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## from the editor

How many *Frogpond* editors can you name? Do you know who was the first one to serve? Or who had the longest run? With this issue, *Frogpond* enters its fortieth year. As a way to celebrate that milestone we thought it would be fun to feature some haiku penned by each editor, thirteen individuals in all, who served from 1978 to the present, with all of their sampled work first published in *Frogpond*.

Also in this issue, Charles Trumbull, inimitable chronicler and conservator of all things haiku, offers us an excerpt (and the first installment in a possible series?) from a long-term project of his: *A Field Guide to North American Haiku*.

And most exciting for me personally, and long overdue, this is the first issue of *Frogpond* to include haiga. Eight creative, eye-pleasing, full-color pages of it. It's the debut of what we anticipate to be a regular feature.

For northern hemisphere dwellers, here's hoping this issue also marks the passing of winter and promise of spring.

*Christopher Patchel, Editor*

*Joyce Clement, Coeditor*



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*\$100 for the best previously unpublished work  
appearing in issue 39:3 of Frogpond as selected by vote  
of the HSA Executive Committee.*



off to on I disappear into the visible

*Francine Banwarth*

# haiku/senryu

over the crib  
a universe  
in suspense

*Peter Newton*

nun's chapel  
the roar of a candle  
being lit

*Doris Lynch*

lightning strike in the bardo I ride a photon

*David McKee*

between  
goldfinches  
thunder

*Tanya McDonald*

junco  
in an ice-glazed bush  
a slight tinkling

*Ruth Yarrow*

moon jellies the music mind makes

*Lorin Ford*

prelude in e-flat minor  
the solace  
of november roses

*Judt Shrode*

winter night...  
I whisper her name  
to see if she's awake

*Bill Kenney*

piercing cold  
the shape of ravens  
in the crack willow

*Ron C. Moss*

calving the winter moon fjord

*John Stevenson*

shattered glass the pulse of red light

*Simon Hanson*

practicing CPR  
on the dummy—  
November night

*PMF Johnson*

a raspy cue  
from the cicada  
my living will

*Tom Painting*



deadlines...  
the biopsy has me  
counting backwards

*Thomas Chockley*

shortening days  
all the small things  
gone underground

*John Hawkhead*

eternity  
her final hours  
checking her watch

*Diane Wallihan*

evergreen  
her name from paper  
to stone

*Roland Packer*

heavy Buddha  
resting briefly  
on the sofa

*John Stevenson*

country philosopher:  
“Well,  
I’ll be.”

*Bill Pauly*

*be-be-be*  
a bird sings  
ten thousand shades of green

*Peter Newton*

pigeon coos  
*comme ci, comme ça*  
the day unfolds

*Madhuri Pillai*

rainy afternoon—  
on her windowsill  
a pile of wishbones

*Tanya McDonald*

the creek my imagination runs to its source

*Susan Constable*

rippling cloud shadow      what passes for a back story

*Jeff Stillman*

bus ride  
enough time to finish  
the whodunit

*Michael Fessler*

And then it hit me  
as I was making coffee  
for the two of us

*Natalia Iorlano*

struck dumbilicus

*David J. Kelly*

conversation starter the tartan's pattern

*Alan S. Bridges*

you smile  
I smile  
the teapot's piccolo

*Robert Witmer*

record temperatures—  
the raspberry's white heart  
left on the cane

*Sandra Simpson*

skinny dipping  
the pull of the moon  
in your voice

*Elliot Nicely*

a sudden gust  
lifts the low pine branch  
rabbits all eyes

*Marian Olson*

what are you telling me spruce needle rain

*Polona Oblak*

hayloft  
trusting the barn cat  
to keep secrets

*Sue Colpitts*

stroke the dog,  
bury the dog—  
wander into woods

*William M. Ramsey*

keeping pace with me hunter's moon

*Srinivasa Rao Sambangi*

step by step each jetty stone shaping me

*Bill Cooper*

talus slope  
my surefooted son  
so far . . .

*Tom Painting*

dawn-wet grass  
my daughter's command voice  
across the parade grounds

*Hannah Mahoney*

mushroom risotto  
the way my mother said  
keep stirring

*Tiffany Shaw-Diaz*

Thanksgiving  
the recipe I know  
by heart

*Julie Warther*

unshelled pistachios  
my father  
on marriage

*Tiffany Shaw-Diaz*

Frosted juniper berries  
in forest shadows—  
the quarreling jays

*Rebecca Lilly*

into battle  
applying war paint  
at each red light

*David J. Kelly*

where we buried  
the hatchet  
red roses

*Robin White*

Satan waits  
at the gates of hell—  
bookmarking Milton

*Mark Dailey*

making a pot  
drinking a cup  
winter night

*Isak Kempe*



talking to myself  
versus talking to no one  
clozapine

*Neal Whitman*

October wind  
parsing the leaves from the trees...  
such long whispering

*Wally Swist*

lit ship  
on the night horizon  
no reply

*Els van Leeuwen*

burnt coffee  
the taste of nothing  
left to say

*Glenn G. Coats*

a Christmas card  
unsigned—  
winter solstice

*Paul David Mena*

my untitled document on Saturn yet another moon

*David Boyer*

I darken  
a blank  
page  
at night  
hoping for stars

*David Boyer*

a trunk here  
leaves there  
oak gall ink

*Renée Owen*

done in cursive  
his report  
on dinosaurs

*Bill Pauly*

car museum  
a short walk from  
the tar pits

*Gregory Longenecker*

playing quarters  
eight feet above  
the bronze age

*Patrick Sweeney*

rusting hulks  
the sunset estuary  
drains molten iron

*John Hawkhead*

venus in the river  
the houseboat turns  
on the tide

*Els van Leeuwen*

boarded up casa  
lizards flick through  
lost dreams

*Marian Olson*

catching my eyes  
the scent  
of her perfume

*Jeff Hoagland*

foehn wind  
startled from sleep  
by my own snoring

*Polona Oblak*

false spring  
 I rub red marker  
 from her lips

*Nick Hoffman*

the way of a petal  
 becoming  
 the way of a rose

*Natalia L. Rudychev*

butterfly mind  
 flower to flower  
 then over the fence

*Garry Gay*

unlatched gate —  
 a shame we  
 never met

*John Martone*

the kiosk girl  
 gone with the kiosk  
 first autumn leaves

*David Jacobs*

maple keys  
I download a boarding pass  
to my iPhone

*Carolyn Hall*

alpenglow  
each nook  
in my pack

*paul m.*

scenic view ...  
a sign that says  
SCENIC VIEW

*Jeannie Martin*

trout lilies  
within reach  
sound of the falls

*Tom Clausen*

dwindling river  
grandmother knits  
by touch

*Martha Magenta*

everything passes the rattle grass

*Lorin Ford*

xeriscaping  
if only  
i could

*Michael Henry Lee*

water  
to cool the fish  
in yesterday's paper

*Guy Shaked*

his last words  
the hint of green  
in a fallen leaf

*J. Brian Robertson*

a field of lavender  
half my heart  
pumps shadows

*Patrick Sweeney*

blue moon  
the busker  
rips it up

*Helen Buckingham*

summer's over  
an orange in the mesh  
of his backpack

*Brad Bennett*



finding my place  
in the asperger's spectrum  
winter rainbow

*J. Zimmerman*

October afternoon  
how easily a prayer would fit  
the kitchen sunslant

*Burnell Lippy*

solstice night...  
the candlewick  
takes the flame

*Francine Banwarth*

Christmas Eve  
the blinking traffic lights  
of my hometown

*paul m.*

snow flurries  
the tilted seesaw  
evenly covered

*Christopher Suarez*

the dentist's diplomas perfectly aligned

*R. P. Carter*

first home —  
spacing seedlings  
with a ruler

*Mary Wuest*

late June ...  
I decide  
it's a weed

*Julie Warther*

basil  
into pesto  
into August

*Ann K. Schwader*

chai tea steeps  
morning sun sinking  
into sunflowers

*Michael Ketchek*

Polish vodka  
a hole deep enough  
to bury the stray

*Francine Banwarth*

hangover ...  
the outstretched wings  
of a cormorant

*Bob Lucky*

eggs in a shirt  
to be here  
so lightly

*Dan Schwerin*

headed home ...  
under her arm  
the duct-taped piñata

*Tom Clausen*

teaching a lesson  
to little stone throwers  
Poohsticks

*Robert Forsythe*

hard winds  
do the acorns pelting me  
blow from Aleppo?

