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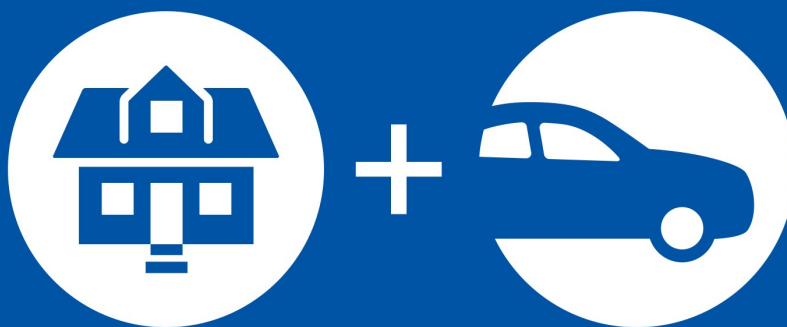
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## Vol. 11- Annual Magazine

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Cover art courtesy: Atreyee Dey

Hello and Welcome to Somerset Bengali Association's (SBA)  
Saraswati Puja 2019

It seems as if it was just yesterday that SBA organized its first 'ghoroa' Saraswati pujo for a dozen families. This is our twelfth year of organizing Saraswati Pujo and I feel immense pride in the fact that we are now a strong community of over 175 families. SBA has grown into a closely knit extended family that stands together in good times and bad. We continue to extend a warm welcome to families moving into the area to join the Bengali community.

Over the past decade, SBA has expanded its cultural offering to much more than the annual Saraswati Pujo. Last April, SBA hosted its first Poila Boishakh event to celebrate the Bengali New Year, the annual picnic in summer 2018 where we gorged on delicious food and enjoyed a day of fun and Diwali Party held in November 2018 was a huge success with music, dance, competitions and a sumptuous menu. SBA promises to continue to organize cultural and educational events for the Bengali diaspora in New Jersey and look forward to seeing you at all our future events.

Children have always been the driving force behind everything that we do. SBA primarily aims to introduce our culture and heritage to our kids in a way that is meaningful, relatable and enjoyable. SBA provides a forum that helps them make new "best friends forever" by participating in all our events and activities throughout the year.

In 2017, we started a philanthropic initiative "SBA Cares" to give back to society in a tangible, meaningful way. SBA members volunteered their time in foodbanks, and also organized a food drive. In 2018, SBA launched an annual merit scholarship in Bridgewater Raritan School district. SBA hopes to establish its charitable footprint in New Jersey.

We sincerely thank our participants, program directors, members, grand patrons and sponsors for their unwavering support. Without their patronage, our survival and success would not have been possible. With each passing year, our bond and our seamless teamwork continues to make this event bigger and better than ever. For further details about our events or becoming a member, please visit our website and Facebook page.

Have a happy, healthy, prosperous and safe 2019.

- Soma Choudhury, Probir Dhara, Indrajit Ghosh, Mitushi Banerjee  
Niloy Jana, Suchismita Bagchi, Ashish Das

# সমসেট বেঙ্গালি অসোসিয়েশন

## Saraswati Puja - February 2019

**Officiating Priest:** Arkendu Chatterjee

**Event Manager:** Indrajit Ghosh

**Puja Arrangements: Lead: Ratnanjali Dutta** Anindita Ghosh, Arkendu Chatterjee, Arunima Kuilla, Doel Ganguly, Dolon Mukherjee, Hiya Banerjee, Indrani Moitra, Ishita Chaudhuri, Lopamudra Das, Lopamudra Mukherjee, Madhumita Banerjee, Ranja Bhattacharya, Sangita Chakravarty, Sangita Dutta, Sreyashi Samaddar, Suchismita Bagchi, Suparna Bakshi, Suparna Das

**Cultural Committee: Lead: Niloy Jana,** Achintya Pal, Arindam Kuilla, Bikramaditya Mukherjee, Chitra Srinivasan, Dibyendu Chatterjee, Ishita Chaudhuri, Jayanta Das, Ranjana Sanyal, Soumi Jana, Sourav Banerjee, Subhrojit Dutta, Suchismita Bagchi, Surajit Deb, Tanay Talukdar, Sangita Dutta

**Food Committee: Lead: Ashish Das,** Arkendu Chatterjee, Hiya Banerjee, Jayanta Das, Satabdi Chowdhury, Supriyo Guha

**Fundraising & Vendor Management: Lead: Probir Dhara,** Bibhas Mitra, Mitushi Banerjee, Niloy Jana, Soumi Jana, Subhrojit Dutta, Sumita Dhara

**Guest Relations & Registration: Lead: Indrajit Ghosh,** Abhishek Banerjee, Achira Ghosh, Chitra Srinivasan, Debesh Chakraborty, Mitushi Banerjee, Rahul Ganguly, Somesh Choudhury, Soumendu Charkaborty

**Facilities Management: Lead: Chanchal Banerjee,** Bikramaditya Mukherjee, Chayan Mazumder, Debanik Chatterjee, Dibyendu Chatterjee, Joydip Chakraborty, Krishnendu Goswami, Probir Dhara, Rohan Bhattacharya, Somesh Choudhury

**Magazine Production:** Achira Ghosh, Mitushi Banerjee, Somdip Datta  
**Photo and Video:** Bibhas Mitra, Niloy Jana, Probir Dhara, Shivant Krishnan

**Art and Venue Decoration: Lead: Sumita Dhara,** Jayanta Mazumdar, Namrata Thakur Bhattacharya, Rinku Chatterjee, Rohan Bhattacharya, Saumitra Bagchi, Shourabh Mukherji, Somesh Choudhury

**Promotions, Multimedia and Website: Lead: Mitushi Banerjee,** Indrajit Ghosh, Probir Dhara

## Diwali Party - November 2018

**Event Managers:** Chitra Srinivasan and Suchismita Bagchi

## Summer Picnic - June 2018

**Managed By:** SBA Team

Thanks to the many volunteers who made these events a success

SBA would like to thank their lifetime members and 75+ annual members whose participation makes every program special.

Abhishek and Moumita, Chanchal and Mitushi, Debesh and Sonali, Devi Prasad and Soma, Indrajit and Malini, Kris and Chitra, Krishnendu and Sangeeta, Niloy and Soumi, Probir and Sumita, Rahul and Doel, Somesh and Soma, Subhrojit and Ratanjali



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Dibyendu and Sudipta  
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Prasun and Manjari

Prithwiraj and Sreyashi  
Prithwiraj and Darshana  
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# The Great War

Aryaman Das

It was the year 2476. The world is not how most people remember. As humans fought their own scuffles, they were blind to the world around them. They did their own undoing as when a nuclear power plant exploded, many species gained a mutation, giving them sentience, and enhancement of their abilities. Panthers could camouflage to fit with anything, and could move faster than lightning. Cockroaches were virtually indestructible, and dragonflies aced the skies. They had used their power to compete with man, and enslave weaker creatures. They possessed the only thing that had set mankind apart from animals.

Even though they were sentient, they still had their wild instincts. They had taken over Earth as we knew it. Most people have been forced into slavery for animals, and most others were dead. Only a few free groups survived, and even fewer of them had hope. I am Shane Bell. I lead a group known as the Alliance.

We had been walking to find a place to camp. The sky was red, as always. We hurried onward, not wanting to be caught by the apes. The apes dictated the region that we traversed in. They ruled with an iron fist. Despite the dangers, the Alliance unites many downtrodden people and species, and fights the larger kingdoms, such as the panthers and the apes.

I gave orders to the different factions. We were about to face our biggest war. A war to finish it all! There would be no captives. It would be to kill, or be killed. Such is the way of our time. I rallied the groups. The flies would act as scouts, as they are difficult to hit. The bees and wasps would take out others by power in numbers. The tiger beetles would deliver troops. We set off to fight this war.

We approached the battlefield. There was red sprayed on the ground from previous wars. I turned to my troops and said "This is it. This is the last time many of us will walk the Earth. We are all that's left. We will soon join our friends and family, but before that, we must fight one last time." I turned to see the beasts closing in. "There will be no stories, no memories about us, but there will be freedom. We have one last job. We must protect what is right, fair, and just. Now is the

time to unleash what has been suppressed. We must fight till we strike victory. We must make a final stand. Fight, my friends, and know you are the greatest heroes that have ever been. It will be an honor to die fighting alongside you." We turned to the enemy, charging at us and let out a mighty roar.

Claw met claw as we slashed at the enemy with dagger, jaw, and fang. The enemy slowly reduced, but so did we. We could barely hear ourselves above the cries of war. The thing about war is that upon the battlefield, generals, commanders, and sergeants are the same. The two armies clashed endlessly. As the first few rays of the morning sun hit the ground, already darkened by blood, we could see. The Alliance had won. We looked upon the bodies of the slain, both of man and beast. We heard a small sound. And another! We looked up to see not the red, daunting sky, but dark clouds. We had not seen clouds since the explosion.

