



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Editor's Choice Award Winner, Vidhu Aggarwal's *The Trouble with Humpadori*, Takes Readers on a Wild Poetic Ride

The Trouble with Humpadori, the debut book of poems by Vidhu Aggarwal, introduces readers to a new cosmology. Poet Srikanth Reddy calls the book “a Rabelaisian journey of epic (dis)proportions.” It is the first of the Editor's Choice Award Winners, chosen from nearly 100 manuscripts submitted to The (Great) Indian Poetry Collective, a startup publishing house founded in Bangalore in 2013.

In this debut collection, Aggarwal, a professor at Rollins College in Florida, takes readers on what performance artist Justin Chin calls “an inter-intra-cultural post post-colonial (& then some) deranged wikidickiepsychopedia tilt-a-whirl carnival screw-ride.” Readers follows the progress of Hump (a.k.a. Humpadori, Hum, Om) — a racialized, monstrous, performing entity that morphs across genders and commodity forms. Structured as a set of slapstick theatrical acts borrowing from American comedy routines and minstrel traditions, the book moves from lyric intimacy to predatory rage, examining the “textures” of feeling available to marginalized bodies in a globalized world. Hump navigates time and space as a phenomenal body fractured by fairy tales, tantric symbols, Bollywood spectacle, international icons, and military technologies.

“Vidhu Aggarwal is a poet of the pineal gland,” writes acclaimed experimental poet and Naropa University professor Bhanu Kapil. “She transmits-emits like a unicorn technology in the form of an author. Brilliant and wild, she writes.”

Previous titles from the Collective are *Geography of Tongues* by Shikha Malaviya, *Bountiful Instructions for Enlightenment* by Minal Hajratwala, and *Histories of the Future Perfect* by Ellen Kombiyil. Under a peer mentorship model, the Collective publishes books by innovative, diverse poets with a connection to India and curates the *inPoetry*, app, which debuted in the Google Play Store on Dec. 1, 2015.

Below: Advance praise, author bio, sample poem

For high-resolution images, table of contents, excerpt: [Download via google drive](#)

To request a review copy, please email indianpoetrycollective@gmail.com

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Advance Praise for *The Trouble with Humpadori*

"The Trouble with Humpadori is a Rabelaisian journey of epic (dis)proportions. Introducing the world to the unforgettable Humpadori—an ontological riddle wrapped in a historical enigma, or vice versa—Aggarwal's dazzling collection imagines a new kind of poetic subject who embodies the vexing complexities of identity in Anglophone Indian verse. Traveling a literary landscape of mock-interviews, pseudo-manifestos, concrete poetry, and Bollywood marquees, our hapless protagonist discovers that modern India—and our ancient planet—offers little cover for the endlessly unraveling self. Throughout, the comedy and tragedy of identity alike are illuminated by the spotlight of universal longing. "I'd say we're pretty much all Humpadori," says Humpadori. For reasons beyond me, I whole-heartedly agree."

—Srikanth Reddy, *Facts for Visitors, Voyager, and Changing Subjects: Digressions in Modern American Poetry*

"The Trouble with Humpadori is an inter-intra-cultural post post-colonial (& then some) deranged wikidickiepsychopedia tilt-a-whirl carnival screw-ride of creation-decreation myths, unreliable facts, improbable gossip, discoball narratives, pop (& lock) fairy tales & chainsaw allegories, all in some futuristic language not unlike our own."

—Justin Chin, *Gutted, 98 Wounds, and Mongrel: Essays, Diatribes, + Pranks*

"Vidhu Aggarwal is a poet of the pineal gland. She transmits-emits like a unicorn technology in the form of an author. Brilliant and wild, she writes. Then writes again."

—Bhanu Kapil, *Ban en Banlieue, Humanimal, and Vertical Interrogation of Strangers*

"Through *The Trouble with Humpadori*, Vidhu Aggarwal plumps the "Nub" of Mackey's *Splay Anthem* to a frothy mound of postcolonialism, dark wit, and gender crit. History is a symptom here and the hump is a sty in gazes, a site to see and misread in this exhilarating collection's minstrel show sequences, soundtrack playbacks, love notes, and wild spectacles. Poem by poem, form and deformity get addled and ogled—the HUMP makes a body crook, bedecks it with cleavage, leaves speakers "stuffed with lumpiness/. . . bumsome to the nth" but also busting into enflowered sprawls. What a debut! Don't get over the HUMP, get into it."