*William M. Ramsey*

spring gust—  
the toddler's deep breath  
before her next yell

*Ruth Yarrow*

a silver spoon  
in its mouth  
autumn night

*Elmedin Kadric*

her Blacklama becomes her new moon

*Scott Mason*

another darkness deep inside the food chain

*David McKee*

free choice time  
a fourth grader draws  
corporate logos

*Brad Bennett*

rain...  
my son doesn't know  
why he's sad

*Agnes Eva Savich*

overcast the shadows no one sees

*Bob Lucky*

clouds thicken  
I step on the scale  
to a lesser weight

*Lenard D. Moore*

early diagnosis  
the sunlit side  
of the moon

*Sharon Pretti*

late bus  
warming my hands  
with my hands

*Jeannie Martin*

When did I don  
this glove of veins?  
deep winter

*Mitch Berman*

no watch stem to wind winter light

*Scott Mason*

geese returning  
out of formation  
all the day's plans

*Adelaide B. Shaw*

a plaque  
in her memory—  
dementia unit

*Mary Frederick Ahearn*

old age  
fluent in blossoms  
and wind

*Lori Zajkowski*

pond grasses  
a stillness on the verge  
of heron

*Michele Root-Bernstein*

until my shadow a log full of turtles

*Sandi Pray*

tendrils of fog  
I follow a thread  
back into the dream

*Annette Makino*

long night  
where words end  
her warmth

*Rick Tarquinio*



sirius rises...  
the stray dog asleep  
in a foreigner's arms

*Kyle Sullivan*

first frost  
even on the barn roof  
young wild turkeys

*Bruce Ross*

empty nest  
a space heater carried  
room to room

*Rick Tarquinio*

by the woodstove...  
reading a beer  
and drinking a novel

*Brent Partridge*

nailheads  
poking out of the siding—  
the new normal

*Cherie Hunter Day*

next time  
will the world be less crazy?  
supermoon

*David G. Lanoue*

New Year's morning—  
sliding doors open  
on pachinko din

*Philip Rowland*

Bangalore bazaar  
I barter over  
tarnished gods

*Terri L. French*

jet lag —  
with a suitcase click  
summer ends

*Michael Dylan Welch*

to unsee  
what I've seen  
more snow

*Dan Schwerin*

buried in the sand of fixed ideas

*Robert Epstein*

baloney  
the deli dog  
feigns a limp

*George Dorsty*

our different truths  
the rusty underside  
of a bluebird

*Robyn Hood Black*

half moon  
the election results  
divide our bed

*Michelle Schaefer*

end of the world  
nobody stays  
for the credits

*Bill Kenney*

small hand in mine  
my daughter puts everything  
in perspective

*Michael Blaine*

# linked forms

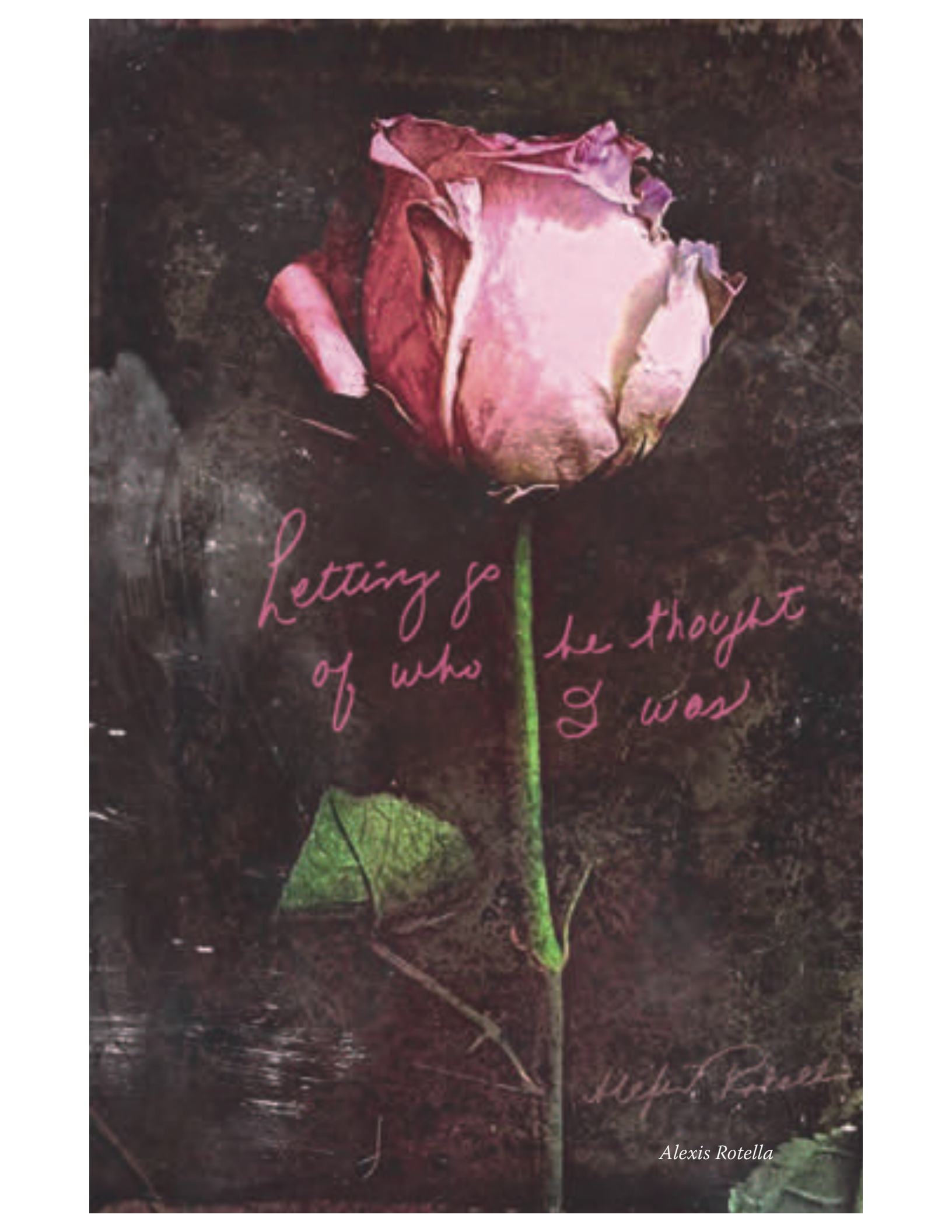
one day just like another

un  
ripe  
man  
go

*Jim Kacian*

s l o u g h e d s  
b o d y i n s k  
e d i s i  
o n d n a n

*Jim Kacian*

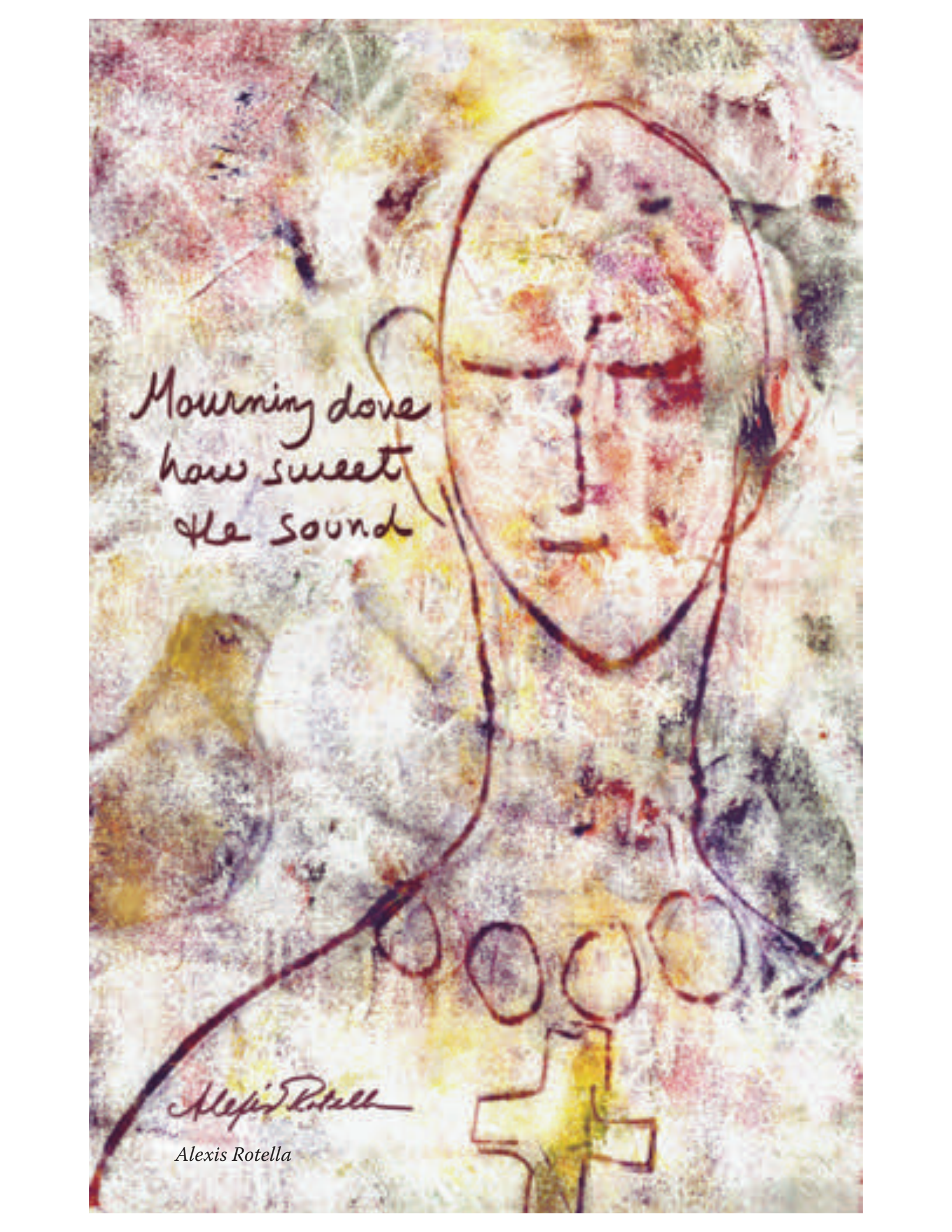
A photograph of a single, wilted pink rose with handwritten text in pink ink on a dark background. The rose is the central focus, showing signs of age and decay. The background is dark and textured, possibly a wooden surface. The text is written in a cursive, handwritten style.

Letting go  
of who  
he thought  
I was

Heidi Rose

*Alexis Rotella*



A watercolor painting featuring a central figure with a human-like face, closed eyes, and a simple cross-shaped body. The figure is rendered in dark brown outlines against a background of soft, blended colors including pinks, yellows, and greys. To the left of the figure, there is a faint, sketchy outline of a dove. The overall style is expressive and somewhat abstract.

Mourning dove  
how sweet  
the sound

*Alexis Rotella*

*Alexis Rotella*





**Hear the sough of rain  
I whisper a secret  
so I can get in**

吹き付ける雨 私は侵入するために秘密を囁く

*Tomas Tranströmer, haiku  
Anatoly Kudryavitsky, translation  
Kuniharu Shimizu, art*



**The moon?  
Yes, I said**



**opening the ward's blinds**



Frayed  
lifelong  
cloth  
mended  
a New  
Year  
begins



haiku x  
artwork

Kuniharu Shimizu

### Post-op

On his hospital room ceiling he sees cockroaches peeing. And later, bugs that turn into sandwiches, or maybe vice versa. Even now, thinking back on it, "Such cool bugs!" he says.

ICU  
the hour hand  
slightly out of sync

*Carolyn Hall*

### The Picture Library

That's right, the woman at the desk says in her Glinda the Good Witch voice. You may check out any frame you like—up to three at a time—and take them home with you for six weeks. Live with them. Watch them like television if you wish. Certainly pictures are worth as least as much as words. Don't you agree? Immediately, I plunk down Edward Hopper's *A Room By the Sea* on the checkout desk. I can almost hear the sounds of the waves when I look at it. Beside that, Chagall's *I and the Village*. In his defiance of gravity, Chagall must have been part acrobat. My third choice is a small portrait by someone or other. I can't quite make out the artist's name signed in the fold of a Navajo blanket. It's not always the who as the what, Glinda reminds me and I agree. She seems pleased by my selections as she waves her scanner over their barcodes. She slips the prints into a large clear plastic sleeve. Outside, it's dark and wet. All along my walk home street-lights flicker to life.

capturing her gaze  
the speckled wings  
of a cactus wren

*Peter Newton*



## Deeper

The one place on Earth where it is visible above ground. My hand first touches East and then, a step away, the West.

Iceland chill  
walking deeper into  
the continental rift

*Bruce Ross*

## Sign of the Cross

“This is why you won’t find God in a church,” he says, circling my waist with his hands as he stands behind me, drawing me closer while I gaze up at the canopy of far-flung stars. I lower my sights to where Orion in all his midwinter glory is striding above the hilltop, the three kings glittering on his belt.

“Look!” his lips brush my ear as he takes my hand and lifts it to the sky, unfurling my index finger to have me trace spirals of my own between the constellations. New galaxies are birthed at my touch.

It seems like yesterday we etched triskeles in the kerbstone, rendering in our own fashion the star-fields of Cygnus, all the while tilting our heads to the first glimmer of their calls, or the bell-beat of wings like driven snow. Once the bend in the Boyne rang with their voices, it would not be long before we welcomed the return of the sun.

And in a breath, we are Caer and Aengus. We are flying.

whooper swans...  
the angels we make  
in thundersnow

*Claire Everett*

**Infrastructure**

This power outage has me thinking. I sit here in my darkened house, lit only by a candle, and scribble this note to you on paper. Remember when we used to commit our words thusly, a flourish of handwriting, endearments etched in ink. Delayed gratification came easy because I knew you'd run your fingers over the page.

snowbound  
sugar at the bottom  
of my cup

*Tom Painting*

**Matisse Grasps the Essence of Things**

on the ground floor we do a first study after the model

sifting sunlight

on the second floor we draw from memory what has already been sketched hurrying downstairs when necessary to confirm the model in the mind's eye

the carpenter bee makes a pile

ascending at last to the third floor we do without the model entirely recalling by heart only those few shapes and colors that suggest the essence of what we have long labored to see and no more

of not-nest

in this way he taught us to make a life out of leave-taking

*Michele Root-Bernstein*

**After the Sheriff Leaves at 3 AM**

My son pokes his head into my room and says, "The air in here smells different."

"Is it bad?"

"No, dusty and sweet, like outdoors."

frayed satin trim  
his receiving blanket  
warm from the dryer

*Cherie Hunter Day*

**Cabin on the Lake**

"It is those we live with and love and should know who elude us."

*–Norman Maclean*

My sister heads west on Highway 401 instead of east. It is a long time before she realizes her mistake and turns around. She arrives at dusk and sits for a while behind the wheel. I ask her what she is doing. "I lost something," she says. "I'm trying to remember where it is."

On Saturday, she walks around all day with a coffee cup in her hand. Her steps are slow and her hands shake. There is a trail of drip spots on the floor. "I couldn't sleep last night," my sister says. "This place is too dark."

After dinner, I put *The Swinging Blue Jeans* on the record player. My sister comes alive when she hears "Hippy hippy shake," and jumps up on a kitchen chair and starts to dance. The thin cottage walls beat like a heart as she stomps and vibrates. "Now this is music," my sister shouts.



Sunday. We take tubes and float over the lily pads and out onto open water. “They give me the creeps,” she says. We float for hours as she tells me the same stories that I have heard before: how someone stole her phone, about the van she doesn’t recall crashing, and the wedding where no one was talking.

After my sister leaves, I open a cabinet door and the bottles of liquor that were full are now nearly empty. There are pills on the crooked bunkhouse floor that must have rolled away from her. I find a pile of cigarette butts beside the boat house where she spent hours watching the moonlight. The mosquitoes must have eaten her alive.

the chord breaks  
into separate notes  
first drops of rain

*Glenn G. Coats*

### **Bison Sky**

“The center of the universe is everywhere.” –*Black Elk*

Walking these long end-of-year nights, the sight of the constellation Orion fills me with joy. I love the wide sweep of its rectangle in the eastern sky, the calm of its pulsating anchors: Betelgeuse and Rigel. Instead of a hunting constellation, the Lakota people saw a giant bison stamped across the sky, the arc of its spine curved over the plains. Some nights, breathing in draughts of winter-cooled air, I smell a faint buffalo scent.

December sky  
making room for  
the new moon

*Doris Lynch*

**Honeymoon**

When I sense the disquiet turning all the way up, he reminds me, "There's a reason you survived cancer. There's a reason I survived drinking."

tussock grass...  
the lives of lizards

*Amelia Cotter*

**Nonfiction**

Thanksgiving is as good a time as any to accept a relative's stories recounting memories that never happened.

tossed in  
the dead frog also  
makes a splash

*LeRoy Gorman*

**Thermodynamics**

You were impressed that I knew local geology and coaxed words from my mouth: esker, drumlin, kame moraine. We dug in alluvial deposits hoping to uncover arrowheads. Once you found a remnant of bone and we made ourselves believe it was from a woolly mammoth. I lived in awe of the forces that sculpted our world and feared your leaving me a landscape under a mile of ice.

a stray cloud  
crosses the prairie  
the heat

*Tom Painting*

**Ageism**

This antidepressant so old-school I doubt anyone still takes it besides me. The doc pronounces me “beyond post-menopausal,” and so blames increasing hot flashes on this particular med. The choice: mental or physical misery. I’d take the road less traveled if only I knew which that was.

narcissi  
reflected in the pond  
the earth’s wobble

*Carolyn Hall*

**The neighbor unplugs**

his angel on December 26. He doesn’t get it. The lights aren’t just for Christmas, but for the darkness that comes after.

night wind  
holiday glitter sucked  
into the vacuum

*Francine Banwarth*

**Potatoes**

Those at the rear of the line have no idea that traffic has been backed up because a car hit a couch when it fell from a truck.

in the dark  
potato eyes idle  
until spring

*LeRoy Gorman*

**Nurse Et Al**

He lost her name yesterday but found it tucked between the toast and a runny egg. He supposed that one day it would be gone for good. The smell of horse liniment rose from her knotted fingers as she offered him each bite. She shaved his face and tied his tie before getting down to the hard business of forgetting.

daylight saving time ...  
holding hands  
a bit longer

*W.S. Manley*

**Since I Have Retired ...**

the sensation of time has changed for me. Once, like wire strung between anchored points, it had the pluck and twang of a guitar string. Now it's like rope. Rope sometimes tied to something, though never with much tension. And sometimes just hanging loose in my hand.

another school year  
certain trees turning  
before the others

*John Stevenson*

**A Change in the Light**

"It worries me, mum. I'm afraid I can't help her. She says she's too broken to be fixed ... that she feels too small for this world. I try to be strong, but at the end of the day, we're all alone inside our own heads ..."