Just as the heavenly rain washed away the dark blood of warriors, the evil had been eradicated by the light. We knew this was the dawning of a new era. A time when the man and the beast alike; will rule the Earth. There would be no more wars. There would be no more bloodshed. There would be no more suffering. We would prosper, with the aid of one another. This would be the new world. This would be the new Alliance.



Birds by Aditya Das

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# The Waiting

Rupsa Jana

One week ago, the doctors performed my last surgery. Three days ago, I had suffered from a massive heart attack. Just thirty minutes ago, the nurse came to my bedside with another cozy fleece blanket.

"Hope you feel better Ma'am," she wished me kindly as she covered me up in the most comforting manner.

However, not even the young nurse's utmost compassion nor the warmth of the blanket could relieve my chest that writhed in agony, or my hands and feet which trembled in fear.

The End was near and yet, I wasn't ready.

Though my sore eyelids eagerly awaited their closing, my mind still seemed to wander endlessly through the forests of time, a stubborn child refusing to accept Fate's command.

For all these years I lived, never had I felt so lost. Confused! Alone!

In a desperate quest for peace, I scanned the blob-like faces of people who now assembled at my bedside. Finally, I found Him and focused on his shining almond-shaped eyes.

And then I remembered.

*My eyes search for Him in a sea of scrambling tourists.*

*My arms yearn for his clumsy, yet warm embrace.*

*My ears ache to hear his youthful voice again.*

*Twenty-three years ago, I had named him "Akash"- meaning sky in our ancient language, even though my love for Him is vaster than the sky.*

*In the minds of the people, he was a prospective engineering student who would soon journey seven thousand miles away through this same sky to a virtual paradise, in which lay the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. But to me, he was only a tiny bird with tiny wings soaring with ambition, which flew away from his nest - my protective arms - to a strange realm in the West. Five years later, this tiny bird was returning home.*

*At that very thought, my heart leaps with newfound jubilation. The giant windows that lined the waiting room through which one could see the enormous planes that carried people to edge of the universe, were clouded instead with images of my Akash. His signature plaid shirt with hints of luminous red and blue. His wrinkled, navy-blue jeans. His shy, innocent grin. His almond-*

*shaped eyes. His...*

*"Attention! Flight 104 has just arrived at gate 11B!"*

*The announcer's holler interrupted my slideshow of memories.*

*"That is Akash's gate! He must have arrived," I think.*

*My eyes rapidly shift their focus to the arrivals board to confirm the joyous news. His flight had arrived indeed!*

*Warm blood surges through my veins as my feet attempt to cling to my brown leather slippers, which threatened to jump out beyond reach. Akash would be here in any minute!*

*My aged eyes strain through my spectacles past the growing crowd in order to catch a glimpse of the arrivals gate. Minutes turn into hours, and yet no Akash had crossed the threshold. Beads of sweat dot my forehead as I repeatedly adjust the pleats of my new woven Sari that I had fancied for the occasion.*

*"Where is my Akash?" My heart clamors for answers. Suddenly, just as all hope is about to slip away from the clutch of my palms...*

*"Ma!"*

*My eyelids fluttered open, awakened from deep slumber. He was standing there, front and center. I smiled as His mellow call fiercely drove out the shrieking pains. After I had my fill of gazing at His heavenly face, my eyelids gently closed themselves. A blessed assurance.*

*Finally, my soul was lifted.*

*Lifted into the eternal light.*

## Flowers by Anya



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## Trip to Spain and Portugal

### Somdeep Nath

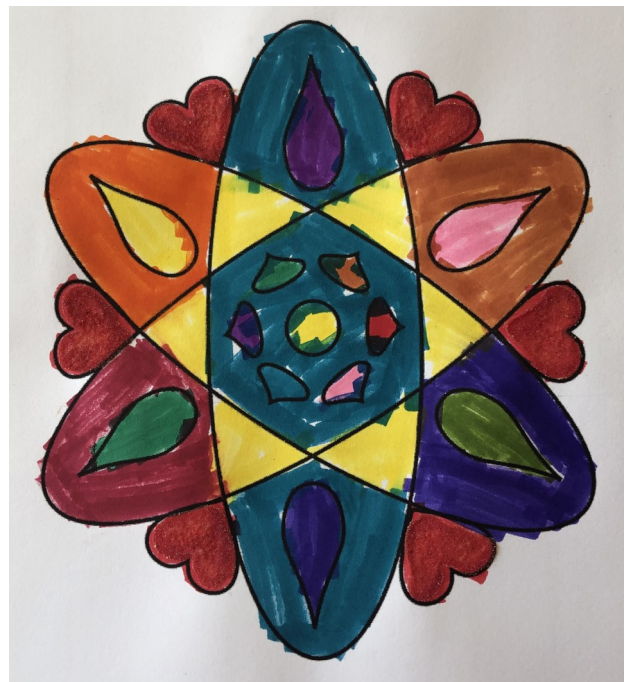
My trip to Spain and Portugal was in December 2018. I went with my family, my friends Sreyan, Amarka and Sahana and their family. My journey started in Spain. To be specific, it started in Barcelona. The hotel's name was hotel "Catalonia eixample 1869". The first place I went to is the Sagrada Familia. In case you didn't know what that means, Sagrada Familia means holy family. After that I went to a cathedral. That was the first day. The next day I went to Camp Nou. Camp Nou is the stadium of the soccer team FC Barcelona. After that I went to Montjuïc. Montjuïc is a cable car station. Then I went to another cathedral where they kicked us out because there was a private event going on.

Then I went to Magic fountain where the water was glowing!!!!Then I went to the hotel and slept. The next day first I went to Tibidabo an amusement park and a church on top of a mountain. After that I went to Arc de Triomf. Arc de Triomf is a big arch where street performers do soccer tricks, play music, or do flips on a hula hoop. Then I went to Barcelona Sants, the train station. Then I was off to Madrid. The hotel's name was "Hotel Regente". Then I went to bed. Then I went to Plaza mayor. Plaza mayor is a complex where you get meals, toys, and ornaments. Also my friend Amarka blew up his water balloon pig outside of there. Then I went to the royal palace of Madrid. It had armory, paintings, and a great view! Then I went to the temple of Tebot. It was an Egyptian temple. Then I went to Neptune fountain. That was cool. Then I went to the hotel and slept. The next day I went to the Prado museum. It was full of paintings. I almost fell asleep! Then I went outside of a bullfighting arena. In the evening I went to Madrid Atocha, the train station and caught a train to Seville. The hotel's name was Novotel.

Next morning I went to the Cathedral of Columbus. Sorry to tell you, Christians, but my friends were playing games on their parent's iPhone. Then I went to Alcazar. There was a big layer of sand there. Then I went to the Golden Triomf. The golden Triomf is a boat station. I went on the boat with my friends. Then I went to Plaza de Espana. I saw the flamenco dance there. We went to Plaza Nueva, lit fireworks and then went to the hotel and slept.

The next morning I went to Al Hambre in Granada. That is the fort of a Muslim king. I saw armor, towers, paintings, and more. The next morning I took a flight to Lisbon, Portugal. Next I took a plane to Porto. Then I went to the clerigos tower. The hotel's name was Sheraton Hotel. The next morning I went to the Ello bookstore. It is the second oldest bookstore in the world. Also a scene in The Chamber of Secrets was inspired by the bookstore. Then I actually climbed the Clerigos tower. The Douro River wasn't so much fun. Soon I went to a cable car station! The view was awesome!!!!Then I went to the hotel and slept. The next day I was on a train to Lisbon. The hotel was Marriott hotel. Then I went to the Sintra castle. I had to walk a lot. Also I got a wooden shield and sword. Then I went to the Belem tower. That was very scary!!!! Lastly, I went to Boca do inferno. That felt great. Then I took a flight back to America. My friends in the trip with me were Amarka, age 10,Sreyan,age 7,and Guria, age 5 ½.

### Rangoli by Arjun Mukherjee





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## Thank You SBA!

Soumyanil Jana

Hello SBA! I have to say, thank you so much! You have all these events. You make kids like me, unleash their spirit to dance, drama, or singing. I love to participate in these activities so much! One reason I like joining these programs is because of the rehearsals. In rehearsals, we can talk to people and make new friends. The rehearsals are so much fun! For example, in the kid's drama, some dialogues are so funny and we love to say those lines. I learned a lot of dancing in the SBA programs.

I also enjoy the snack time. The moms who help us out in the rehearsals and at the program are very nice. They help us learning drama lines and right expressions, wearing our costumes, finding food and juice. If we are confused with any direction, they help us understand.

On the Puja day, we pray to God, play with our friends, eat special food and have fun. The most important thing is I get to go on the stage and impress my parents. I enjoy performing in front of the audience. Thank you for all the fun. Dear SBA, I wish you more success in the future.

## Gun Control

Rohan Mukherjee

In light of recent events (What are the recent events? There have been several school shootings in recent times). There is an urgent need to do something to stop these school shootings. I believe gun control is the most significant step one can take to stop these shootings. I've noticed that there is a problem with gun control.

