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FROGPOND



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HAIKU SOCIETY OF AMERICA

HAIKU SOCIETY OF AMERICA
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WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

Again this year we have seen a tremendous surge of interest in haiku and renga here in the States. Second printings of the Haiku Anthology and Haiku Handbook have been on the shelves in bookstores for months. At the same time, more than twenty-six books were submitted for the Merit Book Awards and the caliber of work was well above the average.

We also hosted with other organizations the Association of International Renku with Tadashi and Kris Kondo and other Japanese masters of the art. They toured five cities here and will soon publish a Collection of Renku from their North American experiences.

On the West Coast, the Haiku Poets of Northern California are planning a second Haiku North American Conference in July of 1993. Added to this is interest in a three part educational film entitled "Haiku in Japan and North America" which is being promoted as a joint venture in North America and Japan by Arts & Sciences Productions of San Francisco and the Japan Foundation.

As you are also aware, *FROGPOND* has taken on a new look and from all the correspondence received, the new format is a success. More haiku and articles will be forthcoming as the awareness of haiku continues to grow in universities and schools.

Next year we will have five Regional Coordinators who will help to enlist new members for HSA and promote the Society in their own areas with readings, workshops, and discussion groups. For those of you who wish more information about happenings in your area, contact your local Regional Coordinator. Next year we hope to have representation from the other four regions who have yet to nominate a coordinator.

It has been a pleasure to represent HSA this year. I don't think a day has passed without some correspondence from old and new members as well as letters from around the world. There is an eagerness out there to communicate with one another and the haiku moment is our way of saying, let's share. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to represent your interests this past year.

—Raffael De Gruttola

MUSEUM OF HAIKU LITERATURE (TOKYO) AWARDS

\$25 Awards for previously unpublished material from
Frogpond XV:1

Haiku

An old woman with bread
waves the geese down
from the sky.

—*Alexis Rotella*

over the earth's edge
they all go—the white clouds
and the one sailboat

—*George Swede*

Sequences

amish territory —*Elizabeth St Jacques*

Windswept Walk—*Michael Dylan Welch, et al.*

first day of autumn . . .
crickets still singing
their summer songs
—*Kenneth Tanemura*

wild blackberry
bushes picked clean —
by summer
—*Cathy Drinkwater Better*

My health coming back—
I clutch an acorn
in my fist.
—*Alexis Rotella*

at the door
with the morning paper
this red maple leaf
—*Peter Duppenthaler*

First day of school—
even the cat's tail
a question mark
—*Constance Morgenstern*

autumn stroll . . .
the swirl of leaves
behind a passing car
—*Michael Dylan Welch*

so quiet
by the roadside
Queen Anne's lace
—*Bruce Ross*

bright fall day—
the brook wandering off
its shimmer lingers

—*H.F. Noyes*

the coolness beneath the willows
a goldfinch flies
into dusk

—*Wally Swist*

Late September—
the cathedral
in lavender light.

—*Alexis Rotella*

autumn leaves
turning my windowpane
to stained glass

—*Ce Rosenow*

Over the church—
A red-tailed hawk,
A snake in its claws

—*Stanley M. Sutton, Jr.*

lizard
gone into the shade—
a sparkle

—*Yasuko Yasui*

illuminating
the dusk
sunflower harvest

—*Margarita M. Engle*

new moon
children camping
in my backyard
—*Barry Goodmann*

thrown on the fire
the log comes alive
with ants
—*Frank Higgins*

without thought
until after
squashing the gypsy moth
—*Tom Clausen*

shaggymane—
grazing on its inky cap,
a snail
—*Emily Romano*

darkening path
the white morning glories
lead the way
—*Wilma M. Erwin*

After the pebble splash,
the stars go back
to where they were.
—*Alexis Rotella*

bird in the night—
what's keeping *you*
awake?
—*Peter Yovu*

early morning walk:
under the white moon
a twig snaps
—*Edward J. Rielly*

Tai Chi
on the high hill
waving hands in clouds
—*Shelby Gallier*

a pause for breath:
a few asters still blue
among the white puffs
—*Harvey Hess*

autumn stillness—
the logger's footprint
left in wood dust
—*Michael Dylan Welch*

In my sleeping bag
in a fetal position;
this cold autumn night
—*Tom Tico*

a shift in the wind
the leaves of the old bush
start to change
—*Michael Ketchek*

Deepening autumn—
my begging cup accepts
the falling leaves
(*after Santoka*)
—*H.F. Noyes*

by day, the leafblower
by night, the zapper
mountain hideaway
—*Carol Montgomery*

the pruned oak
looks chilly
in the wind
—*William Hart*

Moving day—
in the woods behind the house
leaves letting go
—*Kristen Deming*

late autumn
the last leaf
hurries down the street
—*Peter Duppenhaler*

late autumn
in flight . . . flocks of birds
on my wall
—*Nancy Mosburg*

In the grove
Fallen apples
Fill the air
—*Bert Noia*

kicking the scent
from fallen leaves
how blue his eyes were!
—*Ebba Story*

All Saints' Day
a fissure running down
the pumkin's face
—*Jeanne Harrington*

peep of nestlings—
the scarecrow swollen
beneath her apron
—*Jim Kacian*

crawling up
toward the harvest moon
a spider
—*Kohjin Sakamoto*

ants, too, enjoy
the dish of wild berries
beside the headstone
—*Caroline G. Banks*

waning moon:
darkness swells
inside the pumpkin
—*Ruth Yarrow*

tucking bulbs
into their beds:
childless couple
—*Emily Romano*

Its scarlet berries
trembling in November wind—
the pyracantha.
—*Gloria A. Maxson*

nothing but rain—
toadstools emerging
from the welcome mat
—*Yvonne Hardenbrook*

they pass
slanted all the same—
umbrellas
—*Peter Yovu*

umbrella blossoms
even the city smells good
in the rain
—*John Thompson*

typing
the tap tap
of rain
—*Kristen Deming*

Rainy night—
A frantic moth
At the window of light
—*Akira Kawano*

opening the blinds
reading your letter in light
and shadow
—*David Hood*

city night—
in the rain-wet street
a deeper darkness
—*Lawrence Rungren*

wind through
the firs . . .
the rain falls twice
—*Daniel Mills*

hunched in the rain
the hunter becomes
his environment
—*Emily Romano*

beneath beads of rain
on the barbed wire fence
a racoon's matted fur
—*Wally Swist*

autumn rain
all around the compost heap
sprouting mushrooms
—*Peter Duppenhaler*

rain on the roof
the hermit crab claws
its dark cage
—*Nina A. Wicker*

Monday rain
the moonflower opens
all the way
—*Alexis Rotella*

leftover
on the spider's web
last night's rain
—*Pamela Connor*

morning sunlight
through oak leaves
goldfinch song
—*Mark Rutter*

tornado trash heap . . .
a breeze thumbing through
the Yellow Pages
—*K.H. Clifton*

Wilson's warbler—
in the white-alder wood
such yellow!
—*June Hopper Hymas*

falling leaves
day by day
the house grows brighter
—*Peter Duppenenthaler*

four birds perching:
one by one
the breeze pulls them away
—*J.P. Slater*

walking alone after arguing—
the thorns
of the floss silk tree
—*Carrie Etter*

Fly as he might
the mallard cannot escape
his own reflection
—*Clifford S. Johnson*

snap of the twig
the forest stops
to listen

—*Peter Duppenthaler*

at the end of the pier
over the still lake,
an empty wheelchair

—*William Woodruff*

deep
within the pond—
the forest

—*Nika*

drought-brown hills—
the windmill's shadow
fans the roadway

—*Michael Dylan Welch*

desert moon—
tumbleweeds roll their shadows
across the road

—*Christopher Herold*

quiet evening—
a spider walks its shadow
on the wall

—*Tom Clausen*

Autumn moon—
I pass an old friend
and say nothing.

—*Alexis Rotella*

moon-silvered pond
a gold carp swims
through the pleiades
—*Marie Forsyth*

pond's edge,
where we once spoke—
the thud of green plums
—*Ebba Story*

among fallen apples
the stallion
stamps his hoof
—*Peter Yovu*

heavy with fruit
the grapevines cling to the hills
full harvest moon
—*Wilma M. Erwin*

sidewalk fruit stand
the fragrance of apples
thickens the air
—*Ebba Story*

leaves scraping
in a slow circle
autumn afternoon
—*T. Melser*

Shadow after shadow
falls from the dogwood—
the end of autumn
—*Rebecca Lilly*

autumn morning;
imagining ocean
behind the fog
—*Ce Rosenow*

green sea
a jellyfish
flowers out
—*Makiko*

hauling in the catch—
the sardines bring with them
all the ocean's colors
—*Frank Higgins*

at the ocean's edge
honeymooners in the sun
build a sand castle
—*Tom Clausen*

the pause
before the big wave
breaks
—*Paul O. Williams*

feeling the *mana*
in the crashing surf—
'Iniki
—*Darold D. Braida*

lavender storm clouds
one following another
into the leaden sea
—*Mary Lou Bittle-DeLapa*

seaside breeze
bringing the mist in
with the morning paper
—*Anthony J. Pupello*

How the spider
runs over the sand
as if on air
—*Marje A. Dyck*

alighting on a starfish
the butterfly
taken by a wave
—*Michael Dylan Welch*

on the cliff
a wildflower gone to seed
twitches in the wind
—*Michael Ketchek*

End of the season:
just beyond the ocean's reach,
a clump of rose hips.
—*Caroline Rowe Martens*

changing
tide
footprints
suddenly
end
—*Jim Kacian*

warming my fingers
on this bowl of clam chowder
the pale winter sea
—*Ebba Story*

Setting the clock
back too tired
to stay up the extra hour
—*David Elliott*

election day—
throughout the city
thick fog
—*Paul O. Williams*

From the sand dollar
I used as a paperweight—
a trickle of beach
—*Tom Tico*

a seagull's cry
carried on the wind
drifts in with the tide
—*Peter Duppenhaler*

Waning moon
still
no blood.
—*Alexis Rotella*

In the moonlight
The empty house
Emptier
—*Bert Noia*

cafe sideboard—
a plastic blossom
drooping in the sun
—*John O'Connor*

just after the closing
on the new house:
nicer one for sale!
—*Emily Romano*

in the attic:
an old sleeping bag rolled
with childhood
—*Tom Clausen*

moving day
as the house is emptied
the echoes grow
—*John Thompson*

empty rooms
no one to tell
you're pregnant
—*Jerry A. Judge*

Yard sale
last look
at childhood
—*Jerry A. Judge*

My many houses
in none of them the feeling
of being at home
—*Gunther Klinge*
(*adapted from the German by Ann Atwood*)

closing up the house . . .
the rough board's weight
on his old shoulders
—*Elizabeth St Jacques*

cutting the first grey
from my beard
before leaving
—*John O'Connor*

so many years
carved
on the woodcarver's face
—*Mark Arvid White*

travel itinerary
Dad lists all the villages
where he can't be reached
—*B.H. Feingold*

distancing herself
the geologist's daughter
takes astronomy
—*John J. Dunphy*

ten year old
looking for sex
in the dictionary
—*Deborah L. White*

always black or white
her clothes
her thoughts
—*Peggy Heinrich*

the picture
when her back is turned—
crooked again
—*Yvonne Hardenbrook*

flea market:
I spy a book
of my poems!

—*Emily Romano*

Pulling and begging
at the end of his leash
the dog's owner

—*Mykel Board*

used car lot
the kung fu master
kicking tires

—*John J. Dunphy*

circus dwarf—
so high above his hand
the red balloon

—*John O'Connor*

hugging a doll
in a dark corner of the cage
a gorilla

—*Kohjin Sakamoto*

The rest home hall—
piped-in music drowning out
somebody's cry.

—*Gloria A. Maxson*

Against the northwind
Women stand gossiping,
Not facing each other.

—*Ryokufu Ishizaki*

cityscape:
a million lights
a single star

—*Nika*

Outside the bistro
red napkins on the sidewalk
where the mobster fell.

—*Robert M. Binkins*

murder victim's outline
kids fill in
the private parts

—*D. J. Dunwhite*

Los Angeles
using a bullet hole
to hang a painting

—*D. J. Dunwhite*

police lights—
body in the street,
a yellow tabby

—*Randy M. Brooks*

siren
red light in black air—
not my turn

—*Thomas A. Tweed*

Snow on the graves—
the sound
of a distant plane.