He's been helping me with the shopping and we're on our way home in the lavender blue of a late winter afternoon. The sun

is low on the horizon. Seems like it was coming down as soon as it reached its height. We're waiting to cross the road and the proximity of other pedestrians has hushed my son. This will buy me a little time. I'm not sure what to say as it is. First love was never easy.

A man and his German Shepherd are at the kerb. They set off ahead of us the second the stoplight shows. It's not until then that I realise the dog only has three legs, but plods along, relatively unhindered. As we fall in behind them the dog falters, turning to look at us with a soft growl deep in her throat. We falter.

The man turns to us, "Please, don't hang back behind her... and I'd appreciate it if you didn't hurry past, either. She's a rescue dog, you see. Suffered a lifetime of abuse. In certain situations, she's very much on her guard."

"No problem," I reply, "what would you suggest?"

"Walk beside her, at least until we turn the corner."

The dog has sat down now in the middle of road, seemingly oblivious to the cars poised to move on both sides of the crossing. She waits for us to come to heel then starts walking again in her slow, deliberate gait. As we head off, I glance up at the faint glow of the first streetlamp and its halo of just-this-minute snowflakes. Taking my son's arm in mine, I give it a gentle squeeze.

bare maple...  
the robin's breast  
then its song

*Claire Everett*

*Julie Warther*

*Dan Schwerin*

### **Frayed Piece of Rope**

sunrise ...  
runner beans  
over the top

a shaft of light  
takes my hand

not letting go  
until I'm over water  
this frayed piece of rope

first day of school  
the small melons  
keep trying

in the tall grass  
one firefly blinking

star by star  
she takes him  
the long way home

*John Thompson*  
*Renée Owen*

### **What Remains**

the winged descent  
of a grasshopper  
Chippewa burial mounds

hidden in the mangroves  
an ancient shell midden

zigzag dash  
through the petroglyphs  
mating roadrunners

moonglow  
the time it takes  
a pyramid

the centuries-old gaze  
of a mausoleum cat

on the temple trail  
mosquitoes  
then night

*Dietmar Tauchner*

**Aisle to Eternity**

Acropolis  
the bricks of Europe  
slippery

Theatre of Dionysus  
the dream of  
my imagination

Epidauros  
the applause  
of an absent audience

Panathenaikon  
running on the athletic ground  
time

the orchestra  
of the amphitheatre  
october wind

amidst the Ionian Sea  
aisle  
to eternity

Aegean Sea  
I share the view  
with Socrates



*Joe McKeon*

**Swirling Snow**

awaiting word  
coffee in a paper cup  
too hot to sip

hospital chapel  
we convert to the faith  
on call

heirloom pin  
on her favorite sweater  
white lilies

swirling snow  
neighbors we never met  
say goodbye

death poem  
I leave the typos  
to others

# contests

## 2016 MILDRED KANTERMAN MERIT BOOK AWARDS

FOR BOOKS PUBLISHED IN 2015

*Judged by Joe McKeon and Naia*

Congratulations to all who submitted books to this year's HSA Merit Book Awards. The quality of submissions is a testament to the vibrant talent of those who study and write haiku throughout the world. As we share this year's awards, we invite you to savor these perceptive collections and make each personal journey yours.

### F I R S T P L A C E

#### **Answers Instead: A Life in Haiku**

*by Edward J. Rielly*

*Encircle Publications, Farmington ME*

*36 pages, 6×9", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-893035-29-4*

*\$15.95 from [encirclepub.com](http://encirclepub.com)*

From growing up on his family's dairy farm in rural Wisconsin, through marriage and beginning his own family, to reflections of and from his later years, Edward J. Rielly's haiku intimately provide glimpses of his life and the answers awaiting discovery within a life fully experienced. Rielly's imagistic haiku are stunning. On the surface they portray life in rural America from a perspective only one who has lived it can convey; however, as the depth within each haiku unfolds, the reader senses having lived it, too.

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This retrospective collection is organized into three parts:

**SMALL BOY AT THE FENCE.** Rielly's reflective haiku take the reader beyond the story of a boyhood immersed in rural farm life to universal revelations regarding the hardships and joys of daily life and the importance of family.

Dad and I  
planting a weeping willow—  
how little I know

gray winter day—  
after the farm sale  
the cow not sold

**ACROSS THE FULL MOON.** As Rielly's life progresses into experiences with fatherhood and aging parents, his haiku reveal a poignant range of emotions.

with a pink Kleenex  
rescuing a spider from  
my daughter's fear

across the full moon  
a small, dark cloud—  
my mother's "don't go"

**DANDELION PUFFS.** The answers take shape through Rielly's well-spring of intuitive insights and are offered up in this final section.

distant birdsong—  
the old man lays down  
his binoculars

listening to the sound  
 from the deep well...  
 stone on stone

The circle completes on the last page of *Answers Instead: A Life in Haiku*, with the final haiku of Rielly's retrospective collection.

another birthday—  
 the road back to childhood  
 calling me

## S E C O N D P L A C E

### **The Deep End of the Sky**

*by Chad Lee Robinson*

*Turtle Light Press, Arlington VA*

*40 pages, 5¼×8", perfectbound. ISBN 978-0-9748147-5-9*

*\$12.50 from [turtlelightpress.com](http://turtlelightpress.com)*

Rich in stunning imagery, Chad Lee Robinson's evocative haiku take the reader on an intimate journey through life in the heartland of South Dakota: life as he observed it, life as he lived it, and life as it continues to unfold. With his haiku *letting go / of the oars... / spring breeze* Robinson invites the reader to slow down and experience this sensory journey. In *winter stars... / the name of my father / of my father's father* he shares one of many intimate moments of deep connection to the land, to the life.

## T H I R D P L A C E

### **Deflection**

*by Roberta Beary*

*Accents Publishing, Lexington KY*

*29 pages, 5×7", perfectbound. ISBN: 978-1-936628-33-9*

*\$8 from [accents-publishing.com](http://accents-publishing.com)*

Relationships, expectations, roles, loss, aging—the stuff of life that often makes it hard to find center again—are the guideposts of each reader’s journey through *Deflection*. With the powerful honesty and evocative layering in this collection, Roberta Beary invites readers to explore some of life’s harsh deflections, as she reveals her own deeply personal experiences.

## HONORABLE MENTIONS

*(Unranked)*

### **Mostly Water**

*by Rick Tarquinio*

*Self-published, Bridgeton NJ*

*82 pages, 4½×7”, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-63110-158-8*

*\$12 from [bandcamp.com](http://bandcamp.com)*

### **⊕RS**

*by Dan Schwerin*

*Red Moon Press, Winchester VA*

*80 pages, 4¼×6½”, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-35-5*

*\$12 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com)*

### **Young Osprey**

*by Bill Cooper*

*Red Moon Press, Winchester VA*

*62 pages, 4¼×6½”, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-41-6*

*\$12 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com)*

# fortieth

With this issue, *Frogpond* enters its 40th year of publication. The contributions and service of 13 editors (one who served twice) has provided continuity and renewal for the journal from 1978 to the present. Editing a journal for a community of strong, outspoken writers is challenging, “behind the scenes” work that requires creativity, patience, diligence, and a thick skin. It is also one of the highest forms of literary criticism: the ability to judge the quality of writing, work with authors to improve their haiku and essays, then arrange the best submissions into an aesthetic and engaging reading experience. The Haiku Society of America has been blessed with talented editors who have helped shape the rich diversity of English-language haiku over the past 40 years. Each editor was/is also an accomplished poet, so to help mark this 40th year we offer a sampling of each editor’s haiku, all previously published in *Frogpond*. –Randy Brooks

**Lilli Tanzer**, *Hopewell Junction NY: issues 1:1, 1:2, 1:3, 1:4, 2:1, 2:2, 2:3, 2:4, 3:1, 3:2; 1978–1980.*

A jumble of words interspersed with messages uttered in passing

*HSA Frogpond 1:1, 1978*

silent growth  
centered in warmth  
circled by snow

*HSA Frogpond 1:4, 1978*

The vine declines my horizontal guide  
twists upward on itself

*HSA Frogpond 3:1, 1980*

**Geoffrey O'Brien**, *New York NY: issues 4:1, 4:2, 4:3, 4:4, 1981.*

spire  
entering mist  
fills the sky

*Frogpond 4:2, 1981*

**Bruce Kennedy**, *Brooklyn NY: issues 5:1, 5:2, 5:3, 5:4, 6:1, 6:2, 1982–1983.*

sunrise i pick skin peeling from my shoulders

*Frogpond 4:3, 1981*

Filling my flat  
with spring—  
a sparrow

*Frogpond 6:1, 1983*

that sonofabitch  
on the corner has a knife—  
the rain glistens on it

*Frogpond 6:4, MHL Award, 1983*

**Alexis Rotella**, *Mountain Lakes NJ: issues 6:3, 6:4, 7:1, 1983–1984.*

chin on the broom    floating petals

*Frogpond 5:4, 1982*

Moving with  
the clock-tower's shadow,  
the flower lady.

*Henderson Award (3rd) 1984*

Wet cement    the possibilities.

*Frogpond 18:2, 1995*

**Elizabeth Searle Lamb**, *Santa Fe NM: issues 7:2, 7:3, 7:4, 8:1, 8:2, 8:3, 8:4, 9:1, 9:2, 9:3, 9:4, 10:1, 10:2, 10:3, 10:4, 11:1, 11:2, 11:3, 11:4, 12:1, 12:2, 12:3, 12:4, 13:1, 13:2, 13:3, 13:4, 1984–1990. Santa Fe NM: issues 17:1, 17:2, 17:3, 17:4, 1994.*

leaving all the morning glories closed

*Henderson Award (1st) 1978*

cry of the peacock the crack in the adobe wall

*Henderson Award (2nd) 1981*

a spider's web  
across the windharp  
the silence

*Henderson Award (3rd) 1982*

**Sylvia Forges-Ryan**, *North Haven CT: issues 14:1, 14:2, 14:3, 14:4, 15:1, 15:2, 16:1, 16:2, 1991–1993.*

Winter morning—  
the closet dark  
with old shoes

*Frogpond 8:1, MHL Award, 1985*

urban sunrise  
the garbage truck brakes  
heave a sigh

*Frogpond 16:2, 1993*

A field of sunflowers  
all my summers clear  
back to childhood

*Frogpond 35:2, 2012*



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**Kenneth C. Leibman**, *Archer FL: issues 18:1, 18:2, 18:3, 18:4, 19:1, 19:2, 19:3, 20:1, 20:2, 20:3, 20 Supplement, 1995–1997.*

propane getting low  
but beneath the tank cover  
a wren's nest

*Frogpond 11:2, 1988*

21-gun salute  
shell casings fall  
on the grave

*Frogpond 18:4, 1995*

the words unspoken ...  
waiting for the toast  
to pop up

*Brady Award (HM) 1990*

**Jim Kacian**, *Winchester VA: issues 21:1, 21:2, 21:3, 22:1, 22:2, 22:3, 22 Supplement, 23:1, 23:2, 23:3, 24:1, 24:2, 24:3, 25:1, 25:2, 25:3, 26:1, 26:2, 26:3, 27:1, 27:2, 27:3, 1998–2004.*

winter seclusion  
tending all day  
the small fire

*Henderson Award (3rd) 1995*

gunshot the length of the lake

*Henderson Award (2nd) 2005*

i hope i'm right where the river ice ends

*Frogpond 35:2, 2012*

**John Stevenson**, *Nassau NY: issues 28:1, 28:2, 28:3, 29:1, 29:2, 29:3, 30:1, 30:2, 30:3, 2005–2007.*

applauding  
the mime  
in our mittens

*Frogpond 25:1, 2002*

jampackedelevatoreverybuttonpushed

*Frogpond 25:2, 2002*

it's winter now  
people have stopped saying  
it's winter

*Frogpond 33:2, 2010*

**George Swede**, *Toronto, ON: issues 31:1, 31:2, 31:3, 32:1, 32:2, 33:3, 34:1, 34:2, 34:3, 35:1, 2008–2012.*

She won't speak to me...  
neither will Basho, Buson  
or even Issa

*Frogpond 9:4, 1986*

thick fog lifts  
unfortunately, I am where  
I thought I was

*Frogpond 20:2, 1997*

among the gravestones  
with names worn away  
children play hide-and-peek

*Henderson Award (HM) 2004*

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**Francine Banwarth**, *Dubuque IA: issues 35:2, 35:3, 36:1, 36:2, 36:3, 37:1, 37:2, 37:3, 38:1, 38:2, 38:3, 2012–2015.*

child's wake  
the weight  
of rain

*Henderson Award (1st) 2005*

winter  
night  
faking  
it

*Frogpond 33:1, 2010*

spindrift...  
I go where  
the story takes me

*Henderson Award (2nd) 2016*

**Aubrie Cox**, *Knoxville TN: issues 39:1, 39:2, 2016.*

mating dragonflies—  
my overuse  
of dashes

*Frogpond 35:1, MHL Award, 2012*

firefly flashes the distance of narrative

*Frogpond 37:2, 2014*

paper stars  
I try on  
his last name

*Frogpond 38:2, 2015*

**Christopher Patchel**, *Libertyville IL: issues 39:3, 40:1, 2016–2017.*

a path of leaves  
our conversation  
turns wordless

*Frogpond 26:2, 2002*

a recurring escape from my father's dream

*Henderson Award (HM) 2011*

freight track the far ends of visible light

*Frogpond 38:1, 2015*



# essays

## “TURTLE”

### FROM A FIELD GUIDE TO NORTH AMERICAN HAIKU

by Charles Trumbull

*A Field Guide to North American Haiku is a long-term project along the lines of a haiku encyclopedia-cum-saijiki, a selection of the best English-language haiku arranged by topic and attempting to illustrate what it is about a given topic that attracts poets to write. When complete, the Field Guide project will comprise multiple thick volumes keyed to the several topics in traditional Japanese saiiki (haiku almanac) and Western counterparts, notably William J. Higginson's Haiku World: An International Poetry Almanac (1996). These topics are: Season, Sky & Elements, Landscape, Plants, Animals, Human Affairs, and Observances. The current compilation presents “Animals: reptile: turtle.” The haiku are selected from my Haiku Database and are offered as prime examples of haiku in English that illuminate our points. The Haiku Database currently contains just over 350,000 haiku. I sometimes indicate the count of haiku in the Database on the given topic in this form: N=520; J=46, meaning in this case there are 520 “turtle” haiku in the Database, of which 46 are translations from Japanese. These numbers have no absolute significance but are useful in gauging the significance of a subject in haiku—i.e., a very rough frequency index.*

Turtles are believed to be the oldest extant members of the reptile class, having originated more than 150 million years ago. Turtles are characterized by a hard protective shell and by their longevity. Some species can live for hundreds of years. Though the three types are rarely distinguished in common usage, much less in haiku, technically *turtles* live in water, *tortoises* on

land, and *terrapins* live in either or both but always near water.

