

FROGPOND XXII:2

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President's Message

Regional coordinator Steve Addiss put together a really fine meeting in Richmond, Virginia, March 19 and 20. On the evening of Friday, the 19th, a concert of new music was presented, vocal and instrumental, illustrative of haiku, a number of short pieces being based on haiga in the exhibit of Zen art in the adjoining gallery. Steve and Audrey Yoshiko Seo had published a book, *The Art of Twentieth-Century Zen: Paintings and Calligraphy by Japanese Masters, Boston* (Shambala, 1998), which supported the exhibit. I found the exhibit remarkable and am very pleased to have the book to peruse and contemplate.

On the 20th, after a ginkgo walk in the morning, and lunch, the meeting included a haiku round, a paper by Patrick Gallagher, entitled "Tell the Truth as If It Were False," based on Pat's reactions to a paper by Ishihara Sensei on the same subject. The Richmond Haiku group read a renga, then D. S. Lliteras gave a reading, "The Renga Party," from his book, *In the Heart of Things*.

A panel followed, "What's so Zen about Haiku." After a break, Steve turned us loose with brushes, ink, and paper to create our own haiga, the best of which were immediately exhibited on the meeting room wall. The attendees then put haiku of their own on a haiku tree, and a dinner at a local Vietnamese restaurant followed.

One of the strengths of the meeting was its mingling of haiku both with music and graphic art. Thanks, Steve, for a fine meeting.

I have been continuing to volunteer at the American Haiku Archives, currently listing the duplicate materials the archive has acquired. I have been struck by the fact that so many publications do not contain complete publishing information. Even when self-publishing it is a good idea to provide a publisher's name, a date, and certainly a place of publication. Smaller publications would gain much from providing a mailing address for ordering copies as well as a price and mailing charge. This would not only promote the distribution of the material, but would make the whole process of ordering it much easier for all involved. The archive includes some extremely ephemeral material, but nothing is so ephemeral that it ought to be secretive about its own existence.

With the generated list of duplicate publications, by the way, we will have a means of informing people of available materials. If anyone has a great idea for what to do with this material, I would love to hear from you.

Paul O. Williams

haiku

1) An unrhymed Japanese poem recording the essence of a moment keenly perceived, in which Nature is linked to human nature. It usually consists of seventeen *onji*.

2) A foreign adaptation of 1, usually written in three lines totalling fewer than seventeen syllables.

first day of spring
out of the gutter drain
my neighbor's indoor cat

Carolyn Rohrig

in the squirrel's mouth
a faded page from
the lost storybook

Emily Romano

5

left undisturbed
by the housecleaning war vet—
5-legged spider

Mark Arvid White

cool spring morning—
the chimney conducts
birdsong

Sheila Windsor

vacant store—
two grackles carry straw
behind the sign

Kaye Bache-Snyder

pumping gas;
the slow drip
of melting ice

Jo Lea Parker

spring sunshine
returning this morning
the rented wheelchair

Ronan

frost thawing
rainbow hexagons
in the chicken-wire fence

Elizabeth Howard

6
spring rain
meeting a man from the same town
at a foreign café

Sosuke Kanda

wisteria . . .
I bless
a sneezing stranger

Ellen Compton

cool spring
the length
of her hair

Kam Holifield

the moving van
pulling up—
shivering treebuds

John Vieira

spring cleaning
her old love letters
get a dusting

Charles Scanzello

soft leather
of an old baseball
spring fog

paul m.

spring dusk—
a line of raindrops
not dropping
from a power line

Philip Rowland

Night and the
daffodils are still
bright yellow

Kenn Compton

the sound of spring rain
looking around, the deaf man
pretends to hear it

Jerry Ball

flooded meadow—
joined toads sway gently
with the grass

Linda Jeanette Ward

8

plump porcupine—
a branch of tender leaf shoots
bends beneath its weight

Billie Wilson

scattered petals . . .
the thud of my books
in the book drop

Michael Dylan Welch

spring rain—
around the feeder
sunflowers

Andrea Missias

fluttering between
unfurling ferns
green butterfly
Justin Hayes

spring weekend—
on the entertainment page
a topsoil ad

Yvonne Hardenbrook

lifting a cold stone
earthworms slowly withdraw
into their holes

Richard von Stumer

orange lichen brighten
the sailors' names
cut into granite

Cherie Hunter Day

lingering pneumonia
the smell of apple blossoms
little by little

Carrie Etter

clear through
the noon whistle
spring peepers

Tom Painting

wind in the leaves—
the nursing infant
glances up at the tree

Tom Lynch

10

nearing the pond—
the sudden silence
of frogs

Mark Huffman

their engagement night—
venus jupiter and moon
in perfect alignment

Elizabeth St Jacques

scanning the skies
for converging planets
I grind the gears

Cathy Drinkwater Better

spring cumulus
half houses drive
down the highway

Robert Gibson

|| ||

after a downpour
gushing water brings spring
from the mountains

Yoko Ogino

spring break—
his fleeting white thumbprint
on my sun-scorched skin

Addie LaCoe

lovers quarreling
in the iris gardens
end of spring

Kim Hodges

The Cyber Pond

A. C. Missias

In the second installment of Cyberpond [*Frogpond* XXI:2], I described one of the most comprehensive haiku resource sites on the web, belonging to Dhugal Lindsay. There are only a few other web sites offering such breadth of content for writers of all levels of experience; one of the best is Jane Reichhold's AHA! poetry site <<http://www.ahapoetry.com/haiku.htm>> [note: this is a new address replacing the older one still visible at faximum.com]. This is a truly huge site, with sections devoted to many forms of poetry, among which haiku, tanka, and renga are only a subset. However, each of these sections is substantial in itself, and a thorough exploration of all the various materials that Jane has collected would be fuel for many days of reading. I'd like to overview the section on haiku as an introduction to the types of material available there.

|| 2

When you first visit Jane's haiku page, you arrive at an index which points you to subsections on different topics. Let me advise you not to click on any of the links before the page is fully loaded; most of this section exists as a single document (it took about 10-15 seconds to load over my 56k modem), with links pointing to particular headings further down rather than to separate documents. This is a slight inconvenience for navigation (as well as for printing — don't just hit "print" or you may get some 20+ pages all at once!), but may help Jane keep the site organized. Forewarned is forearmed.

Probably the richest portion of this site comes under the heading of "How-to Haiku". This starts with an essay entitled "Another Definition of Haiku", which gives a useful history of the evolution of the haiku form from tanka and renga, as well as discussing some of the technical considerations of writing within the current form. Early on, she warns against the possibility of giving truly definitive answers (a recurring theme of this site, as we shall see):

[O]ne may ask what separates a haiku from any other short, light verse. The answers will be as varied and individual as are paths to a religious belief — a metaphor that is not too far off as haiku writers easily admit to living the Way of Haiku (in an awareness of just *this* moment) and in the Spirit of Haiku (to hold all things with reverence).

|| 3

However, she doesn't shrink from providing advice on both "craft" and "spirit" aspects of haiku. She discusses the issue of form, suggesting that writing in 17 syllables or sticking to the content scope of Japanese poems are mutually exclusive in English: "...we cannot have both method and translated product correct in one poem, so each of us must choose one system or the other." She also discusses the notion of internal breaks in haiku, advocating that "run-on sentence" poems be broken up grammatically to provide a caesura. As an example, she rewrites the poem at left to the right hand version:

the strange shape
of the passion flower
and its legend

strange shape
the passion flower
and its legend

Jane also provides a guiding theory for decisions about when to use or avoid articles or prepositions in haiku.

It has slowly evolved that it seems to sound best if one allows the shortest part of the haiku to be very brief by

dropping these sentence parts. However, ...in the two-line connected phrases, the poem can sound like pidgen-english or haiku telegrams if this is followed. It is often best to allow the longer two-line part all of the articles and propositions it needs to sound like a proper sentence fragment.

This simple explanation was later expanded into an excellent article on "Fragment and Phrase Theory" that appeared recently in Frogpond, and is also available in this "how-to" portion of her web site.

As for the spirit and overall approach of haiku, Jane offers an assortment of thoughts. She recommends using care in choice of modifiers when writing, as many adjectives and adverbs "imply judgement (beautiful, graceful, ugly) so by avoiding them, and more importantly *your own opinion*, the haiku is left with images of things just as they are." Further, the writer's goal should be to be concrete; "use your bodily senses instead of your intellect. Forget what you have been taught; write of what you experience with your body." And finally, she offers this on composition:

Check a haiku. Can any word of it be changed out for another? If so, the haiku is flawed and can be rewritten. Only when each image is so dependent upon the other that the whole thing collapses if one word is altered is the haiku "solid".

|| 4

In summary, Jane has this way of describing both the difficulty and richness of haiku as a form and discipline:

Here comes the real challenge of haiku. To express an image or two so well that the reader "sees" them in his/her mind and then! you add another image that demands a leap or twist so the two previous images are seen in a new relationship...An additional twist is to have images plus leap which reveal some deep philosophical truth or ideal without having to speak of it. Poetry is written vision.

