in the good old days, before you've actually left them.' —Sumeet Kulkarni



IISER reinvented, recreated a new me and ultimately brought myself back with me.

Lipi Jain



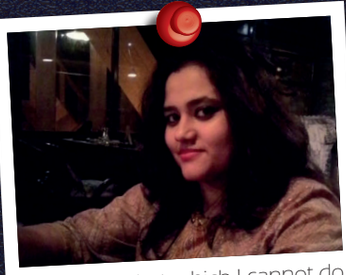
3 rooms 4 years 5 roommates: NH-1 5th floor covered!

Shubham Joge



JKCMB with 'Soniji and Aap Dude Ho'

Abhishek Soni

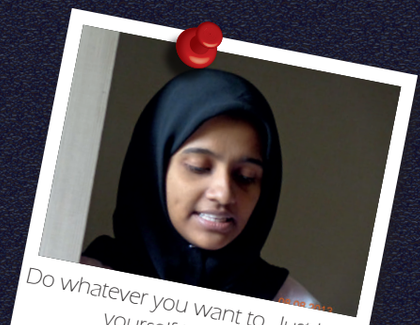


'I always do that which I cannot do, so that I may learn how to do it' - Picasso

Lavanya Lokhande



Life is a game, so play it well
Nitesh Kumar Singh



Do whatever you want to. Just keep yourself happy :) :)
Thasneem A



A legacy is etched into the mind of others and the stories they share about you.
Kiran Gajhans



I want to fly
Kavya Mohan N



Jab daant hote hai tab chane nahi, jab chane hote hai tab daant nahi.
Ameya C Pofare

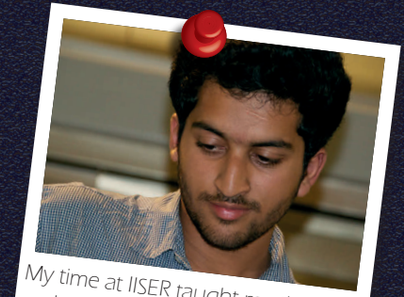
We have a group in our batch of around ten to twelve guys which we call 'sabha'. It is called so because of the interesting topics that we discuss. It was the birthday of one of the sabha members and we thought that cutting a cake was too mainstream. We ordered some eatsome wraps, bought some beer and went to Panchavati hill to celebrate his birthday. We were there on the hill till three in the morning, talking about some random stuff pretending that we were high :P . It was one hell of a birthday. —Rajath Sawant



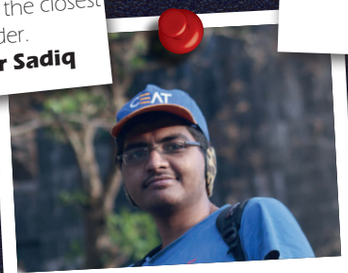
A believer in nature being the closest depiction of wonder.
Mohammed Aamir Sadiq



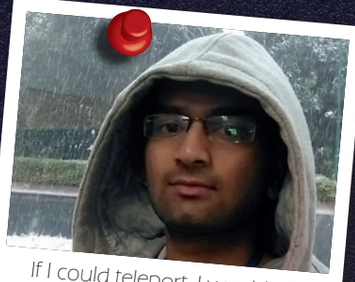
Ae kaash ke hum, hosh mein ab aane na paayein.
Ajith Nair



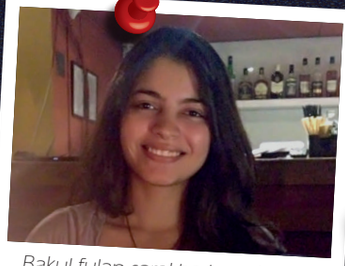
My time at IISER taught me the most about science, the brain and life
Adithya Rajagopalan



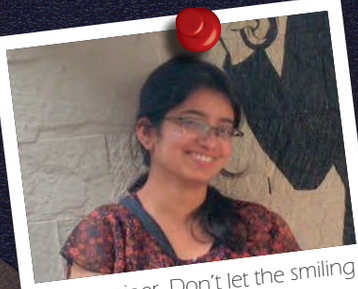
Minimalist speaker.
Bottomless thinker.
Vaibhav Thakur