—*Alexis Rotella*

the gravedigger
surprises his new wife
with day-old roses
—*Pamela Connor*

Her hello—
hearing the goodbye
in it.
—*Alexis Rotella*

getting used to your voice
long distance—
winter chill
—*Kimberly Cortner*

tuning his mandoline
my father's gnarled fingers
listening
—*John O'Connor*

after a walk
the answering machine
still not flashing
—*Robert Tannen*

after death—
answering machine saying
she'll return your call
—*Jerry A. Judge*

five years later
mom keeping dad alive
in phone book
—*Jerry A. Judge*

at the library
returning "Better Memory"—
overdue

—*Marie Forsyth*

Grey winter drizzle;
beneath an arc of branches
two ruffled doves

—*B.H. Feingold*

in the hospital courtyard
poplar leaves fluttering—
some letting go

—*Kay F. Anderson*

another doctor
same diagnosis
her fourth second opinion

—*John J. Dunphy*

ironing, waiting
for the hospital to call
pressing the black dress first

—*K. Middleton*

Before dying,
Dad waits for Mom
to leave the room.

—*Alexis Rotella*

For Dad's seventy-second
birthday,
a gravestone.

—*Alexis Rotella*

All around
the war memorial
marijuana plants.
—*Alexis Rotella*

yesterday's coins
are gone from the fountain
homeless woman dries her feet
—*K. Middleton*

American flag
used for warmth
by the homeless
—*Jerry A. Judge*

in an alley, huddled
in a tattered Stars and Stripes,
a homeless boy
—*William Woodruff*

above the homeless
high-rise windows reflect
a rainbow
—*Christopher Schendel*

Through shatterproof glass
commuters watch the ghetto
recede in the dusk.
—*Robert M. Binkins*

Late autumn sleet—
a hooded passenger waits
for the evening train
—*Rebecca Lilly*

peering at manuscripts
under museum glass
I feel illuminated

—*H.F. Noyes*

old Bible
a pressed leaf
over the family tree

—*John J. Dunphy*

all the way to church
this morning, stepping
on your shadow

—*David Hood*

The priest dips the child
Into the eternal spring—
Water splashing sound.

—*Rev. William J. Teverczuk*

his black habit:
the Benedictine Monk
sips brandy

—*Anthony J. Pupello*

thirty years later
he still wears the medal
the priest gave him
not to tell

—*John J. Dunphy*

after the beating
father and son both crying
in different rooms

—*John J. Dunphy*

At Uncle's grave,
the cleaning lady
sobbing.

—*Alexis Rotella*

weeping as always—
winter willows'
black and white

—*Harvey Hess*

a large black ant
traces a figure eight
on the white tile floor

—*Doris Lynch*

Full moon—
a knock on
the midwife's door.

—*Alexis Rotella*

This moonlight
stretching itself at full length
on my bed

—*Gloria Maxson*

Deep in the blankets
my son sleeps, only his ankle
brushed by the moon

—*Doris Lynch*

winter
on the tangled branches
a star

—*Leatrice Lifshitz*

torches and the frost:
one of the carol singers
caught not singing
—*David Cobb*

Christmas service—
the homeless man's offering
more than mine
—*Michael Dylan Welch*

Tonight
speaking for all the others—
one star.
—*Gloria A. Maxson*

Asleep among
Christmas ribbons
the cats.
—*Alexis Rotella*

the day after Christmas
a flock of sparrows
lands in left-over trees
—*Michael Dylan Welch*

Outside the rest home
the discarded Christmas tree
with scraps of tinsel.
—*Gloria A. Maxson*

Christmas over—
a star falls
from the indoor tree.
—*Alexis Rotella*

feeding time,
the bird feeder
covered with snow
—*Raffael DeGruttola*

Hard to see
anything in this snowstorm
but that cardinal
—*David Elliott*

snowy field
wolf tracks leading
into dark woods
—*Michael Ketchek*

winter woods—
everything's white but the wolf's paw
left in the trap
—*Frank Higgins*

field of milk weed
each pod
cupped with snow
—*Wally Swist*

through the ice
brightly colored carp
barely move—
—*Peter Duppenhaler*

winter night—
only the moon's reflection
moves on the frozen river
—*Frank Higgins*

winter light—
one perfect snowflake
on my car window
—*Bruce Ross*

high noon—
a pine branch snaps back
in a burst of snow
—*Wally Swist*

To celebrate
the winter solstice
a long hot bath
—*David Elliott*

winter solstice . . .
the longest night
sleepless
—*Geneva Outlaw*

I let
the black cat out
the moon in
—*Lequita Vance*

robin's nest
in the bare apple tree
filling with snow
—*Diane Tomczak*

listening to the bells
another year
gently passes
—*Peter Duppenhaler*

fresh snow on the mat—
the shape of welcome
still visible

—*Michael Dylan Welch*

cold starlight—
small stirring of mice
in the corn crib

—*Patricia Neubauer*

just dropped its snow—
a pine bough
bouncing

—*Michael Dylan Welch*

crisp blue morning—
spring in the air
and the postman's feet

—*Cyril Childs*

warmed by the fire
not wanting to be older
or younger

—*Francine Porad*

end of winter—
one yellow rose
faces the sun

—*Marlina Rinzen*

abortion clinic

parking lot
protesters sing a hymn
as they picket

elderly priest
tries to sprinkle holy water
on a client's abdomen

volunteer escort
pauses to wipe
the spit from her clothes

waiting room
receptionist wearing
a maternity smock

13 year old
wonders if she'll have to use
her fake ID

45 year old
shows wallet photos of her grandchildren
to another client

the doctor
an ashen cross
still on his forehead

woman with a polaroid
asks to photograph her fetus
to send to her ex-lover

exit door
protester strikes a client
with a catsup-splattered doll

—*John J. Dunphy*

STORM/AFTERMATH

thunder masks
the terrible toppling
of aged pine trees

blocking my driveway
tangled pine —
the stunning stillness

hollow log
four baby squirrels
cry as I cry

full moon
peaceful beautiful distant —
this devastation

two a.m.
still awake
owl and I

dawn
already saw sounds
grind part of my past

the mother squirrel
searches, searches, finds
her babies

I touch one dogwood
still standing, though bent —
I straighten my back

midday
neighbors greet neighbors I greet
the ongoing sun

—*Geraldine C. Little*

EVEN BULLFROGS GET THE BLUES
—Lorraine Ellis Harr and Lenard D. Moore

(written between May 10, 1991 and November 28, 1991)

Sultry bayou night;
and now even the bullfrogs
are singing the blues LEH

behind new artist-neighbor
shadows blacker than himself LDM

wisps of ghostly smoke
rise from the dying bonfire
the rain increases LEH

the calling of spring peepers
comes and goes in the graveyard LDM

a slow-rising moon
flocks of grackle returning
to the oaks at dusk LEH

woodrat darts beneath the porch
the stars shine even brighter LDM

cold twilight deepens
her two thin Siamese cats
prowl in the hedgerows LEH

the wind cooling chitterlings
in grandma's old black kettle LDM

musty root cellar—
even in this cool darkness
pale sprouts are reaching LEH

rain drenches the screech owl's hoot
behind the crumbling old barn LDM

aspen leaves falling
autumn deepens in the woods
the pond grows misty LEH

grandpa's axe echoes through pines
sunlight scatters with wood chips LDM

open cellar door — a fly escapes noisily out of the darkness	LEH
full moon rising behind mist coonhound barking at black shapes	LDM
awake at midnight passenger plane coming in with motors throbbing	LEH
the rabbit caught in headlights still unmoving in the weeds	LDM
cherry petals drift in the current of the stream going in circles	LEH
sunrise strikes one more mountain the slow-falling mist on pines	LDM
the blue jay arrives — an exodus of sparrows and other small birds	LEH
the morning glories lightstruck chimney crumbling to brick dust	LDM
above the pond's scum only the eyes of the frog and all this silence	LEH
a King snake slithers through weeds no trail left among shadows	LDM
cowboys bedded down beside a dying campfire the dust-haze settles	LEH
sad howls of the coyotes echoing toward the stars	LDM
water-logged elm leaves at the bottom of the stream the chill of autumn	LEH
red sunset through graveyard oaks bat after bat flits squeaking	LDM

into twilight rain	
the cow's long lonesome mooing	
the grey dusk deepens	LEH
a breeze lifts above the trees	
oak leaves dropping in the pond	LDM
under a full moon	
locking the pasture gate shut	
the mares are restless	LEH
cool wind blowing and gusting	
through the grinning pumpkin's teeth	LDM
in November woods	
the scent of mold and mushrooms	
among soggy leaves	LEH
twigs crackling in the red dawn	
a stray dog sniffs through camp trash	LDM
from the marshy bank —	
old 'gator's silent slither	
into the bayou	LEH
gnarled hands baiting the fishhook	
unknown fragrance at last light	LDM
wild orchids in bloom	
by a mossy alder snag —	
the rowboat slides by	LEH
from another lily pad	
the bullfrog sings in the rain	LDM

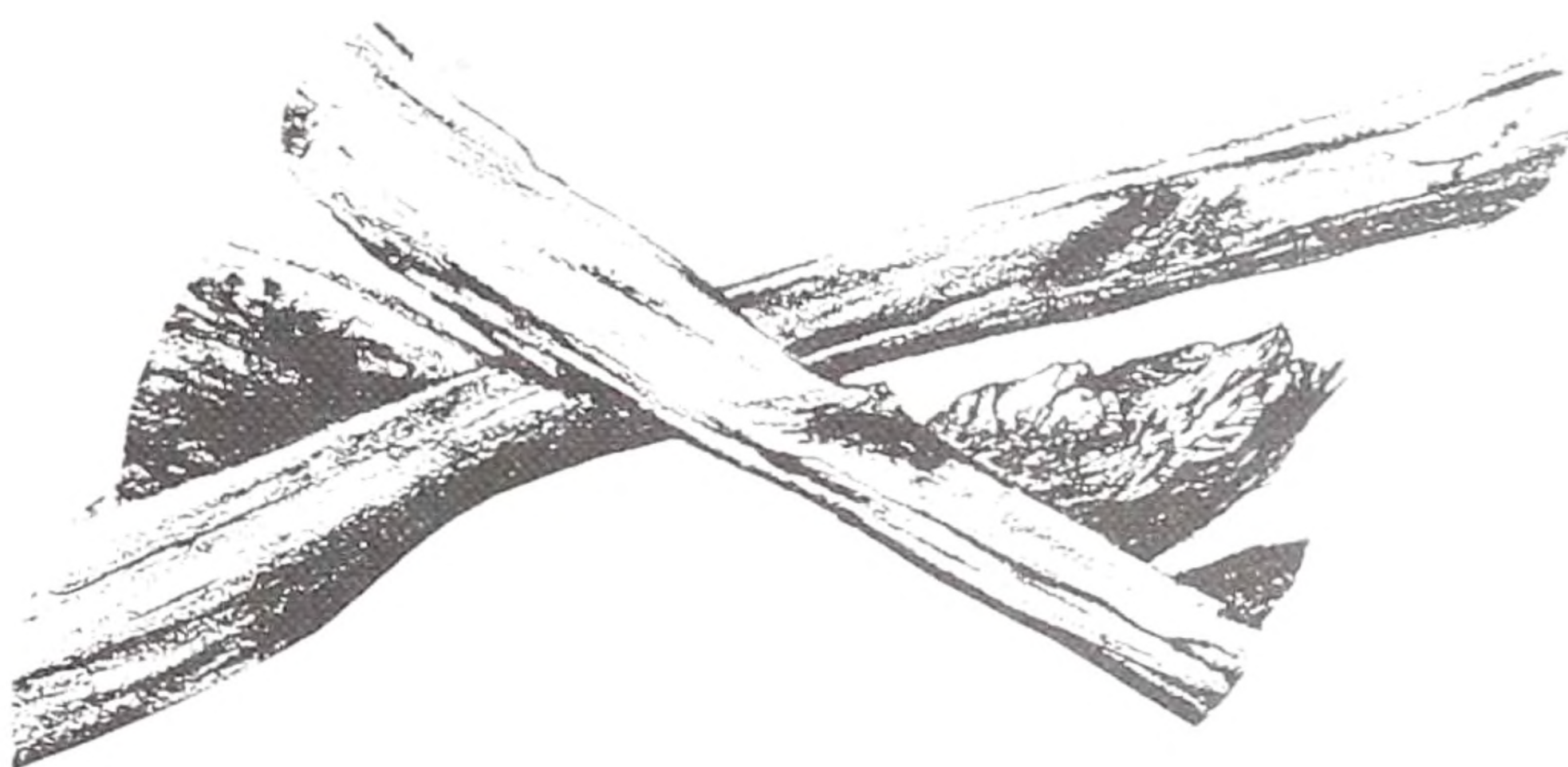


PAPER FLOWER UNFURLING
—*Patricia Neubauer and L. A. Davidson*

winter park—the wind whirling dead leaves across the dance pavilion	PN
after the jump she glides to the far end of the rink	LAD
from opened shell paper flower unfurling in the water glass	PN
over Blue Mountain clouds obscure the peaks	LAD
rising full moon . . . at the lonely crossroad someone waits	PN
something more than shadows under that cotton tree	LAD
first day of spring on a shortcut through the park frozen puddles	LAD
gold dust windbrushed from willow catkins	PN
serenely white dogwood and azaleas in the still garden	LAD
world within the paperweight hidden by swirling snow	PN
out of Africa 16th move in 22 years . . . topsy-turvy	LAD
the chiming clock placed on a new chimney piece	PN
hours one by one move the hot summer day on the sundial	LAD