The other pieces in this “how-to” section all deserve a good reading. One is an essay by Keiko Imaoka on the differences between the Japanese and English languages, and how these lead to different requirements for form in haiku. The other two are both by Jane, and are closer to exercises designed to stimulate your thinking about haiku, as both a writer and reader. One of these is called “Haiku Rules That Have Come and Gone” and is essentially a list of various strategies and definitions that can be used to write better haiku—some controversial, many mutually contradictory, all designed to help you break out of a rut or keep yourself continually challenged as a haiku writer. To excerpt just a few:

1. Seventeen syllables in one line.
2. Seventeen syllables written in three lines.
7. Write what can be said in one breath.
19. Use of common sentence syntax in both phrases.
20. Use of sentence fragments.
21. Study the order in which the images are presented. First the wide-angle view, medium range and zoomed in close-up.
22. Save the “punch line” for the end line.
23. Work to find the most fascinating and eye-catching first lines.
24. Just write about ordinary things in an ordinary way using ordinary language.
42. Avoid all reference to yourself in the haiku.
43. Refer to yourself obliquely as the poet, this old man, or with a personal pronoun.
57. Write haiku only from an “ah-ha” moment.
58. Use any inspiration as starting point to develop and write haiku.
65. Write down every haiku that comes to you. Even the bad ones. It may inspire the next one which will surely be better.

The last Reichhold piece in this section, entitled “Some Thoughts for Rethinking Haiku,” is shorter, and consists of an array of thought-provoking

questions. These range from what terms we want to use when discussing haiku in English, to how and when we make time for "receiving" and writing haiku. I leave this one for you to read and mull yourselves.

The other sections of Jane's site are titled "Articles on Haiku Writing", "Samples of Haiku", and "Links to Other Haiku Sites". The articles are quite varied, including a close reading of entrants to a long-past contest (by Lenard Moore); a brief biography of Issa (by Earle Stone); and an examination of subtle metaphor in Basho's poetry (by Jane). The haiku samples are in groups organized by topic, including poems by Jane about the ocean and about aging, some erotic haiku by a variety of authors, and a large group of Basho poems apparently translated freshly by Jane and arranged by kigo. As a tiny sampling of the wide range of images in Jane's work, I offer these:

river valley
letting the sunrise
into the sea

saying goodbye
a salt wind swallows
the words

on the island
no one goes to
driftwood

waiting for the wave
a killdeer practices his cry
of surprise

16 in the photo album
my mother's face
before I knew her

waiting room
a patch of sunlight
wears out the chairs

The "Links" section is quite short, as many of the links on the older version of this page had expired; those listed here represent a small variety of personal and organization sites. For those seeking a comprehensive list of web haiku sites (which I hope to overview in an upcoming column), I again recommend Mark Osterhaus' exhaustive collection <<http://www.execpc.com/~ohaus/haiklink.com>>.

However, the haiku content of Jane's site is rich and interesting at both poetry and theory ends of the spectrum, and by following the link (at the bottom of the page) back to the AHA!poetry main site you can wander easily into hours of tanka and renga information as well. I hope that this taste has been enough to make you find time for a visit — there's much to learn, and much to come back to again and again.

For now, that's all from the cyberpond.



*Suggestions for topics welcomed by email
(missias@mail.med.upenn.edu) or mail care of Frogpond.*

fire hydrant:
where it leaks
little green shoots
tom tico

picking radishes
soft rains sweetens
the tang
Gloria Procsal

Unexpected guests
The tang of dillweed
in the salad
Carol Purington

18

bugs
banging into the porch light—
good night kiss
Mike Allen

slight ripples
in the cistern's water—
first dim stars
H. F. Noyes

weeding . . .
where the birds pooped
poke

Ken Hum

garden work—
talking to each other
back to back

Dimitar Anakiev

haytruck:
men pitchfork clumps
of shine

Lloyd Gold

after swallows
this interlude of dusk
before the bats

Patricia Neubauer

rising moon
in the young tomatoes
the day's heat

Rob Krevitz

sunday fishing
a little old lady says
I'll pray for you

Ernest J. Berry

midbridge
bits of fish
and a feather

Cindy Zackowitz

beneath the pier
the lake holds
slats of sunlight

Lloyd Gold

20

roadside kill—
crow stands its ground
as I drive by

Albert W. Haley Jr.

double rainbow—
the saltwater bay sparkles
with floating rain

Clifford Wood

breakfast headlines
jumping from the fold
a pale lizard

Harry R. Gilli

in her nose ring
one still drop
of the Atlantic

William M. Ramsey

21

cleft in a boulder
high above the crashing waves
the bluest harebell

Anne Day

sunset slides in
as I beat up a bowl of
yolks

Jianqing Zheng

that star seems
close enough to
swim to

Diane G. Lynch

returning from holiday
our voices sound strange
inside the house

Nikhil Nath

cicada rhythm
the napping boy's hammock
slowly swings

James Paulson

mosquito:
washing its blood
off my hands
tom tico

22

after the ufo
the fireflies

John Barlow

falcon returns
summer's half over

Eileen Blas Schaefer

Summer solstice—
the same street musician
on the same corner

Ed Zuk

summer rain—
on top of the sheet
we lie without touching

Andrea Missias

23

deep greens and thunder
that welcome hiss
stops in the trees

Rees Evans

sun steams the rain
from the reservoir walls . . .
your laugh drifting by

Dave Russo

thunder—
I just miss
my bus

Christopher Suarez

The Conscious Eye

Dee Evetts

When last year I made a plan to devote this column at least once in 1999 to a discussion of war haiku and senryu, I did not imagine I would find myself doing this in the midst of daily reports from a totally new conflict. Perhaps inevitably, the Kosovo crisis has influenced the way I view the material now spread before me. The many submissions and suggestions for publication fall all the more clearly into three broad categories: poems written by combatants; poems written by non-combatants living in the war zone; and poems written by distant observers and commentators.

All three have their own validity, but today I feel an impatience with the last group. At some time in the future I will no doubt appreciate these often eloquent expressions of concern and regret. At present the enormity of what is happening in Yugoslavia takes my attention elsewhere—to the voices that speak from personal experience of warfare. Precisely because so much in our culture conspires to distance us from the actuality of war, I am drawn towards those poets who can take me there—where I fervently hope never to be.

Vietnam was one such place, never more vivid for me than as evoked by Ty Hadman:

Rainsoaked and cold—
without moving an inch
I let the warm urine flow¹

Waiting in ambush;
our hands touch as he hands me
an extra grenade²

Plenty of war movies have the capacity to make me flinch and cringe, and still I remain a spectator. It is all happening to someone else, far away—never to me. Hadman's achievement lies in his ability to make us feel what it is to be pinned down by sniper fire, and having to pee, or to feel the touch of a comrade in the moment before combat. By focussing on the ordinary and the vulnerable, with unswerving tenderness he denies us escape from the underlying truth: *that is me, that is every one of us.*

Closer to the present, Lenard D. Moore shows similar skill in this glimpse of the Gulf War:

midday heat
soldiers on both sides
roll up their sleeves³

His poem likewise emphasizes common humanity, this time of the opposing troops. It brings to mind, however distantly, the so-called fraternization during World War I (reports of which could not be completely suppressed) when English and German soldiers slipped through the lines to celebrate Christmas together in no-man's-land.

I had assumed that Moore's poem was based on first-hand experience, and have only recently learned that it is not. We have here an example of that rarity in haiku: a work of imagination which—for this reader at least—is totally convincing.

Trench warfare has always struck me as a special kind of hell on earth. In strong contrast to the preceding works, though with no less compassion, the Croatian poet Mirko Vidovic gives us:

virile young men
shooting their semen out
in the trenches⁴

Caroline Gourlay chose this for a Museum of Haiku Literature Award, with the following comment: "In fourteen syllables Vidovic has captured [war's] stupidity and futility—the discarded sperm an apt metaphor for wasted lives. Routine masturbation is a lonely affair; how effectively in this context does it reflect the deeper loneliness of dying".

It is indeed a powerful poem, with nonetheless a weakness, for it is phrased somewhat as a general statement and thus lacks the full conviction of a particular moment or event. That kind of particularity, so apparent in Hadman's work, can be seen in the most successful of the poems written by Croatian civilians caught up in war. Here is Vidovic again, less emphatic but more closely observant:

kalashnikovs
stop short the tapping
of the woodpecker⁵

The poet makes us stand beside him in a landscape perhaps still unscarred by war, straining our ears to tell from which direction the threat is approaching. This silencing of a familiar bird may be for many the event from which they will date their transformation into refugees.

The next poem is by Rujana Matuka, and the scene she depicts could easily be from the same locality just a few days later.

since the early morning
shadowing a young soldier
a stray dog⁶

I imagine the dog as one that belonged to a family forced to flee, and like them, now caught cruelly between the opposing instincts of fear and need. This poem was sent to me by Margaret Nichols, who remarks: "The word *stray* suits war's desolations particularly—its dislocations, as well as suggesting

how we have gone astray in the acts and intentions of killing”.

