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Sahitya Akademi

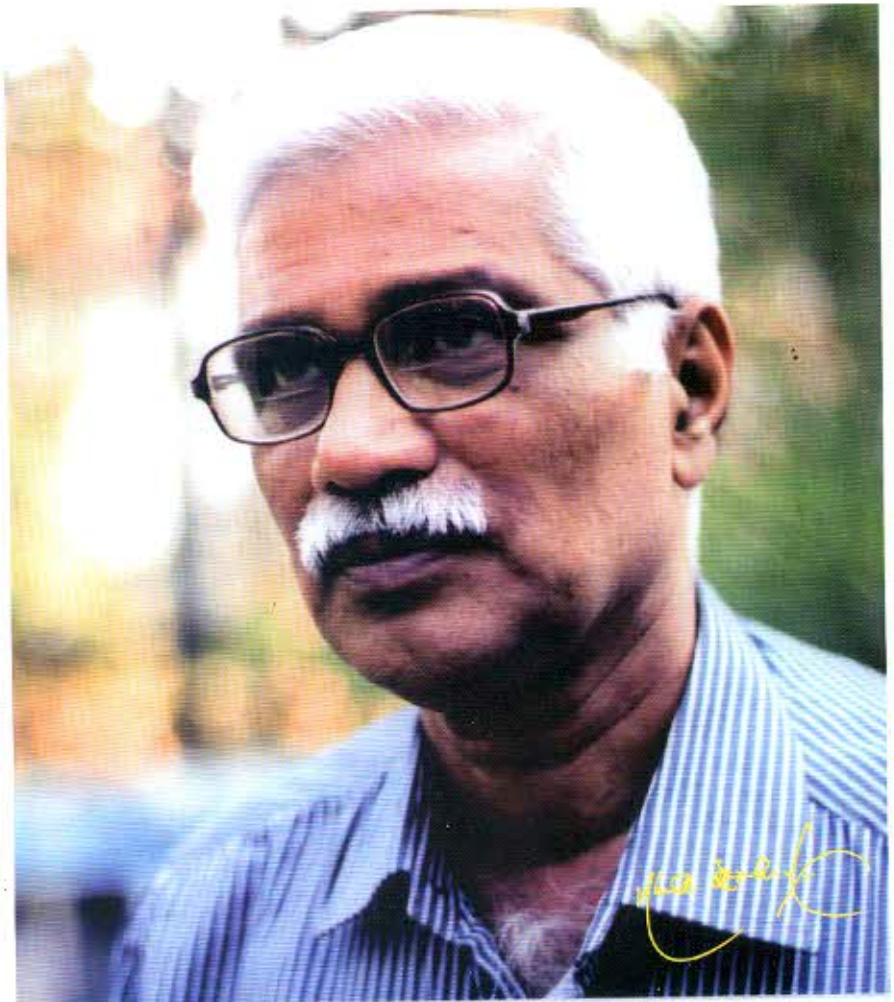


Kala Academy Goa

invite you to

**meet the author**

**Madhav Borcar**



A quick glance at the contemporary literary scenario will unmistakably reveal just a few scores of volumes by a handful of maestros holding the banner of Konkani poetry afloat. Of these, a significant output is of the unassuming and mild-mannered quintessential poet, Venimadhav Borcar, popularly known as Madhav Borcar.

Born on June 4, 1954, Madhav Borcar grew up in the scenic village of Borim. Having completed his schooling and college education in Goa, he obtained the degree of M.A. in English and Aesthetics from the erstwhile Bombay University, through the Centre of Post Graduate Instruction and Research in Panaji. Soon he joined the teaching profession and taught for almost twelve years before finding his calling at All India Radio (AIR), Panaji. Until his retirement in 2014, as the Station Director of AIR Panaji, Goa, he served All India Radio in several capacities and at various venues across the Western Region.

