

Sasenarine Persaud

UNCLOSED ENTRANCES

Selected Poems

“Persaud’s poems are delicious on the tongue: *Honeyed milk and kiskadees. Gulab jamuns soaked in red wine.* There is an under-tongue taste of native language that the speaker—and now the reader—longs to hold in the mouth”.

In contrast to Wilson Harris, famous for his dream-like novels of magical realism, Persaud’s poetry shows not syncretism but a belief that Indians in the West retained their culture, a culture which has a matrix capable of give and take with the whole world, as proven by the fact that Vedic culture has seeded many cultures and religions.

This collection contains a selection of Persaud’s poetry from his earlier to more recently published work. Persaud’s early poems are made up of short lines, each consisting of a few words, which are evocative like haiku poems although they do not have the haiku form. Persaud never gives up this kind of writing because he writes about everything he sees, and what he sees sometimes moves away in the blink of an eye so he must pin it down quickly. But increasingly his poems are like rivers flowing with power—the power of words with an inevitable rhythm. Rivers figure greatly in Persaud’s poetry, as waterways for the colonizing missions of Europe, as symbols of the self merging in the Self as the river flows into the ocean and as mediator and facilitator. Their flow unites apparent opposites, perceived through a consciousness which is ancient yet modern and skillfully rendered by the poet’s tools of memory and the imagination.

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