



Dakshini Presents

Durgotsav 2023

Sharodiya Shubhechha





**An Environmental Technology Firm to Promote
Sustainable Life on Planet Earth**



Kisholoy Goswami
President and CEO



InnoSense Corporation
www.innosensecorp.com



Latika Goswami
Chief Operating Officer

**We Wish All Dakshini
Friends
Shubho Bijoya, 2023!**

Greetings from the President

"Sing like no one's listening, love like you've never been hurt, dance like nobody's watching, and live like it's heaven on earth."

The Executive Committee 2022- 2024 indeed came into action like a storm picking up its last bits and pieces, and announcing its existence and sadly enough it is almost time for this Committee to say adios and give way to the new. Built on Inclusion, Respect, and servant leadership tenets, the Executive Committee strived to attain perfection and serve its immediate community and beyond with honest efforts. The journey was not entirely smooth sailing in its totality. Heartbreaks and disappointment found their way in and tested the team during critical times. However, we stood united and faced our share of challenges, and came out with a winning smile. Life in general truly reflects our journey here at Dakshini; the curves of surprises and uncertainty make it all the more interesting to live.

With Ma Durga making her way into Dakshini, now is the time to let go of the old and make way for the new. The new beginning will usher in fresh hopes and stunning dreams. With divine blessings, may all our worries be washed away, the pain and suffering be gone and all that is bright, positive, and new make their way into our lives. The Dakshini Family has been built on love, camaraderie, and an unconditional flow of honest faith and trust. Let us all pray together to keep this family safe and the fountain of love flowing eternally. May the bonds of unity be tied forever and withstand all adversities. Dakshini is not only our shelter at all times but also an emotion we can't deny.

Words will fall short if we try to express our gratitude to you all who are reading this. You have been our motivation and will continue to be so for as long as we are here to serve. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

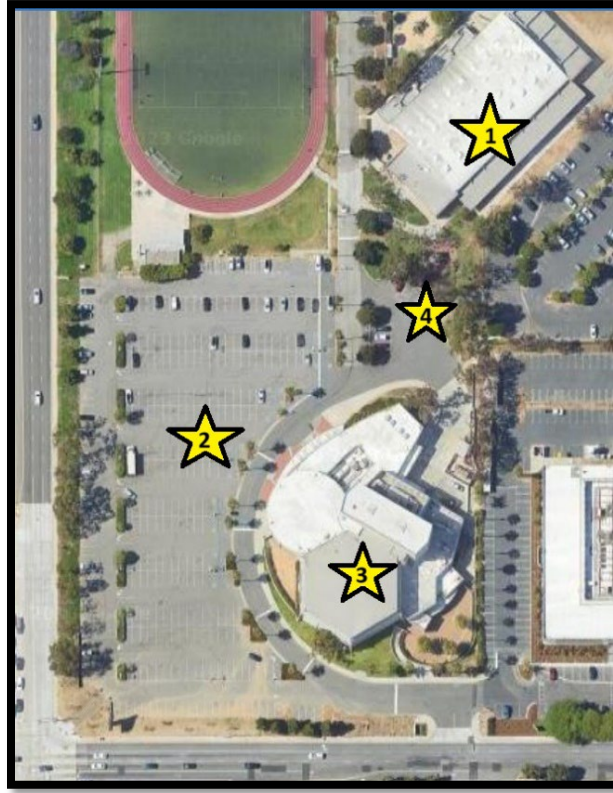


Regards,

Riddhi Chakraborty
President, Dakshini Bengali Association of California

(310)895-6094

Map of Puja Venue



1935 Manhattan Beach Blvd, Redondo Beach, CA 90278

1. Puja location – Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center Gymnasium
 2. Parking
 3. Concert location - Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center Auditorium
 4. Grand sponsor parking
- Enter through Manhattan Beach Blvd.
 - Park in the general parking lot.
 - Proceed towards Registration Booth at the puja location and collect food coupons.
 - All meals will be served outside the puja location.
 - Concert location is close to puja location. Entry will be allowed only with ticket with a QR code and seat number.

Special Acknowledgments

Priest: <i>Kamalendu Ganguly</i> Priest Assistant: <i>Pratima Ganguly</i> Pandal Credit: <i>Sudip Purakayastha & Team</i> Cover Page Art: <i>Tamasree Sinha</i>	Vibrnz Team: <i>Mrinalini Ayachit</i> <i>Krishna Kamaraju</i> <i>Abir Chakraborty</i> <i>Shayok Dutta</i> <i>Anup Goswami</i>
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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS – 2022-2024



Riddhi Chakraborty
President



Mohua Roy
Vice-President



Dr. Bhaswati Moulik
Secretary



Suman Saha
Treasurer



Biswajoy Basak
Executive Member



Dhruba Bhattacharyay
Executive Member



Dipankar Biswas
Executive Member



Sayandeb Ghosh
Executive Member



Sudip Purakayastha
Executive Member

Dakshini Acknowledges Our Sponsors

We are thankful and grateful to our sponsors, donors, and members* for their unconditional support

Super Grand Sponsor:

- ❖ Mrs. Latika Das & Dr. Kisholoy Goswami

Grand Sponsor:

- ❖ Mrs. Sangita Chattaraj & Dr. Sarnath Chattaraj
- ❖ Mrs. Rupashree Goswami & Mr. Anup Goswami
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- ❖ Mrs. Ritu Bhattacharya & Dr. Arunabh Bhattacharya
- ❖ Mrs. Jayesha Mukherjee & Dr. Sukrit Mukherjee

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- Mrs. Arati Das & Dr. Moloy Das
- Mrs. Riddhi Chakraborty & Mr. Abir Chakraborty

Platinum:

Basanti Dey & Mr. Sudip Purkayastha	Somali Saha & Suman Saha Keka Ray & Sibabrata Ra	Krishnakali Guha Roychowdhury & Pabitra Guha Roychowdhury
Reshmi Dutta & Pushkar Ghosh Choudhuri	Indrani Chatterjee & Deepak Chatterjee	Mohua Roy & Subhendu Roy
Pratishruti Sarkar & Avijit Bhunia		

Diamond:

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Sharmistha Ray & Pradipta Ray Saivendra Kayal	Manjushree Chakraborty & Milan Chakraborty	Sampurna Dube & Prosenjit Bhattacharya
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Rupasree Das & Ranjit Das	Ruby Mitra & Shoumya Mitra	Kajari Ghatak & Amit Ghatak
Indrani Sinhaikim & Amiya Sinhaikim		Kamales Som

Gold:

Sumita & Shayok Dutta	Soma & Pranab Mishra	Madhumita & Dipankar Basu
Bhaswati & Dr Sanjoy Moulik	Shawli & Sourav Roy	Sourabhi & Timothy Austin
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Bandyopadhyay	Swapna & Bidhan Ray	Sayanti & Subhajit Bera
Indrani & Daipayan Sen	Subrata Das	Aditi Majumder
Rupa & Sumit Das	Archana & Probir Datta	Malabika & Atish Das
Sanhita & Sauvik Basu	Geeti & Supratim Mukherjee	Popy & Soumitra Banerjee
Payel & Dipankar Biswas	Chumki & Sandip De Sarkar	Ananya & Siddhartha
Abornita & Shailesh Kumar	Sonali & Kaushik Sarkar	Dattagupta
Puspita & Swagata Ghosh	Paulam Basu	Malini & Tirth Sanyal
Arpita & Sanjib Mukherjee	Hiromi & Amritendu Maji	Jayshree Das
Chameli & Sidhartha Biswas	Rajitha & Samrat Chakraborty	Dipanwita & Anjan Manna
Debapriya & Notonesh Bhattacharya	Lopa & Rupak Das	Poulomi & Sayandeb Ghosh
Suparna & Arun Chakladar	Sumana Mohanta	Dhriti & Amitabha Bagchi
Sudeshna & Kala Seal	Asit Shil	Rituparna & Saikat Chakraborty
	Arpita & Sanjit Sanyal	

Silver:

Abira & Joydeep Roy	Indrani & Alope Ray	Rituparna & Arijit Majumder
Abira & Joydeep Bhattacharyya	Indrani & Mithun Dutta	Rosa & Suprio Banerjee
Aditi & Ritwik Chattopadhyay	Ipshita Das	Saikat Sarkar
Aditi & Sumon Sengupta	Ishika & Pinaki Karfa	Sakti Mukherjee
Anamika & Salil Pradhan	Jayita & Dibyendu Das	Sanchita & Gautam Mukherjee
Ananya Sen	Kabita & Sajal Debnath	Sangita & Tapas Ghosh
Anindita & Devashish Rudra	Kanimozhi & Samik Barua	Saswati & Sabuj Kumar Dutta
Anjali & Tapas Bagchi	Choudhury	Satamita & Arindam Sutradhar
Arpita & Anirban Roy	Kaustabh Raut	Saurabh Ghosh Roy
Arpita & Sabyasachi Mitra	Manisha & S K Gangopadhyay	Sayantani & Aniruddha Das

Arti & Sanjay Biswas
 Arundhati Biswas
 Arundhoti & Apurba Tribedi
 Arundhuti Chakrabarti
 Atreyee & Suvendu Laha
 Auntora & Sujay Kar
 Avijit Bhattacharya
 Avishek Sanyal
 Barna & Pranjit Saha
 Bikash Sett
 Bula Jha
 Carmen & Joyraj Basu
 Chaitali & Ranajit Banerjee
 Debadutta Roy
 Debasmita & Amlan Chatterjee
 Debjani & Subir Banerjee
 Debjani & Rajib Bhowal
 Deepa & Benoy Chowdhury
 Dhakshana & Jagdish Ajanta
 Dipanwita & Reetabrata
 Mookherjee
 Diti & Rudra Bhowmick
 Gargi & Chiranjib Dasgupta
 Indira Chatterjee
 Mahua & Anupam Biswas
 Manavi & Siddhartha Dasgupta

Milu & Rama Acharjee
 Mitali & Sukanta Datta
 Mithun Mukherjee
 Monalisa & Tathagata Dasgupta
 Moumita & Sneharhya Pal
 Pampa & Avijit Mitra
 Paramita & Arup Roy
 Piyali & Amitava Majumdar
 Piyali & Basu Mukherjee
 Poly & Sushil Pramanick
 Pompy & Amitava Banerjee
 Poulomi & Joydeep Mukherjee
 Priyanka & Sougata Ghosh
 Priyanka & Tonmoy Bhattacharjee
 Puja & Somnath Seal
 Purnima & Pratim Gupta
 Rajasree & Ranjeet Ganguli
 Rajasri Chakraborty
 Rajni & Anindya Pradhan
 Reba & Aditya Palit
 Rita Roy
 Rita & Sushanta Datta
 Santasree & Rabindranath Dutta
 Saroj & Harsh Sondhi
 Saroj & Nirmalya Chatterjee
 Saswati & Alok Das

Sharmila Dasgupta
 Sharmistha & Kohinoor Basu
 Shehla & Rajan Singh
 Sohini & Shubhamoy
 GhoshSoma & Anindya
 Mukerjee
 Soma & Sidhartha Saha
 Sonali & Sowmik Sengupta
 Sreerupa & Subrata Sabui
 Suchandra & Subha S Ghosh
 Sudip Chakraborty
 Sudipa & Sanjib Ghosh
 Sumana & Priyodarshi
 Majumdar
 Suparna Chatterjee
 Suprabha & Kaushik Biswa
 Swati & Pratip Mukherjee
 Tamasree & Sayantan Sinha
 Tapas De
 Tapasri Dattaray
 Tuhinkana Das
 Uma Charanjiv singh Mansingh
 Uthra & Koushik Chattopadhyay

Donor:

Ranu & Robin Paik

Prithwish Gupta

Manatosh Das

Nibedita & Suman Laha

* The list is based on membership received as of midnight 10/22/2023



Art by Tamashree Sinha

PAST AND PRESENT PRESIDENT(S) OF DAKSHINI

Year	Name
1985-1988	DR. SAMAR SIRKAR
1988-1990	DR. MALAY DAS
1990-1992	MR. AJIT RAKSHIT
1992-1994	MRS.MAITRAYEE MAZUMDAR
1994-1996	MR. AJOY DUBE
1996-1998	DR. KAMALESH SOM
1998-2000	MR. MOHIT CHATTERJEE
2000-2002	MRS.JAYASHREE DAS
2002-2004	MR. RANJIT DAS
2004-2006	MRS.PRATIMA DATTA
2006-2008	MR. SAJAL DEBNATH
2008-2010	MR. ANUPAM SUKUL
2010-2012	DR. SARNATH CHATTARAJ
2013-2015	MR. ARNAB CHATTERJEE
2015-2017	MR. BIDHAN RAY
2017-2019	MR. SHUBHAROOP GHOSH
2019-2022	MRS.NIBEDITA LAHA
2022-2024	MRS.RIDDHI CHAKRABORTY

Dakshini Youth Leadership (MILESTONE)

Kudos to Dakshini leaders' perception that the future of the organization is the youth of today. Thus came the Milestone initiative or the Youth Leadership Council to promote leadership skills, confidence, and global perspective to lead by example and make a difference in their community. The young Dakshini members put their gloves on to clean up Seal Beach celebrating 'World Environment Day'. They recognized and paid tribute to the fearless firefighters by distributing hand-crafted gift bags, and in return received a specialized tour of the fire-station, climbed aboard the ever-so recognizable red cruiser, and received demonstrations on emergency protocols. In addition, Milestone members also received invaluable training/information from Torrance Memorial Hospital Burn Unit Surgeon which contributed to hands-on knowledge not available in textbooks. The Milestone leaders cooked and arranged to feed the underprivileged in association with the Urban Community Church. The future heroes of the community are certainly moving forward to make our society a safer and better place.

Dakshini Just Older Youth (JOY)

As Dakshini continues to grow and expand in multiple ways, the leaders of today did not forget to recognize and pay respect to the founding members and long-time participants of the organization. A community can only thrive when modern leadership is combined with long term experience and dedication. Thus came JOY (Just Older Youth) initiative where older youth can share their insights and life experiences, participate in various activities, and promote a stronger bond with the immediate community and beyond. To assist our senior members to actively take part in the organization, Dakshini arranges free rides for them and provides additional assistance as per request.

