

f r o g p o n d

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FROGPOND SUBMISSIONS

Submission periods are one month long: July for the autumn issue, November for the winter issue, and March for the spring/summer issue.

Send submissions to frogpondhsa@gmail.com (preferred) or 1036 Guerin Road, Libertyville IL 60048. See our submission guidelines at hsa-haiku.org/frogpond/submissions.html

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Cover art by Christopher Patchel

from the editor

Continuing our celebration of *Frogpond's* fortieth year, we invited Michael Dylan Welch to take a gander through all the archived Museum of Haiku Literature Awards (for best-of-issue poems, like the one on page 5) and to offer a retrospective of that long-running tradition.

Also in this issue, Charles Trumbull gives us a second excerpt from *A Field Guide to North American Haiku*, this outing a nighttime exploration of “things that glow in the dark.”

As promised, we feature more full-color haiga. And as always this edition is brimful with diverse haiku and senryu (have you noticed Joyce Clement's superb sequencing of those poems?) along with haibun, rengay, renku, book reviews, contest results, and even a fun short story for good measure.

While not quite there yet, we are one step closer to getting *Frogpond* all the way back on schedule. So with any luck, for those in the northern hemisphere it will still be high summer when this spring/summer issue arrives.

In any case, wherever you are, and whatever you're sipping—maybe something garnished with a cocktail umbrella—we hope this edition adds to your enjoyment of the present season.

Christopher Patchel, Editor

Joyce Clement, Coeditor



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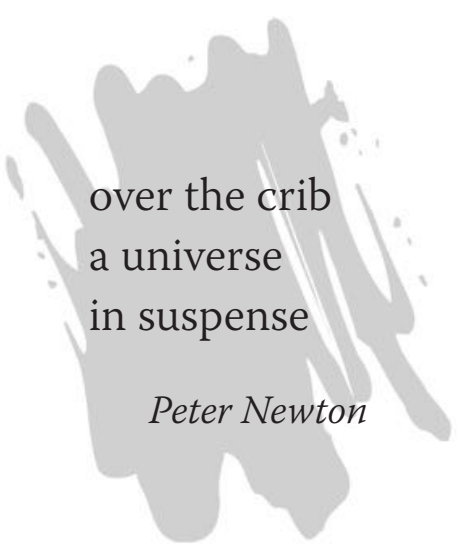
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MUSEUM OF
HAIKU LITERATURE
AWARD

*\$100 for the best previously unpublished work
appearing in issue 40:1 of Frogpond as selected by vote
of the HSA Executive Committee.*



