

FROGPOND XXVI: I



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HAIKU SOCIETY OF AMERICA  
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## President's Message

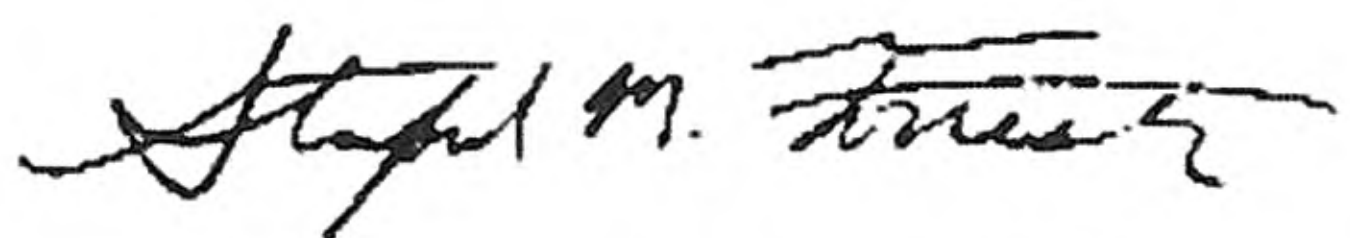
Dear HSA Members and Friends:

It is with great pleasure to welcome you into this new year and with that, another issue of *Frogpond*! I am very excited because 2003 promises to be an important year for us all. Never before have we seen so many contests, web sites, discussion groups, journals, and conferences dedicated to haiku. This is a great sign. In the spring, to take only one example, the long awaited book of Jack Kerouac's collected haiku will be published. This will no doubt will create a huge amount of interest inside and outside the haiku.

With so many new people becoming interested in haiku every day, I ask that each of us be prepared to serve haiku in two ways, as both haiku diplomat and educator. Only in this way can we further the knowledge of the form we love so dearly. Welcome the new poet. S/he will also have something to offer us. The more voices the better. There is plenty of room in pond. I just can't promise what the temperature will be like this time of year.

I leave you now to enjoy this issue of *Frogpond* and wish you a great year of reading and writing haiku.

Best wishes,



Stanford M. Forrester  
*President*

# 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.**

disappearing as fast  
as they land  
spring snowflakes  
*Sylvia Forges-Ryan*

The mountain lily  
shines underfoot in the snow.  
One's life is this close.  
*Mark Hamilton*

5

after a haircut—  
light-headed  
with spring wind  
*Tom Tico*

Between furrows  
in the tulip fields,  
ribbons of frost  
*William Scott Galasso*

spring shower  
yellow slickers  
in a rowboat  
*Allen McGill*

just knowing  
the day belongs to me  
the stream

*Emily Romano*

wind over grass  
a cyclist spins his wheel  
to set the chain

*kirsty karkow*

sun and water  
the way among boulders  
with two shadows

*Elizabeth Hazen*

6

spring breeze  
the swallow draws a curve  
to its nest

*Saori Kitano*

by the river  
committing new haiku  
to memory

*Maureen Gorman*



beyond the picket fence  
the great expanse  
of the sea

*Tom Tico*

the wind lifts  
a paper cup and a kite  
and a kite

*Elizabeth Petty Bentley*

7

expanse of shoreline—a dog dragging his leash

*Michelle Tennison*

hands  
of the kite master  
flying

*Terry Ann Carter*

high tide  
against the seawall  
night breaking

*Caroline Gourlay*

night journey—  
entering town  
I lose the stars

*Hilary Tann*

museum courtyard  
an anole darkens  
on a wrought iron knee

*Peggy Willis Lyles*

haiku gathering—  
the parallel grooves  
in the raked garden

*Pamela Miller Ness*

8

beside a reflecting pool's overflow the conversation

*Judson Evans*

our turn  
to stand here—  
falls overlook

*Tom Clausen*

First day of summer  
the cows take their time  
crossing the road

*Carol Purington*

as rich  
as the loam they sift  
brown thrashers

*Joann Klontz*

9

fierce sun  
a rattlesnake slides  
along the fairway

*Timothy Hawkes*

home improvement:  
a brown patch of lawn  
after the dumpster

*Scott Mason*

storm cloud  
single drops  
of desert rain

*Marlene Egger*

curl  
of the corn worm  
lingering heat

*Burnell Lippy*

heat lightning  
a Mennonite woman  
takes in her wash

*Kay Grimnes*

her hand covered in orange pulp she slips into her accent

*chris gordon*

10

my son spits seeds  
I hear my father say melon  
in Armenian

*Michael Ketchek*

gold summer grasses  
my daughter sings  
a make-believe language

*Lori Laliberte-Carey*

heat lightning  
a thousand words  
locked inside me

*Gary Steinberg*

sleepless night  
the motionless stars  
through the skylight

*Bruce Ross*

11

the summer moon  
a black cat's white paws  
crossing the lawn

*Lorri Lambert-Smith*

reaching a dead end,  
fireflies seen  
through gaps in a fence

*Richard von Sturmer*

the solace  
of crickets at night—  
no way to say thanks

*Carmen Sterba*

# The Conscious Eye

Dee Evetts

When at the end of my previous article I proposed the topic of parent/child relationships, I had some hopes that readers would find this interesting—but had no idea just how large the response would be. I have received over 150 poems as submissions so far, while looking at some 700 more from other sources.

I have not made a rigorous analysis of all this material, but can state with confidence that the two largest groups consist of poets writing (lovingly, wryly, wistfully) about their growing children, and poets writing (fondly, sadly, elegiacally) about their aging or deceased parents. There are a smaller number of poems coming from other angles—such as the role a parent played in the poet's childhood.

It seems obvious to start with poems that have children as their subject. As always, I was on the lookout for work that goes beyond the commonplace. To be honest, one poem about a child's lovableness or charm is very much like another. To be truly interesting, to be worthwhile not only reading, but lingering over and going back to, the poem needs—as a pearl oyster needs a grain of irritant—some portion of the complexity of relationships, the ambivalence of feelings, the paradox of gain and loss.

Most of the examples below have the teenage years as their setting—no surprise here, since that is when the push-pull of individuation usually becomes insistent. Yet Annie Bachini has astutely caught a very early moment of self-assertion:

after dad  
tidies her scarf  
the toddler fixes it herself<sup>1</sup>



through you but not from you . . . You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth.” He concludes by speaking of “the arrow that flies . . . the bow that is stable.”

In my opinion, Karen Sohne has written the quintessential haiku about loving and letting go:

fifteenth birthday  
my son’s eyes no longer  
exactly blue<sup>5</sup>

I have discussed this sublime expression at length elsewhere, so I will leave it at that.

Graduation ceremonies, for so many parents, prove a watershed in this transition from protector to whatever is possible: friend, well-wisher, port in a storm. I sense all of this and much more in Lee Gurga’s deservedly well-known

graduation day—  
my son & I side by side  
knotting our ties<sup>6</sup>

While this defies exegesis (is there a higher tribute?) I have often wondered about that ampersand. Recently I tried typing out the poem with the second line a more conventional “my son and I side by side”. A hint of the sententious is detectable, and I would guess this is what the poet sought to remedy.

In a much simpler vein, this poem by Ross Kremer conveys a good-humored acceptance of the new order:

14

Graduation over  
my daughter hugs her boy friend  
first<sup>7</sup>

I like the way the last line creates a small shock of surprise, akin to that which the parent(s) must have felt.

Finally in this group, there is Carolyn Hall’s finely measured

first night home from college  
click of the latch  
on her bedroom door<sup>8</sup>



It may be that the daughter of this house was formerly in the habit of leaving her door ajar at night. Even excluding that, the small sound of the latch speaks worlds about what continues and what must change. She is home again—and yet not.

In one way or another, all of these poems are saying the same thing: if love aspires to be more than self-serving, it has no choice but to grant autonomy to the beloved.

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1. *Presence* 4
2. *A New Resonance* 1 (Red Moon Press, 1999)
3. *School's Out* (Press Here, 1999)
4. *Woodnotes* 21
5. *Absence of Cows* (Spring Street Haiku Group, 1998)
6. *Woodnotes* 30
7. *Frogpond* XIV:2
8. *A New Resonance* 2 (Red Moon Press, 2001)

*(Submissions for this column may be sent to Dee Evetts, 131 Roszel Road, Winchester, VA 22601. Please indicate whether the work has been previously published, supplying details.)*

birdless dawn—  
the hiss of raindrops  
on campfire stones

*Robert Gilliland*

one by one  
the sound of zippers  
from every tent

*Marc Thompson*

making way  
for others—  
autumn trail

*George Dorsty*

16

two cranes—  
the whole  
autumn sky

*Robert Mainone*

switchback trail  
my hand slides round  
the polished tree

*Dee Evetts*

the roughened lake—  
a goose  
departs

*Brian Darnell*

autumn canyon  
a hawk shadow surges  
down the waterfall

*Elizabeth Howard*

17

the space between  
autumn fog and the river  
a heron calls

*Le Wild*

dwindling light  
ducks on the pond  
coast to a stop

*w. f. owen*

the full moon  
fills Lake Superior  
first chill

*Marc Thompson*

alone now—  
the slump  
of the garden gate

*Merrill Ann Gonzales*

swallowtail . . .  
weeds in bloom  
about St. Francis

*Robert Gilliland*

the red-cheeked old woman  
cutting her poppies  
hot August sun

*Anne LB Davidson*

18

more water on top—  
the sliced carrots  
begin to float

*Gary Hotham*

waiting for the timer to go off i let the moth walk on my arm

*chris gordon*

Indian summer  
dust on the plains  
rising up

*William Cullen Jr.*

school again  
kids kick apples  
along the alley

*Robert Gibson*

19

sounds of laughter  
from the school bus—  
autumn deepens

*Kathy Lippard Cobb*

Xerox center  
60 copies of lecture notes  
warm my hand

*Yu Chang*

rainy day . . .  
clicking the lamp switch  
three times

*Connie Donleycott*

the crossword done . . .  
a white onion husk  
skitters down the street

*George Swede*

fall spreads  
through the old oak  
hospice garden

*Vanessa Proctor*

dim light  
the night nurse  
describes the rain

*Joann Klontz*

20

rainy season dampness  
increasing the volume  
of my hair

*Rie Matsuba*

flooded highway  
the silence of leaves  
drifting by

*William Cullen Jr.*

October commute—  
leaf debris covers  
the center line

*Hilary Tann*

first frost  
the hula hoop leaving  
a circle

*Carl-John X. Veraja*

21

Halloween  
a spider clings  
to the night light

*Jessica Stampfli*

autumn mist oak leaves left to rust

*Marlene Mountain*

withered grass  
a baseball  
coming apart

*Michael Fessler*

Veterans Day  
how the ocean breaks  
in the mist

*Bruce Ross*

Antietam—  
facing into  
the autumn wind

*Carolyn Hall*

one suitcase  
darkens the next  
autumn journey

*Burnell Lippy*

22

our reminiscing . . .  
the late-night clocks  
turned back an hour

*Christopher Patchel*

I awaken  
saying “mama”—  
autumn wind

*Peggy Willis Lyles*



north wind  
this valley  
of scattered lights

*Giselle Maya*

a ring of ice  
around the pond  
crescent moon

*Jack Barry*

23

out of the gray sky  
just a few drifting snowflakes  
and it's all over

*Rengé/David Priebe*

far enough  
from Christmas lights  
the pole star

*D. Claire Gallagher*

old stationery—  
his name bleeds through  
the white-out

*Merrill Ann Gonzales*

a lot of it  
falls in the river,  
first snow

*Michael McClintock*

New snow.  
Following the first tracks  
of wild animals.

*Tomislav Z. Vujcic*

romp in the woods  
the dog shakes off  
my petting

*Makiko*

24

the dog's breath  
visible  
around the ball

*Michael Blaine*

patches of snow  
above the timber line  
a daytime moon

*Yu Chang*

the sharp angle  
of a red brick building—  
the hard blue sky

*Mark Koerber*

winter light  
in the painting . . .  
where do we come from?

*Randy M. Brooks*

25

also within  
the a-bomb dome  
dense fog

*Yasuhiko Shigemoto*

pause in the sermon  
melting snow  
splatters from the eaves

*Del Doughty*

spring's first wind  
wondering if I gave you  
my best

*Marjorie Buettner*

# senryu

**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.**

Star gazing . . .  
the kids want to know  
can we get a satellite dish

*Patrick Sweeney*

aglets tap the floor  
a hall leading to  
the principal's office

*Michael Kennedy*

27

4<sup>th</sup> of July  
kids kicking a beach ball  
of the globe

*D. Claire Gallagher*

eating standing up:  
a piece of plastic wrap  
clings to the melon

*Charles Trumbull*

Her tiny hand  
gripping my finger?  
I feel safe.