2023 DURGA PUJA SUB-COMMITTEE (VOLUNTEERS)

Communication:

Dipankar Biswas
Riddhi Chakraborty
Sudip Purkayastha
Aniket Dasgupta
Priyadarshi Majumdar
Sharmila Dasgupta
Abhishek Naskar
Anushtoop Majumdar

Welcome:

Dhruba Bhattacharyay
Sangita Chattaraj
Payel Biswas
Saswati Bhattacharyay
Poppy Banerjee
Soumira Banerjee
Papiya Basak
Pushpita Roy Choudhury
Shawli Roy

Entertainment/

Cultural Programs:

Mohua Roy
Bhaswati Moulik
Reshmi Dutta
Chumki Sen
Poppy Banerjee
Anubhav Basak
Soham Ray
Sony Das
Ankita Chattaraj
Subharoop Ghosh
Sam Dubey
Soumitra Banerjee
Aniket Dasgupta
Anushtup Majumdar
Avishek Naskar
Bula Jha Bhattacharya
Pratip Mukherjee
Siddhartha DuttaGupta
Annaya DuttaGupta
Poulomi Roy
Deshan Biswas
Papiya Basak
Jayanti Dasgupta
Arnab Dasgupta
Abornita Das-Kumar
Purnata Acharjee
Proma Acharjee
Parvez Havalder
Biswajoy Basak
Chitra Ghatak
Shawli Roy

Décor & Aesthetics:

Sudip Purkayastha
Sumedha Sundaram (Kids)
Sanjit Purkayastha (Kids)
Ipsita Saha (Kids)
Sanhita Biswas
Soma Saha
Kanimozhi Chelliah
Arijit Majumdar
Tamasree Sinha
Pradipta Roy
Payel Biswas
Basanti Dey

Food:

Sajal Debnath
Bidhan Ray
Soumen Ghosh
Abhishek Ghosal
Amar Banerjee
Amritendu Majhi
Ananya Dutta Gupta
Aritra Acharya
Arpita Mukherjee
Bidhan Ray
Daipayan Sen
Hiromi
Kajari Ghatak
Keka Roy
Koushik Biswas
Madhu Basu
Milu Acharya
Mithun Dutta
Moina Banerjee
Moloy Das
Notonesh Bhattacharya
Paramita Chatterjee
Pratima Dutta
Pratima Poddar
Purnima Gupta
Purnota Acharya
Pushpita Roy Chowdhury
Ramashankar Acharya
Sabuj Dutta
Sajal Debnath
Sanhita Biswas

Magazine:

Madhu Basu
Sharmila Dasgupta
Soumitra Banerjee
Sauvik Basu
Swagata Ghosh
Dipankar Biswas

Registration:

Anup Goswami
Abir Chakraborty
Suman Saha
Shayok Dutta
Rupashree Goswami
Sonali Saha
Sumana Majumdar
Mrinalini Ayachit
Krishna Kamaraju
Anusha Basak

Logistics:

Biswajoy Basak
Sayandeob Ghosh
Pratim (Joy) Gupta
Jayanta Purakayastho
Swagato Ghosh
Mithun Dutta
Sanjeeb Mukherjee
Tridib Bandyopadhyay
Kunal Chakraborty
Pami Mukherjee
Sucharit Sarkar
Sumit Das

Crisis management:

Sarnath Chattaraj
Abhijit Bhuniya
Jayanta Purkayastha
Avishek Ghosal

Bodhon:

Saswati Bhattacharyay
Siddhartha DuttaGupta
Annaya DuttaGupta
Biswarupa Dubey
Sangita Chattaraj
Rupa Das
Papiya Basak
Payel Biswas
Somali Saha
Basanti Dey
Pushpita Roy Choudhuri

Pujo:

Pratishruti Sarkar
Rupa and Ranjit Das
Avijit Bhunia
Debashish and Anindita Rudra
Sauvik Basu
Somali Saha
Rita Dutta
Suchismita Ghosh
Deboshree Ghosh
Sonali Saha
Ayan
Basanti Dey
Sumana Majumdar
Moyna Banerjee
Biswarupa Dubey

Marketing, Vendor Mgt., & Sponsorship:

Dipankar Biswas
Riddhi Chakraborty
Suman Saha
Robin Paik
Ajoy Dube
Sarnath Chattaraj

Setup:

Jayanta Purkayastha
Sujoy Kar
Ranjit Ganguly
Samik Choudhury
Sayantan Sinha
Ranajit Banerjee

Picnic Food Volunteers:

Amarendra Banerjee
Sajal Debnath
Saswati Bhattacharya
"Biswarupa Dube
Ananya Dattagupta"
Pratishruti Sarkar
Papiya Basak
Suchismita Roy Ghosh
Sonali Chakrabarti
Puspita Roy Chowdhury
Rupashree Goswami
Swapna Roy
Ananya Sen
Basanti Dey

**Entertainment/
Cultural Programs:**

Sampurna Dube
Saurabh Chatterjee
Ananya Sen
Simran Bhattacharya
Saswati Bhattacharyay
Soma Ghosh
Pushpita Roy Choudhuri

Food:

Sanjib Mukherjee
Sanjoy Moulik
Saswati Das
Sayanti Das
Sharmila Dasgupta
Sharmishtha Ray
Siddharta Biswas

Bodhon:

Jayesha Mukherjee
Milu Acharjee
Proma Majumdar
Deshan Biswas
Purnata Acharjee
Moyna Banerjee
Krishnakali Guha
RoyChoudhury

Picnic Food Volunteers:

Payel Biswas
Soma Ghosh
Purnima Gupta
Somali Saha
Purnima Gupta
Somali Saha
Tridib Bandyopadhyay
Soma Bandyopadhyay
Ruby Mitra
Jayanti Dasgupta

Event Check-in:

Abir Chakraborty
Aarya Moulik
Sattwik Banerjee
Kanak Das
Soham Sarkar
Sayon Ray
Aishik Chakraborty
Sweta Bhattacharya
Sucharit Sarkar
Swapna Ray
Sonali Chakraborty
Rajasri Chakraborty
Mrinalini Ayachit
Krishna Kamaraju
Priyanka Ghosh
Choudhuri



We sincerely apologize for any inadvertent omissions of names. An updated list of volunteers will be posted on www.dakshini.org.

Food:

Soumen Ghosh
Soumya Mondal
Sukanta Dutta
Suparna Chakladar
Sushanta Datta
Swagata Ghosh
Swapna Ray

Maa Aschen

A painting (acrylic on canvas) of son Ganesha all decked up and ready for the arrival of Maa - his Maa Uthra Rajamani



2023 PUJA SCHEDULE

DAKSHINI DURGOTSAV 2023

PUJO LOCATION: **REDONDO BEACH PERFORMING ARTS CENTER GYMNASIUM**

1935 MANHATTAN BEACH BLVD, REDONDO BEACH, CA 90278

CONCERT LOCATION: **REDONDO BEACH PERFORMING ARTS CENTER AUDITORIUM**

1935 MANHATTAN BEACH BLVD, REDONDO BEACH, CA 90278

SCHEDULE:

OCTOBER 27, 2023 - FRIDAY

BODHON, CHONDI PATH AND PUJO - 6:30 P.M.

DINNER- 5:30 P.M. - 7:00 P.M.

HARIHARAN CONCERT- 8:00 P.M. ONWARDS

OCTOBER 28, 2023 - SATURDAY

SAPTAMI AND PUSHPANJALI - 9:30 A.M. - 1:30 P.M.

LUNCH- 12:00 P.M. - 1:30 P.M.

ASHTAMI, SONDHI PUJO AND PUSHPANJALI - 2:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.

TEA- 4:00 P.M.

DINNER - 5:30 P.M. - 7:00 P.M.

SHAAN CONCERT- 8:00 P.M. ONWARDS

OCTOBER 29, 2023 - SUNDAY

PUJO - 10:30 A.M. - 1:30 P.M.

LUNCH - 12:00 P.M. - 1:30 P.M.

MUKTO MANCHA - 2:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.

DASHAMI PUJO- 2:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.

BISARJAN DANCE- 5:00 P.M.

SINDOOR KHELA - 5:30 P.M.

DINNER (BOXED)- 6:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M.



2023 PUJA FOOD MENU

তবঙ্গে ব্রিন্সনী

সবোর মোক্কে পুজোর সাজে ব্রিন্সনী র বাদি বোজে

Dakshini

PRESENTS

Friday Dinner (10/27/2023)

VEG

Non-VEG

Pulao
Mixed Tawa Fry
Shahi Paneer
Cham Cham

Pulao
Mixed Tawa Fry
Mutton kosha
Cham Cham

Saturday Lunch (10/28/2023)

VEG

Rice
Shukto
Moog daal
Alu bhaja (jhuri jhuri)

Alu phulkopi r torkari
Chatni
Payesh
Papad

Saturday Dinner (10/28/2023)

VEG

Non-VEG

Fried Rice
Malai Kopta
Karahi Paneer
Roso Malai

Goat Biryani
Chicken Bhuna
Raita
Roso Malai

Sunday Lunch (10/29/2023)

VEG

Non-VEG

Rice
Moog Daal
Mixed Veg
Echor er torkari
Chatni
Rosogolla

Rice
Moog Daal
Rui Macher Kalia
Mixed Veg with Fish head
Chatni
Rosogolla

Sunday Dinner (10/29/2023)

VEG

Kachuri
Aloor dam
Bundi Laddo

2023 PUJA ARTISTS/PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Hariharan Anantha Subramani, is an iconic Indian vocalist whose rich and diverse musical career encompasses popular playback songs, bhajan, classical music, ghazal etc. This eminent singer in his velvety voice has presented an array of superhit melodies like 'Tu hi Re, Chanda Re, Bharat Humko Jaan Se etc. For his rich and timeless contribution to Indian music, the Government of India honored him with Padma Shri in 2004. Hariharan has presented over 15,000 notable songs in 10 languages including Malayalam, Kannada, Bhojpuri, Odiya, Bengali, Sanskrit and English. The twice national award winner (1998 and 2009), joined by composer/singer Lesle Lewis, formed a fusion music band in 1996,

and their debut album, Colonial Cousins, became the first Indian act to be featured on MTV Unplugged winning a string of awards including the MTV Indian Viewers' Choice award, and Billboard Award for the Best Asian Music Group. Hariharan is one of the foremost Indian ghazal singers and composers with more than thirty albums to his credit including famous hits like Aabshar-e-Ghazal (with Asha Bhosle), Gulfam, Hazir (1992), Jashn (1996), Halka Nasha (1996), Paigham (1997), Kaash (2000), and Lahore Ke Rang Hari Ke Sang (2005). He has been one of the favorite singers of the Oscar-winning composer A.R. Rahman. He received numerous awards and accolades, and to this day he continues to enrich and diversify his talent in different directions. He recently collaborated with a Pakistan-based band called 'Strings', released a Punjabi/Bhangra album called 'Destiny', and performed the Swagatham song in the 2010 Commonwealth Games opening ceremony in New Delhi.

The star who can rightfully claim to be the 'Don' of the music world is the one and only super-talented playback singer **Shaan**. Shaan (Shantanu Mukherjee) was born in Mumbai to a family with multiple



musical talents and was an outstanding playback singer, composer, actor, and television host. Throughout his career, this superbly versatile artist presented vocal renditions and compositions in various languages and genres, including film songs, rock, pop music, and classical. His versatility is demonstrated by his foot-tapping numbers like 'Koi Kahe Kehta Rahe' and 'Dus Bahane' with simultaneous presentation of soulful songs like 'Behti Hawa Sa Tha Woh' and 'Chand Sifarish'. Shaan has hosted the top-rated television show Sa Re Ga Ma Pa and has been a judge, coach, and mentor on various talent shows, including the Bengali reality show 'Super Singer Season 2' (2020) and 'Super Singer Season 4' (2023), 'Music ka Maha Muquabla', 'Voice of India Kids' and many more. Shaan's songs "Chand

Sifarish" (from Fanaa) and "Jab Se Tere Naina" (from Saawariya) won the Filmfare Best Male Playback Award and the Zee Cine Award in addition to receiving several other nominations. In 2002, he won the MTV Asia Music Award for best solo album for his album Tanha Dil. In addition, throughout his illustrious career, Shaan has received the Filmfare Award (South), the IIFA Award, the Indian Television Academy Award, the Annual Central European Bollywood Awards, and many more. Shaan is currently a member of the 'Board of Advisors of India's International Movement to Unite Nations (IIMUN). To this day, he remains one of the most popular and acclaimed figures in the musical world and continues to grow and enrich his talent.

2023 PUJA ARTISTS/PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS – AACE DRAMA

জঙ্গলে এক দঙ্গল

Inspired by "The Jungle Book"

Script: Chameli
Direction: Chameli, Siddhartha DG
Choreography: Riyana, Sourabhi
Production Manager: Sayanti
Costume: Mohua
Makeup: Sweta
Stage: Shubho, Siddhartha B, Abir
Sound: Ananya
Light: Sucharit, Pami

Peacocks: Siona, Nirajana, Arohi, Shreya
Butterflies: Kiash, Kiara, Rishaan
Birds: Idhika, Esha, Aditri, Yashasree, Sumedha
Deer: Aishani, Aashi
Monkeys: Arik, Wriddhi, Ipsita
Wolf pack: Avish, Akash, Abhyuday, Shreya, Sanjit, Srijan, Reyansh
Hyenas: Soujonnyo, Srihan, Rivaan
Panther: Sreedeeep
Elephant: Tisya
Snake: Anushri
Rhino: Pratyush
Tiger: Anusha
Bear: Aviraj
Man cub: Vivaan

Jordan High School, Long Beach CA
Sunday Nov 12 2023, at 4.00 PM



Jongole Ek Dongol:

Join Ananda, a village child, as he adventures through the dangerous jungle and to find a place for himself among the wolf pack with Akhildev and Bhaloo dada. He meets many animals along the way, both friend and foe, to discover the joys of family, friendship, and forgiveness. "Jongole Ek Dongol" reimagines Rudyard Kipling's "The Jungle Book", highlighting what it means to be Indian American through rhyme and music.