Recent studies have shown that one out of every 235 Americans will be murdered in the course of their lives. Also, 42% of Americans will be a victim of a violent crime. In most of these cases, criminals who buy these guns don't really get a thorough background check. Also, roughly 2,000 to 5,200 guns shows take place in the United States each year. Here is a source that shows where criminals usually get their guns from.

- 40.0% through an illegal/street source
- 37.4% of family or friends
- 7.3% at a retail store
- 2.6% at a pawnshop
- 0.8% at a gun show
- 0.6% at a flea market

From what I see, it sounds like a person could get their gun from anywhere they want and whenever they want. As you can see, we need better gun control measures because a lot of people are getting killed and injured each year in America. The people who sell these guns don't even check who they're selling the gun to. There are millions of places in America where you can get a gun. A lot of these guns should not even be available to the citizens.

Gun control is a giant problem in America. And playing games like Fortnite and Overwatch are not helping with. If gun control is enforced this world will be a better place.

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## My visit to Prado Museum, Madrid

Ria Mukherji

I recently travelled to Spain and I enjoyed it so much that I want to share one thing that I think is too memorable not to share with you. Ok, so my dad is an artist and he went out of the way to purchase us tickets to the most famous art museum in Europe- the Prado.

The Prado includes works of famous artists like Francisco Goya, Pedro Rubens, Pablo Picasso, Diego Velasquez, and El Greco! Now remember, these artists because they are going to be important in my write up. Yep, let's get started.

First is Pedro Rubens. Rubens was a very detailed oriented painter. He didn't use bold and thick brush strokes like some of the other artists, he simply used soft and delicate ones. His paintings gave a velvety feel. Next is Francisco Goya. Goya was your average bright painter until he became deaf. He couldn't muster up the strength to paint in bright tones anymore and he began to paint gloomy heartbreaking paintings, with black as the background color every time.

Out third painter is El Greco. Greco didn't paint horizontally like other artists do now days, he painted in longitudinal form. And because of his lengthy strokes the characters on his canvas had long faces and bodies. A new born baby in El Greco's painting was as tall as my sister and she is six. The last but not the least of the painters is Diego Velasquez, my favorite. Velasquez had all the details and flair in his paintings. One of his most famous painting I saw is called "Las Meninas" which had tons of tourists gathered around it.

So this was my share about Prado museum and I hope you go there someday.

## All About Books! Srishti Sengupta

Hello Everyone! Have you ever tasted a book- A chapter book, a story book, fairy tale book or a non-fictional book? Hey, I love books. It is so sweet as candy! It gives your brain an **intelligence switch**.

When you flip the pages of a book, you come to know new words, digraphs, verbs, plural nouns and lots more **about language**. I came to know all **facts** from hibernation to migration! I really want to get better in knowing the world of facts through reading books. A book made me laugh aloud like '**The Pigeon Finds a Hot Dog**' by Mo Willems. A book made me shiver as I read '**It's Snowing**' by Gail Gibbons. **Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs** made me so emotional! So my dear friends do you really know how **tasty are books?**

Story book has always been my **true friend!** It is kind to me through bright pictures, bubble words on a rainy day. I hug my book and sleep at night. I really cheer for the **authors** for their hard work to bring my true **friend home!** **So friends, always read a book in the morning without frowning and at night while sleeping tight!!!!!!**



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## Expedition Everest

Nirav Banerjee

Today was a very exciting day, it was the day I will be going on the ride, in Disney, Expedition Everest (the ride with the highest drop in Disney). At the time, I extremely scared and I really didn't want to go on the ride, but my dad and my brother went on it. So that kind of hinted to the fact that I had to go on it too. I was super nervous because if I read correctly in an article it stated that there is an 80-foot drop and you also go backward at a super-fast speed. This trip my friend, Shounak and I had decided to go on it together. But enough talking about the ride instead let us get on it.

Once we arrived at the park the nervousness levels started to drop because when we saw other people go on the ride it was actually a pretty small drop time wise. But when we got in the line that's when our hearts started pounding. We knew that there was no turning back once you're in the line you can't get out. After a while, we were at the gates and we were about to get on the ride. Once they opened the gates to board the ride, we boarded the ride Shounak and I in the front row, my dad and my brother in the back. The conductor at the ride with all the colorful buttons said "Good luck, have fun and enjoy the ride," as if he said good luck to make sure nothing happens to us. We jerked forward a bit then we started going. Now keep in mind that I have been on other roller coasters before but this one was the ultimate challenge. Before we started climbing the mountain, they tried to scare us a bit by having some fast parts and some fast turns. But that didn't scare me at all, the other roller coasters I've been on had that too.

We started climbing up the mountain about half way up; there was this open place where you could almost see the whole park. Every single ride! Once we got to

the top, we dropped a little and we started going super-fast until we came to a full stop. The tracks were broken in front of us I didn't know what they would do until we started rolling backward slowly at first. But after a while, we started to pick up speed until we started rushing backward, down back the way we came. Then we ended up in some sort of cave and stopped. I saw this shadow, it looked like a yeti I saw it break the tracks. After that, we started going forward again we took a sharp turn, then the train started slowing down but it didn't come to a complete stop. It looked like there was a drop ahead I was pretty sure it was a big drop but it wasn't. We went forward until "AHHHHHHHHHH!" everyone on the train screamed. It was that big drop that is 80 feet I told you about. At the bottom of the drop, the momentum kept going, we whizzed through another cave but at the very end I could make out something that looked like a YETI! A real-life living YETI! It was hanging from a branch, sticking out of the ice. Then before we knew it the ride was over we were back where we started.

We got out of the ride, my legs were shaking I could barely walk straight. We walked out of the ride I was shaking! I asked Shounak "Did you like the ride?" "Well umm," "It was scary, but I liked it!" He replied. Later that night I thought, today I stood up to my fears and went on Expedition Everest even though I knew I would be scared, but I stood up and completed the challenge.

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## Pujo in Kolkata

### Eeshika Bhattacharjee

I went to Kolkata for a pujo once in my life. It was Durga pujo. Some say that what seems like a big, important thing when you are younger, will barely matter as you get older. But after over one year the memories remain sharp. It was something I don't believe I can ever forget. When my parents said they had a surprise for me, the last thing I expected was an impromptu trip to India the next morning. That too, during Durga pujo!

The plane ride was the worst part. I sat against the window, waking my parents up because I saw a shape in the clouds! It was the last two hour stretch and I was restless. When the plane landed, I knew my aunt and both sets of grandparents were waiting for me. I tried to convince my parents to let me go outside and wait with all my family while my parents got our baggage. As usual, my parents said no!

Soon enough I was sitting in my grandma's house, marveling at the fact I was really there and not just dreaming. I felt that it was too good to be true. I would experience the traditional Durga pujo! Soon, I would find out just how good and just how true it really was!

Close your eyes and imagine the prettiest pujo you can. Now open them. The Kolkata pujo was even better in its own way. Everyone was shouting and talking and taking pictures. There was barely a person who didn't have a phone in hand or camera around his or her neck. Pandals were everywhere. A pandal is a temporary structure made out of bamboo, draped in cloth with beautiful patterns and/or images of gods and goddesses. Inside people were crowded around murtis or earthen idols of Goddess Durga. She was draped in a beautifully patterned sari made of silk with a lion at her side. Young children sat on their dad's shoulders for a better view. It was hot but people still came out to admire the pandals. If you thought that waiting in line to get inside the Statue of Liberty or the Empire State Building was annoying, then you haven't waited in line to get inside a pandal! People queue up since dawn and the waiting time reaches up to three hours! But everybody has a smile on their face! They will do whatever it takes. Nobody can frown in the festive atmosphere that Durga pujo creates! My dad

and aunt were with me, pointing things out. My dad told me stories about Goddess Durga and about how he used to go out with his family as a boy to do what I finally got a chance to do!

It began to rain but it was still hot. People still queued up at the entrances of pandals. The rain didn't seem to dampen the mood in the slightest! We bought my favorite flavor of ice cream and with a bag of butterscotch ice cream we ran back home in the rain, though the rain was soothing in the heat, despite it being October!

Now you know the beauty of the pandals during the day. It is even better at night. It was cooler and everything was lit up. We passed by booths and trees with strings of lights illuminating the festive crowds. Me and my dad skirted mud puddles that had formed in the past day's rain. Inside a pandal, a priest was giving out sweets and some boys were playing around with the mike on a platform. The gold threads on Goddess Durga's sari sparkled in the lights wrapped around nearby trees and poles. The festive air seemed to sparkle too!

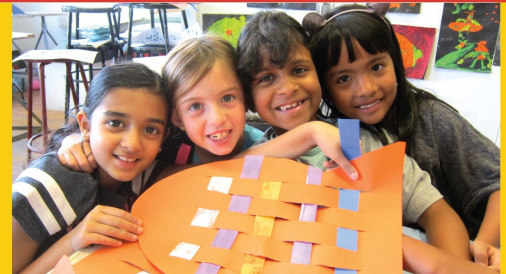
I have been to India multiple times. I love seeing my family, but this trip will forever stand out not only because of the beauty of the pandals but because of the memories I made with friends and family and the bonding that happened while walking through the bustling streets of Kolkata, where my roots will forever reside!