over the crib
a universe
in suspense

Peter Newton

haiku/senryu

first twinkle
in the sky...
unfurl the sails

Randall Herman

blurred wings
the fragrance
of honeysuckle

Rick Tarquinio

Indian paintbrush
a car full of laughter
streaks by

Gabriel Bates

driving all night
another gospel station
left behind

Bill Kenney

autumn migration
the pull of my son's hand
from mine

Elliot Nicely

distant train whistle—
missing you more
when the wind rises

Penny Harter

so dark
how the current's sound
changes at the bend

Burnell Lippy

earth from space
the meniscus curve
of a tequila shot

Mark Dailey

two agnostics
walk into a bar
tropical sunset

Carolyn Hall

sliced papaya
in a green glazed bowl—
'apapane song

Tanya McDonald

Spring drizzle
on the temple's ashcan—
my joy is genuine

Rebecca Lilly

needing nothing
he draws me near
garden Buddha

Marian Olson

an old love
umbrellas
lightly touching

Dan Curtis

gibbous moon
desirable
still

Mimi Ahern

the sound of her voice
more than the words...
waterfall mist

Bill Kenney

he disappears
behind closed eyes...
afterglow

Michele L. Harvey

horizon aflame
a flawed life's
long shadow

George Swede

cup stains on a thrift shop bukowski summer night

Clayton Beach

dinner for one
on the table
last night's dishes

Debbi Antebi

glass emptied
the evening full
of me

Ben Moeller-Gaa

in the background
someone else
taking a selfie

John Stevenson

pearly gates
grinning down
on the gritted

Helen Buckingham

ashed foreheads
we point
to each other's

Julie Warther

poppies
as if they know
they won't last

Sharon Pretti

spring cleaning
rainbows bursting
in my bucket

Rachel Sutcliffe

may our love last
so long
silver mylar balloon

Scott Mason

the side we see moonstruck

Ken Olson

the prospector
tilts a pan—
shooting star

Chad Lee Robinson

spring rain...
I bubble sort
my options

Francine Banwarth

the daisy's odds
and evens out

Michele Root-Bernstein

one day at a time lottery ticket

S.M. Kozubek

passers-by
speaking in numbers
winter sea

Phillip Kennedy

midnight tolls
across the highrise canyon
twelve thousand alones

Roland Packer

gridlock
talking to the driver
is prohibited

Neal Whitman

closure leading nowhere

Alan S. Bridges

into my body
another flying dream
folding back

Peter Newton

gin martini
my mood
with a twist

Alanna C. Burke

steady drizzle
the bartender tells me
the story of his life

Bob Lucky

one door opens
as another closes...
therapist's office

Michele L. Harvey

someone
we can trust
with winter

John Stevenson

black ice—
a memory
that isn't mine

Seren Fargo

my head buried
in the pillow
deep state

Scott Mason

War and Peace
a hundred pages in
he surrenders

Annette Makino

bookmark
a visitor's badge
from Tower Two

Bill Cooper

rubble dust
the swinging hands
of a carried child

Malintha Perera

losing my place
mid-page
the call of a dove

Susan Constable

between the lines the scent of lilacs

Valorie Broadhurst Woerdehoff

hopscotch
square to square
the refugee girl

Aparna Pathak

thoughts of home
seagull calligraphy
on the beach

Chen-ou Liu

watering her roses
one last time...
eviction

Diane Wallihan

for sale sign
another year
in tall weeds

Phoebe O'Connor-Hall

each green shoot
reviving again
retirement plans

Edward J. Rielly

autumn leaves
even the road taken
disappears

Jeanne Cook

all I know
the drifting shadows
of soap bubbles

Michael Ketchek

a shift in the wind...
we follow our noses
to the apple orchard

Adelaide B. Shaw

cherry blossoms
the teacher puts down
her red pen

Joe McKeon

babbling brook
she learns yellow
from a daffodil

Claire Everett

avocets—
a ruddy dawn suffuses
the marsh's thin mist

Patricia J. Machmiller

the rusty mill
grinding water
into twilight

Michael McClintock

desert thunder—
in the hands of the artist
turquoise and silver

Andrea Grillo

lilac rain...
the page bookmarked
to Monet

Claire Everett

tour buses idle...
all kinds of butterflies
in this battlefield

Kyle Sullivan

summer break
the geraniums
watered to death

Glenn G. Coats

back from vacation my shoes too small

David Boyer

morning snow
the bracelet my daughter made
tight on my wrist

Joshua Gage

zucchini blossom
just this once
i let her wear the bling

Jennifer Hambrick

heirloom tomato—
finally comfortable
in my own skin

Annette Makino

family reunion—
even leafless
the old sycamore

Billie Wilson

firewood heap—
settling into
my anonymity

Burnell Lippy

her name
the blue summer plate
in my cupboard

Dan Schwerin

cold front
the taste of dark roast coffee
on her tongue

Ben Moeller-Gaa

gone to her mother's...
another lemon pit
misses the ashtray

Lew Watts

married life...
ups and downs
of the toilet seat

Olivier Schopfer

holiday cleaning—
the bathroom buddha
looks younger

Brent Partridge

rain clouds
my forehead smudges
the glass door

Brad Bennett

early alarm—
my favourite doll's
unlined face

Sandra Simpson

another day
Pema Chödrön
or Aladdin Sane?