আসছে তো? সন্কেবেলা? লক্ষ্মী পুজোয় দক্ষিণীতে? পুজো, নাচ, গান, নাটকে আমরা সবাই উঠবো মেতে	কি বললে? প্রোডাকশন ম্যানেজার? Rehearsal schedule, snacks coordination 34 টা বাচ্চা, বিশাল ব্যাপার সায়ন্তী মাসি সামাল দিতে জেরবার
ভাবছো বুঝি ওমা একি? এষে দেখি ঘন জঙ্গল? ঠিক ধরেছো, এবার পুজোর নাটক "জঙ্গলে এক দঙ্গল"	Costume-set এ কেন বৃথা প্রশ্ন করা? পিউ মাসি ওগুলোতে সবার সেরা তার সাথে যদি থাকে স্বেতা মাসি, শুভ, সিধু, আবির কাকুরা
কে লিখেছে? Inspiration "Jungle book" by Kipling কিন্তু এটা অন্যরকম, যদিও আছে শের খান The Jungle King	বাঘ, ভাল্লুক, হায়না, চিতা অন্ধকার জঙ্গল, করছে ভয়? সুচরিত কাকু আর পমি মাসি করবে আলোয় আলোময়
Script লিখেছে চামেলী মাসি আছে মজা রাশি রাশি Direction এ এবার আসি? DG আঙ্কেল আর চামেলী মাসি শিখিয়েছে ওরা ছোট ছোট বাচ্চাদের ভয়ঙ্কর হায়েনার হাসি	Sound, music এ মাসি তুমি অনন্যা Rehearsal থেকে backstage নাটকের পিছনে আর সব মাসি কাকুদের অবদান সকলেরই জানা
Choreography তে রিয়াম দিদি দারুন হতো LA- তে থাকতে যদি চিত্তা হচ্ছে? ছোট পিউ মাসি সামলে নেবে ঝপ তুমি এখন কলেজের পড়ায় দাও মন	সঙ্গে থেকে দক্ষিণীতে খুন আর গুটির বাঁদরামীতে ভালুদাদা, বাঘা, হাতি, গন্ডার, কা আনন্দ আসছে নিয়ে নেকড়ে বাবা মা অভয় দিচ্ছ? আসছে তবে? জমজমাট নাটক হবে

Cast:

Peacocks:	Siona Ghosh, Nirajana Sarkar, Arohi Das, Shreya Sanyal
Butterflies:	Kiash C Mukherjee, Kiara C Mukherjee, Rishaan Ray
Birds:	Idhika Saha, Esha Sanyal, Aditri Majumder, Yashasree Sabui, Sumedha Sundaram
Deers:	Aishani Sen Austin, Aashi Sen Austin
Monkeys:	Arik Ghosal, Wriddhi Bera, Ipsita Saha
Wolf pack:	Avish Banerjee, Shreya Mukherjee, Sanjit Purkayastha, Srijan Dolui, Reyansh Basu, Abhyuday Sinha, Akash Purkayastha
Hyenas:	Soujonnyo Saha, Srihan Sengupta, Rivaan Ray
Panther:	Sreedeeep Goswami
Elephant:	Tisya Barua Choudhury
Bear:	Aviraj Ghosh
Man cub:	Vivaan Sensharma
	Rhino: Pratyush Basu
	Snake: Anushri Purkayastha
	Tiger: Anusha Ghosal



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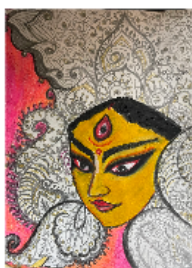
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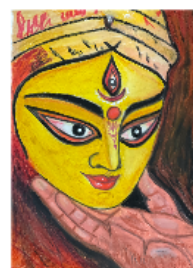
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ভাবানুবাদ

দীপক বাগচী

চেত-দরপণ-মারজনং ভব-মহা-দাবাগুনি-নিরুপাণং
শ্রেরঃ-কৈরব-চন্দ্রিকা-বিতরণং বিদ্যাবধুজীবনম্।
সর্ব-আত্মস্নপনং পরং বিজয়তে শ্রীকৃষ্ণ সঙ্কীর্তনম্ ॥১॥

শ্রীকৃষ্ণ সংকীর্তনের হউক বিজয়,
পরিষ্কৃত করে যাহা খুলি যত রয়,
বহু কাল ধরিয়া যা' জমেছে সেখায়,
এবং ভব-মহা-অগ্নি তাহাই নিভায় ॥১॥

নাম্‌নামকারি বহুধা নিজসর্বশক্তি সত্ত্বাপিতা নিয়মিতঃ স্মরণে ন কালঃ।
এতাদৃশী তব কৃপা ভগবন্‌ মমাপি দুর্ভদৈবম্-ঐদৃশম্-ইহাজনি নানুরাগঃ ॥২॥

তব নামে নানা শক্তি অভিব্যক্ত রয়;
নাম স্মরণের কোন বিশেষ সময়
নাহি আছে, আর নাহি কোনই বিধান;
এতই তোমার কৃপা প্রভু, ভগবান।
তথাপি দুর্ভাগ্য মোর এতই ভীষণ,
ও নামে মনেতে নাহি অনুরাগ কোন ॥২॥

তুগাদপি সুনীচেন তরোরপি সহিষ্ণুনা।
অমানিনা মানদেন কীর্তনীয়ঃ সদা হরিঃ ॥৩॥

তুণের চেয়েও রহি নম্বর হবেভাবে,
তবুর মতন রহি সহিষ্ণু স্বভাবে,
মানহীন যে বা তারে দিয়া তো সম্মান,
হরির কীর্তন সদা কর দিয়া প্রাণ ॥৩॥

ন ধনং ন জনং ন সুন্দরীং কবিতাং বা জগদীশ কাময়ে।
মম জন্মনি জন্মনীশ্বরে ভবতাদ্‌ ভক্তিরহৈতুকী ত্বয়ি ॥৪॥

হে জগদীশ্বর, আমি নাহি চাহি ধন,
অনুচরবৃন্দ কোন, সুন্দরীর মন,

নাহি চাহি কাব্য-গাথা, শুধু আমি চাই
জন্মজন্মান্তরে ভক্তি— অহৈতুকীটাই ॥৪॥

অগ্নি নন্দতনুজ কিঙ্করং পতিতং মাং বিষমে ভবাম্বুখৌ।
কৃপয়া তব পাদপঙ্কজস্থিতখুলিসদৃশং বিচিন্তয় ॥৫॥

রহিছে এই কিংকর পড়িয়া এখন,
ভীষণ ভবসাগরে, হে নন্দনন্দন;
তোমার কৃপায় মোরে করিও ধারণা
চরণ-পদ্মের তব কৃষ্ণদ্র খুলিকণা ॥৫॥

নয়নং গলদশ্রুধারয়া বদনং গদগদবৃন্দধয়া গিরা।
পুলকৈর্নুচিতিং বপুঃ কদা তব নামস্মরণে ভবিষ্যতি ॥৬॥

কবে তব নামখানি করিতে গ্রহন
চক্‌মে গলদশ্রুধারা করিব ধারণ,
হবে গদগদ স্বর ও বৃন্দ বচন,
আর হবে পুলকিত মোর দেহ-মন? ॥৬॥

যুগায়িতং নিমেষেণ চক্‌মুখা প্রাবৃষায়িতম্।
শূন্যায়িতং জগৎ সর্ব গোবিন্দবিরহেন মে ॥৭॥

গোবিন্দ-বিরহে মোর মুহুর্ত সময়
যেন এক যুগ সম বলি' মনে হয়;
চক্‌মু হ'তে অশ্রু বারে মোর অবিরত,
শূণ্য প্রতিভাত হয় সমগ্র জগত ॥৭॥

আশ্লিষ্য বা পাদরতাং পিনষ্টু মামদর্শনা মর্মহতাং করতু বা।
যথা তথা বা বিদখাতু লংপটো মত্প্রাণনাথস্তু স এব নাপরঃ ॥৮॥

হে ভক্ত-হৃদয়-চোর লইয়া আমায়
কর তুমি তাহা যাহা তব মন চায়;
কারণ তুমি যে মোর হৃদয়ের পরিয়,
তুমিই কেবল মাত্র, একমাত্র স্বীয় ॥৮॥



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এবার পূজোয় যেতেই হবে চাঁদে
রাতে বসে চাঁদ অনেক দেখেছি ছাদে।
মুশকিল শুধু একটাই আছে, জেনো-
টিকিটের ভাড়া বলছেন এখনও॥
কবে যে টেক-অফ, ভেবে মোর মন কাঁদে,
পূজোয় তবে যেতেই হবে যে চাঁদে।
এতটুকু ভেবে দিই কঞ্চল মুড়ি,
চোখ খুলে দেখি, চড়কা কাটছে বুড়ি।
তারপর দেখি বরফওয়ালা মেরু,
ঠিক টিনটিন যেন গেছে বেরু বেরু।
হঠাৎ এসব কাব্যের মাঝখানে-
কাসির, ঘন্টা শব্দ পেলাম কানো!
ধড়পড়িয়ে চোখ কোচলিয়ে দেখি-
সফ্টল্যান্ডিং হতে এতোটুকু বাকী।
এরপর এক ইতিহাস হলো রচিত
বিজ্ঞানে আজ ভারত তারকাখচিত॥

ইচ্ছে

তোতন সোনা চাঁদের কনা, চাঁদের মতো হাসি,
বলনা আমায় জড়িয়ে ধরে-মা তোমায় ভালোবাসি।
আলতো ছোঁয়ার চমকানিতে ঘুমের থেকে উঠে
হঠাৎ যেন তোর দেখা পাই টুকটুকে লাল ঠোঁটে।
হেসে বলবি মিথ্যা সেসব মিথ্যা স্বপ্ন দেখো,
এইতো আমি তোমার পাশে কিছুই বোঝো নাকো!
সারা জীবন থাকবো পাশে, দিচ্ছি তোমায় কথা,
আমি আছি, চিন্তা কেন - পাছ কেন ব্যাথা?
আবার সবাই ঘুরতে যাবো অনেক মজা করে,
এবার নাহয় একটু দূরে, অল্প একটু দূরে,
সেখান থেকে দেখবো নিচে, নানান রঙের মেলা,
থাকবো মোর অনেক সুখে করবো অনেক খেলা।
চলো না মা সেখানেতে আমরা চলে যাই,
যেখানেতে তোমার তোতন করবে শুধু খাইখাই।

পাপিয়া দাসগুপ্ত - ২০ত জুলাই ২০২৩

Rangila

Ei je tumi mishti poka
Rupe aamai banao boka
Golapi-kamala-kalo
Tumi soundorjer aalo
Holud and sabuj, tomar preme abujh
Rangiye aamar mon
Ghatale je aghoton
Bolo ekhon ki kori,
Chhi chhi lajjaye mori


Written by Tapasri Dattaray

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A Memorable Journey to a Faraway Land

by Latika Datta Goswami

Life consists of challenges. Instead of avoiding them, we can accept them head-on to make them memorable. Traveling from Bangladesh to the USA with my twin toddler sons was such a challenge. The journey involved a few nerve-wrecking hurdles, but I was able to overcome them and make the trip one of the most illustrious events in my life.



Boston - Three months after arrival

It was May of 1981. I, with my twin sons (less than two years old), left my parents' home in Bangladesh to join my husband in Boston who was studying for his Ph.D degree at Boston University. My husband, Kisholoy, opted to purchase two tickets for our sons at 10% of the regular price, as being financially strapped as a student, it was a very lucrative deal. But unfortunately, the boys could not travel with two 10% tickets; we had to buy one boy's ticket at full price during confirmation.

We took "Bangladesh Biman" to Heathrow followed by "TWA" to Logan, Boston making it a 24-hour journey altogether. Through the glass windows of the plane, the light and dark scene caught my eyes while I wondered about my loved ones I was leaving behind. Would I see them again? Could I talk to them again?

Luckily, I got two seats for my twin boys, who slept peacefully. I was almost lost in the darkness of the unknown and came back to the sound of the boys waking up realizing they were hungry. With the help of a teenage co-traveler, I prepared their milk with hot water and milk-powder which kept them calm and satisfied. I was hungry myself, but had no appetite.

After taking a brief restroom break, I noticed that one of my sons had disappeared. Although my heart was pounding, I realized that the plane had no open windows, so I would definitely find him on the plane, which gave me some relief. Minutes later I saw my lost son following a flight attendant with fruits on a platter to the business class. Upon being questioned, he answered that he wanted grapes, but eventually calmed down. While being compelled to respond to the call of nature, my boys refused to use the plane's toilet. I solved the problem by spreading newspapers in front of the toilet.

When food was served my sons expressed their wish to feed themselves, although they were always fed at home. In fear of upsetting them further, I agreed to let them eat by themselves using a fork and knife. Of course, the food did not end up in their stomachs, but on the floor and our seats. I was mortified thinking of the effort it would take to clean the plane later.

The first leg of the flight journey was completed in thirteen hours. While everyone was getting off the plane, we fell far behind. When I got off the plane and came to the passenger lounge, a gentleman, who looked like he was from Bangladesh, spoke to us in Bengali. He informed us that after our plane took off, the president of Bangladesh, Ziaur Rahman, was assassinated by a group of army officers from the opposition. A state of emergency was proclaimed throughout the country, but luckily, our plane took off before it happened. Conversing with him, I mentioned that I was going to the Boston University hostel for international married students, called Warren Hall, Room number 604. To my amazement he informed me that by an incredible coincidence, he stayed in the same hostel, in the same room, and completed his PhD in Economics. Later this kind gentleman became the Governor of Bangladesh Bank and the founder of East & West University in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Aboard the TWA flight my twins took turns every other minute to go to the restroom and flush the toilet watching the blue water for the first time in their lives. All my efforts to bring them back failed. I looked

back in dismay and noticed about ten people queuing to use the toilet. While I felt like crying, I didn't have that luxury. Finally, close to tears, I brought the two brothers back to their seats.