If I could teleport, I would still probably be late.
Abhilash Sawant

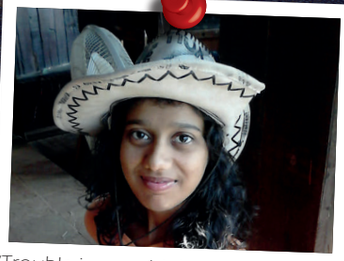


Bakul fulan sarakha ha sahavas, darvalat raho apulya manat...
Arushi Bodas



I am a sniper. Don't let the smiling face fool you
Nilima Walunjkar

April 2016: It was 2:30am and I was walking on the cricket ground with Ajith, Aamir and Soniji. Suddenly, we saw a girl who was sitting on the ground next to the stage, with her back towards us! She was alone, silent and still. One crazy guy thought that she was a ghost (he was from Sultanpur, so perhaps that explains it). I stayed back with him, and the other two started walking towards her. They tapped her on the shoulder; she turned and said something in a tone which suggested that she was not exactly looking forward to having a conversation with them. Realizing that our intervention wasn't what she needed, we left the place. Till today, we have no clue who she was. —Srinidhi Mahishi



'Trouble is, you think you have time' - Jack Kornfield
Prashali Chauhan

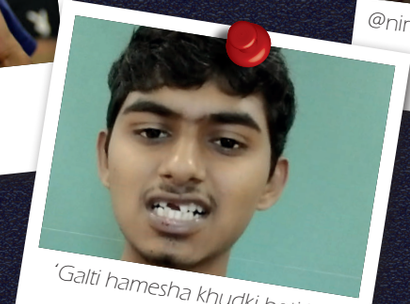
During Kalpa 2015, when Darshini and I were so tired of picking on grammatical errors, we decided to do something crazy and hence founded the NAC (Nilima Appreciation Club) by sending emails to Nilima from random juniors asking for her approval. —Harini



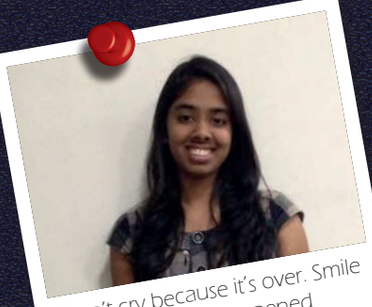
Time flies
Sujay B



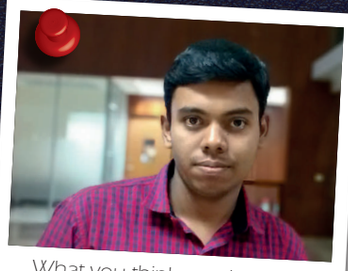
@nirban - naam to suna hi hoga :P
Anirban Sharma



'Galti hamesha khudki hoti hai' –Kanishk
Gaurav Khairnar



Don't cry because it's over. Smile because it happened
Sushma Tejasri



What you think, you become
Navathej P Genesh

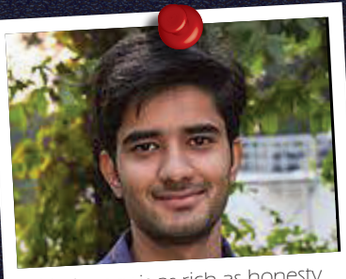


Simply enjoy life :)
Nithinraj PD



Happiness is a state of mind
Dileep A

I had gone for a run, around the campus. The summer vacation had just started. The campus was deserted and I was feeling a bit lonely. I was missing my batchmates. I came to the stage near the cricket ground and as I was so tired, I lay down on it facing the clear blue sky. Slowly, the tiredness was receding and I was enjoying the solitude. That blue sky was also refreshing. I could hear birds chirping. That was the moment I realized, I love IISER without the people as well. It was my home. There was a sense of familiarity and comfort in the grounds around, in the sky, in the tiredness. That was the moment I realized that the people and the place both have a special place in my heart. —Prachi Atmasiddha



No legacy is as rich as honesty
Ashutosh Acharya



Shed your inhibitions
Sayali Shevate



Enjoy every moment of life
Surya R

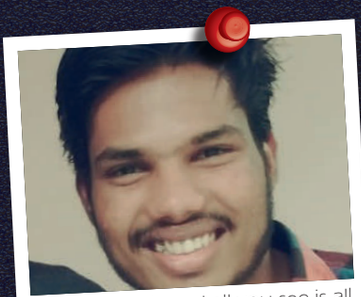
Gift Club:
This was a ceremony in which we went to a friend's room and gave him the stuff lying around as gifts. It started with giving him books, a charger, a phone, and ended with that guy getting buried inside a pile made of jeans, bags, books, soap, a bucket, and his chair on the top. Then we would leave. —Saurabh Talele



