

G-ASIA

Autumn 2020 || Free Distribution

Worldwide Magazine



PRABHA

THE FRAGRANCE





FACE OF DIGNITY

**Face of Dignity, Non Profit Organization, for
Spiritual and Educational Empowerment, Worldwide**

Face of Dignity is committed to providing girls and young women in unjust, repressive and often, cruel situations with access to the social and legal support they need. Through education and resources, Face of Dignity strives to empower, instill confidence and provide opportunities to today's struggling and oppressed persons.

With your help, there's strength in numbers.
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Face of Dignity,

Empowering girls & women
through educational,
social and legal support in order to
unlock and achieve
their greatest potential.

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Publisher : Prabha Sharma
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Publisher, Printed and owned by
Prabha Sharma

G-Asia World Wide Magazine would like to
acknowledge the following websites
for their contribution
www.article.com
www.content4reprint.com

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Publisher's Note

Self horizon is the new science in the face of the distillation of the Soul. Man has witnessed the shattering of his organized manifestations. The world of Man imprisoned him to hold sacred to the notion that he ascended his cosmos, or so his illusion played beyond its own shadow. Now, reality has been radically betrayed by what appears "normal" There is a raw awakening to frame the dialogue in verses of fragility.

What has been the voice of reason, science, order, civilization and social life has now collected dust at the door. The question is now for mankind -- What will he create for himself as the reality behind the door. And how will he open the door. Will it be with the key of ego, lust, survival, selfishness, chaos, or is the face of dignity the wine he has drunk in isolation.

Simply reminisced is the question of how the sting of uncertainty and the shattering of all known realities and routines will debone the privileged. Herein lies the ponderance of all framed luxuries.

Serenade the world with sonnets of self mudras poetic flowering of dream worlds. Awakening oneself from the existential moorings to kiss the waves of reckless order. There between the sun and moon, the earth shall embrace you in that fertile soil of waves.



Prabha Sharma

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THE SOUL'S

THE JOURNEY OF LIFE

THE SOUL'S QUEST

Gurpreet Sekhon

It's your story as well as mine. It is soul that lends movement to life, It is the soul that teaches us to live and teaches us to die. It is this that teaches us to love ; it is this that teaches us to hate. It is this that fills us with pride, it is this which teaches us humility. Damn it; it's this which makes us sin and also sometimes helps us plant the tender saplings of goodness. The long journey of soul shall never end from the mother's womb through childhood, youth, old age and death and re-birth, the cycle is endless. Let us salute our soul which has brought us together for this wonderful experience.

What is this life and what is this journey?

Neither you know nor I?

You talk too much, so do I,

You too die every movement, so do I.

We have to talk about the soul's journey,

We have to talk about the grave.

Let's go and ask God,

What is that grave.

If we have to talk about the journey, we have to talk about life,

If we have to talk about the journey, we have to talk about death.

Sometimes good fortune throws us up to the sky,
Some times misfortune flings us down to the earth.

Life is like a spool of the spinning wheel,
The radiant life you enjoy today will not remain tomorrow.

Preet ! you talk too much about darkness, You should sometimes talk about light too,

Preet ! you are afraid of this world, you should also learn to fear God.

Let's sit together and chat,

Let's celebrate these moments of togetherness.

You were asking for directions from me, said God,

Today you have come to tell me something.

I am not blaming anyone for anything, as myself am hapless and helpless,

Let's talk about the comfort's of the Mother's womb and also sorrows flowing from that.

I think there cannot be a better home than the Mother's womb,

When I think of that, I do not think I would ever like to die.

I was like a lump of flesh which neither spoke nor asked for anything,

I was not bothered about the breathe nor about the hurdles on the way.

There was neither lust for life, nor fear of death,
There was no fear of day, there was no fear of night.

There was no fear of talking, there was no fear of being watched,

There was no worry of standing up, or of falling down.

Sometimes I said something, sometimes she said,
Sometimes I understood, sometimes she guessed.

There was solace, there was madness,
There was worship and there was the code.
I saw the birds chirping there,
I played with the snow and also basked in the sun.
Sometimes, I talked to the stars, Sometimes I cheated
with the moon,
Sometimes if I got angry, the Moon himself came
down to woo me.
While in the Mother's womb, I was perturbed by the
thought of discrimination,
I also thought whether I would be a boy or a girl.
Because, if I would be girl, they could kill me,
Because, if I would be a girl they might burn me.
If it's so easy to kill, why do you believe in religion,
If its so easy to kill, why do you believe in Karma?
I am but a reflection of my mother dear!
I am but the caption of your aspirations.
The time has come when I shall be torn asunder from
my Mother's womb,
And I have to see the world and there will be noises of
all kinds.
Now my mother shall have to bear the pangs of child
birth,
It appears I have forgotten that thick shadow.
Now Man has appeared on the seen, Now we shall talk
about man,
O my powerful God ! we shall together bear the joys
and sorrows of life.
Sometimes I think how you must have torn me apart
from your body,
Sometimes I think, after separation from you, what
shall be my fate?
Sometimes my father rebuke you and sometimes my
grandma torments you,
You are burning in the fire and yet you protect me by
holding me to your bosom.
Sometimes your near and dear ones hurt you with
poisonous arrows,

Sometimes you do strange silly things to protect me
from the evil glances.
Sometimes you hang something on the door to nullify
the effect of evil.
Oh! Man! Do not think this is mere superstition in fact
it is pure love of the mother for the child.
So tender was I that my father was afraid of lifting me
up,
So innocent was he that he did not know I should fall
and fall.
He tickled me and I too smiled in response,
He sometimes pinched me in order to hear my
innocent cry.
My father hardly knew that the evils of the world
would break me,
Since I have come into the world in the kalyug even he
did not recognize me.
This is the story of life and we have to talk about the
relationships of the world,
If you get good relations, you do not need angels.
I arose and fell and rose again,
Sometimes I walked a few steps, despite my fall, it did
not matter to me at all,
So far as I was able to look into the mirror of my
Mother's eyes,
Though I was soiled and sullied, it did not matter to me
at all.
I was aware of neither life nor death,
I was aware of neither work nor of idleness.
The home was my temple the home was my church,
I can neither forget the floor where I toddled nor the
room upstairs.
I was eager neither to learn nor to fight,
I was fond of neither weapons or sharp swords.
How can I forget the little slap of my, father?
How can I forget the big cracks in the world ?
My school bag was heavy; my childhood was lovable,
Even my father's fist appeared very appetizing.

There was neither love nor hatred in my heart,
No one appeared to be a stranger, the whole mankind
appeared to be mine.

The sweater knitted by mother which I wore,
Protected me from, all the snows and storms of the
world.

I had great respect then for my father looking askance
at me,
I had no illusion about any relationships.

Nor did I know the difference between victory and
defeat,
And the meaning of falling stars.

Now I began to know about the joys and sorrows of
the world,
Now I knew about the candle and the Moth.
If I do not talk about one relationship, this story
would remain ever incomplete,

If I want my sister to tie the sacred thread on my wrist,
it is also imperative that I protect her honour at all
times.

The brother sister relationship has a uniqueness of its
own,
Sometimes I feel a sister is a Man's good fortune.

Now I am ascending the stairs of life,
My forehead is ploughed with worries.

Let me tell you frankly that the memory of my
Mother's womb has always haunted me,
I am not nostalgic even about my childhood.

My soul has seen the birds returning from abroad,
I have also seen the souls who never think of returning
to their native land.

I have seen the fire burning in the heart of a mother
who is thirsting to see her son,
I have seen father's eyes shedding tears on the
departure of his son.

Today the landed property has altered the destiny of
people,
And materialistic gains transform the profiles of
people.

Oh my God ! you feed some people in plates of Gold,
And you make some people sleep hungry at night.

I can only say that you alone know how to run the
world, I am nobody to comment on it,
I appeal to you O God! to take pity on the hungry lest
they should die of hunger.

Now the times have changed, so has the devil,
Now the world has changed, so have the concerns.

There is neither that beauty nor those beautiful
women,
Now the world is racked by worries and has lost its
peace and tranquility.

Who talks of the nation today and who talks of the
sacrifices of martyrs,
Everyone is dying every moment and talking of the
worries of life.

I have been a mute witness to the blood- sucking
leaders and their devilish acts,
What is the use of these words now? When I did not
feel, there was time for them.

While we are all destined to die one day, why was I
afraid of speaking the truth?

While I knew that everything acquired will have to be
left behind, why did I gather so much?

I have seen people killing others for the sake of
honour,
I have seen fathers raping their daughter's to satisfy
their lust.

I have seen people remembering martyrs for their
own selfish ends,
They think they will go to heaven with all their money.

Now the preachers don the robes of great prophets
for their self glorification.
What's the use of their pomp and glory?

What is the use of all this false display of wealth and
power?
They are talking in terms of millions and billions, how
will they teach us contentment?

I am the dancing girl of my Lord and only he can make

me understand the enigma of life,
My wounds are fresh, only he can apply the healing
balm.

Why have you come to this city of stones,
You won the hearts of the people without doing
anything?

All this is the play of destiny,
And the lines on the palm of the hand.
Some people go on exploiting in the name of culture,
Some people shamelessly smile even after selling
their motherland.

It seems now everything is over relations and their
affections, The mother and her son all are sold.

Their eyes are unable to see anything good,
Now the times have changed and daughters are not
afraid of their parents.

The winds from abroad have played havoc with our
relationships, Since the trees have been uprooted,
there is no shade.

Some people die pre-maturely, Some people continue
to live even after their death.

Some people have the urge to live and some are
consumed by the fire of passion,

Some people count the stars, others can't count the
steps on the earth:

Some People have their loaves buttered on both
sides,
Some can not claim even their rightful due.

All these are the whims of God! which I have called
upon to record.

He looks serenely in the heaven and we are made to
suffer on the earth.

God gave me large bungalow and cars and I do not
know what else should I ask for?

What I wanted to seek, I could not speak.

Now the sands of life are gradually becoming a part of
life, Though I now get injured everyday, the injuries
are automatically healed everyday.

I remember my childhood chums and also my one
time flame.

How can I forget the one who held me to her bosom?

Sometimes God brought me out of water to make me
squirm like a fish,

When I could not even walk, he asked me to perform
rigorous exercise.

Seasons changed and people had to change too,
When I had to walk so long, I had to reach the
destination.

I sometimes talked of religion,
While seeing others die, I was afraid to die too.

Eventually, I struggled to reach the destination where
death was waiting for me,

My body kept burning in the fire all the time and today
my soul too got singed.

It is the soul which made me realize that it takes no
time to create great distances,

It is difficult to bridge the gulfs, Do I ever remember
past relationships?

I sometimes wonder whether life is a gateway to
immortality or to death,

I sometimes wonder whether death is a dispenser of
grief Solace.

I closed my eyes and relinquished my body,
I slept peacefully but wrenched the hearts of many
well wishers.

The body grew cold, and hot winds began to blow,
Those who called me theirs, now left me alone,

The eyes were closed no doubt, yet I had a feeling that
I was leaving the world behind.

I could not resist the temptation of money and I could
not give up my ego while living.

Now even the bank notes and securities in the coffers
of banks smile at me ironically,

Those who rob others of their nests never live in
peace themselves.

Now my soul once again longed to re-enter the body,
It begged me to save the body from burning.

I told my soul that flowers once separated from the
branch can never be re-united,

There was a time when rivers flowed with the nectar
of life, now they are all filled with poison.

Those who called me corrupt and murderous while I
was living,

Shed crocodile tears on my death and were happy to
see me dead.

Now people were about to take my body to the
cremation ground but my soul was smiling,

But she who called me her own preet, she even did
not come even on my death.

Like the coin, life too has two sides.

The people will show signs of sorrows for some times
and then will get going with their work as usual.

When they performed the last rite, my heart too got
broken,

One who walked with pride in long strides now lost his
head.

I cried that she should comb my hair with her fingers,
Only a few moments were there for my burning on the
funeral pyre.

The closer I went to the pyre, my soul shivered and
shriveled.

I was repenting for my past deeds.

I begged my mother to save me, to hold me closer to
her bosom,

The soul curiously watched which of my friends kept
their word and which did not.