David Gale

Selection Sunday
the zinnias
seeded number one

Johnny Baranski

contestosterone

Dan Schwerin

novelty pepper shaker president

David Boyer

knotweed—
we agree
to disagree

George Dorsty

fifth season
inside the other four
clouds from the sea

Michael McClintock

sudden rain
an invisible man
left on third

Rick Tarquinio

hospice
the good seats
already taken

Michael Henry Lee

game over
voices litter
the dark

Gary Hotham

the ashes scattered
 a sea-stone
 warm in my palm

Lorin Ford

the water wheel · north star · sacred cows yoked to

Carolyn Hall

whirling snowflakes —
 a Lakota elder
 passes the pipe

Chad Lee Robinson

a driftwood limb
 snagging my trouser cuff —
 death day of our boy

William Ramsey

change in pitch
as the nail enters wood—
an ache beyond reach

Chrerie Hunter Day

the river
lined with butterbur, back and forth
with its answers

John Barlow

responses in bold requiem

Roland Packer

burial
a mourning dove
equivocates

George Swede

a crow
by any other name...
deep winter

Polona Oblak

ice fishing
the insistent tug
of need

Doris Lynch

late frost
the runt holds on
to the last teat

Bob Lucky

the odd way
the dog trainer
shakes my hand

R. P. Carter

vet's office
my old dog lies down
one last time

Tom Painting

long walk home
the drunk shadow and me
apart together

Chen-ou Liu

cold snap
strangers at the bus stop
crowd closer

Robert Witmer

group therapy
a cloudburst
darkens the room

Olivier Schopfer

dense forest
light that finds
the least of us

Glenn G. Coats

winter night—
still paying the price
for that stolen dime

Billie Wilson

after the break-in
something's missing
missing or not

David Gershator

barefoot...
I try not to step
on ephemera

Lorin Ford

winter light—
books
reached only by ladder

Jeffrey Ferrara

ultraviolet violence
avoided
cool dark bar

David G. Lanoue

the core of being a flower colors sunlight

Natalia L. Rudychev

even the caged bird fall migration

William Scott Galasso

first frost
too deep in
to leave you

J. Brian Robertson

losing our friends
to neon Osaka—
Orion and I

Warren Decker

indigo night
this star-studded sky
for my shroud

Renée Owen

November dusk—
a man asleep on our bench
by the cenotaph

Ruth Holzer

anonymous...
raindrops find
the river

Michael J. Rosen

another year
the names of perennials
only she knew

Joe McKeon

Mother's Day
never lilies
while she lived

LeRoy Gorman

the death of my prayer plant

Sheila Sondik

posthumous the redwood's diary

Dorothy McLaughlin

autumn moon
only the words
grown old

Jeffrey Ferrara

onion snow
a man in traffic
singing to himself

paul m.

vernal equinox
my car window
frozen shut

Alan S. Bridges

permanent loss of hearing with the heart

Francine Banwarth

hope chest
the ocean's hush
within the conch

Sarah E. Metzler

winter storm
I change my mind
about opera

Michele Root-Bernstein

fake news family reunion

R. P. Carter

flower seeds
in a book of poems
fire weather

Sandi Pray

spring rain—
a ladder left
to prop the apple tree

Judson Evans

autumn
old friends
at the bird feeder

John Soares

Puddled field stalks
the cynic I've become
disappoints

Rebecca Lilly

yes even the low-hanging half-moon yes

Stephanie Baker

her first ginko
a cormorant
skims the river

Quendryth Young

trembling in the gusts
this weed's tiny flower
I've not seen before

William Ramsey

with a hop
a tree frog announces itself
glacial valley

paul m.

