

***AN INTERVIEW OF SURABHI BHATTACHARJEE***

**By Dhruva Harsh**

**1. What is the most satisfying part of writing poetry for you?**

The hope of connecting with another person through language. I like to “make music” – tell a story or paint a picture that captures the reader with its word-crafting. You hear an expression and think “Wow!

**2. Surabhi, what started you writing poetry?**

I don't know what *started me* but I just wrote it from the time, when I was quite small. I wrote my first poem ‘**Rain**’, my first published poem, when I was seven-and-a-half years old. Still I remember my fondness for sounds of Nature, birds, bees, spring, fall, and all those subjects which were absolute gifts to me as a child or a young poet. The floating clouds, the dancing springs, the winding rivulets, the all-pervading multicolour flowers, standing trees were like sentinels with birds singing sweet harmonious songs in their branches, the cool breeze, the humming bees, the delicious fruits- all catered to my needs . Actually my memories with my childhood days are still very poetic to me. Anyway, I now understood the roots of my fascination for stars and love for green nature.

“i had open my notebooks  
found the name i had written  
no more today.” (Alleys that I leave)

**3. Say us something about your childhood memories?**

Literarily my father was my first inspiration. He was a singer not professional but his words of music was first inspiration for me .Due to his Govt job, I had to stay with my parents at a very remote area of a town. The memory of my first schooling was very romantic. I started

and did my schooling until 6th grade. My school was middle of a wood forest without any window and door. It was just open surrounded with four brick walls and **was enough to shape my dreams to be a little poet.**

I remember, it was the most beautiful place I had ever lived in my childhood. The village was very remote. It was crowded with mango trees and beautiful green farmlands. I remember walking through the only paved road in the village (everything else was mud road), which ran through few ponds of the village and endless mango trees. The ponds were protected by the mango trees lined up around them. I can still feel the chillness of breeze in my memory that came from the waving bamboo plants & mango trees, when I walked through this almost deserted road. As a child, I literally felt in love for the beauty of the waving bamboo plants with their unique “shhh” sound from the breeze. I loved the rustling sound of Bamboo trees, when there was a breeze. When there were strong winds, the bamboo trees bent to the earth and came back (going up and down, like it was their dance to the wind) and they scratched one another and created a breaking sound. Whether it was breeze or strong wind, the sound of bamboo trees was very much soothing and perfect for the late afternoons.

“ I turned my face over the darkness of my room  
now I can't remember  
when cattle crossed the road, wagons quickened on stress  
Two butterflies went out at noon, and a spider sewed at night  
Cuckoo's walking on summer's melodies, jewel led with raindrops and mango tress  
Just try to think nine years old girl  
with whom I used to play "dollhouse"  
where my loved ones dwell  
try to write it down  
the love that I have known.”(Alleys that I leave)

#### **4. Do your poems tend to come out of your own life?**

I think my poems immediately come out of the sensuous and emotional experiences I have,

but I believe that one should be able to control and manipulate experiences, even the most tremendous, like madness, happiness. I think that personal experience is very important, but certainly it shouldn't be a kind mirror looking, narcissistic experience. I believe it should be *relevant*, and relevant to the larger things, and world.

“It is the time when  
silence  
sunlight  
and  
dust  
slowly merging into an evening.  
Golden lights upon the treeless streets  
sifting down through a haze of dust,  
Teeming crowds of men and women  
settle down like a red winding sheet  
on the serried tumult  
of the town.  
People shut up under their  
little path of city sky  
within their city walls  
In this passing moments of passing poetry  
my memory goes to my home.”(Ode to My Home)

**5. Do you consider yourself a *confessional poet*?**

**Yes from the bottom of my heart I am a confessional poet.** We think we're writing something to amuse, but we're actually saying something we desperately need to share. A total self-examination and self-accusation, a total confession - very naked, I think, when you look into it. The need to keep real things hidden that makes it poetic.