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# The Best Loss

Shounak Ghosh

Welcome back, how was your day at school?" my mom cheered.

"Meh", I replied almost falling to sleep. Now that's how every day goes for me, but today was hopefully going to be different, I thought, and it was!

"Ah", I said with refreshment as I was drinking a fresh cold cup of lemonade. It was a scorching day outside. It was also a Friday so I was happy to be back at home from school. After a quick snack, I got pulled to my TV like there was a black hole in my living room. I start loading in Fortnite. I sat comfortably hoping I wouldn't have to get up again. I soon then joined a game. I could hear my mom and my sister calling me but I'm too focused on the game and I just ignored them. Soon as the game starts, their voices start fading away. I could finally play the game in peace. I realized then that I forgot to turn on the fan. I didn't want to get out of my seat but it was incredibly hot so I had to. But when I stood up and started walking to the remote, it didn't let me and instead just moved my Fortnite character.

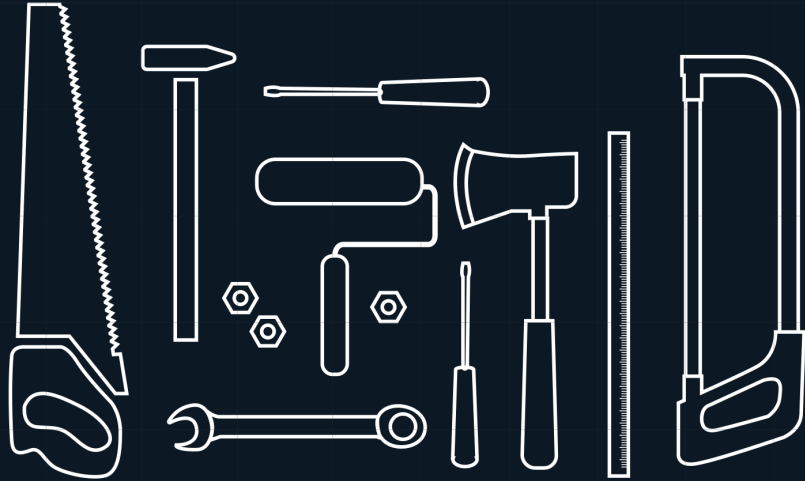
After moments of confusion, I realized that I was the Fortnite character! Most people would probably start hesitating and yelling, but I didn't and I just wanted to see how the game would turn out. All I was scared about was when I die. Would I die in real life, will I get any punishment at all, I thought. I just danced around in the starting island, where they collect enough people to start the game. Then my view changed, I was in a bus, a floating bus. The bus was very cramped and there were probably about 100 people in there. I was also holding a piece of paper, I looked at it. It looked like a map. I wanted to drop at Leaky Lake. I haven't heard of this place before so when the bus was near Leaky Lake, I jumped out the back. I could see a lot of people trying to jump here so I'm guessing everyone wanted to see what it was all about. From the top, Leaky Lake looked the same as it was before, the big house in the middle, the factories. I don't know why they changed the name from Loot Lake to Leaky Lake. Then as I got closer to the ground, I could see why everyone was so excited about it. The big house in the middle was floating! A massive vortex was pulling it up. I didn't know where to land on, the floating house, the bottom, or the factories. Everyone was going to the top

and I didn't want to get killed, so I went to the bottom. There was a lot of weapons and ammo. I was prepared, so I went to vortex. I didn't know what it was going to do, was it going to kill me. I took a risk and went in it. I started floating up.

This was the best thing I have ever experienced in my life. But suddenly I hit my head on something, I reached the top though. I could hear a lot of shooting and footsteps. I hid in the basement, but there was already someone there. I quickly built a wall, pulled out my shotgun and killed him. When he died a lot of stuff fell out of him, I picked up everything and hid. I didn't want to be over confident and die quickly. No one was coming into the basement so I slowly crept up the stairs and went into the house. I guessed most people would be flying around the vortex so I looted the house and got to the roof. Then I realized I needed to run, the storm was about to kill me. As soon I was safe, I hid in a bush. I saw 2 people fighting and I didn't want to join in because I would die immediately. When the match ended, the victor started healing and I just shot him down with a pistol. I stood still the rest of the game until there were only two people left including me. A few minutes of hiding in the very uncomfortable bush, I got out (I don't know how people stay in bushes so long). I didn't want to fight the last guy because he/she was probably a professional player or he wouldn't have come this far into the game, well except for me I was horrible at the game. Finally there was the last person building crazy and intimidating structures. It felt like I was playing hide-and-seek but and the enemy were the seeker, but when I was found, instead of dying figuratively, I would die literally. I thought he didn't see me, but a second after that, I thought he sniped me. I was so angry I wanted to break the TV. I don't know what I was lacking, strength or speed. Maybe it was my speed. I was never that fast in my life.

5 months later, I joined track, and after years of practice, I have gotten extremely fast and I was able to dodge everyone. I got a lot of wins over the years. I guess I learned my lesson, not to break TV's when you're angry and practice makes perfect. Everything was happy, well except for one thing... will I ever get back to the real world.





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## SBA Saraswati Puja 2019 Cultural Schedule

Start time	End time	Program Name	Director	Performers/Host
3:30 PM	3:35 PM	Introduction by MC		Soumi, Jayanta
3:35 PM	3:40 PM	Inaugural Song- "Saraswati Bandana"		Anasuya Dey
3:40 PM	3:50 PM	Mc and Sponsor Announcement		Soumi, Jayanta
3:50 PM	4:50 PM	Kids Dance Drama- Gupi Gyne Baagha Byne	Mitushi Banerjee	<i>More Details: Page 32</i>
4:50 PM	5:05 PM	President's Address and SBA Intro, Recognition of Volunteers		Soma Choudhury, SBA Board mem- bers
5:05 PM	5:40 PM	Jibonpurer Pothik	Malini Mazumdar	<i>More Details: Page 34</i>
5:40 PM	5:55 PM	SBA Recognition award, Drawing competition prize distribution		Soma Choudhury
5:55 PM	6:05 PM	Chena Achena Kobita	Probir Dhara	Probir and Ranja
6:05 AM	6:15 PM	SBA Care, Raffle winner		
6:15 PM	6:50 PM	Abozeshe - Shruti Natok	Banani Mukho- padhyay	Banani Mukhopadhyay, Keka Sirkar, Mithu Das, Shrabani Alo Nan- di, Sudipta Chattopadhyay
6:50 PM	6:55 PM	Mc announcement		Soumi, Jayanta
6:55 PM	7:25 PM	Adult Dance perfor- mance - Hey Krishna	Deepa Bhandari	<i>More Details: Page 30</i>
7:25 PM	7:30 PM	Mc announcement and Thanking Note		Soumi, Jayanta
<b>7:30 PM</b>	<b>9:00 PM</b>	<b>DINNER BREAK</b>		
9:00 PM	10:00 PM	Antakshari		Host- Soma and Niloy



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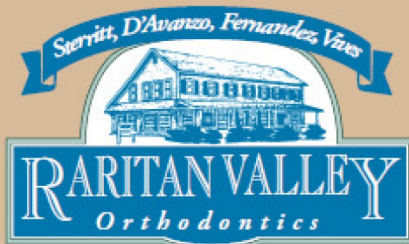
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## অবশেষে

### বনানী মুখোপাধ্যায়

আজ শ্রাবণীর খুউউউউউউব মন খারাপ। হবেনা? আজ সকালবেলা বাইরের ঘরে এসে শ্রাবণী দেখে তার সদ্য লেখা গল্পটা হাওয়া? মানে হাসি? ইশশ, এই প্রথম তার কোনও লেখা ছাপা হবে। বিকেলেই পাবলিশার আসবে লেখাটা নিতে, আর লেখাটাই কিনা দূম করে উধাও ??? এ দুঃখ রাখবে কোথায়?আমারই তো ডাক ছেড়ে কাঁদতে ইচ্ছে করছে।

আচ্ছা? লেখাটা কোথায় যেতে পারে ? লেখার তো আর পা গজায় নি যে সে হেঁটে হেঁটে বাইরে চলে গেল? আর যদি গিয়েও থাকে তাহলে এতক্ষণে তো কুকুরে চিবিয়ে তার বারো টা বাজিয়ে ছেড়েছে, উঃ আর সহ্য হচ্ছে না শ্রাবণীর। এত কষ্টের লেখা, এত ভাবনা চিন্তা করে লেখা, বেকার হল? বিকেলের মধ্যে আরেকটা লেখা সম্ভব নয়, তাহলে? এতদিন অপেক্ষা করার পর কোনও রকমে একটা পাবলিশার জোগাড় হলো তাও কিনা শুনু তে ই শেষ?

