

Presents

Those near and dear
Lavish their loved ones
With presents
Bought at quite a cost
Instead can one put
in a little effort
garnished and gift wrapped
with priceless love
to make a tiny beautiful gift?
The hand-sewn hanky 'I got
from my first love
Years ago I keep and cherish
gifts hand-made are
individual and unique,
Money is countable
but love is priceless!

A.G. Abeysinghe

After the carnival

I was there 'on the dot' -
in the lecture room
'cos I was down for it
for my usual work.
Which is our mission in life;
and our excuse for living!
And yet... the room was deserted
Like a forsaken graveyard
only the wind from the rubber trees
haunting among the dead furniture.
I looked across the vast playground -
not a soul in sight.
Have they retired into their boudoirs
after the carnival?
Are they not coming to work?

Work! My guardian god!
How lonesome thou can make me!
While crowds flock
around carnival-mongers
which is the antithesis of work!
The nature around me is busy
putting out leaves, buds, flowers and fruit
Which is their mission in life
While men gorge on them
but have no mission to fulfil!
So I left the treacherous human habitat -
the dead lecture - room
to mingle with the pulsating nature
My guardian god!

- Vijaya Jayasuriya

Montage Poetry



The third eye

A blooming bunch of waving flowers,
A fluttering swarm of lovely butterflies,
Cascades of silvery bubbling waters
Falling o'er rocks, like a bridal veil.
"A beauty!" our eyes would happily comment.
It's the third eye that decided so.
With the change of times our senses wane
The eyes, the ears, the nose and all.
The third eye, it further develops
Giving true pictures of things we lose touch.
It shows clear images of human nature
The changes of the world, the changes of the man.
It can decipher what's true, what's false
Better than our faded senses.
The loving smile of an innocent babe,
The cunning smile of the foxy man,
The calculating smile of the commercial world
Everything is shown through this third eye.
Believe not on our weakened senses
But on our mind, the third eye then.

- Lalitha Somathilaka

Floods

It's torrential rains once again
And the dusty roads
Are mini rivers now
Bringing death and disaster to man and beast
The mighty gaunt trees
Have been cleanly washed
And they look refreshingly green
Towering over the Sri Lankan tropical scene.
The ghostly sky is threateningly dark and cloudy,
Excited birds fly about desperately
Searching for morsels of food
And the hated leeches, slimy and slim, are active again
After their long hibernation in the arid soil.
The meandering streams and rivers
Are swollen with murky waters
That hurriedly flow by
Blanketing their stony beds
Because the mighty rain gods
Have over-fed them.
Helpless city and urban dwellers
Ponder sleeplessly in their flooded abodes
Throwing vain hopeful glances
At the merciless sky
For even signs of sunny weather.
Displaced animals, small and big,
Invade man's domains
Becoming easy prey of enraged humans
Who revel in killing them.
The good earth is yearning and crying
For the dark clouds to clear
Bringing back life
To all nature once again.
And when will this unwelcome rain cease
Bringing back solace to man and beast.

Andrew Scott

Ode to the Pontiff

Shepherd of the flock dispersed throughout the world
Thy visit to this Asian land - the orient pearl
We hail! With prayerful obeisance, the Papal banner unfurl
Arise faithful of Lanka; greet Christ's representative on earth.
With one voice we acclaim the privilege on us bestowed
Blessed messenger of peace the shepherd to his fold
With reverence, loyalty and love we greet thee and enfold
Within our land's hospitality, its traditions of old.
This land of God's abundance, this land so richly blessed
This land devoid of strife on its peaceful quest.
Missionary of peace! In thy magnanimous zeal and zest
For peace; chose our resplendent isle; chose to be our guest
A sharer in our hour of hope and peace
Thy prayers and blessings Holy Father for unity replete
And so from North and South from East and West the faithful throng
We thank thee for the honour - a joyous welcome

- Jeannette Cabraal

Fools of paradise

Nowadays
Admirably
There are divergent ways
Of expressing
Heartfelt feelings
Of joy
As laughter and mirth
Rekindle with thousand
Pregnant promises
As words easily find
Their much admired shape
As the tempting music
Reaches its crescendo
And the time is
Stilled for a moment
As wise men

Wholeheartedly vying
To be idiots
Admittedly, intoxicated
With strong spirits
Forgetting easily
About the impending tomorrow
To be engaged, again
In their prestigious professions
Donning with pride, formal suits
Propagating shamelessly
Wise man's unique credential
Of rationality
In a bid to reach the
Summit of materialistic success

Ranjan M. Amarasinghe