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## Artistic Excellence of Jeet Thayil

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### Abstract

A poet's artistic excellence refers to his high level of skill, creativity, and mastery in his field. It is a subjective assessment of the poet's ability to create compelling and impactful poetry through the use of language, imagery, symbolism, rhythm, and other literary methods. There are some key aspects that contribute to the artistic excellence of a poet such as innovative and original voice, mastery of language, imagery and symbolism, emotional impact, sound and rhythm, depth of meaning, consistency, experimentation, universal relevance and enduring impact etc. with his sensibility to his contemporary surrounding. Thayil's poetry is distinguished by vivid imagery, complex vocabulary, and thought provoking issues. He is well renowned for his novel 'Narcopolis' and was nominated for the Man Booker Prize in 2012. His writing style combines the lyrical and the mundane, resulting in a unique and compelling story. He is not hesitant to test the limits of traditional storytelling and poetic traditions. Thayil isn't hesitant to stray from the rules of traditional poetry and narrative. He frequently tinkers with language, structure, and narrative strategies to give his writing a unique and creative voice. He stands out as a superior artist because of his willingness to take artistic chances. Thayil is a multifaceted artist who, in addition to his literary accomplishments, is also a musician and performer. He was a founding member of the group Sridhar/Thayil, which combined poetry and poetry with elements of rock and electronic music. His artistic expression is enriched by his ability to take inspiration from a variety of sources of which the credit goes to his multidisciplinary approach. Jeet Thayil's work has received various honours and awards. In addition to being on the Man Booker Prize shortlist, he also won the DSC Prize. This paper endeavours to analyse Thayil's poetry collection 'These Errors Are Correct' to have an insight depth of his artistic excellence.

Key words: artistic, poetry, tradition, accomplishment, multidisciplinary, innovative.

## Introduction

“Art is the triumph over chaos.”

- John Cheever

“The world is but a canvas to our imagination”

-Henry David Thoreau

The term “artistic excellence” implies to the distinguished quality and elevated calibre of artistic works of performances. It includes an exceptionally high level of skilled proficiency, inventiveness, and innovation displayed by artists in a variety of artistic mediums, including visual arts, music, literature, dance, theatre and even more. For artistic brilliance a strong commitment to perfecting one’s trade, a thorough understanding of the intended medium, and the capacity to provoke strong feelings or stimulate thought in viewers are tend to be prerequisites. It is an exigency for competence that distinguishes artists and develops the perception of culture and society as a whole. Pablo Picasso quotes, “The purpose of art is washing the dust of daily life off our soul.”

Artistic excellence is the great degree of inventiveness exhibited by a poet. It is a poet’s high level of talent, originality and craftsmanship he exposes through his language in a composition. The capacity of the poet to employ language, imagery, symbolism, rhythm, and other literary methods to produce potent and memorable poetry that connects with the audience is evaluated subjectively.

“A poet is, before anything else, a person who is passionately in love with language”.

-T. S. Eliot

A number of aspects contribute to the artistic excellence of a poet.

#### I. Innovation and Original Voice

A poet’s propensity to enrich his work with novel viewpoints, distinctive writing styles, and imaginative (visionary) expressions is referred to as having an inventive and original voice. It is about departing from conventional conventions and articulating emotions, ideas, and experiences in an unconventional and creative way. Such a poet frequently pushes the limits of language and intellect to enthrall and challenge his audience with novel metaphors, wordplay, and structures. In the world of poetry his voice is a breath of fresh air making a lasting impression and encouraging others to pursue new avenues of self expression. To bring innovation and original voice a poet avoids cliché and sentimentality as cliché work against original communication and it dulls meaning, and sentimentality is “dominated by a blunt appeal to the emotions of pity and love.... Popular subjects are Puppies, grandparents, and young lovers” (Minot 416). “When readers have

the feeling tht emotions like rage or indignation have been pushed artificially for their own sake, they will not take the poem seriously” (Minot 132). He concentrates on using images, metaphors and simile, concrete words instead of abstract and communicative themes etc.

