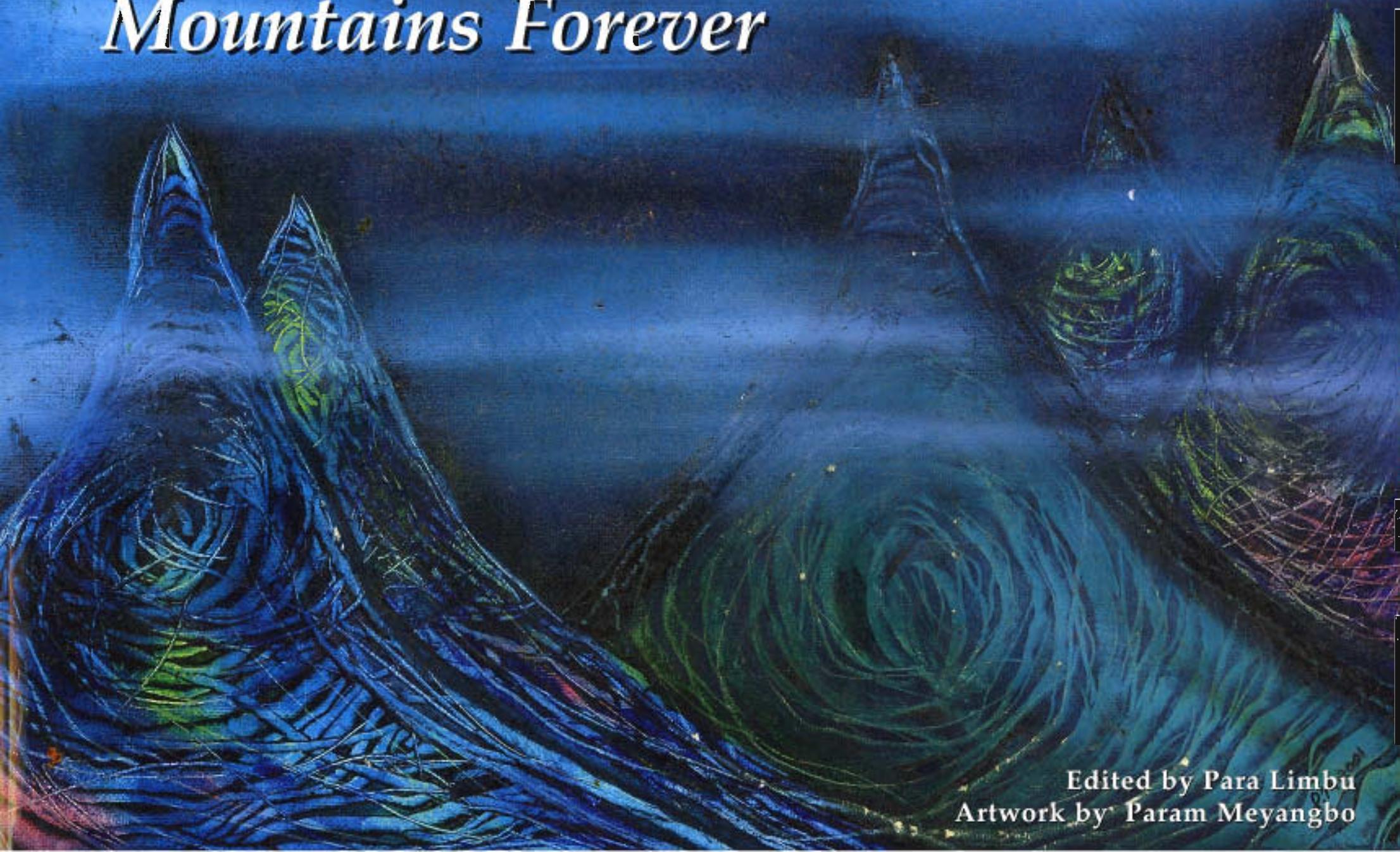


# *Mountains Forever*



Edited by Para Limbu  
Artwork by Param Meyangbo

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## ***Mountains Forever***

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Artwork by Param Meyangbo

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stories and essays, the contributors;

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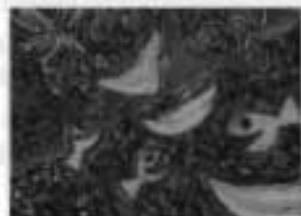
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Neil Walton, Country Director, Helvetas Nepal  
Pallav Ranjan, Founder, Spiny Babbler

