

Ward Parks Seminars

2025 Avatar's Abode

Baba's House



The Art of Praise as a Path to God

Francis Brabazon's Poetic Legacy as
Foundation-laying for a New World Civilization

Civilizations are based on the loves that they cherish; and in the minds and hearts of the people of a civilization, these loves are upheld through the art of praise. In truth, all praise belongs to God. When people praise God through the forms of art that their lives cultivate, God guides them on the road to felicity and blesses them with their own highest good.

Four live Saturday sessions:

May 17, 24, 31,

June (not 7) 14

3pm to 5pm

Among Meher Baba's disciples, no one played a greater role of articulating this understanding of the role of art in civilization than His great Australian disciple and poet Francis Brabazon. Stay with God, which Meher Baba characterized as second only to God Speaks, stands as his most developed statement on this subject. But many other works of his bring the "art of praise" into practice. His songs and ghazals, many of them composed during the years of Francis's residence at Meherazad as one of Meher Baba's mandali, developed the art of praise-and-complaint between lover and Beloved as it has not been known before in the Western world, though the East has long traditions in this regard. But in other major works, such as The East-West Gathering and The Word at World's End, Francis brought the poetic art to interpretive cultural commentary and historical narrative in ways that will exert immense influence in the years to come. In this study program we will delve into Francis Brabazon's poetic legacy, not so much as a personal accomplishment on Francis's part but as an act of foundation-laying for the new world civilization that will arise in the aftermath of the new Avataric Advent. Art in various forms—poetry, plays, songs and musical composition, painting, films and video, architecture—have played a pivotal role in helping to formulate our collective vision of Who He is and in providing channels for the expression of our love for Him. This four-part series will view a selection from the body of Francis's poetic work as a beacon and signpost for how art could be used as a Divine Path now and in the years to come.

Schedule of Sessions and Topics (Excluding June 7th - Anniversary)

<p>Saturday afternoon, May 17, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m</p>	<p>Session 1. “The Main Theme: Art as Praise”</p>	<p>Topic A. Art as the imitation of the Real. Topic B. Passages on the significance of art in Book V of <i>Stay with God</i>. Topic C. Praise and complaint in the ghazal form: some readings from <i>In Dust I Sing</i> Topic D. The panegyric—a case study: “Hymn to God the Man” in <i>The Word at World’s End</i>.</p>
<p>Saturday afternoon, May 24, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m</p>	<p>Session 2. “The Art of the Lyric: Songs and Sonnets in <i>The East-West Gathering</i>”</p>	<p>Topic A. A brief introduction to metrics and rhyme in the song and sonnet forms. Topic B. Some songs and sonnets from the English language tradition. Topic C. A reading of several songs and sonnets from <i>The East-West Gathering</i> (1963).</p>
<p>Saturday afternoon, May 31, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m</p>	<p>Session 3. “Historical Narrative as Poetic Art: Francis’s Transformation of an Event into Poetic Revelation in <i>The East-West Gathering</i>”</p>	<p>Topic A. How Francis handles the historical “plot line”: the poem’s division into six sections. Topic B. Comic and topical passages and moments. Topic C. A meditation on the contrast between Baba’s public presentation and his hidden state of suffering. Topic D. The “city of love” and its inhabitants. Topic E. Poignancies: the wrapping up of the narrative.</p>
<p>Saturday afternoon, June 14, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m</p>	<p>Session 4. “The Uses of Irony: Caustic Cultural Critique and the Praise of God in <i>the Word at World’s End</i>”</p>	<p>Topic A. Dystopian vision in “A Dream of Wet Pavements.” Topic B. “A day in the life” as the organizing narrative principle in “A Dream of Wet Pavements” and “The Young Poems.” Topic C. Irony and the sympathetic portrayal of spiritual beginners in “A Dream of Wet Pavements” and “The Ballad of the Rhyming Knight.” Topic D. Apocalypticism in “After the Flood.”</p>

The focal texts.

Though *Stay with God* has just been republished in a new, Fourth Edition, since time is limited, and since many in the Avatar’s Abode community are already well acquainted with this Francis’s masterpiece, in this study program we will concentrate mainly on other works that have received less attention, particularly *The East-West Gathering* (1963) and *The World at World’s End* (1971), though on occasion we will dip into the treasury of his ghazals in *In Dust I Sing* (1974).

Zoom:

Avatars Abode Trust is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Art of Praise

Time: May 17, 2025 03:00 PM Brisbane

Every week on Sat, until Jun 14, 2025, 4 occurrences **(excluding June 7th)**

Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.

Weekly: [https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/](https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/tZcrfuypqjwrH9KvdL5twHPzoJHRVz69QGRQ/ics?icsToken=DlnaDgKViYNH0_PwNwAALAAAKn1DETdHNJbcJ2V73HoG7T6wzbhDeGfVlaKgrwZ4k5bIPoh3WwBsGdaLG9k0ISV79bAVTD9dpXyEUyNyjAwMDAwMQ&meetingMasterEventId=q71Tky-XQsqBR3rW3TGq7g)

[tZcrfuypqjwrH9KvdL5twHPzoJHRVz69QGRQ/ics?](https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/tZcrfuypqjwrH9KvdL5twHPzoJHRVz69QGRQ/ics?icsToken=DlnaDgKViYNH0_PwNwAALAAAKn1DETdHNJbcJ2V73HoG7T6wzbhDeGfVlaKgrwZ4k5bIPoh3WwBsGdaLG9k0ISV79bAVTD9dpXyEUyNyjAwMDAwMQ&meetingMasterEventId=q71Tky-XQsqBR3rW3TGq7g)

[icsToken=DlnaDgKViYNH0_PwNwAALAAAKn1DETdHNJbcJ2V73HoG7T6wzbhDeGfVlaKgrwZ4k5bIPoh3WwBsGdaLG9k0ISV79bAVTD9dpXyEUyNyjAwMDAwMQ&meetingMasterEventId=q71Tky-XQsqBR3rW3TGq7g](https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/tZcrfuypqjwrH9KvdL5twHPzoJHRVz69QGRQ/ics?icsToken=DlnaDgKViYNH0_PwNwAALAAAKn1DETdHNJbcJ2V73HoG7T6wzbhDeGfVlaKgrwZ4k5bIPoh3WwBsGdaLG9k0ISV79bAVTD9dpXyEUyNyjAwMDAwMQ&meetingMasterEventId=q71Tky-XQsqBR3rW3TGq7g)

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83695147156?](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83695147156?pwd=i9jxCum7H3TNwA628MEdrsTlbSea9V.1)

[pwd=i9jxCum7H3TNwA628MEdrsTlbSea9V.1](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83695147156?pwd=i9jxCum7H3TNwA628MEdrsTlbSea9V.1)

Meeting ID: 836 9514 7156

Passcode: 794557