তোমরা কি বল? পূর্ণিমা কি ঘর ঝাঁট দিয়ে জমাদারের গাড়িতে ফেলে দিল? তাহলে তো এতক্ষণে সে কাগজ নানা বাড়ির নানা রকম নোংরায় একেবারে মাখামাখি হয়ে গেছে, তাইনা? আমাদের ভাবতে ই এত কষ্ট হচ্ছে, বেচারি শ্রাবণীর না জানি কত কষ্ট হচ্ছে।

এই লেখাটা নিয়ে কত কি ভেবেছিল সে, একটা না একটা পুরস্কার তো পেতোই, একটা "লেখিকা স্ত্রী" তো পেতো ই? শ্রাবণীর এখন চিঁকার করে কাঁদতে ইচ্ছে করছে, মাথার চুল ছিঁড়তে ইচ্ছে করছে।

ওর এখনো বিষে হয়নি, তাই চুল ছেঁড়া টা ঠিক হবেনা। তার চেয়ে তোমরা সবাই মিলে একটু ওর কাছে এসে খুঁজে দ্যাখনা যদি লেখাটা পাওয়া যায়? এস স্নীজ। তা নাহলে বেচারি হয়তো সুইসাইড করে ফেলতে পারে। সবাই মিলে চলে এসো কেমন? হয় হয়, এত দিনের পরানের ধন কিনা জমাদারের গাড়িতে ? নাহ, আর সহ্য হচ্ছেনা ।

After the tremendous success of the Antakshari program that was introduced last year, SBA decided to continue this popular program this year also. This program guarantees the endless fun and enjoyment in our cultural medley. Along with the selected groups, audience are also encouraged to take part to sing the right song and win multiple prizes.

The planning, rehearsals and challenges to create this program were no less exciting than our drama or dance program. The right songs and questions were diligently selected while making sure various era of Bollywood songs were well represented. A very strong technical team successfully sequenced the format and presentation. Also the hosts (Niloy Jana and Satabdi Choudhury) practiced rigorously perfecting the singing to right tune and correct usage of lyrics.

We encourage you to come back to the auditorium after eating our sumptuous dinner and sit back, relax get swayed by this must watch program and encourage the teams to a stupendous victory. We promise to bring back a smile on your face and challenge everyone's repertoire of songs.





# STARGLOW

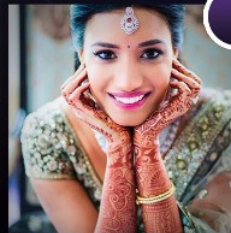
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# Hey Krishna!

*A dance medley based on the life and leela of Lord Krishna.*



**Choreography and Concept: Deepa Bhandari**

**Coordination: Suchismita Bagchi**

**Aarushi Kuila, Abantika Mukherjee, Aditi Dhara, Amrita Pal, Amrita Sutradhar, Anirban Bhattacharya, Anoushka Ghosh, Anushree Sutradhar, Ariyan Tripathy, Deepa Bhandari, Dolon Mukherji, Indrani Mitra Thakur, Komal Deb, Namrata Thakur Bhattacharya, Pranita Kundu, Priyanka Roy, Rashi Roy, Rashmika Majumdar, Ria Mukherjee, Ria Mukherji, Rinku Chakraborty, Rupsa Jana, Sangita Chakraborty, Shubham Kumar, Soham Kumar, Soma Mookherjee, Soumyanil Jana, Sreyashi Samaddar, Srija Majumdar, Subhashish Tripathy, Subhasree Banerjee, Suchismita Bagchi, Ujjayini Bagchi**

**Script: Atreyee Dey Narration: Aratrika Dey, Multimedia & Light: Mitushi Banerjee/ Suchismita Bagchi**

Krishna, "the all-attractive one," is the original, unique Supreme Person, the source of all that exists. He is the full reincarnation of the supreme god Vishnu, and is portrayed and worshipped in many ways: a God-child, a prankster, a model lover, a divine hero and the Supreme Being.

Our very own SBA young boys, young girls, teens and adults have put together a short dance program based on the early life of the mischievous Kanha, the beloved of Gokul, Vrindavan and us all.

It has been a hectic, albeit fun filled effectuation of the weekend rehearsals, the herding of kids and grown-ups together, the execution of steps, the coming together of the dances as a whole. Over chai/coffee, snacks, many a suggestions, harmless banter and genuine camaraderie, it has been a wonderful two months and the Hey Krishna team wishes to touch the audiences hearts with their riveting performances.

Hope we achieve just that!





Bengal has seen many changes. It suffered the tragedy of partition, had a deep scar of Naxal movement, and now because of globalization the society is going through a huge transformation. Still what hasn't changed in the Bengalis is their underlying love for poetry. The tradition and glory begun with Rabindranath Tagore has been successfully upheld by young poets of millennium.

This year Somerset Bengali Association is presenting you a new recitation performance 'Chena Achena Kobita' adorned with ensemble of four selective creations of different emotions by the famous poets from different era. We are amateurs, but passionate about poetry and recitation. This evening we hope to take you down your memory lane to the life we left in a small

# Chena Achena Kobita

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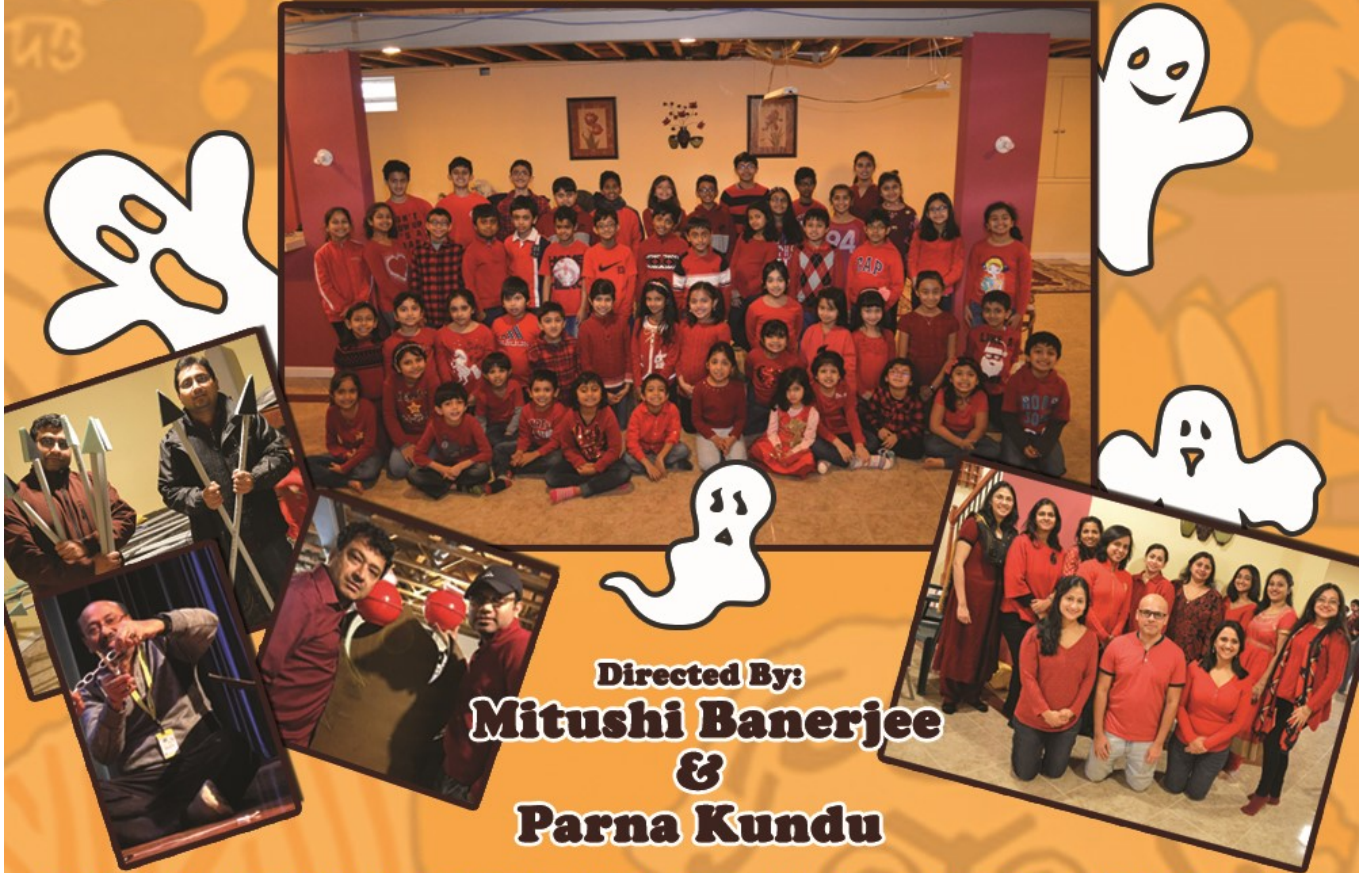
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# GUPTA BAGHA ERU