## II. Mastery of Language

A skilled poet knows how to employ language effectively. He has a thorough understanding of grammar, syntax and vocabulary that enables him to create eloquent, evocative and lyrical verses. This profound knowledge of language when a poet in accustomed way uses becomes his diction.

## III. Imagery and Symbolism

Artistic poets have profound ability for creating vivid and compelling imagery through their words. They can create and build pictures with language, employing metaphors, similes and symbols to represent intricate feelings and a strong emotional response. In Writing, imagery refers to the use of colourful language that adds depth. When an object is given a new meaning beyond its original function, this is referred to as symbolism. The reader's mind is given images by imagery. Symbolism suggests that words have a deeper significance. Imagery engages all five senses.

## IV. Emotional Impact

The best poets may affect their audience on an emotional level. Their words have a great effect on the audience, provoking a powerful emotional response, whether it is joy, sorrow, love, or anger. The ability of music to enthrall us and elicit feelings like "chills" and "goosebumps" is generally acknowledged. Although the brain circuits involved seem to be distinct, recited poetry can have similar emotional effects. Although the brain circuits involved seem to be distinct, recited poetry can have similar emotional effects as writing poetry has too.

## V. Sound and Rhythm

The ability of a poet to control the rhythm and melody of his poem is essential. In order to give his poems a musical character, this includes the use of rhyme, metre, alliteration, and other sound elements. Poetry relies heavily on sound and rhythm to enhance its beauty and influence listeners or readers. They add to the overall emotional and aesthetically pleasing experience. By stimulating the senses, evoking emotions, and forming a meaningful, coherent expression of the poet's thoughts and feelings, sound and rhythm enhance poetry. They are essential instruments that poets use to produce art that deeply connects with their audience.

#### VI. Depth of Meaning

Poets that are artistic frequently create poetry with several levels of meaning. Their writing can be read in a variety of ways, allowing readers to gain new perspectives after each reading. Through a combination of deft language use, emotional resonance, and thematic exploration, an artistic poet strives to achieve depth of meaning in his poetry. In order to provide room for interpretation and a personal connection with the readers, poets must be able to succinctly and artistically portray complicated feelings and concepts. It necessitates a skillful balancing act between technique, imagination, and emotional expression.

#### VII. Consistency

A poet exhibits artistic greatness when he continuously produces outstanding work. It is important to maintain a high standard throughout the entire body of work, not simply one exceptional poetry. Poetic consistency is crucial for producing a well-rounded and powerful artistic experience. Consistency does not imply that all poems must be alike or repetitious; rather, it refers to the development of a body of work that is cohesive and has a unified aesthetic voice and vision. One may accept experimentation, but he should make sure that each poem finally serves the main idea and adds to the harmony of the collection.

#### VIII. Experimentation

Poets that aim for aesthetic quality don't hesitate to try out novel forms, techniques, and themes. They push the limits of poetry by taking chances and contesting accepted rules. An artistic poet experiments with a variety of literary tools and poetic styles to produce original and powerful poetry. These tests are designed to provide a creative effect that enthral the reader and improves the aesthetic experience as a whole. It's crucial to remember that poetic experimentation should support the poem's main ideas and purposes. Experimenting excessively and aimlessly can result in obscurity and bewilderment. A competent artistic poet understands how to strike a balance between originality and significance in order to create a powerful and enduring artistic effect in their poems.

#### IX. Universal Relevance

An artistically accomplished poet's subjects frequently strike a chord with a broad audience of readers. Their poetry goes beyond the confines of personal experience and engages with more general facets of the human predicament. For a creative poet, bringing universal significance to a poem is a difficult but gratifying undertaking. It takes careful consideration of many different factors to produce a work that connects with people from varied origins and cultures. An artistic poet might use the following techniques to make their poem relevant to everyone:

By focusing on issues that are universal and cross all societal and cultural borders as well as themes that appeal to humans on an emotional level include love, loss, hope, fear, joy, and human emotions, a poet is able to elicit familiar feelings by discussing these issues.

He uses plain terminology. Steer clear of highly technical terminology and obscure references that might turn readers off. Instead, he utilises language that is simple to understand and accessible to people from various backgrounds. Employing Imagery and metaphor, a creative poet, without significantly depending on cultural references, uses vivid imagery and metaphorical language to communicate complicated ideas and emotions. Visual and sensory descriptions have the capacity to stir up strong feelings that connect with a wide audience.