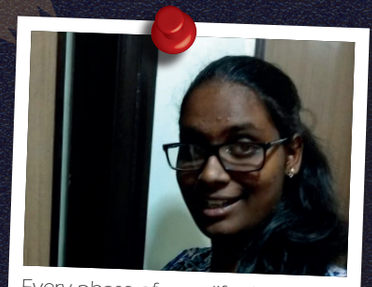
Nalle family
Gyana Gourab Mishra

It was the first month of the first semester, 7 A.M in the morning, I was sleeping, the door opened, I heard someone verbally fighting in front of my room. It was Yaikhomba and Maniteja. For a while I thought I am having a dream, but turns out I wasn't. Those two were arguing loudly over who had removed the clothes from the washing machine! On a Sunday morning! It was so loud that everyone from our corridor woke up, but no one argued. Every batch probably has one or more such characters and they are from ours.
—Shubham Joge

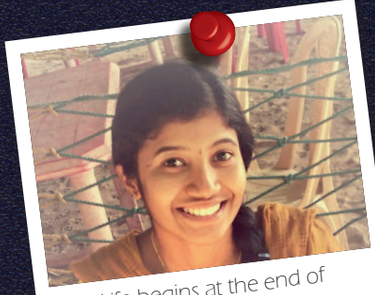
My first few days at Disha Abhyasika are something I can't forget. I am not comfortable with Hindi even now but I taught kids who knew only Marathi with my broken Hindi. I could not understand anything they said and couldn't talk to them. I could not even teach them math since I didn't know the number system that they used. Few older kids helped me translate and I learnt the number system from them. I can't say who the student was, me or them. —Kavya Mohan N



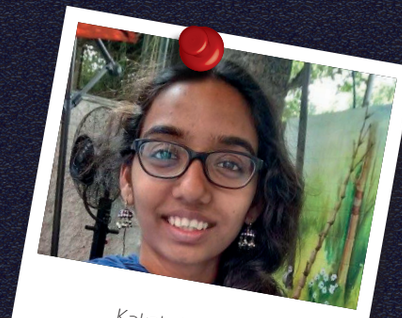
'All you touch and all you see is all your life will ever be.' - Pink Floyd
Visakh Narayanan



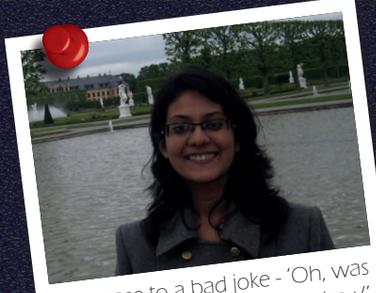
Every phase of your life demands a different level of craziness from you!
S Harini



Life begins at the end of your comfort zone.
Anjana Raj R



Kakakakakakaka
PM Shreenidhi



Response to a bad joke - 'Oh, was I supposed to laugh? Ha ha ha :/'
Irene Dutta



Enjoy all you have while pursuing all you want.
Anagha M C

The gulab jamun contest at our inaugural meet in Barbeque Nation. Kanishk -18, Gyan - 32, Ameya - 37. The rest is legend! —Ameya Pofare



The latter half of the 2015 fall semester was turning forgettable, especially because of the weather. It hadn't rained in months and the October heat was showing no signs of respite. One afternoon however, the sky suddenly got very dark, and the air was getting warm and moist. Within no time, it started to pour. My heart just lit up. I soon figured that some of my batchmates shared my enthusiasm. Together, we went to the cricket field and started running and sliding on the grass. One of us also got a ball to play with. The sheer bliss of running around with my batchmates barefeet, with the skies letting go above me was something that just left me overwhelmed. —Aamir





