

The Prof. Barbra Naidu Prize for the Personal Essay 2017

Theme

Walking, Like Deciphering...

**ORGANISED BY THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), BANGALORE**

About the Prize

Prof. Barbra Naidu taught English for over two decades at St. Joseph's College, Bangalore and pioneered a remarkable engagement with the student body, one marked by a commitment to conversation, and to a notion of teaching shaped by the diversity of experiences and needs that students might bring. **The Prof. Barbra Naidu Memorial Prize** was instituted in 2013 as a way of keeping this engagement alive, and to find and reward talent in writing.

This year's topic: Walking, like Deciphering..

Travel is somehow always about the horizon, not the familiar streets we keep missing because they have disappeared into habit. In a world where speed and success are often synonymous, what does it mean to slow down so much as to merely walk, without having anywhere in particular to go?

When our neighbourhoods disappear everyday in a blur, much before they actually disappear in some new wave of energetic building, what discoveries might we make if we chose to walk? If all our walking is exasperation or exercise, what is the measure of our loss? And what compensation can we point to?

If our hurrying turns our cities into lost languages, what do we find ourselves learning, or failing to, when we return to the humility of a human pace? What are the stories of our cities that we may unlock for ourselves if we practice walking like an art-form, like intimacy, like it were the slow burn of the need to translate?

The Details

Ø Participants are expected to write a personal, exploratory essay. The submission must be original and offer a lively engagement with experience.

Ø The suggested range is **1500–3000 words**.

Ø The contest is open to school (Std. 8--12) and college students (UG or PG), and to the general public (any age).

Ø Prizes will be awarded in three categories: **Best School Entry, Best College Entry, and Best Open Entry**.

Ø Submissions can be sent by ordinary post to

The English Department,

St. Joseph's College (Autonomous),

No. 36, Lalbagh Road, Bangalore 560027,

handed over in person above, and by email (attach a word document) to **barbranaiduprize@gmail.com**

Ø The last date for receiving submissions (in any form) is **5 Feb 2017**.

Ø The entries will be judged by an independent jury of writers.

Ø The results will be announced on the Facebook page Meta--The Josephite Festival of Literature and on www.metajosephs.in by **15 February 2017**. The prizegiving will be held on the same day.