## The Twenty Nation Short Story Program

by Para Limbu, Project Leader, Mountains Forever



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# Foreword



*Mountains Forever* is more than a book about mountains. It is a book of stories about mountains by mountain children and youths for their counterparts in other mountain countries across the world. It began as a collection of short stories from 20 countries. The idea was forwarded to the Asia Pacific Mountain Network (APMN) – a project of ICIMOD funded by Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) and in recent years the Asian Node of the Mountain Forum Network – by Spiny Babbler, a young people's media organization in Nepal. The small grant award given by APMN supported adventures in prose and paintings about the mountains by young mountain people.

The paintings themselves, all produced by a young mountain woman, Param Meyangbo, constitute the illustrations to the stories which evoked in the artist the vibrant colors of the mountains and the vivid imaginations of the young authors. ICIMOD is proud to be a part of this endeavour, to experience an awakening in the next generation of enthusiasm for their mountain world and a desire to describe it in their terms – terms of joy rather than gloom.

I take this opportunity to thank Neil Walton and Helvetas Nepal for co-sponsoring the publication of this book with us to celebrate the International Year of Mountains (2002). Thanks are also due to Neil and his team for finding for us the young author and story from Switzerland. I would also like to thank the Spiny Babbler team led by Pallav Ranjan for their unfailing enthusiasm for this work. It is indeed gratifying to find such strong echoes of our own enthusiasm for mountains and their people in the future generation of workers for mountain development.

J. Gabriel Campbell  
Director General  
ICIMOD

## ◀ helvetas Nepal ▶

Helvetas is very pleased to share support for the production of this book. Even though mountains have always been there, this kind of cross-country story-telling by children themselves has not. Let us hope this small contribution helps to bring children and adults a little closer together and adds to the sharing of cross-cultural perceptions and feelings.



Neil Walton  
Country Director  
Helvetas Nepal



## Spiny Babbler

This book you hold in your hands is the output of young people of twenty nations. It was two years ago that Spiny Babbler received some support from the Asia Pacific Mountain Network to initiate "Mountains Forever," a project that would encourage young people to learn and present mountain environments, cultures, and lifestyles in creative ways.

Para Limbu was already spearheading Spiny Babbler organization's arts related multi-national involvements. Selected Short Stories of Australia and Neighbouring Islands, Selected Poems of Europe, Selected Poems of the United Kingdom, an extensive website at [www.spinybabbler.org](http://www.spinybabbler.org) were some efforts that were going on. She is also the editor of *Pen and Ink* for International PEN's Nepal Chapter, an organization with a hundred twenty chapters in seventy-four countries. It was she that led this new project "Mountains Forever" across four continents.

The challenge facing Spiny Babbler was to initiate contact with governments, youth clubs, educational institutions, and related networks and through them to youths. The project had to encourage youth in as many countries as possible to learn and research mountain environments, cultures, and lifestyles and write about them. Spiny Babbler had to select a wide range of stories and essays based on research, imagination, and legends and come out with products that would help share this knowledge with an international audience.

The creations that have come out of the project have helped Spiny Babbler come up with several outputs. These include a webpages concentrating on this project within [www.spinybabbler.org](http://www.spinybabbler.org), a book of stories published by Spiny Babbler as *Young Minds of Twenty Nations*, and this book *Mountains*

*Forever* published by the International Centre of Integrated Mountain Development with Helvetas Swiss Development Agency.

While presentation of the outputs of this project in other forms are being discussed, Spiny Babbler realizes how important it is to involve young minds in sharing their concerns and joys and reaching out and communicating their ideas, knowledge, and love for this world, particularly the mountains that they live with. At this time, Spiny Babbler features an average one hundred youth volunteers who are working with arts in ways that help the mentally ill, people facing life-threatening conditions, girls at risk, and others. The work of these young people in Nepal and the young people of four continents who share with us these stories are genuine and heart touching.

Whether fantasy, solid research, folklore, simple statements, or science fiction, I hope that you enjoy these creations. And I sincerely thank Neil Walton at Helvetas and Greta Rana and Beatrice Shrestha at ICIMOD for making this particular output of the project possible.

Pallav Ranjan  
Founder  
Spiny Babbler