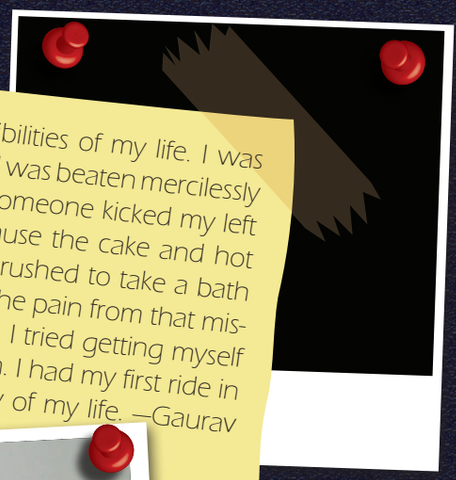
One of my first memorable memories at IISER was in my first semester when we had our morning classes at Sai Trinity. On one such day, a few friends and I sneaked out through the back door of the Raman Hall while some biology class was going on. We went to the open area next to the canteen and started chatting, and soon we started playing Truth or Dare. I got to prove my mettle as someone who could flirt using mathematics. :D That one hour was my first experience of doing something wild and adventurous. :) —Ajith

As a signof protest, few of us planned to play a prank on our floor representative (FR) as he didn't fulfill his promises. We, with the help of his roomie, hid all of his underpants which we thought any sound person could easily find. But we were wrong as our FR was *special*. He searched for them all over the floor except in his own room, and so ultimately we had to help him out. After a week, we revealed to him, the places where we hid his underpants. Two in the hanger (under the coat), one inside his pillow cover (on which he was sleeping every day) and one in his bag (which he used to bring to class every day). We still don't know how our representative managed without any underpants for a whole week!! —Vished





Raireswar trekking has taught us that '*beta aukad mein chadhna, jyada herogiri waat laga sakti hey*'. We anticipated that it would hardly take 30 minutes or so for us to get bored with climbing the hill using a regular trail. With all crazy minds on the plate, consensus was to climb from a seemingly impossible path. But on that extraordinary route we finally realized at a point that there was no way that we could come down or go up. Stuck at that point till late evening with people predicting their imminent death, we finally managed to climb down with great difficulty. I can still remember the look on everyone's face that day after getting to the bottom of the hill. The feeling of ultra relief, pleasure, and comfort. —Gyan



On my 20th birthday, I was wondering about the possibilities of my life. I was smacked by one the very next day. Before cutting the cake, I was beaten mercilessly on the most comfortable part of my body. In their rage, someone kicked my left thigh with all the life in him. I did not feel any pain because the cake and hot jalebies were very distracting. However, in the morning, I rushed to take a bath (it was my birthday!). By the time I got into the bathroom, the pain from that mis-kick hit me. It was so intense that I was barely able to walk. I tried getting myself out, tripped over a mat, fell and broke two of my front teeth. I had my first ride in a wheelchair followed by an ambulance and the first X-ray of my life. —Gaurav Khairnar





In 2011, Bengaluru had faced repeated bomb threats and so the army decided it was a good idea to educate school students about guns. They brought fully loaded guns to our school and were displaying them. When I was walking past, I decided to pick up a rifle and kill a passing pigeon. As I was a model student I was not expelled but only suspended. Almost all my batchmates and some seniors at IISER believed this ridiculous story cooked up by Sahana and Darshini. They also believed that I had turned down a chance to participate in the commonwealth games to write IITJEE. You can imagine how convincing Sahana's and Darshini's storytelling skills are, if you take one look at my innocent face. —Nilima

Siddhesh Kamat

A chemical engineer by training, this amiable chemical biologist studies the biological pathways of human genetic diseases using the principles of proteomics and metabolomics, with special focus on lipids. He is a sports buff and enjoys playing cricket and badminton, and running in the afternoons. He is also a member of the IISER faculty cricket team.



Venkateshwara Pai

This focused and dedicated researcher is studying the history of astronomy and mathematics in India, equipped with knowledge in mathematics and Sanskrit. He strongly feels that it is important to be aware of the advancements made in ancient Indian sciences, but also stay away from its exaggerated accounts.



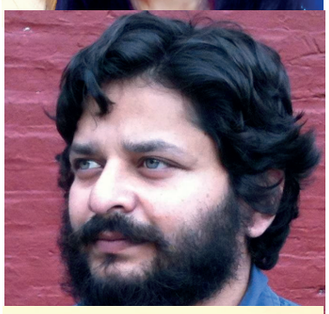
Jahnavi Punekar

Following her childhood dream of becoming a paleontologist, this vivacious and young researcher works on the dinosaur extinction event by studying microfossils and absolutely loves her field of work. She enjoys listening to music, painting, cooking and trekking with friends.