kingfisher
putting
everything
into
its
splash

Brad Bennett

pond mist...
something little ripples
into nothing

brett brady

linked forms

Seabeck

deep water bay
a story from far away
with each wave

shoes off
along the shore
breaking bread together

low tide
loose legs of a ghost crab
belly up

lovers on the rocky beach
one touch silences
his signing

almost sunrise
reluctantly a pair of gulls
takes flight

Randy Brooks

Full of Stars

glow-worms
their sticky webs
pulsing with light

a crow's blue sheen
taken by the night

summer storm
the lightning tree
full of stars

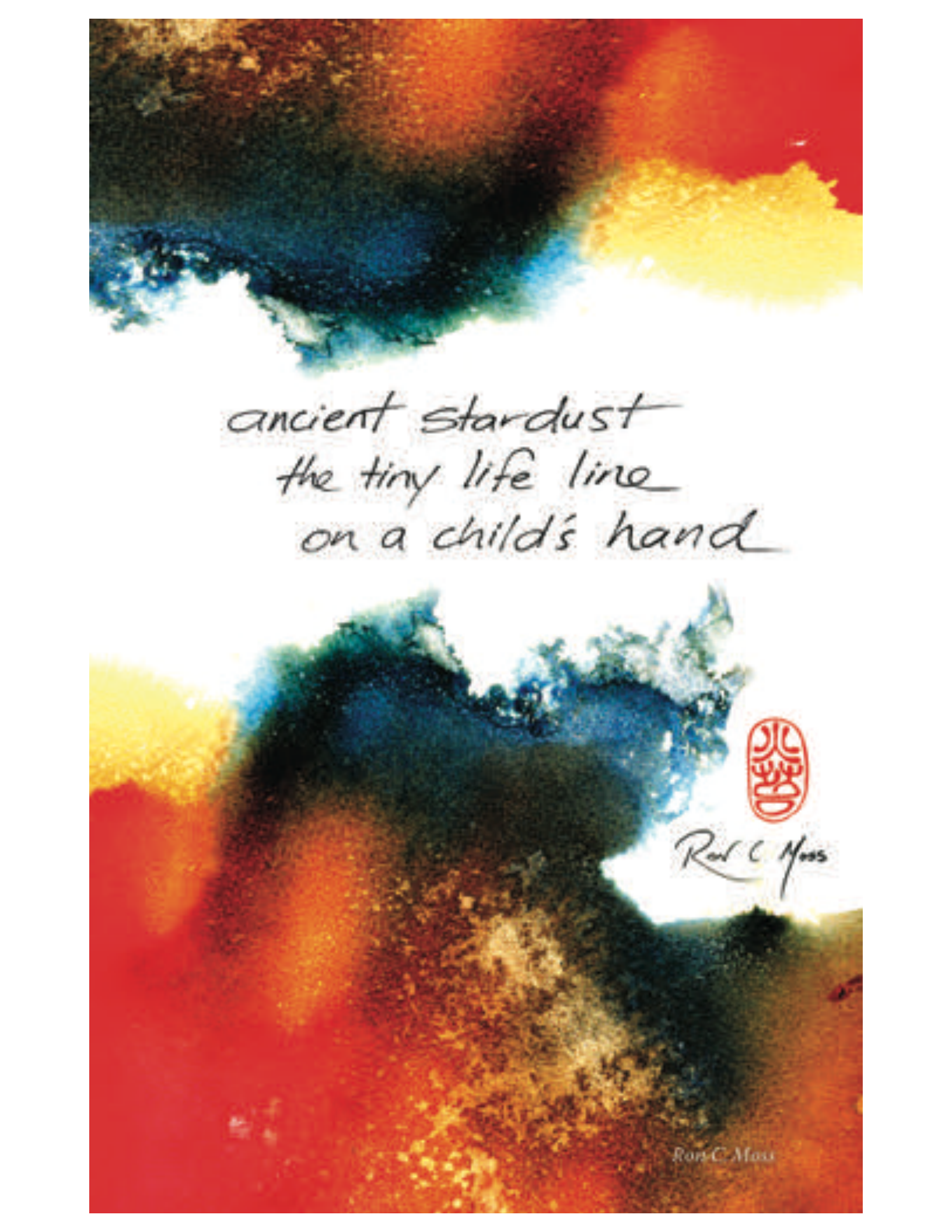
christmas beetle
sunlight colours
an empty shell

