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HAIKU SOCIETY OF AMERICA
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President's Message

Greetings once again to H.S.A. members. This seems to be a time of waiting for our organization. What's happening is that members of the executive committee are waiting until the September 21st meeting in New York to articulate and formalize any changes. You might recall my last report where I tempered my concern for financial problems with an optimism based on the quality of our membership. I am impressed with the generosity of members who made thoughtful contributions to the organization. Now is the time to register your comments, suggestions (and donations) with your regional representatives and/or with national officers.

Our projects (contests and awards) have proceeded on schedule this year and will continue. Announcements will be made at or after the September meeting. HNA was a success. I look forward to meeting with members in New York. We are planning a regional meeting here in Long Beach on the 1st of December with everyone invited. (We have arranged very nice accommodations (less than \$80 for a double) near the beach. The temperature should be in the 70s.) There are many interesting events and also places to see in Southern California. Please come and meet the members of Southern California Haiku Study Group.

An H.S.A. trip to Japan has been suggested during the year 2002. Let us know if you have an interest. In the meantime, please communicate.

As you can see, many things are imminent, but much depends upon you: your reaction, your support, your intention. Let us know how we can serve you better, and together we will all make this a better organization.

Jerry Ball

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.

Valentine's Day—
just after appetizers
the young moon sets

D. Claire Gallagher

full moon
after all these years
this lust

Ed Baker

march bluster
the dragon kite
rattles its tail

Darrell Byrd

wind shift—
he plans a new route
for her wheelchair

Linda Jeannette Ward

No signs
at the fork in the road
forsythia

Carol Purington

down this path before—
in my tree guide, white alder
already circled

Carolyn Hall

trickling up
 from the creek
birdsong

Christopher Herold

Under
 the river's flow
 the stone's velvet
Virginia Brady Young

6

Spreading through the woods, the Native Plant Society . . .

John Stevenson

the early singing
of the vineyard workers
planting grapes

Paul O. Williams

morning coffee
a yellow butterfly unfurled
on the windshield

Darrell Byrd

missed the train
—a small green shoot
between the tracks

Robert Kusch

7

dogwood blooming—
finding one vacant seat
in the library

Yoko Ogino

Behind the chatting couple
she is making faces;
spring afternoon.

Ryan Underwood

Spring passing—
the talk with my father remains
in my tea time alone

Ikuyo Yoshimura

morning fog
the ladder higher than
the house

Bruce Ross

first warm day—
the roofer complaining
about his job

A. C. Missias

blowing bubbles
they slowly float towards
a younger me

Eleanor Cameron

8

watering the grass
I'll have
to cut

Steven Binz

perennial—
scent of lilac
past or present

Joan Morse Vistain

another familiar bird
I cannot name—
spring garden

A. C. Missias

unseen woodpeckers
chirring in the oaks—
I ought to call home

Paul O. Williams

blue sky:
missing her
blue eyes

Robert Henry Poulin

From the land rover
the herdsman counting his cows—
early summer rain

Bill Wyatt

cedar forest
first here—then there
a nightingale calls

Peter Duppenthaler

dusk
a bright bubble skims
the tarn
og aksnes

guests departing—
summer moon spills its excess
across the glazed tile

Patricia J. Machmiller

bedtime story—
the smell of rain
through the screens
Brian Gierat

10

the worlds
within this one—
sound of crickets

Michelle Tennison

windless mist
hardly shimmering
the barroom neon
Philip Waterhouse

Two Medicine Lake—
the white cloud fitting
inside a dark one

Harry Bose

thunder clap—
on the billboard the word “big”
big

Alice Frampton

|| ||

thunder ends—
the contralto’s voice rises
in the lounge

Lenard D. Moore

lying next to her
far away in the same bed
summer storm

Victor Ortiz

receding thunder
a cascade of veery song
among dripping leaves

Elizabeth Hazen

summer heat—
by the sprinkler
an empty snail shell

Yoko Imakado

ripe summer
our love/hate relationship
with the mulberry tree

Hayat Abuza

Warm summer dusk—
puffs of talcum powder
dust the white porcelain tub

Rebecca Lilly

12

between
Goethe & Graves
summer
shelldust

LeRoy Gorman

argument at dinner
a fly moves
from plate to plate

Steve Mason

Independence Day—
I let him touch
a little bit of me

Fay Aoyagi

soldiers' cemetery—
the mower starts to cut again
with the A's

Kristen Deming

fireworks over—
smokers remain
seated

Emiko Miyashita

at the curb
waiting for the light—
clouds still moving

Ulys S. Yates

white moon
her bindi
out of place

Pariksith Singh

facing the sunrise,
the full moon
retains its whiteness

Richard von Sturmer

morning walk
where the waves end
empties

Paul Watsky

on the sand
a crab pincer
holding nothing

Barbara Strang

|| 4

summer afternoon
the pail with rope rests
on the rim of the well

K. Ramesh

afternoon nap
sea wind blowing
through the house

Lynne Steel

listening to father
on Sunday afternoons
melting ice cream cone

Ulys H. Yates

beach walk—
a boy's high-pitched voice
beside his dad

Barry George

15

afternoon shadows . . .
the snail
racing stones

Stanford Forrester

evening surf
vacationers on the boardwalk
pass back and forth

Christopher Patchel

ebb tide
the drift
of footprints

Connie Donleycott

home from vacation—
newspapers on the driveway
with faded headlines

Dorothy McLaughlin

hot spell . . .
I bend lower
to a shrinking stream

Liz fenn

Summer heat:
little streams trickling
from my armpits

Tom Tico

16

sunlit showers—
how we enter
each other

Marjorie A. Buettner

electrical storm—
the aquarium light
flickers

Lee Giesecke

end of the drought—
listening to the rain
I flood the sink

Joanna Preston

all-day drizzle
out of their thin shells
the stretch of snails

Cherie Hunter Day

|| 7

Manhattan
I am also a jaywalker
autumn shower

Sosuke Kanda

she shakes
the umbrella—
the rain meant for her

Gary Hotham

dwindling light . . .
grandma's knotted fingers
unravel the afghan

Kathy Lippard Cobb

The Conscious Eye

Dee Evetts

It has become clear that this projected series on the subject of separation and divorce is not going to fall as neatly into stages as I supposed in the conclusion of my previous article. I now foresee a considerable amount of overlapping and even doubling-back in this survey of relationship's unravelling, as expressed in haiku and senryu.

This is due in part to the length of time that inevitably elapses during the production and distribution of this magazine—as well as the reading of it—such that I may find myself writing an article several weeks before receiving some of the submissions most relevant to it. At the same time it is true that breaking up (like so much in life) tends to be an untidy business that does not always progress according to our expectations. Add to this the complication of some poems being ambiguous with regard to time . . .

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Fortunately, all of these problems—if they are that—can be viewed as canceling each other out. I am taking advantage of this to revisit the large group of poems that start with some version of the phrase “discussing divorce”. Among them is Barbara Strang's deceptively circumstantial

you speak of divorce—
the morning sun
in your face¹

I almost overlooked this poem, and then began to find more and more in it. The evocation of shared domesticity; a beloved face seen with great clarity in the bright sunlight, eyes blinded to whatever expression might be read on the poet's own face. This strikes me as very truthful and infinitely sad—a love poem about impending loss. (Other interpretations are no doubt possible, and it may well be that recent memories prompt me to choose this one.)

The British poet ai li employs a more dramatic image in her

talk of divorce
she feels the knife edge
of her skirt's pleat²

This too has a very personal and authentic feel, the surreptitious movement conveying much tension as well as suppressed emotion. Sharp objects appear not infrequently in the iconography, and Ferris Gilli gives us another:

divorce papers
she carefully snips
a loose thread³

We have the almost too obvious image of something being excised and discarded. But there is another level, if we linger to take it in: the picture of a woman sewing, the divorce papers at her side—already opened, or still unread. She quietly continues with her work (the word “carefully” is perfect here). What she feels or thinks is left open, and this only enlarges the poem.

For most people the legal documents—even when expected—come as a shock. It is easy to relate to Michael Evans' experience:

divorce papers—
my signature
suddenly old⁴

Such a simple statement, yet it pinpoints one of those unforeseen and seismic shifts in our lives.

Of the four poems so far examined, two make use of the first or second person, and two the third—though all (I would guess) are describing the poet's own experience. With such personal and emotional material, which voice to use is often a delicate decision. Here it seems to me that all four poets have made the right call.

We can look at the next poem, by Cindy Guenterman, in this light:

laughing together
out in the hallway
her lawyer and his⁵

Clearly we have no way of knowing whether this refers to the writer's own circumstances, or was simply a scene observed. If the former, then the poet has avoided using "my lawyer and his". That would be substantially different, to my ear. There would be potentially more reproach in it, a more injured tone. As it stands, there is a reaction to the lawyers' behavior, to be sure, but also recognition that it is natural enough: the adversaries in court may well have a friendly relationship outside of it.

A more pointed dig at the legal profession comes from Alexis Rotella:

Telling me
how I should feel
the lawyer.⁶

While acknowledging the accuracy and economy of this, I find that it has the ring of epigram rather than

of haiku. It is tempting to respond: Telling me/how I should feel/the poet.

I have allowed the lawyers to elbow their way in, as they will tend to do. Let us retreat to appreciate a very private moment, sketched by John Stevenson:

moving day
the other men
in her life⁷

Another poet might have said "man", and then it would have been ordinary. This way, we get to feel all the doubts and questions that arise. If she has a lover, is it one of these? Or will it be? How long has she known these guys anyway? And so on. This is a wonderful example of ambiguity sowing confusion for the writer's persona, while creating intriguing possibilities for his reader.

2 |

* * *

1. *New Zealand Haiku Anthology* 2
2. *Raw Nervz* VI:3
3. *Acorn* 6
4. *HSA Members Anthology* 1999
5. *Modern Haiku* 19:3
6. *Woodnotes* 22
7. *Acorn* 5

(Submissions and recommendations for this column can be sent to Dee Evetts, P.O.Box 955, 128 East Broadway, New York, NY 10002. Please state whether previously published, giving details. Work may also be selected from general submissions to Frogpond, and other sources.)