As far as I could see, I was the only female passenger with two children, wearing a saree, and had sunglasses on to cover my red eyes due to conjunctivitis that I got the day before I left. Finally to calm down by wailing kids, I let them play with their much-coveted milk powder which was always kept out of their reach. Somehow that lulled them to sleep.

After the plane landed at Logan Airport, I took turns carrying my boys and luggage to reach customs which was quite a long walk. Not surprisingly, we were the last at customs. The customs officer, seeing a mountain of childrens' clothes (which I brought to save money) enquired after the sheer volume of clothes. When my answer did not seem to appease him, he started showing my suitcase to others, like a mysterious item. The waiting time seemed to be non-ending.



*Kisholoy and Sons -
Boston - August 1981*

Suddenly, I spotted my son happily playing in a man's arms, and I could see these men back only. I was surprised and alarmed at the same time wondering who this person was. After a while, I figured out that my son was in his father's arms. My husband told me that he observed that we were quite late coming out of the customs, so he explained to the customs officer about the situation, and was permitted to go in. Having my husband there at that time, all my worries ended and I broke into tears. Finally, we had reached America, the land of our dreams.

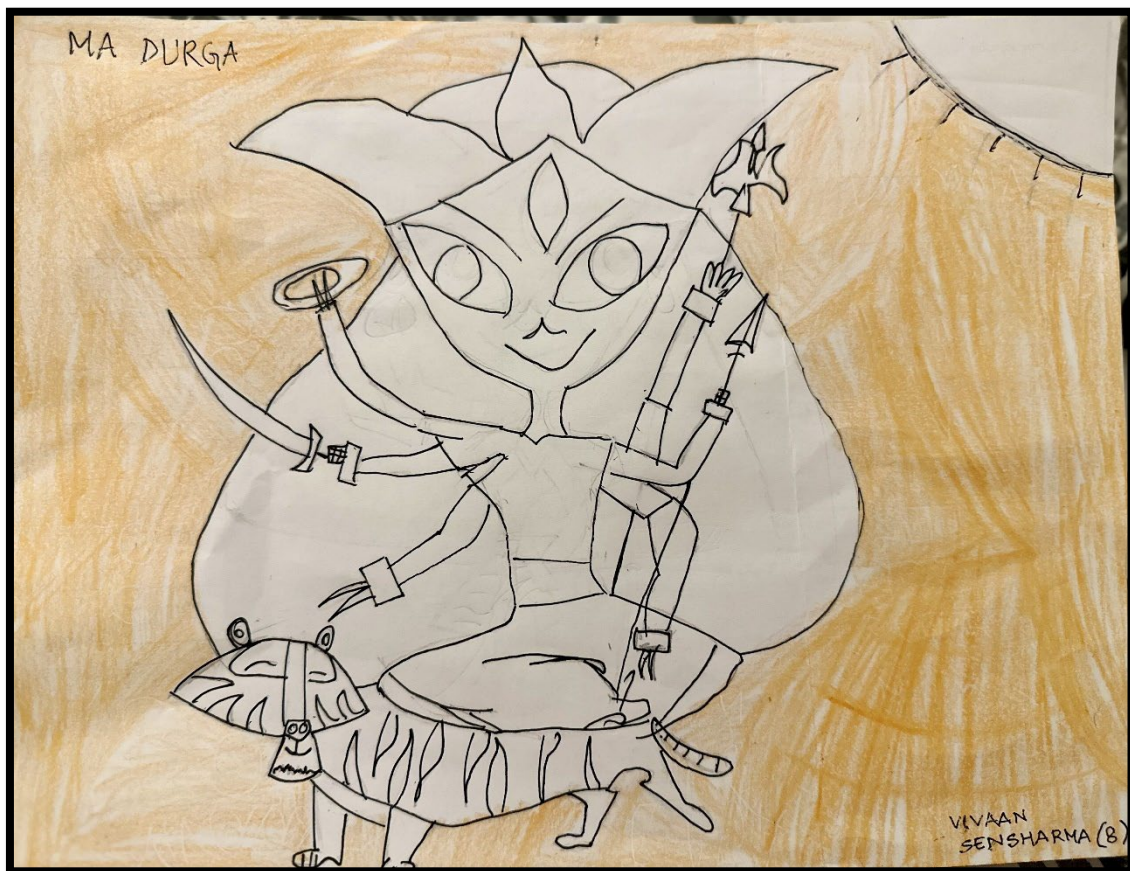


Art by - Krishnakali Roychoudhury

Evolution of Mankind, the Thoughts and Delving into the Future by Shreyan Chatterjee (grade 9, University High School, Irvine)

Life is what everyone shares. From the realms of infancy to the aged...this is what nature has given us. However, in the pursuit of life, many have tried to conquer it. The nature of humanity has been distinct; growing legacies that outlive the former and branch for the latter to carry on. Dissemination of knowledge is what brings man closer to the top. It starts with the earliest life form, our progenitors of existence. They managed to forage, gather, and hunt to the top; establish order and learn about the principles of fire. Their brains were paltry to what we possess now, yet at the same time...ingenuity and discovery existed long before our existence. It was so simple and basic but life flourished. Millions of years have progressed from that time.

We have created new technologies, given our posterity years of bewildering technologies and crazed aspects from what was taught to be just an imagination. Our society has progressed so much that we are capable of language, order, and artificial intelligence that may eventually take over our way of life. Amongst all these advancements, I believe that we are far from where our potential can take us. One thing is certain for sufficiency: The youth mustn't be shunned or repudiated, instead nurtured with care. We were bequeathed a role from our parents, ancestors, and God, to carry this undying urge of curiosity, intelligence, and principles that make us all human. It is our responsibility to grow the world and make it a future where our children can learn from it. It is in this endless cycle of growing and nurturing the young that we stand here today, gloriously flaunting our achievements we have made.





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A Single Blunder by Aryan Mukherjee

*A gentle hum echoed through the windows,
The elephant rumbled along its path,
Her riders smiled, expressions coated in sun rays,
A lily blossom uncoiled its spathe.*

*The children exclaimed,
Their eyelids sent aflutter,
"A bridge!" they cried,
Their hearts warm as melted butter.*

*A few hearty laughs arose,
Their presence tinted with amicable aura,
Oh innocence, how illuminating it can be,
Just to be crushed, a dissipated beam of aurora.*

*The lily blossom shuddered,
A petal gently fell,
Then another, and another, and another, and another,
Until there were no more, just a spadix, whose comrades
were sent to hell.*

*The clouds made their entry,
The light slowly subsided,
A wail erupted from an elephant,
Not ours though, this one's misguided.*

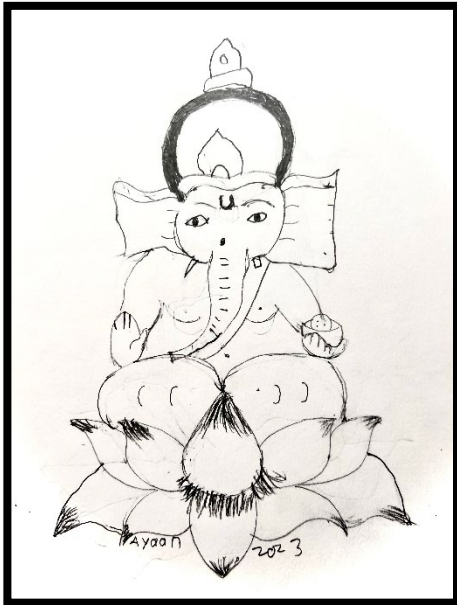
*I watched with curiosity,
As we seemed to feel time slow,
Then suddenly the car bombarded us,
Our thumping heartbeats lost all tempo.*

*Honk! Buzz! Crash! SCREECH!
We tumbled out of sorts,
The world warped round and knocked us
hollow,
The string unraveled from our shorts.*

*We're sent spiraling,
Blood, glass, and tears,
A looming darkness consumed my vision,
Soul-sucking, the restoration of my greatest
fears.*

*And like that, the elephant released one last
wail,*

*Her crash the strike of thunder,
And it came to me in those final moments,
That all good things can vanish with a single
blunder.*



Ayaan Pradhan



Arik Ghoshal

Ashdown Forest by Shreyasmi Dolui

October 26, 1991

My best friend's name is Walter. He's been my friend ever since I can remember. He has blonde hair and the only thing he ever wears is an oversized red T-shirt with baggy blue jeans. He claims that the shirt covers the fact that he has, "a bit of a tummy." He also has a sweet tooth and is in the habit of putting honey on everything: cheese and honey, honey cakes, honey butter cookies, whipped honey, etc.

As for my other friend, his name is Peter. He likes to wear pink polo shirts tucked into navy blue pants. He became my friend a little bit after Oscar came along, but I haven't seen Oscar since he built that treehouse. Peter is a little bit uptight. He is always worried and comes up with unrealistic "what ifs." One day Peter came up to me and said, "Oh Charles! I am troubled by the idea that a terrible storm might come during the night and ruin all our homes. What shall we do?" "Peter, the sky is clear," I replied. Still Peter ignored me and decided to board up his house before bed.

Another one of my friends is Tim, a very hyperactive boy who can't stay still for more than two minutes. Robert, although I don't see him anymore, was always the clean freak type. He would wipe down a spot two times saying that once isn't enough because all the *stubborn* germs still linger, but three times would be excessive.

One of my friends that I am very worried about is my good friend Edmond. Eddie, for as long as I can remember, has always felt down. He once told me he can't remember the last time he felt true happiness. Walter and I worry the most about him. He deserves happiness in some way, like we all do.

I was at a picnic with all of them earlier this morning. I ran back to the building to get my camera to click a picture of the six of us. I couldn't find it so I just decided to go back and enjoy the moment with them, but when I returned, everyone was gone. I walked farther to the gated entrance, and when I got there, all I saw was a broken honey pot laying underneath a giant sign that read "Hundred Acre Woods."



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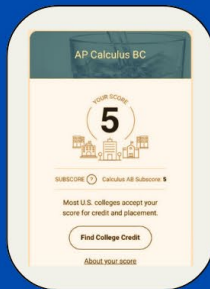
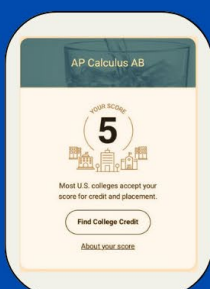
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I just wanted to let you know that I got a 5 on the AP Calc exam
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Drops of Happiness by Anusha Ghosal (grade 6)

Amidst rumbling roaring outside, raindrops play tag on their dissent from the skies down to Earth. The drops that have completed the journey perform a fleeting drumming piece, dancing to the sound of their own music, before vanishing. This is not the end of the journey; it is the mark of a new chapter as the rain races across the windows of a car, as it freezes up on the mountains, and as it swirls down the drain with a seemingly final “SHH”. The rain that’s soaked up by the Earth serves a vital purpose. It rejuvenates and refreshes the plants, elongating the lives of the trees, supporting animal and human lives long term. The raindrops happily get to work, “greening” grass, sweetening fruit, providing fresh water, and keeping the Earth alive. As they race across car windows, children greet them with laughter, amused and intrigued by the various patterns the drops form across the glass. The rain slides off of the vehicle, bidding farewell to bubbly smiles. They then swiftly bolt to the drains, disappearing from sight as everyone continues about their business. The water rushes down slides that we refer to as “pipes”. They swoosh down to the rivers and lakes, washing out the polluted waters. The kid biking to school, and the adult on his motorcycle off to work cherish the feeling of rain on their face, relishing the rhythmic tapping and the earthy smell. However, at a nearby college, a grumbling, frowning student rushes for cover, criticizing the rain’s unwelcome presence. She tells her friends how she believes rain is the cause of so many car accidents due to the reduced visibility and landslides.

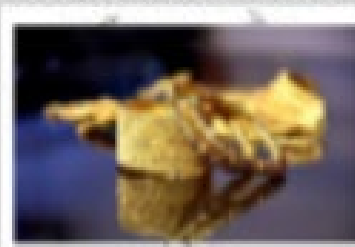
The rain descends to the small, local coffee shop in the heart of town, a place to relax and unwind. It is owned by elderly, beloved man. He watches the scenes unfold with a smile, greeting joyful people. He contemplates where the water goes and its impact on life while observing it swirl down the drain and be absorbed by the grass. Viewing the rain as a sign of hope, he goes about his work, making customers comfortable, smiling and singing to himself, reassured that what seems like an ending can always be a new beginning.

In the afternoon, the college student glares at the everlasting rain. She decides to go get herself something to drink from the local store. When picking up her drink, she grumbles, her voice tinged with annoyance, to the elderly man, “What a dark and gloomy day. I absolutely hate rain, and it can cause car accidents because of reduced visibility. Oh, and don’t forget the landslides! I mean, it goes down the drain, or into the dirt anyways. Why’s everyone so happy?” Smiling to himself, he thinks about his own past and how he once thought that too. After a few moments, he opened his mouth and gently told her, “Rain offers us renewal, let us learn to embrace its story. What you think is a mere ending is actually a new beginning filled with endless possibilities. We should learn to recognize that, no?” She is taken aback by his answer, as she simply expected him to agree with her. “What do you mean?” she inquired after some thought.

It was time for his lunch break, so rather than simply excusing himself, he decided to ask her to join him for lunch. It is then that he changes her view of the world with an explanation regarding a phenomenon as “simple” as rain. He elaborates on the life of a raindrop after it disappears down the drain, or into the dirt, showing that this is the cycle of renewal. She left the store in deep thought, and his explanations kept circling back to her. She tossed and turned all night in utter confusion until sleep came to take her. Waking up, everything made sense. From then on, rainy days would make her remember the happy kids she saw on that specific day. Proceeding to become a high school teacher, the year of her retirement, she meets a freshman boy on a rainy day with the same thought process she had. The man’s explanation had surely stuck with her. She explains to him what was told to her all those years ago. “What you think is an ending can always be a sign of light. Mere endings are hopeful beginnings in disguise.”