*W. M. Tidmarsh*

patio party  
a fistful  
of cherry pits

*Carolyn Hall*

long grocery line  
the modest excitement  
of my thoughts

*Tom Clausen*

the window washer  
girl-watching  
without turning his head

*Barry George*

28

low sun  
all the wires  
I could call her on

*Gary Steinberg*

Under mistletoe—  
two friends awaken to  
something deeper

*William Scott Galasso*

rest stop bathroom—  
a laugh with a woman  
I'll never see again

*Kathy Lippard Cobb*

sunday afternoon  
mum & dad  
close their door

*Tim Bravenboer*

29

Hong Kong subway  
everybody's talking  
but not to each other

*Jo Salas*

dinner alone  
again a pinch too much  
self-pity

*R. A. Stefanac*

hospice table  
the old men play poker  
for pennies

*Celia Crook*

Talking to himself,  
Cigarette pointing straight down,  
While he takes a leak

*Gregory Mosakewicz*

Umbrian door of the dead  
the pill bug  
passes under

*Patrick Sweeney*

the bruises  
they shut you up  
didn't they?

*Nancy Stewart Smith*

30

open-air market  
I hurry past the row  
of pig heads

*Marian Olson*

early morning pee  
my downstairs neighbor's  
first cigar

*Dee Evetts*



side-show alley—  
the coloured lights  
of your smile

*Ron Moss*

boy and girl paper dolls  
insert tab a  
into slot b

*Michael Ketchek*

31

showing her art  
color comes  
to her cheeks

*w. f. owen*

ice fishing  
the obstetrician  
farthest from the hole

*LeRoy Gorman*

after the colonoscopy  
my rings  
looser

*Cathy Drinkwater Better*

new sign  
on a derelict gas station  
PRAISE THE LORD!

*Cyril Childs*

estate sale  
a bible bookmarked  
near the end

*Ernest J. Berry*

hard sunlight  
the house I used to visit  
is just cornerstones

*Zinovy Vayman*

32

election day  
in fine rain  
snow

*Peter Macrow*

against the wind  
we hold the peace banner—  
our spines straighten

*Ruth Yarrow*

living long enough  
to get gray hair,  
she dyes it

*Dorothy McLaughlin*

heavy thoughts  
I sink deeper  
into the bath

*Stephen Toft*

33

nursing home  
a stranger turns  
my father

*Tom Painting*

waiting room  
a magazine  
makes its rounds

*Dan McCullough*

last rites spoken  
the preacher  
zips up his bible

*John Quinnett*

linked

forms

# Tan Renga

Late autumn  
only the kite skeleton  
left in the tree

*skid marks  
across the parking lot*

Garry Gay  
Michael Dylan Welch

35

\* \* \*

Lost beach ball  
the waves keep tossing it  
back and forth

*an hour to sunset  
the sun faintly orange*

Garry Gay  
Michael Dylan Welch

\* \* \*

our ungreening  
one-line haiku sequence  
april 6 1995

our ungreening of nature my ungreening of haiku

blue bird of sadness

*Marlene Mountain*

## *Imagining Eve*

fig leaves  
in April moonlight—  
imagining Eve

first date . . .  
he helps me see Orion

Himalayan dawn  
through open tent flaps  
a yeti sighting?

close of day—  
in the center of the fairy ring  
bluebells

searching the heavens  
for Heaven

newfound love—  
a rainbow from one pot of gold  
to the other

## *Battle Fields—A Sequence*

Scorching day  
straw hats become  
easy targets

Wood pigeons  
fly out of the brushwood  
into cannon fire

On a Charleston hillside  
dead Zouaves  
in wildflowers

A young soldier  
finds himself alone  
on the battlefield

Amputated limbs  
outside the tent-hospital  
turn blue in the cold

After the battle  
swollen horses  
in the peach orchard

37

## *Make a Visual Display of Yourself*

I ATTENDED A SEMINAR at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Union Square. Holiday shoppers abound as Macy's is brightly wrapped inside electronic wreaths. Shoppers used umbrellas to duel with rain as I, and 650 other lucky people, crammed inside the basement of the Grand Hyatt, two escalators down. We'd come to hear Edward Tufte, an information architect par excellence who teaches "by the book", that is, by all his remarkable books, sharing case studies, visuals, analysis, and scholarship.

He even brought along his personal 430-year-old copy of *Euclid's Geometry* signed by Ben Jonson. An assistant thumbed through pages wearing latex gloves. If only I had been sitting aisle-side so I could've seen the poet's signature. Instead, I listened to Tufte talk about bulleted lists and how PowerPoint presentations corrupt thought by making us substitute strategic for generic thinking by removing narrative from text. Tufte described how low-resolution devices, our small screen world, is causing us to become stupid, removing richness from thought.

Since I spend most of my time in front of one of these devices, what will this make me in the next 10 years? I can't wait to spend time with his gorgeous books and keep the man talking inside my ear to help ward off inevitable idiocy.

Oh, for a heavy ceramic cup of tea.

in the center  
of the steel-and-glass table  
*Euclid's Geometry*

38

*Lenore Weiss*

## *Stomp*

AS A UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATE I had a summer internship at the Juvenile Detention Home in Honolulu. On the first day, I see there is an element of danger. A caseworker has a swollen cheek and black eye from yesterday's escape attempt. My immediate supervisor, Pete, gives me two bits of advice: don't turn your back and keep smiling. I watch



him and he does just that. This man in his fifties has a permanent smile. Not a happy-face-sticker-smile, but a genuine glad-to-be-alive one. The entire staff has that smile and one odd behavior.

In conversations, each of them uses the "foot stomp," a slap of the foot nearest to you. Stomp, laugh. Pete introduces me to the superintendent. This small, articulate man has the loudest foot stomp of all. After three months, I file in my notes the hypothesis: volume of foot stomp increases with status.

end of summer  
on the storeroom floor  
flattened cockroaches

*w. f. owen*

39

## *Fireworks*

JULY 1ST.

Morning paper. With your coffee as usual. Except, you read this out loud: "Girl Drowns at Local Pool." "Which one?", I say. You name the pool where I work.

July 3rd.

Lap lane. Swimming, I search the bottom. She was dead when they pulled her up.

July 4th.

Family hike. We're on the mountain. Panorama and no cars. Our daughter reverts to chasing lizards. Our son stops for the moon. We are apart. We are together. From a ridge, celebrations.

pyrotechnics  
the flashing begins  
without sound

*Laurie Stoelting*

# *Dig dig*

“You have to dig deep, to bury your daddy”  
*Romany Gypsy saying*

## 1. DADDY’S LITTLE

Fathers and daughters. Bounced on his knee. Perched on his shoulders. Best seat in the house. Best dad on the block. Keep the bat straight. Keep your eyes on the ball. Want an ice cream? Want to come with me? Pocket money. Mowing the lawns. Saturday morning polishing shoes.

lunar eclipse—  
a halo of grey hair  
around dad’s head

## 2. TIED IN NOTS

First detention. First boyfriend. First pimples. First bra. First Not with that boy! First Not in those clothes! Not on a school night. Not while I’m here. Not in that tone of voice. Not on your life. Not likely. Not ever. Not under my roof.

school ball—  
dad’s angry voice  
from the car

40

## 3. GROWN

New year. New town. New job. New life. New love. New family. New baby. New choices. New problems. New answers. New grass on his grave.

beachside holiday—  
wiping salt water  
off the photos

*Joanna Preston*

## *The Importance of Gold Fish*

IN OUR EYES AND OUR SLEEP and our answers to everything and the way we ate our food and left our personal odors and debris around the house, like strands or clippings of hair, or a fingernail, or wadded tissue with spit, and seldom coordinated our clothes or speech or opinions when we went out or had people over, preferring different books by different authors about different things, and the feelings we kept to ourselves, harboring them like warts or bleeding punctures, until now, we grew apart and we knew it, had known it for over four years—since the day you lost the gold fish down the toilet and never said you were sorry. You even laughed about it.

“only temporary”—  
about our separation  
we agree to lie

*Michael McClintock*

41

## *The Day After*

SEPTEMBER 12, 2001: The small mental health clinic where I work steams with whispering bodies, a mass of humans lined up breasts to backs seeking an appointment with a stranger who launders fear in a language devoid of words that hint of unanticipated death. The man waiting for me has come because of difficulty distinguishing reality from TV. We meet in a room where no pictures have been nailed—only a fist-shaped indentation relieves the repetition of four walls. He asks about the replayed scenes he spent hours watching yesterday, testing the authenticity of the attacks on the Towers, the burned out wound in the Pentagon . . .

white noise of a fan  
in a bare room  
*no, I say*  
*it wasn't real*

*Linda Jeannette Ward*

## *Seaside Onsen*

A MOUNTAIN HAIJIN has come to the seaside. I am at a hot spring along the coast of the Japan Sea (a twelve hour train ride from my town). The spring is located in the open, right by the beach. A few steps away is the wide, wide expanse of the Japan Sea. I watch the huge sunset as I warm myself in the hot water.

calm sea...  
a boat's wake  
leads to the setting sun

Basho walked along this beach on his *Narrow Road of Oku* and wrote the following haiku:

the rough sea—  
flowing toward Sado Isle  
the river of Heaven

Sado Island is too far to see from where I am. And I do not stay outside to observe the river of Heaven, the Milky Way. I have a party to attend and, having been in the hot spring too long, I am more attracted to cold beer and sake.

a treat for travelers,  
milk for Basho  
and sake for me

*Kuniharu Shimizu*

42

## *At Guilin*

SUNRISE OVER THE LI RIVER. Limestone hills lift straight up from the water. Terraces and dwellings glint in the mountains above Guilin.

From a dirt road we descend rocky steps to the river. The scent of wood fires and the slow smokeless burning of refuse greets us. Vendors line the road to the river selling souvenirs, live animals, herbal remedies and aphrodisiacs.

chickens squawk  
a faint odour of shit  
hangs in the air

The Li flows over smooth pebbles down to the sea. It is one of the most important waterways in the region. A fleet of tourist boats shadow the quay, sunshine flares on the unusual limestone formations, then rises above the hills.

It is Sunday on the river. Fishermen tie their cormorant's throats to prevent them swallowing the fish before letting them dive, women wash their family's clothes along the banks, and naked children swim in the brown water. Water buffalo wait to cross the river.

Why do these sights cause us pain? It is the pain of comparing the simple life of these peasants with our own luxuries at home. These images—flashed with the sun on the river—will follow us.

After a day spent on the river boat we return to Guilin. The moon is almost full and old men beat drums and blow bugles to scare away the demons.

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across the river  
a match flares and dims  
sunset

*Patricia Prime*

### ***The Face on the Floor***

THE ONLY TIME I SAW HER FACE in twenty years as her neighbor was on that one day in October when she failed to retrieve the morning newspaper from her doorstep and I with two other neighbors opened her front door—it wasn't locked—after knocking and ringing her doorbell, getting no response, and found her dead but still warm in a simple flower print house dress on her living room floor with her blue eyes open and her small, delicate arms and hands flung outward in a gesture of surprise and rapture. I stood gazing at her face the full hour it took for the coroner to arrive and place her on a gurney and unfold a clean sheet over her entire length—covering that face which was one of the most beautiful and perfectly guileless and unforgettable I have ever seen.

heavy drapes,  
a carefully-made bed—  
a life like that

*Michael McClintock*

## *blink*

BILL TELLS THE STORY of his stroke on Super Bowl Sunday. A baseball player, golfer and high school honor student. Much of that taken away as he sat in a recliner during half-time. He is a new advisee of mine at the College. Six years, and only a sophomore. He takes one course at a time. One day at a time, he laughs. Dark glasses. A white cane. He finds the buildings on campus by the colors and shapes of air conditioning units on top. Recently, they repainted our building a different color, throwing off his internal map. He found his way by the different scents of flowers and shrubs bordering the sidewalks. "You turn left at the roses, then right at the mock orange. It's easy."

I saw Bill only a few more times. We chatted about the new plants on campus.

humid stillness  
in the bush  
the frog's blink

*w. f. owen*

## *Mountain Reflections*

THE BUS DRIVES AWAY leaving darkness. I stumble down the rough drive until, turning a corner, lights, greetings. After supper the retreat begins in silence. The days have a pattern: meditate, walk, listen, question, discuss.

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sound of the gong  
lingers early  
morning yawns

By the second afternoon backs begin to ache. Behind the Buddha rain and sunlight cross the mountain; rainbows shimmer in the mist; the farmer tends his sheep. We settle into stillness.

in the silence  
intense irritation flips  
to affection

As the week moves on, assumptions are questioned.

What do we know about time, space, ourselves and the world? Attitudes are shaken, common sense challenged. Feelings of outrage, of wanting to leave. We take comfort in food, walk down to the lake where rams with ripe testicles eye ewes across the fence. In the water mountain reflections shatter in ripples.

Something shifts in my solid world view. Earnestness cracks into laughter.

The trains are disrupted by engineering works so I leave early, return up the drive in grey dawn

clouds  
hide the mountain  
hum of morning chants

*Jo Pacsoo*

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### *bird without wing*

ALL WEEK LONG the bird was obedient to its caged routine; fed promptly at regularly measured intervals, even naps taken perfunctorily with cosmic discipline and good birdism. in this manner the bird did deliver song—an efficient ecstasy. on weekends the bird was allowed to escape its cage. in moments of disturbed flurry—a dollhouse flight

tiny bell  
by the mirror  
rings again

*Donna Fleischer*

### *driftwood*

ITS SAP LEACHED away carrying the endless waters, burns now with a noiseless fire

pleasantly drunk  
fireflies come out  
of the moon

*Jim Kacian*

*essays*



## H. D. & the Haiku Spirit

IN ENGLAND EARLY IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, a group of poets—soon to include several Americans—called for a new precision in poetry, for an “absolutely accurate presentation” of the subject. Led by T. E. Hulme, a young Englishman who had been recently expelled from Cambridge for having been involved in a tavern fight, the group’s discussions on poetic techniques were largely based on the members’ knowledge of various foreign literary forms, including a limited understanding of Japanese haiku. They posited as an ideal the creation of poems with images of an intense and realistic presence. Given the name *Les Imagistes* by Ezra Pound, who joined the group in the spring of 1909, the poets were soon called—in plain English—the Imagists.