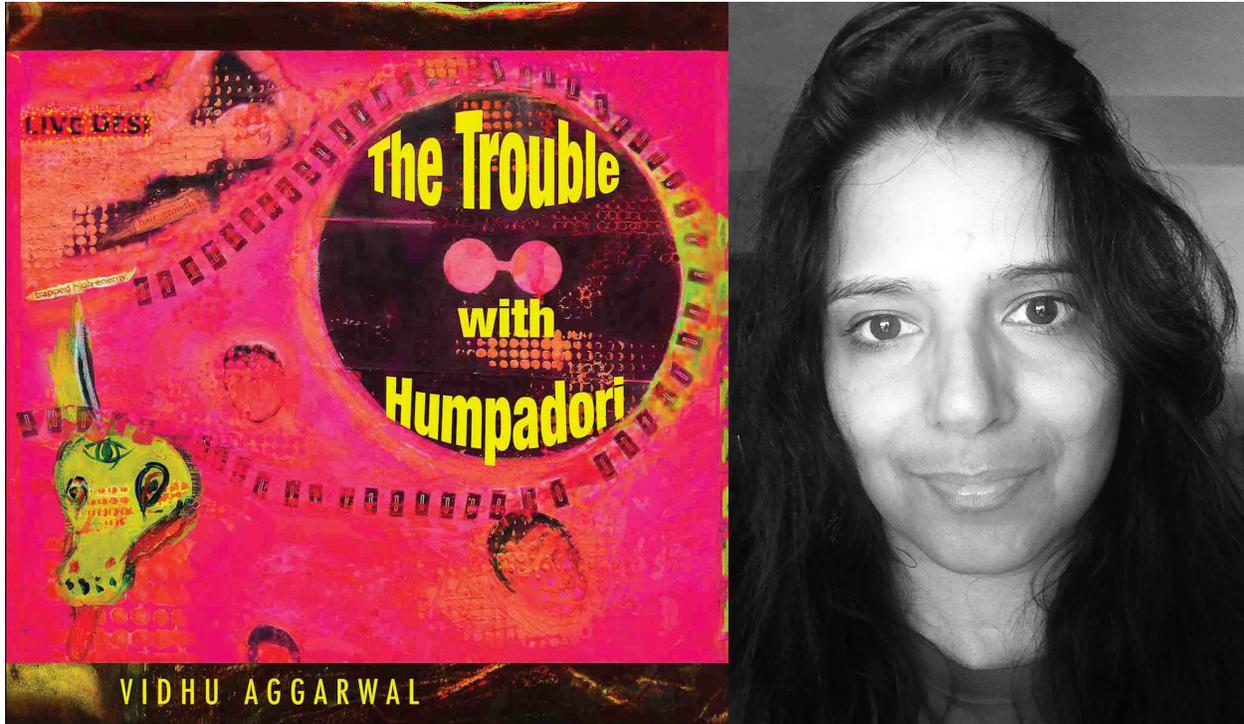
—Douglas Kearney, *The Black Automaton and Patter*

"In *The Trouble with Humpadori*, Vidhu Aggarwal goes all "boogie woogie" with the politics of imperialism and racism, wedding abjection and postcolonialism, exuberance and shame. This book explores the accent, the smear and the mangling of language—the "violence of exchange"—while giving us some of the most "debased kerfuckle" around."

—Johannes Göransson, *The Sugar Book, Haute Surveillance*, co-editor of Action Books

"In *The Trouble with Humpadori* we find a bejeweled and day-glo world in which the figure of Humpadori—human and non-human—performs, taunts, seduces, and critiques with all sorts of 'unfurling action. Here language pulses with vital sounds and inventive word incarnations. Downright serious Vidhu Aggarwal creates contemporary spectacles with shades of myths and dystopias. A fantastically original book!"

—Molly Bendall, *Under the Quick, After Estrangement, Dark Summer, Ariadne's Island*



About the Author

Born in Ranchi, India, Vidhu Aggarwal (vidhu-aggarwal.squarespace.com) grew up in the Southern U.S., primarily in Louisiana and Texas. Her multi-media works in video, poetry, and scholarship are oriented around Bollywood spectacle, Mardi Gras, and science fiction. Her poems have appeared in *Juked*, *[PANK]*, *Sugar House Review*, *INK BRICK*, and Norton's *Language for a New Century: Contemporary Poetry from the Middle East, Asia, and Beyond*, among others. A Kundiman fellow, she is the founding editor of *SPECS*, a multi-media journal with issues on "Homuncular Flexibility," "Toys," and "Faux Histories." She has worked with John Sims Projects on "The 13 Flag Funerals" in Florida, and with artist Bishakh Som on "Lady Humpadori," a poetry/comic book collaboration. Her latest work, *Avatara*, concerns the romance between a temporary Y2K tech worker and a unicorn A.I. She teaches postcolonial and cultural studies, and poetry and poetics at Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida.

To download high-resolution cover and author images, please go to:

<https://drive.google.com/folderview?id=0B67N5ig639lVT2J0c3pDQkJZWlhc&usp=sharing>

About the Collective

The (Great) Indian Poetry Collective is a mentorship model literary press bringing new poetic voices from India to the world. Founded in 2013 in Bangalore, India, the Collective is a not-for-profit, shared work literary press that publishes poets with a connection to India and the Indian diaspora. Through high-quality books, workshops, events, and our innovative inPoetry app, we are building a poetry community in which artistic expression leads to positive action, as each poem initiates a dialogue with society and the greater world.

Poet Advisors

Meena Alexander
Sampurna Chattarji
Eunice de Souza
Carolyn Forché
Ranjit Hoskote
Ravi Shankar
Prageeta Sharma
Arundhathi Subramaniam

Founding Poets

Minal Hajratwala
Ellen Kombiyil
Shikha Malaviya

2015-2017 Collective Poets

Vidhu Aggarwal, Editor's Choice Award
Jennifer Robertson, Editor's Choice Award
Rohan Chhetri, Emerging Poets Prize

Excerpt from *The Trouble with Humpadori* by Vidhu Aggarwal

TAJ MAHAL-ADORI

I've contacted the experts
and they can confirm:
even my dreams

are symmetrical
even when they slide around and purr.

So release in me
a vector of your most encrypted wants—inflatable,
detachable, suspended by wires and drool—and I'll make your perversions beautiful,
a calligraphic frieze

of glowing zigzags and roving tattoos.

We'll go global with your oozing brands, flowering up
neon-cities in your fits of kitsch.

Having scoured the cosmos

for your one and only body, I'll be your avatar
against extinction,

your best-friend-forever-
cum-exotic-stranger, your undiminished
exhibitionist.

Tell me:
What bizarre-o organ would you like to suck?

I'm nostalgic for sensation, circa 1631:
Enter this glittering apparatus. It's all the rage.

Who wouldn't say you were lovable once?