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Dumb Pigeon by Aditya Palit

This happened many years ago when we were in New Orleans. One morning we were driving on the street along the Atchafalaya River. My wife Reba was sitting next to me on the passenger seat. My daughter Aditi, a 9th grader, was sitting on the back seat listening to the music on headphone.

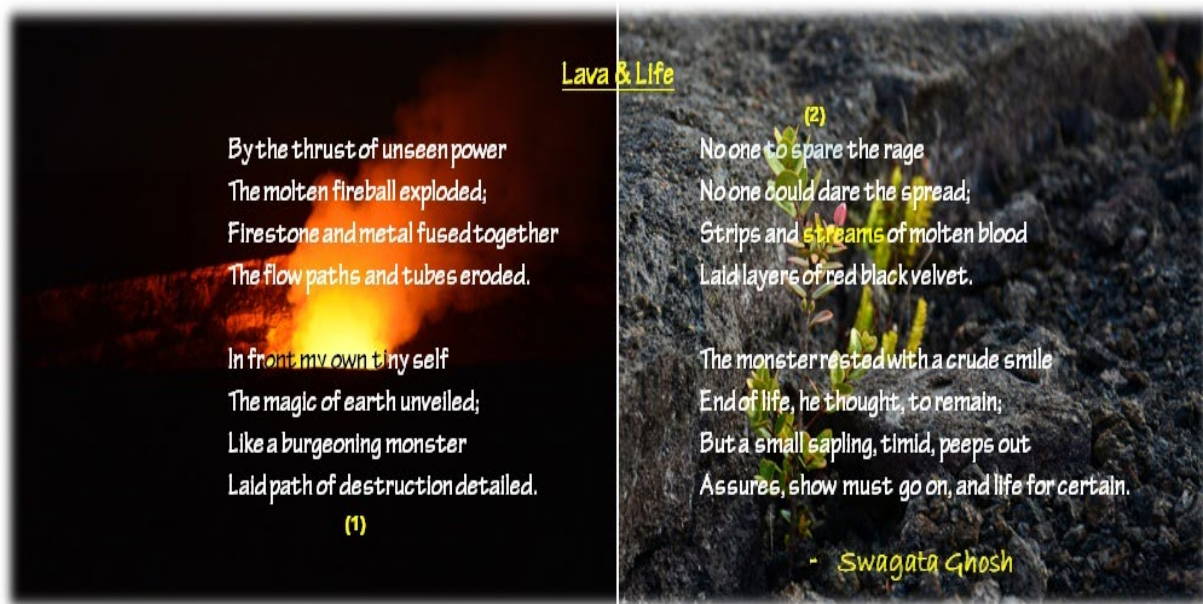
I was driving at around 50 mph when we saw a pigeon about 100 feet away on our path. The bird was pecking and looking around like any other pigeon.

Now in our engineering class we are taught that when a car moves through the air stream, it compresses the air in front of the car and the air further away expands. However, when a car moves at high speed around 50 mph the air stream in front does not have time to expand. The result is a series of compression waves generated in front of the moving car.

A small bird in the path of a car will feel the compression waves and fly away safely from the incoming car. But this dumb pigeon did not go to an engineering college and was dumb enough not to fly away.

Reba cautioned me to slow down. My reply: "It will fly away". The car was approaching the pigeon, but it kept pecking on the street. Then there was a sound: "squash".

There was a dead silence inside the car. Reba said: "you should have stopped". Aditi screamed from behind: "He killed the pigeon". She was in the habit of addressing me as He instead of Dad whenever she was displeased with me. I said I am not going to slow down for any dumb pigeon. It was dumb and deserved to die. Both the mother and daughter continued to chastise me for the rest of the journey.



Early Detection Saves Lives by Abhisek Ghosal, Ph.D.



DNA serves as the blueprint for our existence. Understanding how these genetic codes orchestrate molecular events that shape who we are led to the initiation of a groundbreaking scientific endeavor known as the Human Genome Project (HGP) in 1990. The project aimed to map the entire human genome, encompassing 3 billion bases. Despite the immense workload and relatively low throughput technology at the time, this monumental task took 15 years to complete at a cost of \$2.7 billion USD. Since then, advancements in DNA sequencing technology have propelled us to a point where a human genome can be sequenced within hours at a fraction of the initial cost.

Genome sequencing furnishes a trove of information about an organism's DNA, offering insights into its genetic composition, variations, and potential implications for health and disease. From pharmacogenetics and disease risk stratification to molecular diagnosis and personalized medicine, DNA sequencing has unlocked vast opportunities to save lives. I find myself playing a modest role in this transformative journey. Specifically, I am engaged in the field of epigenetics, the study of heritable changes in DNA function that do not involve alterations to the underlying DNA sequence. While the DNA sequence remains unaltered, epigenetics adds another layer of complexity by influencing gene expression and cellular functions. These modifications are reversible and responsive to environmental changes.

Esophageal carcinoma stands out as one of the most lethal cancers in the gastrointestinal tract, with a five-year survival rate of less than 20%. Barrett's Esophagus is a known precursor to this cancer, and males over 50 years with obesity and a prolonged history of heartburn constitute a high-risk group. Although endoscopy is considered the gold standard, it often misses the diagnosis, particularly in the early stage of the disease.

Early detection is critical in cancer care, and in the technology, we employ specific cells from the esophagus can be collected through an FDA-approved device in a quick 5-minute office procedure. DNA is chemically modified and tagged with a barcode. The thousands of copies of DNA strands are concurrently sequenced and analyzed using sophisticated algorithms for DNA methylation. Supported by validated clinical trials on specific biomarkers, we can confidently predict the disease at its early stages. If detected, physicians can easily treat the disease in its nascent phase, offering patients the chance to reclaim a normal life. The confirmed biomarker has the capacity to forecast both the advancement and progression of the disease. In my role within Research and Development for molecular product development, I am actively involved in creating novel methodologies. This includes the identification of new biomarkers within a multi-omics platform, introducing fresh markers that contribute to the early detection and monitoring of gastrointestinal cancers, such as esophageal cancer.





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Simple Recipes for Festive Season

Murmura Ladoo (Laddu) Recipe



About Murmura Ladoo (Murmura Laddu) Recipe:

Crispy ladoos made with puffed rice and molten jaggery. Though puffed rice is not really nutritionally rich, it is light on the stomach and low in calories. Murmura Ladoos made of puffed rice are quite filling and are among one of the most loved sweet treats of the country.

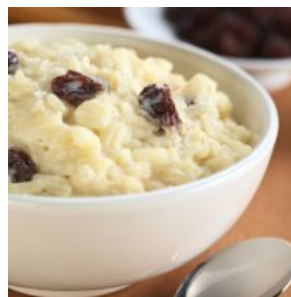
Ingredients:

- 250 Gram Murmura (rice puffs)
- 750 gram Jaggery
- 3 1/2 cups Water

How to Make Murmura Ladoo (Laddu)

1. Place jaggery and water in a pan, and dissolve the jaggery over low heat.
2. Once the jaggery dissolves, increase the heat and bring it to boil and cook over full flame till, a 2-thread consistency is reached.
3. Mix in the murmura quickly into the mixture.
4. Take it off the heat and let it cool for a while
5. Make round balls moistening the hands if the batter is too much sticky.
6. Leave it to cool and serve.

Bundiya Payesh Recipe



About Bundiya Payesh Recipe:

Sweet, thickened milk dessert, perfect for summer or festival time.

Ingredients:

- 200 gm bundiya
- 1 liter milk
- Sugar to taste
- Few drops of rosewater

How to Make Bundiya Payesh

1. Boil milk on low flame, keep stirring for 20 minutes.
2. Add the bundiya and sugar if required.
3. Boil for another 5 minutes and remove from flame.
4. Cool and add in a little rosewater and chill in a refrigerator, serve.

Journey Through Paradise: Road To Hana by Soujonnyo Saha (Simba)

Finally, I was there on Maui and going on the Road to Hana Drive. We started from our rented apartment in the Kaanapali Plantation in Lahaina. We picked up some snacks and drinks at the local Safeway and headed to Central Maui. After passing Kahului Airport, we were at the official starting point of the Road to Hana. Well, we were not going alone. We bought a digital tour guide called Gipsy which would tell about all the myths and science behind the island and tell us the best stops. Well, buckle up because this is going to be a heck of a ride!


We entered the famous Highway 36 known as the Hana Highway. After a few miles of driving, we reached the small town of Pa'ia. In Pa'ia, you can find souvenir shops but we just drove past them. Now we came upon the fun stuff. We reached Ho'okipa Beach which is one of the beaches in the world to go surfing. But this beach didn't have the type of sand that you would also find in California because the sand was pretty rocky and very hot. The water touching my feet made me feel so relaxed and calm. Near the beach, there was a plantation from where people would pick golden pineapples and make traditional Hawaiian Golden Pineapple Wine.



We started at "Mile 0," then passed "Mile 1" and made our first stop at Twin Falls. After parking near the trail entrance, the hike seemed endless. Finally, we reached the waterfall, and my brother swam while I almost drowned but was saved by a stranger. This incident highlighted the importance of knowing how to swim. Our next stop was the costly Garden of Eden, where we saw peacocks and various birds. We admired exotic flowers, including the yellow hibiscus, and enjoyed the view of Wailua Falls. Notably, Maui served as a filming location for Jurassic Park. We also visited the Ke'anae Arboretum, discovering various plants like golden bamboo, Narra, breadfruit, and the famous rainbow eucalyptus.

After the arboretum, we headed to day's last- Wainapanapa Beach. Well, this beach wasn't any ordinary sandy beach but made of cooled lava. When Haleakala, which is the volcano that we have been driving along this whole time erupted, the lava flow reached the ocean and created what we know as Wainapanapa Black Sand Beach. This was by far my favorite stop in the whole drive. Overall, this trip on Hana Road was perfect except for the part where I almost drowned. Altogether, we made a total estimate of 600 turns and 52 one-lane bridges in the whole round trip. After reading this, will you go to Maui and do the Road to Hana experience?





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The lores are Alive here...photographs: Sourav Roy, content: Shawli Roy



The history book comes to life when I stand in front of the churches, monuments, and castles. The destination this time is Scotland. Via Heathrow we reached Edinburgh with 6 days in hand. Sunday is our day to visit the most visited place in Edinburgh.



2023 Spring break called for a trip amidst lush natural beauty. With just a week in hand to cross the Atlantic, soak in the natural beauty and witness history of thousands of years – we were more than ready to get on board. Traveling to any European country fills me with utter amazement.



With a history of over a thousand years, Edinburg Castle is said to be the most besieged place in the United Kingdom and one of the most attacked castles in the world. It has a long and rich history of royal residence, military garrison, prisons and fortresses.



It gives one goosebumps to roam around the castle where soldiers, kings, queens, and a few odd pirates once walked. Along with the regal stories, a brutal history of greed, vengeance, and power play lingers here to haunt. This is probably true for the history of any kingdom.

The Royal Mile is the heart of Edinburgh's old town. For about 500 years this road had been a processional route for monarchs. From castle's point to the other side of the Palace of Holyroodhouse – the length of the road is approximately one Scottish mile. This Royal Mile is full of life, music, filled with travelers from around the world. You can't miss listening to music played in Bagpipes and occasionally, for a fraction of a second, you can't either miss hearing a note resembling Rabindra sangeet! A quick visit to the Writers' Museum on the way was gratifying to see the quill that Sir Walter Scott used. We would return to The Royal Mile after our trip to the Scottish highland.





Hogwarts express, Glencoe



Location for Skyfall

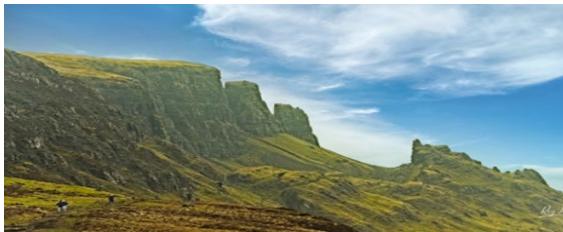


Eilean Donan castle

We booked a conducted tour to Inverness and Isle of Skye. Scotland witnessed a long winter in 2023; guided tours were just opening in early April. It was still freezing cold, but tour enthusiasts were eager to explore the beauty of the Scottish highland. Among many interesting facts and guiding us to local café and eateries, the tour guide showed us many movie locations – Braveheart, Harry Potter, Skyfall to name a few. Bollywood was not far behind to explore highland. We took a trip to the beautiful Eilean Donan castle - situated at the confluence of three sea lochs – Loch Duich, Loch Long and Loch Alsh which was featured in the movie “Kuch Kuch Hota Hai”.



Limpid water of Lake Ness is at the center of Scottish highlands. The lake is overlooked by the ruins of medieval Urquhart Castle and is also known for mythical monster “Nessie”. Inverness is a city on Scotland’s northeast coast, where the River Ness meets the Moray Firth. Historically, the city is best known for the Battle of Culloden where the Jacobite army was defeated by the British government force in 1746 in the final confrontation of the Jacobite rising. In literature, Inverness was the location where Macbeth murdered King Duncan to the path to the throne.



On the next day trip, we visited The Isle of Skye. It is connected to Scotland's northwest coast by bridge, and is known for its rugged landscapes, picturesque fishing villages and medieval castles. Truly the land ends here. In search of some coffee to beat the cold we reached to Portree. A beautiful port town that features pubs and boutiques. We found a warm café corner to have soup and bread.



Coming back to Edinburgh to learn about Scotch whiskey was one of the main attractions of our trip. Earliest history of distillation in Scotland goes back in 1494. The tasting room was arranged like a museum of scotch whiskey. There are five Scotch Whisky regions - Campbeltown, Highland, Islay, Lowland and Speyside. Each offers a unique palate. Listening to the presentation while sipping a whisky of a particular region with a room full of whiskey connoisseurs was indeed delightful.