ward attendant passing through patches of moonlight	PN
in and out of dreams glimpsing faces of people never before seen	LAD
the clairvoyant's cat stares into sunrise	PN
church usher above the boutonniere the fixed smile	LAD
the dentist checks for malocclusion	PN
beneath fallen leaves the steel teeth of the trap waiting	PN
too near it seems, the sun glints on a passing plane	LAD
crystal goblets on the glass shelf humming — humming	PN
behind a locked door she sits rocking in another world	LAD
pink rubber doll floating face down in the bath	PN
unseen tourists in balloon view small animals below	LAD
ribbons of grey smoke rising from rich tapestry of autumn hills	PN
rain driven by strong winds paving the street gold and red	LAD
the garnet glow from the lamp at the door of the harlot's house	PN

slipping into his own house	LAD
the night watchman locks out dawn	
under a ghost moon	PN
the snow-shrouded city	
beginning to stir	
Fifth Avenue sidewalks	LAD
jammed with Christmas shoppers	
on the esplanade	LAD
rows of white wire angels	
lifting gold trumpets	
grandfather turns off	PN
his new hearing aid	
waiting the silence	LAD
after the great clock	
has sounded midnight	
summer dawn—starling calls	PN
echo down the chimney	
attaching to ivy	LAD
a pink climbing rose	
inches its way up	
over the wall the children	PN
into this tangled Eden	





Scarecrows

From time to time I pay a visit to the local elementary schools, usually to give a session in haiku writing. Last spring, however, I decided to teach the kids how to build scarecrows. We built several marvellous ones and, during the summer months, I checked up on them to make sure they were on the job. I think I learned as much as the kids did about scarecrow anatomy and ever since that frenzied spring day of straw, broomsticks, old clothes, hats and masks, I've taken more careful notice of the skill and originality people use in manufacturing their garden wardens.

after the news
building a scarecrow
with an angry face

birds from everywhere
have come to see the scarecrow
in a three-piece suit

no birds on the wires:
a Richard Nixon mask
on the scarecrow

neighbor boy
peeping up
the scarecrow's dress

foggy dawn:
the scarecrow's hat brim
gathering droplets



drunken mime:
in silence, starlings await
the scarecrow's next move

shoulders caked white,
the scarecrow leans
on a sunflower

jays_
no matter how loud they scream,
the scarecrow's silence

While focusing on scarecrows, I had a vivid memory from my childhood. I'd been given a CO2 BB gun as a present for my tenth birthday and the first thing I did was go outside to look for targets. The scarecrow was an obvious choice. After pumping about thirty BBs into him I went to inspect my marksmanship. It had been quite good; I had put out one eye and made a good many holes in my father's old smoking jacket. Suddenly I felt sick. It occurred to me that, by shooting my father's well-worn and beloved old coat, I had actually shot my father or at the very least made mockery of him. I was devastated. The gun was returned the next day; replaced by a new baseball glove.

after shooting him
apologizing
to the scarecrow

—*Christopher Herold*

ephemerality: a tanka cluster

cherry blossoms
from this March tree—
how flickering
the Buddha
mentality

once
after concerts
movies, plays
this table
held two cups

they're too brief!
too short!
I cried
reading my poems
this April night

washing away
last night's
mood
I shower
I shampoo

again
September corridor walk
and all the open doors
shout
frail! frail!

the afternoon's
enormity
it too will pass
passes—
I drink coffee in this paper cup

trying for sound
I see
the watering down
even of this fragile
tanka world

this leaf smell
as if burning
burning
even the transitory
away

see, Basho,
I too can stop,
can notice
this somethin
blooming beneath a hedge

where's
last night's image
I held in a gray form?
today's chopped wind
rattles the maple like a toy

—*Sanford Goldstein*

TANKA: OFF THE BACK BURNER

—Sanford Goldstein

A nineteenth century wit derided American books as being without readers. We might ask, though without sarcasm, who reads an American tanka today—and for that matter who writes the few tanka printed in our country each year? Once Basho had knocked off the final fourteen syllables of the *waka*, he started the haiku trend that dominates Japanese poetic forms even in our time. This is not to say that tanka died out in Japan, though by mid-nineteenth century it had deteriorated into a kind of innocuous non-communicative outpouring until it was revived by such stalwart Japanese tankaists as Akiko Yosano (1878-1942), Takuboku Ishikawa (1886-1912), Mokichi Saito (1882-1953), and Shiki Masaoka (1867-1902), the latter having helped to revitalize haiku as well. After all, the Japanese tanka is twelve hundred years old and deserves, even in our own country, a better fate. The amazing popularity of Machi Tawara's tanka collection a few years ago, *Salad Anniversary*, reveals once more the enormous appeal tanka can have.

Nevertheless, the haiku industry has dominated Japanese poetic forms in our country, thanks to the Imagists and Ezra Pound and even Amy Lowell, and of course The Haiku Society of America is the most prestigious group in our country for haiku study and publication. Only occasionally in *FROGPOND* pages does a tanka surface. Glancing at the spring issue of 1992, I find no tanka at all, though I do find "linked lines," a renku, and a Cor van den Heuvel haiku/senryu sequence. Of late Jane Reichold offers her *Mirrors* tanka competition, and she is also publishing some short volumes of tanka, her latest being my own *At the Hut of the Small Mind*. Having been the judge of her first tanka competition, I can attest to a tanka stir, but in my short commentary on the entries and the judging, I wondered about the title of her volume of winning entries, *Tanka Splendor*. After all, tanka can and often do deal with frustration, illness, and near insanity. Where's the splendor in these states of human existence? Mokichi's "a few/mosquitoes/ inside the net—/ if only I could tell her/this loneliness I feel" (Purdue 1989, *Red Lights*, p.104), Takuboku's "Waking,/ Unable to move, my body in pain—/ I'm almost in tears waiting for dawn" (Tuttle 1985, *Romaji Diary and Sad Toys*, #100, the latter a series of three-line tanka), and Akiko's "With this ax/ I strike my koto!/ Listen!/ The

sound of life's end! / Of God's will!" (Tuttle 1987, *Tangled Hair*, #44), offer examples of non-splendor. And Shiki's self-portrait of his invalidism is full of irony and pathos: "what an emaciated / figure! / I pity you / anew, cripple!" (in *Songs from A Bamboo Village*, unpublished book manuscript of Shinoda and Goldstein). But of course there is elegance, splendor, in tanka, from the numerous tanka in Seidensticker's magnificent translation of *The Tale of Genji* to Mokichi's "two swallows / red of neck / sitting on this beam, / and my mother / dying!" (*Red Lights*, p.112). The latter may puzzle without the necessary background information. Mokichi returned to his birthplace when he learned his mother was quite ill. The image of the two swallows sitting on a beam inside his parents' farmhouse reminded him of the Buddhist picture of nirvana, Buddha lying on the ground and surrounded by priests and animals, all weeping.

All of which is to say that tanka is eclectic while haiku basically restricts itself to a moment in which nature is dominant. (I am aware of some objections to this restriction of haiku). Yet tanka too can have nature as its center, though behind the scene is the autobiographical moment of the poet, as in Mokichi's "this sky / beyond the eastern mountains / steeped red / in the red / morning-glow" (*Red Lights*, p.93). On hearing of the death of his poet-master, Mokichi rushed to a friend's farmhouse for consolation. Anguished in most of this tanka sequence, the poet, in this early morning scene on Lake Biwa, reaches a moment of reconciliation to loss. What has moved me in tanka is its moment-to-moment awareness, its diary-like significance. Takuboku's words in an essay entitled "A Dialogue between an Egoist and His Friend" (see, *Romaji*, p.49) have always seemed significant to me: "Each second is one which never comes back in our life. I hold it dear. I don't want to let it pass without doing anything for it. To express that moment, tanka, which is short and takes not much time to compose, is most convenient. Yes, it is convenient indeed. It is one of the few good fortunes we Japanese enjoy that we have a poetic form called tanka. (Pause) I compose tanka because I love life. I make tanka because I love myself better than anything else."

At least in America, while there are some compelling signs of tanka rejuvenation like Jane Reichold's *Mirrors* and a few other short-poem journals and tanka contests, I feel there is no tanka foothold, no strong base in which to anchor this magnificent poetic

form. There is certainly much more to be said about tanka aesthetics—some nine or ten aesthetic principles which apply equally to haiku. In this brief tanka commentary, however, I do want to make one suggestion. I feel the Haiku Society of America ought to sponsor a tanka journal; in fact, a new name for the society might be a good idea. Since the Society does publish in *FROGPOND* some tanka, a few senryu, and a good many renku, why should our fine society be called The Haiku Society of America? Yet it seems unlikely that my suggestion will light up even a mild seventeen-syllable satiric poem; therefore, I call on tankaists to create their own American tanka journal.



THE JUXTAPOSITION OF IMAGES

—Patricia Neubauer

The juxtaposition of images is one of the least mysterious devices of haiku poetry. Indeed, the word “juxtapose” is a most unambiguous word. Derived from the combination of the Latin adverb *i[j]uxta*, close by, and the verb *ponere[positus]*, to put or to place, the word “juxtapose” simply means to place something next to something else. Only this and nothing more—in Latin, in French, and in English. Most of us juxtapose images intuitively, unconsciously, and successfully without pausing to ask what we have done or why we have done it. As the beginning dancer does the same barre exercises as the prima ballerina, and the professional musician runs up and down the same scales as the first year student, it does us poets no harm to review a few of the “hows” and “whys” of a basic haiku technique.

Now, this placing of images in close proximity contributes richness, validity, and vitality to a haiku. It is as salt that brings out the flavor, as a spice that adds piquancy. Sometimes, it introduces the delight of surprise, at other times, it defines the mood or clarifies the meaning of the haiku. Images can be juxtaposed in a number of ways for different effects: the three most obvious are the intensification of the feelings evoked by the haiku, the contrast which plays one image against the other to the enrichment of both, and as a key that unlocks the haiku’s underlying meaning. In most haiku, of course, these effects overlap.

First, a haiku in which the two images are similar:

freshly fallen snow—
opening a new package
of typing paper

Nick Avis¹

A new world—really the same old world, lying beneath the enchantment of recently fallen snow—clean, trackless, silent like the new paper without crease, smudge or erasure. The smell of the new snow and the smell of the new paper are different, but both can be described as fresh. One strokes the smooth, cool surface of the paper. Although one cannot stroke the snow in the same way, looking out at the unsullied drifts and unbroken planes, one feels

that it could be done. And one becomes aware of a great rush of exhilaration and expectancy amid this whiteness, this newness. A time for beginnings! Either image might have evoked the same sensations, but combined they add intensity to the mood of expectancy and exhilaration.