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Perhaps among the most representative of the Imagists’ ideals of knife-like-sharpness, concision, and clarity of language, are the early poems of the American poet Hilda Doolittle. They were highly praised by Pound, as well as by another member of the movement, the English poet Richard Aldington. At one time early in their friendship, before they went to England, Doolittle and Pound were romantically involved, but she ended up marrying Aldington.

Louis Untermeyer in the 1950 edition (“The Combined Mid-Century Edition”) of his influential anthology of modern American and British poetry said of H.D., the pseudonym Pound gave her: “She was, in fact, the only true Imagist. Her poems are like Tanagra figurines. Here, at first glance, the effect is chilling—beauty seems held in a frozen gesture. But it is in this very fixation of light, color and emotion that she achieves intensity. What at first seemed static becomes fluent; the arrested moment glows with a quivering tension.”

H.D.’s best Imagist poems embody the spirit of haiku. A haiku poet’s experience of a moment of awareness of, and a sense of oneness with, an aspect, or object of nature may be said to be both caused by, and result in contact with, the haiku spirit. That is: the haiku spirit is the unification of the human spirit and the spirit of nature at that moment. This is the “haiku moment”. The poet then recreates in a haiku the objects of that awareness so the reader may also experience this unity, or oneness, with nature. It is, perhaps,

the same kind of instant Untermeyer refers to in the work of H.D. as “the arrested moment”.

Haiku poets are, of course, not unique in experiencing nature in such a direct and immediate fashion. Nor are they the only writers who have recreated such experiences for their readers. Haiku poets, however, are usually more interested in this aspect of poetry than other writers, because it is the essence of haiku. The barest kind of description—stripped almost to just a naming—but possessing the power of suggestion and employing the most direct, simple, and immediate language, is a haiku poet’s common stock in trade. Other poets and writers often have other things to do. But sometimes, as in the case of the Imagists, they are striving for the kind of sharp delineation of an image sought by the haiku poet. Among these writers we may find some who have the sensibility of a haiku poet. They have the haiku spirit even though they may never have heard of haiku. They might call it being in tune with nature. In their poems they try to recreate those aspects of nature that inspire them. H.D. is, I believe, one of those writers.

In such early poems as “Oread”, “Pear Tree”, “Heat”, and “Sea Iris”, she vividly portrays natural objects in haiku-like moments. In “Hermes of the Ways”, a fairly long lyric, fifty-four lines broken into two sections and eleven stanzas, the first two stanzas about a beach perform a verbal dance for the reader much like that presented by two linked haiku:

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The hard sand breaks,  
and the grains of it  
are clear as wine.

Far off over the leagues of it,  
the wind,  
playing on the wide shore,  
piles little ridges,  
and the great waves  
break over it.

The simile in the first stanza is something a haiku poet might avoid, but the effect is very haiku-like. The second is pure description with overtones. That is it is sharp and vivid while at the same time it is suggestive. Of course, she is a lyric

poet and she has other objectives than just the haiku poet's goal of direct observation. In this poem the later stanzas relate her feelings about the wind and sea to Hermes, the Greek god who was the herald and messenger of the other Gods and who presided over such human activities as commerce, eloquence, cunning, and theft. He also conducted the dead to Hades. These stanzas depart from the haiku-like stance of the first two and become an address to the spirit of Hermes that ends with a figure of speech about the sea that most haiku poets might find distorts our sense of that natural phenomenon: "Hermes, Hermes,/ The great sea foamed,/ gnashed its teeth about me;/ but you have waited,/ where sea-grass tangles with/ shore grass."

Even in her most imagistic poems, H.D. infuses her lines with emotional overtones. For some readers, who may be looking for a haiku moment unalloyed with other poetic virtues, this may lend a distracting subjective element. In H.D.'s case, it usually involves the personifying of nature. Yet, in spite of this, the technique she uses—which is to address aspects of nature directly: "Whirl up, sea" or "O wind, rend open the heat"—may give some readers a sense of immediacy, an opening to the image rather than a blurring of it. At least it does not seem to get in the way to the extent the personification of a more sentimental sort had done in the works of many 19<sup>th</sup>-century poets.

Still, a reader wanting a more direct experience with nature might feel some of the poems would have been better without it. Her descriptions might have been even more crystal clear and sharply defined and the haiku spirit more evident. On the other hand, to achieve this "purity" she would likely have had to sacrifice the emotional exuberance and romantic lyricism she attains to in such a poem as "Sea Iris", where she addresses the flower in the second person all through the poem. The poetic values of a subjective expressionism, combined with the musical elements used to embody it, may take our mind a bit off the flower, centering it on the poet and her feelings, but that is often the intent of a romantic lyric. Still, there is a strong sense of the flower as flower, too. The description is immediate enough to capture the presence of what I've called the haiku spirit. Only in the second stanza of the first part—where she begins "Fortunate one"—does the personification, I feel,

number tend to mar the descriptive intensity. Perhaps because it includes a subjective judgement? In any case, I feel it would still be a complete poem without that stanza—and might be even more striking and evocative. (It would then be a three-stanza poem with no division into two parts.) The original poem follows:

## SEA IRIS

I

Weed, moss-weed,  
root tangled in sand,  
sea-iris, brittle flower,  
one petal like a shell  
is broken,  
and you print a shadow  
like a thin twig.

Fortunate one,  
scented and stinging,  
rigid myrrh-bud,  
camphor-flower,  
sweet and salt—you are wind  
in our nostrils.

II

Do the murex-fishers  
drench you as they pass?  
Do your roots drag up colour  
from the sand?  
Have they slipped gold under you  
rivets of gold?

Band of iris-flowers  
above the waves,  
you are painted blue,  
painted like a fresh prow  
stained among the salt weeds.

Of course, good, vivid description does not belong only to haiku. And I'm not saying this is a failed haiku, or that H.D. should have tried to write a haiku. It is an exceptionally

fine romantic lyric that happens to partake of the haiku spirit, as does all great nature writing that presents us with elements and aspects of nature with vivid immediacy—whether through description, suggestion, metaphor or any other means of inspired language.

In the above poem, the haiku spirit shines through in the broken petal and in the way the poet evokes the blue of the flowers. Though the technique of indirection, asking instead of stating, and the use of figures of speech, such as simile, are not ordinarily the tools of the haiku poet, as used by this poet they give a haiku-like immediacy to the image of the band of iris-flowers, even as we see them change into the prow of a boat. (Murexes, by the way, are mussels that yield a purple dye.)

Another Imagist, Amy Lowell, wrote short poems she called hokku, but they generally tend to have a flaccid droop to them rather than a hard-edged clarity. Sentiment and a cloying Japonisme—using cherry blossoms and other props of Japanese art and literature to give an exotic flavor to her poems—prevent the haiku spirit from entering into her work. Just wanting to write haiku does not give you the haiku spirit, nor does an ignorance of haiku prevent you from having it. Neither Lowell nor H.D. had a real understanding of haiku, because sensitive and accurate translations of, or even knowledgeable commentaries about, Japanese haiku were not available. Yet H.D. possessed both the spirit to relate to nature and the poetic techniques to objectively and simply render it in a way that embodied that spirit—the haiku spirit. Though her short poems were longer than Lowell's hokku experiments, she was able to find and present a more direct communication with nature.

After Pound published the first Imagist anthology, *Des Imagistes*, in 1914—in which he included work by William Carlos Williams—the movement began to lose some of its focus and to include more poets. A more diffuse and varied approach to poetry and the image resulted as Amy Lowell started to exert a strong influence on the movement. Pound went on to Vorticism, calling what Lowell was doing “Amygism”. Lowell brought out the next three anthologies—all called *Some Imagist Poets*—in the years 1915 through 1917. As William Pratt wrote in his small but valuable study and anthology of the movement, *The Imagist Poem* (1963), “[a

of the poems in the final two anthologies] though excellent in themselves, were rather far from the Imagist doctrines of concentration and economy. . . . After 1917, then, Imagism was no longer a movement: it had become a tool, which each poet could adapt to his own use.” He points out that T. S. Eliot called Imagism “the starting point of modern poetry.” In the conclusion of his essay, Pratt writes, “The permanent value of Imagist poetry is no greater, and certainly it is no less, than that of modern poetry in general. If the mature poems of Pound and Eliot, Lawrence and Stevens, Williams and Marianne Moore—not to speak of others—prove valuable beyond the age in which they were written, then Imagist poetry, which is basic to their work, must be valuable, too. ‘Preludes,’ Eliot’s title, seems a proper way of describing all Imagist poems, for they were the prelude to the full orchestration of the modern poem. And it seems safe to say that, should any new metamorphoses of the modern poetic tradition occur, new Imagist poems will be written. For whenever precision and clarity of language combine with natural musical form, new Imagist poems are being created, whatever names may be given them.”

A member of the original group, the Englishman F. S. Flint, published a set of rules for Imagists in an early issue (1913) of *Poetry* (Chicago), the first two of which might easily apply to haiku: “1. Direct treatment of the ‘thing’ whether subjective or objective. 2. To use absolutely no word that does not contribute to the presentation.” In the same issue, Pound wrote, “It is better to present one Image in a lifetime than to produce voluminous works.”

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Many critics thought H.D.’s nature imagery was inspired by Greece and ancient Greek poetry, but the best of her Imagist poems derive from her American roots. Janice S. Robinson, in *H.D.: The Life and Work of an American Poet* (1982), writes, “Later in her life H.D. was to say that the landscapes of her early poetry, including “Hermes of the Ways,” was not Greek as much as it was the remembered seacoast of her childhood. She often told Norman Holmes Pearson that ‘her nature imagery, for example, was never really Greek but came from her childhood reminiscences of Watch Hill and the coasts of Rhode Island and Maine, which she used to visit with friends as a child’” (p. 37).

Born in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania in 1886, Hilda Doolittle grew up with five brothers and step-brothers. She went to Moravian schools and then private schools in Philadelphia. She met Ezra Pound and William Carlos Williams when they were attending the University of Pennsylvania. Right after she met Williams in 1905 she went to Bryn Mawr College in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, for several semesters. That year she began a romantic relationship with Pound that lasted for a few years. In 1911 she went to London with her mother and a young woman Hilda had fallen in love with the year before. When her mother and the young woman returned to the United States Hilda stayed in England where Pound, already in residence, introduced her to other poets and artists. She married Aldington in 1913 and published her first book of poetry in 1916.

H.D.'s bisexuality would lead her to and from male and female lovers for a number of years, but from 1919 on most of her life was spent with a woman, Winifred Ellerman, known as Bryher, whom she had met the year before. Also in 1919, she had given birth to a daughter, her only child, by Aldington. She and Bryher traveled extensively, spending time in places like Paris and London, Greece and the United States, but much of the rest of her life she lived in Switzerland.

A free spirit in life as well as in her poetry—her work was initially considered fresh and experimental—she was also often emotionally troubled. She was one of the first to undergo psychoanalysis, starting in 1919 with Havelock Ellis. She later wrote a book on the subject: *Tribute to Freud* (not published until 1974). It was a memoir of her analysis with Sigmund Freud in 1933-34 and their ensuing friendship. Her work in the 1930s turned to autobiographical novels and longer poems. She turned away from her Imagist past and said she felt restricted by the label. Though these longer literary works have had their admirers in recent years, especially for their feminist aspects, her renouncing the descriptive lyric may have caused the world to lose some smaller but more powerful poems.

*Cor van den Heuvel*

(This essay is from a work in progress entitled *The Haiku Spirit: One With Nature in North America*. "Sea Iris" is from *Collected Poems of H.D.*, published by Boni and Liveright, New York. Copyright, 1925, by Boni and Liveright, Inc.)

# Haiku Metamorphosis: A Workshop

I consider myself an educator rather than a poet, however I have loved and used haiku in my teaching for over 40 years. Since my recent retirement I decided to explore writing haiku more seriously. Over the years I have written about 300 short poems and as I analyze them, some are haiku and some are senryu, but some just musings. Like so many haiku “beginners” I have lacked the confidence to just write and let the chips fall where they may. Only recently have I risked the embarrassment of allowing others to see my efforts.