Marinko Španović pinpoints a particular aspect of “collateral damage”:

a child’s drawing:
the same color for tank,
for soldier, and sun⁷

Even for children who survive physically unharmed, there is this immeasurable loss—the denial of a childhood free of daily fear, the theft of inherent light and color from a young life.

27

All of these poets succeed in placing me (as television images never can) where I understand—however briefly—that this is my home, my dog, my child. Only this realization can hold out for us any hope of an end to war, to cruelty, to all that Alexander Pope encompassed with the phrase “Man’s inhumanity to Man”.



1. *Dong Ha Haiku* (Smythe-Waithe Press, 1982)
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Desert Storm: A Brief History* (Los Hombres Press, 1993)
4. *Blithe Spirit* 7:2
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Modern Haiku* XXV:2
7. *Haiku in Wartime* (Croatian Haiku Association, 1992)

(Submissions and recommendations for this column can be sent to: Dee Evetts, 102 Forsyth Street #18, New York, NY 10002. Please state whether previously published, giving details. Work may also be selected from general submissions to Frogpond, and other sources.)

early September light . . .
the wild grape tendril trembles
with the grasshopper

Bruce Ross

Fan blows afternoon light onto the verandah.

Rosanna Licari

weeding
the sharp scent
of tomato

Linda Robeck

28

in a slow puddle
turning round each other
two mosquitoes

Patricia Prime

drawing a vine around the poem
about grapes

Helen Shaffer

leaves in the swing—
a push
from the wind

Adam Schaeffer

sun sparkled water
a wing-clipped swan rocks
toward the handout

Kay F. Anderson

29

road gang
and sun bouncing off
the guard's gun

Louise Somers Winder

diseased bat dead—
aware this long day
of my heavy boots

Clifford Wood

gazing at the full moon
the lingering taste
of peppermint

Eileen Blas Schaefer

puddle
on a river barge
bringing back the moon

Matthew Louvière

Orion
between our breath cloud
autumn sea

Peggy Willis Lyles

The big dipper
lies between the same two trees
50th birthday

George Skane

30

above his pillow
an ex-girlfriend's shell mobile
swings with the tide

Catherine Mair

gray, gray, gray
a crow trailing rain
from its wings

D. Waidtlow

the cornfield fence
surrounds
my childhood

Katie Smallpage

movie theater
'drive-in' spelled out
in empty light bulb sockets

John J. Dunphy

31

empty playground
animal cracker horses
dissolving in rain

Jack Lent

Twilight—
among white moths
a car weaves.

David Michael Nixon

last autumn color—
two old firetrucks kept parked
out in the open

Brent Partridge

Indian summer—
the roots of an oak stump
visible

Mike Spikes

just plucked—
the apple warm
clear through

Larry Kimmel

how the Fall air
polishes the sound
of sawing

ubuge

32

autumn twilight
a bird's gliding wings
touch a distant star

Fred Gasser

dark mountain rain
beats against the cabin
we make love

Michael Ketchek

even after closing
the bedroom drapes
full November moon

Bruce Ross

geese flying south—
tourists in line
to gas up

Patricia Schilbe

33

skipping stones
talking of people
no longer here

Jack Barry

rain falling
across a cup of tea
your breath

Michael Cecilione

after a crow's caw
for the first time
the scratch in your voice

Mike Spikes

The Practical Poet: Be Your Own Haiku Editor

Michael Dylan Welch

One of the best pieces of poetic advice I ever received was something I read in *Poet's Market* a decade ago. It appeared there in a profile of Elizabeth Searle Lamb when she was editor of *Frogpond*. "Be your own editor," she said. It may be easy to read her advice and move on, but if you take her words to heart, especially when considering which of your haiku you want to send out for publication, you can not only improve your chances of publication, but improve your poetry as well.

Once you have begun to read the haiku masters and write haiku, the next step for the practical poet is often to share your poetry. Some people feel a sense of accomplishment at seeing their names in print. Others find such delight in the haiku moments that moved them in the first place that they can't help but share their moments of awareness in haiku—and publication is one good way to do that. Whatever the motive, getting your poems into print can be very rewarding.

But publication isn't the only motive for assessing your haiku. When reviewing your work, the first question to ask yourself is who you're writing for. If you're writing purely for yourself, then you can apply (or not apply) whatever guidelines you like to your poems—you need please only yourself. If you've written a poem for a specific person, you surely want to cast the poem in such a way that it has maximum impact for the intended recipient—you want to please a specific reader. But if you're writing for a broader

audience, then applying a broader set of rules or guidelines will clarify the haiku moment and help make the poem unambiguous, thereby making it accessible to more readers. You don't want to try to please everyone, though, for in trying too hard your poem may become flat and lifeless. Instead, the key to successful haiku lies in finding the right balance between disparate demands on the poetic experience. Writing a preflight checklist can help you find that balance.

The difficulty with considering the broadest audience is in casting the poem so it has the greatest desired effect for many readers, which often means trusting your intuition. But over the years certain techniques and characteristics have shown themselves to be effective in communicating the haiku moment. The poem's effect can range from subtle to stunning, but it should never seem contrived, and never abandon authenticity. Being your own editor doesn't mean starting your own magazine and featuring lots of your own haiku. It means to think through what's important to you in haiku, and what is likely to matter to your readers (consciously and subconsciously) in terms of form, content, and technique. Being your own editor means vigorously applying your preflight checklist to each poem you might send out for publication. You can thereby winnow down the number of poems you send out. This will increase the quality of your work, and editors will appreciate not receiving a dozen nearly identical poems all about a fallen swallow's nest along with the lazy request that the editor pick out the best one. Being your own editor means for *you* to pick the best one.

My own preflight checklist for haiku has developed over the years through much reading, much writing, and best of all, much discussion with other poets. Other writers have created effective haiku checklists in the past, including James W.

Hackett, Anita Virgil, and Lorraine Ellis Harr. Hackett's list appears in his own books and in Harold G. Henderson's *Haiku in English* (Tuttle, 1967, pages 60 through 62). The books of R. H. Blyth and William Higginson and others contain similarly helpful advice. Sometimes you just want to experience life and write about its suchness (perhaps being your own editor is not for everyone—and there's a time for applying the checklist, and a time for just enjoying the flight), but the practical poet, if he or she is seeking publication, may want to take the time to vigorously assess his or her work. It's as simple a necessity as buying stamps for all your self-addressed envelopes, but a task that's too easily neglected.

It would be possible at this point to present my own preflight checklist for assessing my haiku. However, I think most haiku poets would benefit from creating their *own* checklist, and I'd like to invite you to do that now. Rather than present just my own personal guidelines for writing haiku, I would like to present yours. I'll compile the best guidelines I receive (I encourage brevity and concision, as in haiku) and will share them in the next issue of *Frogpond*. You might write a complete checklist of ten or twenty questions (nothing too long, please), or you might wish to share only one or two favorite comments or questions regarding your haiku assessment process. You could address such topics as form, content, freshness and originality, line breaks and punctuation, juxtaposition, tense, nature and season words, appropriate images, rhetorical devices, detachment and objectivity, natural language, intuition and emotion, showing rather than telling, and a number of other topics—or come up with your own categories of what you think matters in haiku and ways to assess them. What's the best haiku advice *you've* received? I suspect that I won't be able to present everything I receive, and that I may need to edit some of the guidelines to make the entire list

as cohesive and as practical as possible, but I'll do my best to include as much as I can. Don't hesitate to send me a postcard, a longer letter, or e-mail. Please send your checklists (or individual checklist suggestions) to me at 248 Beach Park Boulevard, Foster City, CA 94404 USA, or e-mail them to me at welchm@aol.com. To be considered for the next issue of *Frogpond*, I'll need to receive your response by September 1, 1999. Thanks for your participation, and I look forward to presenting *your* preflight checklist items for assessing haiku! Writing such a list, I hope, will help us all be our own haiku editors.



Erratum

from Frogpond XXII:1

Agawa Rock:
a spider spins in midair
beside the pictographs

Bruce Ross

woodpecker
into night
a pockmarked moon

ai li

the flute has stopped
but the walls repeat it

Gregory Hopkins

brilliantly rain speckles
infants' shopping bag
winding sheets

Bernard Gadd

38

the funeral home—
a birdbath
with no water

Ava Kar

December apple.
The long muscle of a doe's
thin face, reaching.