Next, a haiku in which the two images contrast:

not seeing
the room is white
until that red apple

Anita Virgil²

The white room is first seen without interest, without comprehension. The eye is immediately drawn to the small red sphere. Too many colors in a confined area dull the perception of color, but one color against a relatively colorless background astonishes the eye. Now, being sensitized to color, we begin to look for variations of tint, texture, and shadow in the all-white room. The room takes on new dimensions, and white shows us its infinite variety of shades and subtleties. But beyond the white room with its red apple, I think of that first man and that first woman who did not realize how bright and pure was their primordial world—until that first apple.

The third haiku also uses contrast—in this case, a white fan and black ink. The contrast presents a picture, Buson-like in its charm, but the chief effect of this contrast is to lead the reader into the contemplation of deeper meanings beneath the surface of the word-picture.

out of black ink
a white peony takes form
on a white fan

Lorraine Ellis Harr³

The hand that moves the brush does not paint the peony, only the shadows cast by the peony and the space around it. Where the fabric of the fan remains silent, empty, untouched by the brush—there, the peony takes form. Out of nothingness, something has come into being.

Among the ways in which the juxtaposition of images can be used, I have mentioned only the three most evident, but within each

rough category, there are many variations, and beyond variation, innumerable possibilities of combination. Only two important points need be made: first, the sole purpose of this device is to increase the *expressiveness* of the haiku. Secondly, it should not be used for the sake of shock—there is a difference between shock and surprise just as there is a difference between hallucination and illusion, between cacophony and dissonance—and it should not be used for mere decorative effect, for this would violate the essential spirit of haiku. Images placed in close proximity must have a meaningful and functional relationship within the haiku. Unity without variety is monotonous; variety without unity is meaningless.

¹ Copyright Nick Avis; acknowledgement to Wind Chimes and *THE HAIKU ANTHOLOGY*

² *A 2nd Flake*, Copyright © Anita Virgil 1974

³ Copyright © Lorraine Ellis Harr (To commemorate a visit by Kametaro Yagi)



THE HEART OF A CHILD
A Reading of Issa*
—Tom Tico

"The great man is he who does not lose his child-heart." —Mencius

If the Japanese haiku poets were to be evaluated by the wisdom of this saying, there is no doubt that Issa would stand head and shoulders above all others. For Issa—more than any other haiku poet—managed to see the world with the eyes of a child and to convey that vision in the haiku that he wrote. By so doing, he gives us a glimpse of our forgotten childhood; and, to a certain extent, he satisfies our nostalgic yearning for that pure and innocent time. To be sure, Issa's haiku have many facets, of which this childlike perception is but one. Yet it is certainly one of the most endearing qualities of his work—and plays a big part in winning for him the love, and affection, of generation after generation.

1

Ah! to be
A child,—
On New Year's Day!

There are some people who have a keen recollection of what it was like to be a child. They can recall the state of natural wonder in which they lived,—and recalling it they wish to re-experience it in adult life. Like Wordsworth, Issa is one of those. Although Issa was a Buddhist, he would have undoubtedly agreed with Christ who said, "Unless you become like a little child you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven."

2

The kitten,
Weighed on the balance,
Is still playing.

If, for the moment, each haiku represents the poet's world-view or vision of life, then in this poem Issa indicates that what life offers us is a chance to play. The kitten, like a child, is a master of play. Every circumstance, no matter how seriously viewed by others, is simply another opportunity to express his (or her) playful spirit.

3

Snow melts,
and the village is overflowing—
with children.**

The ebullient spirits of the children are in perfect keeping with the enormous energy of spring. Through the winter, for the most part, the children had to remain indoors, but now with the cold and snow disappearing, their pent-up energy bursts forth, exuberantly. They run and shout, fight and play—all with great glee! And Issa delights in the spectacle, identifying so completely with the children that he feels as if he is one of them.

4

Naked,
On a naked horse
Through the pouring rain.

This haiku has a sensuousness which is so pure, so complete, that it seems that only a person with a childlike heart could have written it. There's something dreamlike and mysterious about it, and yet it's exceptionally vivid. It's not difficult—but it is exhilarating—to imagine oneself as the naked rider straddling the wet-warm body of the naked horse, galloping through the pouring rain.

5

The child's imitation
Is more wonderful
Than the real cormorant.

It seems to me that when a person does an impersonation, or an impression, that he reveals more about himself than he does about whatever it is he's impersonating. Whether the impression is comic or serious, the impressionist is showing you how he perceives the world. In this haiku Issa delights in the child's imitation, not because it's a dead ringer of the cormorant, but because it's so creatively expressive of the child's personality.

6

"The peony was as big as this,"
Says the little girl,
Opening her arms.

It's been said that to portray the innocence of childhood the artist must be innocent himself. If such is the case then Issa, like Renoir, must be among the most innocent of men. For both are masters at portraying children. In this poem Issa shows us the expansive and hyperbolic effect that the peony has had upon the little girl, with the child herself becoming an image of its beauty.

7

The child sobs,
"Give it to me!"
The bright full moon.

In Tantric Buddhism there is an ancient saying that "Nothing is worse than unfulfilled desires." Whether or not Issa was acquainted with this teaching is hard to say; but as he listens to the little girl's request, he intuitively picks up on its significance. He realizes that to want what you cannot get, or are very unlikely to get, is one of the major sources of pain—not just for children, but for people of all ages.

8

We have been friends,
And now we must part,
Scarecrow.

Perhaps Issa is walking over the fields when he sees a scarecrow that seems to him particularly touching. So he decides to sit down and contemplate its worn-out visage. The longer he gazes at this tattered replica of a man the greater fondness he feels for it—until finally he feels he has met a friend. Eventually, with duties calling, Issa bids the scarecrow farewell, and goes his separate way. In his affectionate response to an inanimate object we can behold Issa's childlike heart.

9

In my old age,
Even before the scarecrow
I feel ashamed of myself!

In the preceding verse Issa felt the equality of friendship with the scarecrow, but now, things have changed. Issa has gotten so old and careworn, and his clothes are in such a state of disrepair, that even before the scarecrow he feels ashamed of himself. To make an admission of this sort requires an unusual candor, and Issa, like an honest child, has more than his share of this trait.

Withered pampas grass;
 Now once upon a time
 There was an old witch . . .

Or at least that's what people called her, but really she was just a poor old woman with eccentric ways who had a long sharp nose and long white hair that looked like withered pampas grass. Wherever she went she was harassed; the young boys, in particular, never tired of giving her hell—teasing her and calling her names. And sometimes, the bolder ones even threw rocks at her. But there was one boy in the village who never took part in this mischief, the cobbler's son. He was a bright good-natured boy who realized that every person was worthy of kindness and respect. One day, after seeing the old woman particularly mistreated, he felt sorry for her and decided to bring her a basket of fruit. He knocked on the door of her ramshackle hut . . . she opened the door (but only after she had looked through the slats and had seen his bright and handsome countenance) and accepted the basket. Then she invited him in. Being both fearless and sympathetic he accepted the invitation. Once inside, the boy was both astonished and delighted to see the old woman transform herself into a beautiful goddess. Then she told the boy that the king, whose wife had died leaving him with no heir, had prayed to her to find a boy worthy to be the prince. And she told him that he was the chosen one.

Mountains seen also
 By my father, like this,
 In his winter confinement.

Issa remembers when he was a small child watching his father as he sat and gazed out at the snow-capped mountains. He remembers wondering what it was about the mountains that held his father's attention for hours on end. Now, in his declining years, he finds himself doing the exact same thing. He realizes (like his father must have) that the mountains are not only a magnificent sight but they act as a perfect screen for reverie. As he ponders the events of his life, the prospect of his death, the Buddha and the Pure Land . . . he feels such a deep kinship with his father that it is almost as if his father lived within him.

Spring begins again;
Upon folly,
Folly returns.

Implicit in the beauties of spring is a promise of happiness, a promise that is not always fulfilled. Year after year Issa has let the season raise his hopes only to have them later on dashed to the ground. Now, in his old age, after so much hard experience, he gazes upon spring in the same way that a cynic might look upon Don Quixote. Yet, despite his words, one can sense that the poet has an irrepressible love, an undying affinity, for this youthful, gallant time of year.

*The R.H. Blyth translations are from his *Haiku* in four volumes, and *A History of Haiku* in two (Japan: Hokuseido. 1949-1964).

**Translation by Harold G. Henderson is from *An Introduction to Haiku* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1958).



DOWN WITH “DESK HAIKU”!

—William J. Higginson

It has become fashionable to deride a haiku that—in the speaker’s opinion—somehow lacks the immediacy typical of the best haiku by calling it a “desk haiku”. This seems to imply that the author sat down and “thought up” the verse, rather than having an experience “from life” and promptly composing a haiku upon it. Of course, in the best tradition of false argument, no one ever defines what they mean by “desk haiku”—at least I’ve not seen anyone do it. But the statements above seem to summarize the pejorative meaning.

If so, then “desk haiku” has nothing to do with any sensible discussion of the genre, or a particular haiku. First, not all haiku depend upon immediate, or even recent, experience. Memory and fantasy can be fertile sources for haiku. Second, since haiku are composed of words, and words are objects of thought, all haiku, good and bad, are thought up. Revision can turn an ordinary haiku into a great one, demonstrating this “thinking up” aspect of haiku at its best.

Just now reading Makoto Ueda’s incomparable *Basho and His Interpreters: Selected Hokku with Commentary* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), I shall pick examples from its pages. More will be found among these new translations of hokku from the full range of Basho’s career and changing styles.

The following two examples each include a hokku, and direct quotes from Ueda’s background notes and translations of comments on the poems by important Japanese haiku scholars and poets.

departing spring—
birds weep, and fishes’ eyes
are tearful

NOTE

Oku no hosomichi says that the poet wrote this hokku on May 16 (our Gregorian calendar), when he set out on his northern journey and bade farewell to his friends and disciples who came to see him off at Senju, a northern suburb of Edo.

COMMENTARY

. . . This was a farewell poem not in fact, but in (Basho's) travel journal. It does not appear in Sora's travel journal (written day-by-day during the *Oku no hosomichi* journey of 1689, and considered a factual record of that journey) nor in any haikai book published during Basho's lifetime. He probably composed it between 1692 and 1694, when he was writing *Oku no hosomichi*.—Imoto

* * *

[The following was] Written at Keishi's house on the topic "Accompanying a lovely boy in the moonlight"

the moon is clear—
I escort a lovely boy
frightened by a fox

NOTE

Written on November 15 (1694) at a verse-writing party where poets were asked to write a hokku on various topics related to love Basho himself, recalling his youth, once wrote: "There was a time when I was fascinated with the ways of homosexual love."

COMMENTARY

Basho's craftsmanship can be seen in his ability to work on such a topic as homosexual love and create a fairy-tale atmosphere out of it—Handa

. . . The kind of aestheticism seen in this hokku was explored at length by Buson in later years.—Shuson

. . . The poem creates a romantic, picturesque scene; it is written in what Basho called "a narrative style." To his last days, Basho did not reject this type of playful fancy in poetic composition.—Yamamoto

As a final example, I refer readers to my article on Basho's revisions of the famous hokku on cicada-cries at Risshakuji, which will be in *Modern Haiku*, perhaps before this appears.

So, in one case, a poem of farewell, the most occasional of all verses, was "probably composed" two or more years after-the-fact and almost certainly not on the scene. And though many of the hokku in it were indeed written "on site", the *Oku no hosomichi* was written long after the fact. There is a great advantage to that. Having recently completed a travel journal, I know how the distance of intervening time helps one to find the essences of the more important experiences.

Both the presumably later-composed farewell poem at Senju and the much-revised hokku on the cicada at Risshakuji are considered among Basho's finest, and demonstrate how he was able to find striking new images—even new kinds of experiences—by thinking his way through the words.

The topic of the homoerotic poem was set by another at a party. Much as he might have done in the middle of a renku, Basho responded to the fanciful context with a fanciful image. The addition of a fox to the assigned topic was a master stroke, for the fox is a mysterious and terrifying animal spirit in Japanese folklore. The clarity of the chilly moonlight throws strange shadows. Whether the fox is seen or heard, it scares the shivering boy into his lover's arms. If this relates to an actual experience, it must have been several years earlier. Even if this happened to Basho, only the poetic challenge at the party brought it to verse.