September
on the wall calendar
post-it-notes rustling
Christopher Patchel

river sedges
a bittern settling
into the frog song
Elizabeth Howard

moonlit chill
no answer
to the loon's call
Gloria H. Procsal

22

delta autumn
the storyteller cradles
his gun
Peggy Willis Lyles

half moon—
the wild dog follows
at a distance
Stephen L. Amor

fog in the hills—
this air tastes of
yesterday

Matthew Cheney

thinning mist
the morning glory
has a shadow

Christopher Herold

23

the chestnut husks
like open hands—
autumn

John Ower (after Basho)

Peach in hand,
I contemplate the fullness
of her figure

William Scott Galasso

geese add their shadows
to the afternoon
canning jars still warm

Burnell Lippy

sitting out
 the night air cooler—
 nothing more happens in the 20th century

Gary Hotham

autumn clarity
 —the bell's echoes
 return slowly from mountains

Brent Partridge

new moon . . .
 the snap
 of a nearby twig

Anne LB Davidson

24

before the move
 cremating several heads
 of a camellia

Yoko Imakado

commuter train's
 abandoned crossword;
 the early darkness

Burnell Lippy

morning walk—
an elderly woman picks up
certain leaves

Tom Clausen

October street; the plain-dressing girl in scarlet socks

Thomas Hoyt

25

Cold afternoon—
an out-of-tune piano plays
through rain on the roof

Rebecca Lilly

taking brief shelter
leaves
on the fire escape

Judson Evans

harvest moon—
the neighbor hits a high note
on his saxophone

Kathy Lippard Cobb

gathering clouds—
a chill settle in
my writing hand

Naia

on the ladder
my neighbor silently strings lights
as I rake

Stuart Ungar

a tangle of brambles
threading through
the security fence

Martin Lucas

26

stacking wood
the rumble of his voice
but not the words

Kirsty Karkow

frosty night
deer velvet brightens
the silence

Ernest J. Berry

in December's chill
the thinness of her body
as we hug goodbye

Margaret Hehman-Smith

icy ground
the missing leaf
exactly

Stephen L. Amor

27

funeral director folding chairs

Tom Painting

the funeral over . . .
we take home a cigar
from his last box

Maurice Tasnier

restless night
in the winter rain
heart beats

Gene Williamson

Winter Solstice—
the sunset incantations
of red-winged blackbirds

D. Claire Gallagher

New Year's bonfire
in the deep darkness
my home village

Yasuhiko Shigemoto

sub-zero night
the distant train
brittle and thin

Craig Barcal

28

silent car ride
after the argument
I adjust the heat

Maureen Gorman

first contraction
stopping in the snowstorm
to buy cat food

Peggy Heinrich

miles of night
light from a farmhouse window
glows on fresh snow

Michael Ketchek

bluer
on a fresh dusting of snow . . .
tonight's moonlight

Naia

29

cookie crumb
on the car salesman's desk—
record snowfall

Anne LB Davidson

whiteout . . .
the brightness of fallen snow
on the rooves

Bruce Ross

trimming my moustache
over the bathroom sink
snowfall

Marc Thompson

at the Laundromat
a lint trap overflowing—
the sound of sleet

Cherie Hunter Day

winter farm
facing empty fields
Granddad dozes

Thomas Hoyt

February sun
the yellow bucket
of frosted leeks

Dee Evetts

30

Ash Wednesday—
Carnival gaud
in the gutter

Makiko

the hill we climb
enters our conversation
beginning of Lent

Michael Fessler

meteor watch . . .
a ghostly pair of birds
in the city glow

Rengé/David Priebe

looking down
from the bridge—
stars wavering

Lloyd Gold

31

Only
so many more times—
the moon and stars.

Charles Douthat

spiral nebulae
through the telescope's site—
longing to love

H. F. Noyes

Valentine's Day
the red-haired postman
two hours late

Stephen Addiss

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.

first house together—
before the furniture comes
echoes

Mike Spikes

morning after our affair—
the candle melted
into itself

Brynne McAdoo

33

returning my rented woman
to her moonlit
corner

David Lanoue

after new paint—
shadow on the coat hook
on the bedroom door

Harry Bose

guest bedroom—
beneath the bedspread
a bookmark

Chris Pusateri

arm in plaster
the weight
of a careless moment

Greeba Brydges-Jones

induction physical—
squeezing my balls
that should have told me

F. Brunon Poshinski

Shyly
she shows me
her butterfly tattoo

Tom Tico

34

laughing gas
the dentist and I compare
our old draft numbers

Michael Ketchek

two canes . . .
my uncle drags home
World War Two

D. A. Thomann

intervention:
my hands shake
too

John O'Connor

diagnosis . . .
one by one the petals
of the paper rose

Ellen Compton

35

confessional—
considering her tone
he steeples his hands

Nancy Stewart Smith

waiting ambulance—
the paramedics walk back
slowly

Stewart Collie

obituary photos—
no one looks
surprised

John Stevenson

Neil Diamond concert—
so many old ladies
my age

Billie Wilson

gossiping on the phone
she butters
both sides of the toast

Nikhil Nath

poets' café—
trying to decipher
the menu

Tim Bravenboer

36

school cafeteria—
uniformed first graders
all choosing pizza

Dorothy McLaughlin

Yummy Pretzels
the vendor sells them
in a monotone

Joann Klontz

Trash day—
another passerby
tries out the couch

David Elliott

heavy traffic—
at the light the boy crosses
his legs

Alice Frampton

37

back from the P.O.—
an empty space
where the manuscript was

Linda Robeck

wanting my life
to be different—
I cut my hair

Patricia Ann Rogers

although I am lost,
the direction I'm taking
now agrees with me

J. D. Heskin

linked

forms

tan renga

surgery—
getting my books together
long poems and short

*this world distilled
into a word*

39

Leatrice Lifshitz
Merrill Ann Gonzales

the swirls
in his thumbprint
as he passes the jug

fine wood grain
in the temple's paneling

Merrill Ann Gonzales

The Monkey's Ultrasound

a cricket
at the threshold
open door

*in the new coolness
she waters her garden*

tasting salt
as we drop anchor
west of the moon

*cowboys break camp
with the first light*

saddle soap
and a woolen blanket
spruce up the chair

*your wrinkle-massage before
the New Year's Eve party*

*a quick scan
of the folded pages
in my diary*

the monkey's ultrasound
proves he swallowed coins

*dried flowers
with the wedding portrait
in a gilded frame*

why would one couple
buy so much clear wrap?

*as a dancer
"she worked at fifteen
clubs a day"*

another backhoe
stalled in the ditch

*near the old quarry
I pick wild raspberries
by moonlight*

*fans cheer like crazy
when the runner scores*

*the addict steals
a lighter and spoon
from the diner*

*burned brush along the edge
of a weed-riddled lot*

*drowning
in apricot blossoms
the library sphinx*

4 ||

*our hot-air balloon
drifts over the mirage*

*as if it were
his father's voice,
the call of a bobwhite*

*students between classes
step with the tower bells*

*lessons
from the Kama Sutra
taped to the fridge*

*on the brewery tour
she goes into labor*

*don't look now
my old boyfriend just left
the ladies' room*

*a field of narcissus
within the mountain shadow*

*awakened
by the silence
of fresh snow*

*miniature dream catchers
at only twice the cost*

*diplomats
sift earthquake rubble
for microchips*

*alone in the temple . . .
ugly American*

*gibbous moon
above dress rehearsal
of a chain gang scene*

*around the circus train
colored leaves swirl*

*the young child
paints a crooked smile
on the scarecrow*

*just follow this map
to get through the maze*

*finishing
is not the point
of cross stitch*

*with the hour set forward
he frees the pendulum*

*a chess game
while the magnolia sways
in the square*

*for the hermit crab
a larger shell*

plain brown wrapper

laundry day
a toddler peeks
from the empty hamper

*a pink plastic ring
spills with the Crackerjacks*

in the duty free shop
a Matryoshka doll painted
as a blushing bride

*daybreak
he still hasn't seen
her dragon tattoo*

a man in the library
reading braille

*the manual arrives
in a plain brown wrapper
"how to build a bomb"*

the light still shines

empty room—
the smell of old age
and her cologne

*wrapped in yellowing tissue
great-grandma's wedding dress*

Easter hat
the one with the birds
still on my mind

*crocuses
up through
snow*

the worn purple cushion
on her prayer bench

*mantlepiece shrine
the light still shines
in mother's eyes*

Stillflow

sitting with eyes closed
on a flat rock in midstream
the flow surrounds me

funeral service
the drone of passing sirens

skywriting—
letters drift
into clouds

from bloom to bud returning . . .
sunset colored poppies

high noon:
a rattlesnake rests in the bend
of the highway

leaf in a whirlpool
roar of the falls

45

John Thompson
Rich Krivcher
Garry Gay

dubya and

dubya and i disagree how we fuck with nature
here nothing's wild just is
grouse still on their nests the freedom to mulch
everywhere and not shrinking the violets
pines' edge poison ivy & touch-me-nots gather again
i slept on it which bed for the separated irises

Wreck Beach

I had long wanted to visit the infamous nude beach situated on the Pacific Ocean just below the University of British Columbia campus. But it was early spring and so chilly that there was little chance that I would see the students at their leisure nor the vendors who were said to hawk vegetarian food, beer, and hallucinogens to them. Yet I wanted to at least take a look at the beach itself and, like Kilroy, say I was there. The old wooden staircases led a long way down from the campus road with many turns and dense woods on both sides. At the bottom was a long beach bordered here and there by marshes and backed right up to the woods which provided a sense of protective enclosure. There was no one on the beach and, for its ordinariness, I wondered why I was there. Then I began to look closely at the benches clustered together at odd angles. They were rough-hewn gray planks that had weathered considerably. Next to each bench was a huge driftwood log, pale and stripped of its bark. In their erect, slightly curved forms they were obviously totems, however abstract, perhaps inspired by the collection of totems at the Museum of Anthropology just up the hill. Between the benches and the ocean as a focal point to the setting was a makeshift altar with empty glass jars filled with weeds, small potted plants, smooth colored stones, votive candles, broken pieces of polished glass, and a little Buddha. The absence of every living soul intensified the sense of sacredness that those who created this place intended. I felt not unlike those times I had explored awe-inspiring ruins in places far from this one. Then, with a shock of recognition, I saw the avatars of all the otherworldly regard held in this place in their tall unstooped beings.

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Wreck Beach:
the four great blue heron
wade in the cove

Bruce Ross

Sobe Beach

Early mornings and we swam naked in the warm and luminous water of the China Sea. Okinawa 1952 and 1953. A few of my Army buddies and myself submerged and slowly moved among jellyfish—storied and angelic creatures with only a few degrees of separation between themselves and Miss Havisham, the mistress of the shadowy manor in *Great Expectations*. It was as if those undulating fish wore fading and diaphanous wedding gowns . . . extremely fragile . . . about to dissolve. As I write this, I think of lines from a Hart Crane poem: *It is all hung by an invisible white hair/It trembles as birch limbs webbing the air*. There were those of us who felt that we could look straight through the organisms as they adhered to our cupped hands and reaching arms, our foreheads, our bellies, our pricks . . . Gelatinous globs to the very core of their beings, strung with billowing phosphorescent veils. And, once we left the sea and stepped gingerly onto the coral beach where one of the fiercest of World War II battles was fought, we found ourselves imprinted, as if lipsticked where blood had been gently bruised from our youthful bodies. Overly oxygenated, the phantom shapes fell from us and slid back into their watery element, threatened by the sky and the dark looming outline of a beached-and-rusted landing craft. We once brought a bayonet-loosened coral-encrusted skull ashore . . . American? Australian? Japanese? We knew that in the depths among jellyfish, there were hundreds of other ghosts . . .

deepening turquoise . . .
the amber rays of the sun
slant through the silence

Jerry Kilbride

A Matter of Time

It was Holy Thursday when mom received a bouquet of flowers from my brother Jack, a Marine, fighting in Korea.

