Kali

to transform a goddess into a gas mask large eyes bulging with millennium’s rage and red slash of tongue twisted into a spiral round and round towards the source of air somewhere there in your throat’s clenched plea where hibiscus blooms stretching its tongue breathing while the ruff of petals raised in praise of evil cleansed oxygen while yellow billows of exhaust fumes and spume of chimneys waste the land stagnant drain by drain round the gas mask’s neck a chain of skulls from culled sacrifices landfill land felled dripping tube tongue lolls half in anger half in shame who to blame the goddess saviour cries fish eyes swimming into oblivion drawn out by that shout into round circles from brow to bone the alien form emerging through smoke hoarse breathing echoing from a million frames the horror the horror of that visage unreeling all prayers to a dark dancer lost image blurred in the appearance of evil guardianship disfigured in beleaguered time’s passing

Anjana Basu