Shortly after the party where he wrote this verse Basho became ill and took to his bed. He never rose from it. During the almost two weeks before he died, in mid-winter, Basho wrote what has been traditionally regarded as his death verse, about his dreams that "roam about / on a withered moor". He also radically revised a hokku he had composed the previous summer—the poem beginning "Clear Cascade" that some consider his true death verse, which I have reported on elsewhere.

So it seems that creating his great masterpiece *Oku no hosomichi*, writing a hokku in response to fanciful poetic challenges, writing what most call his death verse, as well as deeply revising an earlier poem, Basho in his greatest, most mature years made haiku from memory and fantasy, as well as from the here and now.

Speaking of which, Ueda's book also presents in English for the

first time that I know of the actual passage where Basho is supposed to have said that "haikai was nothing more than what happens at this place and at this moment." In the words of Somaru, who notes that another commentator reported the incident, "That is what the commentator said, but the story is not convincing." He goes on to give evidence.

Basho may not have said any such thing in the first place, and even if he did, it is only one of many things he said about haikai. Like Whitman, Basho contained multitudes. Shall our haiku be less?

Here's to haiku carefully written, at a desk or wherever their authors do their best writing. And down with loose-lipped, snide remarks about haiku one doesn't happen to like. To criticize a haiku, say clearly and specifically what you don't like about it; don't try to invent an evasive, undefined, and ultimately dishonest pejorative.



FATHER RAYMOND ROSELIEP
Poet, Priest, Professor, Friend
—*Sister Mary Thomas Eulberg, O.S.F.*

on so tall a stalk
I need only bend my nose
that rose*

**Introductory haiku for the essay submitted in the Roseliep Competition, Loras College, 1983.*

THE HAIKU PATH

An inveterate walker, Father Roseliep, rosary in hand, daily took to the outdoors. One day our paths crossed at the top of a hill. We chatted a bit, and then almost with inspiration, I said, "'Father, I think if you'd give me an assignment, I'd write some poetry.'" I had always loved and enjoyed teaching poetry but seldom assigned students to write it. I felt it unfair to ask them to do something I had not done. Father Roseliep's immediate response to me was: "All right, how about haiku?"

That day was March 7, 1976. After a few explanatory remarks, the teacher added, "Now I must give you a deadline. How about Easter? Five haiku for Easter." At my first appointment with Father Roseliep, and for every poem I presented to him thereafter, I received a personal appraisal: Corrections, suggestions, approval, all typed flawlessly.

BOYHOOD

Raymond Francis Roseliep was born on August 11, 1917, in Farley, Iowa, twenty-five miles from Dubuque. The family later moved from Farley to Dubuque and, once there, from one parish to two others. As Father himself told me, "It was in high school that I started making music out of words, another kind of art and love. As a senior I entered dozens of poems in a contest, competing against the whole school (Columbia, later Loras Academy). I took the top three prizes and all the honorable mentions. Since this embarrassed the school administration, I was asked to relinquish all but the top place in order that a second judging might give other students recognition. Loras College offered continued enticement to poetry under the calibre of teacher I like to recall having had in high school—all of them great men, all priests—yet without providing any specific creative writing course. But the spell of words and their

patterning had taken hold of me. As a freshman, I asked my parents at Christmas for *Walker's Rhyming Dictionary*. That same Christmas an uncle gave me *Roget's Thesaurus*. All that was needed now to lure the muse was my own investment in Clement Wood's *Poets' Handbook*. In the annual college poetry contest, I won third prize as a freshman, and in each of the ensuing years, I captured top honors. Many of my poems appeared in *The College Spokesman*, moderated by scholarly Father I.J. Semper, just the mention of whose name awes me to this day."¹

POST-COLLEGE YEARS

After his college years, there followed an interim of four years in the Theological College at the Catholic University of America, during which the seminarian had little time for writing poems. These years of preparation for the priesthood were a natural transition into his "Catholic Poetry," a concept which paralleled the life of "Spirit," the magazine begun by the Catholic Poetry Society of America in 1934.²

Ordained to the Roman Catholic priesthood on June 12, 1943, Father Roseliep's first two years were spent as a parish priest and as managing editor for the Archdiocesan newspaper, *The Witness*. In 1946 Father Roseliep was appointed to teach at Loras College, where he served until 1966. He earned an M.A. from the Catholic University of America in 1948, and a Ph.D. from the University of Notre Dame in 1954. But it was shortly after his ordination that he began to write poetry for publication.

Because he was both priest and poet, he was automatically labeled a "Catholic poet". He read vastly, both poetry and literary criticism, along with studies in prosody. He submitted and published poetry to a variety of Catholic magazines, "Spirit", "America", "The Catholic World", and "The Sign" among them. Here he found his arena, but in the mid-fifties, Notre Dame's John Logan persuaded "the Catholic poet" to move away from "the Catholic ghetto" and try his pen in the secular market.

FIRST BOOKS

Father Roseliep's first hardback was *The Linen Bands* (1961), the first poem identical in title with that of the book. "No poet not a priest could have written that poem," said John Logan. Published twenty years after his ordination, Father Roseliep dedicated the book to his mother.

Father Roseliep was priest, poet, and teacher, a triad “held together by mere love,” said Logan in the book’s foreword, “or by art or by both. I think that in Father Roseliep they are held together by both.” He adds, “Technically, the work of Father Roseliep is ordinarily impeccable.”³

INTERVIEWS

Often interviewed about his poetic life, Father responded generously. When Dennis Hayes asked, “Why do you write a poem?” He answered: “I write a poem because I can’t write a musical score. I can’t paint a picture, I can’t do a sculpture, design a building—what else is there? Oh, the dance. I can’t dance now as a priest—though at one time I thought I was pretty good.”⁴ But very graceful he surely was always. As he left the Mount St. Francis chapel in his cassock after a funeral, he simply glided along the corridor.

Martin A. Miller asked the same question. “Why do you write?” And Father replied, “I write because I’m a lover. Man is essentially a lover, and a man who makes poems is no exception.” Then he expanded his answer, quoting Myles Connolly’s Mr. Blue:

“If one loves anything, truth, beauty, woman, life, one will speak out. Genuine love cannot endure silence. Genuine love breaks into speech. And when it is great love, it breaks out in song. Talk helps to relieve us of the tiresome burden of ourselves. It helps some of us find out what we think.”⁵

Father Roseliep himself admitted it might be unusual for a Catholic priest to write so much poetry of human love (it’s “the question I answer most often”), but he found writing a sublimation. “The very human love,” he confessed, “is safe within the walls of a poem.” This love is man’s love for woman, for religious Sister, for girl; love for male friends, students; sometimes it is the love he sees existing between two other people, an experience he might vicariously adopt for what appears in print to be the poet’s expression of “I love you.” “Not to love greatly in a human way,” he said, “would make it practically impossible to love the hills and trees and birds and flowers, rivers and seas with their fish and exotic forms of life, skies and swirling planets, animals and insects and reptiles—the bright and beautiful, the great and small of creation. For the Christian, love is the ultimate hallmark; for the priest, the highest challenge. For the artist, love is the creative force for his best work.”⁶ Marc Chagall sees blend, not dichotomy, between love and art.

"One must love to create great art," he said at a ninetieth birthday celebration. "You can't explain love. You have to feel it. . . . In art, one must be honest and sincere. . . . Pure, follow a moral ideal. . . . Justice and love."⁷

moth
nor lover's breath
disturb my candle⁸

Dennis Hayes asked Father Roseliep, "How many poems do you write in a year? How many poems did you write last year, for example?" Father answered, "The most I ever wrote in a year was fifty. That's almost one a week. In 1962 I wrote eighteen. That was a lean year."⁹

But then there emerged the haiku world: The move from what was then standard poetry to the concise haiku form.

ROSELIEP'S HAIKU THEORY/PRACTICE

Though he rarely followed the 5-7-5- haiku pattern in his later years, he used it exclusively when he began writing haiku. He found "the asymmetry really stunning . . . shape with no need for a rime, and . . . the emphasis on word choice, word arrangement, the ear always on sound." Reading enormous quantities of Japanese haiku in English translation, he discovered "the omnipresent intimacy with physical nature and human nature." "Haiku," he concluded, "is the trimmest athlete of all, and our constant workouts together help me show my other poetic athletics how to be tighter and harder bellied."¹⁰

In 1965 W. W. Norton published Father Roseliep's *love makes the air tight*, a lovely flexible-cover book. The back cover acclaims Roseliep's "exquisite care for language that marks true poetic gift" and his "visual sense (which) never outstrips his verbal capacities but complements them. His poems are close-packed and sharp edged, truly word-music. . . . As a poet he has elegance, wit, style, and important things to say."

Typical is his dedication which reads:

for my students
past
present
and to come¹¹

Interspersed among the 110 pages are titled haiku . . . not only in combination, but each haiku within the combination titled. I love

the haiku titled "Poets":

God is like me, he
makes from nothing, only I
am caught with a script.¹²

In a January, 1976 *Telegraph Herald* newspaper article, David Fyten stated that Father Roseliep had already written more than 1,000 poems, and his works appeared in more than 200 publications in the United States and abroad. He commented on a facet of Father Roseliep's cutting back: "Roseliep's verse displays an uncommon economy of language . . . so tightly worded that a published friend told him that one day he would carry it to its ultimate extreme and write one syllable poems."

He did just that:

NUN
o
n
e

Added is the sentence: "this conveys the loss of identity many nuns suffer in community life." I'm uncertain if that is Father Roseliep's thinking or David Fyten's. That may have been true when Sisters dressed alike, though I would have to say that I lived those days and didn't feel a loss of identity, ever.¹³

In her review of *Flute Over Walden*, Dr. Donna Bauerly, first woman professor at Loras College and a former student of Father Roseliep's, commented that *The Small Rain*, Father's second hard-back (1963), "contains two haiku-form poems . . . but these are multi-stanza poems, wearing the seventeen-syllable form, only as an outer garment . . . both poems overly didactic." She continues, "Though Roseliep gradually gives the haiku form content its way, using haiku sequences that are thematically centered, he burdens the reader with titles, crams too many on a page, and still indulges in mini-sermons."¹⁴

But Bauerly writes, this book "by contract, is pure, nothing pollutes the crystal spring-like depths. Seventeen syllables, seasoned essence. Roseliep does not disturb his reader with excessive capitalization; punctuation is minimal."¹⁵ With 22 of the 59 poems in *Flute Over Walden*, Roseliep, for the first time, devotes an entire page to a mere three lines. One of those one-on-a-page haiku which intrigues me is:

drop that corn nugget
you stole from Bob Squirrel's bank
Joe Fancypants Jay!

In a letter to Jan and Mary Streiff, editors of *Bonsai*, as published in 1976 under the title "This Haiku of Ours," Father Roseliep advises use of the haiku "to express our own culture, our own spirit, our own enlightened experiences, putting to service the riches of our land and language, summoning the dexterity of Western writing tools." He urges:

Exploit our fabulous native tongue . . . cadences, . . . rhythms, measures, movements, stops, pauses, rimes . . . For subject matter, . . . dig into our own teeming country. God's plenty when it comes to materials: outer space discoveries, hairy youth, mini-skirts, bell bottoms, roller skates, pizza, peanut butter, saucer sleds, circuses, our enormous bird-fish-animals-insect kingdoms, our homeland flowers-trees-plants-grains-vegetables-&-fruits, motorcycles, ships that plow the sky and deliver people to Japan—the storehouse is without walls."

He says further: "Use the first person singular, . . . personification and hyperbole . . . simile and symbol . . . Metaphor I especially promote because it is the imagination's pet tool." And finally he writes, "Frowned upon by purists, enjambment is another felicity that is increasingly common." Here he exemplifies:

Smoke leafy air
the boy drop-
kicks the ball¹⁶

Two additional books appeared in 1976—both non-haiku: *Walk in Love* and *A Beautiful Woman Moves with Grace*, this second honoring Katherine Anne Porter (1894-1980), Marianne Moore (1887-1972), and Anne Sexton (1928-1974).

Three chapbooks came out in 1977, the first, a February issue, *Sun in His Belly*, is comprised of mostly short titled poems, though there are five haiku along with one concrete poem, the word "egg" repeated over and again in egg shape.

On his birthday, August 11, Father gifted me with his *Wake to the Bell: A Garland of Christmas Poems*, published by Rock Press, the first poem the lovely:

Up here in the hills my father said
a lamb is born in David's town
and he is god and a boy like me—
I think I'll bring my pet lamb down.¹⁷

Among the poems in this eighteen-paged book, however, there are no haiku.