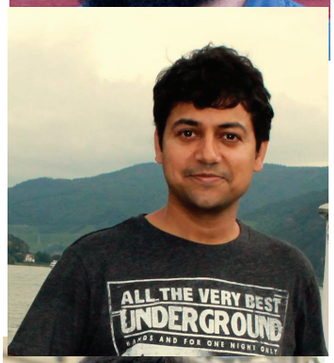
Pushkar Sohoni

An architect by training and a historian in art, architecture and preservation, he believes that his life has reached a full circle as he has returned to his home city of Pune. This curator by hobby, collects paintings and stamps, and also owns a diverse collection of books in various languages.



Manish Mishra

This mathematician works on Number Theory, specifically on Langlands Program. He loves travelling and has always been intrigued by the cultural universality in India amidst the diversity. In his free time, he likes to read non-fiction books, specifically on evolutionary psychology and evolution.



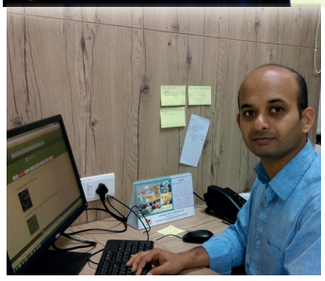
GJ Sreejith

This gentle theoretical condensed matter physicist works on strongly interacting quantum matter, such as quantum Hall and frustrated spin systems. In addition to this, his interests lie in Carnatic music and photography as well.



Atikur Rahman

This experimental physicist works in the field of quantum transport. He is mostly interested in applied research on energy harvesting. He is very close to nature and at times derives inspiration for his experiments and models from it. He pursues gardening as a hobby, and loves fishing as well.

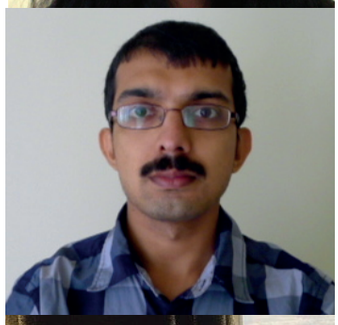


NEW FACULTY



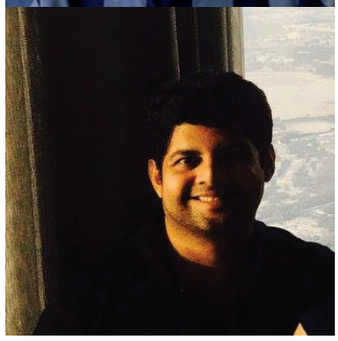
Neeraja Dashaputre

This jubilant organic chemist works on chemical education and pedagogy development. With an additional degree in education, she is actively involved in training teachers for pedagogics and has a strong opinion on the need to evolve our education system. Apart from being a trekking enthusiast, she fancies pottery and painting as well.



Suhas Ettamal

This calm and considerate climate scientist is very passionate about his work in temperature and weather predictions and truly admires the tools of mathematical modelling. He is always enthusiastic to share his research work and will smoothly walk you through any topic of his interest. In his free time, this bibliophile loves to explore the genres of history, political science and biographies.