A week later dad was working in the steelmill; mom busy in the kitchen preparing lunch.

sun behind clouds—
at the front door I sign
for the telegram

Jack was killed by shrapnel on April 9, 1953.

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dining room table
the roses he sent
shedding red petals

In June a truce was declared. A month later—July 9—Jack would have turned twenty.

R. A. Stefanac

. . . and all

September 20, 1955

First morning in Paris. Strolling through formal gardens. Watching children romping in the sunshine, laughing and yelling. But not understanding them.

April 1, 1956, 3:00 a.m.

Sitting bolt upright in bed, having dreams in French for the first time.

in a foreign land
so strange
belonging

Lloyd Gold

Memories

Her memory is a physical sensation. A lead ball sits on my chest. I cannot swallow it, nor puke it out. I focus my attention on my breaths—1—2—3—inhale slowly, exhale from the other nostril. And again and again. Praanayama is no help with my pain. The sea suffocates even more.

dead larvae
wave on wave
on wave

I watch the thoughts but am helpless with their intrusion. Consciousness wavers and I catch myself thinking all over again. Be a witness, I tell myself. Watch! The horizon, passing ships, the sand—only make things worse.

smell of fish
foaming
footprints

Pariksith Singh

In the Middle

50

You can sit on a lawn or in a field, or forest or by a stream; almost anyplace and just sit there sensing whatever. The longer you sit the better for settling out the business of the mind and becoming open to the myriad senses of sound, sight, smell and the way all manner of life is right there to discover . . .

page by page . . .
she knows on each one
where Waldo is

Tom Clausen

Old Dogs

One of my favourite poems from Kobayashi Issa is:

Visiting the graves;
The old dog
Leads the way.¹

Jerry Ball and I both had old dogs of our own in a recent anthology²:

summer morning
the old dog seems to know
the length of his leash

Jerry Ball

child's voice—
the old dog settles lower
in its box

Cyril Childs

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We humans too, as we grow older, come to know the lengths of our leashes—how far we can go and, perhaps more important, how far we want to go. Given a little lateral thinking good haiku sometimes inspire others. (Might we think of these others as derivative haiku?) Following a recent lively discussion of Jerry's haiku I must have been in impish mood as I jotted down:

spring morning—
the old dog seems to have forgotten
the length of his leash

And then, from a friend to whom I'd mentioned Jerry's haiku, came—

summer morning—
the old dog
walks in his sleep

Bob Lee

Jerry, thanks for the inspiration!

Cyril Childs

1. *Haiku* 4, R.H. Blyth (The Hokuseido Press, 1990)

2. *the thin curve* (Red Moon Press, 2000)

Note: A commentary on Jerry's 'old dog' appeared in "The Heron's Nest" Vol. II:#11; the haiku first appeared in "The Heron's Nest" Vol.I:#1.

essays

Struggling for Definition

A.C. Missias¹

WHAT IS A HAIKU? This question is a common one, not only at family dinners but also in the context of haiku workshops and on-line fora where many, if not all, of the participants are relative newcomers to the genre. Among such beginning students in particular, this is a recurring topic of curiosity and debate—how can haiku be recognized and distinguished from other short poems that are commonly encountered? These students want to be given a short, clear description, as a framework within which to understand subsequent discussions and critique, and also as a set of guidelines for their own writing.

Such definitions are also a frequent topic among those more experienced in the world of haiku. Formulating a definition for the genre can be part of the way that individual writers present themselves to the outside world; finding out the definitions of others can also be a way to focus different views on what makes for effective haiku. In the end, both beginners and veterans share the search for a greater understanding of the haiku genre and the best approach to working within it.

This discussion has taken many forms over the years, beginning with the efforts of the Haiku Society of America to arrive at an improved definition for use by American dictionaries,² and extending through the survey of concise definitions from various influential thinkers compiled in a recent issue of *Modern Haiku*.³ However, coming up with a simple definition for the word “haiku” has consistently proven difficult. Those attempting the task generally find themselves having to choose between two approaches: if they try to summarize the “essence” or “ideal” of haiku (as was the task set by the Modern Haiku project), then the definitions must disregard many less-typical poems, leaving the newcomer to the genre

either perplexed or defiant—what about this poem by a master? or this other one? If, in contrast, the definers try for an all-encompassing definition, which can act as an absolute test for the “haiku-ness” of any work, then they find agreement hard to reach, and/or must be so general as to provide little specific guidance. Trying to do everything at once is the recipe for a book, not a simple few-line definition.

In this essay I want to look at these struggles in two ways. First, what can we learn from our attempts to define haiku? By comparing a large number of individual definitions, we can begin to pull out the commonalities among them, and perhaps get a bit closer to recognizing the core elements in which haiku is rooted. Second, what can we learn by looking at the poems which seem to contradict our simpler definitions? By understanding the ways in which these “atypical” examples diverge from the norm, we can expand our notion of the haiku genre—determine the specific ways in which the tradition has extended from its roots to form a complex but delimited living structure.

Defining the Core. To uncover the essence of our concept of haiku, I began by taking the eleven definitions compiled in the Modern Haiku survey, and adding to them the familiar HSA definition cited in every recent issue of *Frogpond*.⁴ The authors of these twelve definitions were all given strict limits on length (*MH* required no more than 25 words), and thus had to choose carefully from among the possible characteristics those which they considered most critical to include; I therefore presume that the frequency with which particular concepts occur is a measure of the universality of their recognized importance. Using these twelve definitions, I compiled a table which records the number of times each of several words or concepts were mentioned by any author (counting as a “half” any partial or implied references).⁵

Feature	HSA	BR	GS	DL	WJH	DC	al	CvdH	ACM	RB	LG	RS	Totals
brevity (length)		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
form (shape/syllables)	X	X		X	X		X						5
nature/seasons	X	X	X	X	X						X	X	7
reality/senses			X	X	X	X		X	-			X	6.5
images/things		X	X			X				X	X	X	6
juxtaposition/linkage	X	X				-						X	3.5
moment duration	X	X	X		-		X		X	X	X		7.5
present tense/now			X			X							2
recreated experience						X			X				2
insight/intuition	-	X		X			X	X	X	X	X	X	8.5
connection/unity					-			X					1.5
human emotion			X		X	X		X			X		5
poem/poetry	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	10

x = definitely included (=1)
 - = implied, or partial (=0.5)

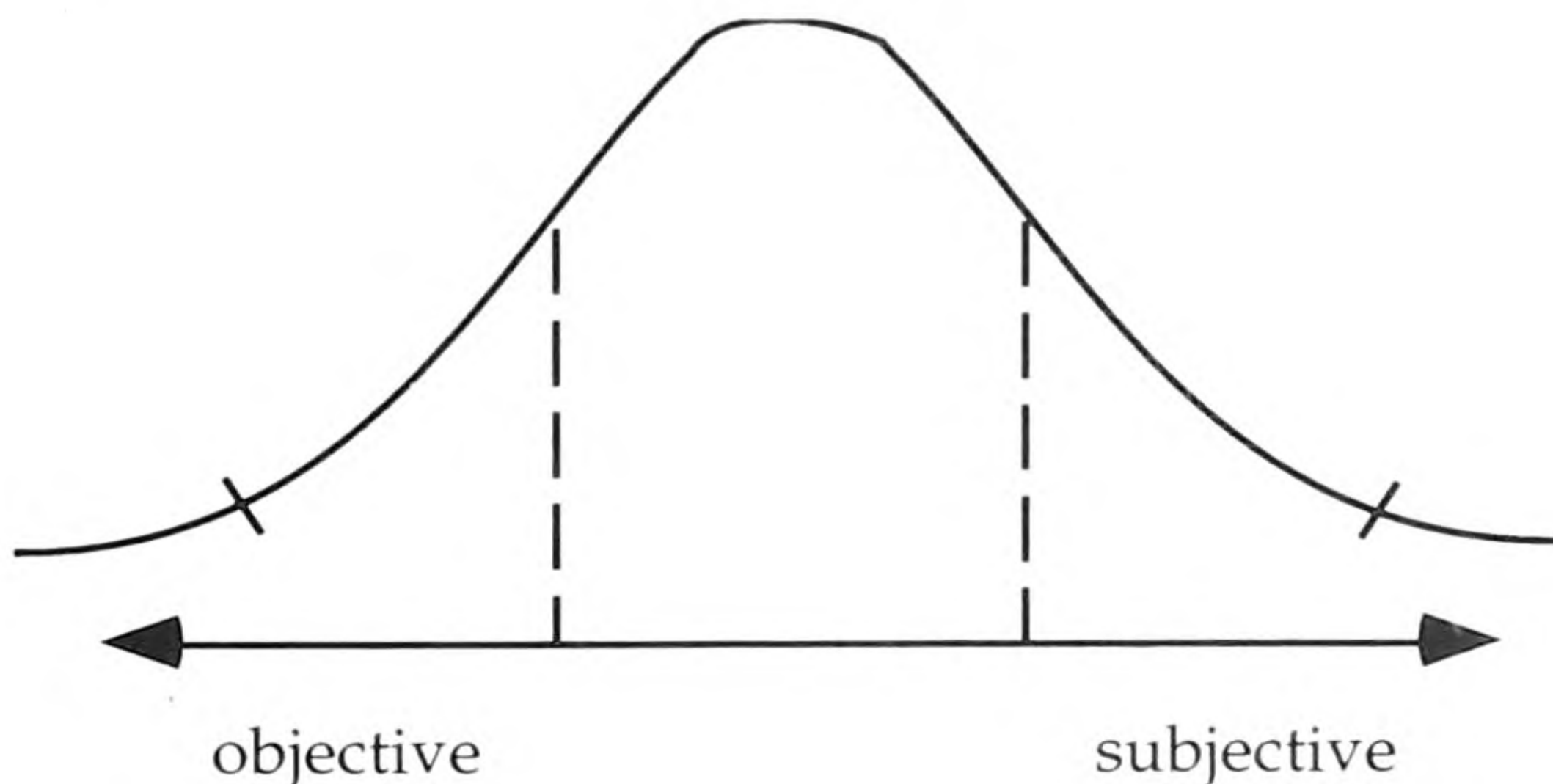
What features stand out from this analysis? Given that twelve definitions were examined, it seems reasonable to treat as significant any idea that came up in half of those or more; in the end, six basic concepts passed that threshold. The first such feature is brevity: ten out of twelve definitions referred in some way to haiku as “short” or “breath-length.” It is worth noting, in contrast, that the specification of a particular syllabic or line form for haiku attracted less than the threshold number of votes. Second is the concept of a basis in reality, or concrete imagery: wordings such as “reality”, “sensory description”, or “not from the imagination” were referred to six and a half times, while the notion that “images” or “things” should be included was mentioned six times—together, these ideas of the concrete basis for haiku received some coverage in eight and a half of the definitions. Third is the importance of nature or seasonality: these ideas were included in seven of the twelve definitions. Fourth is the concept that haiku spans a “moment” of duration: seven and a half references were made to this aspect. The specific use of the present tense received less attention. The fifth essential haiku feature emerging from this analysis is the idea that a haiku captures more than the external observations of a moment, also aiming to convey an “insight” or “intuition.” Eight and a half out of twelve of the definitions mentioned these concepts specifically, although another few referred to human emotions such as “wonder” or to a sense of “connection” with the event. Finally, it is worth noting that ten out of twelve definers felt it important to state explicitly that haiku is a type of poem or poetry; this is not so much a feature used to recognize individual examples as it is a reflection of how we place the genre in the context of our understanding of literature generally.

