

Triveni Utsav and Awards 2025

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TRIVENI UTSAV 2025

conceptualised and curated
by
TRIVENI HAIKAI INDIA

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Triveni Utsav and Awards 2025

Triveni Haikai India: Four Years of Flowing Together

The fourth-anniversary celebration
of pauses paints images from words ...

by **Samir Satam**

When Triveni Haikai India celebrated its fourth anniversary, it did so by creating a shared space to listen, learn, and reflect. Poets from around the world gathered online, carrying the calm and curiosity that haiku inspires. What unfolded was a warm evening of learning, laughter, and gratitude.

The Spirit of Triveni

Kala Ramesh started the event by revisiting the meaning of the word Triveni, the meeting of three rivers: Ganga, Yamuna, and the unseen Sarasvati. It was a fitting image for what Triveni Haikai India has evolved into — a coming together of creative minds and cultures.

Founded in 2021 as a successor to the earlier INhaiku initiative, Triveni Haikai India has developed into a vibrant network of poets who keep the spirit of haikai alive through weekly publications, discussions, and competitions. Over thirty-five poets work quietly behind the scenes, making Triveni less of an organisation and more of a communal home.

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The African proverb quoted during the session, “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” That idea of collective growth has shaped Triveni into a community full of vigour.

Listening to Silence

The anniversary celebration was filled with moments of deep listening. Talks by the respected and well-known **Susan Antolin** and **Michael Dylan Welch** offered insights into the hidden subtleties of haiku.

Ravi Kiran provided Susan with an excellent introduction.

Susan Antolin discussed how time flows within a haiku. She explained how a poet can capture a single moment that also embodies a lifetime, through a gesture, a sound, or a season that might not even be named. Her words showed that haiku is not about compression but about expansion, with a few lines that reveal vastness.

Next came Michael, who was introduced skillfully by **Vandana Parashar**.

In his presentation ‘Finding the Sky,’ Michael Dylan Welch encouraged listeners to look beyond the visible image in a haiku and to sense what surrounds it. He explained that a haiku is not only about what is seen but also about the emotional and cultural context that gives the image its depth. His thoughts on *ma*, the Japanese concept of psychological space, reminded everyone that meaning often lies in what is left unspoken.

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The Art of Simplicity

Kala Ramesh, the founder of Triveni, described haiku as “the simplest and the most sophisticated form of literature.” That paradox shaped the day’s discussions. Haiku, she reminded everyone, is a poem that continues to unfold with each reader who engages with it.

Participants discussed the concept of the semicircle of haiku, where a poem is only complete when the reader brings their awareness to finish it. The poet starts the journey; the reader completes the circle.

This year’s competition received an overwhelming response, with 333 poets submitting 656 poems from around the world. India led with 102 participants, followed by strong representation from the USA, New Zealand, the UK, and Australia. Entries came from as far afield as Romania, Croatia, France, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, and Japan, showcasing Triveni’s global reach.

Judges Michael Dylan Welch and Ashish Narain discussed their approach of reading each submission slowly, allowing images to unfold gradually. In their note to participants, they mentioned that they sought poems with vivid and fresh imagery, often inspired by seasonality but united by a core gratitude for life. They stated, “Haiku are poems of shared experience... a means of cultivating appreciation for the life around us.”

The Triveni Awards 2025

First Place: Award ₹10,000

drowsy day
our watermelon seeds
speckle the cat

Lorraine Haig
Tasmania, Australia

Judges praised this haiku for its playfulness and the quality of karumi - that lightness of touch which is core to Basho's teaching. The poem captures the joy of an ordinary summer afternoon and turns it into a shared moment of delight.

Second Place: Award ₹5,000

a shaft of sunlight
the stairwell becomes
a cathedral

Adelaide B. Shaw
New York, USA

This haiku elevates the ordinary to the divine. A ray of light transforms a familiar stairwell into a place of reverence, suggesting that awe often starts in the everyday.

The Triveni Awards 2025

Third Place: Award ₹3,000

sacred mountain
I tire halfway
to enlightenment

Tracy Davidson
Warwickshire, UK

Both judges appreciated the poem's humour and humanity. It reminds us that even the pursuit of enlightenment has its pauses and that fatigue, too, is a kind of awakening.

Honourable Mentions

heatwave alert
children blow
on a wind chime

Pascal Pozzo di Borgo
Bastia, France

fireplace —
the wall holds the shadow
of an empty chair

Kavitha Sreeraj
Hyderabad, India

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Honourable Mentions

soft breeze
braiding the scent of jasmine
into her tress

Padma Thampatty

Wexford/PA, USA

summer house
a layer of dust
on the old fairy tales

Eufemia Griffo

Settimo Milanese, Italy

falling star
how many of us share
the same wish

Dejan Pavlinovic

Pula, Croatia

Each poem reflected a unique way of seeing, together echoing the evening's larger mood - gratitude, stillness, and quiet celebration.