**Directed By:**  
**Mitushi Banerjee**  
**&**  
**Parna Kundu**

Aarish Mallick, Aarushi Kuila, Aaryan Roy, Abheek Dhara, Aditi Dhara, Aditya Das, Aishani Ghosh, Alina Mukherji, Amarka Kushary, Anaisa Roy, Anitej Das, Anshuman Das, Anshuman Roy, Anushree Sutradhar, Anya Sarkar, Arihaan Mallick, Arjun Ganguly, Aryahi Das, Ashmita Ghosh, Ayushi Goswami, Ayushmaan Mukherjee, Devjit Bhattacharya, Eamon Khan, Eeshika Bhattacharjee, Hiya Khan, Hritam Mukherjee, Isha Banerjee, Jeet Mazumdar, Mahika Maitra, Nirav Banerjee, Nishka Ghosh, Pranita Kundu, Perna Majumder, Prisha Mitra Thakur, Rashi Roy, Rashmika Majumdar, Reesha Mazumdar, Ria Mukherji, Ria Mukherjee, Rishaan Deb, Rishabh Biswas, Rishi Roy, Rishika Chatterjee, Riyanshi Bhattacharya, Rohan Ganguly, Roopkatha Bagchi, Shounak Ghosh, Shubham Kumar, Snesha Roy Choudhury, Soham Kumar, Somdeep Nath, Soumyanil Jana, Srishti Sengupta, Suhit Basu, Teeyasha Biswas, Tiasha Chakraborty

**STAGE MANAGEMENT:** Anamika Sain, Anuradha Das, Deepali Biswas, Doel Ganguly, Moumita Bhaumik, Sharmistha Basu, Sudipta Nath

**ART DIRECTION & SPECIAL EFFECTS:** Jayanta Mazumdar, Saumitra Bagchi, Somesh Choudhury

**PROPS CREATION:** Debanik Chatterjee, Krishnendu Goswami

**SOUND MANAGEMENT:** Anirban Bhattacharya

**MIC MANAGEMENT:** Somdeep Bhattacharjee

**LIGHT MANAGEMENT:** Chanchal Banerjee

**CHOREOGRAPHY:** Anoushka Ghosh and Dolon Mukherji

**CO-DIRECTION:** PARNA KUNDU

**SCRIPT, MULTIMEDIA AND DIRECTOR MITUSHI BANERJEE**

*If I had the space I would tell you about the hard work every child, from the 3 year old to the 14 year old put in, to learn a language, to master a dance step, to remember a dialogue, to be brave to get on stage. I would tell about the countless hours my crew devoted to managing 60 kids and getting them to perform, the time spent with my art directors enthusiastically coming up with special effects, the time my choreographers spent patiently teaching kids of all skill sets to dance. I would tell about hours of phone calls Parna and I spent planning this production. But space is limited and thoughts aplenty. So all I will say is THANKS to every single person who is a part of the production for bringing my vision to reality.*



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# Jibonpurer POTHIK



**SINGERS:** Anindya Das, Arindam Biswas, Bikramaditya Mukherjee, Chitra Srinivasan, Debapriya Mukherjee, Ishita Chaudhuri, Malini Mazumdar, Niloy Jana, Ranjana Sanyal, Ratnanjali Dutta, Satabdi Choudhury, Subhrojit Dutta, Sumita Dhara

**ACTOR:** Swapno Chaudhuri

**SCRIPT AND NARRATION:** Atreyee Dey

**MULTIMEDIA:** Chitra Srinivasan, Sibabrata Banerjee, Niloy Jana

**LIGHT** Surajit Deb

**SOUND:** Arindam Kuila

**DIRECTION:** MALINI MAZUMDAR

*Somewhere around Thanksgiving of 2018 we received the familiar email calling for participation in the cultural program for SBA's Saraswati Pujo 2019. Long before the emails went out, our hard working cultural director, Malini Mazumdar, had a clear vision of what she wanted to present this year. For the first time in the history of SBA Saraswati Pujo's vocal presentation, "Jibonpurer Pothik" is a production that uses various mediums- theatre, dance, various genres of Bengali songs and a projection screen on the stage to give it additional depth.*

*Jibonpurer Pothik is a story of a young boy's journey towards happiness and self - discovery. Tired of the routine humdrum and rules of life, he leaves his home. During his journey, he is distracted by different sights and sounds but carries on until finally he comes across a Baul (mystic minstrel). This encounter finally makes him realize that happiness and enlightenment dwell in his own heart.*

*Putting together a multi-dimensional show required hours of planning and painstaking labor. At the end of this two month journey, we have come together as a group, rehearsed diligently, argued and laughed with equal fervor, teased each other over pronunciation and not memorizing the lyrics and eaten a whole lot more than we should! We have discovered yet again that music creates a bond like none other. Jibonpurer Pothik hopes to immerse the audience in this journey and find itself richer for the experience.*



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## Mission Appetizer

### Abheek Dhara

“Agent Fish Sticks, can you read me? Over,” I whispered into my walkie-talkie.

“Agent Chicken Wings, loud and clear. Over,” my sister whispered into hers. We snuck through the tall grass until we were met by our enemy: The Fat Kid. He ate everything and anything that stood in front of him. We would have to defeat him for the better good of everyone.

“Agent Fish Sticks, you take the right flank, I’ll take the left. Over.”

“Copy that, Agent Chicken Wings.”

With that, we were off. The Fat Kid was on our radar. He was too content on his plate of gummies and chocolates to even notice the eerie silence around him. As I crawled forward, I heard a rumble behind me. “Where do you think you are going?” the mysterious voice asked.

Still not sure who the voice belonged to, I smirked and replied with utmost confidence, “Not towards you!” I raced off, with the unknown being on my tail. Turning on my walkie-talkie, I yelled, “Agent Fish Sticks! Code Red! Someone is chasing me! I need backup!”

“Don’t worry!” she started. “I’ll send the drone!” Soon after, I looked up while running and saw a drone coming down, and attached to it was an automatic gun. I smiled. This will show them. Turning behind a tree, I unstrapped the gun and started running again. Finally, after who knows how many minutes of running, I slowed down to a halt at the fence. Looking around, there was no escape. Turning around, I looked into the eyes of my follower.

“Who are you?” I asked.

“I am the Food King,” he replied. “The Fat Kid is a highly respected official in my court. I am here to protect him from people like you. Now, you should put the weapon down and come with me to the station.”

“Never!” I yelled. Running at him with my gun loaded, I started shooting. Before he knew it, the King was on the ground begging for the mercy of death. Running past him, I found more officers leaning against some cars. Without thinking, I charged out. “Back off!” I threatened. Unarmed, the officers back off, and I boarded a car and drove off. “Agent Fish Sticks, give me a read.”

“Agent Chicken Wings, it looks like we have an eye on

the target. The faster you get here, the sooner we can end this.”

“Great. I’ll be there in a few. Hold them off.” Putting the walkie-talkie back in my pocket, I drove towards The Fat Kid, who was about to take his first bite. Getting out of the car, I got on one knee, aimed, and shot the last gummy worm out of his hand.

“Yes! We did it!” Agent Fish Sticks and I said at the same time. Embracing, we heard another voice, coming from the house.

“Kids! The chicken wings and fish sticks are ready! Put the nerf guns away and put the drone and mini car in the garage. Make sure you wash your hands!”

Looking at each other, we smiled. Another day, saved!

## Lunch and Recess

### Shubham Roy-Choudhury

Lunch and recess period at school is a time where children can eat lunch and play outside. It is a time where children can talk and play with friends. The period feels way too short. In my opinion, it should be longer.

First of all, teachers grade papers during recess. Teachers take time to grade papers. More papers graded means less weekend work. Teachers would like to have less work on weekends, and students want to show parents the work they do.

Second, children get bored at school. More free time means fewer children bored. Children not being bored mean more participation from children. If children don’t participate, then teachers get bored because the same people participate each time.

A lot of times, food gets thrown out at lunch. This is because children don’t get time to eat. More time means more food eaten and fewer starving children. Starving children means a lot less participation from children.

Lunch and recess period is way too short. While some people might think that lunch and recess is long enough, I think for these reasons, it should be longer.

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# A PRISM OF GENERATIONS

Sinchita Sengupta

We all experience the smell of Science books especially that of Physics when we come across words like PRISM..... We steer our grey matter to recollect the rainbow colors emerging from the white light on the Prism! Well, I really do not want my readers to dwell into the gut churned, pencil nib chewed days of Physics challenges but rather dive to appreciate the beauty of the rainbow colors we can perceive through the spectrum of our new generation! Thanking the tradition rooted Somerset Bengali Association; I appreciate the effort and values that it has nurtured across years to the future generations on all festive occasions. Yes, spanning from the little ones of various inquisitiveness to the smart and independent school going youth all have earned a platform of appreciation and introspection of talent hunt. It really doesn't matter the topography or the climate to root hold ones tradition but what really induces cultural integration is a prism of foundation for talents for nurturing variant colors. That is SBA- Somerset Bengali Association- Bridgewater New Jersey a socializing hub.