So: poetry marked by brevity, reality, nature/seasonality, a moment’s duration, and insight or intuition. No single definition included all of these essential

features. Additionally, all of them varied in emphasis and formulation. However, looking at this analysis, it seems clear that all of the definitions' authors were shooting toward the same general target, outlines of which begin to emerge upon such closer inspection. Haiku is clearly not just any short poem. Perhaps what we should be looking for is less something which has *all* of these core features, than something which has *many* of them—enough somehow to be recognized through a “family resemblance.” Think of any family you know: there are often children who look very different from each other, and yet each of whom bears a recognizable similarity to one or both of their parents. By the same token, we can recognize as “haiku” many poems which seem different from one another, but which share at root some linkage to the traditions and “resemblances” of the genre—its core characteristics.

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Making Sense of Divergence. What can we conclude from the existence of example poems that diverge from our central set of criteria, but still seem to be recognized as haiku? I like to think of it this way: for any particular feature or characteristic, we can imagine an axis, and if we were to graph the frequency with which “legitimate” haiku exhibit any degree of that feature, it would have some distribution not unlike a bell curve.



The majority of poems demonstrate a rather central, or balanced level of the character being examined (here, objectivity or subjectivity), with fewer poems found at the more extreme ends of the continuum. By and large, the central members (those between the dotted lines) are those that we say are “better examples” of haiku—not better haiku, but more *typical* of the genre. What does this mean? Are the other haiku, outside the central domain, haiku or not?

The notion of typicality within categories is not unique to haiku.⁶ As a simple example, take the word “bird.” This is a word, a category of vertebrates, with a strict biological definition (making reference to feathers, eggs, wings, *etc.*). However, not every bird is an equally good example of the category: if explaining the concept “bird” to an off-planet visitor, we would be much more likely to point out a robin or a sparrow than an ostrich or a penguin. That doesn’t mean that ostriches or penguins aren’t birds—they definitely meet the criteria—but merely that they aren’t *typical* birds. Thus, it is important to recognize that individual things aren’t merely inside or outside of a category, but that some can be better or worse examples of how that category is understood.

How does this relate to haiku? Returning to the graph above, we find that those poems which reside in the central domain tend to be the most typical, and are thus the source of most of our definitions. This is important to acknowledge, both because it gives us more certainty in using these haiku as examples for newcomers to the form, and because it helps explain why the definitions, even when boiled down to their core features, don’t always encompass the “outliers.” However, as a second and equally important point, many of the poems in the shoulder region of the graph, while less typical, can still be recognizable as members of the genre. This, then, becomes a topic for investigation: how do we recognize the less typical examples as “legitimate” haiku, and/or how do we

learn where to draw a line (like the outer lines on the graph) between these divergent examples and non-haiku?

This is where the role of experience and tradition come in. Much as it frustrates newcomers to be told to “read, read, read,” it seems that breadth of exposure is how we learn to recognize the sets of “family features” of haiku and even the “allowed” types of divergence. Rather than applying a set of *a priori* rules, we deduce the rules by immersing ourselves in the tradition, both Japanese and English-language, and seeing where it has gone. In this way, we come to recognize many of the linkages which tie the unusual types of poems back to more typical examples at the core.

For example, probably the least controversial branch of the haiku tradition is the most objective approach. This type has its roots in such poems as Basho’s

The old pond—
a frog jumps in,
sound of water. ⁷

and extends outward toward such “snapshot” or *shasei* poems as:

A red apple
a green apple
on top of the table

Shiki ⁸

the glitter
of the gravel bed
this morning

John Wills ⁹

This branch of the tradition is certainly very prevalent in contemporary English-language haiku, although few examples get far from the central characteristics of eliciting deeper levels of meaning. A more subjective side of the same scale might start with Buson’s

Happy to the eyes,
My beloved’s fan;
Purest white! ¹⁰

and extend quite naturally to this poem by Lee Giesecke:

Snow everywhere
and its stillness
inside of me ¹¹

There are other axes of variation than this initial one of objectivity / subjectivity, and we need to alter our bell curve to project into three dimensions. However, the three-dimensional shape of the haiku genre isn't just an inverted bowl, extending outward in all directions; rather, it is closer to a starfish, with very definite arms, representing the branches of the tradition as it has developed to this point, and with empty spaces of "non-haiku" in-between. For example, there is a haiku tradition of more philosophical poems, which stretches from Basho's

The summer grasses,
All that remains
Of the warriors' dreams. ¹²

through Issa's reflective

This dewdrop world—
It may be a dewdrop,
And yet—and yet— ¹³

60 to this recent poem by Yatsuka Ishihara:

death must be
playing on a beach
of spring sky ¹⁴

This last poem seems way out on the fringe of our usual understanding of the form, but tracing its roots back closer to the core allows us to understand why the author might consider himself to be working within the haiku tradition.

One of the central criteria for haiku that we derived from the group of definitions was that the

events should span only a moment's duration. But there are both classical and contemporary examples that break that rule:

The sea of spring,
Rising and falling,
All the day long.
Buson¹⁵

Listening . . .
After a while
I take up my axe again
Rod Wilmot¹⁶

Similarly, the focus on sensory images, on realism not imagination, has occasionally been discarded and yet yielded a poem with many characteristics of "haiku."

The sea darkens;
the voices of the wild ducks
Are faintly white.
Basho¹⁷

Searching on the wind,
the hawk's cry . . .
is the shape of its beak.
J.W. Hackett¹⁸

6 ||

In each of these cases, the modern poems have many characteristics of haiku, but also break a fundamental "rule," and in the end our willingness to characterize them as haiku probably depends more than anything else on the linkage to their classical precedents. These outlier examples are thus neither proof that the definitions are "wrong" nor singular exceptions to the rules; rather, they represent particular understandings of *specific* ways that the form may be extended from its core.

So what does all of this mean to you and me?

First, we must accept that while there aren't simple *a priori* defining rules for haiku, there are meaningful "family resemblances" among the poems that belong to the tradition. This core set of features is very important to recognize, as it can help guide us in explaining to others how this type of poetry differs from other brief poetic genres. Second, we must acknowledge that there are poems within the body of haiku which are more and less typical of the overall genre. It may be more useful for our discussions if we trace the

lineage of an individual poem within the tradition, or determine its level of divergence from the prototypical core, rather than debating whether it is outside or inside the absolute bounds of the genre (especially as that final distinction will involve the influence of more personal taste than do the other two measures). For example, one of the most controversial haiku of our own tradition is Cor van den Heuval's one-word poem: *tundra*. Many folks have been quick to line up on one side or the other of the debate over whether this single word can be a haiku. But what might be more interesting is to see *why* the various groups do or don't see a linkage of this poem to the haiku tradition. An argument "against" might include the notions that it doesn't have any juxtaposition, or convey any insight. An argument "for" might include reference to a tradition of "implied juxtaposition," and point out that much more is brought to the word "tundra" than we would attribute to a single word such as "lamp"—that rather than conveying a lack of any observation, the author may rather be capturing his own wordlessness in the face of an awesome phenomenon of nature, through the very absence of the expected additional description. Let us leave off the binary debate of yes and no, and ask instead (1) how typical of "haiku" is this poem? (2) which branch of the tradition does it fit into? (3) does the effect of the poem justify the level of divergence and the chosen approach? Then, only as a final matter, do we bother with the more unresolvable question of (4) should this poem, in the end, be considered a haiku?

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Third and finally, we need to recognize that the variance between types of poems within the haiku tradition is not random, but systematic. This is far from an "anything goes" understanding of the genre—rather, it can be seen to have a real, organic set of boundaries. Our current method of discerning these boundaries has its drawbacks, however; we are largely at the mercy of our own exposure, which

determines the depth and complexity of our learned “branching rules” or motivating principles of the form. Those who have read widely but in different portions of the tradition may have different working models of what is “acceptable” and what is not. However, such variability should be susceptible to study; if we can define the branches or traditions more clearly, we can make it easier and quicker for newcomers to arrive at the outlines of the whole. Additionally, while I suspect that the exact boundaries of the starfish arms may shift a bit over time—haiku is a living form, and inherently going to change with its practitioners—such change is more likely to be by small alterations in the existing traditions than by the growth of entire new arms in what we currently consider “non-haiku space.” At the very least, by studying the current shape and principles of our beloved tradition, we can clarify our current understanding, which will act as a starting point for our future explorations.

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¹ This essay was originally presented as a talk before the New York Metro regional HSA meeting on September 23, 2000.

² Haiku Society of America, Twentieth Anniversary Book Committee, eds. *A Haiku Path: The Haiku Society of America, 1968-1988* (1994), Chapters 4-5.

³ *Modern Haiku* XXXI:3 (Fall, 2000), p.74-5.

⁴ 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). It is usually written in three lines totalling fewer than seventeen syllables.

⁵ **Brevity** requires usage of the words “brief,” “short,” “breath-length,” or “concise.” **Form** includes any reference to the more concrete criteria of syllable number or line structure. **Reality/Senses** meant inclusion of the words “senses,” “concrete,” “real,” “non-ideational,” or “specific event.” **Images/Things** meant use of those specific words (as way to capture the described reality). **Insight/Intuition** included use of the words “insight,” “illuminate,” “glimpse of the Eternal,” and “perception.” **Human emotion** meant use of “emotion” or “feelings,” as well as reference to specific emotions. Other categories should be more clear, referring to the specific word(s) or concept(s) listed.

⁶ Lakoff, George. *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal About the Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

⁷ Hass, Robert, ed. *The Essential Haiku: Versions of Basho, Buson, and Issa* (Hopewell, NJ: The Ecco Press, 1994), p.18.