Like his many illustrious poet

fore-runners such as Bakibab Borcar, Nagesh Karmali, Uday Bhembre, Madhav Borcar's natural temperament suited to the 'T', the multifarious tasks and varied skill-sets that his oeuvre at the Radio station required. It was not just a job done but a dedicated service to the world of voice and memory that offered itself to him. In fact, the aesthetic ambience at AIR honed the creative as well as critical skills he already had and sharpened some that were latent. As a result, one finds in Borcar a fine connoisseur of Art and Music, a naturally inclined conservator and curator of the verbal artifacts in the form of renditions, recitations, speeches, voice-samples, rare interviews and iconic memories of towering literary giants and great stalwarts of Art that he visualized and gleaned for posterity.

Interestingly, his flair for music in particular and his deep appreciation of the Arts in general finds ample expression in his splendid poetry filled with cadence and enriched with radiant hues of colours, moods and shades of experiences, both



*Book launching of Yaman at the hands of Manohar Rai Sardessai*



at AIR Studio in Panaji with Sheela Kolambkar and Ramesh Veluskar

mundane and ethereal. Borcar has been writing poetry since 1968 and his first collection of poems was published while he was still a schoolboy. Hence, Madhav Borcar's arrival on the Konkani creative horizon was likened to a shooting star. He was barely fifteen when his *Chanvar* bloomed into existence. This precocious entry into the bower of the Muse deservedly won him the attribute of Balkavi of the Konkani realm, with a nascent pun: literally, the adolescent poet; and, subtly, an allusion to the renowned Marathi maestro Balkavi Thombre. Over the years, Borcar has published six collections of poems to the date. Besides, he has to his credit two works of translations: *Kabir* by Prabhakar Machve; and, *Eksheem Ek Kavita* by Rabindranath Tagore.

At a quick glance, the titles of Borcar's poetic works convey a certain surface synonymy: *Chanvar* (The Bloom), *Vatacheo Savalleo* (The Shadows of Sunlight), *Uzwadacho Rookh* (The Tree of Light), *Parjallachem Daar* (The Door to Brightness), *Yaman* (Yaman), *Avyaktaachim Gaannim*

(The Songs of the Unexpressed), and the latest *Symphony* (Symphony). They add a certain mystique to his poetry and uncover the essentially romanticist temperament of the poet.

Interestingly, these titles also underscore Borcar's natural affinity with the world of Art and spirituality, although the elusive façade of subjectivity and the polished surface texture of the poems assuming the garb of love poetry at times belies this aspect. For example, if his titles such as *Vatacheo Savalleo*, *Uzwadacho Rukh*, *Parjallachem Daar* dwell on the translucence of existence and experience, his creative acumen in *Avyakntachim Gannim* strikes a densely metaphysical note. Likewise, the titles of his other collections, namely, *Yaman*, and *Symphony* seem to explore the nuances of the universe of melody. The prowess of Borcar's sensuous and sensitive verse is to be experienced rather than recounted. For instance, in "Two Poems" in *Symphony*, he says, "A tremor on the water/ dot-like

lamps/ my own reflections..."; or again, "Leaving a mark/ on the wind engraved/ a ship is headed/ to a far away land" (translation by Kiran Budkuley).

Borcar's poetic oeuvre shows three distinct stages of growth, which co-incidentally are reflected in the sequence and phases of his published works. For instance, following the early 'floral manifesto of bloom' in *Chanvar*, come three works with an unmistakable preoccupation with the vivid imagery of light; and then, the more recent ones, use melody as the plank of imagery. *Symphony*, fine-tunes the crescendo of emotion, melody and colour into an intense expression of human experience. A cogent illustration of this is seen in the lyric "Radha Krishna" "A line, a slash, a twirl/ and a question mark/ (of Orthography)/ Radha-Krishna/ with the Gopis/ playing Hori" (translation by Kiran Budkuley).

In fact, in *Symphony*, there is a unique blend of metaphor, meaning and style, so necessary to the complete poetic utterance and insightful vision. This results in a

cadent aesthetic reading experience too. The poem "Vincent Van Gogh" illustrates this well: "In painting/ the star-studded night/ you poured out/ on the blank canvas/ all the colours/ of life's concussion/ black and blue" (translation by Kiran Budkuley). No wonder, his poems have been translated into major Indian languages. This has deservedly created a pan-Indian presence for Borcar.