Specific types of turtle are not often named in haiku beyond simply “tortoise” or “terrapin.” The types that are occasionally mentioned include painted, leatherback, loggerhead, snapping, box, and mud turtles. Rarely does naming the type of turtle add much meaning to the haiku.

Japanese haiku refer almost exclusively to sea turtles, and “sea turtle” (海亀 *umigame*) is a *kigo* for mid-summer. Higginson admits “turtle” (亀, *kame*) as a season word for all summer. Most turtle haiku by Japanese have an element of time or longevity, for example:

What matter if I live on—  
a tortoise lives  
a hundred times as long.

*Issa, in Yoël Hoffmann, Japanese Death Poems, 1986*

Turtles in Japanese haiku are often said to cry or make similar sad sounds (亀鳴 *kame naku* = turtle chirping):

turtle’s crying  
is like my crying  
over my shortcomings

*Ishihara Yatsuka, trans. Hiroaki Sato, Frogpond 19:3, 1996*

sorting the letters  
of my deceased friend—  
a tortoise cries

*Fay Aoyagi, Chrysanthemum Love, 2003*

English-speaking turtles, however, are more often noted for their silence:

sea turtle:  
her silence enters  
the surf’s roar

*Ruth M. Yarrow, Modern Haiku 25:2, 1994*

Longevity implies doggedness, wisdom, and even sanctity:

a pond turtle rises from 200 million years

*Marlene Mountain, Roadrunner VII:4, 2007*

thundering rain —  
an ancient pattern gleaming  
on the turtle's shell

*Wally Swist, Modern Haiku 27:3, 1996*

turtle 100 years  
without mouth talk  
straight at me

*Paul Reys, 22 Ways to Nowhere, 196?*

on the creek bottom,  
century-old snapping turtle:  
years of beer bottles

*Nicholas A. Virgilio, Frogpond 13:4, 1990*

Surely because of turtles' wisdom, many cultures attribute spirituality and godlike behavior to them. It is often said, for example, that the Earth is balanced on the back of a giant turtle, and these creatures are stock figures in folktales and fables, especially of Native American peoples. Legends and myths would seem to be fruitful hunting grounds for haiku poets, yet this area has yet to be much exploited. A few appealing exceptions:

box turtle  
gods look  
like that

*John Martone, Box Turtle, 2008*

a turtle rises  
from the stone buddha's shadow  
break of day

*Karma Tenzing Wangchuk, Stone Buddha, 2009*

Turtle Dance  
 the youngest boy  
 almost in step

*Marian Olson, Desert Hours, 2007*

One finds an occasional allusion to a fabulous race:

Year of the Hare;  
 in the window of the PET SHOP  
 tortoises for sale.

*Lorraine Ellis Harr, Selected Senryu, 1976*

The turtle's carapace attracts great interest among poets, who often relate emotionally to the beast and impute human feelings of isolation, solitude, and loneliness to it:

empty pond  
 winter's  
 tortoise shell

*John Martone, Modern Haiku 37:2, 2006*

turtle's shell  
 the smooth emptiness  
 inside

*Jim Kacian, Six Directions, 1997*

deep inside  
 the turtle's shell  
 no wind

*Wayo Bo (pseud.), Roadrunner, IX:3, 2009*

Two old mud-turtles  
 dozing on the river bank . . .  
 each in his own shell.

*Evelyn Tooley Hunt, American Haiku 3:1, 1965*

The silent communing  
 with the tortoise in his shell  
 and I in mine.

*Foster Jewell, Modern Haiku 7:4, 1976*



Turtles and the stones on and among which they are frequently observed have a natural affinity for each other, at least in the minds of haiku poets. Undoubtedly this has to do with the fact that they look alike and are both rather slow moving:

Christmas Eve  
the stone can't hold  
another turtle *paul m., Few Days North Days Few, 2011*

Indian summer  
a turtle on a turtle  
on a rock *Peggy Willis Lyles, The Heron's Nest 3:10, 2001*

shallow creek—  
a stone frees itself  
into a turtle *Edward J. Rielly, Answers Instead, 2015*

boys with a stone  
try to crack the turtle's shell  
*Bob Boldman, Eating a Melon, 1981*

In and out of its shell, in and out of the water, the turtle's head provides endless fascination for the haiku poet:

a turtle raises its head  
as high as it will go ...  
dawn *Larry Gates, Modern Haiku 17:3, 1986*

Around the bend  
a log lying in the stream  
—the turtle's ears *Robert Spiess, The Turtle's Ears, 1971*

slow thunder...  
 through pond moss  
 a turtle's back

*Frank K. Robinson, High/Coo 6:22, 1981*

sultry afternoon  
 turtle noses stipple  
 the glossy lake

*Ebba Story, Modern Haiku 29:1, 1998*

all the turtles  
 are headless—  
 the heat

*Ty Hadman, Modern Haiku 23:1, 1992*

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

*Virgil Hutton, Modern Haiku 10:1, 1979*

The turtle's unhurried gait is a frequent subject of haiku; so are the advantages and consequences of its moving slowly:

The year's first turtle  
 slowing...  
 still slowing

*Vincent Tripi, The Heron's Nest 7:3, 2005*

Stopping the jogger  
 in his tracks  
 a tortoise

*Alexis K. Rotella, Clouds in My Teacup, 1982*

midday  
 the tortoise halfway  
 round its pen

*Michele Root-Bernstein, Dandelion Wind, 2007*

tortoises  
 mating  
 the long day

*Carolyn Hall, Modern Haiku 43:3, 2012*

— — — — —

— — — — —

crushed turtle shell nearly across

— — — — —

*Robert Spiess, Some Sticks and Pebbles, 2001*

Sea turtles laying eggs on the beach—in haiku this typically happens symbolically under a bright moon—and the newborns’ perilous trip back to the ocean past predators and despite distractions also captures the imagination of many poets:

a leather back turtle  
 transporting the full moon  
 on a lonely beach

*Keith A. Simmonds, Ito En Oi Ocha New Haiku Contest 2012*

a full moon rises—  
 the sea turtle covers  
 her “one-in-a-thousand”

*Nina A. Wicker, Wild Again, 2005*

moonrise:  
 turtle’s white egg  
 almost buried in the sand

*June Moreau, Boston Haiku Society News, 2001*

no last goodbye  
so soundlessly the turtle  
returns to the sea

*Carolyn Hall, The Heron's Nest 12:4, 2010*

night surf  
lit by condo lights  
a sea turtle  
returns

*Keiko Imaoka, Centerfold website, 1998*

beach lights . . .  
a baby sea turtle  
headed the wrong way

*Mary Wuest, Modern Haiku 39:1, 2008*

autumn leaves  
the turtle eggs  
that never hatched

*Linda Robeck, Dew-on-Line website, 2002*

The creature's human predators consider the soup made from turtle to be a delicacy, but the turtle as food is rarely a topic in haiku. One notable exception:

what thing cries out  
deep inside us  
cooking the turtle?

*Bill Pauly, Henderson Award (HM) 1980*

*Publishing these miniature topical haiku anthologies is an experiment to test the feasibility of the larger Field Guide project. Critique and suggestions, supportive or critical, are warmly invited; please comment by e-mail to [trumbullc@comcast.net](mailto:trumbullc@comcast.net).*

## A HAIKU WRITER'S TIME: LEARNING FROM KENNETH ATCHITY

*by Michael Dylan Welch*

In *A Writer's Time*, Kenneth Atchity's classic book on time management for writers (New York: Norton, 1986), the author makes a number of observations that would seem to apply to haiku poetry. If haiku is a poetic means of capturing—and releasing—haiku moments, then what can we do with our time to write this ephemeral poetry as best as we can?

Atchity lays the groundwork for his discussion of time management by identifying four founding principles: vision, responsibility, productivity, and professionalism (xviii). What sort of vision do we have with and for our haiku poetry? For many poets, the vision is simply to share personal experience, and thus create emotional connections and empathy between the writer and reader. We need not have a vision larger than that, because having certain agendas, such as promoting world peace or social justice, could easily distort haiku as an aesthetic endeavor. But giving some thought to our vision for haiku—that is, our own haiku—would seem to be a fruitful exercise. What is our goal with each poem, or a body of poems? What are we trying to accomplish? Beyond that, we all want to be responsible with our work, which may mean being true to human experience (which is not necessarily the same as reporting “what actually happened”), and not violating the privacy of others in what we write (and avoiding appropriation). We also want to be as productive as we wish to be, and as professional as possible in keeping records and in sharing and publishing our original work.

Atchity expands on these principles by offering four guidelines for good work habits (xviii). The first is to write with a purpose, which is an expansion of having vision for your work. Vision can also be the commitment to apply yourself to the task.

He begins his first chapter by saying simply that “Writers write” (1), noting earlier that “Discipline is the key....Talent is not a rare commodity. Discipline is” (xvii). He also says, as the second good work habit, to write to make a difference, which applies the goal of being responsible. For haiku, that difference might be as simple as brightening the day of one reader’s life with a carefully observed epiphany. If the purpose of haiku is to share them, as William J. Higginson said in the first paragraph of *The Haiku Handbook*, then sharing alone can make a difference if just one reader is sympathetic. The third habit is to keep the audience in mind. For haiku, this involves a transition from process to product, editing to prevent misreading, and knowing when to do that. Editing any text, including haiku, is a transition from the private to the public self, or, as Atchity puts it later, “In editing, you take out the private voice” (72). The fourth habit is to convey emotion, which is really the point of haiku, or at least a primary one—a transfer of energy from the source to the poem to the reader, as Charles Olson once defined poetry. We present objective sensory images to create emotion in the reader. As I say in my workshops, don’t write about your feelings; instead write about what *caused* your feelings. The point of all these principles and work habits is to “hook the attention of the reader” (xix). Indeed, Atchity says, “Writing must have an element of magic to it. When that magic takes over, the writer himself loses track of time during the writing—and the reader will lose track of time during the reading” (xix). Those, indeed, are haiku moments, and through them we approach the infinite and timeless.

In his first chapter, Atchity notes that “the business of being a writer is the business of developing self-awareness and honest introspection” (4). He quotes Keats as calling this “soul-making.” Our haiku cannot begin if we don’t notice, nor can they develop if we don’t contemplate what we notice. In his second chapter, the author says that “Learning to write is learning your own mind” (14). For the haiku poet, I would add that writing haiku involves not just close attention to the world around you, but the careful observation of your own emotions in reaction to everything you sense with our five senses. This is where haiku comes

from, and it all stems from learning your own heart and mind. Know thy haiku self.

Writing, Atchity reminds us, involves specific steps to creativity, which he outlines as dreaming, doodling, assembly, gestation, agenda, vacation, first draft, vacation, revision, focused gestation, agenda for revision, revision, and product (18). While this sort of timeline might be more relevant to writing novels or other long books, or even essays, we might still apply these steps to haiku. It's important to dream and doodle, and not to edit or revise at this point. This is a step of being vulnerable, and it's exactly this act of vulnerability and freedom that writing guru Natalie Goldberg promotes with her ten-minute free-writing exercises. It's important to take vacations from what we write, even if just a single haiku, so we can assess it objectively later. Put your poems aside for at least a month—maybe even a year (I try to fill up an entire notebook before considering any of its poems for publication). It's important to work through the most obvious images or juxtapositions we come up with in our first drafts to see if something better might be possible, especially to show rather than tell—although it's also good to know when to tell. But sometimes we can't see that until months later. And finally, we need to shift our focus at some point towards the audience and what will be clear to them instead of just clear to us.