The Triveni Awards 2025

Number of Participants:

India (102), USA (72), New Zealand (16), UK (15), Australia (10), Romania (9), Canada (8), Croatia (7), Italy (7), France (6), Poland (6), Sri Lanka (6), Philippines (5), Ireland (4), Japan (3), Malaysia (3), Scotland (3), Singapore (3), Bulgaria (3), Belgium (2), Brazil (2), Bosnia and Herzegovina (2), Germany (2), Hungary (2), Nigeria (2), Pakistan (2), Russia (2), Serbia (2), The Netherlands (2), Algeria (1), Czechia (1), Bexar (1), Ghana (1), Greece (1), Iran (1), Israel (1), Lithuania (1), Malta (1), Morocco (1), Nepal (1), Portugal (1), Settimo Milanese (1), Slovakia (1), South Korea (1), Spain (1), Srbija (1), Switzerland (1), Thailand (1), The Czech Republic (1), UAE (1), Zagreb (1)

Triveni Utsav 2025 Finale

A Circle of Gratitude

By the end of the gathering, a sense of shared gratitude filled the atmosphere. Participants described the event as “spiritual,” “meditative,” and “restorative.” Through spoken words and silent reflections, the phrase “everyone is both teacher and learner” echoed throughout the session. This perfectly captures the essence of the **Triveni Haikai India** community.

Here, poetry is not performed from a stage but trustfully shared within a circle. Each voice contributes to a collective rhythm in which humility prevails over hierarchy.

The event was graciously hosted by **Kashiana Singh**, who delivered the vote of thanks and helped set the evening’s rhythm.

Padma Rajeswari organised the contest and ensured its smooth operation, from anonymising submissions to forwarding them to the judges, and finally reconciling the results.

Certificates, beautifully crafted by **Teji Sethi**, were prepared for each awardee.

Vani Sathyanarayan and **Sonali Rasal** managed the registration process with care and precision.

Triveni Utsav 2025 Finale

Flowing Forward

As the celebration drew to a close, voices from across continents merged into a peaceful harmony. The evening was a soulful reflection on why poets write—to see one's inner landscape more clearly, to feel it more deeply, and to share that clarity and depth with the world.

Four years on, Triveni Haikai India continues to live up to its name, a gathering place where different currents converge and move forward together. In the coming days, **Triveni on Wheels** will carry this spirit across India, in collaboration with classical dancers and other artistes. Poets from the community will share their work at literary festivals, bookstores, and cultural spaces in Hyderabad, Chandigarh, Chennai, Bangalore, Delhi, and beyond. Each stop will be another confluence, another opportunity for haikai poetry to meet the world.

The speciality of these programs is the amalgamation of haikai poetry with other fine arts such as Bharatanatyam, Mohiyaattam, Odissi, classical flute music, folk arts, and drama. Each art brings so much to the haiku being read. Kala Ramesh choreographs each of these sessions, and she aptly **calls them Saath-Sangat and not a Jugal-bandhi**. The power of the collaboration is evident!

Triveni's journey serves as a gentle reminder that, in poetry as in life, growth occurs gradually through companionship and attentive care. Every haiku written, every silence shared, becomes another ripple in the expanding river of **Triveni Haikai India**

THE KATHA :: TRIVENI HAIKAI INDIA

In Indian tradition, TRIVENI refers to the confluence of three major rivers: Ganga, Yamuna, and Sarasvati. Here, it symbolises India, Japan, and the rest of the world coming together to celebrate haikai literature.

Origin

Triveni Haikai India wishes to thank the pioneers who paved the way for us, starting with two of our great poets who first introduced haiku to the Indian audience – Rabindranath Tagore and Subramania Bharathi. Later, Prof. Satya Bhushan Verma, Prof. B. S. Aggarwala, and Dr Angelee Deodhar worked tirelessly to popularise haiku, primarily in the Hindi-speaking regions of northern India.

Triveni Haikai India

Kala Ramesh's efforts over the years culminated in founding INhaiku on 23rd February 2013 at the 4th Triveni Haiku Utsav she organised in Pune. On this occasion, a group of like-minded friends gathered to promote, enjoy, and deepen their understanding of the beauty and complexities of this art form.

In 2016, it expanded into a larger community of haikai enthusiasts and practitioners, becoming known as TRIVENI (Facebook group). Under Kala Ramesh's leadership, TRIVENI evolved into an 'activity hub' for all Japanese short-form poetry, and the increased engagement highlighted the need for a website.

THE KATHA :: TRIVENI HAIKAI INDIA

What began as a seed in 2006, TRIVENI blossomed into Triveni Haikai India to accommodate the rising number of Indians participating in the haikai community.

Triveni Haikai India also gratefully acknowledges the support and encouragement that was provided by the late Angelee Deodhar & the late Johannes Manjrekar over the years.

Designed by our talented **Rohan Kevin Broach** and inaugurated on 18th September 2021, Triveni Haikai India is here to help you treasure in its nurturing and engaging avatar!

Website link: <https://www.trivenihaikai.in/>
