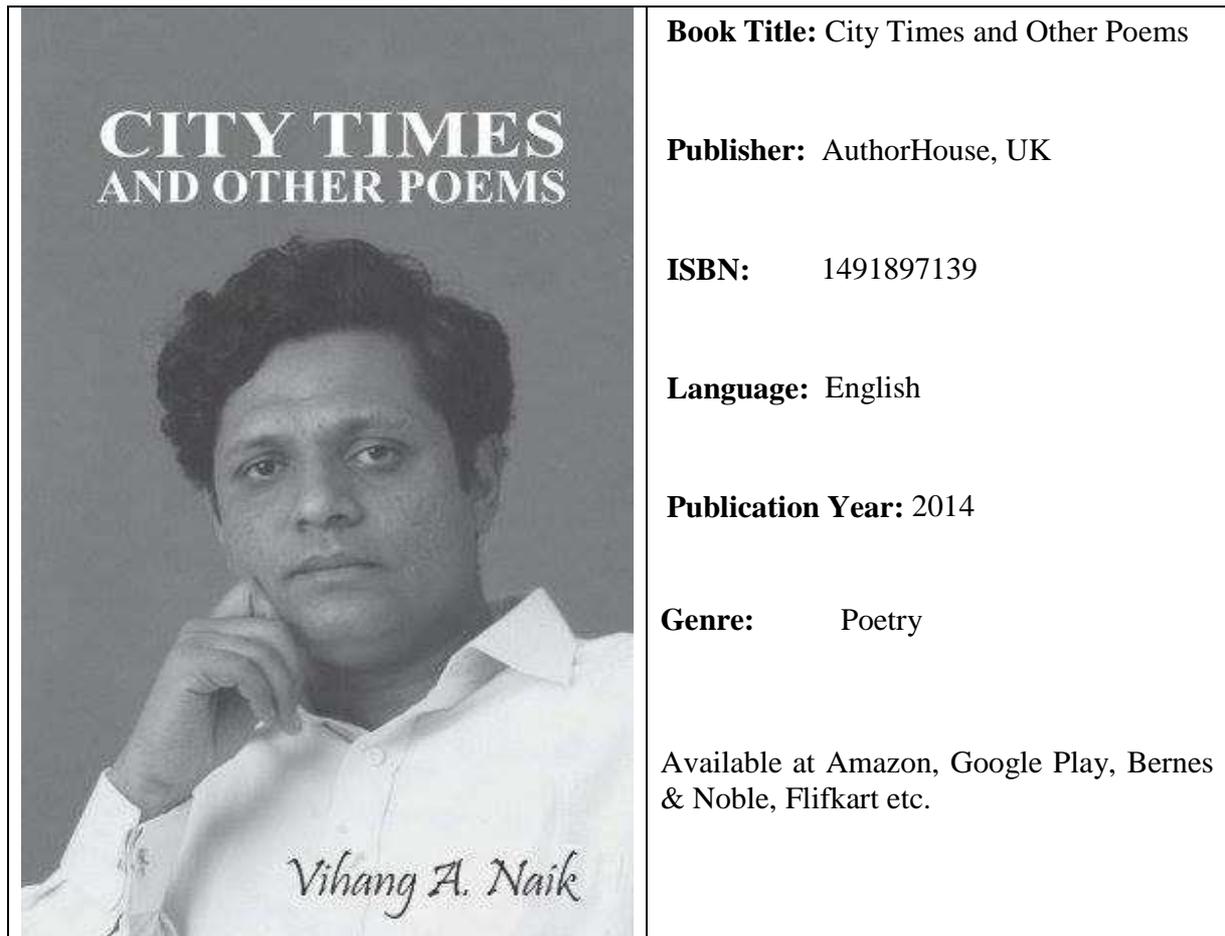


City Times and Other Poem by Vihang A. Naik

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One of the recent book that I read is 'City Times and Other Poems' by Vihang A. Naik. The author has been able to display his feelings and emotions through poems on the fate of city life and changing behavior of the city residents. The poet has used different style in different poems and he has been able to display maturity of thought and expression through his poems in this book. The poems of the book provide readers a mirror to look into life of a city in all its shades, and it is common to find some expression of glory and misery that people feel in in his City. This collection of poems is of philosophical thoughts tested on the altar of reality of life. The Poems are divided in six segments i.e.

First Section i.e., 'Love Song of a Journey Man' that is more or less an inner travelogue, the expression of a poem when he perceives things happening around him. It can be seen from the expressions of some of poems like 'You Revealed the Edge', 'The World', 'Time' expresses the feeling of a man who is always on a journey whether living in city or village.

Second section i.e. 'Mirrored Man' how people in the city are capricious like a chameleon. Some other poems like 'Chameleon is Not That Great' and 'He is Different Behind' express how a man is more deceitful than anything else is.

Third section i.e., 'The Path of Wisdom' is about the benefits of the practice of meditation and knowledge. Some poems like 'When You do Not Find' and 'Listen! Death Knocks' express the extent of futility of this life and convey how wisdom can show humanity a path to salvation. The poem tries to convey a message to humanity how this life is futile and our existence is for greater purpose which can be served on listening to inner voice.

Fourth Section i.e., 'Self Portrait' conveys a how man conceives of himself and he might remain untouched by the heavenly blessings around him.

Fifth Section i.e., 'At the Shore' expresses the poet's sense of futility, memory, pain, exile and alienation in this crowded city life.