In his third chapter, the author addresses the challenge of finding time to write. For me, a simple choice made all the difference for my haiku writing, and that was to buy a small pocket-sized notebook and keep it with me *all the time*. I always have a notebook in one pocket and a pen in the other. You might type into a smartphone instead, but the idea is the same. It gives you no excuse to avoid writing. More than that, it encourages you to write more, to be on the constant lookout for moments or phrases that might become haiku (and also gives you a single place for all of your new haiku). This opens the door to creativity. "Instead of trying to finish your work," Atchity says, "you need merely find time to do your work; then simply concentrate on doing it the best you can" (31), and that you should "Aim to do what *only you* can do" (32). Ultimately, he says, "No time is more

important than the time used to examine and schedule your time” (34). Do we, for example, give ourselves the gift of going for a walk in the woods or around the neighbourhood at least once a week specifically with the goal to write haiku? And if not, why not? If you build your haiku habits, haiku will come.

Atchity makes many other observations not just about the management of time, but about writing itself. For example, he says that “fiction is based on your success in activating the reader’s imagination, not in supplanting it” (69). This is a reminder to show, not tell, to let us feel wonder at the shade of low afternoon light that warms a glaciated mountain top. I particularly like his thought that “You learn to write quickly by learning to write well, not the other way around” (75). This might explain why some haiku writers can write good haiku quickly—because they’ve already learned to write well by writing slowly (and often).

One question that comes up naturally in the exploration of haiku is the matter of authenticity. Some haiku writers choose to write only what they personally experience. Others welcome vicarious experience from television or books. Or they riff off overheard conversations or engage with writing prompts. Still others welcome the imagination. My personal feeling is that all of these sources have useful potential. The trick is to make the poem, the finished product, come across to the *reader* as a believable experience. Authenticity is thus judged by the effect of the poem itself (often emotional), not by whether the event “really happened” or not. As Atchity notes in this regard, “Any writer who writes both nonfiction and fiction knows that both forms are ‘creative.’ Biography and even history are, in many ways, as fictional as fiction; and fiction can be as informative as nonfiction” (103). Haiku too, I would say.

As we know, haiku is an art of leaving things out. This is true of fiction, too. “Some of the greatest practitioners of dramatic fiction, including Hemingway and Chekhov, achieve their greatness by how little they leave in,” Atchity says. “The less there is on a page, the more the reader’s imagination is involved in recreating the fictional world. Through that involvement artistic communication is accomplished. The reader comes to share the writer’s



vision” (105–06). Surely the same is true for haiku. As Atchity says later, “The writer’s aim is to engage the audience’s imagination so that the audience feels it is creating the story” (129).

With poems as short as haiku, it’s understandable that we might repeat ourselves or others with similar subjects or experiences—part of something I’ve called déjà-ku. There’s a point where this becomes excessive, or even plagiarism, but for the most part we can’t help referring to what has been referred to or experienced before. Indeed, it’s this very sharedness of experience that makes it possible for one person’s poem to resonate with a complete stranger. We’ve all seen a toddler explore her first tide pool, or play fetch with the family dog. After all, there’s nothing new under the sun. As Atchity says, “Great writers don’t invent stories; they retell them, just as *Apocalypse Now* retells Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*. It’s the development that distinguishes one creative work from another, and makes them worth our attention” (120–21). Later, Atchity also quotes Philip Johnson as saying “You always copy. Everybody copies, whether they admit it or not. There is no such thing as not copying. There are so few original ideas in the world that you don’t have to worry about them. Creativity is selective copying” (176). This stance should not be seen as an invitation to irresponsibility, but we can also give ourselves a great deal of leeway, certainly at the drafting stages of our work. It seems to me that we should feel empowered to express ourselves freely. In copyright law, of course, you cannot copyright an idea, only the *expression* of an idea. Ultimately, instead of endlessly trying to “make it new,” we can do what Jane Hirshfield advises, to “make it yours.”

Whether we write haiku or other kinds of poetry, we love what we do. Sometimes we need to make time for haiku, or change our habits so we are able to give more attention to this art. It all comes down to passion. As Kenneth Atchity says in his introduction, “A writer, after all, is only a person who loves writing and believes in it strongly enough to want to do it well” (xiv). Isn’t that what all haiku writers are after, to do it well?

# reviewed

**Snow Bones** by Masaya Saito (2016, Isobar Press, Tokyo and London). 71 pages, 5½×8½", perfectbound. ISBN 978-4-907359-15-7. \$15 in the U.S. from [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)

*Reviewed by Dan Schwerin*

**S***now Bones* opens with a definition before the prologue. Snow bones are the “remnants of snow after a thaw; patches of snow seen stretching along ridges in ruts, or in furrows, etc., after a partial thaw.” By means of this image, Masaya Saito’s poetic narrative is suggested from only the traces of what remains.

Saito has given us an intelligent, innovative, and nuanced collection that features haiku in several voices and finely layered narrative sequences. The preponderance of space, the bare cutting of the lines, and fresh juxtapositions bring rewarding reading from a poet who just uses the bones. This may be Saito’s signature poem—it appears in *Haiku in English* (2013), as well as in his first collection, *Ash* (1988), and now with some changes in this second collection:

An empty plate

smashing it  
autumn clearer

The prologue of the book is one poem:

A cold sunset

on the cliff, me  
without wings

Saito's form slows the reader, but also moves us through this work almost as if with bread crumbs. Each haiku works on its own, and is satisfying, with many surprises born from language and cutting as in that terrain-modified self, "on a cliff, me." Some key words from poems on the opening pages suggest how he carries the reader: *across, footprints, distance, crossed, nameless, each, plodding*, down through lines that include and lead to: *old, temple, doll, winter, alone, inside*.

In the middle two sequences of the book Saito makes use of three *metropolis* narrators (*first voice, second voice, third voice*), and three *countryside* narrators. The cumulative effect of all these indeterminate, unconnected, monologue narrations is a sense of shared isolation as each individual navigates the transient moments of their inner and outer worlds.

I have been tired of mist haiku for about twenty years, but Saito uses it in one of my favorites of his:

A misty night

I exist  
as footsteps

Note the narrative of small departures that take us through the collection as in:

To live  
is to move

a winter sparrow

The juxtaposition is layered so that the reader has to search for connections in the same way that the poet writes about his own exploration. The images are just enough to elicit the delight of discovery, and the words move the reader methodically through some cold but bracing inner geography.

The snowfield

those gravestones  
crowded together

A visit to a grave

a candle flame  
shielded with my hand

Some stretches in this book seem to whisper the same journey-  
ing by foot we know from Santōka Taneda. There is a similar  
sparseness in the voices:

Blue sky

I uncross  
my arms

Scholar, translator, and poet Richard Gilbert's review in the *Kyoto Journal* (#87, Nov., 2016) reads in part, "Saito's intellectual and compositional knowledge of haiku in both English and Japanese is deep," and "...Saito has crafted a masterpiece which illuminates further possibilities for haiku in English, crosses and perhaps eliminates the threshold separating the genres of 'haiku' and 'modern poetry' as such."

The pilgrimage arrives at the epilogue having led us with innovative form, smashing through the existential bones.

Driving away

in the rear-view mirror  
a cold sunset

**Lit from Within** by Ruth Yarrow (2016, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA). 150 pages, 6×9", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-68-3. Watercolor artwork by Ruth Yarrow. \$15 from [www.redmoonpress.com](http://www.redmoonpress.com). All profits go to Southside Community Center, Ithaca NY.

*Reviewed by Cherie Hunter Day*

"My heart is by now in its rightful place, in proximity to my hands, which are made to reach out, as I write, to all those around me."

—Alice Walker

As part of a college course she was teaching in the early 1970s Ruth Yarrow asked her students to write haiku as a way to connect with the environment. She tried the form as well, and what began as an exploration of nature writing became a life-long pursuit. *Lit from Within* is a collection of over two hundred of her favorite published haiku across the years from the various localities where she has lived and worked.

Her journey begins in "North: Upstate New York and Canada." The haiku that opens the collection is one for which she is best known, and it remains one of her favorites.

warm rain before dawn  
my milk flows into her  
unseen

This haiku is as powerful today as it was when it was first published in 1981 (*Cicada* 5:1). I nursed my son, and my memory of that experience is still fresh when I read this haiku. Yarrow was completely present to the intimacy of that moment, listening with her whole body. The haiku validates a deeper knowledge—ancient, benevolent, and earth-wise—and was particularly affirming to my own haiku journey. She granted permission to see every moment as an opportunity to listen, learn, and witness. Her stance was inherently generous and inclusive. Love is the

quiet heart of activism. And we still have 208 more exceptional haiku to consider in *Lit from Within*.

She draws a steely strength from her Quaker background and has put that pacifist resistance to the test. Readers can feel her conviction, but the haiku are roomy enough for us to enter and draw our own conclusions.

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

riot police face us —  
just above the tension  
a gull floats

Yarrow's use of sound in her work is particularly keen and well-wrought. Here are two examples from the "South: West Virginia to Costa Rica" section:

mountain evening:  
below the fiddle music  
thunder

tropical night surf  
each crash and hiss  
phosphoresces

In the first example the focus is outward. The fiddle music is layered on top of the much more primordial sound of thunder. In the second example, sound has entered the words. The hissing sibilant sounds in "crash and hiss" and "phosphoresces" imitate the surf. It is also interesting to note that in the pronunciation of the word "phosphoresces" the sound registers just ahead of the meaning of the word. The delivery is biologically accurate. The tiny dinoflagellates need the surf's agitation to shine. It is this level of detail that makes Yarrow's work special.

Yarrow is an avid birder and a number of her haiku are about

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her feathered friends. She knows them not only by name and habitat but by their songs as well. One of my favorites is:

stalking the grouse—  
his booming vibrates  
all my hollows

The Haiku Foundation Lectures recorded a YouTube video of Yarrow reading her bird haiku at Haiku North America 2015 at Union College in Schenectady, New York. In between each haiku she makes the appropriate bird call. It's a delightful and unforgettable presentation ([youtu.be/vuVSt6Om2aw](https://youtu.be/vuVSt6Om2aw)).

“West: Kansas to Washington State” is the final section in the book and the remaining compass direction. Here her haiku reflect her love of camping and hiking with ample examples of the nature-centered haiku for which she is also known.

canyon dawn:  
a bat folding dark  
into a crevice

rounded boulders  
the mountain torrent  
around them

The title haiku is the very last poem in the book. A full-color watercolor by Yarrow depicting this scene graces the cover and brings the reader full circle.

dome of stars  
under it, a small round tent  
lit from within

Educator, activist, and naturalist: Ruth Yarrow is all these things and one of our finest haiku poets.

**Something Other Than Other** by Philip Rowland (2016, Isobar Press, Tokyo and London) 94 pages, 5½×8½", perfectbound. ISBN 978-4-907359-14-0. \$15 from amazon.com

*Reviewed by Melissa Allen*

Much of Philip Rowland's life in poetry, as poet and editor, has been spent exploring and promoting the boundary between and the cross-fertilization of haiku and other short poetry. As founder and editor of the journal *Noon: Journal of the Short Poem*, he has published haiku and short poetry side by side, making it clear how much they have in common and the extent to which they can resonate with and converse with each other. In a 2008 essay in *Modern Haiku* 39.3, "From Haiku to the Short Poem: Bridging the Divide," he explicitly addresses the relationship between haiku and other poetry, urging haiku poets to acknowledge how much haiku has in common with other types of poetry and to consider reading and writing beyond the boundaries of genre. And, of course, Rowland has long written both haiku and other short-form poetry, exploring what he felt he needed to say in whichever genre seemed most appropriate.

Rowland's new collection, *Something Other Than Other*, both demonstrates his range as a poet and puts into practice his ideas about how haiku and other poetry can interact effectively. Unlike his previous full-length collection, *Before Music*, which contained only haiku, perhaps half to three-quarters of the poetry in *Something Other Than Other* could be described as haiku, or haiku-like, or made up of haiku-like units. Many of these haiku have been published in *Before Music* or elsewhere; many of them are well-known poems that have already taken their place in the canon of contemporary English-language haiku:

winter closing in ...  
I visit the simplest words  
in the dictionary



But in *Something Other Than Other*, haiku are not isolated in their own section of the book—though many occur in sequences—but printed in juxtaposition with many other types of poetry, from haibun and tanka to fairly conventional free verse to experimental and concrete poetry. This juxtaposition allows the reader to see haiku not as a carefully fenced-off genre, constantly reminding you of the rules and history associated with them, but as part of the larger stream of poetry in general, sharing, in a larger sense, its history and goals. As Rowland explained in “From Haiku to the Short Poem”:

What does it really mean to “integrate” haiku with other poetry? How might this be done with a view... to stimulating the “ever new human undertaking of thinking together about the things that matter to us”? It has very much to do, I think, with having a wide range of poems “echo and reecho against each other,” creating new kinds of resonance and perhaps even new communities of poets; making us more aware of the limits of language and the syntax of poetry itself, so to speak.

One of the main themes of *Something Other Than Other* seems to be precisely “the limits of language”—the impossibility of completely capturing the evanescent, complex human experience in mere words. Yet another theme is the necessity—perhaps moral, perhaps psychological—of testing those limits. In the book’s four sections, the narrator seems to move gradually through several stages of coming to terms with both the limits and the challenge of pushing beyond them.

