

A DROP OF INK

“Fools are my theme, let satire be my song!” claimed the quill of the ‘Childe’ of passion, as Byron awoke one day to verse, and the next, for freedom. The Romantic Age gave literature the impetus to make it grow in a plethora of varieties, and George Gordon Byron’s words blazed aflame with Romantic vision.

The English Department of Loreto College commemorated the 188th Death Anniversary of Lord Byron on 21st May, 2021, with an objective to celebrate the poet, his verse, and his life. The students were guided by their professors, which enabled them to remember the bard in many different ways. The competitions and events drew many students from across departments and years, who paid their homage to the poet through their words, poems, and recitation.

As a part of the event, students were invited to participate in a Poetry Writing competition on 15th May, 2021. The topics for the competition were provided on the very same day, at 4 PM. The students were asked to write on the topics “I Had a Dream”, or “The Lava of Imagination” within an hour. The submission group flooded with haikus, free verse lyrics and sonnets written by Aradhana Saha from the Economics department, Cresida Chatterjee from the History department, and Prakriti Basu, Sunanda Basu, Snidhi Dhar, Sanjana Khullar, Somoshree Palit, Aishi Saha from the English department. Sakshi Salil Chavan from the 3rd Year English department, Harsha Dwivedi from the 2nd Year English department, Rishita Das from 2nd Year Post Graduate department, and Vasundhara Saha also participated in the celebration with their poetry.

The results of the Poetry Competition were declared on 18th May. According to the judge, Professor Julie Mehta, “The submissions were of a very high standard. There was much passion and engagement in the writings.” Sakshi Chavan and Vasundhara Saha were the joint winners in Haiku, while in the category of Free Verse lyric, Harsha Dwivedi and Prakriti Basu claimed the title of the joint winners. A special mention was made of the “ambitious and impressive” sonnet by Somoshree Palit.

The celebration commenced on the evening of 21st May, at 3 PM with an inauguration speech by Dr. Sumita Banerjee. Seamlessly anchored in a very organized manner by Srestha Dutta, the first presentation, “Mad, bad, and dangerous to know : a brief introduction to the life of Lord Byron” – was handled skillfully with an aesthetic PowerPoint by Shrestha Paul and Ritupriya Samanta. This was followed by the recitation competition of Byron’s famous poems. The event was judged by Professor Sulagna Chattopadhyay. The participants, Debadrita Ghosh, Adrija Chatterjee, Ritupriya Samanta, Shreshtha Paul, Srestha Dutta, and Somoshree Palit from the first year, and Kanika Khetan from 3rd Year English department offered their very own understanding and rendition of the poems they recited.

Debosree Manna read out a short poem she had written, which played with the concept of “Identity.” What followed next was an audio play, “The Banished Prince”, written and directed by Somoshree Palit, which explored the last days of British Romantic poet, John Clare, and Lord Byron. Mandira Acharyya as Dr. Thomas Pichard, Bhagyasri Das as John Croaker, K. Ishanya as Teresa Guiccoli, Debashrita Banerjee as Alexandros, Sanjana Khullar as Fenwick Skirmshire and Somoshree Palit as both John Clare and Lord Byron made the evening stand still as “I felt myself get involved in the play,” said Professor Mangala Chakraborty. John Clare had come to think of himself as Lord Byron during his last days, and this was portrayed by the students in their play, where Lord Byron himself affirms the universality of “all the bards who were born and all the bards to come, as all of them are Byron, and I am but all of them, all of them.” Dr. Banerjee commented, “Congratulations for combining Clare with Byron in your Creative Presentation.”

“It is a smorgasbord of creativity” commented Professor Julie Mehta, as Professor Chattopadhyay announced the names of the winners in the recitation competition. Somoshree Palit, Kanika Khetan and Srestha Dutta ranked first, second and third respectively, as the evening came to a close with a poem by Aishi Saha, “The cot of death smiles at me and offers no dire sentence.”

The outcomes of the event were many. The students had planned for the event with an academic objective in mind, with an aim to learn more about Lord Byron, and to hone their creative skills in writing and recitation. The play raised a question, as said by Professor Chakraborty; whether the artist must be separate from his art, or does life of the artist contaminate his art. Sakshi Salil Chavan found “liberty as a fleeting vision” in the entirety of the event conducted.

Lord Byron had wanted his autobiography to become his legacy, long after he had fallen, in his war for the Greek independence. They had burnt those pages down, whether in vengeance or fear is unknown.

Yet, Lord Byron is that formidable force that shall have no ashes. The students offered him the exaltation deserved by martyrs : he was the sinner redeemed the moment he held that sword.


“The pen is not mightier than the sword, sweetheart. Pens don’t win wars, and swords don’t write poetry. Mighty is the hand that knows when to pick up the pen, and when to pick up the sword,” proclaimed ‘the banished Prince’. The poet might have then smiled down, in scathing remembrance of the irony of the burnt legacy!

**"And the icy earth
Swung blind and blackening
In the moonless air..."**

A Tribute to Byron on his 188th Death Anniversary

EVENTS :

- Recitation Competition
- Tribute to Lord Byron
- Book Cover Designing Competition
- Haiku & Sonnet Writing Competition



Date : 21st May, 2021

Recitation Competition

Choose from these poems :

- 1) There is Pleasure in the Pathless Woods (Without a grave, unknelt, uncoffined and unknown)
- 2) Darkness (upto 'And that was Death')
- 3) So we'll go no more a-roving
- 4) She walks in Beauty
- 5) When we two parted
- 6) To Inez
- 7) Song of Saul
- 8) Maid Of Athens

Time Limit : 2+1 minutes

- Poems recited should strictly adhere to the time limit, or the participant might be disqualified.
- The poem you choose to recite must be informed in the group prior to the final day.
- Poems that are recited must have been written by Lord Byron.
- Your Name, Year, and Department Name must be mentioned before starting the recitation.