Anne Moore Odell

one last blow
drives the nail home
first snowflake

Larry Kimmel

warm gingerbread
dusted with powdered sugar—
first snow

Cindy Bene

39

Onset of snow—
girls dressed in knee socks
amble toward school

Barry George

memorial . . .
snow falls lightly
on your limbs

Joan Vistain

the shortest day—
evergreens and their shadows
frame the cemetery

Rebecca Lilly

Christmas eve—
a *tanshinfunin** at dinner
still undecided

Sosuke Kanda

*a businessman transferred to a new post
who must leave his family behind

redpoll
in the bare hawthorn—
Christmas alone

Andrea Vlahakis

last day of the year—
rain overflows
the clogged eavestrough

Michael Dylan Welch

40

not cutting
pine boughs until she cleans
the ikebana shears

D. Claire Gallagher

winter gloves—
the fragrance
of pine boughs

Makiko

where the school bus comes from
the edge of the winter night
turns yellow

Arkady Elterman

childless silent winter rain

Philip Rowland

4 ||

the weight of it
three days and nights
of snow

Michael Ketchek

a single cry
from a single crow
the vastness of the fallen snow

joan iverson goswell

the bus goes by—
the boy wiping a hole
for his eye

Gary Hotham

in the gaps of his talk the wind's whistle

Carla Sari

Memère's delicate kiss—
the scent
of mothballs

Marsh Moseley

At the foot of the bed
her worn shoe
catching the light

Ken Jones

42

the fleece
of the old robe
stiff with age

Makiko

so cold—
browned hibiscus leaves
atop the radiator

Ray Major

February 15th
heart candies
broken on the ground

Liz Lorio

Biting cold—
a crow cocks his head
between the trellis boards

Rebecca Lilly

43

february snow
the lingering glow
of twilight

Robert Gibson

winter's end—
using a folded poem to stop
the window's rattling

Richard von Sturmer

first day of spring—
I keep thinking of your
autumn hair

Greg Watson

senryū

1) A Japanese poem structurally similar to the Japanese haiku but primarily concerned with human nature; often humorous or satiric.

2) A foreign adaptation of 1.

(from *A Haiku Path* page 82 with corrections from page 80)

1919 photo album
my aunt's frown
on my granddaughter
Kay F. Anderson

proud to be
four fingers
the little girl
Robert Henry Poulin

45

tangles in her hair
before the comb touches
the five year old cries
Joyce Sandeen Johnson

Victorian doll house—
a little girl peeps into
the master bedroom
Patricia Neubauer

The house full of towels
and silverware—
when did this happen?
Carl Mayfield

laundry day
his pillowcase no longer
needs washing

Addie LaCoe

bullet train—
all the stillness left behind
chasing it

Robert Kusch

between goodbye
and her disconnect
his silence

Kate MacQueen

46

Some things can't wait
—she breaks up
with his voicemail.

Hayat Abuza

romance foretold
in yesterday's horoscope
last night's erotic dream

Yvonne Hardenbrook

the dream
of an unsmoked cigar
without sex

Jeff Witkin

cramp in my foot
just as I was stepping
into a dream

Leatrice Lifshitz

47

diarrhea
the toilet paper
on a roll

Evelyn Hermann

the secret world
of my journal
x-rayed at the airport

Molly McGee

in the confessional screening my words

Charlotte Digregorio

spotting
her short lifeline
I turn my head
Matthew Louvière

visiting day
he laughs each joke
to tears
h. h. johnson

news of his death
watching the ash
on the incense stick
Carolyn Rohrig

48

grandpa's funeral—
walking behind
my dad
James H. Kepper IV

cemetery
the gate keeper
asks me to wait
Jeff Witkin

though Grandma
sleeps
she hugs me close
Elizabeth Kraus

with each
condolence card
tears
Joyce Sandeen Johnson

49

deep inside
the onion layers
tears
William M. Ramsey

dad's radio
still tuned
to his station
Mike Allen

I lift the razor
and in the mirror
my father smiles
Gary McGhee

decaf latté—
turning quickly past
the war news

Anthony J. Pupello

mall food drive
new pennies glitter
in the wishing well

Ferris Gilli

tropical fish tank—
fingerprint smudges
on the "Do Not Touch" sign

Mathew V. Spano

50

allergic to Cats
he sneezes
during the overture

Molly Magner

today
my pen dried up
before I did

Art Stein

straining to see
the title of his book—
Practical Ophthalmology

Joe Kirschner

chiropractor's office—
the pictures
hang crooked

Pamela A. Babusci

lecture hall—
students trod
a worn carpet

Anthony J. Pupello

after classes
playing all by herself
the piano teacher

Arkady Elterman

FALLING
ROCK
not a
cloud

LeRoy Gorman

linked

forms

tan-renga

hearts for you
bursting in color

*saying goodbye—
the vase in your room
empty*

Miriam Johnston
Leatrice Lifshitz

53

small clouds
in a clear sky—also swallows
flying high

*all that I did today I did
as if her eyes were on me*

Carol Purington
Larry Kimmel

Here and There

dappled shade
from firethorn to snowball
mockingbird *PWL*

here and there, new mama seeks
a place to hide her kittens *MHT*

moving truck rumble—
in the garden birdbath
the towhee splashes *LLC*

where a current crossed,
live whelks and hermit crabs *PWL*

gathering storm . . .
crows take over the courtyard
at the nursing home *MHT*

tossed from the garden
the clay lump sprouts mushrooms *LLC*

PWL — Peggy Willis Lyles
MHT — Mitzi Hughes Trout
LLC — Lori Laliberte-Carey

Other Rens

rensad

his new used dump truck my new used down-in-the-dumps mood
husband his presence & absence irritating
marking time from one season to the next hazy moon
just as the movie starts a damn link needed
uncrumpling a used kleenex to find a dry spot
their quarrel I end up in the middle

renbad

laughing she teases an older boy 'cry baby'
my second-hand smoke well that's life
IF IT WASN'T FUN SHE DIDN'T WANT TO DO IT carved in stone
the danger is not indulging our vices
prayer in the senate to a non-god for bi-partisanship
implicit admission with that wink

55

renmad

Monica back in Washington Mama's 'don't correct me in public'
both Jekyll and Hyde's obsession to control
missionary style taken to new heights go screw yourselves
impossible feats for a shrinking woman
winter silence the list of things he blames me for grows longer
a 'mad/up word' pricktriarchy no longer adequate

renglad

into the New Year nurtured by a circle of women poets
20-20 vision with the cataract removed
female ideas in the midst of old-fogy fogs and smogs
allowing myself to soar, swoosh and rise higher
mulch at hand seeds into potting cubes for larkspur in May
prepared to cover my ears and open my mouth

Marlene Mountain
Kris k.
Francine Porad

breaking through

shortest day of the year
the slick road
between us

waiting with her
the cold starting in her feet

along that shallow stream
one orchid
breaks through snow

ice melts
old couple walking
his hand warms in her pocket

leaving violets
in her discarded journal

sunlight through clouds
just ahead
. . . the rain

Knots

Navajo weaver
tying warp cords—
her sleeping infant

she replaces a red tassel
on the antique chest

57

the toddler's curls—
while combing out tangles
a tale from Aladdin

work review
he tightens his tie
at the doorway

blowzy flower child
mending jute macramé

brilliant sunrise
a spider adds her egg sack
to the dream catcher

D. Claire Gallagher
Ebba Story

Chocolate to Die For

the murder victim
has a smile on her lips
the poisoned chocolates

the little skeleton at the door
gets a fistful of Hershey kisses

jukebox jitterbugs
share a black & white shake
at the retro diner

leaving the ice cream parlor
grandma's hot fudge grin

by the *chaise longue*
sunglasses, Agatha Christie,
and a Whitman sampler

the heart-shaped box
only the wrappers left

Cor van den Heuvel
Arlene Teck
Jaxon Teck

Spider's Web

Saturday morning laundry—
moving through dryer steam
into the fog

my reflection
in the mop water

59

brushing the dust
from the Japanese doll—
her impassive stare

from the Windex
to the Drano bottle,
a spider's web

scattered carry-out menus
stained with coffee

groceries put away—
in fading light
we each fold a bag

*Cathy Drinkwater Better
Michael Dylan Welch*

J.V.s

It was a moment all of us seemed to like: that hurried circle at courtside as the klaxon sounded. Strategizing over; competition among ourselves forgotten; a sense of the night setting in. The scent of lacquered hardwood. My more worldly teammates knew MacQuain had had a few with dinner—it was on his breath. A crowd was just beginning to gather. We were the junior varsity, a warm-up for the bigger game at eight.

Pre-game prayer:
our coach's tense, reverent
"Father . . ."

—Barry George

Laundry Day

60
✓

I never knew quilts had names until my mother mailed me pictures of the ones she had made, along with a note asking me to select my favorite as a gift. I chose one called *Picket Fence*.

I always wait for warm, breezy days to launder my quilt so it will dry as fluffy as it was when I first received it. I carefully place each clothespin along its border of tiny blue flowers that frame alternating shades of blue and white zig-zagging across its whole, creating the delightful picket effect. When the quilt's dry I gather it into my arms as I remove the wooden pins and carry it to the house,

holding it lightly to my chest so as not to crush the fluffiness. Once inside, I head straight for the bedroom and allow it to float in gentle folds upon the bed . . .

laundry day—
over the picket fence quilt
a tan and black snake

—*Linda Jeannette Ward*

61

My Uncle

Nicholas was his name, but to me he was always Uncle Nick.

Shortly after World War II I remember his renovating our house: ripping out walls, plastering, putting in copper plumbing, installing a new furnace. I marveled at the way he went about his work, making everything look easy.

Although Uncle Nick was not in the best of health it was still unsettling when I heard that he had passed away. The house he remodeled suddenly seemed smaller as I cooked oatmeal on the stove he installed fifty years ago.