“Would you ever think of me ,my dear ?-----in this English July  
Tomorrow people will see me in your eyes  
your eyes like windows, through which love passes  
beating my October curtains  
and my time stop in your eyes.  
Would you ever think of me, my dear?-----in this English July  
where shall i lay or place my hand  
next to your hand  
so no one can steals it?  
I find you in your words  
words that take shape  
leafy colour heart  
inside my poetry.”(Love in This English July)

OR,

“Remember that some words  
which once behold promise in October night  
return to my hollow dreams  
nightlong lamp-post mocks at me  
Nobody knows when window  
curtain shivered with October dawn wind” (Love in This English July)

OR,

‘I see

Red rings

With smiling promise

Of red dust

Silk and blood

Under the serpent's hiss...

Love take care

Don't forget

You are going out for first time,

" Ethnic scent of distant bokul".\* (Ethnic scent of distant bokul)

\*Bokul -----is a name of flower in West Bengal.

### **6. Are you Romantic or Realist?**

Obviously Realist but the exact meaning of ‘realism’, however, has been much debated. “the doctrine that all truth and beauty are to be attained by a humble and faithful study of nature” .To me realism did not mean a naïve belief that writing should not falsify or romanticise but can transparently represent the real world also with moral choice as well as aesthetic values.

‘Words I never spoke  
supposing you would hear

words I never heard  
supposing you would speak .-----

In the vastness of universe  
my words split  
like isotopes .  
My presence ,my situation  
and my very nature class  
smash,scatter into smithereens.

Where I hold all this is  
my own life  
remains with me  
hanging on my own wall .”(In Search of Warmth)

**7. Who are the poets do you continually go back to?**

When I was first learning to enjoy and write poetry, I was influenced by, Philip Larkin, Pablo Neruda, T.S. Eliot, Federico Garcia Lorca, Charles Bukowski, Theodore Roethke even lot of unknown internet poets. You learn how to write good poetry by reading good poetry. It's that simple and important.

**8. Who is your inspiration?**

One of my professor and his words. A favourite prof of mine used to say that **“we crave the strangeness of others.”**

**9. Whom do you want to dedicate your poems?**

Obviously my dad .He is my hero forever. I have written few lines for him.

**‘Every life has a room  
where memories are stored  
I buried my father in my heart  
now he grows in me,  
the curves of his silence mould my being.’(TO MY DAD)**

**10. The writing of poetry, is something which has been a great satisfaction to you in your life, is it?**

I find myself absolutely fulfilled when I have written a poem, when I'm writing one. Having been a poet to becoming a new poet is always a journey for me .The actual experience of writing a poem is a magnificent one.

**11. Anything from your side?**

Every day is different day for me. I'm not a planner. You either do the right thing or the wrong thing, but you do it. I'm experimental, I'm curious, and I try things. And if I like it, I do it again! Again and again!

## **Bio**

### **Surabhi Bhattacharjee**

She is **founder & Editor-in-chief** of Asian Signature. [www.asiansignature.com](http://www.asiansignature.com). And **co-founder and chief-managing-editor** of "Shadow Circle :An International Journal of contemporary Theatre". [www.shadowcirclejournal.com](http://www.shadowcirclejournal.com). She is a Research scholar of English Literature, emerging poet, writer, essayist, activist and translator. Her works maintain a focus on social issues, linguistic identity and feminism. Her articles and poems have been profiled in several international newspaper and magazines. Her Research area is " South Asian Women Poets". She attends various poetry reading seminar all over India. Currently she is working upon translation of contemporary famous French poet Gabriel Arnou -

Laueac 's Beyond Elsewhere and Hindi poet Dhruva Harsh's Aye Jingeji Tu Ret to Nahi. Apart from poetry she likes Nature and spirituality. She is from Kolkata India.

**Dhruva Harsh**

He is a Research Scholar ,Editor,Film Maker and a playwright from India(Allahabad).*He has got published a poetry book "Aye Zindegi To Ret To Nahi" by Authors press Delhi(2015) which thousand copies sold within a month.* Currently, he has done with the *production of a movie 'Honorable Mention'* based on the short story from the collection of "Song Without End And Other Stories" by novelist and short story writer pfof Neelum Saran Gour. For his *Excellencies and transcendent hard work he was awarded by Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, Amarkantak(M.P) with the Creative Achievement Award in 2014.* His website link -----[www.dhruvharsh.com](http://www.dhruvharsh.com)