Those who were always clinging to me, why did they
not come today?

what was their helplessness.

When I reached by the pyre, they brought my body
down,

I recalled with fear the sight of a dying man in the
neighborhood.

Now the destination was close by and I had to move
forward,

If God asked me for a wish, I was thirsting for another
lease of life.

Now even my own people referred to me as a corpse,
It is these very people who were always by my side
while I was alive.

They put iron rods on all four sides, lest I should run
away.

When there was the light of life, I did not run, how
could I run now?

While they were piling wood on my chest, I cried with
agony and pain,

My soul too cried with agony when one of my own
people shouted, set him aflame.

My body was covered with shawls and flowers.

It was already very hot and they buried me under a
pile of wood to torment me,

The conflagration caused another conflagration
inside me.

I cried and tried to tell people not to weep because I
too had thrown them out of my heart, out of Preet's
heart.

Now my soul will have to look for another womb,

Now my soul will bequile another woman to accept
me.

This is the cycle of birth and death,

This is the cycle of karmas and karmas.

Thank God! I got my mother's womb,

Thank God ! my soul got another home again.

Preet's got home again!

PINSTRIPE LUST:

BY NIRAJ SHARMA

“A NEW ROMANCE NOVEL LEGEND”

AN UNDERCOVER COP FALLS FOR THE SISTER OF THE MOBSTER HE'S INVESTIGATING TONY VERGOTTI ENJOYS HIS UPPER CRUST, ELITE STATUS. HIS LUXURY MENSWEAR STORE IS JUST A FRONT FOR HIS REAL BUSINESS—ORGANIZED CRIME. NEW YORK IS ALWAYS BUYING AND BOSSES ALWAYS NEED CLEAN MONEY.

WITH HIS BEAUTIFUL SISTER RUNNING THE STORE, TONY KNOWS HE'S UNTOUCHABLE. BUT WHEN SHE STARTS SEEING A NEW MAN NAMED VIN, TONY'S DANGER SENSE BEGINS TO BUZZ. THE GUY SMELLS LIKE A RAT. AS HIS SISTER AND VIN FALL HEAD OVER HEELS FOR EACH OTHER, TONY'S TORN BETWEEN BEING A GOOD BROTHER AND PROTECTING HIS BUSINESS. WILL TONY HAVE TO KILL HIS SISTER'S LOVER? OR IS HIS GUT WRONG ABOUT THIS GUY?

Pinstripe Lust

NIRAJ SHARMA



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The Heavenly Voice of
PANDIT CHIDANAND SHARMA

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PRABHA

A Luxury Brand

Philosophy of Brand

In an industry saturated with a wide array of perfumes available to choose from, "PRABHA~The Fragrance" has managed to secure a niche market in a class that merges the mystery and intrigue of the exotic East with the luxury and sophistication of current European brands.

The product attracts an international clientele with appreciation for the finer things in life, an awakened consciousness, and desire to evolve further.

The ingredients have specifically and lovingly been selected to elevate the confidence, personal power and flow of spiritual love through the aroma-therapeutic effects of the base oils.

The perfume seeks to empower women and men alike by awakening their spirituality and sensuality through olfactory senses, and creating greater consciousness of the dynamic effectiveness and benefit of the perfume.



PRABHA
THE FRAGRANCE

PRABHA

a luxury brand

The Elixir of Love

Poetic Expression

9 DIMENSIONS of PRABHA ~~~ The LUXURY BRAND

PRABHA embodies superior physical and functional attributes of product quality, craftsmanship, design and charm. There is a refined emotional stimulation associated with the brand and the wearer is defined by it.

1) Social Value -- stands for something ~ women empowerment, femininity, a new feminism, luxury and refinement

2) Personal Connection – emotionally charged ~ for both men and women

3) Differentiation -- uniqueness

4) Self-assertion -- image ~ by association

5) Functionalism -- usefulness ~ embeds everyday spirit, shakti power

6) Product Excellence -- appreciation for quality and superiority

7) Artistry -- poetry, beauty, spirituality, love

8) Real Story -- real story of PRABHA behind the brand ~ The creator poetess has a rich pedigree, talent and extraordinary history, heritage and mastery mirrored in her brand development. Due to the linguistic style, passion for poetry and prose, the founder of this exquisite fragrance allows the inner essence of every person adorning the perfume to have a creative outlet for their unique aptitude and all that makes their heart soar with delight. Poetry has allowed PRABHA to connect more intimately with her soul. It was through this journey within that she heard the calling to create a perfume to awaken the dormant kundalini energy which resides within us all

9) Spiritual – evolves the spirit, flowering bliss perfume.

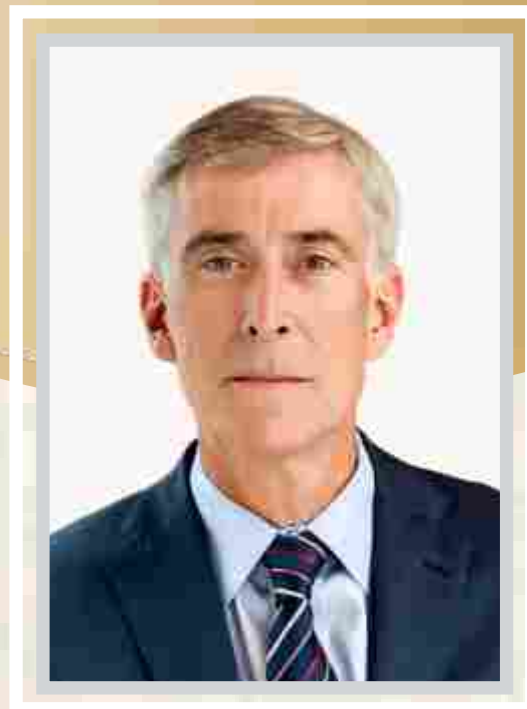


PRABHA
THE FRAGRANCE

David Agnew Speech

July 1, 2020

Seneca



Canada India Education Council, Canada Campus Visits and Agents.CARE have collaborated to produce an exciting new webinar series called "One On One".The series will feature interviews with representatives from Universities, Colleges, Federal and Provincial governments and other key stakeholders. It shall provide an independent platform to communicate live with agents and other stakeholders as well as share updates about their campuses and programs.The inaugural session on July 1, 2020 focused on Seneca College in Toronto, Canada. David Agnew, President of Seneca College presented an informative and inspiring speech. Prashant Srivastava, Director of Regional Business Development (South Asia) and Keith Monrose , Executive Director , Seneca International answered questions from around the world specifically focused on international students for study in Canada.The webinar was hosted by Fenil Sanghvi and representatives of Canada India Education Council, Canada Campus Visits and Agents CARE

Hello I am David Agnew, president of Seneca College and it's my great pleasure to welcome you virtually of course to Seneca, and also to say happy Canada Day. I trust you're staying safe and well during these times and I want to start off by thanking the CIAC for this opportunity. This webinar is to introduce you to Seneca and talk a little bit about the work that we're doing with the Indian students, our Indian partners, and of course a little bit about our response to the pandemic.

But let me start with Seneca. I'm standing in this beautiful atrium of our new centre for Innovation Technology and Entrepreneurship at our main campus: full of wonderful labs,robotics, mechatronics, cybersecurity, computer labs, and beautiful study spaces as well as socialization spaces for our students which are unfortunately empty right now under the circumstances. But soon it will be filled again with students. This is our main campus, but across the GTA: the Greater Toronto Area and the Toronto Region we



have several campuses welcoming about 30,000 students a year in our full-time programs. We

have programs running the gamut from business to technology, to healthcare and social services, the creative arts in a range of credentials, everything from our one-year introductory certificates to our two and three-year diplomas, our four year Honours Baccalaureate degrees and our graduate certificates are very popular amongst Indian students. We're a polytechnic; that is our model of education.

It is a combination of theory and practice at a very sophisticated level. Our focus is on getting students ready for their career, their profession, their jobs, and part of our model is to introduce wherever possible into our programs, a work integrated learning component that might be a co-op placement, an internship, an externship, it might even be applied research or something to give students the confidence they need when they walk across that convocation stage and into the workplace, that they've in fact already been there, they know what it's like to work, and that's a very important differentiator that employers really appreciate.

Now our relationship with India has delightfully grown in recent years quite substantially. We've been recruiting International students for more than 30 years but the growth in the last few years of Indian students has been remarkable. Back in 2019 across Canada we welcomed over 5,000 international students to Seneca into a range of our programs and I think there's a few reasons for that: one is that we offer of course across Canada a safe and secure environment, and a welcoming environment for immigrants. We are a nation that was built on and by immigrants and it's very important for us as we approach an aging society that we continue to keep the doors open to and for immigrants to come in to help our economy continue to prosper and grow. In Fact, there is a political consensus across the range of views in Canada that immigration is something that is absolutely vital to our economic future. Of course, at Seneca we are very welcoming to a diverse population as we have recruited students from more than a hundred and fifty countries around the world. So you will see the diversity of the world and the diversity of Toronto in our campuses and in our hallways.

We have an extensive range of student services, everything from picking students up at the airport to those important outside of the classroom academic supports, social gatherings, all the way through to graduation. In fact, after graduation connecting our new graduates to our Alumni Network which is literally spread around the world is vital. It's not simply about student recruitment that's very very important. It's also about our partnerships in India both with academic institutions and with others. Let me just talk about three of them:

We're elated to have welcomed literally at this point thousands of Indian nurses and nurses recruited from other countries by our training partner Inskull located in Chandigarh. It's

a wonderful program that brings registered nurses to Canada to take up graduate certificates. Again at a very sophisticated level of Education they're going to prepare for the Canadian nursing exams and join the Canadian HealthCare system as an important part of our response to an aging population, the rise in chronic diseases, and of course occasionally a pandemic. We also have a reporting relationship with the National Institute for Financial Management, an autonomous arm of the Ministry of Finance of the government of India. It's a training program for their probationers and their recruits coming into mid-career. An important part of their training program is international experience and we are overjoyed to have given that International



experience to more than 300 civil servants of the government of India in topics ranging from cybersecurity to artificial intelligence to blockchain. We have a new relationship we're just delighted with, the ISTM, The Institute of Secretariat Training and Management, a training arm of the government of India. We welcomed our first batch of trainees last fall and those are examples of the kind of partnerships Seneca wants to build and continue to build with our academic partners and our training partners in India and in fact, around the world. It's part of our diversification approach that allows us to offer a whole range of experience building out of our pedagogical experience and pedagogical

expertise but offering a range of training and management particularly in these days. Now of course we, like many other institutions had to deal with this galloping virus coming in which was declared officially as a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) in March. Shortly after, It really started to spike in Canada and that's when the entire post-secondary system went virtual and went online in the span of a week. We stayed online and we're still online. We responded very quickly with an emergency benefit program for our students and an amazing amount of training for our faculty to move online. We've successfully completed the semester for all but a handful of our students.

Back in April we made the difficult but necessary decision from a health and safety viewpoint to stay online for the summer. But now as the Canadian economy, society, and Canadian businesses and Services have reopened gradually, safely, and slowly, we were able to make the call to while keeping a lot of things online, reopen our labs, studios, and airplanes for those students who need that practical in person component. We're in fact starting a pilot program this summer to allow that handful of students who were unable to finish in April back on campus. We're going to do it respectfully, gradually, and with the safety and health of our students and our broader community including our roster of employees first in mind.

It's been a challenging time for all of us and I think in a post-pandemic world we will all reflect on the lessons we've learned. We're delighted that the Canadian government has been so responsive. But we're just grateful that throughout this, Seneca has kept its virtual doors open, its virtual relationships very strong and we know that we're going to come out of this with our partners stronger than ever. I hope you all stay safe and stay well. Thanks very much.