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Math, My Companion

Dear Math,

You have been giving me your problems since the age of 3. Sometimes I get frustrated with your problems but there is something about your problems that keeps me going, even to this day. Whether I am learning a new topic or I am just practicing a topic that I already know, you make me forget what's bothering me. Your problems require a lot of attention, focus, and concentration. You have always been in my life. When I was 5 years old, I loved building Lego structures and to follow the directions, I would have to count the studs on a Lego to make sure I had the right piece. When I used beaded bracelets at the age of 8, I would make sure that there was an equal amount of different colored beads on each side of the charm.

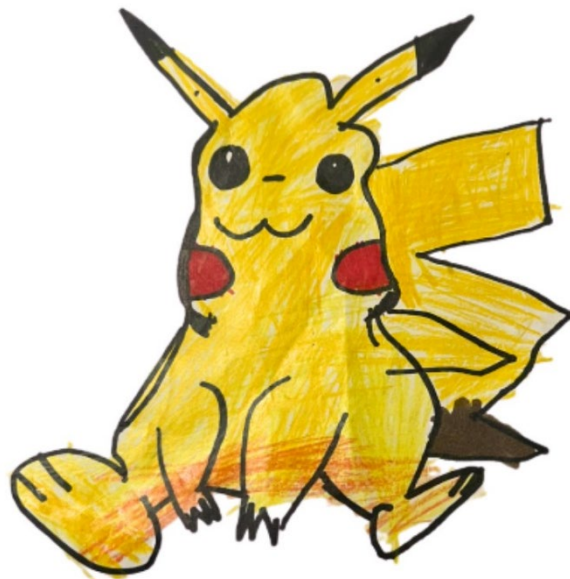
Most people despise your problems but, most of the time I enjoy your problems. Maybe I like your problems because I am good at them and getting better at them every day. I have to work on your problems over and over again because if I don't practice your problems then I will forget the basic concepts and I will have to start all over again.

When I take a math test I get scared and nervous of making a mistake, but you have taught me that I have to make mistakes to master the topic. I have made many mistakes and I will continue to, but you have taught me that it is okay to make mistakes as long as I learn from them. You have taught me that I can't always be right or get the best score and it's okay, but I always have to give it my all. When I take a math test I always worry about the score/the end result. I always worry about the "what ifs" which makes me underestimate and doubt myself. This affects my self-confidence and my performance on a test or in life. Sometimes I really struggle with my self-confidence but I learned from you to believe in myself. I hear "Believe in yourself" everywhere but you have really taught me to apply this in real life.

You are a subject in school but what most people don't understand is you are a journey because I believe that no one will be able to fully understand you. You are a long journey where you can be a constant companion, help people succeed in life and teach them many lessons along the way. That's why I love you. I look forward to the many years we have together. Thank you for never failing to challenge me.

Yours truly,

Ryka Ray Pradhan



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My Crazy Field Trip to The Museum **by Sanjit Purkayastha (grade 7, age 12)**

Today our class had a field trip to an ancient museum. Our class noticed that the museum was run down and no one was inside, not even an employee. Our teacher assured us that everything was safe, so we went in. Just as we entered, one of the old and dusty TVs powered on, and displayed a message, "Alert! Everyone who has entered this museum will be teleported to a year in the past or future." Just as everyone else finished reading, they all panicked, but I tend to stay calm when surprised or shocked.

Little did we know this would be the last time seeing each other, as when everyone panicked, we ended up being teleported to a different era. I and 4 other classmates were teleported into the past. Strangely, my 4 other classmates instantly started foraging for food and water. Eventually, we found a trickle of water, and they started drinking the water. My classmates even tried to compel me to drink the water, but I denied it, as I didn't know whether it was clean or not. As the sun set, everyone was cold and tired, so we decided to build a fort out of tree branches and leaves.

As it became morning, everyone was algid, so we set in search of a village or civilization. Surprisingly, we found a village in the first hour, and it, fortunately, wasn't abandoned. 2 of my classmates decided to raid a house full of essentials. The guards were instantly notified and maimed 1 of the 2 classmates who raided the house. We all were carried to the King's castle. After the guards explained what happened, the king strangely relented his harsh punishment and coddled us.

The king apparently was an infidel as he said he didn't believe in locking up criminals and leaving them to die. He ended up depriving the guards of any food and water and instead locked the guards up. Just then, my arms jerked as I woke up. It'd turned out to be a dream before the real field trip to a museum, but I'm not so sure if I want to go anymore, so I might stay home.



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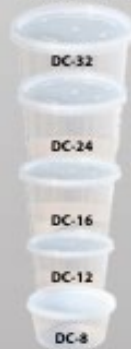
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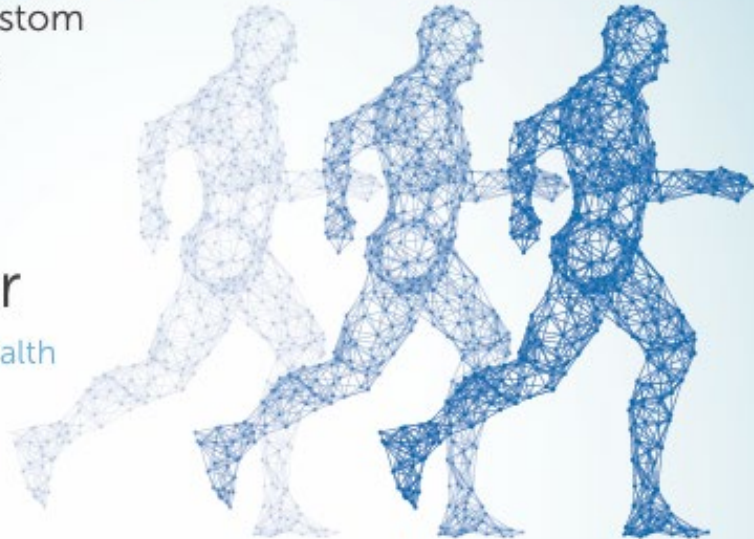


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My Trip to New York by Rivaan Ray

This year my family and I went to New York City (NYC). We stayed there for 4 days.

We took a train from Washington D.C to New York and landed at the famous Penn Station. We took the iconic NYC yellow cabs and reached our hotel for the next 4 nights - Hotel Edison at Times Square.

The next day we spent time in Times Square and thereafter took a bus tour to see all the sights around NYC. We got off midway at Battery Park and took a ferry ride on the East/West River to see the Statue of Liberty and Manhattan. We ended our day having the famous Kati Rolls.

Day after on Sunday, we explored the Museum of Natural History where we saw a lot of things that were shown in the "Night at the Museum" movie. We loved the dinosaurs and the new immersive life galleries. We went to Central Park after that and saw places that I could remember out of the "Home Alone 2" movie. We ended the day with dinner at a Cuban restaurant. On Monday we went to the Statue of Liberty Island where I climbed all the way to the pedestal with great views of Manhattan. Later in the day we visited the 9/11 memorial where I learnt about some of the greatest tragedies in the US. We ended our day by visiting the iconic Empire State Building during sunset. Fun Fact: The Empire State Building is 1,250 feet (380 meters) tall without antenna. It is the 6th tallest building in the U.S.

On our final day at NYC, we walked on the Brooklyn Bridge, the NY stock exchange, the famous bull from Wall Street, Trinity Church and finally visited my dad's office at Park Avenue. We ended our last night at NYC with dinner at an Indian restaurant where we had "Bhogor Khichuri", "Chicken Dak Bungalow" and "Gol Barir Kosha Mangsho".



Rivaan with Teddy Roosevelt @ NYC Natural History Museum

We flew out to Maine early next morning from the JFK airport. Out of all the states I visited during my 2023 summer trip (Canada, Washington D.C, New York, Maine, and Boston) I thought NYC was the best because I was able to relate the various landmarks with the movies I have watched growing up. If you all get a chance, please visit NYC, and let us all know how you liked it.



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Pacific Coast Road Trip (Ipsita Saha)



This summer, my family and I went on a 2-week-long road trip starting from Southern California, up through Oregon and Washington, and all the way to Vancouver, Canada. Beginning in California, we drove many hours to Oregon where we explored the lively city of

Portland along with the beautiful Portland Japanese Gardens and the International Rose Test Park. The next few days, we visited Colombia Gorge and Mt. Hood State Park, where we saw beautiful views of Mt. Hood, numerous waterfalls, and lush green forests.

From there, we headed up to Washington, where we visited Rainier and Cascades National Park, where the views were spectacular! We

did a couple of long hikes, but the beautiful mountain scenery, green glacial lakes, blue alpine lakes and the wildlife we saw along the way, made the long grueling hikes worth it!



We crossed the US border into Vancouver, Canada, the highlight of our trip. We explored the city, visiting Capilano Suspension Park, Kitsilano Beach, Granville Island, Gastown with its unique steam clock, and Stanley Park with a view of the skyline. We also ventured to Whistler, known for the 2010 Winter Olympics, and experienced the 3 gondolas, ski lift, and the thrilling Cloudraker Skybridge at a dizzying height.

of a lifetime. On our last day in Canada, we explored Victoria Island, visiting the British Columbia Legislative House and the beautiful Butchart Gardens. In Seattle, we saw iconic spots like the Space Needle, Boeing Museum, and the first Starbucks at Pike Place Market.



Our trip also took us to the magical Olympic National Park for hiking. On our way back from Washington, we drove along the Pacific Coast

Highway, taking in the stunning views of the ocean, redwood trees in Redwood National Park, and charming beaches along the route.

To wrap it up, we visited the Tillamook factory, witnessing cheese production and savoring unique ice cream flavors. Throughout the trip, we indulged in diverse cuisines, from street food to fine dining. This road trip was an unforgettable adventure filled with natural beauty and cultural discoveries.



A Critical Review Psychoanalysis- Interpretation of Dreams by Annika Chatterjee (grade 9, University High School, Irvine CA)

The Interpretation of Dreams is an 1899 book published by Sigmund Freud that introduces his theory of the unconscious mind with respect to dream interpretation. Born May 6, 1856, Freud was an Austrian neurologist and the founder of psychoanalysis, a clinical method for evaluating and treating pathologies seen as originating from conflicts in the psyche, through dialogue between patient and psychoanalyst. The editors of Encyclopedia Britannica summarize his work and life with thought provoking details and forms the basis for future reference. His provoking theory suggests that dreams are the embodiment of an individual's unconscious desires, thoughts, and motivations. Essentially dreams are the byproduct of an individual's physical and mental state during sleep. This theory also proposes that the human psyche comprises three aspects; the id, ego, and superego as reviewed by Mcleod, S, Ph.D. . In psychoanalytic theory, the id, ego, and superego are three distinct, interacting agents in the psyche apparatus defined in Sigmund Freud's structural model of the human psyche. Simply put the id is the impulsive part of one's personality that is driven by pleasure and repulsed by pain, superego represents man's morality or ability to judge another's actions, and finally ego symbolizes reality or an individual's rationality. Fundamentally speaking although each part of an individual's personality is inherently unique these elements make a relative contribution to a person's behavior. The book introduced Freudian psychology and key concepts in psychoanalysis such as the emotional experiences of the past and their psychic consequences influence all later experiences and the belief in the existence of psychic determinism. It outlines Freud's beliefs that dreams are highly symbolic, containing both overt meanings called manifest content, and underlying unconscious thoughts, known as latent content. "Latent content refers to the symbolic meaning of a dream that lies behind the literal content" as noted by Cherry, K and medically reviewed by Morin A. They refer to the manifestation of dream to be a content that the conscious individual remembers experiencing. It consists of certain elements including images, emotions, and thoughts of which the individual is cognitively aware about upon waking up. Sigmund Freud was a prolific author and "The Interpretation of Dreams" was significant in the field of psychoanalysis and introduced a revolutionary approach to understanding human behavior, primarily focusing on the unconscious mind which was widely ignored by other theories at the time. Interestingly Alfred Adler an Australian psychologist was a well-known Neo Freudian who supported Freud's theories and was widely influenced by his work in psychology which is evident in his own work upon the subject of dreams. However, the book lacked scientific rigor, credibility, and empirical support. Upon further observation dreams are most often simply a reflection of waking life. Dreams are formed by an individual's fragment memories which reflects conscious thoughts rather than the unconscious mind. Essentially modern research has deemed dreams as a way for humans to consolidate memories rather than reveal the fragmented shards of one's unconscious mind, as reviewed by Romanoff, S, Psy.D, 2023. Unfortunately, there is no definitive evidence which supports Freud's theory that dreams have any symbolic meaning or contribute to an individual's actions. However, whether dreams expose one's unconscious desires or memories is debatable and arguably Freud's theory of dreams lacked empirical support; it has greatly contributed to the field of psychology. Modern day psychoanalytic therapy aims to treat mental conditions by bringing repressed emotions into the conscious mind through free association and dream interpretation. Free association in psychology is the mental process by which one word or image may spontaneously suggest another without any apparent connection. To put it simply free association is the expression of the content of consciousness without censorship. A real-life example of free association in medical practices would be when a patient's therapist mentions family the patient unconsciously responds with "scary" or "disgusting". In contemporary psychodynamic practice, free association may be used by asking a client to report all the memories, thoughts or feelings connected with a certain event. With this the patient or client is able to discuss their thoughts and dreams freely regardless of coherency. Ultimately dreams encompass one's emotions, memories, and thought which is a fool's errand to understand as Fyodor Dostoevsky once said, "Dreams seem to be spurred on not by reason but by desire, not by the head but by the heart, and yet what complicated tricks has played sometimes in dreams".

Disclosure: This article is an original review and did not use AI tools

The Quest of the Dragon by Pratyush Basu (grade 6)

The first time I heard about the mythical dragon was when I spoke to Dada (my Grandfather) during my visit to Kolkata. He told me stories about this creature and that it all started when he used to go to the National Library to study when he was in college. I was skeptical, then I thought if it is real I must see it with my own eyes! So somehow, I persuaded my parents to take me to the National Library.