In fine, it hardly needs reiteration that, on the firmament of contemporary poetry, Madhav Borcar has a stellar presence with seven collections of poems, each with a distinct focus, to his credit. His is markedly the poetry of the spirit. It resonates with the poet's spontaneous bond with Nature and with the inner reality of life. Yet it does not eschew the world of desire and passion. In fact, the tone of his poetry as also the content of many of his individual poems is self explanatory in this regard. Not only do they display a distinct semantic core but also unfold a unique imagist circumference within which that core operates both as a sensuous



*In conversation with Navkant Barua, eminent Assamese poet*

picture and complex experiential entity. For example, in his latest collection of poems, *Symphony*, a resplendent poem aptly titled "Kavita", speaks of "Coloured/chunks of clouds/hewn with westerly rays/ very like your cheeks/ of reddish radiance/ with the mark of my lips"; again, in "Coconut Tree", we find, "Submerged/ in the twilight darkness/ the coconut tree/ on the embankment/ appears/ like picture-painted/ jet black dot-like/ pups of the dark night/ in my mind".

Madhav Borkar has won several awards which include Goa Kala Akademi Award twice for *Vatacheo Savalleo* and *Parjallachem Daar*, the Sahitya Akademi Award for *Yaman*, Sahitya Akademi Translation Prize for *Ekshem Ek Kavita* of Tagore, State Award of Goa Government and Government of Goa State Cultural Award. He was also honoured by T. M. A. Pai foundation, Manipal,

V. M. Salgaonkar Foundation, Goa, The Goa Hindu Association, Mumbai, The Janganga Award, Goa, Konkani Bhasha Mandal, Goa and Bimb Prakashan, Goa. The latest feather in his cap has been Smt Vimala Pai Award by World Konkani Foundation, Mangalore.



*Receiving the Sahitya Akademi Award from Ramakant Rath*

## A SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Poetry

<i>Chanvar</i>	1969
<i>Vatacheo Savalleo</i>	1972
<i>Uzwadacho Rukh</i>	1975
<i>Parzallachem Daar</i>	1986
<i>Yaman</i>	1999
<i>Avyaktachi Ganni</i>	2002
<i>Symphony</i>	2012

### Anthology

*Konkani Kavitechi Panch Dashakam*

### Translation

*Kabir* - Prabhakar Machve

*Ekshem Ek Kavita* - Ravindranath Tagore

(Both from English into Konkani for Sahitya Akademi)

## A CHRONOLOGY

- 1954 Born on June, 4
- 1969 First collection of poems *Chanvar* published.
- 1972 Joins as a teacher in a school in Goa. Later, gets appointed as a lecturer at a college.
- 1984 Gets selected by UPSC, joins as Programme officer at All India Radio, Mumbai.
- 2001 Receives the Sahitya Akademi Award for *Yaman*.
- 2004 Receives the Sahitya Akademi Translation Prize for translating Tagore's *Hundred and one Poems*.
- 2014 Retires as Station Director, All India Radio, Panaji.

### Awards Received

- 1973 Kala Academy award for *Vatacheo Savalleo*
- 1976 Konkani Bhasha Mandal prize for *Uzwaddacho Rukh*
- 1988 V. M. Salgaonkar Foundation prize for *Parjallachem Daar*
- 1988 Kala Academy award for *Parjallachem Daar*
- 2001 T.M.A. Pai foundation award for *Yaman*
- 2001 The Sahitya Akademi Award for *Yaman*
- 2004 The Sahitya Akademi Translation Prize for *Ekshem Ek Kavita*
- 2007 Directorate of Art and Culture, Govt. of Goa state award for achievement at national level
- 2012 Directorate of Art and Culture, Govt. of Goa Cultural Award
- 2013 Vimala Pai Vishwa Konkani Award for *Symphony*  
BIMB Award for *Symphony*



With family - Mankarnika, wife, daughter Yogini and Son Chinmay