Last winter, I was in a cold storage room off the basement where I keep my deciduous bonsai, checking on which trees needed water. Over in the corner hanging from one strand of web was a dead spider. I have rarely seen a dead spider in a web. I often see carcasses of various other bugs. My mind flashed on the mortality of even that spider. It gave me the impression of having been hanged or did it commit suicide? The image stayed with me. That evening this haiku came in to my consciousness. I tried to write it using the riddle technique. I am aware of my tendency for the dramatic and admit to enjoying the more theatrical images. So I wrote:

in the corner	or	in the corner
dangling from a strand		dangling by a strand
the spider's corpse		the spider's corpse

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Then I thought about the 5-7-5 possibilities. Oh, I know that counting syllables is passé but as a kind of discipline I often try it just for practice.

in the cold corner  
dangling by a single strand  
corpse of a spider

I decided to put this haiku out there on the chopping block and to impose on some of the well known U.S. haiku aficionados for their comments and suggestions in hope that I will learn more about the craft. My goal is to use this information to help students and other neophyte poets in their quest to understand and to write good haiku.



I was amazed at how generous the people I contacted were. No one refused to make comments. I found the haiku world very friendly and supportive. I have quoted e-mails and letters from the respected aficionados. They were aware that I wanted to use their comments but several admitted to being very busy and could not spend the time making as detailed a commentary as they had hoped.

The first thing I did was to enter the poem in the AHA Poetry web site's Sea Shell Game. As it happens I did not quote the poem accurately and I entered it as follows:

in the corner  
dangling by a thread  
the spider's corpse

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Richard Watkins judged the contest and selected it to go on to the second round with these comments: "(It) . . . conjures up a more challenging image. For me the main obstacle is the business of a spider's corpse. Usually it would be another insect's corpse, a fly or moth and not a spider. What has caused the web to be damaged to the extent that the corpse is left dangling by a thread? But perhaps that is part of the mystery. You are able to create a picture of sinister mystery using only one verb and a gerund at that."

The poem made it through the second and third rounds with these comments: ". . . there is what my imagination insists on seeing as a dark corner of a basement. . . . The corner one strikes me as sinister and mysterious. It is suspenseful in that it suggests that there is more to come"

In the end he chose another poem as the winner but added: (This haiku) "places the break at the end of the second line and leaves us in suspense. Briefly we wonder what's dangling by a thread? Then we are left with the puzzle of why or how did the spider end up in the web?"

It was rewarding to have some one get the correct images and the right setting from the few words of my haiku.

Jane Reichhold looked at this haiku and said "(it was) a very good one in the *shasei* style of Shiki. . . . (a simple sketch of nature)". However, she went on to suggest that "I would want to have it come from a positive angle. The haiku as it stands is very bleak and defeated if one reads it as saying 'backed into the corner, all that is left is the body of a dead

spider swinging from a thread”.

She made reference to the Kikaku and Basho story in which Kikaku recites:

“tearing wings  
off the dragonfly  
a red pepper

To which Basho suggests a better way:

adding wings  
to the red pepper  
a dragonfly

Jane Reichhold then added: “Not being Basho, the best I could do...

home again  
in the same corner  
a spider”

As I read Jane Reichhold suggestions and her example she prefers a more positive and gentler message. Obviously the image I created was not a contemplative one for her, though she appreciated the style.

John Stevenson looked at the haiku and several of my variations of it, which included:

in the cold corner  
dangling from a strand  
the spider’s corpse

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He preferred a briefer version. He liked “cold corner” and suggested:

cold corner  
a dead spider  
dangling

He explains, “since we know it’s a spider, we can easily imagine that from which it is dangling. For me, this is in the category of what can be left to the reader’s imagination. The word “cold” gives the poem more of a seasonal setting and resonates with dead. Just my thoughts.”

For John Stevenson I did not succeed with the “riddle” technique and he took my idea in a different direction. However I like his poem very much.

After looking at this poem Dr. Randy Brooks said, “This haiku presents a clear image, and we feel the sadness of neglect, of a spider’s life not being fulfilled because of its indoor choice of home. And the expression is very unified with clear images. My main question or desire for this haiku is to have more of a hint of where this corner is. A hint at the context would bring added richness and significance: “in the funeral parlor corner”; “in the pigpen’s corner”; “corner of the classroom”; “I’m having trouble with the significance because I don’t know where we are.

“Now in my wishful thinking, I want to think it is only a husk of the spider left behind and that the spider itself has crawled out of that skin and left it behind, moving on to a better hunting grounds.”

His suggestions relating to this idea are:

in the corner	or	in the corner
dangling from a thread		dangling from a strand
a spider’s skin		husk of a spider

or

spider web  
in the dusty corner  
a spider’s remains

“I think in this last edit we get the ambiguity of all of it being remains, as well as the body, the husk, the web, the dust to dust, etc.” Combining both these ideas his suggestions include:

in the kitchen corner	or	corner of the classroom
only the husk of a spider		dangling from a strand
in a broken web		the spider’s shell

This last version really hits home for me. As I mentioned in the introduction I have retired but was hired back as an adjunct for one quarter. I see myself as the spider, dangling in the corner of the classroom, seen by the students as only a shell. How poignant and depressing! That’s a real A-Ha moment for me. Thank you Jane Reichhold.

So from Dr. Brooks' remarks the poem needs a more precise setting which would give it deeper significance and impact. He also seems to prefer a more optimistic outlook or a possibility for redemption. I agree with the need for greater significance but as a realist and a spider hater, I don't want the spider to move on, I want him to dangle dead.

Stanford Forrester was complimentary. "First of all I like it. It is something we have all seen and probably even written about. There is a sense present of stillness and maybe loneliness on the first level. I do feel, however, that the haiku stops there. I feel it needs something that brings the reader into a deeper level.

"Reading the poem and returning to it, I also think that 'strand' might not be needed. Reason be, is that spiders would be dangling on their own thread. I wonder if you added a season to the place and then revised, in order that the season with all it evokes equals the second part of the haiku. The first two lines as is don't carry the reader until the end.

"Maybe something like:

end of summer—  
dangling in the corner  
the spider's corpse

"By using a season here, not that I am into seasons, the first part of the haiku can now = the second part. Summer and all that it represents is left behind, just like the body of the spider, etc.

"Anyway, I think you have something here. Just needs some tweaking. I hope I was some help."

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Stanford Forrester suggests adding a specific time and getting rid of the strand or thread would help out this haiku. These are good suggestions and quite thorough from my perspective even though he says "my comments were of a quick passing and the haiku deserved a deeper analysis, which at that point in time I was unable to dedicate".

Personally, I am most grateful for all of the time and effort given to my haiku.

Francine Porad had these elucidating comments.

"A dark mood is established due to the arresting phrase 'spider's corpse'. Although the word 'corpse' is technically

and scientifically accurate, its primary definition is ‘a dead body especially of a human being’. I had an instant mental picture of a person, hanging, twisting on the end of a noose. I would change the wording of line three to ‘the dead spider’ but that is just a personal opinion.

“Some might consider the ‘spider’s corpse’ as wry and dramatic hyperbole. Also ironic is the thought that the spider is caught in its own web.”

I feel that Francine Porad has pegged my tendency for the theatrical and prefers the less dramatic approach.

Next, I asked William J. Higginson to comment and make suggestions. In the version I sent him I had used “dangling by”. The reader can see from his detailed comments how he carefully analyzes haiku.

“Looking at this haiku, as always, I’ll start with the basics: Rhythmically, it has a pleasing haiku movement of short-long-short, though the first line could easily be taken as very short (“in the CORner” rather than “IN the CORner”). The middle line is not strongly marked as three beats (it could be scanned either “DANgling BY a STRAND” or “DANgling by a STRAND”, the latter being actually more normal, as the former sounds forced), and the last line comes on strong with the concatenation of sibilants and plosives. Reading it very naturally, then, it actually opens with just three accented beats in the first two lines: “in the CORner ANgling by a STRAND”. But the runs of unaccented syllables do stretch out the rhythm a bit, contrasting sharply with the strict iambs of the last line: “the SPIder’s CORPSE”. This contrast of the lilting, syncopated opening lines and the jarring iambs of the last contributes to the drama of the poem.

“Formally, the grammatical break at the end of the second line augments the deliberately introductory phrasing of the first two lines and accentuates the rhythmical shift in the last line.

“Seasonally, the subject being a spider places the poem in summer. Spiders and their silk have a special place in haiku, as in many cultures, as emblems of industry and an archetypal image of danger. A spider dangling on its single thread is a common haiku image, not infrequently seen as menacing.

“This poem plays off that archetypal image, but gives it

a haikai twist. One might say that this twist is the point of the poem: The spider, instead of menacing, has itself suffered defeat and death.

“In this haiku, I’d like a bit more to work with. Indeed, some haiku simply give us the unexpected to play off against our expectations—thus providing the typical contrast of images that often make a powerful haiku. And this poem does that, to an extent. But I’d like just a little more setting than a nondescript “corner”; corner of what? And with that corner, something about the light (perhaps related to time of day) would add depth to the image itself as well as its psychological effect. Were it my haiku, I’d go on to experiment with something like the following, adding and shifting elements in the first two lines for clarity of image and improved rhythm, perhaps enriching the sound as well:

garden dusk  
dangling on a single strand  
the spider’s corpse

“Note that here the primary break comes at the end of the first line, giving the reader a split-second to form the image of a garden at dusk before plunging ahead to the sharper-focused image.

“I might even consider shifting the season with a different seasonal reference in the opening lines:

in the winter shed  
dangling on a single strand  
the spider’s corpse

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“These, by the way, would be two very different poems. The first makes me think of the fact that some spiders prey on other spiders, as well as on insects, so the twilight of the summer garden becomes the remains of a battlefield. The light, though growing dim, is lush with hints of color and the depth of shadowed green. On the other hand, the winter shed image changes the light to silver, puts already a bit of chill in the poem, and leaves the active life of the summer spider behind in the “dead of winter”.

“One would have to decide where to go from here, whether to keep both a summer and a winter haiku, or to

prefer the one over the other. In either case, the result would be a more fully realized image, where the introductory lines not only set up the last, but provide a rich environment in which its meaning can reverberate.

“The haiku has plenty of space in which to construct powerful, memorable images that build to a climax and leave an aftershock, even in its short duration.”

Mr. Higginson gives me a valuable lesson in haiku writing.

Notice how the prepositions have changed. I began with “dangling from”, then changed to “dangling by”, and then “dangling on”. Some suggested leaving out the preposition. All this stresses the importance of each word in haiku.

Finally, L. A. Davidson sums up this analytic process and gives a personal perspective that for me, seems to point to what makes haiku such a great poetic form. She says:

“My eye caught the haiku before I read the letter. My thought at that moment was that it is a good haiku. At the same time, a secondary thought was that whoever did the cleaning had missed the spider web because it was in a corner. So much for once having kept a neat home, and also for the time a painter who knew I had just had an eye operation, actually skipped painting a dark corner of a room until a discerning neighbor came along.”

“It is such personal memories in the reader that makes workshops go astray from trying to perfect the observation that the writer attempts to convey and cause an emotional response similar to his own. Too often the resulting workshop haiku may be a better one from traditional, innovative, or an impactful angle while becoming a totally different observation from that of the poet. It would seem that the haiku should remain the poet’s, whatever changes are made. “Were he trying for a mood, he might have said: ‘in the musty room’ but that changes the emphasis from the spider to the room. Certainly the last line should be ‘a spider’s corpse’ as a surprise twist, with corpse instead of ‘a dead spider’ to emphasize the turn of fate that makes the wily predator the victim of his own scheme.

“At risk of seeming lazy or lacking ideas, I think the haiku is right as it stands.”

So I tried a number of the suggestions including these:

cold basement  
dangling in the corner  
the dead spider

end of winter  
dangling in the corner  
a dead spider

I showed a number of these versions to our local Kukai, made up of beginning haiku writers and all nine picked

in the corner  
dangling from a strand  
a spider's corpse

This group felt the original impact of this dead spider hanging from a single piece of web. They preferred the power of the raw simplicity, allowing their own minds to supply the details.

What I have learned is that each poet speaks to his or her audience with an individual “voice” that can not have universal appeal. If a few get it then they become your audience. We need to respect our own way of seeing and give voice to those images fearlessly.

*Jerome Cushman*

## The Haiku Poet Hokuto Iboshi

62 The Ainu are the indigenous people of Hokkaido. They appreciate the blessings of nature, have a deep affection for human beings (*ainu* means “human”), and once lived peaceful lives. During the Meiji era, the land of Yezo was renamed Hokkaido, and many people immigrated from Honshu and other areas of Japan. With this new influx of people, the Ainu became a minority group. Their traditional lifestyle and means of food production were lost and they suffered extreme poverty. In addition, until recent years, the Ainu faced frequent discrimination without reason by the Japanese government’s assimilationist policies (for instance, in 1986 Japanese Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone asserted that “Japan is a nation with one ethnic back-



ground”, ignoring not only the Ainu but millions of people of Korean, Chinese and other origins). Though the Ainu no longer maintain their traditional lifestyle, their living conditions have not materially improved.

2002 marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Hokuto Iboshi. If you don't recognize the name, it is no surprise: he is hardly known today in Japan, even in the Ainu community. He is the author of 3 books of haiku, which were collected in *Hokuto Iboshi Posthumous Works*, published by Soufukan in 1984. It includes 366 tanka and 39 haiku, a modest output which accords with the poet's brief life of only 27 years.