It rained the morning of his funeral. At graveside the priest recited a few prayers, and when the ceremony was over I made my way down a narrow road onto the main highway.

heading home
a trace of incense sticking
to my clothes

—*R. A. Stefanac*

Deep Rumble

Made it to Durban. A long journey. By bus from Cape Town, through the Transkei, where few white people venture. We've found a B&B, not far from Kings Park, site of mighty battles between All Blacks and Springboks. Your face is still flushed with the excitement of our day. It's time for your Lentaron jab—deep i.m., once a fortnight, to keep the cancer at bay. They showed me back home how to do it. I practiced on an orange. Don't worry, you say, it'll be OK. Just do it. I break the ampoule and mix the ingredients. A deep rumble draws close.

thunder overhead -
I flick the last bubble
from her injection syringe

Cyril Childs

Strands

62

The nest has been rescued from the tree surgeon's pruning. It is oval. It is empty. Such a small, but wonderful achievement! No hands, just beak and feet, and yet the bird has made its nest strong, though light. It has held life, and contributed to the cycle of bird life.

fledglings have flown;
late sunlight highlights
a few tawny strands

Emily Romano

Last Day of Deer Season

I know a woman who has recently taken up hunting. Last autumn she went deer hunting with her father and a few of his buddies. They sat behind some brush near a deer trail for a considerable time but saw no prey. Suddenly, they heard dogs barking and decided to investigate.

A dog pack had surrounded a young doe. The animal bore a shotgun wound just above its left front leg. The woman's father estimated the wound was two days old. Its eyes were glazed over with pain.

My friend's father chased away the dogs, and the doe fled on three legs to take refuge behind nearby brush. The hunting party encircled its hiding place and flushed it from cover.

Her father took careful aim at the animal's spine and squeezed the trigger. The doe dropped, gasped three times and died. He quickly dressed the animal, removing even its liver and heart for future meals.

It was getting late, and the hunters were about to leave in their vehicles when one of the other men spotted a buck some distance away. He didn't have a clear shot in the fading light but, disappointed that he had bagged nothing, decided to risk it.

The buck ran into the woods. When the hunters examined the spot where it had stood, they found fresh blood. Since encroaching darkness made tracking the buck impossible, the hunters returned to their vehicles for the journey home.

dusk
snarling dogs surround
a wounded deer

Haibun

a waiter in white
spreads a white tablecloth
blue portuguese sky

Weekday afternoon and few customers at the Sintra cafe as I occupied an outdoor table and ordered coffee. At the far end of the terrace sat an attractive older woman with lively dark eyes. She nodded and smiled as we glanced at each other . . . the glancing that one does when seated alone in a restaurant . . . the quick and furtive observations of other occupants. I pulled a book from my jacket and began to read, but again found myself looking in her direction. Another nod . . . another smile . . . this time her eyes held a hint of consternation. Lifting my head a short time later, I saw her speaking to the waiter. The waiter approached from across the terrace. "Excuse me, sir, but would you mind telling me if you are an American; Beatriz Costa would like to know." "Yes, from Chicago." The waiter bowed and returned to the woman's table, where they exchanged a few quick words. The waiter retraced his steps. "Excuse me, sir, but would you be offended if I asked your name?" "Not at all, but please tell me why the lady wants to know?" "SIR" he shot back—indignantly! emphatically!—"SHE is a WOMAN we PORTUGUESE love!" A bartender by profession, I had empathy for a waiter caught in a sticky situation which, for me, was gathering elements of intrigue. I gave him my name. He frowned and repeated it with some difficulty, awkwardly stumbling over the syllables. Walking at a much brisker pace, he went back to confer with the woman, but only for a moment. Back across the terrace, almost running. "Excuse me, sir," he said breathlessly, "but would you mind writing your name?" He offered a pencil and tore a page from his order pad. The woman looked at me apprehensively, as if in supplication, and her lips slowly formed two, possibly three words. I nodded in acknowledgment and very carefully printed my name. The waiter scrutinized my name before going back across the terrace, and, after examining what I had written, the woman folded the page from the order pad and placed it in her purse. Rising slowly, she leaned toward the waiter and gently touched him on the shoulder, and then

bowed . . . bowed very graciously in my direction. Below the terrace, a chauffeur helped her into a waiting automobile which was driven down the sloping street and around a curve. The waiter came to my table with an almost haughty sense of accomplishment. "Sir, Miss Beatriz Costa requests that you go to the desk of the Tivoli Hotel in Lisbon, where she will leave two complimentary tickets for a film of hers. Beatriz Costa said to say that you have brought back the memory of an American gentleman she was fond of years ago."

tip tray
smooth profiles
on old coins

65

The afternoon visit to Sintra had been a way of killing time. Having a reservation for an overnight train from Portugal to Spain, I would continue my wanderjahr by meeting a friend in front of Madrid's Main Post Office on the following morning; together we would journey to Morocco. After picking up my backpack—left for safekeeping at a Lisbon pension—I stopped at the Tivoli Hotel. Indeed, there was a white envelope holding the promised tickets which, unfortunately, I would be unable to use. In addition, the desk clerk gave me a small poster of an attractive young woman sporting a Clara Bow pageboy haircut—obviously the reproduction of an old photograph. The lively dark eyes were immediately recognizable! *Para a dear Jerry Kilbride, um beijo, da sua grata amiga de Portugal, Beatriz Costa, Lisbonne—77.* On the way to the railroad station, I passed a billboard advertising a film that seemed to be about the Roaring 20s. Again, those huge eyes smiled as they had across a terrace in Sintra . . . *grata amiga de Portugal.* Further down Avenida Liberdade, I noticed a young couple holding hands while strolling in the evening air; the white envelope was quickly given to them as I passed.

the moon begins
to move at the same speed
as the departing train

Jerry Kilbride

Fifty

My room fills with relative young and old, their heads high and low, golden and brown and white. The candles are lit, enough to impress excited little ones without challenging their ability to count. Then the singing—voices sharp and flat, not beginning together and certainly not finishing together. The little ones help me make a wish. I remember the first rule of birthday party etiquette: swallow before you blow. The smoke disperses, and guests trail after the cake. My room is empty, quiet. I turn to the window.

Just after blowing out
the birthday candles—
a straggle of high geese

Carol Purington

Something Light is Freed

66

The woods all around are bare and gray. No birds sing. Nothing moves but us. The air still holds winter on this Easter morning. We've gathered on a mountainside in the Blue Ridge, in the region where my father liked to hunt, to scatter his ashes.

We're unprepared for wilderness, unprepared for saying good-bye to the first among us to die, though he is four months gone, though he spent his last two decades in a wheelchair and in grief for his lost capacity. The head can't help. The heart remains innocent. This is a thing the heart bears.

In the woods, my sister-in-law plants a red plastic bouquet at the foot of the oak nearby. We form a circle, and each takes a turn at good-bye in a little service of prayers and poems. We silently hold hands. When my brother takes up the urn and pries off the lid, my small niece, knowing only that this is about Grandpa, breaks our sad silence: "What is that?"

scattering ashes—
a wild turkey flies
from gray woods

Jeanne Lupton

67

This Autumn Night

While watching the television, I listen to my decade-old-house settle again and again. A stray cat screams outside. the full moon casts shadows on my upstairs walls. Suddenly the silence greatens. Then a picture frame falls from the wall. My heart flutters. I stare at the spot left on the wall. Passing headlights disappear into the mirror on my chiffonier. For an extended period I sit up straight on the waterbed, ignoring the television. My wife returns home and darts to the bathroom. I exhale, leaning against the headboard. Slowly my hands settle on the patchwork quilt.

her shadow floats
through the hallway—
I grin

Lenard Duane Moore

essays

Like a Fine Wine

Perhaps it's a bit of an exaggeration to say that a really good haiku gets better with age like a fine wine. But it does maintain its freshness and vitality; and, as the years roll by, its unremitting power seems more and more remarkable.

Already in the development of English-language haiku we can look back on poems that were written more than thirty years ago. And the best of them truly deserve to be savored. All of the poems in this article are taken from either *American Haiku* (1963-68) or *Haiku West* (1967-74): the first two haiku magazines in the English language.

69

1

Seashell
and seashore . . .
one inside the other.

Robert O. Dodsworth
AH 1:2 (1963)

After walking along the beach for an hour or two the poet is in a calm, contemplative state of mind. Everything he sees is harmonious, unified. And the superb integration of the seashell and seashore is simply a reflection of his being. Like the Taoists of old China, he has rounded the circle, harmonized the opposites.

2

Wind and desert sand
whispering behind my back
where my footprints dim.

Foster Jewell
AH V:1 (1967)

The poem is written with great simplicity and is full of mythic power and suggestiveness. In the immense loneliness of the desert a solitary traveler journeys across the burning sands; he's a spiritual seeker who listens to the voice of the wind...If Jesus Christ were a haiku poet, I could imagine him writing this poem as he journeyed into the desert to fast for forty days and forty nights.

3

The little boat
tugging free of its mooring
travels with the wind.