Dada had mentioned looking for a small door in the North Eastern corner of the library. As I kept walking through the huge corridors filled with books, I saw a small door at the end of one of the shelves. As I pushed the door, I saw a cave. I went inside and it was a different dimension. I was standing upside down. The cave had zero earth gravity. As I managed to stand, I saw an interesting key lock and there were various shapes on it. It said that to awaken a magical beast you must find the seven ancient relics from across the different parts of the world. That was strange because it had 8 keyholes. Anyways, I kept thinking what could be 7 different parts and it struck me that maybe the 7 of them are the seven wonders of the world! Yes, that's the clue. I have to find relics from the 7 wonders of the world. I climbed out of the cave to arrive and hurried out of the Library.

Since I was already in India, I set off to the Taj Mahal where the first artifact was located. I spoke to the administrators there and was allowed to enter the inside and was allowed to go look around. Just beside the tomb, I saw a spiral stair leading down to a dark room. I slowly walked into it and when I reached the bottom I heard one of the 8 mystical beasts. It was roaring very loudly. I hid and out the corner of my eye I saw a diamond tiger with ruby stripes protecting something. So, I snuck behind him and found the relic that I was looking for. It matched exactly like one of the shapes in the lock. But just as I was about to put the ruby key in my bag, the tiger leaped upon me. But when he looked into my eyes, he just stopped. I slowly walked up to him, patted him on the head and left. I then realized he followed me.

Next stop: The Great Wall of China. I started looking around for caves or clues. Suddenly, I found a staircase. It went down and below it stood a family of leopards. Seeing the tiger with me the pack made friends with me in no time. I grabbed the second artifact which was an emerald green key and went to the next artifact spot.

It was the Great Pyramid of Giza. I looked for hours and finally found the room with the artifacts. There I found thousands of tiny scorpions moving around the Mummies. So, I stayed on alert. I tiptoed and soon got the third artifact. It was a Blue sapphire key. Well, I also made friends with the tiniest and most dangerous of the scorpion. Soon, I made it out and found myself and went to Italy.

When I arrived at the Colosseum, I found a clue to move two stones to the right and that led me to a dungeon. As I walked into the dungeon, I initially could not see anything. So, I kept moving to the bottom as fast as I could. Suddenly, I saw something like Komodo Dragons. One was bright ruby colored with lapis eyes. It was beautiful but dangerous. I could see the yellow topaz key behind the Komodo. As I tried to go near the artifact, the lapis eyed Komodo dragon followed and instead of attacking me he went inside my bag. I got my 4th artifact. We ran back but instead of coming out of the Colosseum or the Leaning tower of Pisa, we were at the North Pole! So that made me think that the wonders are a mix of manmade and natural ones too.

It was beautiful at the North pole with the northern lights across the sky. I realized that the artifact is timed with the Aurora Borealis, so I started looking when the borealis is active. I could find the secret tunnel - it wasn't dangerous because there were a lot of penguins inside and 1 diamond polar bear in the cage. I grabbed the fifth artifact – a purple amethyst, set the polar bear free and ran with the penguins. I was on my way out with the polar bear and jumped out of the cave to find me just beside the largest waterfalls.

Yes, the Niagara Falls. It was so big and awesome at the same time but I somehow managed to go down to the lake at the bottom. There I saw a tunnel so I ran straight through to find a cave which had sharks. I jumped right passed them and got hold of the sixth artifact, a pearl key. I also got a pet turtle and kept running.

I had six artifacts and an unusual entourage of animals, including a tiger, leopard, Komodo dragon, polar bear, and a pet turtle. Somehow, I found myself at the Grand Canyon. Inside the canyon, I discovered a cave emitting a menacing hissing sound. Cautiously, I approached, knowing it might be snakes. Inside, I encountered hundreds of diamondback rattlesnakes. However, one snake stood out—it was larger and adorned with colorful gems. Out of the corner of my eye, I spotted my seventh key. As I reached for it, a swarm of snakes rushed at me, but the special snake intervened, quelling the others. With all seven gems in hand, I realized the special snake was another mystical beast. It joined my journey and, like my other animal companions, helped me find the way to the next key location where it all began.

With my seven gem keys and animal companions, I contemplated the eighth artifact. Suddenly, a tiny mystical creature appeared, and a fierce battle ensued. I couldn't subdue or defeat it on my own, but with the help of my animal friends, we worked together to triumph. The snake, scorpion, tiger, and leopard all played a crucial role. Thanks to their combined efforts, I secured the eighth artifact, and the once-enigmatic creature became a valued ally.

So, finally I put the seven gem keys in keyholes and the mystical creature on the 8th, I found the most beautiful looking dragon in the world. It was golden in color and had 8 limbs and a fiery tail. It had gems all over its wings and fire would come out as he roared.

That's how I found the legendary dragon while exploring all the wonders with my magical animals. He lives with us now and I plan to bring him to Dakshini Durga Puja this year. Would you like to meet my legendary dragon?

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Reorganize with Change by Toree Roy (age 14)

Why do humans refuse to accept change? It's not like change is always a bad thing and will only cause life to get more complex. Change can be beneficial and make one's life more effortless. Even then, why do we feel so intimidated by the thought of change?

People love routines. And it's not set routines with specific times, but each person's pattern in which they do the things that may or may not satisfy themselves. This structures the life they're living. Change can put this routine in danger. Suddenly, life will seem out of control because one isn't used to this new routine. Waking up in the morning will feel impossible and bringing oneself to complete new tasks will feel useless. As much as people love new things, change is the one new thing they cannot always enjoy.

Someone rarely finds delight in mundane chores. Change can mean an increase in the work part of one's life, making it undesirable and even intimidating. Eventually, this extended amount of work will become the person's ordinary. But at first, they will be resistant to making the transition knowing that they will physically, mentally, or emotionally have to function more. Now, some tasks in life will never be enjoyable, but there is a way to make them quick and manageable. The addition of functions like these is a part of change, which is why so many people shy away from it or make it difficult for themselves. These are just acts of being frightened to adapt to the change.

Fear of loss is a significant factor of change. Something will have to go when making a transition. For example, moving is a big change in a person's life, especially if they are young and in their development stage. Moving translates to leaving behind or 'losing' homes, friends, and even memories made in that specific place. This can unnerve anyone and make them afraid of adjusting to a new scene.

At the same time, all these versions of change can improve someone's lifestyle and can make them healthier humans. One's routine might be filled with life-threatening activities. If they change this routine to do more uplifting hobbies or interests, they are helping their life. A switch-up in work and the amount of work that needs to be done will increase stamina and also help decide if this is the profession or organization to stay in. Moving might be the toughest alter to get used to, but many people use this chance to restart life on a clean slate. This can mean restarting in a new school, city, or even country.

Everyone will always fear change and try to prevent it. People are too set in their schedules, that making edits to them is extremely stressful and more than they can handle. But everything always has a bright side, including change. Eventually, happiness and normality are found in what once used to be appalling.



Space Facts by Akash Purkayastha (grade 3, age 8)

Did you know that space has a lot of cool and mysterious facts? First, did you know that the mysterious particle: Higgs Boson has terrifying consequences? It can eliminate anything from existence because it is metastable, meaning it pretends to be stable, causing it to release potential energy when gravity pulls it downwards, which is physically impossible. But the amount of potential energy it creates is so much that it makes a false vacuum eliminating anything from existence. Secondly, did you know that if you destroy a black hole, you will destroy physics?

If you put the right amount of mass at the same moment, it will shed the event horizon, if you spin it enough, the event horizon will also shed, leaving a blank singularity causing it to destroy physics, because a singularity is your future showing you what will happen to you in the next 10,000 years ahead of you. Did you know that we can dodge a supernova? If you use a cosmic beacon it will push the sun, moving the solar system because it's glued to the sun by gravity. The beacon works because it uses magnetic funnels to pull in helium and with nuclear fusion, it creates oxygen which is used to firing the beacon and hydrogen used to push the sun, creating a speed almost 1% the speed of light.

It also increases the lifetime of the sun by reducing the mass of the star. But did you know why supernovae happen? It happens because the fusion of the star makes the core hotter and hotter as it fuses heavier elements using nuclear fusion. It works because the pressure compresses the atoms into each other creating new elements as the star gets older.

In the star, if it becomes iron, the minute that happens, it explodes compressing the core from the size of earth into a small city, destroying the star, if it's not heavy enough, the core turns into a neutron star, if it's heavy enough, it becomes a black hole. Did you know what unique properties a neutron star has? A neutron star is compressed enough to turn the nuclei into almost neutrons.

The electrons float around the nuclei and, as the deeper you go, the less protons and electrons you'll get, as most merge into neutrons. The nuclei at one point will start touching creating a property of matter called nuclear pasta, it's almost indestructible and is extremely dense and heavy. You can make lumps of it which are centimeters large but many times heavier than the Himalayas.

Then we'll reach the core, it is not sure if the protons and neutrons stay the same, a lot of scientists say it makes a new type of matter: Quark - gluon plasma, it's temperature is 12 trillion kelvin. Also, did you know that the universe has a limit of existence? At one point the universe will decay, as it will eventually end in three different ways, "The Big Crunch", "The Big Freeze", or "The Big Rip".





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BY CHEF SAGAR GHOSH

The Secrets of the Gray House by Siona Ghosh (grade 5)

The moment I moved into my new house; I could feel that there was something uncannily disturbingly wrong about it. I just moved into this house my mom bought for us. When we were driving, I thought we would have a nice cozy blue house with a big backyard or something. I was super excited to finally be able to see it because my mom had kept it a surprise. When I finally reached our new house, I was super surprised when I saw it. It was a 2-story gray house with cracked windows. The house was covered in vines and I didn't see a single house around it. Just looking at the house was somewhat spine-chilling! Afterwards, we went in to check the inside and it was huge! I wondered why we needed such a big house for only the two of us so I asked my mom. She said that she got the house for an unbelievably low price and thought it would make me happy because I would have more room to play!

That night my mom went to bed early in our new home but I stayed up longer reading. It was almost midnight and I was fully engrossed halfway through my novel. Then all of a sudden, I heard a scratching noise and slow steps dragging from above me. It was a sound that I was not expecting at this hour of the night. I was trying to compose my fear and thoughts when I heard something clattering. I thought I was just hearing things until the lights flickered and I heard a shrill, high-pitched noise. I ran into my mom's room and tried to wake her up. "MOM! MOM, WAKE UP! PLEASE WAKE UP, MOM! I hear creepy noises coming from upstairs!" I yelled. "What? No! It's probably just the wind. It's fine. Now go back to sleep," said my mom sleepily. I didn't believe her though so I left the room and went to go check the 2nd floor myself.

When I reached the second floor, I saw a giant shadow but when I blinked, it was gone! The shadow had huge wings attached to horns, a long tail with spikes on it, and even claws! There was no way this was a real animal. Even though I was horrified, I decided to keep looking around the second floor. All of a sudden, I saw a red liquid on the wall and shards of glass shattered all over the floor. I saw that it was just my lamp that fell though. I thought the red liquid was blood so I screamed my lungs out and ran for my life! I reached my bedroom and shut the door behind me, while breathing heavily. I walked back and forth talking to myself.

"No, no, no, this cannot be happening to me! We bought a haunted house! What am I gonna do, what am I gonna do, what am I gonna do!?" I cried to myself, then whispered, so that no second soul could hear me. "What if I get murdered by a monster in my sleep or something?" I was absolutely terrified but I decided to go to bed to get my mind off of things. I was probably hallucinating. I eventually fell asleep. But I didn't notice the weird lump at the corner of my bed... "Priya, wake up! I made pancakes for breakfast!!" yelled my mom from the kitchen. "Coming mom," I said drowsily as I started to get up. "Wait!! Don't stand up!" said a tiny voice from my foot.

I instantly opened my eyes as terror shot through me! Was this the monster? Then I realized there was a monster on my bed! I ran out of bed and pulled out my fake sword hoping it was enough... "Don't be afraid," said the monster as it emerged from my blanket. I gasped as I saw the monster. I looked at the little creature and saw that it was actually adorable! It was a very chubby monster, with fluffy white feathers, tiny little wings next to short horns! It had huge eyes full of cuteness and its snout was just like a cat's snout. Its long tail was full of long feathers that were all in rainbow colors. Its short arms had pretty big claws though. I wondered if this was the monster, I saw last night.

"What are you?" I gathered my strengths and asked, cautiously moving closer to the monster. "Well, I'm a mythical creature, of course!" said the little creature. "I'm a griffin and dinosaur mix." "Why should I trust you? I saw the blood on the wall. I know it was you!" I said cautiously moving back again.

"Blood, where?! I hate blood!! Wait, you think I got blood on the wall? I wouldn't hurt a fly." "Wait a second... Where was the blood?" asked the little creature with a scared expression on its face.

"Well, it was on the 2nd floor," I said, confused.

"Ohh! I'm so sorry about that. The *blood* isn't blood at all! It's a fruit punch!" it said smiling.

"Yeah right. That's what every murderer says," I say, while rolling my eyes.

"Okay. If you don't believe me, I'll show you," it said.

We both walked up to the 2nd floor. And the creature told me to lick the "fruit punch" and so I did. Turns out it was! "I'm sorry I judged you by your looks," I said, ashamed of myself. "It's okay. I believe we started off wrong, so let's restart. Hi! My name is Fluffy! It's nice to meet you!" said the cute little creature. I laughed and said, "My name is Priya, and I think you are adorable! You know, we should be friends, Fluffy!" "Yay, I love friends! I've been alone for so long.." exclaimed Fluffy.

"Great!" I said happily! After that day, me and Fluffy became the best of friends and I learnt an important lesson. "Don't judge a book (or monster in this case) by its cover."

POEMS

**By Shekhor Bhattacharya
(grade 9)**

One With A Plan

I can't comprehend
The fact that I am
Always thought of as
The one with a plan.

I'm not only that
I'm compassionate and kind,
I wish they realize
But they don't even mind.