⁸ Watson, Burton, tras. *Masaoka Shiki: Selected Poems* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), #126.

⁹ van den Heuval, Cor, ed. *The Haiku Anthology: english language haiku by contemporary american and canadian haiku poets* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1974), p.220. The first edition of this book was used intentionally, in order to bring as examples only poems which have been considered seminal for several decades.

¹⁰ Blyth, R.H. *History of Haiku* (Tokyo: Hokuseido, 1963), I: 282.

¹¹ Kacian, Jim, ed. *The Red Moon Anthology, 1997* (Winchester, VA: Red Moon Press, 1998), p.20.

¹² Blyth, I: 26.

¹³ Blyth, R.H. *Haiku* (Tokyo: Hokuseido, 1952, 1982), III: 968.

¹⁴ Kondo, Tadashi and Higginson, William J., ed. and trans. *Red Fuji: Selected Haiku of Yatsuka Ishihara* (Santa Fe: From Here Press, 1997), p.37.

¹⁵ Blyth, *Haiku*, II: 453.

¹⁶ van den Heuval, p.209.

¹⁷ Blyth, *Haiku*, IV: 1261.

¹⁸ van den Heuval, p.25.

Haiku Workshop: The Dead End Cure

Your heartstopping haiku moment resists every attempt to express it as an equally powerful haiku.

THE PROBLEM.

Magnificent moments can stun the poet's creative process: Events that occurred are too powerful, and/or Emotion connected to events is too powerful, and/or the poet becomes stuck with a Precommitment to one or two specific lines.

THE THERAPY.

Start over. Clear your mind of all the poem-trash, *i.e.* everything up until now connected to this poem. Erase everything. "I know nothing." Take yourself back to the haiku moment.

1. *Elements of the Poem.*

- a. What Happened? The facts. Try listing them.
- b. How Did You Feel? You need to find one word. Write it down.
- c. What's Non-Negotiable? Refer to a and b above and choose two or three elements that you want in the poem. List them.
- d. Translate into Images. Feelings are often expressed as abstractions. If you have an abstraction in the list, you need to find an image that says the same thing.

2. *Structure of the Poem.*

The *Relationship of the Elements* gives your poem its structure.

- a. Which two elements are equal, or 1st and 2nd in terms of emphasis? In the poem, these will have the power; there will be tension between them.
- b. Which element is 3rd in terms of emphasis? This element can serve as an adjunct to, assist or compliment, but not conflict with, the other elements. (Some poems may not have a 3rd element.)

THE FOLLOW-UP.

Your poem now has Elements and Structure. Work with these until the poem Feels Right. Usually it is more important to suggest the true feeling than to replicate the true story.

ANATOMY OF A POEM.

at dawn
the red throat
of a hummingbird
(many variation, poem not working)

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- 1a. *the facts*
Mountain cabin
Dawn
Hummingbird's red throat suspended above deck railing
Nothing else in the sky
- 1b. *the feeling*
I was stunned: amazement
- 1c. *the elements (non-negotiable)*
hummingbird's red throat
suspended
poet's amazement
- 1d. *(abstraction)* amazement = *(image)* caught my breath

2. *the relationship of the elements*
suspended + caught my breath = he stops my breath

FOLLOW-UP.

the hummingbird's red throat
he stops
my breath

Laurie W. Stoelting

(Haiku Workshop articles are welcome. Please send your work of 400 words or less to Editor, Frogpond, PO Box 2461, Winchester VA 22604-1661.)

Residual Effects

HAIKU, AS WITH ALL POETRY, EVOKES EMOTION. This emotion, understanding, or moment keenly felt, is transferred from writer to reader or listener. Each poem is a gift, a sharing, a piece of oneself, artistically given and if we are lucky, perceptively received.

Some verses touch us immediately. They pull us back to childhood, love, sorrow, or bliss and our senses thrive. For me, Christopher Herold's:

foghorns ...
we lower a kayak
into the sound¹

does this and much more, transporting me back to the aroma, sight, taste, feel, and rhythm of my youth near Puget Sound.

Nonetheless, in all of what we read or gather there will be pieces that stay deep within, echoing over and over, recorded for some future date. These are the residual effects of bestowed words.

How many times have we focused on an utterance or phrase we've never heard before, just to encounter it again and again in the coming days? Like a song, we find ourselves replaying the melody. From *In Concert*, Jim Kacian's:

a couple notes
of the nocturne hummed
next night²

shows us attention has been drawn to an idea or image and our minds are like fishing nets, opened and spread to collect and haul-in additions to our thoughts and to our souls. After reading John Stevenson's:

at the urinal
I remember my plants³

it's virtually impossible for me to pass by a men's washroom without contemplating my greenery.

However, not all haiku reflect things to which we may entirely, or instantly, connect. In Nicholas Virgilio's:

Viet Nam monument
darkened by the autumn rain:
my dead brother's name⁴

we come face to face with the pain of war, perhaps an experience not all of us have had to deal with first hand. But later, when given the chance to view the monument, to see loved ones tracing names onto thin paper, to witness tributes placed at the base of the Traveling Memorial, the poem steam-rolls into our consciousness and beats in our hearts.

At no time are we left totally unaffected by words shared. Even though we feel they may dodge us, deep inside they assemble, standing in line like soldiers at parade rest, milling, never far, reserved for the present, until we recall the moment they were given. Jim Kacian's:

just now
as my life turns crazy
forsythia⁵

shows us life's cycles, the effects of the seasons, and while it may be summer, we store his eloquent statement, retrieving it when needed; reciting it to remember or repeating it in conversations to sooth and remind.

Memorable phrases stay with us forever. With Elizabeth St Jacques':

first snow
the neglected yard
now perfect⁶

we conjure the beauty of her gift and, as winter sets in, may even quote it to perfect strangers as they peer at our forgotten leaves.

Then, at our end (and that time will come), when words fail us, we might summon up Christopher Herold's:

no one but me in the morgue
and that fart wasn't mine⁷

and hopefully, the residual effects of poetry shared will stir us until we absorb our last breath.

Alice Frampton

1. *Frogpond* xxiii:2
2. *In Concert* (Saki Press, Normal IL, 1999).
3. *Snow on the Water* (Red Moon Press, Winchester Va, 1999).
4. *The Haiku Anthology* Third Edition (W. W. Norton Co., NY, 1999).
5. *The Heron's Nest*, February 2001.
6. *Snow on the water* (*ibid.*).
7. from "Dandelion Globes" in *Frogpond* xxiii:2.

Two Favorite Haiku

morning tide—
the surf-watcher's shadow
starts to float¹

David Cobb

We need not so much to be informed as to be reminded. Through self-absorption we miss countless opportunities for the blessing of genuine haiku moments. We gaze absently out to sea, while it is our shadow which makes virtual contact with the water. We walk in the middle of the road, while our shadow is in touch with nature all along the roadside. Our shadow is a means of extending awareness, reminding us of our oneness with the natural world. In this haiku, Cobb's phrase "starts to float" is positively arresting.

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quiet on the bay,
sailing away from a dog
barking on the shore²

L. A. Davidson

Such immediacy! The reader is *with* this poet, intimately, in that silence that is so often the more profound following a loud noise. I love the sense of *flow* in this haiku as we sail away with her, farther and farther from shore. It is not so much a haiku *moment* that she captures as it is the haiku *spirit*.

H. F. Noyes

1. *A Bowl of Sloes*, Snapshot Press 2001.
2. *The Shape of the Tree*, WPC 1982.

books

&

review

Second Sight

Natsuishi, Ban'ya *A Future Waterfall* Translated by Stephen Henry Gill, Jim Kacian, Ban'ya Natsuishi, Susumu Takiguchi. (Red Moon Press, PO Box 2461, Winchester, VA 22604, 1999.) ISBN 1-893959-04-X. 64 pp., \$12.00 from the publisher.

We are fortunate to receive in English translation some of the best haiku composed by Ban'ya Natsuishi, a poet mentioned as "one of the most outstanding contemporary haiku poets breaking new ground in haiku form and expression in Japan" (*Japanese Haiku 2001*, Modern Haiku Association). Ban'ya has not only integrated both classical and modern haiku perspectives, but has produced truly insightful, pioneering haiku. These are poems that reawaken us to the power of the image and provide fresh approaches to haiku expression. Tohta Kaneko writes in his foreword to *A Future Waterfall*:

The one hundred haiku in this anthology were selected from Natsuishi's eight volumes already in print. Some of them are delicate, others are bold and vast as the universe. Some are melancholic, still others are cheerful and enjoyable. Some are sympathetic with fellow human beings, yet others are bitterly cynical about them. These . . . with their rich variety have all come through the very heart and center of Natsuishi as a human being.

The book contains two short essays, "The International Nature of Contemporary Haiku", and "Composing Haiku in a Foreign Country", which will introduce the reader to Ban'ya's efforts to overhaul the *kigo* concept in haiku and promote international haiku expression. The translations, by a group of notable haiku poets, possess a taut muscularity, poetic power, and elegant concision, and are faithful to the sense of the originals. Clearly, the work of the translators was to retain as much as possible of what Philip Rowland has termed the

"poetmeat" of each of the works. It is a unique opportunity to co-translate with a living Japanese *haijin* also acquainted with English. I have worked with the poet, and find Ban'ya to be sensitive to the poetic possibilities of the English haiku; he has made the selections in this book and approved the translations.

Ban'ya often presents unique, almost paradoxical combinations of metaphysical insight and concrete sensation. An example is the signature haiku below (now to be found in a number of Japanese anthologies and textbooks). In a commentary elsewhere, Ban'ya urges readers not to consider the haiku from a *kigo* perspective, though the poem contains traditional season words. While this is not the place to argue the 'keyword' approach, it surely is spurious to analyze Ban'ya's haiku in terms of *kigo* (as was recently done in a review in *Modern Haiku* XXXII:1), when the poet has explicitly detailed his 'keyword' method in several essays and extensively in his *Keyword Dictionary* [*ki-wa-do jiten*, 1990]. In the following, the keyword "future" allows the poet to create a locus larger than 'season':

Mirai yori taki o fukiwaru kaze kitaru

From the future
a wind arrives
that blows the waterfall apart

What kind of wind is it? It is ordinary wind. Ordinary water. And yet? . . . Reading this haiku, I was reminded of a scene witnessed at Bridal Veil Falls, in Yosemite—nicknamed 'the falls to nowhere.' The falls continuously divide, first into veil-like sprays, then droplets, and far above the ground the falls seem to disappear. A droplet of water at the top will meet its future wind, to be annihilated. In a zone of invisible transition, space becomes time. Yet in that

section of the waterfall cascading over the rock at the summit and out into space this future never quite arrives. The future annihilates the identity of the instant, yet the standing wave of presence affirms it.