Mind of Jiva

*I am that self effulgence
that illuminates the mind of Jiva
Kiss my lips and taste the elixir
of the heavenly lotus*

*Long not for the desire of the pilgrimage
to the wine waters of the seas
For even the celestial oceans
drink from the Union of our souls*

~Prabha Sharma Sajan~

Tremor in Worship

*Water, earth, fire and breath in sweet dream states
Its unending desires of passion through creativity that
teach the negation of void
Let love flow in that creative chakra in this jeeva samskara
The hukum is aquiver
The eternal hug of the Atma seeing
the pranayama of eternal Truth conflate*

*Lord of All Worlds
Long garlands
Every kingdom is at the beckon of your footsteps
Your splendour is aflow of trickling water
drops to the music of the cosmic dance*

*Flowers at Your feet
The science of its vibration at the forehead.*

*At every moment
I find pleasure in My Beloved's name*

*Whose remembrance is situated in between '
the creeper-like waves of My heart
Veins in the neck unsteadily tremor in worship
Energy wafts into the fuming fire
Burning coals like twisted hair-locks in scented mirrors
Stones imbrication afoot in the seaweed*

*I worship that blazing fire at the surface of ineffable poetry
A coax between the mind and the lotus eye*

*True love speaks in the art of devotion
Oh Speech of Divine Attributes !*

~Prabha Sharma Sajan~

FEED FROM THE DIVINE UMBILICUS

*Feed from the divine umbilicus
Gallop valiantly across the bridge to the high octane of
this dream state
Thou art a spiritual epiphany
Somehow it wished to float
Shakespeare literature in the Saraswati river
A moment of awakening to
the realizations we ponder for
Interconnected wires made in moonshine
Recitation of the Divine Consciousness has
tuned the bookshop of love to a vellichor*

~Prabha Sharma Sajan~

MYSTIC FIRE OF TRUTH

*My body is the sitar that floats in the cosmos
I am that celestial music in the ears of pure hearts*

Searching for Love

Oh Seeker

If you are ready

*The secret pathway to the transcendental heart
Aham Sphurana is playing the song of Ananda*

Gurus, Saints and Sages know my secret

Oh Mystic Fire of Truth

*Prabha's ears are dancing to the moonshine of
the Kavayah Satya Srutha*

I SPOKE WITH THE MOON,
AND THIS IS WHAT
SHE TOLD ME...

Samana Sajan



I SPOKE WITH THE MOON, AND THIS IS WHAT SHE TOLD ME...

Samana Sajjan

I Spoke With the Moon and This is what She Told Me... is a collection of poetry that explores pain, love, and growth through the different phases of the Moon: The New, The Waxing, the Full, and the Waning. Each phase takes the reader through the stages of their own life, sparking an inner conversation. Each poem carries within it, its own universe, and its own whispers to the reader. It is simply planting the seedling of a constellation within all of those willing to taste the moonlight. I Spoke With the Moon and This is what She Told Me... is a collection of poetry that explores pain, love, and growth through the different phases of the Moon: The New, The Waxing, the Full, and the Waning. Each phase takes the reader through the stages of their own life, sparking an inner conversation. Each poem carries within it, its own universe, and its own whispers to the reader. It is simply planting the seedling of a constellation within all of those willing to taste the moonlight.

SPOKE WITH THE MOON,
AND THIS IS WHAT
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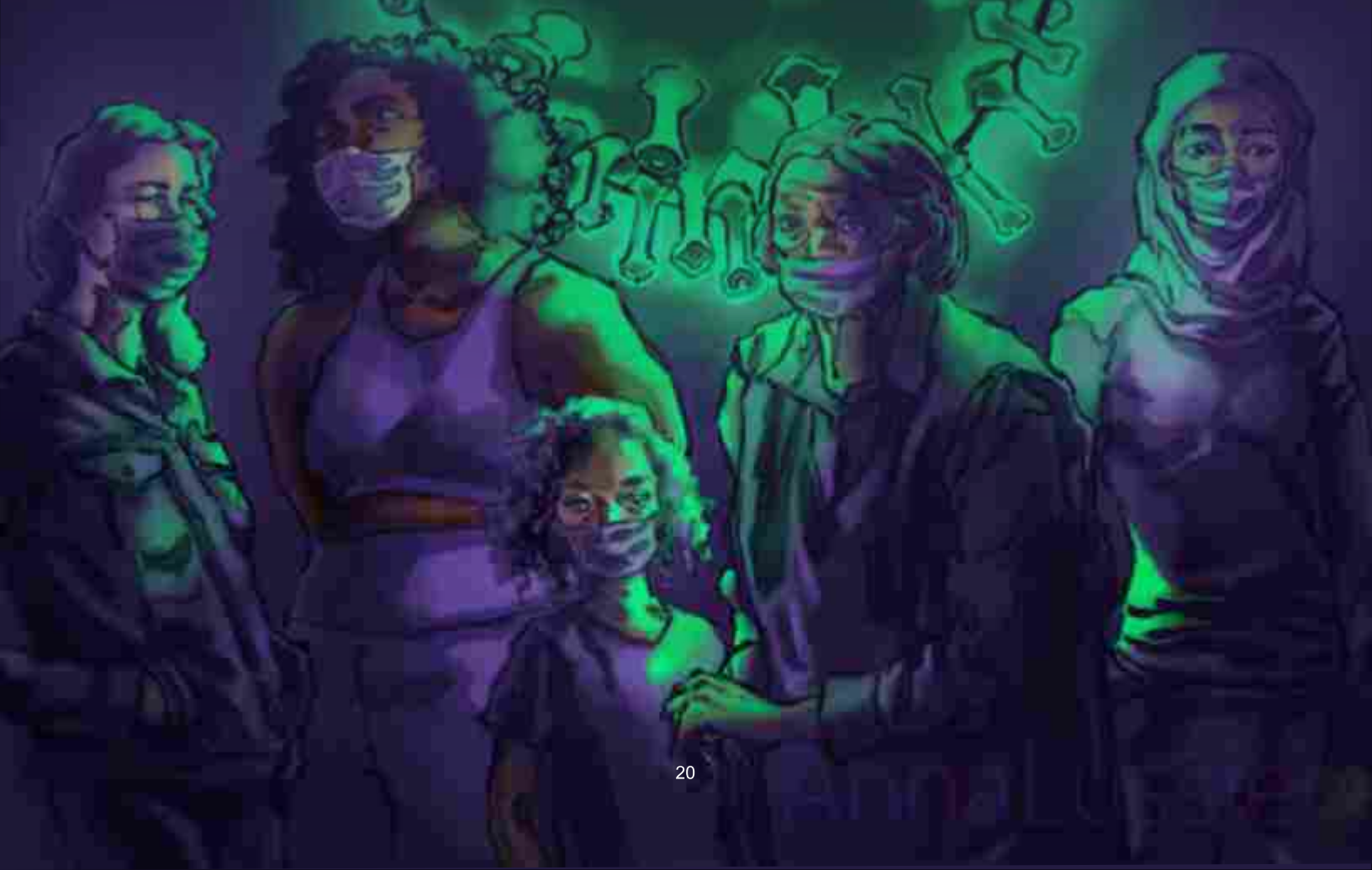
COVID-19: The Women, Peace and Security Agenda at Risk

Renu Sharma Persaud

COVID-19, deadly as it is for all of us, has multifaceted security dimensions and grave implications for those caught in the midst of conflicts, postconflict or humanitarian crises. In particular, the pandemic may disrupt humanitarian aid flows, limit peace operations, and undermine or delay diplomacy efforts. Even worse, in times of crisis, gender equality is a goal that tends to be regarded as secondary.

As a result, responses to the pandemic usually don't address existing gender inequalities and end up exacerbating them. Moreover, the broader impact of the pandemic remains yet to be seen.

Consequently, the Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS) is particularly affected by the pandemic. The WPS Agenda, adopted by the United Nations Security Council in Resolution 1325 in 2000, thus recognized for 20 years by the international community, is now at risk because of the pandemic.





COVID-19 is exacerbating gender inequality in conflict-affected settings, post-conflict and humanitarian crises contexts

The reason is obvious: With the outbreak of the pandemic, women and girls are more likely to be at risk because they are more vulnerable than the rest of the population. As I explained in a recent article on Impakter, this is as a result of facing higher gender-based violence, difficulties to access basic goods and services, unpaid care work, early and forced child marriage and other abuses and human right violations that women and girls regularly suffer in conflict-affected settings, post-conflict and humanitarian crises.

Their plight is particularly visible and poignant in refugee camps, shelters hosting internally displaced persons and when they are on the move, part of migrant flows. This is why the United Nations Population Fund expects an exacerbation of gender-based violence, early and forced child marriage, female genital mutilation, and unintended pregnancy.

Rapid assessments and responses to the COVID-19 pandemic must be both conflict and gender-sensitive to prevent increased suffering of women and girls caused by their

added vulnerability. In these contexts, where women and girls already suffer exclusion to access basic goods and essential services such as healthcare, health systems are not properly equipped to respond to the COVID-19 crisis.

Also, limited access to essential health information, insufficient or non-existing sanitation facilities, and crowded conditions prevent women and girls from conducting the hygienic and social distancing measures recommended to avoid the spreading of the virus and risks for their lives.

Evidence from past epidemics, such as Ebola or Zika, shows that efforts to contain outbreaks frequently reduce resources from routine health services, including healthcare during pregnancies or contraceptives treatments. The pandemic undermines access to sexual and reproductive health services which were already limited.

Gender inequality rates are particularly high in conflict-affected, post-conflict, and humanitarian crises contexts. Because of that, women are deeply excluded from all decision-making processes (including peace and security issues).

As a result, women are frequently kept out of the design and implementation of peace and political solutions to crises. Consequently, they have a low capacity to influence decision-making processes on social, economic, health, protection, and justice.

In addition, the responses to the pandemic should also be gender-sensitive in consideration of the fact that the women are those who predominantly carry out the burden of the provision of primary healthcare. 70 percent of the health and social workforce caring for affected people is made up of women and increasingly health workers are getting infected by COVID-19.



Women and girls also bear exacerbated burdens of unpaid care work as health care systems become overcrowded with the sick. As a result, the responsibility for caring for ill family members and the elderly is usually given to women, again because of the gendered roles and dynamics established in society.

Furthermore, the closure of schools in pandemic times increases the burden of unpaid care work because women are also those who usually care for children.

The promulgation of national emergency laws by governments to fight against the COVID-19, such as the introduction of lockdowns, closed borders, self-isolation, and other restrictions on citizen's movements or rights may also have grave implications for gender equality around the world.

This is so particularly in contexts affected by armed conflicts, post-conflict, and humanitarian crises because, as said before, crises and conflicts impact disproportionately the pre-existing inequalities that women and girls already suffer.

COVID-19 may become a driver of conflict

In this context, it is imperative to prevent the COVID-19 from becoming a driver of conflict exacerbating existing tensions and violence.

To this end, raising awareness about the coronavirus health crisis and the prevention of the spread of the pandemic, especially in communities where the government's reach is limited, must be a top priority.

For that purpose, it is necessary to avoid misinformation, distrust, and the spread of rumors which could increase tensions leading to new forms of violence or the rise of previously existing ones, as was the case in many places during the Ebola outbreak.

This is particularly important because, with the escalating spread of the COVID-19, fake news, hate speech and stigma have exploded, undermining social cohesion in times of compulsory social distancing.

Technology and evidence-based strategies to empower women and girls

Regarding the management of COVID-19 response, digital technology and online tools to collect data may turn out to be highly useful to address the specific needs of the population

and provide solutions during the pandemic. But for women technology is a double sword: It is frequently less available to them or it could become a source of potential abuse.

As a result, it is essential to guarantee that alternative methods to digital technology and online tools (such as access to radio, megaphones, datasheets, technical brochures or other materials for reading, classifying or writing information) are accessible to women and girls. Furthermore, gender-disaggregated data, including on key issues such as the rates of infection, differential economic impacts, or the incidence of gender-based violence and sexual abuse, is essential to understanding appropriately the epidemiological, social, and economic risks and impacts of the pandemic.

Moreover, women's civil society organizations have a key role to play. They are indispensable networks for sharing the right information about COVID-19 and as key vehicles for women's meaningful participation in the decision-making processes. They can considerably help sustain women's role in the key areas of disease surveillance, prevention, detection and responses to the long-term impacts of the pandemic.

In this regard, it is especially important to develop strategies to foster women's economic empowerment. This should include exploring cash transfer programming to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 on women's rights and, in turn, advancing towards gender equality.

