

Forverses Website

About us :

Forbidden Verses is an organisation built to provide and promote the local artists around us. Our aim is to create a judgement free environment and let the voices of the people speak for themselves. We wish to create space for art, art that can empower as well as heal.

Forbidden Verses is our little part to bring art to everyone else. This community started in October 2018 with a little open mic that has evolved to be so much more. Through our events we aim to give a space to artists to truly express themselves without any conditions and try to make art more accessible for all. There are poems that can change the world, paintings that build new ones, photography that captures both the ugly and the beautiful and music which sets this change into motion, and our aim is to bring these glorious artforms under one roof.

Our community is ever growing with new art forms being experimented each event and our audiences come not only to listen, but to become parts of little stories themselves. We also believe current social situations can never be divorced from the art we create, hence, we provide a safe space for these difficult dialogues to actually be facilitated. We are open to collaborations with any organisation that aims at making the skyline of Delhi and beyond, happier with art, expression and any civic engagement.

Team :

1. Varun Ahuja (Founder)
2. Krishn Saran (Founder)
3. Anureet Watta - Chief Executive Director

Anureet is a student of Economics at the Lady Shri Ram College for Women. She has been performing and writing poems for the past two years. She has also been a writer and contributor to various organizations like SheThePeople TV, GAYSI Media and Feminism in India among others. You can catch her memes and poems at @wattaaaaaaa

4. Chetna Chauhan - Creative Director
5. Anoushka Radhakrishnan - Creative Director

Anoushka is a poet and artist and mostly relies on chaotic creative energy to produce her work. She has many dreams and a lot of goals with one common theme : to do her part in making the world a slightly better place.

Events :

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1. Open Mic

On our first event, we presented spoken word poetry on November 3rd, 2018 with 14 poets at GoStops Hostels and were met with an overwhelmingly positive response, and an audience that felt more like family by the end of the evening. Since then, we have only grown.

2. Beparwah

On 21st December '18 we held Beparwah : An unapologetic expression of gender through art, in collaboration with Nazariya as well as Mardaangi at GoStops Hostels. We had an incredibly talented line up consisting of 5 artists, 6 photographers and 5 poets.

3. Almost Open Mics

We hosted our first Almost Open Mic at People Places Art on 6th April, a unique initiative to help artists grow together.

On 2nd June we held Almost Open Mic 2.0. An Almost Open mic was back with its third edition on 30th June. In collaboration with Mental Health Foundation, our monthly Almost Open Mic 4.0 was held on 19th September, with a different concept this time. Performers were to register on the spot, living up to the name 'open mic'.

4. Naqsh

On 25th August, we presented you with Naqsh at The Hosteller, our attempt to give credit to the art that helped us begin our individual creative journeys. In collaboration with Slam Out Loud, it was a music open mic, poetry showcase and an art and photography exhibition.

5. Film Screening

On November 8th at The Hosteller, we held our first ever Film Screening where we first had a line up of assorted abstract short films specifically hand-picked and capable of having several interpretations followed by two short films : Drag in India by Anmol Singh Gula and The Death of Us by Vani Subramanian.

6. Kommune Spoken Fest

We collaborated with Kommune for our Almost Open Mic on November 17th at the Helter Skelter Cafe where we presented three of our poets for the Spoken Takeover.

7. Online Fundraiser for the COVID 19 Pandemic

We broke our hiatus with our first online event, the Covid 19 Fundraiser where 6 musicians and 8 poets performed to raise funds for various organisations.

8. Online Fundraiser for Assam Floods

Collaborations:

1. Mardaangi
2. Slam Out Loud
3. Kommune
4. The Hosteller
5. Mental Health Foundation (India)
6. People Places Art
7. Nazariya LGBT
8. GoStops
9. Light Up

Journal :

Marketplace is our monthly curation of poetry, visual art, cartoons and photography. At Forbidden Verses, we aim to provide a safe platform for budding artists around the country to present their work, especially that which is deliberately unheard to this day. We envision this to be a safe space, and one that is actively working towards amplifying a plethora of voices, especially those that do not conform to the general populace. We hope this marketplace can be a safe home to your thoughts about the private and the public, while being wrapped in the best of art, from around the country.