Iboshi gave voice to his deepest feelings, his outrage at the discrimination he met at the hands of Japanese, his love for his native areas, his pride in being Ainu, through his tanka, but he hewed to a more traditional style and content through his scant haiku output. He wrote in the fixed haiku form, including kigo, and altogether expressed things in a more objective fashion. It can be said that Iboshi's work is heavily stratified, since he is able to vary between the emotional outpourings of his tanka and the rather classical restraint of his haiku. Both haiku and tanka are important modes of literary expression for him. He sublimates his own needs to conform to the needs of these genres. His keen observational skills are apparent in his descriptions of Hokkaido's environment and the Ainu lifestyle, and his talent as a writer can be discovered in his choices of language to realize his poems.

A sampling of his work:

early spring  
Herring Bay there!  
five feet of snow

the cliff-like road  
passed here also  
herrings hung to dry

frogs croak  
an Ainu village becomes dark  
in the ceaseless rain

in the legendary  
marsh all alone  
a frog

a party for new-brewed sake  
the headman spins Ainu myths  
all through the night

all the falling leaves  
to be embraced  
return to earth

*Ikuyo Yoshimura (with Jim Kacian)*

## Re:Readings

There is an art of reading haiku which is the parallel to writing them.

This column is intended as your opportunity to share your readings. We welcome your brief comments on what you may have appreciated about poems appearing in the current issue for possible use in the next.

Terry Ann Carter remarks on “Ash Wednesday” (rengay by Marco Fraticelli & Carolyn Rohrig): “[I] love the unity of this piece...the ‘kindling’ (used for firewood) returning to the ashes in the last verse. Each link contains images of black and white . . . again, ashes, old movies, newspapers, fingerprints on cards (presumably white) and lastly the idea that life itself is a cycle dust to dust . . . the last image (‘a smudge/ on the baby’s forehead’) a nostalgic glimpse back into my own Catholic childhood.”

Tom Painting was moved by Burnell Lippy’s “squash vines/long and hollow/the last late evenings”: “This haiku leaves me feeling melancholy. The vines, stretched to their limit parallel the days that have been stretched and now recoil into darkness. The hollow of the vines reminds of the first cool days of early autumn when the cicadas stop singing. There is an emptiness in the air, save for the occasional trumpeting of southbound geese. Words of poet Robert Frost come to mind . . . how it feels treasonous to admit the end of a season.”

Jessica Stampfli resonated to Tom Clausen’s evocative “on the way home/more geese/on the way home”. She writes “. . . it is rare to see a haiku that repeats an entire line, though the technique of repetition is often used. Sometimes it may in three lines that . . . repeating one would almost be a waste. However, a successful haiku should not feel cramped into three lines, but freed by them, and this piece achieves just that kind of freedom and space. The first and most obvious interpretation we find is that the writer, on his way home, notes that the geese are also on their way home; however, it goes deeper than that. The repetition brings us a cyclical feeling, not just the coming and going of geese on this particular day, but the coming and going of geese each year, years turning into new years, reminding us of the larger picture of life cycles. Also, the repetition emphasizes

just how many geese were encountered 'on the way home'. Like a song that gets stuck in your head, the geese keep coming, like a severe case of déjà vu. Lastly, it is interesting to note that since we do not know the direction the geese are flying, this haiku can be appropriate for two seasons. After all, no matter which way the goose flies, he's always going home."

We, of course, are much taken by most of what we selected, but time does help us see which poems have a little something extra. Amongst our favorites are Max Verhart's "refugee centre/between the paving stones/blades of grass". The HSA definition of haiku (page 4) is generally acknowledged to be incomplete. Nonetheless, it's a good explanation of a certain kind of haiku, of which we think the above poem is an example. The image is clear and would not be clearer in any other words. The link between nature and human nature is also clear. Like the grass, which finds a way to grow in the most inhospitable circumstances, the people are resilient. The source of their resilience is as deep in them as it is in the grass, and is ultimately the same source. One entry into the subtleties of this poem would be to consider that the image may well be encountered with a bent neck, and to feel that while looking down and discovering the grass. Literary associations for the images of paving stones and blades of grass are another opening to wide resonance.

One which seems to have grown in our estimation since we first accepted it is Michael Ketchek's "summer brook/which ones/are the stepping stones". How much of our time we spend imagining how things would be if they weren't as they are. How much more time is devoted to crossing streams than to following them. But the imagination is a wonderful thing. So, why complain?

Consider, too, Jack Barry's "your bare foot/curved over the jetty stone—/the ocean's roar". John notes that he has come to the ocean relatively late in life; three years ago on the Maine shore. Prior to that, he doubts he could have fully appreciated this poem, which involves an intense sense of "being there".

We also are enlarged by Joyce Payne Kincaid's artless "washing a zucchini/the blossom/end", a poem with that elusive vertical axis, reminiscent of Issa's poem about the foolishness of being washed at birth and death. We are

preparing to eat the zucchini. What's eating us?

w. f. owen's "Summer solstice/floating on our backs/  
watching the clouds provides us a little world of (and in)  
balance: the span of day and night, our floating bodies,  
floating clouds. The haiku humor of this, for us, is in the  
emphatic quality of the image; it seems to say balance,  
balance, balance! There is also the charm of the invitation  
to be one of those floating.

Much the contrary is present in Rebecca Lilly's nicely  
chiseled "a scorcher—/skull-and-bones/on a biker's arm."  
The strain of restraint is expressed here and, by implication,  
the snarl of what is, just barely, restrained. The suggestion  
of other details is powerful: the Harley sounds, bulging  
biceps, the glint of sun on metal. Someone has made himself  
a Hellbent *memento mori*.

Quite the opposite, the forgotten something, impels  
Billie Wilson's moving poem "choosing a melon—/a song so  
old/I forget why I cry" along the same trajectory. We subject  
the accumulation of experiences in our daily lives to a  
rational scrutiny, as though we must surely be able to make  
sense of it all. And yet there is always the unexplainable, not  
in any extrasensory way, but in the felt and unreachable.  
We are moved to tears, or else to joy, to fear, to anger, to  
impotence. And why? We sometimes cannot say.

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Perhaps along this same vein, in our belief that we are  
making sense of our lives, we share the opinion of Zinovy  
Vayman's mother: "blue winter sky/my mother hopes to  
die/before losing her mind". We can feel the fear latent in  
this understated matter of fact declaration. It's something  
that has perhaps come up in their conversations, as they  
have considered the encroachments of old age and the "big  
nasties" which it holds for all of us. Of course we would hope  
to maintain what Salinger termed the F-A-C-U-L-T-I-E-S  
in his short story, "For Esmé—with Love and Squalor"  
many years ago. It is an enduring theme, but one which we  
each meet ourselves, in our time, and inevitably.

We are heartened by your many, various and excellent  
responses, and look forward to what you have to say about  
the poems of this issue. Good reading!

*Jim Kacian & John Stevenson*

## Favorite Haiku

snow ends  
the coyote's fur  
shimmers in the moonlight<sup>1</sup>

*Larry Rungren*

The transfer of the shimmer of light from the snow's glimmer to the coyote's glistening fur effects an arresting and poignant linkage in the seamless flow of winter's lifeflow. A haiku that renders a visual experience with such immediacy and such refreshment to the spirit is indeed rare.

fork in the road  
both branches  
closed<sup>2</sup>

*Matthew Louvière*

I somehow accepted this haiku as if it might be Matthew's death poem. Though it was not his last, his friends are now no longer in contact, fearing the worst. He has long been losing his sight. My favorite of his work from bygone years is now all the more poignant:

saying too much  
the deaf girl  
hides her hands<sup>3</sup>

The haiku startles us—in a charmingly delicate way—into a deeper empathic awareness of this deprivation. So many of us have lost a precious friend, and the haiku world an incomparable voice of “local color”, earthiness and depth.

*H. F. Noyes*

1. *Voice of the Peeper* (British Haiku Society Anthology).

2. *Modern Haiku* XXXII:1.

3. *The Marsh and Other Haiku and Senryu* (Modern Haiku Press, 2001).

books

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reviews

## Mortal Topics

Kacian, Jim (Editor *et. al.*) *the loose thread: The Red Moon Anthology of English Language Haiku 2001* (Red Moon Press, P.O. Box 2461, Winchester VA 22604-1661 USA). ISBN 1-893959-26-0. 160 pp., 8.25" x 5.50", perfect softbound. \$14.95.

Like previous Red Moon Anthologies, *the loose thread* is an annual collection of haiku and related forms. This sleek, sturdy book, the sixth volume in Red Moon's award-winning series, is satisfying in the hands and visually appealing, with an efficient text format in largish, easy-to-read type. From a nominated list of over 2000 works by more than 1500 different authors, a staff of 11 editors selected 151 poems (haiku and senryu), 19 linked forms, and six essays to represent the best from publications around the world.

The RMA selection process in a nutshell: After reading hundreds of mainly English-language publications (including Internet sources) during a 12-month period, each staff member submits his or her nominations to the editor-in-chief, who then presents the works anonymously to the judges for voting. The staff cannot nominate or vote for their own work, but contest winners, runners-up, and honorable mentions are automatically nominated. Only a work that receives votes from at least half the judges will be included in the respective volume. This process (along with a luminary roster of judges) supports the view that having one's work chosen for a Red Moon anthology is a mark of high achievement.

Work from more than 130 authors from 15 countries and 33 sources made the cut. Authors (with their works) are placed alphabetically. Within the 75 pages of haiku/senryu (two or three per page), I found many of my longtime favorite writers, along with a cast of rising stars. There is no division of haiku and senryu, an editorial decision that I applaud. Although they will be tagged "senryu" by many readers, the 40 or so poems that do not show a lick of nature other than the human kind also lack the stinging political or social satire that exemplifies senryu in the Japanese tradition. While many of the poems portray human weakness, they do not *attack* it. Treating the mortal topics of sex, illness,

aging, death, greed, love, and divorce with keen insight and honest perspective, their authors open doors behind which readers may at times glimpse themselves.

A sharp, tense poem by ai li becomes a metaphor for the doubts and anxiety evoked by the human situation:

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

The poet sensitively depicts a human response to an uncomfortable situation. Placed in juxtaposition with the topic of divorce, the words “knife” and “edge,” whether as a unit or separate, are powerful indicators of the subject’s state of mind.

Valeria Krestova’s lean, multilayered poem exemplifies the relief most of us feel when the guests are gone and we can “be ourselves” again, while at the same time it hints at the loneliness that may follow:

guests gone . . .  
I eat again  
from the cracked plate

It is gratifying to find many poems that I’d already noted as special when they appeared in prior publications. Read afresh within these pages, even familiar poems have brought new insights, in the way late sun breaking through heavy clouds can surprise me with an unexpected view of something I thought I knew well. Other examples that explore human depths with bare-bones precision:

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her estate  
dividing  
the children

*W. F. Owen*

old passport  
the tug  
of my father’s smile

*Yu Chang*

eye exam  
I stop trying  
so hard

*Hilary Tann*

R. A. Stefanac crafts a juxtaposition of fashion and religious tradition with startling parallels:



communion wafer  
she sticks out  
her pierced tongue  
*R. A. Stefanac*

There are gems aplenty for nature-lovers; many haiku such as these are sensually evocative and rich with visual imagery:

deep summer—  
the sweet-smelling wake  
of a hay wagon  
*Brett Peruzzi*

darkness gathers  
in the treetops  
crow by crow  
*Alison Williams*

unseasonable heat—  
a woodpecker  
in the lightning scar  
*Cindy Zackowitz*

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Others skillfully combine nature and the human condition to offer a more complex synthesis of seasonal and emotion-driven elements:

heat waves—  
the hitchhiker shifts her child  
to the other hip  
*Linda Jeannette Ward*

alone—  
she takes the daisies  
from room to room  
*Leatrice Lifshitz*

sent back out  
for something I forgot  
winter stars  
*Rick Tarquinio*

The linked-forms section features a haiku sequence, a rengay, a septenga, and a collection of haibun that is as diverse in styles as in subject matter—it even includes one “gothick” tale. The piece that won’t let me go is Carolyne Rohrig’s brief but riveting “Visit to the Mall”. Using prose the way a chef wields a filleting knife, Rohrig depicts a victim of schizophrenia with heartbreaking accuracy. She describes the woman’s ephemeral quality with a chilling objectivity that conversely reveals the depth of the writer’s pain as she watches her friend disappear into the crowd. I will not set apart for sampling even one line of this exquisitely concise work; it should be read in its entirety.

There is much to enjoy among the essays. Though I know only about ten Japanese words, I am keenly interested in the opinions of others regarding translations. In “The Mechanics of Haiku,” Kai Falkman of Sweden presents R. H. Blyth’s translations of three famous poems (one by Issa, two by Basho) and handily discusses their limitations. From the U.S., David G. Lanoue’s voice in “Issa and Buddhism” is learned and delightful as always. Caroline Gourlay of Wales, H. F. Noyes of Greece, and Dee Evetts from the U.S. are must-reads for anyone who has ever wondered what makes haiku work—each has a particular genius for letting readers see right into the heart of the form.

“A Certain Open Secret about Haiku” by Robert Spiess leaves us with a wonderful parting gift. An inspiring and fitting anchor to the essay section, his work concludes *the loose thread*.