Gender-responsive policies are indispensable to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 on women and girls' rights

In sum, it is necessary to take into account how the COVID-19 outbreak is impacting conflict

and humanitarian dynamics with a gender lens. To meaningfully address this global health crisis, all hands need to be on board, particularly women's and girls'. For that reason, strengthening the leadership and meaningful participation of women and girls in all decision-making processes is paramount.

Gender-responsive policies and practices related to education, women's economic empowerment, food security, livelihoods, nutrition, healthcare, and other key topics are indispensable in the framework of the pandemic. Recovery measures designed and implemented by policymakers, donors, practitioners, or civil society organizations must engage with local communities. This means directly addressing women's political, social, and economic needs and priorities with well-planned, long-term support to achieve gender equality.

No woman and girl must ever be left behind, particularly the most marginalized and vulnerable, including migrants, LGBTQI persons, or the ones living with disabilities or HIV.



Waris Shah

(PUNJABI SUFI POET)

Waris Shah was born in Jandiala Sher Khan, Punjab, present-day Pakistan into a reputed Sayyid family and was a descendant of Sayyid Muhammad Al - Makki through his son Sayyid Badruddin. His father's name was Gulsher Shah and mother's name was Kamal Banu. Waris's parents are said to have died when he was young. Waris spent years in search of the perfect spiritual guide. Waris Shah acknowledged himself to be a disciple of an ustad from Kasur, namely Hafiz Gulam Murtaza from whom he received his education. After completing his education, Waris moved to Malka Hans, a village twelve kilometres north of Pakpattan. Here he resided in a small room, adjacent to a historic mosque now called Masjid Waris Shah, until his death. Other poets later added their own verses in Qissa Waris Shah throughout the history. It is estimated that there are 11069 forged verses in the commonly available Qissa Waris Shah. One of the oldest and most accurate copies of Qissa Waris Shah published by Kripa Ram in 1916 is available in the Punjab Public Library in Lahore.

Waris Shah is primarily known as the author of Heer Ranjha whose verse is a treasure-trove of Punjabi phrases, idioms and sayings. His minute and realistic depiction of each detail of Punjabi life and the political situation in the 18th century, remains unique and the entire poem is an album of colourful and enchanting pictures of life in the Punjab, of varied views but always deeply absorbing.

Waris Shah was a consummate artiste, deeply learned in Sufi and domestic cultural lore. It is said that the story of romantic love is a poetic expression of the mystical love of the human soul towards God – the quintessential subject in Sufism and a recurring theme in both Muslim and Hindu mysticism.

Heer Ranjha was written by Waris Shah. Some historians say that the story was the original work of Shah, written after he had fallen in love with a girl named Bhag Bhari. Others say that Heer and Ranjha were real personalities who lived under

the Lodi dynasty and that Waris Shah later utilised these personalities for his story. Shah states that the story has a deeper meaning, referring to the unrelenting quest that man has towards God.

Heer is an extremely beautiful woman, born into a wealthy family of the Sial Tribe in Jhang which is now Punjab, Pakistan. Ranjha (whose first name is Dheedo; Ranjha is the surname, his caste is Ranjha), a Jat of the Ranjha tribe, is the youngest of four brothers and lives in the village of Takht Hazara by the river Chenab. Being his father's favorite son, unlike his brothers who had to toil in the lands, he led a life of ease, playing the flute. After a quarrel with his brothers over land, Ranjha leaves home. In Waris Shah's version of the epic, it is said that Ranjha left his home because his brothers' wives refused to give him food. Eventually he arrives in Heer's village and falls in love with her. Heer's father offers Ranjha a job herding his cattle. Heer becomes mesmerised by the way Ranjha plays his flute and eventually falls in love with him. They meet each other secretly for many years until they are caught by Heer's jealous uncle, Kaido, and her parents Chuchak and Malki. Heer is forced by her family and the local priest or 'Maulvi' to marry another man named Saida Khera.

Ranjha is heartbroken. He wanders the countryside alone, until eventually he meets a Shaiva Jogi (ascetic). After meeting Gorakhnath, the founder of the "Kanphata" (pierced ear) sect of jogis at Tilla Jogian (the 'Hill of Ascetics', located 50 miles north of the historic town of Bhera, Sargodha District, Punjab), Ranjha becomes a jogi himself, piercing his ears and renouncing the material world. While reciting the name of the Lord, he wanders all over Punjab, eventually finding the village where Heer now lives.

The two return to Heer's village, where Heer's parents agree to their marriage - though some versions of the story state that the parent's

agreement is only a deception. On the wedding day, Kaido poisons her food so that the wedding will not take place, in order to punish the girl for her behaviour. Hearing this news, Ranjha rushes to aid Heer, but is too late, as she has already eaten the poison and has died. Brokenhearted once again, Ranjha eats the remaining poisoned Laddu (sweet) which Heer has eaten and dies by her side.

Heer and Ranjha are buried in Heer's hometown, Jhang. Love-smitten couples and others often pay visits to their mausoleum.

ਵਾਰਿਸ ਸ਼ਾਹ

ਵਾਰਿਸ ਸ਼ਾਹ (੧੭੨੨-੧੭੯੮) ਦਾ ਜਨਮ ਸੱਯਦ ਗੁਲਸ਼ੇਰ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਦੇ ਘਰ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਤੋਂ ਕਰੀਬ ੫੦ ਕਿਲੋਮੀਟਰ ਦੂਰ ਸ਼ੇਖੂਪੁਰਾ ਜਿਲ੍ਹੇ ਦੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਜੰਡਿਆਲਾ ਸ਼ੇਰ ਖ਼ਾਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੋਇਆ। ਬਚਪਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਾਰਿਸ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਨੂੰ ਪਿੰਡ ਦੀ ਹੀ ਮਸਜਿਦ ਵਿੱਚ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਲਈ ਭੇਜਿਆ ਗਿਆ। ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ-ਏ-ਨਜ਼ਾਮੀ ਦੀ ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਕਸੂਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਮੌਲਵੀ ਗੁਲਾਮ ਮੁਰਤਜ਼ਾ ਕਸੂਰੀ ਕੋਲੋਂ ਹਾਸਲ ਕੀਤੀ। ਉਥੋਂ ਫਾਰਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਅਰਬੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਿਦਿਆ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਹ ਪਾਕਪਟਨ ਚਲੇ ਗਏ। ਪਾਕਪਟਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਬਾਬਾ ਫ਼ਰੀਦ ਦੀ ਗੱਦੀ ਉੱਤੇ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਬਜ਼ਰਗਾਂ ਕੋਲੋਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਤਮਕ ਗਿਆਨ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਹੋਈ, ਜਿਸ ਦੇ ਬਾਅਦ ਉਹ ਰਾਣੀ ਹਾਂਸ ਦੀ ਮਸਜਿਦ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਮਾਮ ਰਹੇ ਅਤੇ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਵਿਦਿਆ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਰ ਕਰਦੇ ਰਹੇ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਦੇ ਸਿਰਮੌਰ ਕਵੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਉਹ ਮੁੱਖ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਕਿੱਸੇ ਹੀਰ ਰਾਂਝਾ ਲਈ ਮਸ਼ਹੂਰ ਹਨ।

Heer akhdi jogia, ve jhooth bolle..

Kaun ruthre yaar manawda

eee.....

Aisa koi na milya, mein dhoond thakki...

Hooooo

Ki jeda gya nu mod leawnda ee.....

Oo sade cham dia juttia kare koi

Ki jeda jeonda rog gwawnda ee

bhla moe te vichre kaun mille..Hoooo

Aiven jeona lok wlanwda ee,,,,,,

Ikk jatt de khet nu agg laggi.....

Te vekha anke kado

bujhawnda ee.....

Ikk baaj to kaag ne kunj khoi.....

Te vekha chup hai ki kurlawda ee



Bulleh Shah

(1680 – 1757)

whose real name was Abdullah Shah, was a Punjabi Sufi poet, a humanist and philosopher.

Early life and background

Bulleh Shah is believed to have been born in 1680, in the small village of Uch, Bahawalpur, Punjab, now in Pakistan.

When he was six months old, his parents relocated to Malakwal. There his father, Shah Muhammad Darwaish, was a preacher in the village mosque and a teacher. His father later got a job in Pandoke, about 50 miles southeast of Kasur. Bulleh Shah received his early schooling in Pandoke, and moved to Kasur for higher education. He also received education from Maulana Mohiyuddin. His spiritual teacher was the eminent Sufi saint, Shah Inayat Qadiri, from Arain tribe of Lahore Punjab.

Little is known about Bulleh Shah's direct ancestors, except that they were migrants from Uzbekistan. However, Bulleh Shah's family was directly descended from the Prophet Muhammad.

CAREER

A large amount of what is known about Bulleh Shah comes through legends, and is subjective;

to the point that there isn't even agreement among historians concerning his precise date and place of birth. Some "facts" about his life have been pieced together from his own writings. Other "facts" seem to have been passed down through oral traditions.

Bulleh Shah practiced the Sufi tradition of Punjabi poetry established by poets like Shah Hussain (1538 – 1599), Sultan Bahu (1629 – 1691), and Shah Sharaf (1640–1724).

Bulleh Shah lived in the same period as the Sindhi Sufi poet, Shah Abdul Latif Bhatai (1689 – 1752). His lifespan also overlapped with the Punjabi poet Waris Shah (1722 – 1798), of Heer Ranjha fame, and the Sindhi Sufi poet Abdul Wahab (1739 – 1829), better known by his pen-name, Sachal Sarmast ("truth seeking leader of the intoxicated ones"). Amongst Urdu poets, Bulleh Shah lived 400 miles away from Mir Taqi Mir (1723–1810) of Agra.

POETRY STYLE

The verse form Bulleh Shah primarily employed is called the Kafi, a style of Punjabi, Sindhi and Siraiki poetry used not only by the Sufis of Sindh



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Bulleh Shah's poetry and philosophy strongly criticizes Islamic religious orthodoxy of his day.

A BEACON OF PEACE

Bulleh Shah's time was marked with communal strife between Muslims and Sikhs. But in that age Baba Bulleh Shah was a beacon of hope and peace for the citizens of Punjab. While Bulleh Shah was in Pandoke, Muslims killed a young Sikh man who was riding through their village in retaliation for murder of some Muslims by Sikhs. Baba Bulleh Shah denounced the murder of an innocent Sikh and was censured by the mullas and muftis of Pandoke. Bulleh Shah maintained that violence was not the answer to violence. Bulleh Shah also hailed the ninth Sikh Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur as a Ghazi, or "religious warrior", which caused controversy among Muslims of that time.

HUMANIST

Bulleh Shah's writings represent him as a humanist, someone providing solutions to the sociological problems of the world around him as he lives through it, describing the turbulence his

motherland of Punjab is passing through, while concurrently searching for God. His poetry highlights his mystical spiritual voyage through the four stages of Sufism: Shariat (Path), Tariqat (Observance), Haqiqat (Truth) and Marfat (Union). The simplicity with which Bulleh Shah has been able to address the complex fundamental issues of life and humanity is a large part of his appeal. Thus, many people have put his kafis to music, from humble street-singers to renowned Sufi singers like the Waddali Brothers, Abida Parveen and Pathanay Khan, from the



synthesized techno qawwali remixes of UK-based Asian artists to the rock band Junoon.

Bulleh Shah's popularity stretches uniformly across Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims, to the point that much of the written material about this philosopher is from Hindu and Sikh authors.

MODERN RENDITIONS

In the 1990s Junoon, a rock band from Pakistan, rendered such poems as Aleph (Ilmon Bas Kareen O Yaar) and Bullah Ki Jaana. In 2004, Rabbi Shergill performed the unlikely feat of turning the abstruse metaphysical poem Bullah Ki Jaana into a Rock/Fusion song, which became hugely popular in India and Pakistan. he Wadali Bandhu, a Punjabi Sufi group from India, also released a version of Bullah Ki Jaana on their album Aa Mil

Yaar...Call of the Beloved. Another version was performed by Lakhwinder Wadali titled Bullah. Bulleh Shah's verses have also been adapted and used in Bollywood film songs. Examples include the songs "Chaiyya Chaiyya" and "Thayya Thayya" in the 1998 film Dil Se. The 2007 Pakistani movie Khuda Kay Liye includes Bulleh Shah's poetry in the song "Bandeya Ho". The 2008 film, A Wednesday, included a song titled "Bulle Shah, O Yaar Mere". In 2009, Episode One of Pakistan's Coke Studio Season 2 featured a collaboration between Sain Zahoor and Noori, "Aik Alif". In June 2010 Coke Studio 3 Episode One featured "Na Raindee Hai" performed by Arieab Azhar.