The MarketPlace of Ideas, a Theory

Simply put, the marketplace of ideas refers to the belief that the test of truth or acceptance of ideas depends on their competition with one another and not the opinion of the censor. Emerged in the late 1800s, this was one of the first few theories of free speech coined by J S Mill, albeit a white, male, European Man. This idea comes from the belief 'no one knows the whole truth' and a free and fair platform is necessary for the truth to be found. However, in 2020 it's imperative to rethink this theory. How far does the line of free speech extend? Is the marketplace of ideas really a 'free and fair' space? Are all ideas even given the space to compete?

Rethinking this Marketplace

The marketplace of ideas is not a free market as we would like to believe. There exists censorship, and there exists a hegemony of some ideas. As the theory evolves the pursuit of

free speech has changed from a pursuit of truth to the pursuit of dominance. In the dystopian times we live in, mainstream media echoes only a few voices and our ideas aren't from diverse sources and in fact deeply coloured. Thus, to overcome this illusion would also be to recognize who's free speech infringes on the existence of another. Is hate speech a litmus test for free speech? How do we ensure a level playing field, when it has been devoid for centuries?

आज खामोश वतन में सबकी आवाज़ खामोश नहीं है। शासन की आवाज़ बुलंद है पर आवाम के मुंह में सेडिशन का मैला कपड़ा ठूस दिया गया है। अभिव्यक्ति की आजादी महज़ लफ़्ज़ है जो कुर्सी पर बैठे कुछ चुनिंदा लोगों और महकमों के होंठों की शान बढ़ाते हैं। ऐसे वक्त में दरकार है एक ऐसे मंचान की जहां आजादी महज़ लफ़्ज़ ना रह कर दिलों में दौड़ने वाला खून हो। एक मंचान जहां सेंसरशिप की कैंची ना चले, जहां सच को उतनी ही तवज्जो मिले जितना कि वो हकदार हो, जहां जुबान से निकले अल्फ़ाज़ पर ताले ना लगे, जहां थिरकते कदमों को रोका ना जा सके, जहां रिसते खयालों के बहाव को ऐतराजी के पत्थर इख्तियार ना कर पाए, जहां किसी का कमज़ोर हकीकत भी मुकाबले के माहौल में सांस ले और जहां कला के हर एक रंग में फ़र्क दिखे। ऐसे मंच की दरकार है हमें। ऐसा मंच जहां आजादी किसी चिड़िया का नाम ना होकर रोज़मर्रा की हकीकत हो।

To be a part of our next issue, submit here . (hyperlink this to submissions page)

Submissions :

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

We accept submissions monthly in a window between the 10th and 30th of the month. Our unsolicited submissions are themeless and you can submit any pieces which fit the description below. If we are accepting only themed submissions in the current month, you will find the information below. We are currently a very small organization, therefore are not in a position to pay you. However, with your continuous support, we hope we can rectify this and pay our contributors soon.

Please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Please send your entries to fvsubmission@gmail.com with the subject line "Type of Submission- Your Name- Month of Submission"
For instance, you are submitting a poem for the October Issue, please mention "Poetry Submission - XYZ- October"
- We are currently accepting artworks in the following categories -
 1. Visual Art (Digital / page illustrations)
 2. Photography
 3. Poetry
 4. Cartoons (we appreciate political humour)
- We only accept submissions in English and Hindi/Hindustani. Please ensure submissions are in a readable font and for Hindi submission submit in Devnagri script.

- Please restrict yourself to one submission per month only. Each submission is restricted to a maximum of two poems and three photographs, illustrations or cartoons. Multiple submissions will be left unread.
- Upload any poems in the form of a Word Document or PDF and any images as a PNG/JPG attachment. Put all poems in one document, and start each on a new page. Please title your works, regardless of the type of submission.
- We prefer previously unpublished pieces however are happy to review even previously published ones. If your piece has been published elsewhere please let us in the body of the email.
- Send only complete, fully proofread work. We will not consider revisions apart from formatting and basic editing, this is too difficult administratively for our small staff.

Contact us :

We'd love to have you on board with us.

For any business queries/ collaborations please reach out to forbiddenverses@gmail.com with 'COLLABORATION' in the subject line

To connect with us as an artist please drop an email at fvsbmission@gmail.com with the subject line 'ARTIST COLLABORATION'

For any other purposes please drop your queries below.

(insert query box)