The first section is full of language that evokes dormancy, waiting, preparation; the season, largely, is winter. The effect is of hesitant frustration at the inadequacy of language, doubt that it can really ever come to fruition. Pregnancy, sleep and dreaming, the practicing of music are all common signifiers here for this fumbling at words:

sealed hotel room window in my dream I suckle a child

In the second section, which is a sequence unto itself, titled “Surveillance,” the language sharpens, becomes more concrete, takes on the task of describing the fine details of the waking world, but often with an emphasis on their surrealism:

inside an envelope  
inside an envelope  
funeral money

In the third and fourth sections, the narrator largely abandons this more or less conventional attempt at using poetry to describe the world and launches into a variety of experiments in language—found poetry, concrete poetry, and a one-word poem printed by itself on two otherwise blank pages: “verbatomb.” He seems to be working his way through a thicket of language, trying to get at some fundamental reality beyond it. Even the poetry that takes on a more conventional form becomes increasingly abstract and often directly addresses the question of what poetry is for and how it can best be written:

the ruination of the step  
in the performance of the step itself

as, with each poem, we  
bruise an exit from ourselves?

By the end, though, the narrator seems to have come full circle, back to musical metaphors and images that evoke incompleteness or fruitlessness:

dusk                      rearranging silences

*Something Other Than Other* uses the whole arsenal of poetic technique to argue, essentially, for the inadequacy of poetry. Paradoxically, the fact that the reader so strongly feels Rowland’s frustration is testament to the fact that though poetry’s ability to conjure reality may not be complete, it is powerful.

## BRIEFLY REVIEWED

*Reviewed by Randy Brooks:*

**Afriku: Haiku & Senryu from Ghana** by Adjei Agyei-Baah (2016, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA) 104 pages, 4¼×6½", perfect-bound. ISBN 978-1-936848-68-3. \$15 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com)

It is such a pleasure to find high-quality haiku in this new collection, *Afriku: Haiku & Senryu from Ghana* by Adjei Agyei-Baah, cofounder of Poetry Foundation Ghana and Africa Haiku Network. Published as a dual-language edition in Twi and English, most of the haiku are based on Adjei's cultural perspectives from Ghana. For example, he writes, *all that remain / of a lost tribe's story—/scratches and scars*. In another he writes, *dawn rivalry—/ a muezzin / and a rooster*. This is an exciting collection by one of the new leaders of contemporary haiku in Africa. I look forward to seeing the growth of haiku across Africa and this book is a preview of that anticipated growth.

**Catku: Haiku and Senryu** by Christina Sng (2016, Allegra Press, Singapore) 16 pages, 2¾×4¼", black and white softcovers, saddlestitch. ISBN 978-981-11-1483-0. \$5 from [christinasng.com](http://christinasng.com)

*Catku* is a micro-chapbook of 21 cat haiku. The afterword notes that Christina Sng "has been writing haiku and senryu since 2015 as a form of therapeutic meditation." Evidently her cat, Kit, has been a playful contributor to her contemplation, starring in these haiku. *light drizzle / an afternoon curled up / with my cat*

**A Constellation of Songs** by Christina Sng (2016, Allegra Press, Singapore) 16 pages, 2¾×4¼", black and white softcovers, saddlestitch. ISBN 978-981-11-1480-9. \$5 from [christinasng.com](http://christinasng.com)

Originally published as a pdf-file Origami Poems Project micro-chapbook, *A Constellation of Songs* is also available in a small print edition. The 18 haiku in this small collection are organized

into 6 strings. Each page forms a small triptych of 3 haiku on a related topic such as “The Birth of New Things.” Here are the 3 haiku from “The Agony of Loss”: *fading sun / the one-winged moth / tries to fly away* and *gray sea / I search each day / for traces of you* and *learning / the art of dying / chrysanthemums*

**A Drop of Pond** by Brad Bennett (2016, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA) 80 pages, 4¼×6½”, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-73-7. \$15 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com)

In Brad Bennett’s first full-length collection of haiku, *A Drop of Pond*, we find humor, clear observation, but most of all a sense of wonder. Bennett is an elementary school teacher, and from these haiku I can imagine how well he incites the curiosity of his students. For example, *the boy / belly down on a rock / shadowing minnows* or the title haiku, *a drop of pond / at the end of a beak / setting sun*. An avid supporter of wildlife preservation, Audubon sanctuaries, and national parks, Bennett invites us all to get out of our selves: *Grand Canyon / neither of us mentions / the silence*. In addition to the wonders of nature, he also conveys moments of love, hope, and togetherness. For example, *New Year’s Eve party / my coat on the bottom / of the pile*. This is an excellent collection of award-winning haiku and senryu.

**Down the Milky Way / Miliječnom Stazom** by Dejan Pavlinović (2016, Pula, Zagreb, Croatia) 150 pages, 5×8”, perfectbound. ISBN 978-953-59233-0-5. 75 Croatian kuna (about \$10.66)

Dejan Pavlinović started writing haiku in both English and Croatian in 2007 and *Down the Milky Way* is his first collection. In the preface, the late Jane Reichhold notes that Pavlinović’s haiku go beyond “noticing the little things that happen in our daily lives” in the way that haiku writers “show the reader the specialness of common life and how it relates to every thing in the world.” I agree that Dejan’s 100 haiku in this book go beyond mere description providing suggestions of another level of significance. The title poem *from star to star / down the Milky Way / a little finger*

instantly connects the distance of the heavens with the immediacy of someone pointing and admiring a creativity beyond us. As a teacher of second languages, including English, Pavlinović is comfortable and very proficient at writing in English. Although employing a conversational tone, he carefully crafts lyrical phrasing and subtle connotations. I conclude with a favorite: *out of the fog / straight into the nostrils / mimosa*

**Down to the Wire** by Rob Scott (2016, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA) 74 pages, 5×7½", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-76-8. \$15 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com)

*Down to the Wire* is a collection of "footy haiku." The book is organized as a series of Australian Football League match reports, with 7 to 9 haiku per match. Scott writes "football season, like haiku, is marked by the change of seasons" and "since football is played in nature's elements, nature is present in many of the haiku." The opening haiku is *new season — / the sun rises / between the goal posts*. Some of the haiku turn to the psychology of the game: *twilight / the defender caught / in two minds*. A favorite is the title haiku: *the game goes / down to the wire — / my thinning hair*

**Elemental** by Jay Friedenberg (2016, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA) 80 pages, 4¼×6½", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-74-4. \$15 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com)

Jay Friedenberg is a graphic designer and artist, known for his pastel landscapes and cityscapes. With his new book of haiku, *Elemental*, it is easy to see that he knows how to create an interesting exhibit of his haiku as well. This collection is organized into four sections based on the elements: terra, aqua, aeris, and cosmos (instead of fire). The haiku are carefully sequenced as an exploration of each element. For example, "terra" includes the haiku *the stories told / by each generation / sedimentary rock*. At the end of each section, there is a senryu for "comic relief" such as: *water, water, everywhere — / I've had too much / to drink*.

Jay writes with clarity, humor, and significance beyond the immediate scene. I conclude with his cosmic: *starry night / I exhale / the Andromeda galaxy*

**Every Chicken, Cow, Fish and Frog: Animal Rights Haiku** ed. by Robert Epstein and Miriam Wald (2016, Middle Island Press, West Union WV) 182 pages, 6×9", perfectbound. ISBN 978-0-9980732-2-4. \$20 from [middleislandpress.com](http://middleislandpress.com)

Haiku is not usually considered political or as a vehicle for debating the ethics of issues such as animal rights. However, through the simple act of calling for submissions and gathering a collection of contemporary haiku on the subject, the editors of *Every Chicken, Cow, Fish and Frog: Animal Rights Haiku* demonstrate that haiku can express a common ethos and shared emotions stemming from our human relations with animals. The haiku in this collection convey empathy for animals suffering from abuse, enslavement, and violent treatment. Epstein states in the introduction that haiku poets “draw on the power of intuition and an intimate, unmediated connection to their fellow beings.” Here are a couple of sample haiku: *office aquarium / the fish and I / in different boxes* by Yu Chang and: *not as funny / as it sounds / dead duck* by the late Carlos Colón. Here is an example of making an ethical decision: *New Year’s resolution / making my wardrobe / animal free* by Kyle Craig. And finally, a haiku of compassion: *how could the cat know / this fledgling too / was someone’s child* by William J. Higginson. If you enjoy this anthology, you might be interested in another collection of animal rights haiku also published by Middle Island Press in 2016: *Turkey Heaven* by Robert Epstein.

**Haiku 2016** ed. by Lee Gurga and Scott Metz (2016, Modern Haiku Press, Lincoln IL) 116 pages, 4¼×5½", perfectbound. ISBN 0-9741894-8-0. \$8 from [ModernHaiku.org](http://ModernHaiku.org)

This annual collection is arranged by the author’s last name, beginning with Melissa Allen’s wonderful haiku, *turn the record*



*over and start snowing*. I like the way this haiku conjures up memories of playing an old favorite LP album, with its static also serving as an indoor reminder of snow falling. *Haiku 2016* features playful haiku that turn toward language and its meta-physical significance. Consider the significance of a single type character as in editor Lee Gurga's *dotting an i / dotting an i / death verse*. In another example, Paul Miller wrote, *under snow comma embryos* giving full voice and substance to the comma. Or consider Francine Banwarth's haiku, *fallen leaves me with my grudges* which magically turns "leaves" from a noun to a verb in a millisecond, but resonates with a nagging sense of introspective frustration. My favorite is the collection's finale, a vibrant metaphor that casts its poetic spell, written by Peter Yovu: *two ballerinas in one skin a newborn foal*

**Hammerscale from the Thrush's Anvil** by David J. Kelly (2016, Alba Publishing, Uxbridge, UK) 50 pages, 5¾×8½", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-910185-52-0. \$14 from [albapublishing.com](http://albapublishing.com)

"Hammerscale" are flecks of metal left from working iron and a "thrush's anvil" is a flat stone used by a thrush to crack open a snail to eat the tasty bits inside. This first book of haiku and haibun by David J. Kelly is organized into the following sections: thrush song / shade of a tree / snails / stone / release. Kelly excels at bird and nature observation haiku, but too often includes abstract statements. For example: *as we search / for mightier weapons / crossing words*. A personal favorite is: *Winnie the Pooh country / we cross paths with / a woolly bear* which is playful, literary, and observant.

**Helices** by George Swede (2016, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA) 118 pages, 4¼×6½", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-70-6. \$15 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com)

"A helix (pl: helixes or helices) is a type of smooth space curve, i.e. a curve in three-dimensional space. It has the property that the tangent line at any point makes a constant angle with a fixed

line called the axis. Examples of helices are coil springs and the handrails of spiral staircases.” The first section of this collection is labeled “Single Helix” and starts with *sandcastle my carefully constructed self*. Swede places the construction of self-identity within his art (haiku), which he characterizes as a sandcastle—an ephemeral construct that lasts only until the tide comes in. This “Single Helix” section has references to creativity: *my poems... / the woodcarver’s / pile of chips* and also includes several autobiographical haiku. The second section is labeled “Double Helix” which refers to a pair of “congruent geometrical helices with the same axis.” From the first haiku, *wedding photo kiss / the merger of our / microbiomes*, it is clear this section is about relationships. The third section, “Triple Helices,” features broader social relationships—nationalism, war, gangs, politics, and social psychology. One of the haiku from this section is: *a monument / to a murderous dictator / mob of pigeons*. The last section, “Beyond the Triple Helix,” explores the origins of life and connections to the present and future. Swede starts this section with: *the day begins... / descendants of dinosaurs / darting, singing*.

**Highway of Sleeping Towns** by Deborah P Kolodji (2016, Shabda Press, Pasadena CA) 108 pages, 6×9”, perfectbound. ISBN 978-0-9915772-3-1. \$16 from [shabdapress.com](http://shabdapress.com)

Deborah Kolodji’s *Highway of Sleeping Towns* is a book of selected haiku from over 15 years of writing. The collection is refreshing to read because Kolodji does not repeat common haiku themes, but instead conveys a wide range of emotional responses to contemporary life. Her haiku do what the best haiku do—they offer surprising gifts of insight and emotion from our own lives. The title haiku is: *highway / of sleeping towns / the milky way*. A couple more favorites are: *thistles in bloom / grandmother’s needle / threaded in purple* and *tax day / my mother’s IV / beeps at me*. While employing ordinary, conversational language, she surprises us by the turn of imagery from one context to another. This is an outstanding collection all haiku lovers should add to their libraries.



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**In the Lantern Light** by John Gonzalez (2016, Alba Publishing, Uxbridge, UK) 50 pages, 5¾×8½", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-910185-54-4. \$15 from [albapublishing.com](http://albapublishing.com)

*In the Lantern Light* is John Gonzalez's fourth collection of contemporary haiku. Gonzalez brings readers along with him to a variety of settings, with a clear sense of perspective. For example, *three gravediggers / watching a funeral / from a distance* or *boat ropes / dangling and straightening— / tide in, then out*. Many of the haiku throughout this collection bring us back to images of death, funerals, or graves like a recurring chorus: *on a gravestone / a spider / plays dead*. This haiku is followed by *merry-go-round— / daughter all set / to catch me up*. The mix of life and death haiku makes for an engaging reading experience and reminds us of the ephemeral nature of our lives.