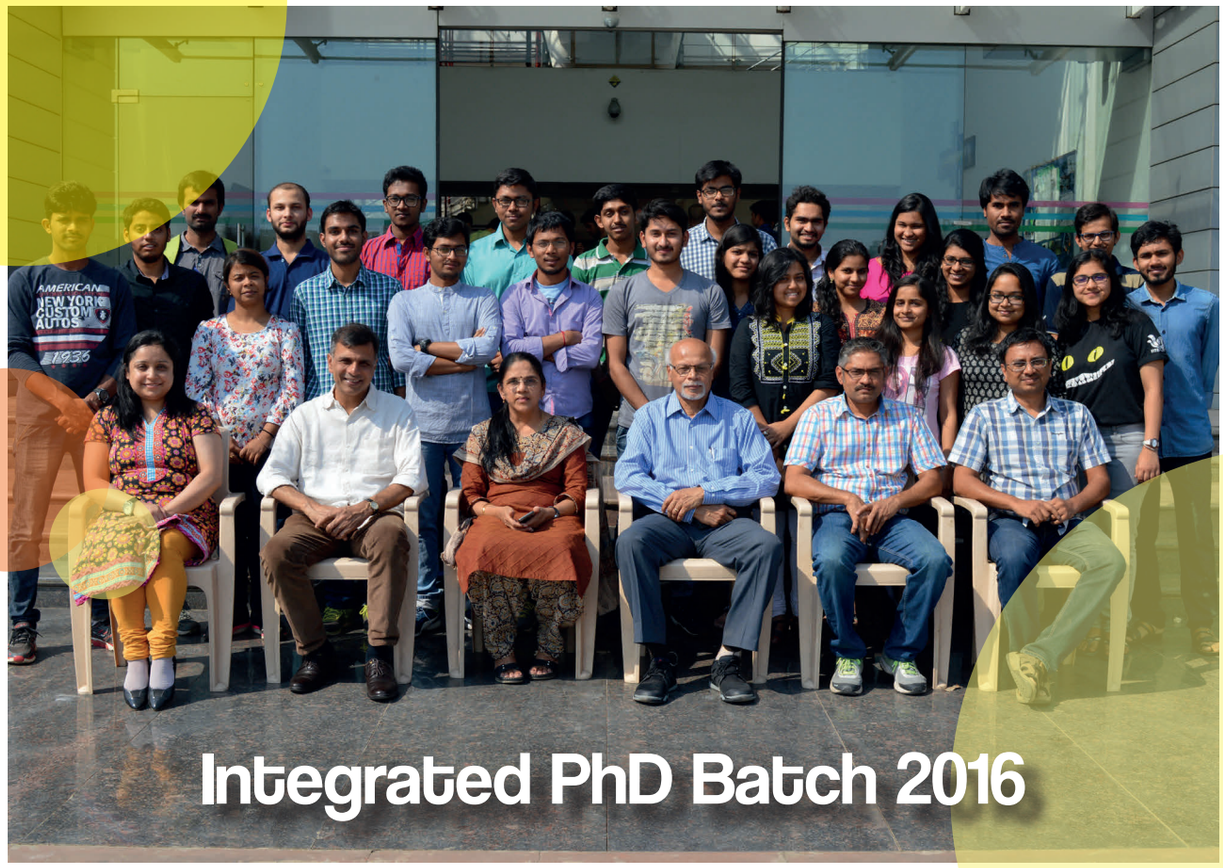


Arun Thalapillil

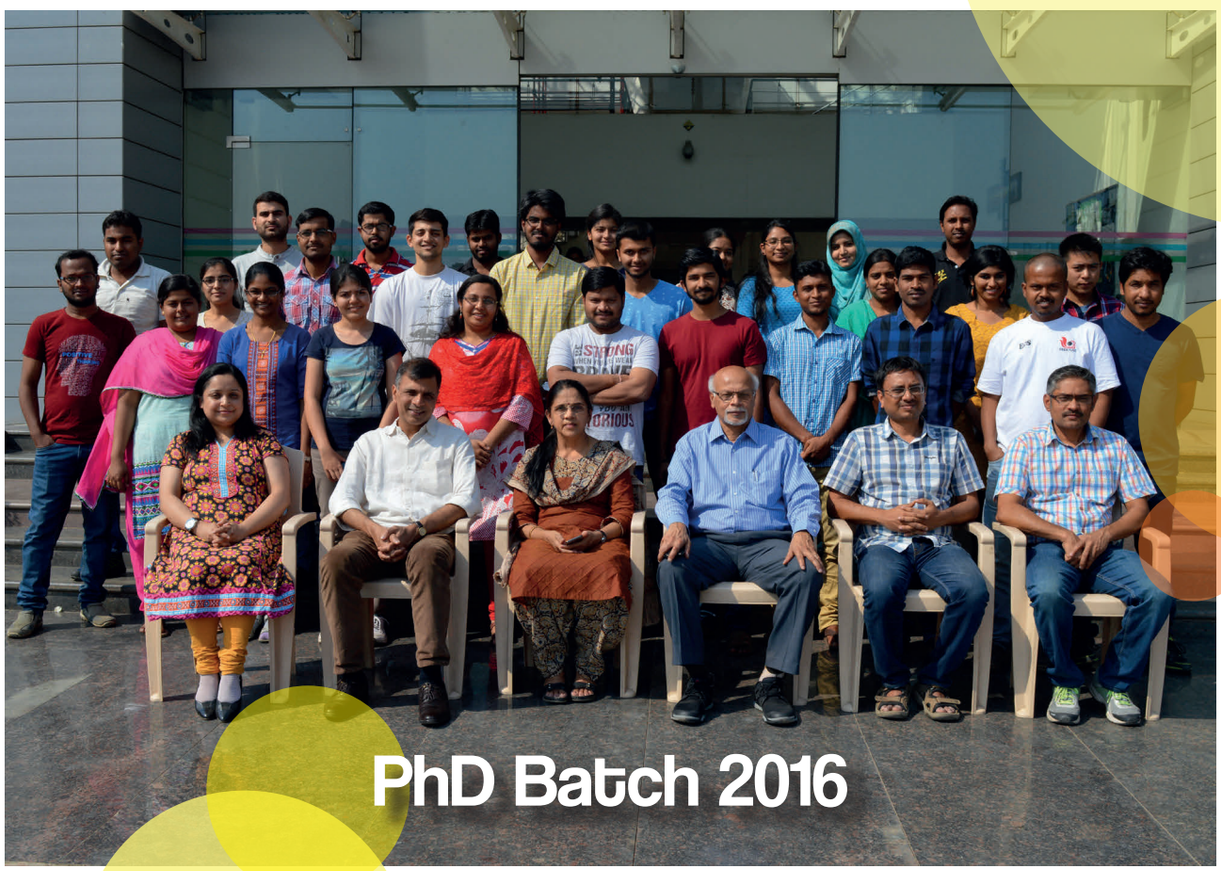
This affable high energy particle theorist who is passionate about teaching ,asserts that science is a way of life,not just a profession. Apart from physics his interests are in western classical music,reading fiction and non-fiction books and a game called ‘Go’.