The Red Moon anthology series is firmly in place as an influential resource of contemporary haiku and haiku-related works. I highly recommend it to anyone looking for a representation of what is considered the best by relevant English-language publications today.

*Ferris Gilli*

## short and tall takes

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Robeck, Linda *arriving* (Galadriel’s Garden Press, 153 Kimball Road, Amesbury MA 01913, 2001). Perfect soft-bound. No ISBN. 72 pp., \$7 from the publisher.

A first volume by this new and promising author; it is remarkably solid, with many excellent haiku and only a few that are ho-hum.

arriving  
with your letter  
the scent of rain

winter rain  
my brother’s kitchen  
full of ants

Childs, Cyril and Joanna Preston, eds. *listening to the rain, an anthology of Christchurch* (The Small White Teapot Haiku

Group, 6 Ballantyne Avenue, Christchurch 4 New Zealand, 2002). Perfect softbound, 72pp., with Foreword, Afterword, contributor bios, Resources (NZ-oriented), and Glossary. US\$9.50 from the publisher.

The haiku in this collection are quite decent overall, with some very good and many common flaws; as usual, a little additional editing would have made for a stronger collection. The prose explanations of the genre are quite good, and probably make their points more strongly than do the example poems actually contained in the rest of the book. As for the haibun, they wander from flights of imagination (one about a ship seen only in the pages of *National Geographic*) to explorations of New Zealand culture (one about a sheep slaughterhouse is so full of local slang that it may be almost incomprehensible to outsiders) to more personal musings (a couple were by one author about his seemingly estranged deaf brother). There also appeared to be a couple of tanka (or quite overstuffed haiku). An interesting collection overall; it's good to see new groups working together and helping to develop a national identity in the haiku world.

skylark  
rises and falls  
into its own libretto  
*Greeba Brydges-Jones*

homecoming—  
the wheel on my case  
squeaks  
*Barbara Strang*

Ketchek, Michael *His Childhood Now* (self-published, 2002) No ISBN. 20 pp., 8.5" x 5.5" saddlestapled softbound. From the author at 125 High Street, Rochester NY 14609-3903.

This is chapbook of haibun about the author's son, fatherhood in general, and the bohemian life, and an exploration of the desire to protect innocence for as long as possible. I think that the feel of the whole is best served by this excerpt from the prose:

This parent thing. This creating of another living person. This direct participation in the ultimate mystery. This complicity with the primal forces. This kinship to living brown earth . . . The joyful seriousness of it all.

Gorman, LeRoy *nothing personal* (proof press, 67 Court Street, Aylmer QC Canada, 2001). No ISBN. 52pp. \$5 from the publisher.

This is a mix of serious and humorous haiku with concrete poetry and word poems, showcasing the author's trademark variety and approach, which has been challenging the boundaries of the haiku genre for years. Gorman gives a special thanks to Dorothy Howard, and much of the book has a feel that reflects its *RAW NeruZ* roots.

TV sex	getting louder	coming up in rows
the ads	the calf	the anarchist's
multiply	the auctioneer	asparagus

Many of these poems are too filled with commentary for my taste, and the author adds plenty of prose commentary around the poems as well. Additionally, some of the concrete poems were almost prohibitively difficult to read. However, there's a lot of fun in the experimentations here, and it is sure to find an appreciative audience among the haiku experimentalists.

Ness, Pamela Miller *Like Salt on Sun Spray* (Swamp Press, 2001). Paintings by Susan Frame. No ISBN. \$12 from the author (printed in limited edition).

74 This is a beautiful book, with color paintings by a talented artist known to many from her work on *HaigaOnline*, and with a translucent over-cover. The paintings punctuate Ness' tanka, which are published in a romantic script font. The poems are clearly love-related, but they do not always have the clear objective components that are present in many strong tanka; as a result, while this book is clearly a collectors' item, the poems may be strongest as personal communication rather than as literature judged purely on its merits.

Deep  
sleeping midnight  
My lover  
crosses  
a rising moon.

Spring Street Group *The Pianist's Nose* (2001). No ISBN. 28pp., \$4 from Bruce Kennedy, 62 Sterling Place, Brooklyn NY 11217-3204.

A really good collection of strong haiku and senryu by a workshop group of talented writers.

fiftieth birthday  
standing a little closer  
to the toilet

*Mykel Board*

morning sunlight  
on the floor of the birdcage  
a small white egg

*Doris Heitmeyer*

Some of these poems were not previously published, but I recognized many of them from the year's journals. As an editor, I find it odd that they feel no need to make any distinction or give any credit, but that doesn't detract from the enjoyability of the collection for readers.

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Lucas, Martin *Moonrock* (Ram Publications, 2002). 36pp., with list of dates and places of composition; no price listed.

This is a very striking book, small and perfect-bound (as seems to be economical only in the UK), with a cover photo of the raked stones of the Ryoanji temple. The poems are divided into four sections by type (more serious, one-liners, more "tipsy," and some tanka and longer haiku), each preceded by a short prose intro. The author presents this as a "deliberately uneven" collection, and they certainly vary radically in both approach and effect.

the dog yapping on and on into the woods

over my page  
shifting oak shadows  
the summer breeze

Harvest Moon

ou, ooo . . .  
ou, ou, ooo . . .  
ou, ooo . . .

the year's  
first ducklings  
and this thought arises:  
do we have a finite  
capacity for joy?

Ower, John *Winter Touch* (Hub Editions, 2001). No ISBN. Perfect bound with glossy cover, 48pp., \$6.50.

Lots of good images here. Some of the haiku are very effective, others are a little on the photo-only side or are weakened by being sentences with no breaks. An emerging writer with potential . . .

sanity—  
this dripping  
this rippled stalagmite

at the projects, also—  
the cherry trees  
in bloom

Santoka *Grass and Tree Cairn* (Red Moon Press, PO Box 2461, Winchester VA 22604-1661, 2002). Translations by Hiroaki Sato, illustrations by Stephen Addiss. ISBN 1-893959-28-7. Perfect-bound, 74pp. \$14.95.

This book comprises a selection of the poems of wandering monk-poet Taneda Santoka (1882-1940), taken from the only full-length book of his poems published during his lifetime (*Sumokuto*). The haiku are divided into eleven titled sections, and appear with occasional introductory headers or narrative comments taken from the original work; no note is given as to why these particular poems were chosen from among the threefold more in the original collection. Each haiku is presented as a one-line translation, with the one-line *romanji* versions of the Japanese given immediately underneath. As many as six haiku are printed on a single page.

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Santoka wrote in an experimental and atypical form, following the lead of the antitraditionalist Seisensui, and his poems range from 9-21 syllables, at my rough sampling—thus, they are considerably more divergent than the occasional extra or dropped onji of the more classical poets. He also occasionally used punctuation, which is rare in haiku. The subject matter and approach taken here vary widely, resulting in poems that would be more or less recognizable as part of the haiku tradition. A few examples that span the range of length and style:

In autumn wind I pick up a stone

Cold clouds hurry

Through the moonlight's center I come back

Snow falls one by one they go

I myself do not read Japanese, so I am in no position to judge the translations for their trueness to the originals. In the Introduction, translator Sato addresses some of the difficulties in balancing literalism (or even finding an equivalent word) against order of images, overall feel, and other considerations. I notice that sometimes he translates the coloring particles (such as *ya*, *no*) into words (in one case, conveying *ya* by *yeah*), while in other cases they are not directly transferred. In no cases does he add punctuation either to translate the particles (as earlier translators have sometimes done) or to help with the parsing of the one-line translations. He includes the occasional comma only when it was present in the original Japanese. Thus, with neither linebreaks nor punctuation as a guide to the reader, some of the translations can be hard to parse:

Which is what everything's abloom

Seeking what I go through the wind

The town's festive you've returned as bones have you

It is hard to know how much of the difficulty in approaching these and similar poems arises from their content (which is quite wide of the mainstream) and how much from the translations (which are also taking a distinctive and uncompromising approach). However, the combination makes this a book much more appropriate for the interest and appreciation of the expert (and maybe especially the fellow translator) looking to get a glimpse of Santoka's singular haiku voice than for the engagement of readers just starting to explore the genre.

*A. C. Missias*

## Another Traveler

M., Paul *Finding the Way: Haiku and Field Notes* (Press Here, PO Box 3339, Redmond WA 98073-3339, 2002). ISBN 1-878798-25-1. 52 pp., 8.25" x 5.50", saddlestitch softbound with wrap cover. \$6ppd. in the U.S. from the publisher.

Before you begin Paul M.'s *Finding the Way*, find a quiet spot, preferably out of doors. Bring your journal, your pen, and enough of your time that you can fully attend to this most personal yet most communal of books. Paul M. has crafted a collection of haiku and reflections that invites the reader to join him on a journey, a journey that has two levels and merits a certain degree of attention.

On one level, we accompany the poet on his wanderings through the natural world and share his solitary experiences:

barren peak  
a pebble from the meadow  
in my pocket

Yet even as the haiku present solitary moments, the poet never forgets his connection to other people. On his travels, he maintains an awareness of those who have shared the trail, as evidenced both by the poems and by the field notes:

lake view  
the map left  
by another traveler

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Dried footprints in fire trail mud. But rather than pace my steps to exactly match their owner's stride, I seek to understand where they were going, where they paused, which direction they looked. While grateful for their guidance, each traveler makes his own trail.

In fact, it is the combination of field notes and haiku that enhances our sense of the poet making his own way while appreciating his connection to others. Together, they reveal a poet competely at peace in his ability to be quiet, to contemplate, to observe, and to listen.

Paul M.'s journey extends beyond the natural world, however, to another level. In the Introduction, he makes clear that he is writing within a particular tradition. He cites



Ralph Waldo Emerson, William Carlos Williams, and R. H. Blyth. He alludes to the many poets and editors with whom he has worked and from whom he has learned. *Finding the Way* draws readers into this tradition. It suggests that the way of these other writers, indeed the way of Paul M. himself, is worth following. This book will inspire you to follow. If you're already on the path, it will encourage you to keep going. You will want to respond to his field notes and compare them with your own. When you read his haiku, you will want to offer your own poems in return. Take your journal, take your pen, and take your time with this thoughtfully written and beautifully produced book.

Ce Rosenow

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## Books Received

Krivcher, Rich (editor) *Still Singing* (Two Autumns Press, 2577 Harrison Street, San Francisco CA 94110, 2002). No ISBN. 32 pp., 5.5" x 8.5", saddlestapled softbound. No price. Enquire with the publisher.

*Another beautiful production from this talented group, featuring the poems of Kay Anderson, paul m., Earl Johnson and Michael McClintock in this volume, featuring the (too) brief readings from the 13<sup>th</sup> annual gathering of the group, too brief only because we are left wanting more.*

Scalin, Noah *Haiku Postcards* (ALR Design, 3007 Park Avenue #1, Richmond VA 23221, 2002). \$5 ppd. for a set of 10 from the publisher.

*The poet won the Christian Science Monitor's annual haiku contest with one of these entries. The best of these are modern-looking and interesting, and of course I like some more than others. Probably best for someone who likes a little edge to their graphics—although the poems are 5-7-5.*

Newell, Ann *Mt. Gassan's Slope* (Red Moon Press, Winchester VA, 2002) 88 pp., 8" x 8", perfect softbound. ISBN 1-893959-29-5. Translated into Japanese by Kenichi Sato. \$14.95 from the publisher at PO Box 2461, Winchester VA 22604-1661 USA. *This volume features haiku, senryu and sumie from a poet who has been practicing these arts for more than half her lifetime. She has a particular feel for place and spirit, and the brief invocations to the seasons, and accompanying sketches, achieve a singularity of vision.*

m., paul *finding the way* (Press Here, PO Box 3339, Redmond WA, 98073-3339, 2002). 52 pp., 4" x 5.5", saddlestapled softbound with endpapers and dustjacket. ISBN 1-878798-25-1. \$5 ppd. from the publisher.

*This very handsome volume by a poet who has come to our attention over the past three or four years reprises many of the surprising number of poems which he has already brought forcibly into our consciousness. The attractive design enhances this fine collection. Recommended.*

Ness, Pamela Miller *the hole in Buddha's heel* (privately printed, available from the author at 33 Riverside Drive Apt. 4-G, New York NY 10023-8125, 2002). 16 pp., 4.5" x 6.25", hand-tied softbound with two-toned paper cover. \$5 ppd.

*This very handsome short collection contains 14 haiku and tanka based on Buddhist works of art found in 9 different locations around this country, which coincides with an interest the author has in art-inspired haiku. A beautiful and limited production. Recommended.*

Noyes, H. F. *still here* (privately printed, 2002). 88 pp., 5.5" x 8.5", saddlestitched softbound with endflaps and dustjacket. \$15 ppd. from vincent tripi, 42 Franklin Street #5, Greenfield MA 01301.

*A collected haiku and senryu, in an elegant version, is a fitting denouement for a poet whose work has done so much to illuminate haiku and the haiku way for so many current devotees of the genre. Highly recommended.*

Gay, Andrew *A Butterfly Careless* (privately printed, 2001) 64 (unnumbered) pp., 6.875" x 6.875", limited edition perfect softbound in slipcase. No ISBN. \$120 ppd. from the author at Fernhill Farm, RR1, Box 5959 Cobb Road, Belfast ME 04915-9736.