DEATH

He died in 1757, and his tomb is located in Kasur, Pakistan.

ਬਾਬਾ ਬੁੱਲ੍ਹੇ ਸ਼ਾਹ

ਬਾਬਾ ਬੁੱਲ੍ਹੇ ਸ਼ਾਹ (੧੬੮੦-੧੭੫੮) ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਫੀ ਕਾਵਿ ਦੇ ਅਸਮਾਨ ਉੱਤੇ ਇਕ ਚਮਕਦੇ ਸਿਤਾਰੇ ਦੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਹਨ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਕਾਵਿ ਰਚਨਾ ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਦੀ ਹਰ ਕਿਸਮ ਦੀ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਕੱਟੜਤਾ ਤੇ ਡਿਗਦੇ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਕਿਰਦਾਰ 'ਤੇ ਇਕ ਤਿੱਖਾ ਵਿਅੰਗ ਹੈ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਆਪਣੇ ਲੋਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਲਏ ਅਲੰਕਾਰਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਜਾਦੂਈ ਲੈਅ ਕਰਕੇ ਬਹੁਤ ਹੀ ਹਰਮਨ ਪਿਆਰੀ ਹੈ। ਬਾਬਾ ਬੁੱਲ੍ਹੇ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਨੇ ਬੜੀ ਬਹਾਦੁਰੀ ਨਾਲ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਦੇ ਹਾਕਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਜ਼ੁਲਮਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਕੱਟੜਤਾ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਉਠਾਈ। ਬਾਬਾ ਬੁੱਲ੍ਹੇ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਕਵਿਤਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਾਫ਼ੀਆਂ, ਦੇਹੜੇ, ਬਾਰਾਂਮਾਹ, ਅਠਵਾਰਾ, ਰਾਂਝਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸੀਹਰਫ਼ੀਆਂ ਸ਼ਾਮਿਲ ਹਨ।

ਕਾਫ਼ੀਆਂ ਬਾਬਾ ਬੁੱਲ੍ਹੇ ਸ਼ਾਹ

Kafian Baba Bulleh Shah

1. ਆਮਿਲ ਯਾਰ ਸਾਰ ਲੈ ਮੇਰੀ

ਆਮਿਲ ਯਾਰ ਸਾਰ ਲੈ ਮੇਰੀ, ਮੇਰੀ ਜਾਨ ਦੁੱਖਾਂ ਨੇ ਘੇਰੀ।

ਅੰਦਰ ਖਾਬ ਵਿਛੋੜਾ ਹੋਇਆ, ਖਬਰ ਨਾ ਪੈਂਦੀ ਤੇਰੀ।

ਸੁੰਢੇ ਬਨ ਵਿਚ ਲੁੱਟੀ ਸਾਈਆਂ, ਸੂਰ ਪਲੰਗ ਨੇ ਘੇਰੀ।

ਇਹ ਤਾਂ ਠੱਗ ਜਗਤ ਦੇ, ਜਿਹਾ ਲਾਵਣ ਜਾਲ ਚਫੇਰੀ।

ਕਰਮ ਸ਼ਰ੍ਹਾ ਦੇ ਧਰਮ ਬਤਾਵਣ, ਸੰਗਲ ਪਾਵਣ ਪੈਰੀਂ।

ਜਾਤ ਮਜ਼੍ਹਬ ਇਹ ਇਸ਼ਕ ਨਾ ਪੁੱਛਦਾ, ਇਸ਼ਕ ਸ਼ਰ੍ਹਾ ਦਾ ਵੈਰੀ।

ਨਦੀਉਂ ਪਾਰ ਮੁਲਕ ਸਜਨ ਦਾ ਲਹਵੇ-ਲਆਬ ਨੇ ਘੇਰੀ।

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਬੇੜੀ ਫੜੀ ਖਲੋਤੀ ਤੈਂ ਕਿਉਂ ਲਾਈ ਆ ਦੇਰੀ।

ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਪਾਸ ਤੇ ਟੋਲਨਾ ਕਿਸ ਨੂੰ, ਭੁੱਲ ਗਿਉਂ ਸਿਖਰ ਦੁਪਹਿਰੀ।

ਬੁੱਲ੍ਹਾ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਸੌਂਹ ਤੈਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਸੀ, ਦਿਲ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਹ ਦਲੇਰੀ।

Every Night I Dream of you

- By Simleen Kaur Arora

My eyes are longing to see you, My arms are yearning to entitle you.
My heart is wrenching with pain. Every night I dream of you,

I pray to God this imagination may come true
So that I no longer have to hide the pain beneath my heart

I remember going with you to the Disneyland
We had lots of fun together, I miss you, I really miss you

I want us to be together, I don't want to die alone
If it were not for your family, We would be together forever

what's the use of this life If i cannot see you , touch you or feel you
Many things are left unsaid I just wish it were me ,not you .

Why god? Why did you take my love away ?
This question just suck up to me every single day.

YOU COMPLETE ME AND I COMPLETE YOU

- By Simleen Kaur Arora

I am that dark night
You are my day light
You are the magic spells,I always wished for

Me the red light
You my green light
You are the shelter ,I was seeking for

Because of you ,yes!
I learned to smile in hail
You are the medicine ,which my soul needs

Before I met you
I didn't knew how to Dance!
Haha haha ,Now, I can dance, because I have a partner

I can't say i like you
Because I have you
You complete me and I complete you

I won't say that, I lost all my fuses when I first saw you
Because you are the right fuse and the right advice
I am that dark night and you are my day light





The Seasonal Bliss

By: Jihan Fadayer Handal

(1)

A prime day at its best,
Beams of an awaited sun glimmer,
A crisp breezesoftening,
While a warm oneis reconciling,
Settling, manoeuvring to rest.
White and blueband together,
Crafting a skyunmatched,
Configuration after configuration;
Spikes of light flicker,
An unequivocal scene!
Downright.... an overture
Of buds opening with a courageous gallant
Determined yet so serene!
Wobbling with every stroke of wind,
Surviving the unknown, jubilant!
Downright.....an overture
Of shrubs flowering cordially
Unconcealed, delectable and blatant
An outright manifestation,
A seasonal bliss that parades year after year,
A compelling scene;

This is spring in its inauguration!
Fellows in humanity,
Filling up their lungs
With the nourishing potion
Inhaling and energizing
Spreadingthe exhilaration
To their little ones!
Joyfulness is air transmissible,
Will switch on their existence
Diverting them from a rigid screen,
A canopy; covering, shading
Masking the wonders of life around!
Little precious, precious ones:
Turn away from an unyielding screen,
Escape the shade, open the curtain.
Joyfulness surpasses blockades,
Transcends barriers,
Penetrates eager souls,
Joyfulness is all- elements permeable,
Will quench the aspiration of the senses.
Away from a four-walled construction,
Sparkling eyes survey a green grass field;

A three dimensional contact;
With the real world around!
Breathe, touch, and smell,
Widen the range of sight,
Roll along the grass,
Lean forward, sway,
Reach a full height.
Almost as speedy as a sound
Is the birth of a playground!
Almost as swift as a wave;
Is the onset of children's interaction!
Proliferating, abound.
Swung with playfulness
Bounced with liveliness
Saving the striving brains of youngsters!
Ever fresh ever new,
Curiosity branches out;
This is how they germinate.
Raise the what, when and why
This is how they sprout.
Adventure makes a start;
This is how they thrive.
Play, play, and play;
This is how they grow.
Run, dash, jog and race;
Grasping, expressing, thinking,
And humane traits develop, vitally.
Jump, skip, gallop and leap;
Learning and knowledge-gaining
Will delve into their foundation, deeply.
Visualizing, imagining, day-dreaming!
Let them get distracted,
Let them explore,
Let them freely innovate,
This is creativity reigning over!
Fellows in humanity,
Filling up their veins,
Saturating their brains,
With the refreshing blends
Of this primaveral coherence,
Sprinkling the seeds of social justice
In raw fertile hearts
In budding vivid minds
Teaching them to stand up

For what is right,
Exposing injustice
To their little ones!
Differences seen naturally,
Disabilities observed supportively,
Empathy is air transmissible
Compassion is transferable
Equality is communicable.
No judgement....no tabooing
No designations....no labelling.
Educating, instructing
Repeating, repeating, and repeating
Today is the perfect time
Here is the ultimate place
Before pollutants come around
Before biased viewstake over!

(2)

A prime day at its best,
A pleasant soothing draft,
Summer is in its bonus days;
Just before declaring the cheerful goodbyes!
A seasonal bliss that parades year after year,
Bright blue skies,
Long unwinding carpets woven in green,
With scattered yellowish slim patches,
Paying their final tributes to the fabulous
season!
Youthful teens saluting their childhood,
Youthful teens greeting their adulthood,
A time of changeover; a transition,
The continuity of ever-changing ideals!
Thirsty souls sipping
From the pure brooks of the blue planet
Realities, simple facts and complicated ones
Too much to handle!
Sandwiched between two stages;
Black or white?
Amid two phases;
Wrong or right?
A stretch of hesitance!
Strolling back and forth:

Self-identity, self-identity
Confused, befuddled,
Risk-taking.....originality?
Peer groups.....a dubious quality?
Unethical or immoral?
Romantic interests,
A twinkle of reluctance!
Against principles or norms?
The never ending restrained perplexity!
Before drifting along twisted dark lanes,
Pause, wait and rest,
Inhale, consider and reset,
Allow thoughtful guidance,
Parental redirection,
Support, help and advice,
It won't let you down!
No puncture of pride!
It won't lessen independence!
No trim on privileges or rights!
Confide, reveal and trust.
To reach the smooth white shores
Of an all-inclusive equilibrium!
Remember, remember
Growth is a process; ongoing
Learning is a manner; never ending
When failing try again and again
Do not despair; rather empower
Applaud resilience not withdrawal.
Wandering west and north,
Unleash imagination!
Turn, construct and put together
While being open-minded.
Roaming east and south,
Unveil inspiration!
Discover the scope of directness,
The domain of truthfulness,
And the globe of fruitfulness,
Without overlooking tolerance.
Assess diversity explicitly
Expose injustice bravely
Reflect on fairness subtly
Value social justice education liberally
Behold peace in society, friends and family,
Uncover harmony in love and nature,

A piece, a drop, a bit of everything
For the unmatched expert of multitasking!

(3)

A prime day at its best,
An exquisite palette of colours,
Unrivalled beauty!
Falling leaves,
Flying leaves,
Dispersing with a mild wind,
Disappearing with a mighty wind!
A seasonal bliss that parades year after year
Adulthood is an elegant age
As refined as the fall colours
As aromatic as pine cones
As yielding as the harvest
Age is an ongoing process:
Never believe planting is merely
An act of the past
Never agree harvesting is solitary
To the future,
The present is where the overlap lies
Cultivate on a daily basis
And gather accordingly!
And yet
There is more to it
The in-between
Beware do not forget the seeding
The irrigation, the trimming
Adjust, change, and bend
Looking up to life teachings!
Regulate, modify, and amend
Experience emerge from hardships,
Sincerity paves the way to competency.
Contemplation and dedication,
Are prerequisites
To the Harvest Moon
Be as opulent, as renewing
Thrive on new beginnings
Give endlessly never hold out.
Embrace social justice
Outdo the realms of stigma
Fly above the scope of stereotypes
Connect, connect, and connect

Fill the generation gap
Care to share
Share to care
Spread the elements of righteousness
With the scattered autumn foliage
Excel, excel, and excel
Generate balance
Craftthoroughness
Weave benevolence
The kernels of adulthood!