BS-MS Batch 2016



Integrated PhD Batch 2016



PhD Batch 2016

Photo Credits : Science Media Centre



CAMPUS UPDATES

18.5477° N, 73.8076° E

Illustration by: Swastik Mishra

1



The Göttingen Pune Outreach Center (GPOC), otherwise called the *superstructure* by students, is here to provide a space for science outreach and activities that inculcate scientific thinking.

2



The Lecture Hall Complex got a new roof and you can now hang around in the central area or use the central staircase even when it is raining.

3



The second ATM machine on campus was a boon when the nation-wide demonitisation took place. Additionally, the older ATM machine in the dining block was replaced. It will hopefully stay in working condition more often than its damaged predecessor.

4



The Academic Building is now complete, with the newly built roof and the last bit of the central staircase.

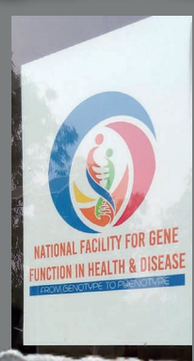


Authentication is now compulsory for using the IISER network. With an IISERites only access, the network is now safer and internet access is at peak speeds.

Photo credits: Jiffin Benjamin

5





The National Facility for Gene Function in Health and Disease includes, regular animal maintenance and procedural rooms, a barrier facility with IVC units, setup for stereotaxic manipulations and a behaviour analysis facility with a several behavioural apparatus, video-tracking systems and more.



20 things you should know when you join IISER

1. The front gate was actually supposed to be the back gate.
2. IISER practically survives on emails. If you forget checking your email for a day, you will feel like you skipped a year.
3. One is not supposed to ask anybody for their CGPA.
4. Your lecture hall will always be either too cold or too hot. It's supposed to keep you awake during classes.
5. You will end up sleeping in at least one of the classes everyday.
6. Got a new t-shirt with the IISER logo? You are going to wear it for all of next week.
7. The ATM is almost always going to stay out of cash, and the fountains out of water.
8. The silent hours rule is valid for the whole campus, but it doesn't hold at the night canteen or on India-Pakistan match days.
9. The stationery shop changes its appearance for every occasion, even for Valentine's day.
10. IISER dogs are omnipotent.
11. Sanjay is the latest avatar of Sanjay, from Mahabharat. He sees everything in LHC. Really, everything.
12. The rumour of having a swimming pool is going to stay as a rumour.
13. You get everything at IISER except proper sleep and shower.
14. You would almost never take the dry clothes off the rack before two days.
15. At the mess, if it is paneer butter masala, paneer 65, paneer tikka masala, or even pasta, it's always the same masala.
16. You should not call a TA as sir/madam.
17. The lift has feelings. Don't anger the lift. May the force be with you.
18. If you mess up in an exam, verify that everybody else has also messed up. Understand that relative grading works.
19. Food that you bring from home is not yours once it reaches the hostel.
20. At IISER, and probably only at IISER, can you have abstract math students talking with enthusiasm to biochemists about their work.