As parents and mentors we share the role of teaching and giving to the younger saplings. The humming voice on the speakers, the rhythm through footsteps, and the

finger and arm movements coupled with suggestions and practice is the essence of traditional integration and generation liveliness. The colorful hues get radiant through the smiling faces of the bubbling team of dancers and actors. The tiny buds bloom out leaving scripts aside and vibrating their vocal cords for the drama practice. What an aura of festive smell! The stage partitions share colors of blue and white, the set of boots and shoes near the doorstep, the jackets getting comfortable spaces on sofas, the mothers encouraging the kids on lines and actions, Sirs and Madams darting on final day perfections for the festival all together diverge to the hue of the so called Cultural Rainbow. Talents are just like a drop of dew on a bud. Not only are the young little buds blooming with excitement on festive occasions but also exfoliating the hidden talents with joy and triumph. SBA also laid a platform for the elders and adults to mingle and retrospect the talents through dance and music. An act, so encouraging and motivating!

I, as a nascent member of SBA experience a wonderful ecstasy of being a part of such a vibrant group. May the banner be the prism of years and generations for the youth and adults spreading the spectrum of talents and wisdom! Seasons giving way to years and talents paving path for traditions kindles a joy and smile in each of us as a member of the giving tree- SBA!



Horse by Roopkatha Bagchi



Peacock by Rishika Chatterjee



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# Day in the Boy's Life

Poli Gupta

The little boy walked into the Pediatricians office with a very brave face. He recently turned 5 and needed to see his pediatrician for his annual visit. His mom had prepped him for a shot. He was afraid of shots, but he promised his mom that he will not cry. After all he was now a big boy, all of 5 years old and he was not afraid of a small needle. His mom had promised him that she will give him a big lollypop if he was brave, and she always kept her promises. The doctor was very nice to him and the little boy almost forgot his fear about the needle. As soon as he was done talking he got something out of the packet and the little boy knew in his mind what it was. That is when he could not control the floodgates anymore. He wanted to hide his little body inside his mom's arms, he was afraid of needles. As he sobbed he heard the doctor smile and say, "you are a big boy now, **don't cry like a girl**". The needle did not hurt much, his mom held him very tight and gave him a big lollypop for being brave. While he waved bye to

everyone at the doctor's office and walked off with him mommy, he wondered what did the doctor mean?

The little boy was all happy now and went with his mommy to buy some new clothes for himself. He was growing tall and one day he will probably be as tall as his mommy. He looked around as his mom was selecting stuff to buy and a pink unicorn on the store shelves got his attention. It was gleaming sitting on the shelves, the prettiest unicorn he has ever seen. Usually he is obsessed with his monster truck toys but there was something about this unicorn that amazed the little boy. He tugged his moms shirt and as she bent down, he showed him the unicorn. Mom smiled and went on shopping. The little boy knew that toys are only bought on special occasions. But he was going to ask mommy anyways. He ran behind his mom again and showed her the object of his joy again. Mom probably was in a happy mood today, she asked him to go pick it up and put it in the cart. He ran as fast as he could, picked up the unicorn and placed it in the cart. He was happy. The cashier was a nice old lady with beautiful white hair, she also reminded him of his new Unicorn toy. She smiled at the little boy as he placed his toy in front of her. She asked him "Is this for your sister?" The boy shook his head side to side, and said with the biggest smile, "This is mine". The old lady looked confused and told him, "**But this toy is for girls**". The little boy looked back confused and he looked up at his mommy. Somehow mommy always knew the right thing to say, and she smiled back at him. "This is his toy" she said as she paid and put the stuff back in the cart. She held his hand and they both walked off.

It was a beautiful day and his mom said that they will make a quick stop at her friends place to drop off something. The boy nodded, he was getting a little sleepy now. He was not fond of naps anymore but sometimes he fell asleep even if he did not want to. Mom's friend was a very nice lady, he has met her before. She welcomed them inside and the house smelled of freshly baked cookies. The little boy suddenly was very hungry. Mom's friend was nice enough to let him have some cookies, and he called her son down to play with the little boy. The little boy was happy, his day was shaping up very nicely. Mom's friend's son was little older than him, but he had a lot of trucks and cars. The little boy walked up to the toy corner and picked up a nice yellow monster truck. He loved Monster trucks. Suddenly he felt a push, and someone snatched the truck from his hand. "It is my toy" said the other boy. The little boy fell and hurt his knee, tears built up in his eyes. He quickly reminded himself that he should not cry like a girl. Mommy came



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running and looked at him, "Are you hurt?" she asked. The boy held his mom, his small body hid inside her hug, "Let's go home mommy". Mom's friend came down too. "**Boys will be boys**" she said. Mommy did not seem to be very happy the way the day was going. Suddenly she stood up holding the little boy's hand. She looked taller to him now. Mom used her gentle but stern voice. "Sorry, but pushing a little kid is not right and boys will be boys is not the right thing to say at this moment". She packed everything and picked up the little boy. The little boy was not sure what was going on in mommy's mind. Mommy looked at the little boy and said with the brightest smile "Son, if you feel like crying, cry ... It is okay to cry". "If you want that pink unicorn, it is okay". He hugged his mom. Mommy put him in the car set, looked at him and said, "You be you my son!!"



**Leaf** (above) and **Peacock** (below)  
by Rohan Bhattacharyya



**My Daughters** (above) and **Old City** (below)  
by Shourabh Mukherji





Horse by Kriti Mukherjee



Family by Prisha Mitra Thakur



Portrait by Aayushi Goswami



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**Sunset by Adhrit Mukherjee**

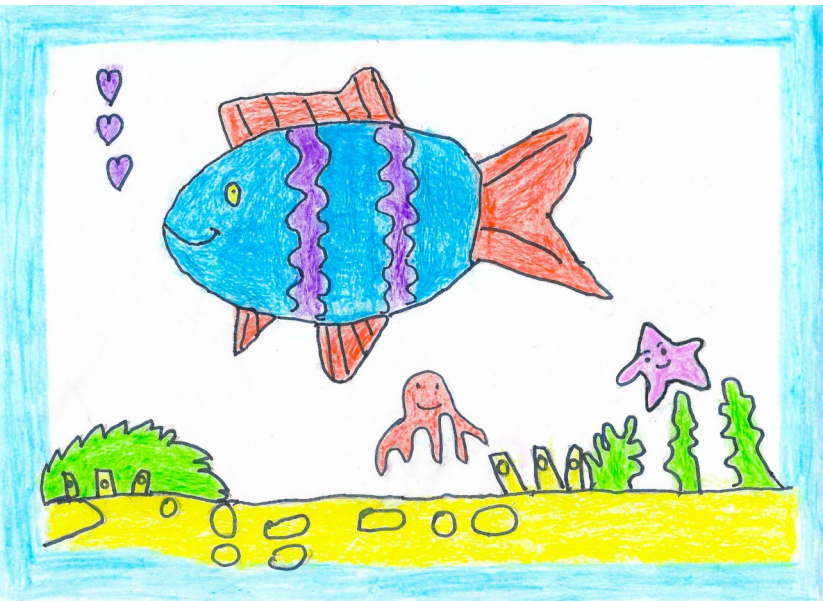


**Ducks by Prerna**



**Landscape (left) and Tulip (below) by Srishti Sengupta**

**Under the Sea by Tiasha**



## 10 interesting facts about Harry Potter

by: Teeyasha Biswas

1. How can Hermione attend so many classes, even though they happen at the same time? She possess a necklace that take her back and forth in time.

2. I bet you didn't know that Voldemort's real name is Tom Marvel Riddle.

3. Did you know Lily and Severus were best friends when they were kids.

4. Do you know why all those death eaters work for Voldemort? Well, because they all have the imperious curse...

5. There are 3 unforgivable curse the imperious curse, torture curse and killing curse.

6. Surprisingly Neville's parents were murdered due to torture curse spelled by Bellatrix.

7. Do you know why Harry Potter can see the other horcruxes when he closes his eyes? Harry Potter himself is Voldemort's horcrux.

8. How did Harry destroy Tom Riddle's diary? With the Gryffindor sword.

9. Voldemort and Harry's wand are twin wands that means they are made of the base.

10. Do you know all 7 horcruxes? The first five are Tom's diary, the ring, the chain, the cup, Ravensclaws diadem. What are the other two? Nagini and Harry Potter himself



## Banani Mukhopadhyay SBA Recognition

Banani Mukhopadhyay was born in Kolkata on 31st May, 1942. Her father was a well-known drama figure Mr. Bidhayak Bhattacharya. Being a daughter of a famous figure, she grew up in a culturally enriched environment. She also started loving drama at her young age. She joined the theater group "Ekotrika" and started acting on a regular basis. She received many awards during her college days when she attended Bidyasagar College. Her biggest break came when the legendary actress Tripti Mitra invited her in

"Bahurupi" group and gave her a role in KanchanRongo. Her dream came true when she became the co-star of Tripti Mitra and started acting in professional theater. After getting married with Dr. Alok Mukhopadhyay, her acting career slowed down, but at the same time she changed her focus from acting to playwright. Her life changed its course from an actress to a successful playwright. Once the FM channel started in Kolkata Radio, Mrs. Urmimala Basu chose one of her drama to perform in radio which became immensely popular instantly. After that fame she never had look back.