(4)

A prime day at its best,
An opaque sky;
Undecided
Alternating from hazy gray
To silvery green
To brittle blue
Peacefully!
A brisk air
Liberating freshness
Unprecedented freshness
Purity, crispiness
Beyond description!
An assortment of clouds,
A medley
Further than all imagination!
A bashful sun declaring victory;
The warmth of the winter sun
Penetrates the assembly
Gracefully
Enlivens spirits
Delightfully!
A seasonal bliss that parades year after year!
A phase of rebirth,
A period of restoration,
Marking the essence
The actuality of late adulthood
Poised, Self-assured;
No surrender to the chronological age!
A pristine stage of life
Analogous with the awaited winter sun
As good as!
Bear in mind the optimal age;

Live up to it,
Hence; the ideal age!
Being the model, the very adept,
Now is the time
Of quality over quantity
Now is the time to travel safely
Along the Silk Road
Linking east and west
Solving the ever confounding puzzle
Landing securely
At the docks of contentment
With an abundance of lore
With the zest
Of clarity at the core
Advocate virtues
Echoes of paths travelled resonating
With lessons and tutorials
Do not be an introvert
Do not give up
Retell, restate
Advocate the supreme recital
Of social justice
That was sprayed around the spring equinox;
Vernally!
Seeded it at the midsummer solstice;
Aestivally!
Harvested over the fall equinox;
Autumnally!
Laurel wreathed about the winter solstice;
Brumally!
Spread wisdom
Sing to well-being cheerfully
Compose the melody of fulfillment
Dance to the tunes of life genuinely.



SITARA

Jewels



SITARA JEWELS AT TIFF 2019

With the season of fashion and film in Toronto having recently passed by, September was truly a sparkling month for Toronto-based luxury jewellery label Sitara Jewels. The upscale and local brand lit up the red carpets at Toronto International Film Festival 2019 events across the city, as it made its official debut on the TIFF circuit. As a participating designer at the exclusive celebrity styling lounge NIUCOCO presents The Salon at Stylist Box, Sitara Jewels quickly became a favourite among Canadian screen queens and rising stars. If you're looking for accessory inspiration for your own eveningwear looks this Fall 2019, look no further than these gorgeous gems by Sitara Jewels.

ABOUT SITARA JEWELS

From engagements to weddings to milestones such as anniversaries, Sitara offers an assortment of pre-made and custom jewellery. At Sitara, each piece is handcrafted to exacting standards, using the highest quality natural stones. Every purchase comes with a certified appraisal and a secret- affordability! We source our gemstones and certified diamonds directly from major global markets like Antwerp, Hong Kong, Jaipur and Bangkok to bring you the best value possible. Whether your piece was envisioned by one of our designers, or it came to life through a custom CAD design process, our goal is to accommodate your individual budget, lifestyle and taste.

ABOUT SHALINI BHARDWAJ

Indo-Canadian certified gemologist, jewellery appraiser and designer Shalini Bhardwaj is the sparkling personality behind the equally sparkling diamonds of Sitara Jewels. As a successful entrepreneur with a focus on empowering women in business, she launched her company in 2002. Shalini is a Certified Fellow Gemologist who has been recognized by the Canadian Gemological Association and is also a Certified Appraisal Professional, accredited by the Canadian Jewellers Association. She was recently honoured as “The Business Woman of the Year 2019” at the Business Women's Network of York Region, where she also received “The Professional Award.” With an aesthetic which is drawn from global inspiration, an eye for detail and a passion for diamonds, her intricate and breathtaking designs are coveted by brides and boss ladies alike.



Canadian actress and ACTRA TO Diversity Committee Co-Chair Samora Smallwood stunned with this Sitara Jewels Carved Aquamarine and Champagne Diamond Ring in 14K Gold, which provided a delicate yet powerful statement look. Paired with a vibrant red ensemble, this necklace truly caught the light, for a superstar-worthy effect.

Beautiful actress and dancer Bree Wasylenko makes a bold impression with this Ceylon Blue Sapphire Ring with Turquoise embellished with Single Cut Diamonds in 14K Gold. With its striking colour, this ring flatters her eye colour and allows her long blonde locks to stand out.



Photo: breewas on Instagram



Actress **Nikki Duval** posed with actor Stephen Tracey at the IT House x Producers Ball, wearing these Flat Blue Sapphire Earrings with 2 Karat of Diamonds.

Actress, dancer and producer **Sydney Van Delft** looks gorgeous at Glenn Gould Studio CBC wearing these Large Statement Earrings in Blue Topaz with Trillion shaped Cabachons and Diamonds..



Fit for a fairytale princess and appropriately named, these Sleeping Beauty Turquoise with Diamonds Earrings flatter **Bree Wasylenko** perfectly.

Samora Smallwood delivered the glamour factor on the red carpet with eOne, as she sparkled in these 4 carats of Single Cut Diamonds Hand Set in 14K Gold and Silver Earrings.



Canadian actress **Naomi Snieckus** (who can be spotted on CBC's Mr. D), attended the Maison Birks TIFF event this past week wearing this **Aquamarine and Tanzanite with a South Sea Pearls and Diamonds Necklace** which caught the light. Paired with a ruby red frock, this neckpiece is truly for the belle of the ball who wants to stand out from the crowd this TIFF season.



If you prefer ear candy to necklaces, you may want to draw your luxury accessory inspiration from **Tammy's** Iways Dying star **Anastasia Phillips**. The **Toronto-born beauty stunned at the TIFF premiere** of her film in a pair of intricate Round Brilliant Diamond Earrings in 14K Yellow Gold and Sterling Silver. For ladies who want to keep their style simple with a classic black dress just like Anastasia, a pair of these dangling earrings can truly bring your evening sartorial sense to the next level.

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SITARA

Jewels

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📷 [shalinisitara](#)

Dear Sleep

By: Jihan Fadayer Handal

When, where, how and why,
Answers resonate straight away.
It should be done,
Hastily, right away.
This should be settled,
At one point in time,
Thoroughly; all the way.
The unsurpassed remedy:
Nothing but time.
Tossing and re-tossing
Ideas and images stirred
Concepts and notions mixed
Ridiculousness in making!

At the tip of it,
It looked as if a perfect storm
Is knocking on a door,
But not anymore!
Is there a storm perfected
In any chance, in anyway?
Ideas like tiny raindrops;
Gently tapping on a windowpane.
Heartbeats slowly pulsing;
The percussions of soul
Swiftly drumming.
Not long before:
An outburst, a mighty windstorm
Whining, humming,
Steadfast pounding.
Sincerely pleading
To stop this buzzing!

A moonlighted night,
Stars elegantly scattered:
Heavenly dust
On a glossy fabric; sprinkled.
Amidst this beauty,
A weary brain,
Emitting shadowed brainwaves,
Perplexed and baffled.
Is it the effect of the moon?
No, no way, no
As tonight's sky is crowned
With the waxing crescent moon
Not a full moon, no.
It could be a lunar upshot, though
Driving this lunatic head
To Nowhere land!

Eyes wide open,
Another episode is shooting:
Tedious thoughts,
The burdensome weight
Of the pyramids of Giza!
Eyelids too.... too heavy,
Horus fighting over a throne,
Eye of Horus, Eye of Ra
Sacrificed to Osiris!
Enough! No legend-talk.
Ideas entwined, thoughts overgrown.
Pupils dilating,
The stare of a Medusa
Propagating a solid stone!

A flash of stillness!
No myths! No, not a stone.
Eyes following every trace of actuality.
In pursuit of the numerous eyes
Of Argus; the Greek giant!
Corneas and irises diverting,
Eyeballs too, too heavy!
No more eye- talk; leave alone.
Absurdity in making:
Neurons are clashing,
A chaotic organization
Of an organized chaos!
Mind-numbing,
Another gust of wasted time,
They, them, this and that
A squall, a fierce storm is banging
When, which, why and what
In a time tunnel....backward.
Enough of this claptrap!
Seconds, minutes and hours,
Leaving and disappearing.
Earnestly tracking a formula,
For time revival and restoration!

On the verge of madness,
On the brink of despair,
Devotedly praying for quietness,
In highest need to unplug,
To sign a peace treaty
With this provocative silliness.
To implant the Piece Sign
Inside this wiggling mind!
To embed STOP sign posts
Across the range of sightedness!
Yearning in a faithful pledge,
To calm down thinking,
To settle viewpoints,
To run away from mind-sets,
As far as Faraway land!

The serenade of a Nightingale,
Tapping on a windowpane,
Brain complexity infiltrated,
Background noise quieted.
The aromatic fields of lavender,
Crossed all boundaries... permeated,
Senses unworriedly complied.... saturated.
Oh sleep,
Tiptoe, creep,
Loom from behind,
Emerge don't shy.
Ideas melting...thoughts fading,
Flying away....combined.
Positive vibes come this way,
Settle down... unwind.
Sleep is overdue,
Now is the time for revivification,
In motion rejuvenation,
Hello sleep
Dear, dear sleep!

IMPACT OF A MURDER: ADDRESSING POLICE BRUTALITY

by Meghan Dawson



It took eight minutes and forty-five seconds for a white Minneapolis police officer to suffocate George Floyd, but the impact of his tragic death will endure much longer. In the words of Floyd's six-year-old daughter, "Daddy changed the world."

A bystander's cell phone video of the slaying quickly went viral, sparking outrage and disgust across the world. George Floyd's death appears to be the straw that broke the camel's back, as video evidence of unchecked police brutality against Black Americans routinely aggregates on the internet.

Egregious incidents of police brutality against

black community members is not uncommon in Minneapolis, Minnesota. George Floyd is not even the first to be asphyxiated by Minneapolis police, two other black victims include David Smith in 2010 and Christopher Burns in 2002.

According to Time Magazine, Minneapolis activist Sandra Richardson does not find the riots surprising, explaining that, "If you talk to enough people in Minneapolis, it wasn't if this was going to happen. It was when. You can only demean people so much until they respond."

"Why do I have to feel this way? Why can't I just be black in the state of Minnesota?" cried

John Thompson, a friend of the late Philando Castile, an unarmed Minnesotan who has fatally shot by officers in 2016

After witnessing the haunting video of Floyd's murder, the nation is scrambling for solutions to a problem that can no longer be ignored: law enforcement is employing unnecessary deadly force against unarmed civilians and are often not held accountable for their actions. Tragically, fatal police shootings are on the rise, with 996 fatalities in 2018 and 1,004 reported in 2019.

Even worse, there is a massive racial disparity in those who the police use force against: Black Americans are three times more likely to be killed by police than their white counterparts. Unsurprisingly, the chronic stress associated with police brutality has toxic effects on the mental health of black communities across the United States.

U.S.: Recent High-Profile Police Homicides against Black Americans

2014: 44-year-old Eric Garner was suffocated by a New York City police officer after being accused of selling cigarettes. No officers were convicted.



2014: 18-year-old Michael Brown was fatally shot by a Missouri police officer after a physical confrontation. No officers were convicted.

2014: 12-year-old Tamir Rice was fatally shot by an Ohio police officer while playing with a toy Airsoft gun. No officers were convicted.

2015: Award-winning U.S. Air Force veteran Anthony Hill was fatally shot by a Georgia police officer after running around his apartment complex naked and unarmed, apparently suffering from a mental breakdown. The officer was convicted and sentenced to 12 years in prison.

2016: 32-year-old Philando Castile was fatally shot by a Minnesota police officer during a traffic stop while attempting to reach for his vehicle registration. No officers were convicted.





2018: 26-year-old Botham Jean was fatally shot by an off-duty Texas police officer who had allegedly mistakenly broken into Botham's own home, alleging that she thought he was a burglar. The officer was convicted and sentenced to 10 years in prison.

2019: 28-year-old Atatiana Jefferson was fatally shot through a window in her home by a Texas police officer. Charges are pending.

2020: 26-year-old Breonna Taylor was fatally shot eight times while in her bed by Kentucky police, who forcibly entered her home searching for drugs. None were found. No officers were charged.

2020: 47-year-old George Floyd was suffocated by Minnesota police officers during an arrest after allegedly using a counterfeit \$20 bill at a grocery store. Charges are pending.

This timeline only contains some police homicides against Black Americans that gained widespread public attention; it is not an exhaustive list.**

As the public transforms their outrage into

deliberation, the role of law enforcement is being called into question. Protests have erupted across the country, with many activists encouraging lawmakers to "defund the police."