Not only I am
The one with a plan
I'm much more than that
I hope you understand

Confused Love - Found Poem

I remember love
Wondering what to explain
I feel real, beautiful flowers
And I imagine her
I can't
make sense of it

Purpose

A frigid cold fills the air
As it comes across, an arctic hare
It burrows deep within the snow
Seeking for its purpose.

Just like the arctic hare
I go about the life I bear
Pressure is present everywhere
Seeking for my purpose

For I wonder what could become of me
In the future ahead, a world I see
Where I don't have to worry about
Seeking for my purpose.

Haiku

The pastel blue sky
Sends wisps of clouds above me
They travel ahead

The pleasant spring breezes
Caresses the leaves softly
Blowing them forward

Monarch butterfly
Flutter with your pretty wings
Untethered from Earth

A Durga Puja Poem
By: Srihan Sengupta

Once a year, when Ma Durga arrives,
It's a happy time, nobody cries.
I meet with my friends,
The fun never ends
We eat good food and potato fries!

We organize a play,
And rehearse every Saturday,
Learning our lines,
Truly good times,
We act the day away!

A kurta and pajama I don,
To the celebration we come thereupon.
Great music, bright lights,
And so many delights!
My party mode finally turns on!

The priest kneels at Ma Durga's feet,
Our respect for her won't ever deplete,
Prasad in the front,
We offer the brunt,
Doing this is a massive treat!!

"Dribbling Dreams"

by : Aadrian Sensharma (age 14)

*On the basketball court, where legends rise
The game flows in their eyes
With every dribble, spin, and dunk,
The crowd erupts with cheer, a chunk.*

*Something about the dribbles rhythm,
Like a song, it's easy to dance along.
Their heartbeats race, in perfect sync,
As athletes soar, their spirits brink.*

*The clock counts down and tension grows
Final shot and the pressure shows
Players dribble down the court with all their might,
Defenders getting ready to put up a fight*

*From three-point range, they start to aim
To claim victory, and the fame.
As the crowd erupts with even more cheer,
It's something that the players love to hear.*

*But beyond points and wins that gleam,
It's teamwork that fulfills the dream,
So let's celebrate the unity it brings,
The joy, the passion, the friendship it sings.*

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Hawai'i - Volcanoes in the Sea by Souhardyo Saha (Tintin)



The Hawaiian Islands are renowned for their breathtaking beauty, diverse ecosystems, and unique cultural heritage. The remarkable volcanic forces that have shaped and continue to shape the archipelago are central to their formation and ongoing evolution. Volcanoes play a profound role in Hawaiian geology, culture, and environment, contributing to the islands' significance on a global scale. This essay delves into the origins of Hawaii's volcanoes, their geological significance, and the profound impact they have had on the island's ecosystems and human societies. Hawaii's

volcanic heritage can be traced back to a hotspot in the Earth's mantle, which has remained relatively stationary over millions of years. As the Pacific tectonic plate drifts northwestward over the hotspot, magma from deep within the Earth's mantle rises to the surface, forming volcanoes. Over time, the continuous eruption of lava and volcanic activity has created the chain of islands that constitute Hawaii. The primary volcanoes responsible for Hawaii's formation are shield volcanoes, characterized by their gently sloping sides and relatively calm eruptions. Mauna Loa and Mauna Kea are two prominent examples, with Mauna Loa being one of the world's largest active volcanoes when measured from its base beneath the sea. The volcanoes' impact on Hawaii's ecosystems is profound.



The lava flows and new land created by volcanic activity create unique habitats that lead to the evolution of new species found nowhere else on Earth. These isolated environments have given rise to a remarkable diversity of flora and fauna, contributing to Hawaii's status as a global biodiversity hotspot. Native Hawaiian plants and animals, such as the endangered Hawaiian monk seal and the vibrant silversword plant, have adapted to these extreme conditions over millennia.

Volcanoes have played a central role in Hawaiian culture and mythology for centuries. Pele, the goddess of fire, lightning, wind, and volcanoes, is a revered figure in Hawaiian tradition. Volcanic eruptions and lava flows are often interpreted as expressions of Pele's power and presence. Hawaiian chants, songs, and legends depict the deep spiritual connection between the land and its people, emphasizing the dynamic and sometimes tumultuous relationship between humans and the natural world.

Now let's dive into what I felt when I saw those volcanoes erupt in Hawai'i. I went to Hawai'i this summer and it was the best vacation ever. Not only did we go to the beautiful beaches and the lush rainforests in the islands, but we were lucky enough to be able to see the new volcano, Kilauea, erupt in front of our very eyes. It was a unique and awe-inspiring experience that I wish I could see again. As I saw the hot magma pouring out of the crust I knew that this was something that not a lot of people see very often.

Kilauea, as I said, is a relatively new volcano as it only started to erupt around 50 - 60 years ago. 50 or 60 years may seem like an excruciatingly long time, but we have to think about time in the scales for volcanoes or mountains. Volcanoes and Mountains have been on the Earth since the dawn of its birth. That is almost 4.7 **BILLION** years old. Most volcanoes were formed around 1.3 to 1.4 billion years ago. That is still a ginormous number. So 50 to 60 years doesn't compare at all to the whole lifespan of a volcano. But, coming back to feelings, it was awesome. I wish we got to see more of it, but if we got closer

the sulfur in the air would not be good for us. So with that one final moment of happiness, we ended our one-week journey in Hawai'i. It was an amazing journey that helped me learn a lot about the Island's nature, its geological facts, and the people who live there.

The significance of volcanoes in Hawaii cannot be overstated. These geological wonders have shaped the islands' landscape, ecology, and culture, leaving an indelible mark on Hawaiian life's physical and spiritual aspects. As Hawaii continues to evolve through volcanic activity, it serves as a testament to the ongoing dynamism of our planet and the intricate interplay between geological processes and the human experience. The volcanoes of Hawaii stand as a living reminder of the Earth's intricate and beautiful mechanisms, inviting us to explore further and appreciate the marvels of our natural world.

Dakshini Trivia

Compiled by Swagata Ghosh

1. What is the full form of "RSVP"?
2. What has a head and a tail but no body?
3. A man went outside in the pouring rain without an umbrella. Not a single hair on his head got wet. How is this possible?
4. A boy kicks his soccer ball ten feet, and comes back to him on its own. How is this possible?
5. You see a truck driver going the wrong way down a one-way street. He passes at least 3 police cars but doesn't get stopped for violation. Why?
6. Where can you find beaches, restaurants, and streets but no people?
7. Where can you add 2 to 11 and get 1?
8. You are in a room with 3 monkeys. One monkey has a banana, one has a stick, and one has nothing. Who is the smartest primate?
9. 2 people in front of 2 people. 2 people behind 2 people, and 2 people beside 2 people. How many people are there in total?
10. Two fathers took their sons to a fruit stall. Each man and son bought an apple, But when they returned home, they had only 3 apples. They did not eat any, lose any, or throw any away. How could this be possible?

*Answers are at the bottom of page 61



The Spirit of Durgotsav

By: Deshan Biswas



In the heart of autumn's
gentle breeze,
A festival of joy and unity
unfreeze,
Durga Pujo, a vibrant
jubilee,
Bringing friends together in
glee.

Amidst the bustling streets aglow,
A symphony of colors in a grand tableau,
Pandals adorned, a divine art,
A celebration that ignites every heart.

Goddess Durga, fierce and divine,
A symbol of strength that brightly shines,
With ten arms, she conquers all,
In her presence, darkness shall fall.

Friends gather 'neath the starry skies,
Laughter and camaraderie rise,
Beneath the twinkling lights, they sway,
To the beats of drums, night and day.

A feast of flavors fills the air,
Delicacies to savor and share,
From savory to sweet, a culinary delight,
Aromatic spices in every bite.

Pandal-hopping, a merry chase,
A blend of tradition and modern grace,
Captured in selfies, moments to keep,
In memories, precious and deep.

Cultural dances, performances abound,
Tales of victory in stories resound,
A kaleidoscope of talents display,
In the joyous spirit of Pujo's array.

With friends by your side, the fun multiplies,
Through laughter and cheers, the spirit never dies,
Durga Pujo is a time to bond and connect,
A celebration of life, love, and respect.

So let's embrace this festive cheer,
As Durga Pujo draws ever near,
When friends old and new reunite,
In the radiant glow of Pujo's light.

Through my poem, I aim to give voice to the painful stories of millions of immigrants seeking refuge in an unknown world. By: Sujay Kar

Through the night and light, I tread Walking with hope, my spirit undeterred My abode, a distant land I lost Path to my future, a journey filled with thorns and dust Leaving behind the home I've known Seeking refuge where seeds of hope are sown In this tapestry of struggle and pain A tale, stitched by silver threads of courage and humane	With hearts resilient, we persevere Through trials and tribulations severe For in unity, we find strength anew A world where suffering, compassion can undo In the face of darkness, we'll rise above With stories of hope and testaments of love In the new land though sorrow may linger, our spirits are free in hope's embrace, we'll rewrite destiny
--	--



Who am I

From Sputnik to Mars Rover,
carrying humanity beyond the blue sky;
Are these ringing a bell,
can you tell "Who am I"?

Blasting off the launch pad,
breaking away from earth's gravity;
My journey knows no limit,
I travel towards celestial infinity.

Reaching out to distant galaxies,
seeking for life on another planet;
My route is a little bumpy,
full of debris - meteor - comet.

Evading the cosmic rays,
saving astronauts from heat and cold;
Satellite to Star War,
today my role is multi-fold.

Quenching human quest for space,
delivering my service so far;
My failure each time,
made me determined to conquer.

Taking satellites to their fixed place,
as they explore the limitless space;
Like my brother Voyager One,
I also juggle through cosmic fun.

Going beyond universe,
multi-verse is my today's mission;
I was born in 10th century,
to the family of propulsion.

Those who have recognized me,
a big "Hurray" to them;
For others who are still thinking,
Mr. Rocket is my good name.

- Written by
Jyotishka Roy
Grade V, Irvine, CA

~The Match Point in Tennis is the Result of the Test~, By Ryka Ray Pradhan

It all depends on you- the match points in tennis and the test results,
So, trust yourself because you are the only adult,
You don't have anyone to carry you on the court, or in the class,
All that matters is the now and present so let go of the stress.

Keep your eye on the ball and stand up straight,
In tennis- slouch and you will make a mistake,
Focus on the question, read it several times,
Don't understand what you read - the ladder of failure, you will climb.

Use your sleeve to wipe of your sweat 'cause it's time to bounce back,
Believe- even if you just lost the match point or failed your last test,
"I can do this, I will soar, I have everything within me to succeed,"
Don't worry about the speed, slow and steady is what I need.

Self-confidence and determination are required,
If success and self-satisfaction are desired.

Answers:

1. Full form of the abbreviation of the French phrase "RSVP" is "Repondez, s'il vous plaît." It translates to "Respond, if you please" or, better still, "Respond please."
2. A Coin
3. He's bald
4. He kicked it up in the air
5. The truck driver was walking, not driving
6. A Map
7. A Clock
8. You
9. Four
10. There were only three people. Son, father, and grandfather



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Congratulations to our 2023 High-School Graduates!



Name: **Riyana Roy**

High School: West High School

College: Northeastern University

Interesting Facts: Riyana was her high school marching band's drum major aka the student conductor and main leader of the 160-person group. Also, her favorite Ted Lasso character is Roy Kent.



Name: **Arushi Bagchi**

High School: West High School

College: UCLA

Interesting Facts: Arushi was her high school Girls' Varsity Tennis Team Captain. She is a voracious reader who enjoys many genres of books.



Name: **Arushi Purkayastha**

High School: Cerritos High School

College: Cal Poly Pomona - Communications

Interesting Facts: Arushi's area of interest centers around the craft of video editing. She finds herself deeply engrossed in the intricate process of constructing visuals and convey messages on her Instagram page.



Name: **Aishani Dasgupta**

High School: West High School

College: Cal State Fullerton

Interesting Facts: Aishani loves to participate in debates. She is an avid photographer.



Name: **Soham Sarkar**

High School: Irvine High School

College: Irvine Valley College

Interesting Facts: Soham has been swimming for the past 13 years and is currently a coach. He is a BioEngineering major.



Name: **Sattwik Banerjee**

High School: Burbank High School (BHS)

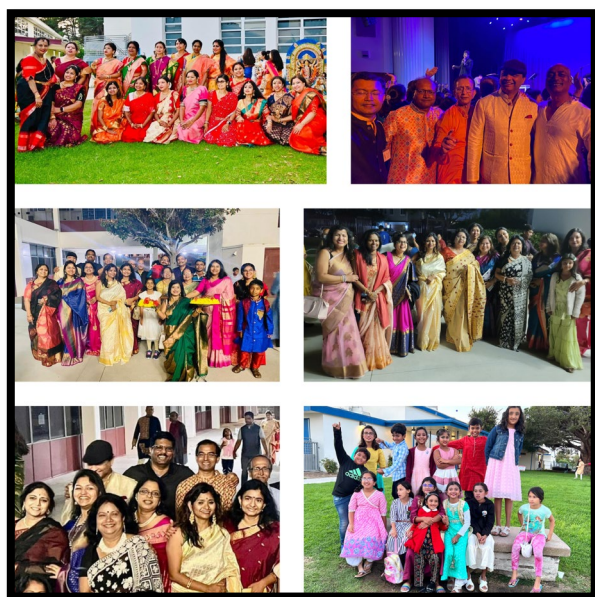
College: Pasadena City College

Interesting Facts: Sattwik, a lettered athlete and captain, created new BHS records by scoring 52 points in a game and overall 1000+ varsity points in basketball.

Pandals Over The Years



Durga Puja 2022





Lakshmi Puja 2022



New Year 2023



Saraswati Puja 2023



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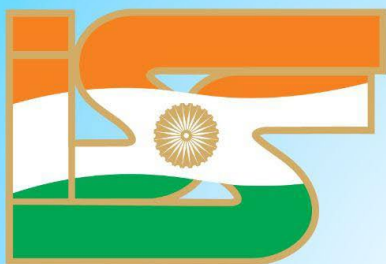
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