Step on the Rain, a 1977 Rook publication, carries nearly a hundred haiku. Bill Pauly, also a former student of Father Roseliep and currently a Loras College teacher, has said of this book: "Consistently as he carves these cherrystone poems, the sculptor displays a remarkable talent for raising the common above the level of commonplace."¹⁸

Among the haiku are these three:

the boy laughs at his bare legs broken in the brook	the paperboy? Just follow the trail of wet plumstones	the little love you give; milkweed ¹⁹
---	---	--

Delta Epsilon Sigma Bulletin, among other periodicals, published many of Father Roseliep's haiku. The December 1977 issue printed "One Dozen Haiku." Among them:

in her ashtray the jagged crescent of his fingernail	taps, the morning- glory
--	--------------------------------

This issue also noted: "Poet Raymond Roseliep is writing and publishing poetry at a hectic pace."²⁰

Father Roseliep introduced himself as "Sobi-Shi" in the 1978 Spring-Summer issue of *Uzzano*, which carried his "50 Haiku." Originally, "Roseliep" is the German for "rose/love" or "lover of the rose." "Sobi" is the Japanese for "rose." "Shi" is the haigo (haiku name) meaning "a man of art." Thus, Sobi-Shi is "a rose-man of art." or simply "a man of art who loves the rose."²¹

From "50 Haiku" come these three poems:

the surgeon watches his wife carve the capon	in broad daylight the columbine's chandelier completely lit
--	---

the blind boy
wishing the fireflies
would sing²²

Sailing Bones is the book in which Father gives a full page to four haiku on each heavy white-paper sheet.

finch
graphing the air
gold

Robert Spiess, editor of *Modern Haiku*, points out Roseliep's "succinctness of expression." "Of all the multitudinous occasions upon which I've seen goldfinches in their undulating or somewhat roller-coaster flight, and as greatly as I have enjoyed seeing them, I have never really felt-seen their flight this perceptively."²³

Roseliep's next book, *The Still Point*, drew a half-dozen reviews from varied sources: Dr. Donna Bauerly; Canadians Chuck Brinkley and Rod Wilmot; Father Daniel Rogers, Ph.D., then professor and Chairman of the Loras Department of English and later Father Roseliep's Literary Executor; Bill Pauly, Assistant Professor at Loras; and Mary Bartolotta, then a Loras College Senior.

Father Rogers quotes Lucien Stryk: "Spirit knows no nationality. Raymond Roseliep would be appreciated as a fine haiku poet anywhere, especially in Japan. He's the American Issa." As to the book itself, Rogers adds: "Part of the delight of the book is to enjoy the arrangement of the poems and their relationship to one another;" and he quotes two haiku from pages facing each other:

the Mass priest	holding bread
holds up the bread	hands
the still point	are empty

Continuing, Father Rogers says, "In these poems, we mostly see; in some we hear; at times we know, in others we believe." Toward the end, he comments in detail on the final poem:

the cricket cries
our point
of rest

"'Cricket' may be an adjective, and if so the 'cries' become not a verb but a noun. Cricket-like cries . . . Are they our cries, cricket-like? Our need to reassure ourselves in the darkness? . . . I reflect, 'our' still point, not mine in self-conscious separateness. We, poet, and readers, are one with all life."²⁴

In her review of *The Still Point* Dr. Bauerly catches herself wondering at the power of Roseliep's seemingly simple expression

which carries the reader so swiftly to his "Therewhere." Even knowing the process of Zen only a very little, I do understand that this means there *is* an intricate patterning, but one recognized through the inner silence that is completely open to the innate order of things. Essences. The only way I know to arrive at a true understanding of this arrangement is to go the way Roseliep goes.

First, Roseliep quiets us down:

not winding the heart
not minding
the mind

Then he arranges our bodies:

my lotus legs
from somehow
to no-how

Then he invites us to *look* (really):

eyes
unwatching
burn surprise

He gives the gift of himself. Roseliep the "man of art who loves the rose"—

the rose in hay
wintering
cellar of myself

What has "happened" thus far? . . . Much "un"doing: "not-nor-no-un." A paradoxical active participle "wintering" naming the kind of passivity which is dynamic. Word play that is serious: "winding" or "winding"? Doing neither, of course. "No-how" or "know-how"? Both of course. "Cellar" or "seller" of self?"²⁵

SPECIAL BOOKS

That Raymond Roseliep was an innovator is obvious, not only in his poetry, but also in the kinds of books he published.

In 1976 Juniper Press put out 250 copies of *Light Footsteps*, a tiny 2 1/2 x 3 inches, unpagged, handset, and handprinted. An intense blue card announced the \$1.25 artifact.

In 1978 Father Roseliep's Rook Press publication, *A Day in the Life*

of *Sobi-Shi*, came out—7 haiku on four pages. The four pages “are actually one large sheet of quality paper, excellently printed on one side and double folded to make four pages, then handsewn into a slightly larger size cover or wrapper.” Robert Spiess says in his review: “*A Day in the Life of Sobi-Shi* is, from both content and format, for the appreciator of quality.”²⁶

Swish of Cow Tail, published in 1982 by Swamp Press, is probably the most exotic of Father Roseliep’s books. Again, a seven-haiku production—this time, accordian-pleated, which, without careful opening, “will spill out into your lap, announcing itself by its name, ‘Swish!’” says reviewer Donna Bauerly. She continues: “This is Roseliep’s paradigm of life. He gives us once more the whole experience, his and the world’s.”²⁷

AGAINST THE NIGHT

In 1976 Father Roseliep drew up his will and hired a local carpenter to make him a cherrywood coffin. He wanted a closed-coffin funeral. Until his death the cherrywood box occupied a space in his living room beneath the rows of books that lined the west wall. In it, Father kept special manuscripts, books, and personal memorabilia. At this time, too, he bought a cemetery plot just west of the Mount Calvary Cemetery Office building a short distance away, and a tombstone on which was carved his chosen epitaph: “Against the night.” What prompted him to thus prepare for death? Perhaps—“The serenity of the Sisters touches me very deeply,” he once said to Sister Concetta, then Co-ordinator at Holy Family Hall. “Mostly, it was those old nuns.”

It was Marianne Moore who selected the phrase “against the night” from *The Linen Bands* as a summary of Roseliep’s life. “Once she put the discerning finger on those words, I began to understand how they indeed do represent my stand against turmoil, chaos, and darkness, and my desire always for peace, order and light . . . I saw how they pointed up the greatest line of iambic pentameter ever spoken: ‘I am the resurrection and the life.’”²⁸

While in the dentist’s chair on December 5, 1983, Father suffered a brain aneurysm. Rushed to the hospital, he never regained consciousness, dying early the next morning, December 6, 1983—a favorite feast day, that of St. Nicholas.

Designed by his Literary Executor, the Rev. Daniel Rogers, the memorial card reads, *recto*:

Raymond Roseliep, Ph.D.
1917-1983
Priest Professor
 Poet

Then, *verso*:

after music
the
silence of it

FOOTNOTES

¹Eulberg, Sister Mary Thomas, "Poet of Finespun Filaments Raymond Roseliep." *Delta Epsilon Sigma Bulletin*, Vol. XXIV, No. 4, December, 1979, pp. 100-105.

²Eulberg, "Poet . . .," p. 101.

³John Logan, "Preface, xi-xvii, Raymond Roseliep's *The Linen Bands*, Westminster, MD. The Newman Press, 1961.

⁴Dennis Hayes, "Magic and the Magician: A Conversation with Father Roseliep on the Poet, His Method and His Art." *Today*, National Catholic Magazine, Vol. 19, No. 1, pp. 16-20, October, 1963.

⁵Martin Miller, "If Rafts and Small Rains," *The Lamp*, February, 1964, p. 34.

⁶Eulberg, "Poet . . .," p. 103.

⁷"Today: The Arts. Chagall: One must love to create art," "Horizons," *The Telegraph Herald*, April 28, 1977, p. 15.

⁸Eulberg, "Poet . . .," p. 103: quoted poem, *Listen to Light*, p. 87,

⁹Hayes, "Magic . . .," p. 19.

¹⁰Eulberg, "Poet . . .," p. 102.

¹¹n. pag.

¹²Raymond Roseliep. "*love makes the air light*," New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. 1965, dedication n. pag. cited poem, p. 88.

¹³David Fyten, "Love inspires poet Roseliep," "Horizons." *The Telegraph Herald* January 9, 1976, p. 7.

¹⁴Donna Bauerly, "*Flute Over Walden: A Review*," *Delta Epsilon Sigma Bulletin*, Vol. XXI, No. 3, October, 1976. citation on *The Small Rain*, p. 99; pp. 98-101.

¹⁵The quoted poem, p. 41.

¹⁶Raymond Roseliep, "This Haiku of Ours," *Bonsai*, Vol. I, No. 3, 1976, pp. 11-20; the quoted poem, p. 15.

¹⁷Marie Udulutch, "Child of the Hills," *Julien's Journal*, Vol. II, No. 11, December, 1977, pp. 24-26.

¹⁸Bill Pauly, review of *Step on the Rain*, *Uzzano*, Spring-Summer, 1978,

Numbers 9 and 10, Robert Schuller, editor, p. 14.

¹⁹Quoted poems from "Step on the Rain" p. 19, 14, 29, resp.

²⁰*Delta Epsilon Sigma Bulletin*, Vol. XXII, No. 4, December, 1977, pp. 126-129 quoted poems, pp. 128 and 129; quoted statement, p. 129.

²¹*Uzzano Spring-Summer*, Number 9 and 10, Robert Schuller, editor, p. 3.

²²Quoted poems from *50 Haiku by Raymond Roseliep*, *Uzzano*, Spring-Summer, Numbers 9 and 10, 1978, p. 4, and p. 7.

²³Robert Spiess, Review of *Sailing Bones*, *Modern Haiku*, Vol. X, No. 1, Winter/Spring, 1979, pp. 51-52; quoted poem, p.7.

²⁴Father Daniel J. Rogers, "Book Review," *The Witness*, February 28, 1980, p. 2; poems quoted: pp. 26, 27, 30.

²⁵Donna Bauerly, *The Still Point: A Review*. *Delta Epsilon Sigma Bulletin*, Vol. XXV, No. 2, pp. 59-62; poems quoted: 1 and 2, p. 60; 3, p. 62; 4, 5, and 6, p. 60; 7, p. 61.

²⁶Robert Spiess, "Two Haiku Publications by Raymond Roseliep," *Modern Haiku*, Vol. X, No. 1, Winter/Spring, 1979, p. 50.

²⁷Donna Bauerly, "Swish! A Review," *Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal*, Vol. XXVII, No. 2, May 1982, pp. 61-62.

²⁸Mount St. Francis Community Letter, No. 7, September 28, 1976.

BOOKS BY FR. RAYMOND ROSELIEP STILL IN PRINT:

For the benefit of our readers, we wrote to Fr. Roseliep's publishers and found that the following books are still in print:

Rabbit in the Moon 1983 \$6 PB \$12 Clothbound—good supply of both.

Listen to Light, 1981—*Collectors Only*. \$25 PB, \$50 Clothbound

Available from David Dayton, Alembic Press, Cruz Maria 580, Bellas Lomas, Mayaguez, PR 00680. Send your check or money order with order; prices include book rate postage.

Light Footsteps 1976, 2nd Ed.—*Collectors Only*. \$5 ea., postage added

Sky in My Legs 1979, 1st Ed.—*Collectors Only*. PB \$10 ea., postage added

Available from Juniper Press, 1310 Shorewood Drive, LaCrosse, WI 54601

Love makes the air light W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., NY, 1965 PB \$1.95 + tax

Available from National Book Co., Inc., Attn: Paid Order Dept., 800 Keystone Industrial Park, Scranton, PA 18512-4601

Flute Over Walden: Thoreauhaiku 1976 Orig. \$3.50 PB, Now \$3.75 ppd to HSA members—Only 6 or 7 copies, first come, first served

Available from Sparrow Press (Vagrom Chap Books), 103 Waldron St., West Lafayette, IN 47906

BOOK REVIEWS

One Potato Two Potato Etc, by Anita Virgil. Forest, Virginia: Peaks Press, 1991. 133 pp., softcover, \$12.95.