Jaye Giammarino
HW 4:1 (1970)

The little boat is so tired of its daily grind on the river: the never-ending chores it has to perform, the same old waterways it has to cross. And then every night, back to the same spot, tied to the same pier, knowing that tomorrow will be just like today and yesterday...The little boat yearns to be free, so every night it tugs at its mooring...Finally, after countless nights of tugging, and after it had practically given up hope, the knot loosens and the little boat breaks free. Now it can travel with the wind, drift with the current, and experience the infinite possibilities of the mighty river.

70

4

The heavens tremble
at the flick of my finger
in this still water.

B. N. Wyatt
AH III:2 (1965)

Most of us want our lives to have some effect; we want to make a difference; leave a mark on the world. And yet so often we feel that who we are and what we

do are insignificant. Some of us even have the dreadful feeling that we are little more than cogs in a machine. But the writer of this haiku has a different vision. He sees—as he flicks his finger in the still water—that even his slightest action can have cosmic ramifications. The poem is an expression of great faith and self-esteem.

5

On the weathered shelf
a self-cleaned cat in autumn
curls around itself.

Thomas Rountree
AH 1:1 (1963)

7 ||

Each haiku a poet paints is not only a picture of the universe but also a self-portrait. Like the cat, the poet is completely at ease in his environment. He's independent and self-sufficient, capable of deeply absorbed action and of total relaxation following it. In the autumn of his years he's already had a wealth of worldly experience and now feels no need to have more. He leads a quiet life and finds contentment within himself.

6

Like the weathercock,
the scarecrow obeys the whim
of the autumn wind.

Nick Virgilio
HW 1:2 (1968)

In general, the scarecrow is recognized as the embodiment of surrender, acceptance, and resignation. But never more so than in this poem. Being old and experienced, this scarecrow learned long ago to surrender gracefully to the forces of nature; and, like the weathercock, all of his movements are attuned to the wind. Although he stands committed to his post, he is like the sages of old who lived without will and went wherever the wind blew them.

7

only the moonlight
 finding the broken lantern
 in the old garden

Marlene Kamei
HW 8:1 (1974)

For many years the lantern was used to light the garden of the mandarin's house. Sometimes it was hung in one of the plum trees, where its mellow light and aesthetic design accentuated the beauty of the flowers. One might say that the lantern was like an old and trusted servant...

Eventually the great house declined, the lantern was broken, and through the years it lay where it fell ...Now the great house is deserted and the garden a tangle of vines. But occasionally the moonlight comes to illuminate the broken lantern.

8

In these dying embers
 a long day's journey
 on high mountain paths.

Larry Gates
HW 4:1 (1970)

72

Beneath a canopy of stars the poet gazes into the dying embers and relives the outstanding experiences of an exalted day. The wonderfully fresh air, the incredible vistas, the song of birds, the beauty of flowers—all of these and more does the poet vividly recall. He thinks of the steady climb, the ascent to higher and higher elevations, the satisfaction and the robust pleasure of it...And finally, he realizes that this present moment, this quiet contemplative time, is the perfect cap to an unforgettable day.

—Tom Tico

Favorite Haiku

waiting for me
to give it life—
my death poem

Dennis H. Dutton

I can scarcely imagine how a 51-year-old poet can write a death poem of this caliber. It gives voice to the deepest truth about life and death—that they are inextricably intertwined. And it reminds me of Trungpa Rinpoche's saying that we will live or we will die, and both are good. Does not death give our life its very meaning, and in return our death await our "giving it life"?

73

sandcastle moat
 how a cloud slips in
with the water

Helen J. Sherry

A childlike observation; but would a child, lost in sandcastle dreams, ever notice? For me, Sherry's phrase "slips in" brings out that effortlessness and purposelessness in nature that is vital to the haiku spirit. To enter the kingdom of haiku and its castles—as in entering the kingdom of heaven—we need to become in our haiku moments like little children, aimless as the clouds.

—H. F. Noyes

books

&

review

Once and Future Favorites

Noyes, H. F. *Favorite Haiku Volume 1* (1998) & *Volume 2* (1999) (both Red Moon Press). ISBN 0-9657818-2-8 & 0-9657818-3-6. 64 pps., 6.5" x 5.0" saddle-stapled soft-bound. \$10.00 each, available from the publisher at PO Box 2461, Winchester, VA 22604.

When first writing haiku it is only natural to seek out instruction from those most qualified to provide such guidance. Equally important, but perhaps less obvious is the art of how to read and interpret or feel response to haiku. There are of course those haiku that shine with sufficient clarity that most readers will be instantly attuned and sensitized. But many haiku are subtler, sometimes even verging on the esoteric. A timely and able assistance oftentimes enables the reader to enter such a world that he or she may not have been able to enter on their own.

H. F. Noyes' two volumes of *Favorite Haiku* is a gift bound to increase anyone's personal favorite list. Noyes has long been a leading practitioner and interpreter of haiku. His volumes suggest that there are as many paths to the heart of a haiku as there are hearts to follow those paths. The two volumes encompass a bounty of insights and explanatory commentaries on 105 total haiku. 51 are contained in *Volume 1*, which features one poem with short essay per page. *Volume 2* highlights two and three poems per page with the haiku linked by corresponding association.

Opening *Volume 1* is this resonant moment from Proxade Davis:

This huge ocean-
I could stand here forever
it would still come to me

Noyes notes:

There are haiku that leave one breathless with admiration for their quality of alertness or special sensibility. I treasure most the kind that seep into one's consciousness deeper and deeper over the years. This memorable example has a childlike wonder, plus what D.H. Lawrence called a "fine carelessness"; yet it has tremendous depth to connect with eternity. I would like to have written it as my death poem. It contains all the calm faith of Issa's

Simply trust
Do not the petals flutter down,
Just like that?

The selections and commentaries cover a great breadth of haiku styles and qualities, including examples of *yugen*, *sabi*, *wabi*, *karumi*, and humor from both contemporary haiku written in English and translated gems from Japanese masters. Whether or not a reader responds to and relates immediately to the haiku, I would venture to say that after reading the insights offered anyone will be sufficiently aroused and perhaps transformed to better respond to and appreciate each selection included. Repeatedly I found a more satisfying and deeper relation to various of the haiku when I revisited it after absorbing the associated commentary. The concert of poem and explanatory notes served to awaken a truth of feeling that had been hidden and in the reading revealed. A perfect example of this specialness came when I read the following by nick avis.

76

sun behind the hills
the fisherman ships his oars
and drifts into shore

"Haiku" wrote Lorraine Ellis Harr, "is like an iceberg. . . . It is the unseen part that is important. . . . What floats within the depths is the universal oneness of the experience." When the sun goes behind the hills, it's the signal all over the world for working people to let down, to call it a day—for fishermen to rest the oars, to drift in peace. It's a hallowed hour, a time of special blessing, of rest well earned. A time for the mind too to drift—to the haven of the emptiness-fullness which revives our hopes and dreams.

Other of the haiku leave little to be said but even the briefest of notations serves to articulate a precision of feeling as in Virgil Hutton's

Dusk over the lake;
a turtle's head emerges
then silently sinks

How well this illustrates William Higginson's description of *sabi* as "beauty with a sense of loneliness in time." An extraordinary sense of stillness is achieved in this eternal moment.

and Ruth Yarrow's

warm rain before dawn;
my milk flows into her
unseen

This lovely haiku is imbued with *yugen* mystery. The juxtaposition of the fall of the gentle night rains with the warm milk flow in the darkness serves to form a fusion with the eternal flow of spirit and the life force.

As is apparent, the essays herein are as precious as the haiku. They serve to broaden and deepen perspective and appreciation of the many facets of what is to be found in this briefest of forms; more, they are often full of life wisdom as well, fully accessible and indelible upon reading. The reverence and care on display allow for repeated and consistently rewarding reading. Such available resonance reminds us what the core spirit of haiku is all about.

Peach blossoms follow
the moving water", she said-
and then fell silent

They spoke no word-
The visitor, the host,
And the white chrysanthemum.

In haiku we give no place to the self of egocenteredness. And sometimes we can and do make the self virtually disappear. Silence may accomplish this disappearing act, as it does in meditation. The vanishing act can be deliberate or unintentional; often the sudden perception of the true beauty in the "ordinary" can lift us out of ourselves. In the haiku moment, an element of nature may seem to displace our self altogether. When we "let go," coming in openness to our haiku moments, our sense of self can become "a home rather than a prison. You can come and go freely . . . the self a verb, not a noun; a wave, not a particle."

These volumes are highly recommended, both for the excellent haiku presented, but even more so for the bridge of understanding and feeling that H. F. Noyes' succinct haiku sense delivers. Over the few months I've had to savor my copies of *Favorite Haiku* I have come to feel strongly that we need more of our most seasoned and sage haiku voices to share with us their "favorites."

It is not too early to suggest that these two volumes be the start of a series where the best of the best are invited to choose their favorites with comments. No doubt haiku as a poetic form will flourish and reach a larger audience if given such illumination. To learn what moves and inspires others is to learn for ourselves how to be moved and inspired, beyond where we already are. To be informed by Tom Noyes what it was he felt in this excellent set of 105 haiku is a genuine invitation and welcome to each of us to meditate on what is at heart haiku. Whether you are just discovering haiku or been enamored with the form for decades these volumes promise to be a generous gift and joy.