**Invisible Tea** by Kyle D. Craig (2016, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA) 72 pages, 6×9", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-71-3. \$15 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com)

In his first collection, Kyle Craig seeks to "risk delight." He opens with a quote by Jack Gilbert: "We must have the stubbornness to accept our gladness in the ruthless furnace of this world." Throughout the collection his haiku, tanka, and haibun playfully tiptoe on the curb between delight and the anxiety of injustice and suffering. The title poem is the delightful *high noon / a toddler pours / invisible tea*, but later in the book we find *nature channel / a toddler watches / mothers eat their young*. One of my favorite haibun is, "We Regret to Inform You" which is a litany of things that go wrong all at once, ending with the haiku *snow storm / grocery store shelves / out of milk*. Often he captures the perfect mix: *walking past the nightclub / a woman wears / her newborn*. This is an excellent collection by a promising new voice.

**Life Death etc** by Anna Maris (2016, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA) 78 pages, 4¼×6½", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-72-0. \$15 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com)

*Life Death etc* is a dual-language collection of haiku in Swedish and English by Anna Maris. Her haiku quietly explore experiences of hope, fear, loss, and a constant expression of caring. For example, in one haiku she writes, *paper boat / another worry / sails away*. This haiku starts with a playful scene that darkens into an attempt to let go of worries. The haiku in this book are populated by people who are often looking for sanctuary: *home town / in the familiar houses / strangers*. The haiku in the section titled “death” feature survivors, as in: *insomnia / the cold on the other side / of the pillow*. This is a collection of well-written haiku that are heartfelt in the universal language of being human.

**Matcha** by Stanford M. Forrester / *sekiro* (2016, Wooden Nickel Press, Windsor CT) 12 pages, 3×3”, Letterpress mini-chapbook, sewn. No ISBN. \$5 including postage from Stanford M. Forrester, PO Box 189, Windsor CT 06095

*Matcha* is the latest in a series of beautiful letterpress mini-chapbooks published by Stanford M. Forrester. The title includes kanji for *matcha* printed on the cover in bold silver ink and on the title page kanji in green ink. This small collection of 7 haiku and senryu are playful and refreshing: *poetry party— / the designated driver / just listens*. I like mini-chapbooks because they invite the reader in for a short visit with the author’s work. Come enjoy a little *matcha* with Stanford: *tea ceremony— / it begins and ends / with an empty cup*

**Naad Anunaad: An Anthology of Contemporary World Haiku** ed. by Kala Ramesh, Sanjukta Asopa, and Shloka Shankar (2016, Vishwakarma Publications, Pune, India) 234 pages, 5½×8”, perfectbound. ISBN 978-93-85665-33-2. From [vpindia.co.in](http://vpindia.co.in)

The title for this anthology comes from the Sanskrit concept of “the primordial sound in the cosmos, referred to metaphorically as AUM” which is “known as naad, and its resonance as anunaad.” The editors explain that the haiku in this collection

“resonate, each in a unique way—just for you!” This is an ambitious collection of haiku in English from contemporary authors around the world, representing diverse approaches and voices. You will find familiar haiku “friends” published in several previous anthologies, such as: *through the small holes / in the mailbox / sunlight on a blue stamp* by Cor van den Heuvel, as well as haiku by young writers such as Aubrie Cox: *roadside violets / all the places / I’ve yet to go*. The haiku range in topic from family: *goldfish bowl / my daughter asks / if I’m going to die* by John McManus to haunting nightmares as in *ghost town— / the sound of army boots / from alley to alley* by Kashinath Karmakar. The 746 haiku by 231 authors from 26 countries provide a showcase of evidence that English haiku is alive and well, resonating with significance throughout the world.

**Old Enough** by Bruce H. Feingold (2016, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA) 76 pages, 4¼×6½”, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-78-2. \$15 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com)

*Old Enough* is Bruce Feingold’s third collection of haiku. The short biography at the back of the book states, “He believes that haiku, like his work as a psychotherapist and as a way of life, is an art of the heart which taps our intelligence, creativity, openness, courage and honesty.” As I read the haiku from this collection I find haiku that give presence to heart, as in *finch’s red head / I want to / love again*. In another we join the adventure, *step by step / my daughter and I climb / the mountain mist*. The title poem is: *old enough / to just listen / trout rising*. This collection meets his stated goal of haiku as a means of sharing the significance of our lives.

**Out of Nowhere** by Rob Scott (2016, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA) 70 pages, 5×7½”, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-77-5. \$15 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com)

Rob Scott grew up in Australia but first learned about haiku while teaching in Japan. He is the author of a master’s thesis,

“The History of Australian Haiku and the Emergence of a Local Accent.” He is currently a teacher in Sweden. *Out of Nowhere* is Scott’s first book-length collection. Scott notes in his introduction that he does not write about Australia. Instead, the 82 haiku and senryu in this collection represent his attempt to “write haiku with a pulse.” I enjoyed reading this collection and would say this is a book of haiku that express the inner weather of contemporary life. The title haiku is: *wind gust— / out of nowhere / we start an argument* and on the opposite page we find *icemelt— / the moon drifts / through my whiskey*. Many of the haiku explore the challenges and joys of relationships: *spicing up the stew / she hands me coriander / in that dress*. Rob Scott has successfully written an outstanding collection of haiku with a pulse!

**Seven Suns / Seven Moons** by Michael Dylan Welch and Tanya McDonald (2016, NeoPoiesis Press, Seattle WA) 64 pages, 4×7”, perfectbound. ISBN 978-0-9903565-9-2. \$14.95 from [NeoPoiesis-Press.com](http://NeoPoiesis-Press.com)

*Seven Suns / Seven Moons* is a collaborative experiment in repetition and variation. Michael Dylan Welch opens with 63 sun verses, followed by 63 moon verses by Tanya McDonald. Then they collaborate by writing “seven suns”, then “seven moons” renga, concluding the book with a kasen renga shifting back and forth between “seven suns” and “seven moons” links. For example, *seven suns / gang members laughing / at a comic strip*. As I’ve said in previous reviews, I am not a fan of collections of haiku that employ continuous repetition of an image or phrase, but in this case I like the playfulness of the poets and the responsive collaboration evident in the renga. Also, each section starts with a prelude with variations such as “one sun”, “two suns” working up to “seven suns.” In the postludes that reverse the count back to one sun and one moon, I especially enjoy the sixth verses in both sections because they break free from the repetitive pattern: *two puns / the laughter / you never gave me* and: *two loons / snow-bound / on our anniversary*

**Scent of the Past...Imperfect** ed. by Renée Owen (2016, Two Autumns Press, Santa Clara CA) 32 pages, 5½×8½", saddle-stapled. No ISBN. \$8 from [jwrobello@hotmail.com](mailto:jwrobello@hotmail.com)

The Haiku Poets of Northern California have been hosting the Two Autumns annual readings for 27 years. This collection includes haiku from the August 28, 2016 reading in San Francisco. The four featured readers are: (1) Michele Root-Bernstein, who provides the title poem: *lilacs / the scent of the past / imperfect*; (2) Robert Gilliland, (3) June Hopper Hymas, and (4) Michael Sheffield. This reading series and the related chapbook provide an archive of many of the best of contemporary haiku poets over these three decades. Hymas' haiku, *abandoned homestead / a thin row of cottonwoods / in afternoon rain* speaks to my own memories of Kansas and what a difference a little rain makes.

**Silver Salmon Runes (Haiku / Senryu 2010–2016)** by William Scott Galasso (2016, Galwin Press, Laguna Woods CA) 106 pages, 6×9", perfectbound. ISBN 978-0-9706471-7-7. \$10 from [createspace.com](http://createspace.com)

This is a large collection of haiku and senryu by William Scott Galasso, organized by the seasons. Reading through the collection, with 2 or 3 haiku per page, I get a sense of authenticity and integrity as if I was reading someone's journal. The haiku are well written and accumulate into a sort of autobiography of the seasons. Here is a sampling from two seasons: *winter wind— / we lean into / each other* and *spring training... / behind the dugout / a new girlfriend*. Galasso also includes a haibun, sequences, and senryu, such as *sidewalk café / her love life lousy... / now we all know*

**Slicing the Morning Mist** by Carolyne Rohrig (2016, Free Food Press, Rochester NY) 28 pages, 4×5½", deckled paper covers, sewn. ISBN none. \$6.50 from [freefoodpress.com](http://freefoodpress.com)

This is a hand-sewn chapbook of haiku by Carolyne Rohrig. The title poem is *tai chi / slicing the morning mist / in quarters*.



The chapbook features 2 haiku per page with an underlying spirit of a peacemaker—someone seeking peace with themselves and others. This is a gathering of quiet, whispering haiku, such as: *village women in black shawls / gathering for the funeral / whispering*. Within these pages we encounter moths, cloudy skies, small talk, last words, confession, and my favorite: *pregnant—/ sucking at her feet / the outgoing tide*. This is an excellent serving of the best free spiritual food I know of, haiku.

**A Small Boat** by John Martone (2016, Samuddo / Ocean, Charleston IL) 60 pages, 4¼×7", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-365-54753-9. From [johnmartone@gmail.com](mailto:johnmartone@gmail.com)

With one haiku per page, *A Small Boat* lets us join John Martone in daily contemplations. Overall, Martone's haiku express quietude—letting things be without imposing our needs on them. One haiku says *every form / of solitude / autumn lakes*, and another, *your eyes get used / to the dark— / listen to that wind*. Some turn inward and ask for forgiveness, *digging up / a handful of moss / another sin* but most ask us to just notice the unnoticed as in the title poem, *gothic arch / a small boat / in the fresco*. Near the end of the collection we watch *a small boat's / wake widens / to the hills*

**Strange Silence / O Liniște Stranie** by Constantin Novacescu and Jim Kacian (2016, Waldpress, Timișoara, Romania) 96 pages, 5¾×8", perfectbound. ISBN 978-606-614-153-6.

*Strange Silence / O Liniște Stranie* includes 48 pages of haiku by Jim Kacian and 48 pages of free-verse poetry by Constantin Novacescu. All of the poems are published in both English and Romanian. Novacescu's poems employ surrealistic imagery with dream-like leaps of imagination. Kacian's poems are good examples of contemporary haiku, such as this favorite: *late summer / after the scab / the scar*

**With a Deepening Presence** by Don Wentworth (2016, Six Gallery Press, Pittsburgh PA) 100 pages, 4¾×6¼", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-926616-86-5. \$8 from Don Wentworth, 282 Main, Pittsburgh PA 15201

Don Wentworth is a seeker of enlightenment, the way . . . but like so many other writers he is unable to give up his attachment to poetry. In a section titled "Haiku Epitaph" he writes, *Let's talk / about attachment now / blue morning glory*. The collection has many references, quotes, and allusions to Buddhist and related literary concepts. However, Wentworth is always playful and spontaneous, as in, *no GPS / the dashboard Buddha / smiling*. One of my favorites: *spilling tea / on a book of mindfulness / again*

*Reviewed by Michael Dylan Welch:*

**African American Haiku: Cultural Visions** ed. by John Zheng (2016, University Press of Mississippi, Jackson MS). 198 pages, 6¼×9¼", hardback, 978-1-4968-0303-0. \$65 from [upress.state.ms.us/books/1855](http://upress.state.ms.us/books/1855) or on clearance for about \$15 on Amazon

It is rare for an academic book, let alone one published by a university press, to examine English-language haiku, and this book may well be a first—other than the occasional dissertation and a book or two that have concentrated purely on the haiku of Richard Wright (I also note Jeffrey Johnson's *Haiku Poetics in Twentieth-Century Avant-Garde Poetry*, which is also in the ballpark, but it does not cover any leading haiku poets of the last fifty years). The poets under discussion here include Richard Wright, James Emanuel, Etheridge Knight, Sonia Sanchez, and Lenard D. Moore, covered by two essays for each poet, except for Moore, who has three. As for the commentators, those in the haiku community may well recognize such names as Yoshinobu Hakutani, Toru Kiuchi, Ce Rosenow, and the book's editor, John Zheng, but not Sachi Nakachi, Virginia Whatley Smith, Claude Wilkinson, Meta L. Schettler, Richard A. Iadonisi, and Sheila Smith McKoy.

Consequently, one strength of this book is how it engages critical commentary from voices that the haiku community may not have heard of — or heard from — before. This helps us get out of our haiku ghetto. Brief biographical sketches at the end of the book tell us more about the book's pedigreed commentators, although it seems that some of them could benefit from having more experience with leading English-language haiku journals and criticism. Other strengths include the assessment of haiku as effective poetry, regardless of whether it is "haiku" or not, the exploration of jazz, blues, and improvisation, the innovations of some of these poets as they make haiku their own, and the adaptation of haiku to an African American vernacular. This book is not light reading, to be sure, but it provides essential discussions for anyone with an academic interest in contemporary haiku in English, especially for its focus on ethnic studies.