Haiku & Sonnet Writing Competition

Topics will be given on 15th May

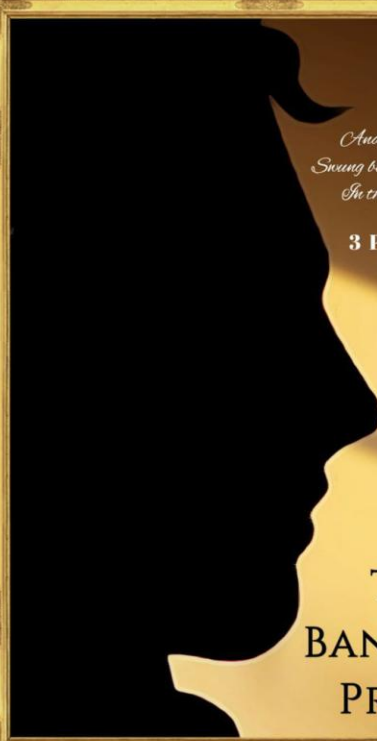
- The Rules and Regulations for both forms of poetry should be strictly adhered to.
- Your poems should be submitted on 15th May, an hour after the topic is given.
- Please submit in a PDF file.
- Your Name, Year and Department should be clearly mentioned in the PDF file.



*And the icy Earth
Swung blind and blackening
In the moonless air.*

3 PM - 5 PM

**THE
BANISHED
PRINCE**



TO BYRON

(In Memory of Lord Byron's birthday 188th Death Anniversary)

Byron! Had I but been a blackthorn, yew,
May be your burnished sheath, O soldier brave!
What I desire – O if you but knew:
Held by you, felled by you, - aye by your grave.
Roar! Roar! As waves slaughter the fallen wave
And shatter and shatter the ruthless sky –
Childe, teach me, preach me, bewitch me to
crave:
My bard, preach me how to swallow the sky!
The way you knew your lover's tender sigh,
Did you know your quill would become a
knife?
O if this is a dream, aye passers-by,
May my blood awake to Byronic life.

Hyperion! In freedom I see your face –
O who says in graves one cannot embrace?

Somoshree Palit
First Year, English Honours,
Loreto College.

HARSHA DWIVEDI

SECOND YEAR

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

I HAD A DREAM

I HAD A DREAM, WRENCHINGLY REAL
THAT YOU GAVE ME THE MOON
AND I COULDN'T HELP BUT LOOK AWAY—
THE BLINDING WHITE SEARED
MY SWIFTLY BRIMMING EYES,
THE WORN FLESH OF MY YEARNING HANDS SIZZLED,
MY BEING WAS ECLIPSED BY ITS SHEER EXPANSE—
NOTHING BUT A PAINED DOT,
BATHED IN ITS MAGNIFICENCE.
IT WAS A GIFT TOO GREAT TO BEAR—
BUT YOU TETHERED IT AT MY FEET
WITH SILVER STRINGS,
UTTERING SILVER WORDS
THAT HELD ME ALOFT LIKE SILVER WINGS,
WITHOUT WHICH I WOULD HAVE SURELY SUNK
ALL TOO SLOWLY BENEATH THE MOON SOAKED GROUND
BUT THEN YOU LEFT ME WITH THE MOON
AND TOOK ITS WARMTH WITH YOU.
I LONGED FOR THE DAYS
IT WOULD LOVINGLY MELT MY WANING SKIN,
AND SET MY DREAMS OF LOVE ABLAZE.
BUT I WISH I HADN'T STOOD SO CLOSE—
FOR IT BURNT MIRRORING CRATERS
INTO MY FRAGILE HEART.
THE LIGHT IT EMANATED NOW WAS COLD AND CRUEL;
LURID BEAMS PLUNGED INTO THE VOIDS OF MY SOUL
AND BECAME THEM,
TO ETERNALLY FREEZE LOVE'S OLD WOUNDS IN PLACE.
I WISH YOU HAD GENTLY PLACED THE MOON
ON MY MEAGRE FORM BEFORE DEPARTING—
SO I MAY BE CRUSHED TO UTTER OBLIVION
BY WHAT I TREASURED MOST DEARLY.

Haiku Submissions

- **The Lava Of Imagination**

Ruby-flared vision—
Mold that fluid thought quickly,
before it's granite!

(Transcript: Ideas that go uncared for, evaporate quickly. It is important to nurture and manifest them before you forget about it!)

- **I Had A Dream**

toasted skins, bandaged—
yearning to be kissed out of
an endless nightmare.

(Transcript: The idea of wanting to wake up with someone so that you'd finally have a good sleep, feeling safe & secure, knowing there's someone who will be by your side through it all. The feeling of not having to fight alone after all, and accept love because you deserve it.)

— Sakshi Salil Chavan
English Hons (3rd Year)

Name: Prakriti Basu
Year: First Year
Department: English Honours.

I had a dream

A lilac sky and a sun obscured
By clouds that swim too slow,
Awaken the sleeping spirit inside
That in slumber refused to grow.

Yet when the spirit awakes,
It starts to dream, weaving its
Passions - familiar and strange.
A myriad of colours and fantasies,
All woven into the fabric of the dream divine.

As Sir Time gallops, extinguishing sparks -
That pose a threat on his way
The spirit begs, "Have mercy, Good Lord!
My dream is the fire to keep me warm,
To help me breathe on the darkest dawns"

Seeing no spark, but a flickering flame,
Sir Time decides to call it a day.
And so the spirit awakened by the lilac clouds
Had an invincible dream, that knew no bounds.