(Reviewer's note: A third volume of *Favorite Haiku* by H. F. Noyes is scheduled for release from Red Moon Press early in 2000.)

Field: A Haiku Circle

Eulert, Don *Field: A Haiku Circle* (AHA Books 1998). 88 pages, perfectbound, 5.5" x 8.5", calligraphy. ISBN 0-944676-41-3. Available from the publisher at PO Box 767, Gualala CA 95445. \$15.00 ppd.

No doubt, some readers will remember Don Eulert who in 1963 co-founded (with Jim Bull) AMERICAN HAIKU, the first English-language journal of "Zen poems of Japanese tradition." This publication is believed to have served as inspiration for a number of haiku publications and societies in a variety of languages. Although Don Eulert of Southern California has been absent from the haiku theater for 25 years, he dances with freshness and merriment through this FIELD of haiku varieties.

In the author's 3-part Introduction, he invites us "to read a haiku a day, starting on New Year's. And to write one too." Akin to a haiku calendar then, each month's poems are preceded by the month's title with each page (usually) containing five haiku along with tiny moon signs where relevant. For easy reference, each neatly printed poem is numbered in small pale print while AHA Books' attractive, environment-friendly production nicely befits the theme and content of these haiku.

While a few haiku in 4 and 5 lines (even one 8-liner) can be found here, the 3-line format dominates this collection, many most rewarding. I particularly appreciated such gentle moments as the following:

the weight of my son
lifted to the phoebe's nest
see how they grow!

dawn in dry August
old water-paths in granite
full of shadows

spiky pod split
the wild cucumber
drops its smooth seeds

Some delightful humor also weaves through this collection. Most are well-written and fresh with surprise:

the candle out
yet today's surprises not over
your step from the dark

all these flies
and here are two more
making more

this shark's tooth
fifteen million years old
in better shape than mine

On the other hand, poems with personification, simile, and metaphor, rarely measure up to haiku. For example, "sudden at midnight/the wind pulls its noisy sheets/over the silence." Sometimes though, less obvious metaphor is forgivable when it works as beautifully as in the following:

rain in the granite
grinding holes left by First People
little sky mirrors

Enhanced by Marci Brealey's lovely calligraphy art, Don Eulert's *Field* glows with a great deal of light, color, and originality. May he share more of his work with us in the future. Meanwhile, a warm welcome back!

slowing traffic
that bundle of gladioli
tied to his bicycle

—Elizabeth St Jacques

Miles to Go

Hutton, Virgil *Jogging the Haiku Highway* (Saki Press 1998). 32 pages, 4.25" x 5.2", saddle-stapled. Illustrations by Kari Masoner. ISBN 1-893823-05-9. Available from the publisher at 1021 Gregory, Normal IL 61761. No price.

This is a posthumous collection of 51 haiku, all related to jogging, an activity Dr. Hutton took up in the late 1970s and continued the rest of his life. He died 1 November 1997.

The haiku are arranged 1-3 to a page and 3-6 to a two-page layout. Good use is made of white space. The illustrations are best when confined to symbols such as the blossoms on a twig (p.8). The font is Comic Sans MS, informal in keeping with the subject matter.

Hutton was a keen observer who faced the aging process with Sufic humor and wrote of it poignantly. This poem was first published in a memorial to him in *frogpond* (XX::3) shortly after his death:

Tears
in the jogger's eyes;
the autumn wind

Other examples of his considerable talent include:

Staring back
from the redbud blossoms—
a robin

No need to raise
his eyes from the jogging path;
fallen tree blossoms

Morning bugs;
working as hard as the jogger's legs
the jogger's hands

Summer's end;
with each morning jog now
his shadow longer

A nice gift for someone who jogs and for anyone who enjoys nature.

—Ken Hurm

Something Old, Something Blue

mckay, anne *can i get there by candle* (Wind Chimes Press, 1996). 80 pages, 4.25" x 7", saddle-stapled. ISBN 0-941190-33-1. \$8. Available from the publisher at Route One, PO Box 194A, Vienna MD 21869.

Poetry, like other art forms, creates a new space out of existing truth. anne mckay is a master. She has published 14 books prior to the present offering. In *can i get there by candle*, done in a rose / cinnamon card stock and paper, she takes us on three journeys. In "dill and sweet basil" we travel to another time, of (grand)mother and (grand)father feel, of farm, garden, and home, of childhood innocence—"for waterwands / witch hazel / in the greening wood." In "watercoloured" we move from sea to city to sea—"through the narrows / seamen / towing moons and nightcargo." The last chapter, "among her papers," is dedicated to her mother and here, after the departure in chapter two, we are returned to home where the poet asks—"can i get there by candle . . ." Relatively rare in haiku chapbooks, this one as a whole is generally an integrated passage within the cozy new place mckay creates, one poem leading to the next as naturally as "summergirls / summerboys / poaching peaches and dream."

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The poems are in haiku format and yet many are not haiku but are haiku-like poems. Regardless of genre, the poetry is well-crafted with right sound, metric, word choice, and shape. As seen in the examples above, anne mckay also creates her own tempo and sound by word invention or conjunction. Another fine example—

early frost

gathering the plums
into moonlight

mckay, anne *a matter of wings* (Wind Chimes Press, 1996). 61 pages, 4.25" x 5.5", saddle-stapled. ISBN 0-941190-35-8. \$8. Available from the publisher at Route One, PO Box 194A, Vienna MD 21869.

anne mckay puts us in flight with poems printed in black against a grey-blue sky background. Poems on birds, bees, moths, flies, damselflies and dragonflies are placed one to two per page. The poems, often haiku-like rather than strictly defined haiku, move us along a landscape that transforms from winter to summer to summer's end and beyond—"waterbird on the wind/ on the wave/ watercoloured" and "frost now and the last days of the killdeer..." Most of what was said in the review of *can i get there by candle* applies here in the overall integration of the book, the construction of the poems and the unmistakable voice of anne mckay. As with her other book, there is again a reference to another, perhaps her mother—"and she/ kneeling beside the little death/ unaware of snow falling."

The book begins with a quote from ws merwin—"years from now/ someone will come upon a layer of birds/ and not know what he is listening for . . ." Throughout the book there is this allusion to forgetting—"no bird sings now on the clearcut hill" and "silent the language of leaves." There is one poem which, while fitting within the theme of forgetting and endings, stands apart: "receiving the folded flags those women in black." Another favorite—

 vespers
 that rush of wings
 from the belltower

Jeff Witkin

Thins and Thickens

Stevenson, John *Some of the Silence* (Red Moon Press, 1999). 70 pages, 5.5" x 8.25", perfectbound. ISBN 0-9657818-7-9. \$12. Available from the publisher at P.O. Box 2461, Winchester VA 22604-1661 USA.

Since John Stevenson's 1996 haiku chapbook, *Something Unerasable*, I have been looking forward to his first full-length collection. How pleasing then to receive *Some of the Silence*.

The collection's cover (a stark black and white oil painting by Franz Kline) opens to a fly leaf in rich black followed by quality white vellum inside pages, all of which aptly complement the book's title. Furthering the sense of silence, each page features only one poem.

Subject matter in these 56 haiku, three tanka, and five haibun range from the author's personal life experiences to observations of others and nature. And as I have come to expect of John Stevenson's work, most poems are fresh, lean, and hold true to the haiku spirit by providing just enough so the reader can fill in the gaps. The following that hone in on death in nature are excellent examples:

84

doe nestled
into the shape
of the ditch

early snowfall –
exposed, an earthworm
thins and thickens

Whether this poet shares moments of death, loneliness or pain, he allows the images to generate the emotion, carefully avoiding sentimentality. Sometimes, even a gentle hint of humor surfaces as if to remind us not to let ourselves or life devastate us

because eventually we will be led in a different
(hopefully brighter) direction.

alone again
making an event
of a sandwich

he always doubted
the "subconscious mind"
leaving for his funeral
I lock my car keys
in the trunk

Further emphasizing this quiet message of hope is the haibun, "For Seneca," about a terminally ill four-year-old girl. Profoundly moving, the final text of this haibun focuses on the girl's powerful spirit. Nevertheless, the haiku in this piece acknowledges that death lurks nearby, and this is where hope is renewed: you just may find yourself praying for a miracle and keeping this young girl in your prayers. It certainly affected me that way.

In fact, Stevenson almost always succeeds with his "human" poems, the surprise in final lines usually drawing forth a gasp, "ahh," or a chuckle:

my son asks
casually
what a tree costs

the thump
of a thousand rumps
returning to their pews in unison

While "the thump" is one of my favorites, I feel this haiku would be more effective without the last two words.

A few other things I wish had been given attention before publishing: the section that begins with the humorous haibun, "A First Impression of Middle

Age," is followed by haiku that seem to be reflections of the author's marriage and its end. But I'm uncertain because the haibun is written in the third person, yet details suggest a personal experience. Also, haiku in this section switch from first to third person which added to my confusion. Moreover, the haiku "on the subway / a woman with sheet music / moving her lips" seems misplaced, as do some haiku in other sections.