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*One of the most beautiful haiku books produced in the United States in quite a long time, this volume features the ink monotypes of Dudley Zopp reproduced on high quality paper, a letterpress cover and a one-of-a-kind slipcase with an original monotype with each. It is a book collector's book, and those who are so inclined will be happy to have this volume as a testament to those arts as manifested in the haiku world.*

Ramsey, William M. *This Wine* (Deep North Press, Evanston IL, 2002) 96 pp., 4.5" x 8.25", perfect softbound. ISBN 1-929116-08-X. \$15 ppd. from the author at 1217 Berkeley Avenue, Florence SC 29505-3008.

*Another beautiful volume from Deep North Press. The design by Lidia Rozmus and the layout and typography by Charles Trumbull are worth savoring, the poems are cutting-edge and at the same time participate in a multivalent narrative. A most interesting volume.*

Suarez, Kiki *Haiku-Kisses* (self-published, 2000). 56 pp., 4.75" x 4.5", perfect softcover. No ISBN. No price. Enquire with the poet at <lagaleria@prodigy.net.mx>.

*A trilingual volume, incorporating woodcut illustrations, of bromides in 3-lines and 17-syllables. Perhaps one end of the spectrum of what we feared would happen to "haiku" if co-opted by the New Age.*

Lilly, Rebecca *Shadwell Hills* (Birch Brook Press, PO Box 81, Delhi NY 13753, 2002) 72 pp., 5.5" x 8.5", perfect softbound. ISBN 0-913559-79-2. \$16 ppd. from the publisher.

*Letterpress still feels like nothing else, and it's nice to see the tradition kept up. These poems, written in the poet's characteristic style, capture the region of the title well, to which I, who have lived there, can attest.*

Franke, Ruth *Lapislazuli: Haiku* (Mafora Verlag, Freiberg, 2002) 56 pp., 8.25" x 3.25", Rivet-bound in slipcase. ISBN 3-929939-04-5. No price. Enquire with the author at Hölderlinstr. 51, 79312 Emmendingen, Germany.

*This volume will interest only a few of our readers for the poems, since they are in German only, but it is another innovative design, a slipcased collection of cards joined at one end by a brass screw, with the effect that the "deck" can pivot, revealing the next poem, and the next.*

Fraenkel, William A. *Haiku for All* (iUniverse, Inc., 2021 Pine Lake Road, Suite 100, Lincoln NE 68512, 2002) 152 pp., 6" x 9", perfect softbound. ISBN 0-595-25617-1. \$13.95 ppd. from the publisher.

*From the back cover: "Dr. Fraenkel has written his autobiography using haiku as his medium." And "He uses his haiku to speak out on such topics as love, nature, war and peace, and 9/11." A collection of poems, and also an encouragement to others to write their own.*

Ortiz, Victor *into breath* (Red Moon Press, PO Box 2461, Winchester VA 22604-1661, 2002) 32 pp., 7" x 5", perfect softbound. ISBN 1-893959-30-9. \$12 ppd. from the publisher.

*The poet's first book, incorporating five of his photographs, is a meditation on love and evanescence, with an understatement unusual in poets so young. Recommended.*

Yoshimura, Ikuyo *A Desert Rose* (Rainbow Press, Oonawaba 4, Gifu 500-8889, Japan, 2002) 72 pp., 8.25" x 4" perfect softbound. No ISBN. Free for a SAE and two IRCs. Available from the publisher.

*A gift (in English and Japanese) from one of the pioneers in the study of haiku from under-represented cultures, this is also a fine collection from an excellent poet.*

Mountain, Marlene & Francine Porad *probably: 'real' renga sorta* (Vandina Press, 6944 SE 33rd, Mercer Island WA 98040-3324 USA, 2002). ISBN 1-887381-18-X. 32 pp., 5.5" x 8.5", saddlestapled softbound. \$xx. Enquire with the publisher.  
*Linked conversation between two of the sharpest wits in haiku (plus art from each), with no subject taboo. These do not follow any rules, they simply go where they go, and the interest in them must be generated by the writing itself. Some will be maddened, and some will shout for more.*

Kondo, Kris & Marlene Mountain & Francine Porad *TRIO OF WRENS* (Vandina Press, 6944 SE 33rd, Mercer Island WA 98040-3324 USA, 2000). ISBN 1-887381-14-7. 32 pp., 5.5" x 8.5", perfect softbound. \$12. Enquire with the publisher.  
*So here's more. This is an extension of the "Other Rens" series created by these three viragos of verse, and lives up to the earlier standards. A bonus is the three visual offerings from each of the poets. Same proviso.*

Reddingius, Hans *The Elements* (Marginale Uitgeverij't Hoge Woord, Rijstersdijk 25, 8574 VW Bakhuisen, Netherlands, 2002). 32 pp., 2" x 3", saddlestapled softbound with dustjacket. ISBN 90-75951-37-0. \$5 ppd. from the publisher.  
*This volume, as all the books in this series, is made entirely from a single A4 sheet of paper (excluding cover). But its small size does not preclude a large impact—this is handsomely produced, bilingual, hand-sewn, with fine papers and good poems. This is volume 29, so ask about the whole series. Perhaps the publisher offers a discount, and shipping can't be much . . .*

Sterba, Carmen *sunlit jar* (Marginale Uitgeverij't Hoge Woord, Rijstersdijk 25, 8574 VW Bakhuisen, Netherlands, 2002). 32 pp., 2" x 3", saddlestapled softbound with dustjacket. ISBN 90-75951-37-0. \$5 ppd. from the publisher.

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*More of the same as the previous, and with the same enthusiasm. The poet teaches English in Japan, though you wouldn't necessarily know this from reading these poems. A nice debut from someone we'll see again.*

Facey, Erica *GLIDING* (France-Do Co. Ltd., 1-9-61-102 Sengawa-Tyo, Chofu-Si, Tokyo, 182-0002 Japan, 2001). 172 pp., 5.25" x 7.75", casebound with dustjacket. ISBN 4-89402-443-8. ¥2400 from the publisher.

*A most unusual volume, reversing the usual process of Japanese poems rendered in English. This bilingual volume, layed out for both English and Japanese readers (opening from the "front" for the former and from the "back" for the latter), supplies well over a hundred of the poet's haiku, and a postscript which develops the concepts which she has employed. An elegant presentation, and an interesting British/Japanese sensibility.*

Forges-Ryan, Sylvia and Edward Ryan *Take a Deep Breath* (Kodansha America, 2003). 120 pp., 5.25" x 7.5", hardcover. ISBN 4-77002885-7. \$16 at bookstores.

*It was inevitable that haiku be appropriated to the self-help movement, and we should at least be grateful that it has been done by a poet who knows more than syllable-counting. This is a book of exercises, and it will find its audience, and perhaps even gently guide them to haiku as art as well as therapy and meditation.*

Forrester, Stanford M. *the temple yard* (Self-published, 2002) \$1 ppd. (US), \$2 ppd. elsewhere. Available from the author at P. O. Box 290691, Wethersfield, CT 06129-0691

*This double-fold haiku card is a collection of haiku and senryu about Buddhism and the Zen experience.*

Jones, Ken *Arrows of Stones* (British Haiku Society, Sinodun, Shalford, Essex CM7 5HN England, 2002) 62 pp., 5.75" x 8.25" perfect softbound. ISBN 0-95223974-4. £5. Available from the publisher.

*Things do come around in circles, it seems. This book is a collection of haibun by one of the leading practitioners and theorists of haibun in English; it is simultaneously translated into Japanese, in which language the form has been virtually extinct for decades. Perhaps it is only dormant, and these vibrant and characteristic works will rekindle interest in the land of the form's origin. Recommended.*

Prof. Ikuro Anzai, Chairperson *The Report of the 36th A-Bomb Memorial Day Haiku Meeting* (Kyoto Museum for World Peace, Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto 603-8577 Japan, 2002) 24 pp., 7" x 10" softbound. No ISBN. Enquire with the publisher.

*I don't usually list the award booklets for contests in this space, but I thought that doing so in this case might prove instructive. This Japanese contest, founded upon estimable principles, has made awards based on such an entirely different set of criteria from what we prize in Western haiku that it is worth having a look just to take note. I don't wish to say that I'm baffled by the selections—I'm not—but think this judgment of value in haiku illustrates the very great gap between art in the service of an idea, and art for art's sake, and why that gap exists.*

Gainer, Bill (Ed.) *Year 2002 . . . an anthology* (Nevada County Poetry Series, Nevada City CA, 2002) 5.25" x 8.25" perfect softbound. No ISBN. No price. Enquire with the publisher.

*The primary interest of this general anthology to us is the contribution of two poets: Carmen Sterba, who offers a pair of haibun and a page entitled 6 Haiku (there are 5 . . . ); and the freeform haikuesque poems of Michael McClure, indistinguishable from the real thing. Interesting.*

HSA

News

# The Harold G. Henderson Haiku Contest Awards 2002

## Comments from the Judges

WE DIDN'T KNOW YOUR NAMES, you haiku poets who entered the 2002 Henderson Contest. But we heard your voices and we looked through your eyes. As we read the 900+ haiku cards (each slightly different in size and texture, in whiteness of stock and blackness of ink, in font and handwriting), we realized that we were literally handling the words of dozens of individual poets. This was pleasure and privilege, as well as responsibility.

Our first readings focused on questions of form. Does this haiku use images to provide a present-moment experience? Are the words vivid and precise? Is there an effective relationship between the images? We found many, many haiku to delight us and, eventually, make us groan in frustration because we couldn't give recognition to all the prize-worthy poems.

In the end we returned to the haiku tradition's focus on content. We chose seven haiku that went beyond the surface, that took us away from ourselves into another person's reality.

We offer sincere thanks to all who submitted haiku, as well as to the HSA for asking us to serve as judges.

Larry Kimmel & Carol Purington, *Judges*

\* \* \*

### First Place

Marjorie Buettner

loon calls  
my daughter drawing circles  
near the fire

Night, beside a large body of water. A small child draws circles by firelight. Since prehistory, fire and circles have represented sources of power to mankind. This contemporary parent's moment of awareness is pervaded by a sense of primal mystery, an awe heightened by the haunting call of loons moving in the darkness beyond the fire's protection and beyond the walls that surround the fire. Whether these are walls of home or walls of night, the impression of an oasis of safety within the vastness of the cosmos is strong. Eternity is put side by side with the immediate—the domestic, the everyday, the ordinary, which is the soul of haiku.

The contrasting rhythms of the first and second parts of this poem contribute to its overall tone, a feeling of well-being that yet recognizes that the universe has its places of shadow.

## Second Place

Billie Wilson

summer evening—  
from across the meadow  
a call to supper

86

You can feel it as much as hear and see it, the calm at the end of the day, the warmth of a soft summer twilight, and the distant voice ringing across the open green space. The time for work is done and a woman is calling workers from the field, perhaps, or it could be a mother summoning children from play. The call is familiar and so is the context, a scene of quiet happiness. The scattered family is gathering to share food and the day's experiences around the communal table.

This haiku, with its vocabulary of "meadow" and of "supper" as opposed to "dinner", speaks from a rural setting. Indeed, though a poem of the now, it nonetheless carries a suggestion of nineteenth-century Americana. If this is nostalgia, it is the strong kind, made of the memories that are foundational to a stable life. A gentle rhythm and simple images arranged in a traditional format appealingly convey this emotional wisdom.



shivering on the roof  
 I rub my palms together  
 meteor shower

Did you watch last year's spectacular Leonid meteor shower? We did, and we can imagine the poet waking very early because of the predictions of a great display, perhaps making a cup of coffee, and then climbing to the roof. Was it to the top of a tall building? Or did this viewing take place in a climate warm enough to allow flat roofs on ordinary houses? Either way, the poet feels closer to the sky now, closer to the excitement of what is happening all around. The November night holds a real chill — the poet shivers and begins rubbing his or her hands together. Are these motions caused by the cool air or the sky show?

This haiku, somewhat untraditional in its presentation of images, introduces an appropriate hint of magic with the third line's jump to the meteor shower. In a fairy tale rubbing one's hands together can produce sparks or gold coins. On this remarkable night can such a simple action create shooting stars? Abracadabra!

### Honorable Mentions (unordered)

ocean breeze—  
 a strand of seaweed  
 steadies the kite

*John Thompson*

A kite with a tail of seaweed is a striking image, not unlike the radish with which Issa's farmer points the way. It possesses an ordinariness that is at the same time extraordinary. What especially captures the attention is the kite-flier's problem-solving attitude of making do with what is at hand, a resourcefulness essential to the arts as well.

It is also noteworthy how many of the senses are employed in these three lines. Besides sight, there are the damp touch of an ocean breeze and the pungent smells, which are almost tastes, of seaweed, beach debris, and

saltwater, all carried by the breeze. The haiku's imagery is sustained by an understated but effective pattern of long vowel sounds and sibilants.

autumn rose—  
even as I sketch the wind  
more petals fall  
*Ross Figgins*

Since earliest times humans have used words and paint and clay to hold experience in the permanent present. In this haiku the artist attempts to put something invisible on paper by creating a visual image of an autumn rose, but has to acknowledge that change intrudes into the very process of preserving the blossom's fragility. She or he ends by discovering that to sketch the wind is to sketch transience. If art can be understood as a way of countering the winds of change, art is like the wind in becoming known only as it touches the world.