There is also a metaphoric resonance with consciousness: the moment of awareness launches out into space, and the future arrives, blowing the waterfall (identity) apart. This is a haiku that reknits time and awareness—present and future are neither entirely juxtaposed, nor merged. Hovering on the lip of this resonance is a vibrant image—a pure source of vital existence.

Ban'ya's haiku often draw upon mythological or shamanic realities, often through literary association:

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Ko no mara o suu haha ya koko kuwa no umi

A mother sucks
her baby's cock
amid a sea of mulberry leaves

Of the selections in *A Future Waterfall*, this haiku is most in need of commentary. On first impression, the subject of incest shocks, while 'sea of mulberry leaves' is a bit mysterious. Ban'ya draws on several literary references in the haiku, all of them stemming from ancient times. The haiku has parodistic elements, similar to those parodistic haiku of Buson (and others), based upon classical Chinese literature. The haiku originally appeared in a collection of 50, which won the prestigious yearly *usho* prize (1981) given by the haiku journal, *Haiku Research* [*haiku kenkyu*]. 'Mulberry' [*kuwa*] was one of the names for ancient Japan used in China [as: *fukuwa*], so mulberry symbolizes Japan. The mulberry leaf is also the sole food of the silkworm; themes of metamorphosis and transformation are implied by the image. *Ko no mara* [baby's penis/cock] is a classical literary reference, indicating Gendai (modern Japanese) haiku lineage;

mara has appeared in Tohta Kaneko's haiku (written in free-meter):

mara furi arau hadaka kaijyou roudou sumu

cock swaying
washing naked, his work
finished on the sea

(trans. Natsuishi and Gilbert)

The classical reference to *ko no mara* is found in the *Nihon Ryoiki* compiled around 822 A.D. by Kyokai. It is the earliest Japanese collection of *setsuwa bungaku*, Buddhist moral tales. What Kyokai did in many cases was to take popular legends from the Japanese oral tradition of strange, 'miraculous,' or seemingly bizarre occurrences in the phenomenal world, and then recast them in Buddhist terms. Ban'ya did not provide a commentary to his 'mulberry' haiku, nor the set of 50. However, the title provided, *Ryoujouki* [a collection of ordinary stories], parodies *Ryoiki*, while at the same time providing an indication of the literary reference. The Buddhist message of karmic retribution is a unifying theme in the *Nihon Ryoiki*. The relevant story, "The Woman who was Raped by a Serpent and Saved by Medical Care", has several parts. Briefly: the daughter of a wealthy family had climbed a mulberry tree to pick some leaves, when a huge serpent in the tree was seen by someone below. The girl panicked and fell to the ground. The serpent then coiled around her and raped her. As she was later being healed/purified, she gave birth to baby serpents, woke up and exclaimed, "It seems to me that I was dreaming, but now I am healed." Three years later, following a similar incident, she announced to her family, "I believe that I was the wife of the serpent in a previous life. I love the serpent—in the next life I wish to be married to the serpent." Two anecdotal stories are next related;

both are told by the Buddha. In the first anecdote the Buddha sees a woman weeping at a grave, and says: "That mother, in a past life, adored the spirit of her only child, a baby son. She did not want to become separated from him. She sucked her baby's penis, wishing that after her death she be reborn as his future wife. Then she died three years later, after performing her same ablution. She was next reborn as the neighbor to her son, and later married him." The Buddha continued with a final anecdote: "There was once a father who had a son he loved and admired, who was an excellent runner. The father exclaimed, 'My son runs as swiftly as a wolf!' The son was later reborn as a wolf." (With appreciation to Prof. Hori, Kumamoto, Gakuen University, for his translations.)

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As the translator Hiroaki Sato has written, "In translating poetry, no one is wrong, except when the literal deciphering is." A recent review of *A Future Waterfall* (again, in *Modern Haiku*, XXXII:1), critiquing the phrase *ko no mara*, argued that "baby" for *ko*, and "cock" for *maru* were incorrect translations. Observing that the mother performed her ritual both with her baby, and three years later with her (then) child, it is significant that the word *ko* in *ko no mara* in English translation, refers to "baby," as opposed to "child," just as is indicated by the *setsuwa* text. It seems that the reviewer, William J. Higginson, had found the standard dictionary definitions for the Japanese terms, but was unaware of the literary reference providing the *raison* of the haiku, and was likewise unaware that *maru*, when used to refer to the male organ, has no negative cultural connotation. (It was suggested that *maru* be translated as "devil stem"!)

We confront several possible interpretations. The *setsuwa* stories were composed at a time in which a pre-existing female-centered shamanic culture had been displaced by Confucian and Buddhist precepts that incorporated and "rewrote" the previous culture

values, maintaining women's inferiority and reinforcing a shift toward patriarchal structure. There are a number of images of union in the stories that involve women, through these roles sometimes appear shocking or perverse. Beneath the overlay of the main Buddhist parable of the serpent tale, there is the outline of a woman shaman—a shaman in union with her serpent-ally. A similar theme is discerned in the Izanagi and Izanami origin myth presented in the *Kojiki* (712 A.D.), where “a shift from matriarchal to patriarchal institutions may have found expression in the story” (*Cambridge History of Japan*, Vol.1. e.g., Izanami gave birth to a disfigured baby because she spoke first at the marriage ceremony). Japanese women from pre-historic times have had an unusually prominent role in dealing with the supernatural. Shinto's principal female deity Amaterasu probably evolved from the concept of a shamaness mediating between humanity and supernatural beings. A case in point is the legendary 3rd century Shaman-Queen Himiko (considered the first ruler of Japan by some scholars), who enjoyed a great following due to her mastery of *kidou* “the way of the demons”. From shaman-queens to inferiors in authoritarian, male-dominant social orders—the *setsuwa* stories reveal traces of an epic power struggle.

76 The mother who sucked her baby's penis committed a bizarre act. Notwithstanding, her karma was the fruition of her love-desire: a marriage to her son (and later, weeping at his grave). Should the story be taken literally? It is hard to imagine that the *setsuwa* anecdote of a mother's incest, at the very least, is set in its original cultural context. A devoted father, with seemingly the best of intentions, causes his son to be reborn as a fox (a rebirth in the animal realm is not propitious), via an overtly literal thought-form. These stories (apart from the question of women's demonization) attempt to shed further light on the bond between woman and serpent

through the karmic travails of additional dyadic relationships.

Through its provocative images of metamorphosis on a number of psychological and historical levels, the haiku challenges us to resist the literal, posing the question: can any poetic image be accepted naively? The shocking 'present-tense' image of the haiku subject moves us, through literary association, into ancient allegory and a usurpation. This haiku, at first glance shockingly blunt, acquires a barbed irony as it addresses the roots of belief.

Aozora o suikomi semi no ana wa kiyu

Sucking in the blue sky
a cicada hole
disappears

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As in the above juxtaposition of a disappearing hole with the blue sky, that we will confront the shifting nature of fundamentals is a given in Ban'ya's haiku. Perhaps this is their genius, to find within the essence captured by haiku form and expression new conceptual locations of presence and consciousness. The publisher, Red Moon Press, aware of these qualities in the haiku, has included a book cover/footer design, "Fylfot Flipflop", a design which at first appears static but which shifts into a coruscating array of patterns and forms; a fit complement to the intention of many of Ban'ya's haiku. Likewise, "Futura," a sans-serif typeface popularly used for its clean and futuristic style represents a creative departure.

Throughout the past century, Japanese haiku culture has undergone a kind of reverse-mirror process to that in the West: a national, classical poetic form has been reformed, abandoned, rediscovered, and extended numerous times, as poets brought together their classical tradition with modernity.

Through his journal *Ginyu*, essays and lectures, volumes of haiku, and most recently by co-founding the World Haiku Association, Ban'ya has been reaching out across cultural boundaries. It is clear that such acts are not always met with good will or appreciation, threatening as they are to established norms. But it is most certainly a way forward, and for that we should at least grant him the honor of a close and informed reading.

Richard Gilbert

Short Takes

Fragments, edited by Alison Williams, HUB Editions, Wingland, England, 2001. Available for \$3 from HUB Haiku Series, Longholm, Wingland, East Bank, Sutton Bridge, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE12 9YS, UK.

This is a nicely produced little book, perfect-bound with a glossy cover (in shocking orange) and a single haiku per page. At about 4 x 2.75 inches, it's also the smallest of this set. The editor's introduction explains that the 13 contributors to the book are all members of an on-line group called *ukku*, which is composed entirely of writers from the various parts of the United Kingdom. A little of the diction hints at that, with reference to "boules" and "friesians", but the majority of the poems here are of high quality and universal appeal. Since there are several haiku per writer, the collection is a nice introduction to new voices, or a pleasant way to re-encounter familiar work (credits included).

starry night
fragments of conversation
drift over new snow
john crook

seagulls
flying faster
than the ferry
Gerald England

Pail in Hand, 25 Haiku by Angelee Deodhar, Chandi-garh, India, 2000 (privately printed in honour of the World Haiku Festival). With preface by William Higginson. Available for \$4 from the author.

A simple book, with a cover of interesting textured paper (some kind of flower stems, perhaps?), and an inside of simple laid paper; saddle-stitched, 4.25 x 5 inches. One haiku per page, but placed somewhat oddly, in the upper third of each page. According to the preface, the collection is a selection from five years' work, arranged chronologically, and brings "a new voice and a new continent" into the haiku community. I think that they generally improve over time, as the earlier poems have more overt subjectivity than they might need; there are some good moments captured in places here.

the moving train
blurs the landscape
or is it tears?

his saffron robes
pale before
the nasturtiums

A Dark Afternoon, by Matt Morden, Snapshot Press, Liverpool, England, 2000. Available for \$6 from Snapshot Press, PO Box 132, Crosby, Liverpool, L23 8XS, UK.

Another of the sharp-looking small chapbooks from Snapshot Press, in their standard format of 4 x 6 inches, saddle-stitched, with color photographic cover and author biography; 2-3 haiku/page. This is a strong first collection from an author who has become increasingly visible over the last few years, probably among the British authors best known on this side of the pond. It is full of rich imagery from daily life, and the general level of the poems is strong, although I think that the collection would have been served by narrowing the total number to allow more focus on the best work. But Morden's voice is distinctive and the moments he captures are usually worth savoring.

leaving home
the children's bubbles
in spring wind

new potatoes
fresh from the allotment
in a Tesco's bag

we begin to discuss
the things that really matter—
a bowl of ripe cherries

hillside oaks
down each trunk
a strip of snow

Along the Way, by Garry Gay, Snapshot Press, Liverpool, England, 2000. Available for \$7, see address given above.