At present, she spends majority of her time in USA with her children who are settled abroad. She is extremely popular among Bengalis and a very well-known figure in drama circle. Besides drama, she wrote numerous poems. She has guided many on how to perform. By reciting her poems, and performing her own written Shruti natak in her daily life, she is continuing her cultural roots even in this faraway land. Today, Somerset Bengali Association (SBA) is very proud to have her among us, and is honored to recognize her achievement in our Saraswati puja. We wish her long life and many more accolades in upcoming years.



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শিশির যখন পড়ে-  
একটুকু তার নেব তুলে,  
দেব চুলে,  
ভুলেই গেলাম  
হলো না তা নেওয়া ;  
ঘুমের থেকে উঠতে হলো দেরী,  
রোদের আভা পড়ল এসে ঘরে।

সন্কেবেলা শিউলি ফুলের হাঁসি দেখে  
ইচ্ছে হলো তখন-  
একটি দুটি ফুল কুড়িয়ে,  
দিই ছড়িয়ে,  
হলো না তা দেওয়া ;  
ঘরেতে মোর ফিরতে হবে এখন।।

দেখা যখন হবে তোমার সাথে,  
বলব চুপিচুপি তোমায়-  
হাসনুহানার গন্ধ আন, রঙ্গিন চুড়ি  
হলো না তা বলা ;

হারিয়ে গেছ তুমি যে মোর মনের মণিকোঠায়।।।

## Winner

### Krishna Chaudhuri (Mukhopadhyay)

Since the age of thirteen,  
All the boys that I've seen,  
Possess different qualities;  
Of many varieties.

I have liked a little,  
Each one of these Beatle(s),  
But never anyone totally;  
'Till I saw him really.

He was not like them,  
Didn't care for fame,  
Was a bit uncultured,  
But he actually punctured;  
My softly cushioned heart!!!

## Me

### Aditi Dhara

I am myself wherever I go,  
I'm who I please to be.  
When things go wrong, I try again  
Because I am Me.

I'm a princess in my own land,  
I rule fairly to those who care for me.  
My family is there to guide me and love me,  
Even when I'm exploding like a kettle pot.

On warm sunny days  
My brother takes me out to play.  
My love for him will go through 10 galaxies,  
Even when we fight I can't imagine the world with just  
me.

If you are reading this Dada I want you to know,  
No matter how much you embarrass me and I embar-  
rass you,

I love more than anything.  
You are my reason to live.

You guide me through the darkest tunnels when I'm  
scared,  
You keep me close everywhere.  
You're so special in my heart,  
That I don't know what I'd do without you.

Every day the day goes by,  
We look ahead to see the sun rise above the horizon.  
We are one with nature  
And nature is one with us.

I am myself wherever I go,  
I'm who I please to be.  
When things go wrong, I try again  
Because I am Me.





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# সূচিস্বপ্ন

## আদৃতা মুখোপাধ্যায়

রাজা মহান- তাই জন্ম নিয়ন্ত্রণে কণ্ডোম বিলোন প্রজাদের ঘরে ঘরে  
রাজা রাম সাজিদের পুরুষাঙ্গ বিলোতে পারেন কি আসিফাদের কবরে?

রাজার কাছে প্রশ্ন আসে এক ও হাজার বার  
রবিবাবুর রাজা ইনি নন, একশ বছর পর-

মানুষ তুমি, মানবিক হও  
জাতীয়তাবাদী নয়  
কবিগুরু আজ ফ্যাকাশে হয়েছেন  
আর মানবতা বিস্ময় !

মানবিক মানে একটা, দুটো অথবা তিনটে মিছিল  
আর সাথে কিছু অ্যাগনের শিখা  
যোনি তাই কেটে ছিঁড়ে খ্যাতলানো হয় বারবার  
রক্তের বিভীষিকা.....

ধর্মে ওরা কেউ বা হিন্দু,  
কেউ বা মুসলমান  
নারীর শরীর তবুও একই  
রাম রহিমের দান !

ধর্ম এখন শুধু রাজনীতি,  
সন্ত্রাস বা জাতিপাত বিভাজন নয়;  
ধর্মকেরও ধর্মবিচারে  
পশুরাজ মুখ ঢাকে লঙ্কায়।

হিন্দুর ঘরে সালমা খাতুন পুত্রবধু যাক  
রঙের দ্বন্দ্ব স্বপ্নগুলোও জ্বলতে জ্বলতে থাক।

এত না পারা, এত হেরে যাওয়া  
তারই মাঝে সল্‌চয়  
ইমদাদুল আর যশপাল  
এনে দেয় এক মূর্তি ভরা জয়।

কি ভীষণ অনায়ামে  
শেখালো নির্নিমেমে

শোধ প্রতিশোধ তোলা থেকে যাক  
বিশাদের কালো খামে  
ক্ষমা যতবার ঢেকে দেবে হিংসার তরোয়ার  
রংভেদ লঙ্কায় পাবে।

প্রশ্ন সরিয়ে ভাবনা জাগছে  
নীরবে, নিরুপায়-  
ধর্ষণ ঢাকা ধর্মের আড়ালে, মিথ্যের কনভয়;  
আসলে পুরুষতন্ত্রের যোনাঙ্গের নীচে  
আজও মেয়েরাই অসহায়।

দলিত, শূদ্র, রাজপুত্র, মোনা কিংবা সে ব্রাহ্মণ  
হিন্দু, খ্রীষ্টান, বৌদ্ধ, জৈন অথবা মোসলমান

যোনি পুরুষাঙ্গ দিক কেবলই সৃষ্টিসূত্র  
দেখতে চেওনা আর একটাও লালসায় বলসানো মুখ।

মানুষ হয়ে মানুষের মত বাঁচতে দিলেই জন্মটা সার্থক  
রক্তের গ্লানি মুছে আজ ধরা সূচি হোক।

হারতে হারতে স্বপ্নরা আবার  
আশায় বাঁধছে বুক,  
মালতি, জুবেদা - দুজনেই  
শুধু নিরাপদে বড় হোক।

# I

## Kriti Mukherjee

There once was a girl, who sat idly by,

With a pen in her hand and a sheet of paper in front,  
she sat idly by.

No one knew what she did,

Or how she did it,

But all I knew is that she did.

Her smile was like a doe's and her lips a thin line,

Yet in the midst,

She had a tiger's eye.

An eye for power,

An eye for success,

An eye that everyone desired.

The eye that knew the future, past and current,

The eye that exceeded time everywhere.

Her stare shook the mountains and a blink made the  
water churn cold,

Yet through this engulfing power, her smile was like a  
pleasant doe's.

I have never met a girl as she, a girl who just sat idly  
by,

Not a sound did escape her,

Yet her thoughts were crystal clear.

When she walked,

Her path was a highway.

Nothing stopped her,

Nothing even made her pause.

She had the tiger's eye,

An eye brighter than a diamond,

An eye filled with liquid gold,

An eye as brilliant as the sun,

An eye that warped time as a whole.

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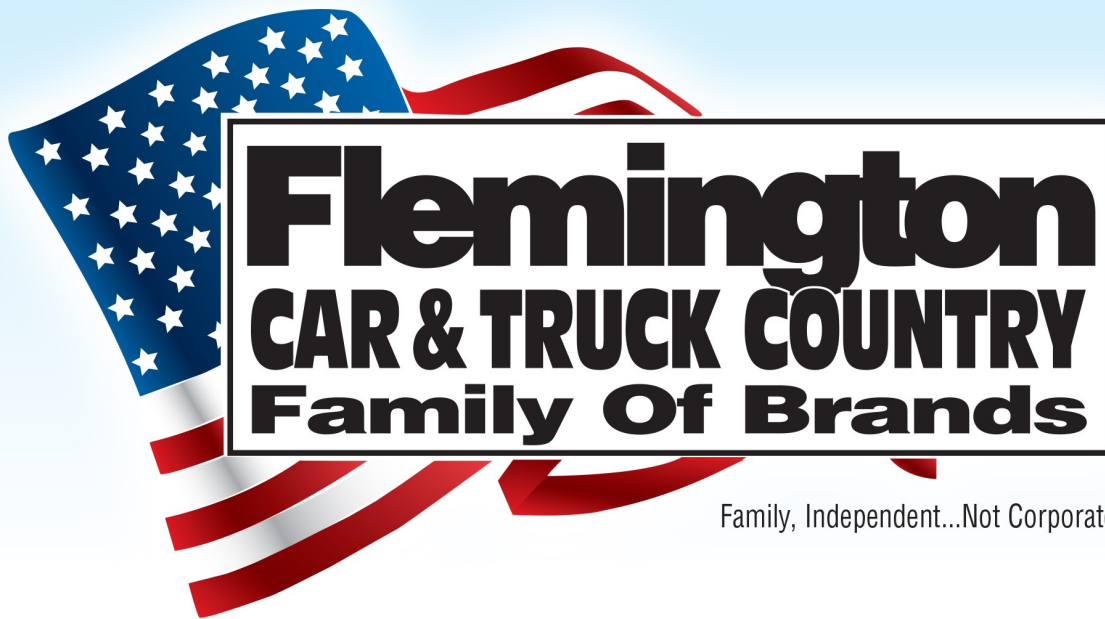
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