He creates characters and scenarios in the poetry that entice readers to identify with other people's challenges and experiences in order to foster empathy. Developing empathy can aid in bridging cultural divides and fostering a sense of our common humanity.

He also explores the universal experiences that, regardless of background, the majority of individuals go through at some point in their life. Birth, death, adolescence, and self-discovery are a few examples of experiences that can bring people together through a common understanding.

While aiming for universal applicability, including personal experiences can give the poetry more authenticity and depth. Since they highlight the universal themes that run through human existence, personal stories frequently have a universal quality.

It's important to keep cultural sensitivities in mind while attempting to be universal. A wider audience is more likely to enjoy and accept a poem that respects other cultural perspectives.

Sharing the poem with a variety of individuals and inviting their feedback to test and revise it makes a poem universal too. Paying attention to how various readers respond to the poem, then making any necessary changes to expand its applicability bring a poet to universality.

## X. Enduring Impact

The influence of a poet's work endures over time, which is another common way to assess their aesthetic greatness. Poets are regarded as having attained a high level of artistic brilliance if they leave a lasting legacy and continue to have an impact on future generations.

It's crucial to remember that artistic brilliance is a personal judgement that varies from person to person. It may not be the same for every reader to agree that a piece of poetry is outstanding. However, some poets have received almost unanimous praise for their artistic brilliance throughout history, making them legendary personalities in the literature world.

## Jeet Thayil's Artistic Excellence

Jeet Thayil is a well-known poet, novelist, and musician from India. His work has received high praise for its artistic quality, and the following are some factors that support this:

**Poetry:** The beautiful imagery, complex vocabulary, and thought-provoking issues of Thayil's poetry set it apart. He delves into subjects like love, addiction, desire, and grief as he frequently examines the complexities of human emotions and experiences. His poetry has a command of language and structure, demonstrating his capacity to use words to make a strong impact. Dom Moraes praises "Theses Errors Are Correct" as "Splendidly structured, both skilful and forceful."

**Writing novels:** Jeet Thayil is particularly well-known for his book "Narcopolis," which won acclamation from critics and made the 2012 Man Booker Prize shortlist. The book is a poetic and unsettling examination of Mumbai's multidecade-long opium and drug culture. Thayil's narrative is distinctive and engrossing because of the way he combines the lyrical with the prosaic in his writing.

"Outstanding debut novel... The ingenuity of Thayil's novel lies in how he has squeezed this entire universe into an opium pipe."

-Independent

**Experimentalism:** Thayil isn't hesitant to stray from the rules of traditional poetry and narrative. He frequently tinkers with language, structure, and narrative strategies to give his writing a unique and creative voice. He stands out as a superior artist because of his willingness to take artistic chances.

**Multidisciplinary Talent:** Thayil is a multifaceted artist who, in addition to his literary accomplishments, is also a musician and performer. He was a founding member of the band Sridhar/Thayil, which combined poetry with elements of rock and electronic music. His artistic expression is enriched by his ability to take inspiration from a variety of sources revealing his multidisciplinary approach.

Awards and recognition: Jeet Thayil's work has received various honours and awards. In addition to being on the Man Booker Prize shortlist, he has won the Sahitya Akademi Award (the highest literary honour in India) and the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature for his poetry collection "These Errors Are Correct."

Social and Cultural Relevance: Thayil's writings frequently discuss relevant social and cultural concerns in India and other countries. His writing is not only superb artistically but also socially significant since he provides insights into the intricacies of the human condition and confronts difficult truths with a sharp eye.

Jeet Thayil's capacity to create vivid, thought-provoking, and original works that connect with readers and have a long-lasting effect on the literary landscape constitutes the majority of his artistic quality. He is one of India's most renowned contemporary authors for his contributions to both poetry and fiction.