Sixth Section or Last Section i.e., 'City Times' is an expression of individuals' routinely exchange murder for murder, when the healing grace of authentic spirituality is usurped by the divisive politics of the religious organizations, and when broken hearts bleed pain in darkness without the relief of compassion. Some of poems like 'Illusion', 'Desire', 'Pleasure' express the things, which are governing the life in city, which is getting devoid of spirituality and welfare society's principles.

The poet has been able to deliver exceptional work and the poems serve as a message of intellectual who can guide you and not dictate how you behave and how you can better your life and the life of others. It can be asserted only after going through the poems of Vihang A. Naik's City Times and Other Poem. The simple yet poetic expression of this modern age poet has brought forward the real image of modern life in a city which is going through a number of changes good and bad. The intensity and uniqueness of the poems in this collection named 'City Times and Other Poem' a must read for those who enjoy modern poetry. Every poem in this collection is a jewel well stud in the crown of poetry.

The poet has used expressions and imagery of light as hope and other expressions which adds value to the poetic expression of the life of city dwellers. This collection of poems has a unique identity which is amplified by the remarkable brevity and precision through which poet has used them The City is the central image in the collections of poems which is also a symbolic expression of life with all its labyrinthine streets which leading you to some directions which are misleading and ambiguous.

Poet Vihang A. Naik has been able in delicately placing the expression of the objects of the visible world which have become invisible due to various reasons and changing habits, in an sophisticated position which strikes the soul and gives them a tragic force to rethink.

According to Pradip Kansi , writing in "The Scoria": "City Times & Other Poems" the poet appears to be "quite sincere in his own unselfconscious way..." while according to Moti Mukhopadhyaya "The book of verses by Vihang Naik has selected a style of his own, different from the running practice. Furthermore, the review of the book reveals how the brevity of use of words, selection of right word in right place, distribution of words as per flow of thought, continuity or breaking us of a line in the interest of rhyme and the expression of deep thoughts in these verses make them all the more attractive and educative for readers. According to Dr.B.S.Murthy writing in "JELF Contour": "City Times & Other Poems": All his poems are marked by precision and intensity , and , of course , typographical experimentation. The views and opinions of different authors and poets assets the quality of the poems and their meaningfulness in our modern life. It can be stated without any doubt that his collection of poems is like an autobiographic poems coming from poet's soul in a poetic form of expression which has beauty, meaning and philosophical traits.

The Indian Book Chronicle has praised the book as saying, "The poet has something up his sleeve to say beyond the appearances. He does not describe what things are, but what they are stirring to be, in his consciousness."

The short and simple poems filled with remarkably deep emotions from poet's sense of vulnerability, memory, pain and loss that dwellers of city feel. In this collection of poems, it is bound to find some sublime possibility of transcendence and insight after reading the poems. All the poems here are easy to understand, but a reader will find hard to move forward without pondering over the thoughts and expression that is exhibited in these poems. "City Times and Other Poems", is perhaps one of the most distinguished literary work of poetry in recent time and an opportunity to review the great work of poetry is like diving deep into the ocean of thoughts and feeling that are hidden in the simple and day to day use language of expression.

"The image of memory like a candle, lighting up a darkened room is truly exquisite and symbolic of vibrant hope" -**The Journal of Literature & Aesthetics (India)**

"...when broken hearts bleed pain in darkness without the relief of compassion, the voice of an exceptional poet introducing exceptional work is not something the world can afford to dismiss..."
Argha Ghosh at *SpectralHues*

"...When our words fall "in empty spaces", when we toddle "for a rhyme", Vihang woots under city lights. Our streets gather fog....Vihang shows calibre in bringing out the dingy shades. Modern is here, go grab the rebel." **Debanjan** at *Goodreads*.

"The images strewn throughout the collection attain a composite whole in highlighting the depravity, hollowness and futility of city life. Despite the stark images that the poet uses in the

poems, the delicate sensitivity with which he evokes them is fascinating” ...” Rit Chattopadhyay at Spectralhuse.

“Vihang A. Naik throws light on the life of a city in all its shades, glory, and misery in his City Times and Other Poems.” - Deepkia Verma at Writing Geeks.

“Vihang Naik’s poems are intuitive, thoughtful, philosophical and creative pieces, where the poet displays a confident command, mature, with a fine balance of emotional intensity, irony, ranging across themes and places with experimentation. ” - Dr. Vishwanathan Bite at The Criterion(December 2012 .Vol. III. Issue IV).

“Naik has established himself as an imagist while maintaining knowledge grounded in realism and emotional intensity.” – G emil Reutter (Fonder / Editor) at Fox Chase Review

Some of the views expressed by some poets and authors clearly substantiate the quality of the poems that has been well preserved in this collection of poems. Vihang A. Naik has used the modern style of poetry and at the same that he has been able to use different forms of poetic expression. One can find how poet has used different forms, lines, rhyme to convey his feelings. The expression of figure of speech like simile, metaphor and hyperbole has been used in the poems to amplify the expression and meaning of the words. Overall, poet Vihang A. Naik has done a marvelous work and written these poems, which will be an example of modern poetry form of free style. And yet he has been able to use poetry as a tool for conveying his views and feelings about meditation and spirituality.

One of the unique feature of this book is intentional attempt of the poet to make you think and express yourself is done through the blank pages which is there for readers to pen down his/her thoughts and view which one feels when stimulated by his poems. Readers can find between 'my self' and 'discovered beyond thought' are five blank pages. The poet wish to be an enabler or an igniter for your flame of wisdom and knowledge which is far beyond anyone’s thought and speech. Vihang Naik has tried to stir in you and your consciousness to evolve your thoughts and feeling through his short piercing poems. He tries to invade in the concrete wall of your imagination through simple meaningful play of words in his poetry. The style of saying great things in simple words is vivid in his collection of poems.

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