Anita Virgil has long been a principal member of the American haiku community, but *One Potato Two Potato Etc* is only her second volume of poems, the first being *A 2nd Flake*, of 1974. Her recent interview with Vincent Tripi, *On My Mind* (Foster City, CA: Press Here, 1989), exploring her concepts of the art of haiku, has no doubt whetted appetites for another volume.

One Potato is a sizeable collection containing 109 single haiku, five sequences, a solo renku, a preface and an introduction. In the preface Virgil explains that she has included a few poems published between 1981 and 1986, but the majority were written in the two and a half years before publication. She notes that on rereading *A 2nd Flake* she found a preoccupation with poems about death, and in the present volume she has sought "lightness" in the Basho sense, embodying "an attitude of acceptance of life."

Her introduction is a brief but very lucid explanation of what haiku and senryu are, aimed primarily at those unfamiliar with the genres. Virgil writes extremely fine prose.

Of the poems it may easily be said that there are no weak ones. This is not meant to damn with faint praise, because one rarely encounters a book of haiku with no poems that should have been edited out. On the other hand, there *are* a number of stronger ones that arrest the attention and give the zing that good haiku afford. For example,

deep in the hole
with the narcissus bulb go
snowflakes

or

on the steps
the snow
covered with plum blossoms

clearly show the lightness Virgil was striving for with charm and grace.

The twenty-three poems Virgil regards as senryu are printed in italics. One might call these wry-smile senryu. None is raucous or crude, none shouts. Most seem aimed at the speaker of the poem:

the cracked cup
gets packed
better than the rest

Her distinction between haiku and senryu is absolutely consistent, and while she is adept at both forms, perhaps the senryu are a bit muted in their emotions. They demand a fine tuned reader to be appreciated.

Among the sequences is one entitled "Foolin' Around," in which Virgil takes three poems from R. H. Blyth translations in *Japanese Life and Character in Senryu* and replies to them with versions of her own. The results are amusing. Another sequence, "November," seems as much like an imagist poem as a haiku sequence. It is a fine poem, tinted with hints of William Carlos Williams. It gains much power from its cumulative narrative, details of which are seen objectively.

One Potato seems not an indispensable book of haiku and senryu, if there is such a thing, but it shows a pleasing, quiet mastery of the forms and attitudes presently practiced in North America among those who work in the genres. It could easily make one forget a meal, as Virgil reminds us may happen.

the morning mail so good
cold eggs
cold toast

—Review by Paul O. Williams

Daffodils and Dragonflies, Hank Dunlap. Illustrations by Logan Dunlap, covers by Carol Rawlings and Suzan Dunlap Fisher. Hank Dunlap, 1228 N. Lois Drive, Prescott, AZ 86301. 1992, 39pp., \$7.95, plus mailing.

An atmosphere of childlike wonder, even astonishment, permeates the first chapbook of Hank Dunlap. The title derives from the haiku:

Imagine: What if—
daffodils and dragonflies
the same season

In several other poems Dunlap's imaginative eye questions what it perceives. One can easily envision the poet's finger probing to find the answers.

tadpoles
hugging warm shallows
—which ones are shadows

in leaf shade
an inchworm rests
which end is which

Dunlap's intimate connection with his environment is evident in his work. As in the abundant, simple, and direct illustrations by his son (who only recently began to teach himself to sketch), the poems reflect an unassuming, yet strong, awareness of the immediate, natural world.

In his brief, informative introduction, Dunlap outlines the expectations for writing haiku. However, the avoidance of personifying or anthropomorphizing natural phenomena is not mentioned and this oversight is evident in some of his work. For example:

a pine tree snag
clutches an eagle nest
—falling snow

The word "clutches" indicates a grasping action that is impossible for a pine snag. The poem is further complicated by the multiple meanings of "clutches." It conjures an ambiguous image of eggs or chicks clustered in a snowy nest or of an eagle clasping its prey.

The tendency to over-personify lends an unevenness to the book. Several of the poems could be improved by leaving out the imposed human characteristics and simply stating what is exactly seen and experienced. Dunlap capably achieves this clarity in many of the haiku. As the first chapbook to come from this sensitive and highly perceptive poet, writing largely in isolation, it delights more than enough to make up for its inconsistencies. The "old dog" poems are wonderfully warm and lovingly true while being free of sentimentality.

brushing my old dog—
a house wren waits
to line her nest

winter fireplace
my old dog's
warm belly

Whatever the season, of daffodils and/or dragonflies, Dunlap possesses the eye and sincerity to write about it. This chapbook is a hearty welcoming into his world and a pleasant addition to one's haiku library.

snow capped peaks—
shimmering reflections
in my cup of tea

—*Review by Ebba Story*

CURRENT CROP

In English literature, except in college classrooms and self-important reviews perhaps, critical commentary on a poem seldom becomes an equal of the poem or upstages it. In Japanese haiku, regardless of where, the customary rule does not apply. A haiku cited is a haiku with its background, real or speculative, explained, followed by the citer's extended musings on the piece. The practice is accepted—for the genre as a whole, because the form is brief and can always use some fleshing out, and for classical haiku, because the nature of *haikai* remains an inexhaustible source of mystery and inquiry.

In *Basho and His Interpreters* (Stanford Univ. Press, 1991; unpriced), Makoto Ueda, Professor of Japanese at Stanford, recreates for the English reader Japanese commentators' endless attempts to puzzle out "the greatest of them all." For each of the more than a quarter of the hokku that Matsuo Basho (1644-94) has left us or, to be exact, 255 of them, Ueda provides a translation, a Roman transliteration with a word-for-word English rendition, and a general description of the piece, followed by a selection of interpretations. His "interpreters" total about eighty and range from Basho's contemporaries like Mukai Kyorai (1651-1704) and Kagami Shiko (1665-1731) to modern scholars like Yamamoto Kenkichi (1907-88) and Ando Tsuguo (born 1919). His earlier book of a similar nature, in Japanese, *Kawazu Tobikomus* (Meiji Shoin, 1979)—a presentation of foreign comments on about a hundred-twenty Japanese haiku—may not have made much of a splash in Japan. If my guess is right and it did not, my hunch is that *Basho and His Interpreters* will be different. It will become and remain a standard reference book in the United States for decades.

This variorum edition of Basho's hokku, with the author disarmingly encouraging the readers to "attempt their own translations according to their own tastes and preferences," closes off most venues of criticism. Still, I might offer a single demurrer, irrelevant though it is to what the book intends to accomplish. In his Introduction Ueda says: "to insist that a hokku should be a one-line poem in English because the original Japanese poet had no sense of lineation is tantamount to insisting that no English grammatical article, such as 'a' or 'the,' should be used in translating Japanese sentences because the Japanese language includes no concept of articles."

This statement, made as it is in the context of his note on translation, accomplishes a triple sleight of hand.

First, assuming that some do insist on a one-line approach in the way he describes, Ueda is being disingenuous in dismissing its advocates. Earlier he cites, with no overt disapproval, the translations of a single haiku by Lafcadio Hearn, W.G. Aston, B.H. Chamberlain, Harold G. Henderson, and Frank Livingstone Huntley, ranging from two to five lines, and then concludes: "translation is a form of literary criticism as well as artistic creation." Why, then, such aspersion on what is no more than yet another approach?

Second, he does not name any of the one-line advocates, perhaps to forestall any further discussion of the matter. For the record, however, I have yet to read anyone saying that "the original Japanese poet [writing hokku] had no sense of lineation." There are, on the other hand, not a few poets and students of Japanese prosody who say that the modern haiku, when printed in one line, is conceived as a one-line poem and is so to be regarded, and that, though retroactively, the hokku may be described as a verse form that cannot be broken into two or more "lines." Among Ueda's "interpreters," Ando Tsuguo says as much in his commentary on one of Basho's syllabically irregular pieces, *Umi kurete*, even though Ueda does not cite that part of Ando's observation. (It would be remiss of me if I failed to note that Ando, known for his aversion to translation, would dismiss the whole question as nonsense.)

Third, to say that an effort to make a translation of a poem reflect the original form is the same as an attempt to impose certain grammatical particulars of one language on another is tantamount to saying, as a Japanese proverb has it, that a heron is a crow. It is a non sequitur. All it does is to show pique.

I can't be certain about the source of Makoto Ueda's pique, but I can be definite about something else: When the occasion arises, he will endorse Lucien Stryk's new book, *The Dumpling Field: Haiku of Issa* (Swallow Press/Ohio Univ. Press, 1991; unpriced). In *Basho and His Interpreters*, he recommends, for further reading, Stryk's earlier book, *On Love and Barley: Haiku of Basho* (Univ. of Hawaii Press & Penguin Books, 1985). As I pointed out in a review elsewhere (*JATJ*, Vol. 20, No. 2), *On Love and Barley* showed Stryk's three-fold failure: to read a couple of books on the history of haiku, to see the nature of classical haiku, and to comprehend the haiku he chose to translate. The same triple failure characterizes *The Dumpling Field*. But

Ueda will probably like this book, too, in view of his apparent rejection of a careful approach to the subject at hand, at least where Stryk is concerned, in favor of the kind of Zennist breeziness palpable in *On Love and Barley*.

Here I will merely glance at Stryk's utter confusion as to the import of seasonal categorization, if only because he bothers to break up the 366 pieces he has selected—how many unwitting duplications in draft rendition, I can't say—into the four seasons. In the opening section of Spring, the 2nd translation, "Owls are calling/'Come, come,'/to the fireflies"—I can't guess the original—is unlikely to belong here; the owl, *fukuro* or *mimizuku*, is a kigo for winter, and the firefly is a kigo for summer. The 4th, "Don't weep", insects,/lovers, stars themselves,/must part," *Nakuna mushi wakaruru koi wa hoshi ni sae*, has nothing to do with spring; both the "insects," *mushi*, and the story of the Princess Weaver and the Cowherd are for autumn. The 5th, "Cuckoo," is for the summer; so are the 6th and 7th which are about "flies." Everyone's favorite, *Daiko-hiki daikode michi o oshiekeri*, here translated as No. 8, "Farmer,/pointing the way/with a radish," describes a winter scene. "Short night," in No. 9, is a kigo for summer. And so on.

If Stryk had a different notion of seasonal categorization, he doesn't say.

Fireflies may be for the summer, but why is the owl for the winter? Don't owls, at least some of the species and in some parts of the United States, hoot all year round? Insects of all kinds swarm into your rural home from early summer to well into autumn; why confine them to the fall? Sigh. Gee, where's the Key?

So sighing and puzzled, Jane Reichhold set out to make an American edition of *saijiki*, which she asks you to pronounce "sigh-gee-key." To achieve her aim, she, of seemingly boundless energy and good intentions, assembled nearly 5,000 haiku she'd written. The result is *A Dictionary of Haiku: Classified by Season Words with Traditional and Modern Methods* (AHA Books, Gualala, California, 1992; \$12.95).

Whether or not you decide to become her "dream reader" and accept this book as your reference guide will depend on the extent of your admiration for her work, for she expects you to "enjoy" and "remember" her pieces for later checking. Here I can offer only a few passing remarks.

As Reichhold notes, there are a number of *saijiki* in Japan (though not as many as she hints), but I have yet to see a personal anthology

offered as one. True, in the old days one person's haiku assembled between two covers were routinely categorized into the four (or, including the New Year, five) seasons, and some haiku writers in Japan today probably still follow the practice. But a personal collection is a personal collection and not a *saijiki* in the true sense of the term.

For a *saijiki* is a collective work, a result of presumed consensus building. Words and phrases specifying a given season do change with time, but because of the presumption of agreement, reasons for ascribing a word or phrase to a particular season can be explained. Indeed, most *saijiki* in Japan come with background notes on most important kigo, along with selections of haiku using them. One assumes that Reichhold can provide, if asked, a detailed account of why she has decided to make this or that word represent a particular season, but one wonders if she can count on agreement among her fellow haiku writers. At any rate, her selections, purely subjective as far as one can tell, have resulted in many words—owl among them, yes—scattered through two, three, or the four seasons, thereby effectively negating the role and import of kigo.