Nevertheless, this collection was a most rewarding read that allowed me to know John Stevenson a bit better. May he honor us with his next collection well within the next six years.

a deep gorge . . .
some of the silence
is me

A Mixture of the Arts

Berry, Ernest J. & Graeme Matthews *a raindrop, a flowing river* (Graeme Matthews Photo Image, Blenheim New Zealand, 1998) ISBN 0-473-05106-0. 144 pages, 11.5" x 10.25" hardcover. \$35 plus \$3 postage from Red Moon Press, PO Box 2461, Winchester VA 22604-1661 USA.

Any multimedia production is a challenge. Coordinating disparate art forms in such a fashion that all elements are balanced and well represented is no easy feat. And haiku, with its extreme brevity, poses challenges like no other form.

One process which has been tried often, with varying degrees of success, has been to combine graphic materials with haiku. Since haiku is in itself often highly visual, such efforts can seem superfluous, or worse, distracting. There is also the difficult question of which art leads: do the graphics take their lead from the poems, or vice versa, or both? And, if there is more than one artist involved, as here, how do these decisions get made, on the strength of personality or persuasion, or due to some underlying artistic principle?

Having mused on these issues, I am happy to say it is easy to see what this book is: a volume which takes its production values very seriously, and which seeks to put the beauty of its words and images in the forefront of what it has to offer. This is a coffee table book, and makes no pretenses to anything else. That said, I find the photos to be of a very high quality, and the poems, drafted with specific visuals in mind, always supportive, and often quite moving in their own right.

At the price, this is probably not a book for everyone. But for the collector, and the connoisseur of nature photography and poetry, one cannot go wrong in acquiring this volume.

—Jim Kacian

Books Received

Ball, Jerry *Hidden Under the Rug* (self-published 1998). 5.5" x 8.5", 32 pages, saddle-stitch softcover. No price given. Available from the author at 1710 Interlachen #40C, Seal Beach CA 90740.

"Haiku, Senryu, and a Tanka or Two" and also a few gathas which try to make sense of the author's life in Southern California, no mean feat, and fun in the doing.

Duhaime, André (editor) *HAIKU sans frontières* (Les Éditions David 1998). 6" x 9", 448 pages, perfect softbound. \$30 + 6.50 (Canadian), \$21 + 6.50 (U.S.). Available from the publisher at 1678, rue Sansonnet, Orléans (Ontario), K1C 5Y7 Canada.

A serious world anthology, representing 23 countries and over a dozen languages, and seeking to be both historical and contemporary. Most poems and all critical apparatus in French.

Ogino, Yoko *Spring Thunder* (Proton Press, Kobe, Japan, 1999) ISBN 4-9980733-1-1. 80 pages, 5.75" x 8.25" perfect softbound. ¥1200, or US\$13 (cash) or 12 IRCs from the publisher at 3-3-2 Shinohara Honmachi, Nada-ku, Kobe 657-0067, Japan.

An attractively produced volume of the author's haiku in English (with translation into Japanese) over the past decade, enhanced by nanga illustrations by Shigeko Yamada.

Tasker, Brian *the sound of rain* (the Bare Bones press 1999). 5.875" x 4.125", 64 pages, hand-sewn softbound. \$8 (bills only). Available from the publisher at 16 Wren Close, Frome, Somerset BA11 2UZ England.

"A year in haiku and senryu" from this familiar voice, in a style which mirrors his beautifully-produced journal of a few years past, with Japanese paper cover, a few sketches, and a delicate sensibility.

British Haiku Society (editor) *Island* (Hub Editions 1998). 4.25" x 5.5", 88 pages, perfect softbound. No price. Available to members from the British Haiku Society.

The seventh annual anthology of the British Haiku Society, containing this year the work of 78 poets (largest ever response) in an effort to "encourage members to show something of what they stand for . . ." Many-voiced, it suggests the range of haiku in the English language on the theme of islands, many of these takes being quite original. A fine introduction to what this society has been up to.

Conti-Entin, Carol, Helen K. Davie, Cherie Hunter Day, D. Claire Gallagher, Marianna Monaco, Ce Rosenow, Ebba Story, and Joan Zimmerman *Beyond Within: A Collection of Rengay* (Sundog Press 1997) 56 pages, 5.5" x 8.5" perfect softbound. ISBN 0-9659589-0-6. \$11.45 ppd. for U.S. orders, \$12.95 elsewhere, from the publisher at: P.O. Box 91, Chesterfield MO 63006; payable in U.S. funds to "Cherie Hunter Day."

This spirited collection of rengay by a formidable group of contemporary poets won a 1997 Haiku Society of American Merit Book Award Honorable Mention for best anthology. It is relisted here to provide correct purchasing information.

verbomotorhead *dead flyers anthology* (ad lib press 1999). 4.25" x 5.5", 56 pages, clip softbound. \$5. Available from Doni Sc0b, #121 2556 E. Hastings, Vancouver BC Canada.

The inaugural collection of "loku," a form related to haiku, says one of the troupe of collaborators on this book, but more forward in its meaning and topical as well. The current book, as an example, is dedicated to the victims of Swissair Flight 111. A serious and interesting new look at analogous form.



HISA

News

1999 Nick Virgilio Memorial Haiku Contest

farming
his hands
showing the work

*Damian Stork, Age 18
Wahlert High School
Dubuque, IA, Gr. 12*

We looked for the clear image that hints at a deeper meaning and creates a space for the reader as well. Both judges grew up with farmer Fathers whose hands really did show the work—callused hands with thick fingers, gloveless even in winter. Farming by hand today is almost a lost art, so we appreciate the poem, and the poet's keen insight and clean craftsmanship.

concentration
on the runner's forehead
birdpoop

*Heather Klinkhammer, Age 18
Wahlert High School
Dubuque, IA, Gr. 12*

In televised marathons or local high school track events, we have seen for ourselves the concentration necessary for these athletes to succeed. The poet brings home the power of the moment by neatly juxtaposing the intense expression on the runner's face with the disgust that surely follows the realization of being shat upon. This surprise is conveyed perfectly in the poem's third line.

at the movie
their hands meet . . .
in the buttered popcorn

*Paula Faber, Age 18
Wahlert High School
Dubuque, IA, Gr. 12*

More senryu than haiku, this poem seems quite appropriate to teen life—full of irony, frustration, mistaken signals, blind groping and good humor. Whether on a first date, hoping to touch each other, or steady date just hungry for popcorn, the poet has captured the moment with a wry sense of humor.

mother's crossed arms
a reminder—
of our argument

*Heather Klinkhammer, Age 18
Wahlert High School
Dubuque, IA, Gr. 12*

No psychology lesson needed to recognize a parent's crossed arms as "end of discussion." At a very young age we become masters of body language, and we found this poet masterful in portraying the scene with few words and well-chosen line breaks.

overhead projector
the lesson—
over a student's head

Joe Arling, Age 17
Wahlert High School
Dubuque, IA, Gr. 12

At first, this senryu seems to state the obvious, but the skillful play on words in the third line adds delightful humor. By folding the meaning back on itself, the poet invites us to linger in the scene and enjoy the pun.

after the rain
so visible
the spider's web

Tony Leisen, Age 18
Wahlert High School
Dubuque, IA, Gr. 12

This haiku is centered in summer with the season word or kigo, "spider's web." The words resonate and seem to tangle the mind. How can we be aware of things that are there and yet not there? This poem has a quality similar to a Zen koan.

92 Many of this year's 235 entries required more than one look and some discussion. As judges, we looked objectively for well-crafted pieces with special attention to word choice and line breaks that hinted at a deeper meaning. We also had to consider the subjective criteria of memories and emotions that these haiku/senryu evoked for us. Those elements were much harder to evaluate, but we were able to narrow our choices to six poems. We thank all the poets and teachers for their fine efforts and hope they continue to study and practice the genre.

Yvonne Hardenbrook and Cherie Hunter Day, Judges

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THE HAIKU SOCIETY OF AMERICA

TREASURER'S REPORT (January 1—March 31, 1999)

Income

Balance	17,114.38	
Membership Dues	5,139.00	
Frogpond Samples	224.00	
Contest Fees	10.00	
Haiku Path	30.00	
Einbond Donations	35.00	
Contributions	921.00	
Total Income		23,473.38

Expenses

HSA General Account

Postage	489.87	
Supplies	207.53	
Awards*	400.00	
Copying/Printing	129.01	
HNA Contribution	500.00	
Frogpond Overpayment	7.00	
Bad Check Fee	5.00	

Newsletter

Printing	1,085.00	
Postage	412.92	

Frogpond

Printing	3,538.75	
Postage	313.56	

Total Expenses 7,088.64

Balance (3/31/99)

16,384.74

Respectfully submitted
Raffael DeGruttola, Treasurer

*Payments for poems in *Frogpond* XXII:1 & 2.

Museum of Haiku Literature Award

\$50 for the best haiku or senryu
appearing in the previous issue of FROGPOND
as voted by the HSA Executive Committee

close lightning
the metallic taste
in my mouth

Charles Easter





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