But what exactly does defund the police mean? The definition of this rallying cry can vary depending on who you ask. For instance, it could mean demilitarize the police, divest in law enforcement funding, or abolish cops all together.

According to a Yahoo/YouGov survey conducted during the immediate aftermath of Floyd's murder, there seems to be strong bipartisan support for higher police training standards, with over 85% of participants desiring more non-forceful conflict de-escalation techniques and employing mandatory body cameras.

There have already been many efforts in recent years to help safeguard against police brutality and racism, including compulsory police body cameras and implicit bias training, which aims to help officers avoid

acting on their own prejudices. However, these solutions have shortcomings, as police departments can manipulate unflattering body cam footage and there is little evidence that bias training has achieved improvements in misconduct.

On the other hand, the international human rights movement Black Lives Matter (BLM) is calling for divestment in law enforcement. “We need to defund police and we need to take those resources and put them back into our communities so that we have access to healthy food, we have access to adequate health care, we have access to adequate public health system,” explains Patrisse Cullors, BLM’s co-founder and chair of Reform L.A. Jails. “The more contact we have with law enforcement, the more death is going to happen with black people.”

In response to public outcry, the mayors of New York City and Los Angeles have vowed to cut police funding and redirect that money to other public resources. San Francisco district attorney Chesa Boudin attested to receiving hundreds of emails demanding that authorities defund the San Francisco police department.

Seeking a more radical approach to police brutality, a Minneapolis activist organization called MPD150 is campaigning to abolish police officers altogether. Pushing for a fundamental structural change that reaches further than cosmetic procedural reforms, MPD150 argues that police reform is impossible, comparing that strategy to slapping paint on a house with a bad foundation.

According to MPD150’s 2017 police performance review, “The culture of Minneapolis Police Department is one where

racism and brutality are tacitly allowed, and officers are honor-bound to cover up for one another’s misconduct. Complaints of officer misconduct are dismissed, covered up, and ignored, and even when officers are found guilty of brutality, the city can’t hold them accountable, and many of them continue to work on the force. Community outrage leads to cries for civilian review, diversity training, and body cameras — all of which ultimately fail to address the underlying problems.”

Rather than investing in police reforms, MPD150 advocates that the government gradually redirect the police department’s funds towards renovating communities through improved educational, housing, and health services.

By pouring money directly into community services, advocates hope to avert crime rather than punish it. Retired Minneapolis Police Chief Tony Bouza explains, “The idea of police as crime preventers is rubbish. By the time the cop appears, the criminal has been formed and the crime has been committed.”

Instead of exposing police force to vulnerable civilians such as sex workers, drug addicts, vagrants, abuse victims, or the mentally ill, MPD150 suggests that emergency operators call on more specific non-police resources that will be better equipped to deal with these sensitive issues, such as mental health professionals, social workers, housing support, and domestic violence advocates.

In fact, there is evidence that aggressively policing low-level offenses can worsen crime. Traffic tickets, court fines, jail time, and the social disruption of police harassment can intensify the ambience of desperation in already disadvantaged communities.

In the case of violent offenses, the police are statistically not very effective at solving



murders or rapes. Additionally, research suggests that police officers are more likely to be domestic abusers than other professionals, potentially making them a poor choice to dispatch to domestic violence victims.

While the movement to introduce police-alternatives is gaining notoriety, a late-May Yahoo/YouGov poll suggests that most Americans do not support reducing law enforcement budgets. Almost two-thirds (65%) oppose cutting police force funding; with only 16% of Democrats and 15% of Republicans supporting that proposal.

In response to #DefundThePolice, law-enforcement advocates warn that reductions in police spending could lead to a rise in crime. According to Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot, "What I've heard from people in neighborhoods is that they want more police protection, not less."

Another concern is that defunding the police may lead to harmful fundraising tactics such as charging higher court fees and traffic infraction fines to remain financially afloat.

Journalist and Fox News correspondent Juan Williams advocates for reform rather than defunding, saying, "To me, it's poor communities that need higher levels of attention and engagement from the police to produce good policing, to make people feel safe in their homes and in terms of their stores, property, and the rest."

For others, simply holding police accountable for unnecessary deadly force would be the first step to real reform.

Because police misconduct is often investigated within the offender's own department, officers are rarely prosecuted for civilians who die in their custody, meaning that victims' families and communities rarely see justice. It is perhaps this apparent impunity that breeds the "shoot first, ask questions later" behavior.

According to ABC's Janell Ross, "Police officers convicted for fatal shootings are the exception, not the rule." Ross reported that, although about one thousand people are shot by police each year, only 35 non-federal police officers were convicted of a crime related to shootings from 2005 to 2019.

While the problem is clear, the solution is disputed.

"We're asking cops to do too much in this country," disclosed Dallas Police Chief David Brown in 2016.

"Every societal failure, we put it off on the cops to solve. Not enough mental health funding. Let the cop handle it. Not enough drug addiction funding. Let's give it to the cops. Here in Dallas, we've got a loose dog

problem. Let's have the cops chase loose dogs. You know, schools fail. Give it to the cops. 70% of the African American community is being raised by single women. Let's give it to the cops to solve that, as well. That's too much to ask."

"I just ask for other parts of our democracy, along with the free press, to help us. To help us and not put that burden all on law enforcement to resolve. So, again, I'm just being pretty honest with you," declared Brown.

As more and more of these atrocities are caught on tape, Americans are forced to look police brutality in the face. Black Americans live in fear of cruelty at the hands of law enforcement, the very entity that is supposed to "serve and protect."

The officers responsible for the senseless killing of George Floyd have been taken into custody and charged. Whether or not they will be convicted of murder or receive any real jail time remains to be seen, however, activists are holding out hope that justice can be served.

Even so, making an example out of a few officers will not restore trust from the black community. Only a widespread transformation of the law enforcement system can do that. Whether neutralizing this systemic racism means reforming law enforcement, defunding it, or abolishing it altogether — a change is going to come.

Editor's Note: The opinions expressed here by Impakter.com contributors are their own, not those of Impakter.com. — In the Featured Photo: The George Floyd mural outside Cup Foods at Chicago Ave and E 38th St in Minneapolis, Minnesota. — Featured Photo Credit: Lorie Shaull



Train of Consciousness

Shopnil Mahmud
shopnilmahmud.com

I'm on the train of consciousness,
with my eyes closed, conscience buried.
Whatever is happening around the world, none of my business.

Let this train carry, wherever it takes me.

I'm on the train of inner turbulence.
And this train stomps over poor human flesh,
I hear them cry, I see them die everyday.

But I do not say a word, I just pretend to be sad sometimes.

Because I feel, as long as I'm inside this train

-I'm safe!

Often I feel that, I've got no role to play in social justice system.
Like every other passengers onboard with a false sense of security.

They too have seen what I've seen, heard what I've heard.

Oh a few are talking about it over a cup of tea, in vicarious joy,
Or watching them all die on TV, shedding crocodile's tears.

How poor we are, even animals are more civilized than we are at times,

Each others blood we drink to fuel this train,
How long will I keep my eyes close, how long will I not see?
How long will I keep myself to my own bloody business?

Because the train on the orbit is coming for me next!

Synopsis: Below is a poem by Samia Doany; a poem she wrote for an MOOC writing class with IOWA University. In this poem written in a Shakespearean style, the poet is associating contemporary sentiments and incidents with the year 1614, through a dream. She's addressing 'The Bard of Avon', William Shakespeare, in his theatre 'The Globe Theatre'. This theatre is an Elizabethan style building on the south bank of the River Thames in London.

In Search of Answers: *THE WORLD TODAY AND YESTERYEAR*

(USA/Amman, 2017 - London, 1614)

By: Samia Doany

Looking back at time, at eras past, at history,
How do I don another hat, alter perspectives?
Delve deep in bygone decades, in an inventory
Discover an ancient, significant memory,
Embrace a new life that is strange and alien to me?

In a dream I saw myself, feet trudging foreign lanes,
In a country unfamiliar, full of muck and mud,
Cold weather, fog, some elves (methinks), eerie, dark domains.
T'was on a whim I crost to shelter from hefty rains,
When lo and behold a building sprung before mine eyes.

'The Globe' I did peruse on the building's entrance side,
I dashed in from the rain and mist, sheltered in the pews.
I looked around, huddled low, perchance to safely hide
When a voice boomed loud and clear: "Why dost thou here abide?"
By Jove! t'was no other than the mighty Avon Bard.

*"I humbly beg thy pardon sir, I merely be a guest;
Honored to meet thine kindly self, I bow to thine muse.
Before ye throw me out, I beseech ye one small quest:
Let me spill my tale of woe before it's laid to rest.
Please list to my thorny tale, my undulating grief."*

*He sat him down to listen to my account of pain,
True to his charming self, he'd granted my desire:
"Once in a far-away future, as 'men' are wont to gain,
Greed for money, greed for power, waxed and did not wane;
It spread its wings, filled the earth, smoldered unabated.*

*Humans suffered, food was scarce, the earth whimpered indeed.
Love, fellowship had vanished, the media waxed deceit,
The only codes prevailing were ego, id, and greed.
Senseless wars erupted, burning tree and root, and seed.
The whole world was in chaos, drastic the human state.*

*Compassion almost vanished, replaced by hate and fear,
The rich did burgeon richer, to poorer shrank the poor;
Eyes were turned to power, to politics harsh, austere,
And lo the world did shrivel to many a sliced-up sphere:
One loyal to the golden calf, one loyal to the throne."*

*"What more can I to thee impart, my world's burst apart!
The dark nature of our breed has grabbed the upper hand.
I ken not where to proceed, and where to simply start.
Thine counsel, sire's direly sought to lift the trodden heart:
Help mankind revert to truth, and from henceforth depart."*

*The Bard sadly gazed yet smiled, he had just this to say:
"The world has ever been thus, so don't lose faith my friend,
For better times will always come, the pendulum will sway.
Go back to sleep for when you wake, t'will be another day."
Thus ends my tale. I fear, on a mystic note of hope.*

About the Author

SamiaDoany
Masters in Comparative Literature

Back when Jerusalem was a peaceful mixing pot of religions and cultures, SamiaDoany was born in Jerusalem and spent a few years of her life there peacefully before the occupation and destruction forced her and millions of others to flee to neighboring countries. Eventually in Lebanon, she discovered her love for languages and literature at the American University of Beirut. After getting married and moving to Jordan, where she and her husband raised their children as she got involved in education and academics. She is now retired and has rediscovered her passion for writing, and has recently penned a few short stories and some poetry.

DEAR U.S. CAPITALISM: IT'S TIME TO CHANGE **OUR ECONOMY**

by BCorp - Editor



How Ownership Shifts, New Incentives, and Social Work Could Fuel Systemic Change for Our Economy.

Dear U.S. Capitalism,
It's me, Social Work.

I see you've been working toward creating a fairer economy, which is amazing, because so many social injustices are rooted in economics. You have certainly made great strides, but ESG (environmental, social, and governance) investing, diversity and inclusion, and corporate social responsibility initiatives are not enough — they are comfortable improvements. You

are capable of so much more, and I hope to help you see that.

So from a social work perspective, I will share:

one reason why our economy needs to change,
two reasons why we need your help, and
three suggestions for creating more systemic change.

One Reason Why Our Economy Needs to Change

Our economy lacks humanity.

It seems ironic that a social construct meant to serve humanity lacks humanity.

Why is it that net worth of White families is 10 times greater than Black families? Why, after stealing their land, have we forced Native Americans into the highest poverty and unemployment rates, and lowest educational attainment of any minority group? Why since the 1970s has the top 5% experienced the greatest growth in income of any class? Why does economic status have to be a risk factor for one's health, as we see COVID-19 disproportionately hurting our impoverished Black and Latino communities? Why do people with disabilities experience higher



rates of poverty, unemployment, food insecurity, and being underbanked compared to adults without disabilities? And why are there more than 23 million self-storage units in the U.S. for extra junk, while over 10 million people are in need of housing assistance and over 550,000 are homeless? Does our economy choose to house junk over people?