The concept of kigo, in the end, is based on the view that haiku writing is a game. With the efforts of Bill Higginson, Kato Koko, Jane Reichhold, and others, there may come a day when American haiku writers gather for a competitive composition and, the moment a topic is given, whip out a list (or dictionary) of kigo or a *saijiki* for consultation, as happens in a typical Japanese haiku meet. But considering, among other things, the admirable independent-mindedness, as well as the less admirable willingness to become a pedagogue but not a pupil, of American haiku writers, that day will be long coming, if ever.

Of the three remaining books I have to comment on today, Alan Pizzarelli's *City Beat* (Islet Books, Bloomfield, NJ, 1991; unpriced)* and Carol Montgomery's *Starting Something* (Los Hombres Press, San Diego, California, 1992; \$6.95) provide a contrast between masculine and feminine sensibilities (if I may point to such things in this age of unisex). Here's Pizzarelli:

a hubcap
rolls down the midnight street
into its distant sound
in the stream
a shopping cart
fills with leaves

And an obvious take-off on Issa's piece cited earlier:

the gas station man
points the way
with a gas nozzle

And here's Montgomery:

saved the circled
temperature, Miami
thirty years ago
summer night
newly-weds cutting shelfpaper
—their bright light
honeymoon beach house
he breaks the key
in the lock

Finally, there is James Kirkup's *Shooting Stars* (Hub Stations, Bedfordshire, England, 1992; unpriced). Kirkup, an English poet, who is a long-time resident in Japan and an aficionado of Zen of his own brand, believes that "the writing of *haiku* is a kind of spiritual jogging . . . a kind of personal exercise in meditation." For this reason perhaps, he proposes to stick to the 5-7-5-syllable, 3-line format, even while in practice spectacularly deviating from it at times.

The 5-7-5 format, along with his apparent abandonment of the effort to congeal "a moment," his readiness to pick up any topic, and his tendency to philosophize, may put off many members of the Haiku Society of America. But as an unadorned record of a mind at work *Shooting Stars* is a good read. The following piece may sum up his approach:

All over the place
a faltering butterfly
finding its own way

*Pizzarelli's book is not presented as a collection of haiku, with some pieces forming what would normally be taken as stanzas within sections of a sequential poem. But Pizzarelli being Pizzarelli, I take it that each of the two-, three-, and four-liners is intended as a haiku or senryu.

—Reviews by Hiroaki Sato

MERIT BOOK AWARDS
for books published in 1991

This year as in the past few years, the Merit Book Awards Contest has shown a marked increase in the number of books submitted as well as the high quality of the entries. As judges we are hard pressed to make the right decisions. Inevitably we are responsible for our choices and win or lose we bear the criticism and/or respect of the final results. This year is no exception.

One of our major concerns which must be addressed is how do we judge translations if we do not speak the language of the translated poets? Or, how do we judge anthologies from other countries when the English translations are less than perfect? Two examples quickly come to mind with Sam Hamill's translation of Basho's *Narrow Road to the Interior* and Lucien Stryk's *The Dumpling Field—Haiku of Issa*. Both seem to be excellent translations. The anthologies, *Four Seasons: Haiku Anthology Classified by Season Words in English and Japanese*, edited by Koko Kato and *Classic Haiku: A Master's Selection*, edited by Yazuru Miura, again, are difficult to judge., as are for that matter, *Eco Poems: Winners of the Rhyming Haiku Contest—1991*, edited by Rengé/David Priebe, and *Wind in the Long Grass*, a beautifully illustrated collection of haiku edited by Bill Higginson with illustrations by Sandra Speidel. Also difficult is the fantastically rich *Sensescapes*, by Werner Reichhold which sends me into a world of haiku and surrealism from which I do not wish to return. The AHA! Chapbook, *April Fool*, and *Tanka Splendor: Mirrors International Tanka Award*, judged by Sanford Goldstein, are in special categories as well. Many of these books could easily have received honorable mentions.

The gallery of good and excellent books goes on and on, and I feel I must mention all the entries so that the readers can begin to understand the difficulty of the judges' responsibility. For those of you who have yet to order these books, I hope you will research their sources or write for more details. I'm sure most of them have been reviewed in the haiku magazines or soon will be.

A special mention must go to King's Road Press in Canada, Marco Fraticelli's small inexpensive editions of fine haiku. His two entries: LeRoy Gorman's, *glass bell*, and Alexis Rotella's, *An Unknown Weed*, should be in every collector's library. The latter received an honorable mention in this year's contest.

In the honorable mention category, we make special note also of anne mckay's *shaping the need*, from wind chimes press. This is anne's lasting tribute in both haiku and short verse form to the master American painter Georgia O'Keeffe. For those of you who are familiar with anne's work, you will find a burning warmth in these gems from our Northern neighbor.

For those of you who like a regional awakening in the universal sense, I suggest *The Measure of Emptiness* by Lee Gurga, Wally Swist's *The Gristmill's Trough*, and Nina Wicker's *Where Pelicans Fly*. All three books put you in touch with your senses in a unique way from the poets' different individual landscapes.

And the list goes on: Alexis Rotella's *Voice of the Mourning Dove*, and *Looking for a Prince*, (always so special). Francine Porad's *A Mural of Leaves*, (so many beautiful renku with Francine's visual touch); Helen Sherry's *Colors of Haiku*, how can I forget her *Van Gogh's Suns*, a renga between Helen and H.F. Noyes; *A Poppy Blooms*, Garry Gay, Rengé/David Priebe, Dave Sutter, and vincent tripi edited by Patricia Donegan; Michael Dylan Welch's editorial expertise for *Harvest: An anthology of haiku commemorating Haiku North America*; Naomi Y. Brown's *Season's Enigma*, with illustrations by Nina Klinkenberg; William Hart's *Monsoon*, so true to the landscape of India; and the rich pictorial *Snowbound: Below the Fern Line*, by Charles, Christopher, and Mary Rodning, a truly unique family collaborative. And let us not forget *The Gulf Within*, a very find collection of political haiku which made us question our commitment to the world order.

AND THE WINNERS ARE: Alan Pizzarelli's *City Beat*. I can hear Bucky's guitar wailings along with Alan's—a must for any practitioner in the art. 2nd: Anita Virgil's *One Potato Two Potato Etc*,—so much wisdom; and 3rd: Robert Spiess's, *The Cottage of Wild Plum*, with line drawings by John R. Reynolds—a touch of elegance! Honorable Mention: anne mckay's *shaping the need*; Alexis Rotella's *An Unknown Weed*.

—Judges: Raffael de Gruttola, Patricia Neubauer

activity of writing. One must pay attention to details, to the limits of one's preferences, to openness, flexibility and to silences and to silences in the poems.

One must pay attention to one's questioning. This too. Is it a moment? Is it objectively presented? Does it avoid metaphor, simile, personification, etc.?

The best-written poems leave one feeling that the author has brought to life our life inside the object; has given us the quality of his or her experience. Contributing to this 'quality' are the ordering of words, their particular selection and appropriateness, the sound and movement of the words as they balance with the things that can't be said . . . in words.

In the final selections, we were guided to our choices by considerations such as: 'naturalness' (which includes simplicity and spontaneity), originality of images, clarity, potential for growth within the reader, suggestiveness, depth and not least, universality. Each of the three winning poems comes alive in a very special way. They make a place for us where we might see, might hear and taste—might be ourselves again.

Memorable haiku grab and hold. A great haiku never lets go, and sometimes it's a prize winner. Each poet deserves hearty congratulations just for entering. We feel privileged to have read your work and shared your moments. Keep reading and writing. Your footprints are vital for packing and shaping this narrow path of haiku.

*Judges: Larry Rungren, vincent tripi, Nina Wicker
Contest Coordinator: Minna Lerman*



1992 BRADY MEMORIAL SENRYU CONTEST
Haiku Society of America

First Place \$150: cropped grass—
 Πr²=
 the tethered goat
 —*Christopher Herold*

Second Place \$100: whacking the bat
 with a broom, she says
 they attack people
 —*Helen L. Shaffer*

Third Place \$50: Clear about
 everything
 the window washer
 —*vincent tripi*

Judges: Arizona Zipper and Dorothy Howard
Contest Coordinator: Minna Lerman

JUDGE'S STATEMENT

We leaned toward submissions which, as the song goes, dare to be different. Usually the more caustic the verse, the more we liked it.

Your 1992 HSA senryu judges wish to thank this year's participants for giving us a chance to review their work.

BOOKS AND CHAPBOOKS RECEIVED

Listings of new books is for information and does not imply endorsement by FROGPOND nor the Haiku Society of America. Future issues will carry reviews of some of these titles.

At the Hut of the Small Mind, A Tanka Sequence, in soft-cover, flat-spined, 54 pages, 5.5 x 8.5, with Introduction, ISBN: 0-994676-37-5, \$6.00. Add \$1.00 postage when you order from: AHA Books. POB 767. Gualala, CA 95445.

DAFFODILS AND DRAGONFLIES: Haiku by Hank Dunlap. Poligion Publications ISBN 0-922484-01-5. Illustrated by author's son, Logan Dunlap, Back cover by daughter, Suzan Dunlap Fisher, 5 x 8, 40 pages, approx. 50 haiku. Available from author @ 1228 N. Lois Dr. Prescott, AZ. 86301. \$7.95 plus \$1.00 postage.

DARKNESS CLAIMS THE BRANCH by Emily Romano. Available from the author, 230 Madison Street, Boonton, NJ 07005. Four seasons of haiku about crows. \$3.00 postpaid, (\$4.00 autographed).

The Essence of This—a book of 79 original haiku by David Samuel Bloch with 14 original hand-carved stamp illustrations and calligraphy by Julie Hagan Bloch. \$6.75 post paid-order from Julie Bloch, 51 Mongaup Rd., Hurleyville, N.Y., 12747.

heavyn by LeRoy Gorman, a chapbook of language haiku, available from: The Runaway Spoon Press, Box 3621, Port Charlotte, FL 33949. \$3 US. 40 pp. (ISBN 0926935-74-7).

THE LIGHT BETWEEN, a new collection of haiku & short poetry by Herb Barrett, published by Hamilton Haiku Press, 4 East 23rd St. Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. ISBN 0-9691638-4-3, 104 pp. Trubound. Price \$8.95 ppd.

Notes From a Humdrum. A Year in Haiku. by Brian Tasker. 40 pages 150 x 95mm 60 poems printed on handmade jute paper with a cover of handmade board from water hyacinths and handtied. The Bare Bones Press, 16 Wren Close, Frome, Somerset, BA11 2UZ ENGLAND. Price U.S. \$10.00 (Bills Only) Postpaid Airmail.

THE RICE PAPERS, by Pat Shelley. A collection of tanka, haibun, and "little Zen" poems. Perfect bound, 9x7, 74 pp. Full color illustration on cover, and five black & white illustrations within the text. Order from: Saratoga Trunk, 19223 Shubert Dr., Saratoga, CA 95070, \$10.00. Please add \$.00 for postage & handling.

The San Francisco Haiku Anthology, edited by Jerry Ball, Garry Gay and Tom Tico. Smythe-Waithe Press, 9632 Berkshire Way, Windsor, CA 95492. 198 pages, 57 poets. \$14.50 (includes shipping & handling within U.S.).

SONGS OF THE CHICKEN YARD by Marian Olson. 1992, 44 pages, handsewn, handset, quality paper, 6 1/2 x 9 1/2 inches, \$17.50 postpaid from Marian Olson, 1154 West L-8, Lancaster, CA 93534.

Waterlily Shadows, by Margaret Molarsky. Privately printed 1992. 53 pages, perfect-bound 8 3/4 by 5 1/4 inches. Six illustrations by Lawrence Nadeau. 108 haiku, senryu. \$8, postpaid. Make checks payable to Margaret Molarsky, P.O. Box 286, Ross California 94957.

NOTE: For future listings in "Books and Chapbooks Received," please follow the format shown above. Books sent *must* be accompanied by the appropriate typed description.

NOTICE: The March meeting of the HSA will be held in Carmel, CA. Please consult the next Newsletter for further details.

DONATIONS TO THE HAIKU SOCIETY OF AMERICA FOR 1992

Patrons \$500 and up

Sacred Heart Church of Camden (New Jersey)
The Nick Virgilio Haiku Association
Anonymous

Sponsors \$100 and up

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Ronan (Oregon)
Helen J. Sherry (California)
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GARY HOTTAM

Scaggsville, Md

8 February 1993