This collection of haiku and senryu was a runner-up in the 2000 Snapshots Chapbook Competition, and many of the poems have won individual awards as well. In the same format as Morden's collection, this book has a different tone starting with the cover (a photograph by the author of a jumble of childhood souvenirs such as toy airplanes, slinkies, and a baseball glove), which sets the reader up for the author's visual orientation to the world. The poems here are of a high quality, although they have a more reflective, emotionally-tinged tone than is common in much of American haiku right now. Again, I might have edited a bit more, but every reader will respond to a different subset of the poems.

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Letting go
of the yellow balloon
last day of summer

The weeds
I meant to pull
in full bloom

Hole in the ozone
my bald spot . . .
sunburned

A lone red ant
carrying the weight
of twilight

Budding Sakura, haiku of Yoshiko Yoshino (trans. Jack Stamm), edited and with introduction by Lee Gurga, Deep North Press, Evanston, IL, 2000. Available for \$10 from Deep North Press.

An elegant presentation, perfect bound with a separate cover, on tinted paper with scattered cherry bud/petal motif throughout. One haiku per page: each poem is given in kanji, vertically along the interior margin of the page; romanji, in small type at the bottom of the page; and in translation in italic type in the upper portion of the page. A slightly romanticized overall effect of the layout, petals, and type. The author is a major figure in Japanese haiku, living in Matsuyama (Shiki central), editing a monthly haiku magazine, and taking part in a wide variety of International haiku fora. The poems in this book are selected from a longer book (*Sakura*) published in 1992.

Solid haiku from a writer with a distinctive voice, and clearly one that is female and Japanese. A bit more self-consciousness than is common in North America, but well within the traditional branch of contemporary Japanese work, and with broad general appeal.

cold rain . . .
a night when the talk turns
to someone who's dead

with sunglasses
cutting off the world—
self-reliant me

A. C. Missias

Home is Where the Heart Is

Clausen, Tom *Homework* (Snapshot Press, POBox 132, Crosly, Liverpool, L23 8XS, UK, 2000). 36 pp., 4" x 6", saddlestapled softbound. \$7. Available from the publisher.

In a reading of this volume at the General Meeting of the Haiku Society of America last September, Tom Clausen expressed the importance of family conflict as a source of haiku and related forms. This approach

was due in part, according to Tom, to his reading of the Japanese tanka poet Ishikawa Takuboku most of whose tanka were derived from his daily life rather than linked to the natural world like traditional tanka. Takuboku was noted for the diaries he kept that illuminated his tanka. Tom's volume is a brave little diary of the workings, both joyful and frustrating, of family life. He feels the tug of a wish to escape from such a life intermittently but squarely, and often with ironic humor, faces up to what that life brings him:

it occurs to me	each day being human
to retreat	brings its choices, chores
from this world—	and emotions—
as if another world	hands in the sinkwater and
might exist	the children calling out for more

This graphically accomplished little collection of haiku, senryu, and tanka which was a runner-up in the Snapshots Collection Competition for 1999 highlights the volume's theme with a brilliantly colored drawing on its front cover by Tom's young daughter and a family portrait photograph taken by Tom's wife on its back cover.

The bulk of *Homework* captures those humorous moments that Tom is known for in his senryu. Not unlike a situation comedy like "Malcolm in the Middle," these moments come one after another:

just back from work	while brushing my teeth
back to back	she tells me again:
phone solicitations	"let's move"
done—	New Year's Eve—
the repairman tells me	the lentil soup
any fool can do it	again

And they continue in reflections of mystery (not being able to tell a child why the sky is blue), "ah!"

beauty (looking at the snow from window to window), a child's life (refusing a diaper change with "I did not"), deft metaphor (the family's future to the grain in the wood floor), and stark self-assessment (somehow falling out of love with one's life).

The elusive nature of the displacement of the self within the family construct is handled with tenderness and at times whimsy:

no longer me
it proves a mystery who it is
I've become
walking around this house
with my family there inside

in the empty room
I look around to remember why
I'm here

Yet there is the undeniable consolation of family life that brings peace and solace to the family and that very self:

in the next room
our children peacefully asleep
—we do nothing

that point
in the evening
where both cats are in place
quietly licking themselves
while I read

Bruce Ross

BOOKS RECEIVED

Pesic, Predrag *Listovi Sunchi (Sun Leaves)* (self-published, 2001). 56 pp., 5.25" x 7.75", perfect softbound. No price or availability information provided. *As is so often the case, what are presumably quite competent and even inspiring poems are undone by poorish English translations, leaving us wondering what might have been.*

Kovacevic, Marinko *Predan Putu (Committed to the Road)*, translated by Visjna McMaster. (The Association of Croatian Haiku Poets, 2001). 130 pp., 5.25" x 7.75", perfect softbound. ISBN 953-6837-02-1. \$8 postpaid. Available from the author at 10 Severin na Kupi, 51 329 Severin Na Kupi, Croatia.

The first of a projected series by the national haiku society of Croatia, bilingual (Croatian and English), in a handsome edition, and featuring their best poets. Kovacevic is an appropriate first choice, for decades amongst Croatia's more accomplished and affecting poets working in haiku.

Kamens, Edward *Utamakura, Allusion, and Intertextuality in Traditional Japanese Poetry* (Yale University Press, New Haven CT, 1997). \$27.95 322 pp., 6.25" x 9.5", hardbound. ISBN 0-300-06808-5. Available in book stores and by special order.

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This most interesting volume concerns itself with, among other things, the history and practice of allusion in early Japanese poetry, and it is not a great reach to see how this has carried into haiku praxis, and our current dialogue of "the vertical axis". Scholarly, and recommended.

Chang, Yu & John Stevenson & Hilary Tann plus guest Tom Clausen *Upstate Dim Sum* (Route 9 Haiku Group, PO Box 122, Nassau NY 12123). \$5. 32 pp., 5" x 7.5", saddle-stapled softbound. Available from the publisher; also, subscriptions available for \$8.

An exceptional debut featuring compelling work from some of our best contemporary poets. This is first of a series, and we look forward to more of this attractive format.

Clements, Jonathan (Selector/Translator) *The Moon in the Pines* (Viking Studio, New York, 2000). \$19.95. 93 pp., 6.75" x 8.25", hardbound. ISBN 0-670-89229-7. Available in bookstores or by special order.

A beautiful contribution to the ongoing myth of Zen in haiku, with high-quality paper, exquisite reproductions of famous paintings (from the Art Institute of Chicago), and new translations of poems we all know.

Gill, Stephen Henry (Editor) *Hailstones* (Hailstone Haiku Circle, Osaka, 2001). \$7. 64 pp., 4" x 5.8", perfect softbound. ISBN 4-9900822-0-6. Order from Michio Sano, 1-55 Kyuhoen, Yao-shi, Osaka 581-0817 Japan. *This first chapbook from a new haiku group is exemplary in design, contains many fine poems, and suggests the melding of Japanese and western sensibilities has a greater likelihood of success than might be imagined.*

Biliarska, Ginka *Day of the Butterfly* (Ab, Sofia 2001). No Price. 80 pp., 4.25" x 8.5", perfect softbound. ISBN 954-737-160-6. Available from the author at Dianabad, V. Kalchev, bl. 58, ap. 11, v.6, Sofia 1172, Bulgaria. *An attractive bilingual edition of haiku with one eye on the Japanese tradition (and a dedication to "the Japanese poetesses") and the other on contemporary Balkan practice.*

Wakan, Naomi Beth *The Haiku Bag* (Lightsmith Publishing, Box 376, Qualicum Beach, BC, V9K 1S9 Canada). 120 pp., 4.25" x 5.5", perfect softbound. ISBN 1-894092-12-0. \$10.95. Available from the publisher. *A how-to-write haiku volume, with a nice personal touch, and including 100 poems by the author.*

Colón, Carlos & Raffael de Gruttola *Circling Bats: A Concrete Renga* (Tragg Publications, Shreveport LA 2001). No ISBN. 8 pp., 8.5" x 11", saddle-stapled softbound. \$6 from Carlos Colón, 185 Lynn Avenue, Shreveport LA 71105-3523.

A one-of-a-kind production, featuring the imaginative linkings of these graphically-inclined poets. With tips of the hats to others.

Louvière, Matthew *The Marsh, and Other Haiku and Senryu* (Modern Haiku Press, Box 1752, Madison, WI, 53701, 2001). 76 pp., 5.5" x 8.5", perfect softbound. \$8 from the publisher.

The long-awaited second volume from one of our most sensitive and committed poets, in a simple and dignified edition which enhances one's appreciation of his fine work.

Spiess, Robert *some sticks and pebbles* (Modern Haiku Press, Box 1752, Madison, WI, 53701, 2001). 64 pp., 5.5" x 8.5", perfect softbound. \$8 from the publisher. *The tenth volume from the erstwhile and estimable editor of Modern Haiku, this volume includes haiku and other short poems and forms clearly inspired by haiku, in a similar production (one might say "house style") to the above volume. Recommended.*

Baker, Ed *Full Moon* (tel-let, 325 W. Tyler Apt. B, Charleston IL 61920, 2001). 12 pp., 8.5" x 11", stapled. No ISBN. No price given. Enquire with the publisher. *An act of obsession matters to us to the degree that the poet is able to make us share it. This quirky opus, more than 150 "full moon" poems, has enough good moments to draw us in.*

old pajamas *Biting the Buddha* (Blue Cottage Press, 17 Sweetfern Lane, Harwich MA 02645, 2000). ISBN 0-9702985-0-2. 64 pp., 5.5" x 8.5", perfect softbound. No price given. Enquire with the publisher.

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A simpler volume than this—white pages, white cover, black type throughout, and straightforward poems—is not possible. An old-fashioned (in the best sense) kind of book.

Bukva, Borivoj *Pas Koji ie Mislio da Sam Zec (The Dog who Thought I was a Rabbit)* (self-published, 2001). ISBN 953-6909-01-4. 40 pp., 4" x 6.25", perfect softbound. No price given. Enquire with the author at Adamiceva 13, 51000 Rijeka, Hrvatska.

A bilingual (Croatian/English) edition of the recent work of this prolific artist/engineer, tending towards the senryu. The volume would benefit from better English editing.

Harazaki, Rockan *Yellow Rock Singer* (Hokkaido University Printing, Sapporo 2001). 130 pp., 5.8" x 8.25", perfect softbound. \$15 from the poet at Planning Station Sapporo, south 4, West 26-2-1-106, Chuouku, Sapporo 064 Japan.

A trilingual (Japanese/French/English) labor of love, collecting the poet's work for the past 2 years attempting "to punctuate one moment of [my] imagination."

Mayuzumi, Madoka *Love in Kyoto* (PHP Interface, Kyoto 2001). ISBN 4-569-61649-6. 120 pp., 4.5" x 7.75", perfect-bound with dustjacket and slipband. \$16 from the publisher at <<http://www.php.co.jp>>

A beautiful bilingual volume of what must be considered popular haiku in Japan today, with accessible translations, attractive design and excellent production values.