We found this poem memorable for its translucent beauty, unusual insight, and first-person immediacy.

Humid July—  
from the stove the smell  
of old fires.

*Doug Hunt*

88

There is a definite measure of discomfort in this haiku, both in its imagery and in its emotional content. The heat and humidity of a scorching July day are made more annoying by the unpleasant smell of an old wood fire. This smell has been present for days, perhaps, but it has just broken in upon the poet's consciousness.

Smell triggers memory more strongly than any of the other senses, and the writer suddenly realizes that something from the past still influences her or his present. The odor may arouse memories of festive times shared with others. But given the negative connotations of acrid smoke and a heat wave, the reference is probably to a period of physical or psychological destruction, a process whose results remain like an old factory that stands long after its useful life is over.

Whatever interpretation one prefers, "old fires" is a powerful image that works effectively to create an awareness

that history, even the most personal history, can't be left behind.

the wind of autumn  
a homeless man warms himself  
hand to mouth

*Harvey Hess*

Shorter days have arrived. The wind is more noticeable, bending bare trees and scattering fallen leaves. It pushes against people so that they walk more quickly, on their way to warmer places. But this man has no shelter to seek. He keeps himself warm in the way that he lives, hand to mouth.

And suddenly, by juxtaposition, a cliché turns into a poignant physical image. This man is breathing his own body's heat onto his own cold hand. It is the best he can do. But the shiver that comes as we read the haiku assures us that his best can't provide lasting warmth.

This haiku probably would not have held our attention if the first line had read "autumn wind." Crucial to the poem's impact is the subtly different rhythm of its wording, bringing recognition that the wind of autumn will be followed by the wind of winter.

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## **The Gerald R. Brady Senryu Contest Awards 2002**

THIS YEAR'S BRADY SENRYU COMPETITION featured 514 poems. We worked independently, each selecting 50 senryu to move on to the next round. Eventually we met in person and narrowed our choices to the 10 poems we felt best captured the humor and humanity desired in senryu. The winning and honorable mention poems came as a result of further discussion. These poems resonated with each of us in a way that distinguished them from the rest. We want to thank the poets who participated in this year's contest and for the honor of reviewing their work.

*Pamela A. Babusci and Tom Painting, Judges*

## First Place

W. F. Owen

divorced  
she cleans the ring  
around the tub

In the aftermath of divorce, evidence of one's former married life surely must reveal itself in the things a partner leaves behind. This senryu uses the image of the tub ring as such evidence. That the tub ring belongs to the ex-spouse may reveal a little something about both people in the relationship. Did the former mate lapse into laziness, or did he always "forget" to clean the tub ring? Did she come to condone his behavior as an acceptable foible, or did she always resent it? We can never know for sure. What we do know is that she is now removing evidence of a past life. She is attacking the ring with a vengeance, glad to be rid of it at last and any trace of her ex-husband. Such is often the case if one is to start anew. Removing the ring around the tub is like removing a wedding band; the marriage is finally over. In more ways than one, things have gone down the drain.

## Second Place

Heather Basile

after lovemaking  
returning  
to ourselves

90

What a revealing and honest senryu. Most of us, while in the act of lovemaking set down our shields, and unveil our bodies and emotions, our sensitivities and vulnerabilities to another person. The words we speak to each other; the tenderness we demonstrate, are in themselves a transformation in our personalities. We forget our problems, our everyday routines, the stress from our jobs or children, and become transported into another dimension, if only briefly.

We can also look upon this senryu in a different manner. Perhaps, this couple has just had a fight and feel that making love might bring healing to the relationship. But, as we know, lovemaking is transitory, and when the lovemaking is over, the problems usually return unresolved.

nest of black hair  
secured with ball-point pens  
office geisha

One cannot help but be intrigued by the persona of this office geisha. She plays her role to the hilt. In her hair, she has an assortment of pens, in various colors, ready to handle any assignment asked of her. She arrives at her job early in the morning and is the last one to leave. One can imagine that her job is her life. What boss wouldn't want to have her in his employ. The language and imagery in this senryu make it effective. There is not a wasted word.

91

**Honorable Mentions (unordered)**

naked at the ironing board  
concentrating  
on a crease

*Marilyn Taylor*

round and round  
debating  
circumcision

*W. F. Owen*

• • •

**Erratum**

not showing up—  
the woman I wanted  
to snub

*Mykel Board*

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# THE HAIKU SOCIETY OF AMERICA

## Treasurer's Report Fourth Quarter (Through December 10, 2002)

### CREDITS:

Balance from Third Quarter	\$13,590.04	
Membership Dues and Contributions	2,704.00	
Einbond Contest Fees	210.00	
Education Packets	135.00	
Frogpond Samples	56.00	
Newsletter Account Refund	45.93	
Total Credits		\$16,740.97

### DEBITS:

Frogpond Account	\$4,819.22	
Annual Mailing	1,260.32	
Awards and Prizes	975.00	
Secretary Expenses	440.47	
Newsletter Account	314.71	
Contest Administration	34.94	
Total Debits		\$7,844.66

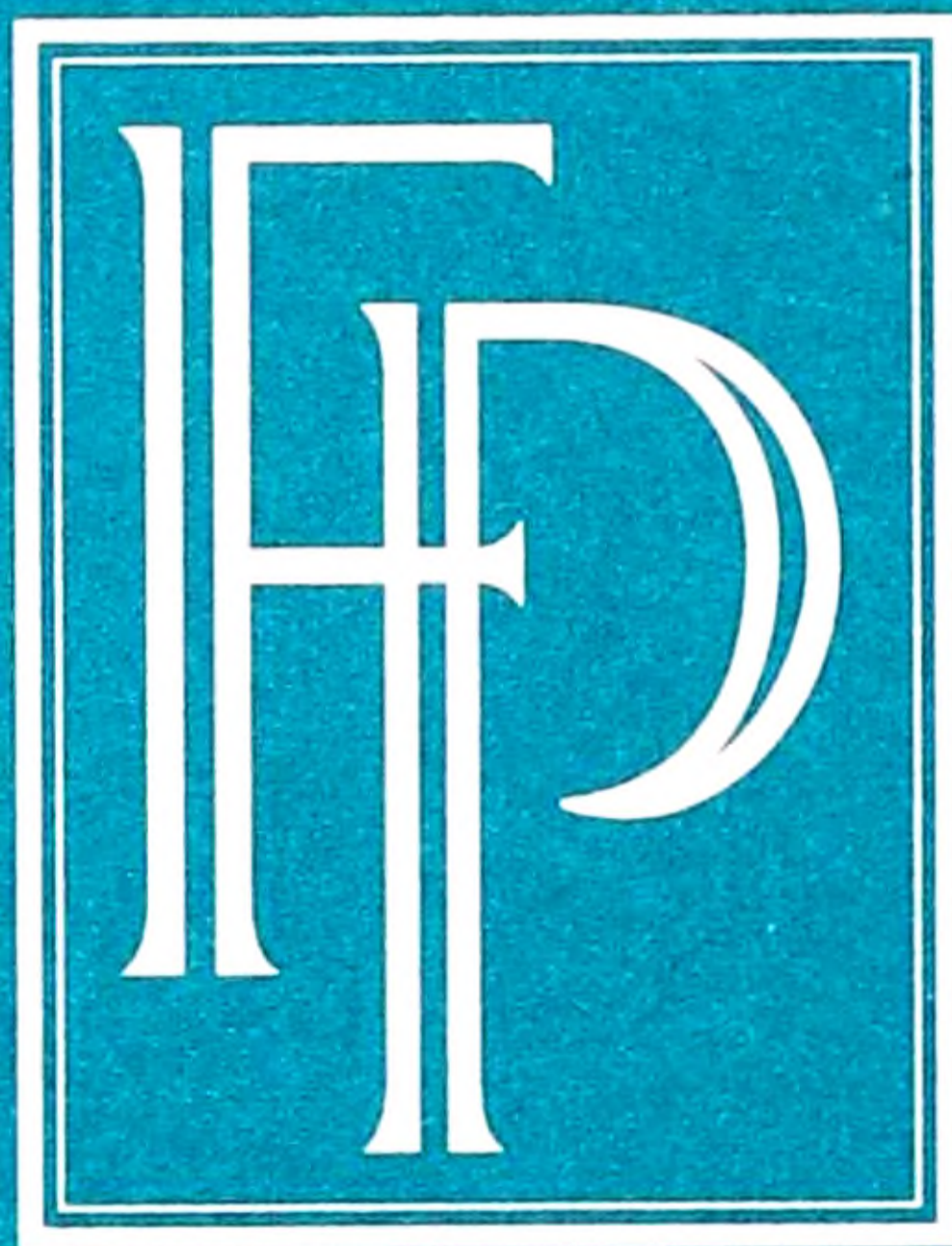
DECEMBER 10, 2002 BALANCE: \$8,896.31

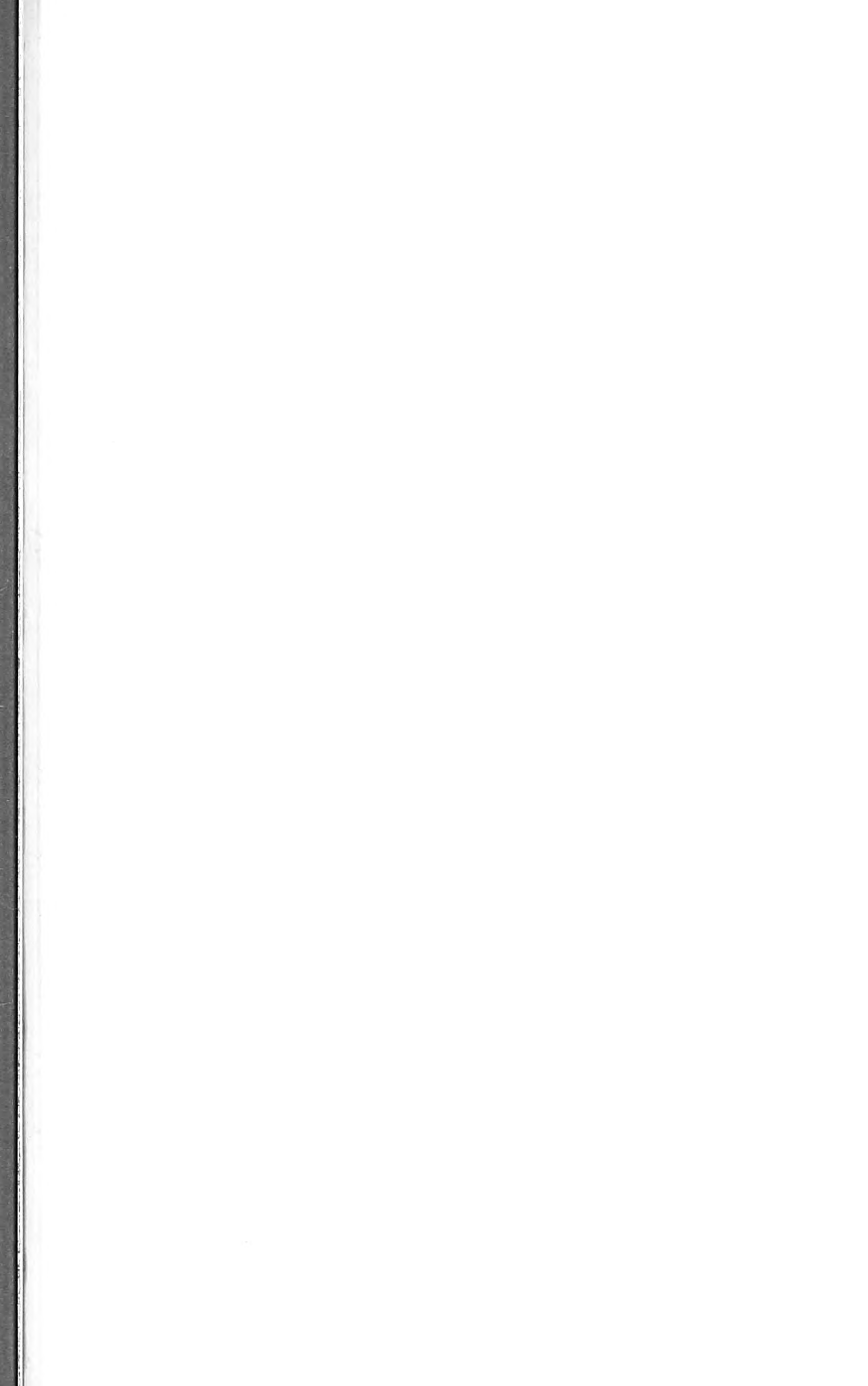
Respectfully submitted,  
John Stevenson, Treasurer

**Museum of Haiku Literature Award**  
**\$100 for the best unpublished work**  
**appearing in the previous issue of *Frogpond***  
**as voted by the HSA Executive Committee**

*squash vines*  
*long and hollow*  
*the last late evenings*

**Burnell Lippy**





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