## Poetic Art of Thayil

Indian poet, novelist, and musician Jeet Thayil is well-known for his original and peculiar poetic style. His first collection of poems, "These Errors Are Correct," was released in 2008 and received critical acclaim from both readers and critics. The following characteristics best describe Thayil's poetry work in this collection:

Themes: Thayil's poetry explores a wide variety of subjects, frequently illuminating the difficulties of urban life, the human condition, history, spirituality, and India's rich cultural diversity. He examines the tension between tradition and modernity, the problems of disadvantaged groups, and the existential concerns that plague people in a rapidly changing world.

Vocabulary and images: Thayil uses a rich, evocative vocabulary that frequently incorporates strong, vivid imagery. He expertly crafts words into a tapestry of feelings and sensations that carries readers into the heart of his poetry. His use of similes and metaphors gives his verses richness and resonance.

Experimental Forms: Thayil is renowned for his desire to try out different poetry structures and forms. He combines conventional forms with modern elements in "These Errors Are Correct," displaying his versatility as a poet. Free verse poems, sonnets, ghazals, and other poetry forms are all included in the anthology.

Urban Sensitivity: Thayil's poetry frequently exhibits a sensibility to the city, reflecting the rhythms and intricacies of city life. He perfectly conveys the frantic energy, alienation, and aspirations of city dwellers.

“I’m trying to forget  
 those days one day at  
 time---  
 a  
 the pitiful rooms  
 with their puddles of light,  
 the women I haggled with,  
 the car stopped in the street,”

-These Errors Are Correct (2022:95)

Thayil's sensitivity dwells in these aspirations of 'car' and 'street' which represents city life and its peculiarity imbued with complex lifestyle of city dwellers. He has serene involvement in their life reflects through his lines. His collection of sonnets under the title 'Premonition' arranges his sense of alienation due to loss. For instance, sonnet no 03 of 'Premonition' depicts strongly how much the poet is detaching himself from the present scene.

At night, in my dream, you return to ask the time,

And each time I take the same reply, Better to die than to lie like this, without you.

- These Errors Are Correct (2022:12)

Social Commentary: Thayil offers insightful views and social commentary in his poetry on societal problems. He brings attention to a variety of sociopolitical issues without avoiding touchy or sensitive matters. His works frequently address topics like urban living, addiction, cultural upheavals, and existential reflections, among others, and they provide insightful analyses of modern society and the human condition. Thayil's comment on contemporary society is just which is heading to monetary direction madly

Money was a consideration. Some worked like dogs for  
it, some worked against it.

- These Errors Are Correct (2022:5)

Mythology and spirituality: Thayil's work frequently explores Indian mythology and spirituality. He finds inspiration in religious traditions and antiquated writings, which gives his poetry a mystical and intellectual undertone. 'The Annotated Gita' opens the true spirituality Jeet Thayil explores as

Everything that lives, will live forever, will live whatever the odds they receive, in rooms that resemble no  
rooms we know.

-These Errors Are Correct (2022:24)

For Thayil Jesus, Buddha, Mohamed, Gandhi, Beethoven are inspiration in the prevailing adverse condition of rapidly changing world.

This is Bodhgaya where a leafless tree  
gives more shade than a house.

-These Errors Are Correct (2022:2)



Music and rhythm: In to being a poet, Thayil is a musician who has made a significant contribution to the music scene in India. His poetry reflects this musical sensitivity, as he frequently writes poems with a rhythmic character that appeal to readers.

In general, Thayil's poetry has a more approachable and modern tone. He frequently employs everyday language, vivid imagery, and subjects that are relevant to contemporary life. His writing is more direct and expressive on an emotional level. The brilliant poetry of "These Errors Are Correct" by Jeet Thayil bravely addresses the human experience with all of its flaws, beauty, and complexity. As one of the most captivating voices in modern Indian poetry, his distinctive fusion of language, imagery, and subject studies has established him as a leading figure. The general perception of Jeet Thayil as a poet is that of a fearless and creative author whose poetry displays a thorough investigation of human emotions, urban life, and cultural interconnections. His writing has received praise from the literary community, and he is still an important voice in Indian contemporary literature. His writing displays a diverse spectrum of influences, ideas, and emotions, and he has carved out a place for himself in the modern poetry landscape.

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