**Beginning: British Haiku Society Members' Anthology 2016** ed. by Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy (2016, British Haiku Society, Ramsgate, UK). 128 pages, 5¾×4", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-9063305-8. £4 from [blithespirit.editor@gmail.com](mailto:blithespirit.editor@gmail.com)

With *Beginning*, edited by the incoming editor of *Blithe Spirit*, the British Haiku Society celebrates twenty-five years of publishing its annual members' anthologies. Unlike most members' anthologies from the HSA and Haiku Canada, each BHS anthology has a theme inspired by a single word, and that word gives each anthology its title. The 2016 collection is the largest yet, with 150 poems. Two poems appear on each horizontal page in a pleasing hand-size book (although it would have been more helpful for the index to list names by last name rather than first name). After twenty-five years, it's refreshing to see all these poems that return to "beginning." A favourite, by Claire Knight:  
*a bough / heavy with snow — / her baby's first kick*

**Chrysanthemum Dusk** by Susan B. Auld (2016, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA). 64 pages, 4¼×6½", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-54-6. \$12 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com)



A collection of 48 poems, 14 of which are one-liners, and one of which is a visually spaced four-liner. Each poem appears by itself on the page, sometimes with a repeated chrysanthemum illustration, making for a relaxed read. We can depend on Auld to write varied and vivid haiku, as in *still fly / traces a slow circle / first frost and snow falling / on tangled trees / alone with my thoughts*

**Discovering Fire** by David Grayson (2016, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA). 160 pages, 5¼×7¾", perfectbound. 978-1-936848-59-1. \$15 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com)

David Grayson's short essays have been appearing steadily in various publications. They are conversational, light, and easy to read, which may be just what many readers prefer, but it means that they often just skim the wave tops rather than diving deep. For example, the essay on J. D. Salinger does a thorough job of citing examples of the writer's mentions of haiku in his fiction, but provides limited analysis of (or speculation on) their influence on English-language haiku, nor does it connect the dots to Blyth's translations that appeared around the same time, or to the rising influence of the Beat poets. And the thinking behind some essays could be more rigorous, such as in one essay about season words that implies "eucalyptus" to be a season word. But a quick review of guidance on season words from William Higginson, Gabi Greve, and other sources will tell you that it isn't, completely undermining the point of the essay. The poem quoted as an example had been entered into the season word category for the Shiki online kukai, but the organizers later realized that they had mistakenly offered "eucalyptus" as a season word prompt and shouldn't have. This suggests that at least some knowledge covered in these essays is simply "received" and not analyzed sufficiently. Still, it's good to have all these essays compiled in a single book, but the reader may well want to consider them carefully—with at least a pinch of skepticism. The essays are grouped effectively, and the structure seems to be modeled after Paul O. Williams' *The Nick of Time: Essays on Haiku Aesthetics*,

alternating sections of essays with four sets of the author's haiku, ten at a time. The essays are grouped into such themes as "Haiku Practice," "Haiku Poets," "Haiku and Art," "Haiku and Religion," and "The Short Poem" (the best section). A sample poem: *lay-offs— / the indents from the chair / still in the carpet*

**The Fingertips of a Glassblower** by Bill Cooper (2016, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA). 64 pages, 4¼×6½", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-62-1. \$15 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com)

As with his recommended 2015 book, *Young Osprey*, this book again features poems with rich subjects and diction (bergamot, Binh Dinh, spoonbill, farrier, dragonflying, mangrove, jambalaya, spalted, scherzo, opal, Respighi, krewe, matador, yarrow). The book's 88 poems (25 of which are one-liners) appear at one or two per page, which helps the reading experience unfold in a relaxed way. As in the previous volume, a handful of poems feel private, such as *near my first bedroom / a boy puncturing / the fire house*, but many others rise up with creative expression and fresh or intense seeing, such as *egret on a high branch / the lily eyebrow / of a gator* or *slowing the bike / in full bloom a field / of lavender* or *clanging halyard / a clam basket full / of snow*. In addition, several poems move beyond personal observation to take a refreshing stance of empathy, as in *high in the pine / an eaglet's first taste / of trout* or *cranberry sunrise oh to be a bog turtle*. One more favourite, because of its childlike delight and sharp observation: *muffled giggles / her smile reflected / in a crab bubble*

**Full of Moonlight: Haiku Society of America 2016 Members' Anthology** ed. by David Grayson (2016, Haiku Society of America New York). 150 pages, 5½×8¼", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-930172-15-9. \$10 from [2016.hsa.anthology@gmail.com](mailto:2016.hsa.anthology@gmail.com)

The 2016 edition of the HSA members' anthology presents 378 haiku at three per page, interspersed with three moon photos by Garry Gay, who also provided the moody cover image. This year's anthology had no theme, but a standout feature is the editor's

introduction that points out the variety and types of haiku produced by the society's members as a snapshot of where haiku is today, making note of *shasei*, nature poems, empathy, senryu, one-liners, two-liners, and even whiskey poems. All poems are arranged alphabetically by last name, which results in many serendipitous pairings of poems, as the intro notes, but it also makes the index at the end (which lacks page references) unnecessary. Here's the editor's poem: *mixing red and yellow paint / my son discovers / fire*. And here's the title poem, by Christopher Herold: *no more wishes / all the dandelion globes / full of moonlight*

**Getting On** by Ernest J. Berry (2016, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA). 72 pages, 4¼×6½", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-61-9. \$15 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com)

This book presents 86 poems at one or two per page that have won or placed in various haiku contests from 1995 to 2005, and the introduction promises a second volume covering prize-winners from 2006 to 2016. The first section, "Getting Up," has 38 poems, and the second section, "Getting Out" has 48, and each section includes a poem fitting the book's title: *getting on / i play a couple of holes / on the laptop* and *getting on / off to bed / with frogpond*. A couple of poems seem excessively similar to preexisting poems by other poets, but most of the poems here are fresh and appealing.

**Haiku, Green Tea & Sushi** by Ernest J. Berry (2016, Prisma Print, Blenheim, New Zealand). 194 pages, 6¼×6¼", perfectbound. ISBN 978-0-9941401-5-9. \$30 NZD from [prismaprint.co.nz](http://prismaprint.co.nz)

This lavishly designed book is a pleasure to peruse, with fine moments scattered through its many pages. We should all be so fortunate to write haiku like most of these. According to a brief author's note, all of the poems in this book (like its predecessor, *Getting On*) have "won or been placed in some international competition." As with the previous book, no credit is given to any of the contests in which these poems placed, but such an

extensive list would undoubtedly overburden the book. When we see that the book contains 277 poems, arranged at one or two per page in fifteen themed sections, placing so many poems in contests is a truly remarkable accomplishment. Surely no one submits to more contests than Ernie. As Nola Borrell wrote in her longer poem, “Classic Haiku: A New Zealand Perspective,” “As for go to the pine, / look at Ernie who can write / forty haiku without leaving his desk / and wins all the competitions.” And presumably these poems are just from 2006 to 2016, since the previous book covered 1995 to 2005—although at least some of the earlier poems reappear in this book. A couple of poems are omitted here where I understand that the prizes were rescinded for apparent plagiarism, and two poems included here now have notes appended to them, such as “with a nod 2 basho” and “a nod to Allan Burns” (neither poem was intended as an allusion when it originally placed in a contest). The book also includes this poem, *autumn leaves / the names of the dead / sink deeper*, which for my tastes is overly similar to Eric Amann’s classic and widely published prize-winning haiku from 1978, *The names of the dead / sinking deeper and deeper / into the red leaves*. Yet this poem does not include “a nod to Eric Amann,” nor does it pass as allusion. It’s a shame that such a marvelous collection would be compromised in this way, but there is still much to enjoy here.

**Horizon** by Anatoly Kudryavitsky (2016, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA). 72 pages, 5×7½”, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-66-9. \$15 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com)

Like many haiku collections, this one effectively slices the poems into common seasonal groupings at a relaxed pace of one or mostly two poems per page (15 in spring, 19 in summer, 21 in autumn, 13 in winter). The book also adds a section of “nonseasonal” haiku and senryu (19 poems), then a sequence (five haiku), and ends with eight haibun (each with a single haiku). This makes for 92 haiku and senryu plus the haibun. A few poems lift off the page for me, such as *spring tide — / the reflection of a bridge / flows under the bridge* and *morning wind / the library / of fallen leaves*

**Impressions of Morning: Haiku by World Children** ed. by the JAL Foundation (2016, JAL Foundation / Bronze Publishing, Tokyo, Japan). 120 pages, 8×8", perfectbound. ISBN 978-4-89309-624-1. ¥1,600 (about \$14) from [webmaster@clubjapan.jp](mailto:webmaster@clubjapan.jp)

This is the 14th volume of the JAL Foundation's sumptuous full-color anthologies commemorating its biennial world children's haiku contests. The most recent contest attracted more than 26,000 entries from 36 countries and regions around the world. All poems, focusing on the theme of morning, appear in their native language as well as Japanese and English translations (full disclosure: I helped with many of the English translations). The children's illustrations are especially vibrant and energizing. The book is highly encouraging to every selected poet, and shows widely varying skill levels with haiku, as these few almost random selections demonstrate: *Morning sound / The world's dream / Happy people* (Hugo Trindade, age 15, Portugal); *A bird is singing / On the tree branch / A cloudless morning* (Pecea Ion, age 13, Romania); *I wonder... / In the morning sky / Still the moon* (Hiyori Tokiwa, age 7, Japan).

**JuxtaOne** ed. by Peter McDonald (2015, The Haiku Foundation, Winchester VA). 268 pages, ISBN 978-0-9826951-2-8.

**JuxtaTwo** ed. by Peter McDonald (2016, The Haiku Foundation, Winchester VA). 292 pages, ISBN 978-0-9826951-3-5. Both, 6×9", perfectbound. \$50 each on CreateSpace or Amazon.

I'm a contributor to both of these volumes—annual assemblages of essays and criticism on haiku poetics in an academic vein—but I hope I can still comment objectively. The full content of these two journals is available on The Haiku Foundation website ([thehaikufoundation.org/juxta/](http://thehaikufoundation.org/juxta/)), and more recently these two journals have been made available in print form. The price point will strike some as shockingly high (although perhaps not for academic books), but this is because both journals are printed in color throughout. This places the haiga that intersperse the



essays in their best light, but I'm not sure if the haiga should be included. If haiga are included, why not have sections of haiku, too, and sequences and haibun? The haiga provide visual and aesthetic relief to the walls of text, but dropping them would give the journal a more academic focus, or at least printing them in black and white would substantially reduce the cost of these publications, and make them more likely to be purchased and read. Still, these journals are beautifully produced and a pleasure to hold in the hand. The essays provide an array of critical perspectives on haiku that can prod and change the sometimes narrow views haiku poets themselves may have of this poetry, especially where they include commentary from writers whose work does not appear in the usual haiku journals. This shows the haiku community to be branching out, which is a superb development. This note is insufficient to discuss the content of these journals in depth (they deserve a fuller review), but they are highly recommended, whether in print or online, for those wishing to deepen their study of haiku and its aesthetics.

**Winnows** by Maxianne Berger (2016, *Nietzsche's Brolly*, Toronto, ON). 60 pages, 5¼×8½", perfectbound. ISBN 978-0-920489-48-2. \$22 by PayPal from Marshall Hryciuk at [imagorediron@gmail.com](mailto:imagorediron@gmail.com) or from Imago Press, 30 Laws Street, Toronto ON, Canada M6P 2Y7

A note on the front cover says that *Winnows* collects "haiku and senryu 'plundered' from Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*." This ambitious book is a kind of "erasure" poetry, an elaborate experiment in which the author has removed words from the pages of Melville's classic novel (all while keeping the words in the same order) to come up with the poems that remain. Three poems appear on nearly every page, for a total of 136 poems, many of which have been published individually in various journals and anthologies. Worth a look to see her many fine catches winnowed from a weighty novel—all of them energetic minnows rescued from a mighty whale. *a worn hearth / all the fireside tales / in this blade of grass*

**Small Things Make Me Laugh** by Yu Chang (2016, Free Food Press, [Rochester NY]). 46 pages, 5½×8½", perfectbound. No ISBN. \$13 from [freefoodpress.com](http://freefoodpress.com)

A pleasing collection of 114 haiku and senryu (one to three per page) by one of haiku's most reliably rewarding voices. As for the book itself, perhaps more attention to bookmaking necessities would help make the publication more professional, such as including a copyright page, and all the things that go with it, such as an ISBN. Nevertheless, there's something refreshingly unpretentious about the lack of such formalities. Here's the title poem: *cherry blossoms / small things / make me laugh*. And a few other favorites: *sports bar / she lets go / of my hand*; *Möbius strip / I am too old / to touch my toes*; *class reunion / the photographer / moves us closer*; *cemetery gate / she lets me / go first*; and *winter evening / a cafeteria tray / at the end of the slope*. Recommended.

**What Light There Is** by Sylvia Forges-Ryan (2016, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA). 104 pages, 4¼×6½", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-58-4. \$17 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com)

This book distinguishes itself by its delightful collaboration with Ion Codrescu, who provides energetic calligraphy and haiga illustrations for six of the author's poems, plus cover calligraphy. The book's six sections provide striking tonal variety, such as with the poems about war and politics or the sections on desire and longing and on sickness and loss. A great deal of thought has gone into the grouping and sequencing of the poems in ways that many other haiku books should emulate. The book collects 148 poems, 33 of which are tanka (mostly in the love section). Here is one of three poems that give the book its title: *Diagnosis / what light there is / dimming*. Here's another favourite: *Softly falling snow / little by little / I learn to forget you*

### TO THE EDITOR

The book reviewer of Lenard D. Moore's *The Open Eye* in the last issue of *Frogpond* (39:3) missed the point. Jim Kacian was quoted by the reviewer in the book's Introduction as follows: "Part of the enjoyment of re-reading this book is knowing how far Lenard has come as a poet." The reviewer goes on to comment: "...but no other motivation is given for reprinting the book." It is obvious that the book was reprinted because it sold out, and no publisher would have reprinted it, had the book been unsuccessful. We all grow as writers after more than thirty years. I'm sure Kacian did not imply that Moore's poetry was shabby back then. And, the focal point of the review should not have been Moore's "first steps" at writing haiku, but the value of the collection, which was darn good.

–Charlotte Digregorio



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