As social workers, we know that economic status largely determines one's access to resources, like well-paying jobs, nutrition, education, health care, and social capital. What's particularly tragic is how our economy's inequalities hurt children. Poverty causes toxic stress and has been shown to

significantly impact a child's emotional regulation and neural functioning through adulthood, in addition to putting them at an increased risk of having ACEs (adverse childhood experiences). ACEs predispose children to mental health issues, learning disabilities, substance abuse, trauma, and chronic illnesses, which in turn are often compounded generationally.

Another example of how our economy lacks humanity is mass incarceration. The U.S. considers itself a leader in human justice, yet we imprison more people than any country in the world in total population and per capita (over 2.1 million people incarcerated, a rate of 655 per 100,000). Our economy is instrumental in this injustice because we as a nation have chosen to criminalize poverty. The 13th Amendment was supposed to abolish slavery, but instead it just replaced slavery with incarceration and the convict leasing system, fuelled by racism, economic interests, and Black Codes that criminalized Black men for being poor or unemployed.

Ironically, after another civil rights victory — the Civil Rights Act of 1964 — President Nixon began the "tough-on-crime" and War on Drugs era that President Reagan and future administrations continued. Our government and elected prosecutors treated drug use as a crime, rather than a public health issue (especially considering the 1955 mental health deinstitutionalization aftermath, despite good intentions), and they didn't see that participation in the illegal economy (e.g. drug dealing) is largely the result of people being excluded from the legal economy.

In New York City districts today, research shows that when poverty increases, incarceration increases. Our unjust economy not only affects impoverished communities but all of us. For example, our law



enforcement is put at a greater danger every day due to the violence and crime that results from the social volatility and deprivation our economy creates. If Black and Blue Lives Matter, our economy needs to change.

Two Reasons Why We Need Your Help Democracy.

I love your democratic nature. You decentralize power. With you, we don't have to rely solely on politics for social change. Dollars are unbiased. \$1 = \$1. Companies depend on consumers to survive, whereas politicians once elected can be much less dependent on voters or bogged down by bureaucracy. You can be a tremendous advocacy tool for social workers, community organizers, and activists.

B Lab, the nonprofit leading the movement of business as a force for good, has a Vote Every Day campaign highlighting that we don't have to rely on just our ballot to vote: We can vote every day with our dollar. Whether it's whom we choose to buy from or whom businesses choose as their suppliers, we have great

power collectively. State governments and municipalities can also vote with their large budgets and contracts. We saw an example of this during the Dakota Access Pipeline Protests, when Seattle City Council divested its city's finances — totalling \$3 billion — from Wells Fargo, because Wells Fargo was one of the banks financing the pipeline project.

Socioeconomic mobility and reparations. You allow for socioeconomic mobility and incentives in ways in which more controlling economic systems cannot. They encourage us to pursue improvements, entrepreneurship, and improve our quality of life. As for reparations, our economy has yet to allow for the flow of resources commensurate with our civil rights victories. In addition to generating public funding and reinvesting tax revenue in communities (like Evanston, Illinois, is doing with tax revenue from recreational marijuana sales), capitalism has the power to unlock the injustices and imbalances bound up in our current economy.

Three Suggestions for Systemic Change Change ownership structures.

Our economy is feudalistic. Our economy's tragic flaw is how ownership is structured across the private sector. How the economy is owned creates the massive overabundance, scarcity, and undemocratic exploitation we see. Fortunately, there are alternative for-profit ownership structures that can greatly shift wealth and power within our economy. One of the most proven models is a cooperatively-owned business (aka cooperatives or co-ops). Cooperatives are truly democratic organizations — one vote per employee, with business surplus (e.g. profits) shared equitably. One of our country's largest worker cooperatives is Cooperative Home Care Associates (CHCA). This Bronx-based Certified B Corporation has over 2,000

employees, over 1,100 employee owners (90% of whom are women of color), around \$65 million in annual revenue, and a CEO-to-lowest-paid-worker ratio that peaked at 11:1 in 2006 (versus the average being 405:1 for all other businesses in New York).

There are many ways to create more cooperative models in the economy. When owners of a business are looking to retire or sell, they can sell the business to their workers, as did the founders of day care center A Child's Place. Owners can convert to a cooperative once they realize the benefit of giving employees a stake in the company, as did Martha's Vineyard construction firm and B Corp South Mountain Company. There are many organizations helping form cooperatives, like The Working World, and a growing number of municipalities, like New York City and Madison, Wisconsin, are providing funding and support services for cooperatives.

Another ownership option is an ESOP (employee stock ownership plan). Companies with ESOPs are similar to worker cooperatives in that the employees are the owners of the company. Employees of ESOPs have on average more than double the amount of retirement funds compared to workers nationally, and report greater employment stability. In addition, employee-owned companies experience a 4%–5% increase in productivity on average. They also enable workers to gain wealth in the event of acquisition. We saw this with the B Corp New Belgium Brewery, which was 100% employee-owned prior to being acquired — allowing the employees to gain significant wealth from the sale.

Changes in ownership may take time, but an immediate change any company can make is establishing fair compensation ratios.

In 2018, CEOs earned 278.1 times more than the typical worker in their industry. In 1980, this number was only 33.6. By creating a national standard for compensation ratios between the highest paid employee and lowest paid employee of a company, let's say 10:1, we could see a dramatic shift in wealth that builds a strong middle class again and lifts millions out of poverty.



Create new economic incentives.

We need to evolve how businesses view their bottom line and revenue streams. To start, we must hold businesses accountable for their externalized social and environmental costs—such as product end-of-life landfill contribution, income inequality, unequal representation—beyond talk of a carbon tax. This will involve complex quantification, reporting, and regulation, but is possible. Measuring tools already exist that can assist with this process, such as the B Impact Assessment, which allows us to quantify and qualify a company's social and environmental performance.

Once we make social and environmental costs relevant, companies will be incentivized to make the appropriate changes or seek entrepreneurs to help them — opening new markets.

Another market opportunity to unlock is government expenditures. Take, for example, housing assistance. In 2018, our federal government budgeted an estimated \$19.4 billion for its most popular housing assistance program, Housing Choice Vouchers (serving approximately 2.2 million households). We can encourage entrepreneurs to reduce housing insecurity by having the government compensate them with payments commensurate with annual reductions in housing assistance demand. An example is the U.K.'s Peterborough Social Impact Bond, a program that reduced recidivism rates for people who had been incarcerated while also creating a return on investment for funders of the program commensurate with the recidivism-related cost savings for the government.

Hire more social workers in businesses.

Businesses play a vital role beyond providing products, services, and employment. Businesses have the potential to rehabilitate people and entire communities. They can help people with disabilities overcome societal limitations, help people overcome poverty, and help people reintegrate into society with dignity.

Social workers can help businesses transform into this powerful community resource from the inside out — creating empathic and inclusive workplaces through an understanding of mental health, social justice, human development, colonialism, white supremacy, patriarchy, systemic racism, microaggressions, mass incarceration, histories of oppression, intersectionality, the spectrum of identity, and other important aspects of the human experience (ramble intended).

Every year, U.S. companies spend \$8 billion on diversity and inclusion trainings.

Although there's a place for consults and trainings, having social workers within organizations as daily advocates for employees would enable more durable and adaptive inclusivity practices. They can be in human resources, marketing, engineering, management — it doesn't have to be an explicit social work role. This will also have a positive impact on the bottom line, as research shows that high sense of belonging in the workplace increases employee job performance by 56% and reduces turnover risk by 50%. In addition, social workers bring a unique set of skills to a business, including individual/group counseling, advocacy and community organizing, policy formation, research, and systems thinking.

U.S. Capitalism, it's remarkable all that you've fostered: economic growth, technological breakthroughs, advances in medicine, incredible supply chains. These accomplishments, however, have come at the cost of injustices, like genocide, slavery, community violence, disease, poverty, and global warming. We can do better; we can progress without injustice if we want to.

Love,
Social Work

EDITOR'S NOTE: The opinions expressed here by Impakter.com columnists are their own, not those of Impakter.com.



MY FIGHT

*My first step in this world,
Made my parents swallow blood.*

*Born as a girl bought happiness on my face,
Everyone was sad in that phase.*

*Unaware of the fact that I was sold,
I cried but became more bold.*

*Sent to a place like bird into cage,
No one ever bothered about my age.*

*Tears did roll from my eyes,
But everyone was as cold as ice.*

*To play with me for fun was their aim,
I was the one who suffered this dreadful pain.*

*Wanted to live but not in this ditch,
Fear of poverty did lower my pitch.*

*Freedom is a thing which my country has gained,
Then why people like me are still bound in chains?*

*Please save me before its too late,
Now my patience has broken, and I can't wait*

*I am not the only one but there are many more,
I don't want other innocent ones to ever knock at this door.*

By: Amanpreet Bhangu

I am extremely passionate about the things around me. I want to write about everything that I encounter. I want people to think about the stuff that randomly exists, and no one ever noticed. I believe there is always a beginning to the end.



— CANADIAN —
ASSOCIATED CHAMBER OF LADIES





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The Lifefootnotes

*Flamed red was the horizon
Cold untouched the sky*

*Cosmic were the fantasies
Terrestrial my truth*

*Doomed was the dusk
Leafless nude my meltings*

*Insurgent was the heart
In surrender my breaths*

*Septic was a Soul
Still the surroundings*

*Mystic was the night
Mundane the moon*

*Blooming were the sighs
Unheard my cries*

*Empty were the bowls
Drunk the eyes*

*Wounded were the passions
Yet playful the pulses..*

*Filled were the footnotes
Blank the folios ...*

~ Ihtisham Qayum

*Ihtisham Qayum belongs to Swat Valley,
a hilly region in the north west of Pakistan.*

*He works as resident physician at
Khyber Teaching Hospital
Peshawar, Pakistan.*



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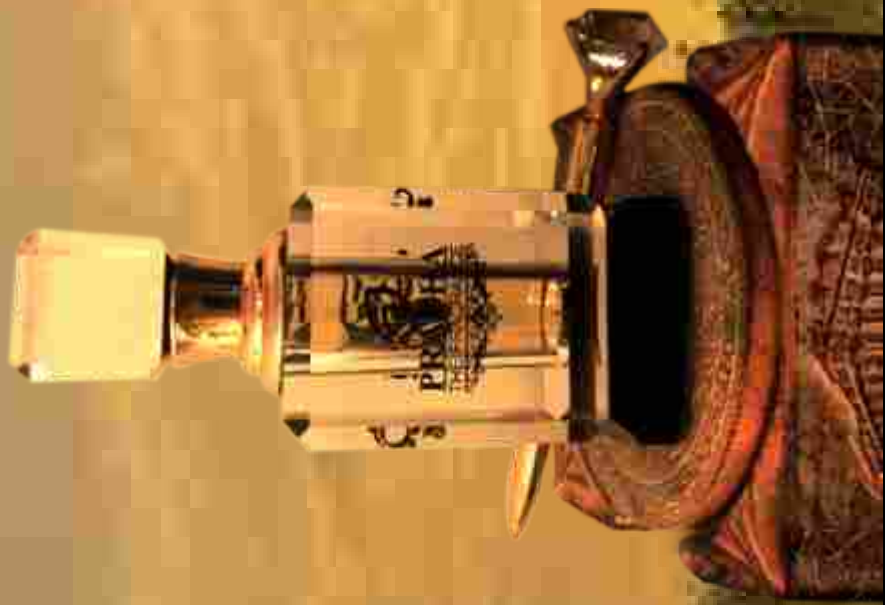


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THE FRAGRANCE 





PRABHA
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The image is a vertical collage. At the top left, a woman's face is shown in profile, looking down, with a large, glowing orange and yellow flower behind her. Below this is a square box with intricate carvings and a golden dagger resting on top. To the right is a dark, textured perfume bottle. In the center, the text 'PRABHA THE FRAGRANCE' is displayed in a white serif font, with a decorative flourish underneath. At the bottom, another woman's face is shown in profile, looking up, with a large, glowing pink and white flower behind her. The overall color palette is warm, featuring oranges, reds, and browns.




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A perfume bottle with a decorative stopper is the central focus, resting on a red, intricately patterned surface. The bottle is clear with a gold-colored stopper and a decorative black floral emblem on the front. The background is a blurred, ornate interior with blue and gold tones.


PRABHA
THE FRAGRANCE