Zivkovic, Verica *The Undressed Sky* (Beofeniks, Belgrade 2001). 72 pp., 5" x 8", perfect softbound. \$10 from the poet at 26232 Starcevo, Letnja 17/A, Serbia, Yugoslavia.

Yet another multilanguage individual collection, for the most part Serbian/English with the occasional Spanish and one Japanese translation. The poems are in the narrative and lyrical tradition of Balkan haiku, and affecting.

Baatz, Ronald *Mt. Tremper Haiku* (Flypaper Press, New York 2000). Illustrated by Irwin Touster. 64 pp., 7" x 7", perfect softbound. \$12, available from Red Moon Press, PO Box 2461, Winchester VA 22604-1661. *Clean and simple, this attractive volume contains "traditional" (that is, 5-7-5) haiku and whimsical illustrations in a charming collaborative effort, and reminds me of the work of the Los Aptos group in the 1960s.*

DuPont, Lonnie Hull *The Haiku Box* (Tuttle, Boston 2001). ISBN 1-58290-030-2. \$24.95. In bookstores.

A simple idea, simply realized: a stepping-off point for those who would like to write haiku but don't know how to begin. Not for advanced players, but aside from its rather hefty price, useful and not half bad.

INSA

INews

The Nicholas Virgilio Memorial Haiku Competition 2001

The Nicholas A. Virgilio Memorial Haiku Competition is for High School Students. It was founded by the Sacred Heart Church in Camden, New Jersey, and is sponsored by the Nick Virgilio Haiku Association in memory of Nicholas A. Virgilio, a charter member of the Haiku Society of America, who died in 1989.

First Prize

autumn wind
rattles the glass—
a child's breath

Travis Moore, 13-G/8
School of the Arts
Rochester, NY 14607

This wonderful haiku takes us to the window, beside the child, looking out at the autumn wind. We feel the chill of autumn and the force of the wind as it rattles against the glass. The focus on the breath, suggests the child is having trouble breathing, that each breath rattles, perhaps with a cold or congestion. Maybe the child is home from school for another reason and the breath is just a sigh that he or she cannot go outside to play in the autumn storm. Either way, we feel the chill of autumn and connect with this child looking out the window. This haiku conveys a sense of being alone, cooped up in the house, remembering sunnier days that will not return until after the coming winter had ended and the child has recovered a more ordinary breath.

Second Prize

walking
the pumpkin patch—
children's faces aglow

Brooke Erschen, 18-G12
Walhert High School
Dubuque, Iowa 52001

Another autumn haiku, but this time with the warm glow of a sunny day in the pumpkin patch. The children in this haiku are excited as they run from pumpkin to pumpkin, imagining the jack-o-lanterns they will carve. It is so hard to find the perfect pumpkin, so they must walk the entire pumpkin patch. And the sun is shining on their faces and on all of the potential faces of the pumpkins—such a glorious celebration of the autumn afternoon full of the warm oranges of the pumpkins and the ruddy cheeks of the children.

Third Prize

from the tanning salon
to her car
January chill

Deborah Meyer, 18-G/12
Walhert High School
Dubuque, Iowa 52001

Our third selection also focuses on someone walking outside, this time from the tanning salon to her car. Of course, the point of having a tan is to let others see it, so we imagine her long bronzed legs or some skin being exposed to the cold air as she scurries to her car. Despite her efforts to resist the seasonal changes in her appearance, she must live in a world of changing seasons. The reality of the January chill intrudes on her desire to perpetuate an endless summer look. We feel the goose bumps of the cold air as she hurries to her car. Even though the young woman is resisting nature, the January chill forces her to accept its power in her life.

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Fourth Prize

strep throat
she kisses him
anyway

Heidi Streit, 17-G/12
Walhert High School
Dubuque, Iowa 52001

Another winter haiku, but this time indoors with a sick child or lover. We like the different ways this haiku can be read. Is it a mother caring for her sick child, who bends over the sick bed and kisses him even though he is sick with a fever? Or, is it a young lover so in love with her boyfriend that she doesn't care if he is sick. Or is it that she is sick? She kisses him anyway, wanting to share everything, even strep throat with her lover. However you read this haiku, we feel the hot skin of the person with strep throat. And we admire the love and dedication shown in that kiss.

Fifth Prize

after the dentist appointment	Katherine Welter, 17
sister returns	Walhert High School
all smiles	Dubuque, Iowa 52001

Our fifth selection also emphasizes relationships. Why is the sister smiling so much now? Did she used to have braces? Has she got a new tooth? A new crown? Has she had her teeth cleaned? Has she quit smoking and the dentist praised her tartar-free teeth? No cavities? For whatever reason, the sister is now proud of her self and happy with others. She can't help but smile to everyone she meets. She returns all smiles with her own smile. She has smiles for others even before they ask for one by smiling at her. Truly this has been a great dentist appointment, and the sister has been transformed into a smiler. Maybe the brother should go to the dentist and get some smiles too!

Sixth Prize

new beau	Kali Smith, 16-G/11
fingering the tattoo	Walhert High School
with her name	Dubuque, Iowa 52001

The final selection is another haiku of romance entanglements. How exciting to have a new beau! It's so fun to get to know each other, to learn all about each other, to share everything with the new lover. This haiku has the intimacy of someone tracing the lines and letters of the tattoo with their finger. The interesting question left up to the reader's imagination is WHOSE name is on the tattoo. Is this a new tattoo, still tender and sore from having the new lover's name injected into his skin? Or is this an old tattoo with the name of a mysterious former lover? Hey, who is this person whose name is on the tattoo? Why is *her* name branded onto you? Such a wonderful haiku celebrating the possibilities of a new relationship with all its complications from the past.

*Randy & Shirley Brooks, Judges
Decatur, IL*



errata from XXIV:2

92

summer noon
lunch looks cooler
with the kitchen light off

Eric Rutter

breaking the silence
of the drought
acorn rain

Kristen Deming

In the rengay "Nature of the Game", the word "flown" was mistakenly printed as "flow".

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THE HAIKU SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Treasurer's Report (1st Quarter—January 1-March 31, 2001)

Income

Balance	13,931.78
Membership Dues	7,416.00
Contributions	1,738.00
Museum of Haiku Literature	300.00
From Here Press	75.00
Contest Fees	30.00
<i>Frogpond</i> Samples	371.00
Educational Packets	770.00

Total Income **24,631.78**

Expenses

HSA General Account	62.50
Postage/Tel:	0.00
Copy/Printing	58.68
Supplies	200.00
Awards	75.00
HSA Website	686.99
Education Packets	88.00
Quarterly Meeting Expenses	
Newsletter Account	
Printing	1,965.52
Postage	661.76
Frogpond Account	
Printing	4,460.00
Postage	1,094.28
<i>Frogpond</i> Payments	200.00

Total Expenses **9,555.43**

Balance **\$15,076.35**

Respectfully submitted
Raffael DeGruttola, Treasurer

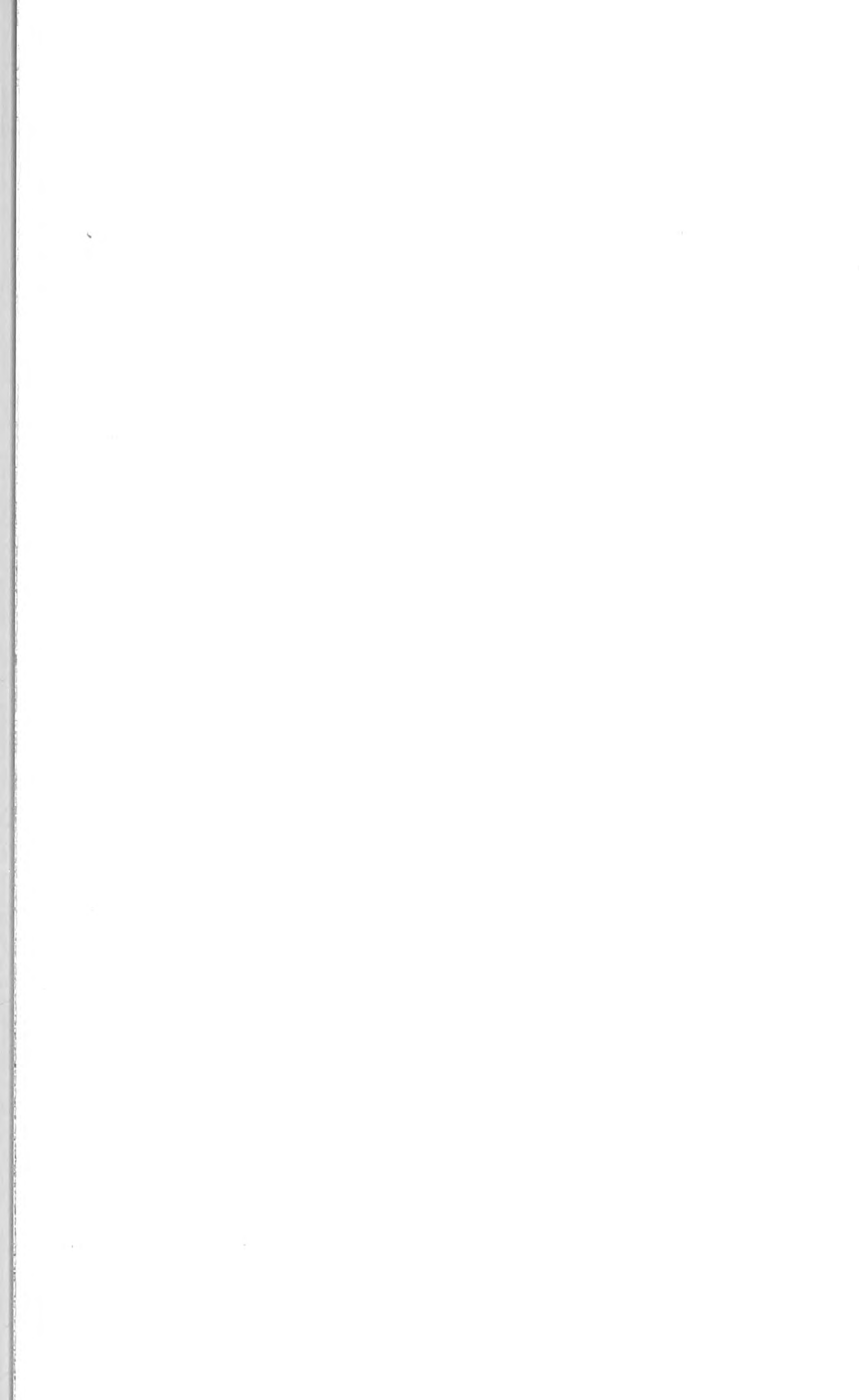


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