moonlit snail trails
on the garden Buddha

soft green
deep in the forest
luminous fungi

Ron C. Moss

Simon Hanson



*ancient stardust
the tiny life line
on a child's hand*



Ron C Moss

Ron C Moss



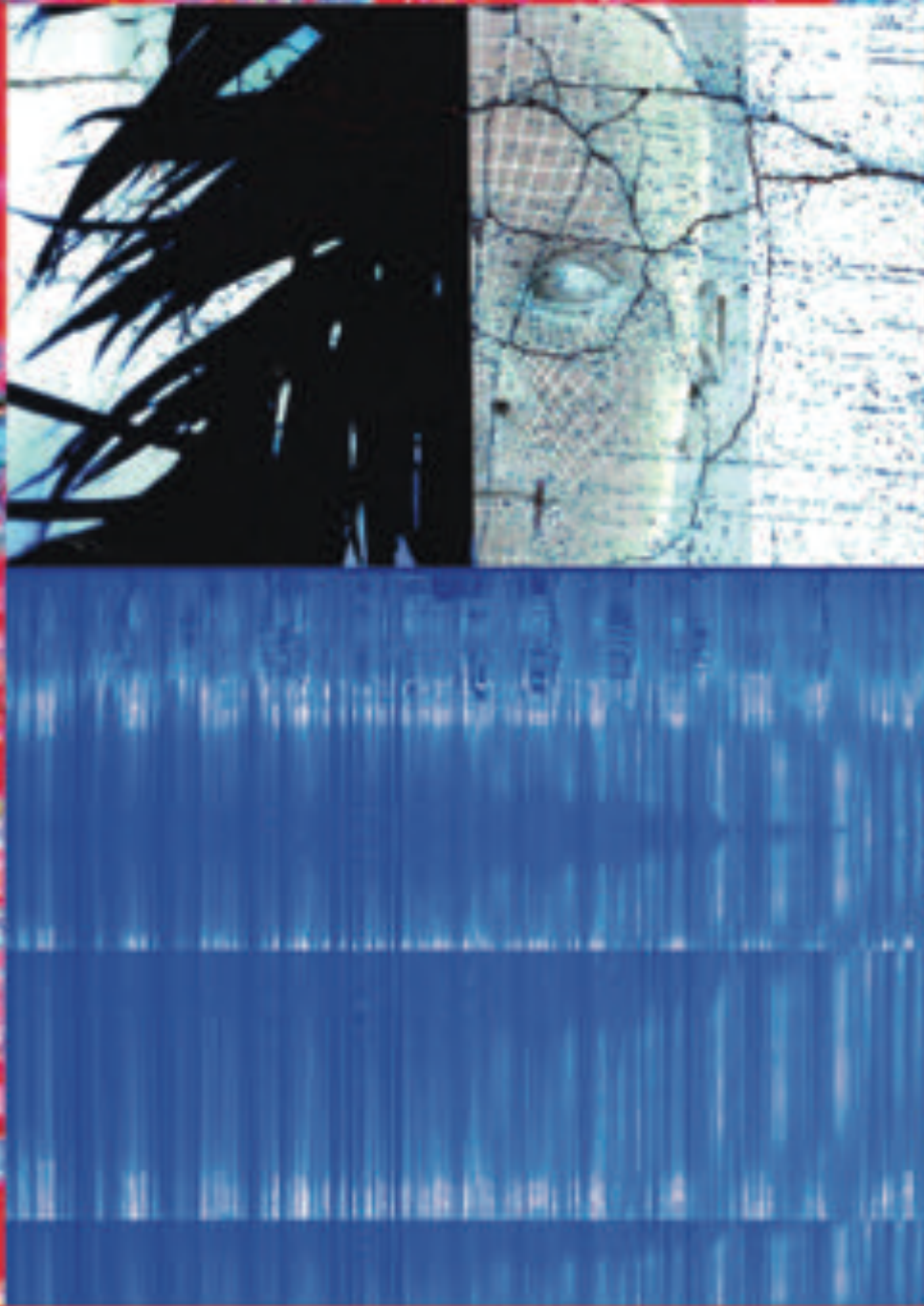
Winter night
deep in my pocket
the dog's medicine

Alexis Rotella
Alexis Rotella

Swans...
the stir of his breath
against my hair



Alexis Rotella



**The tusks left buried
in desire's ice**

Gary Lebel

Gary LeBel

HOYT

the parsec she moves in behind her eyes

島の夜ハイヒールどこにも見つからず



Island night -
her high-heeled shoes
nowhere to be found

Kuniharu Shimizu

沖からの潮騒がララバイ島の夜



Island night -
distant sea roar
is the lullaby

Kuniharu Shimizu



a decoy swept into categories



Cherie Hunter Day

World of Wonder

Four years old, bilingual, well-traveled. The boy adapts easily to the cultures of Europe, Africa, and Asia. An early reader, Shere Khan, Simba, Kanga, and Roo are longtime friends. Lions and tigers he has seen in the wilds; kangaroos he takes in stride. Four—already a man of the world. Still, he can be enchanted by a frog in the toilet.

Shakespeare...
penciled in the margin
a haiku

Diane Wallihan

Béchamel

He tilt-a-whirls melting pats of butter all around the frying pan
You have to make a roux first then holds the pan still at an angle
Drop a spoonful of flour in there and I mound the spoon high
with flour and plop it in the pool of butter and my father stirs
up a slush that looks like the paste we used in art class to make
papier mâché pencil holders *Now add in a few drops of milk* so
I angle the glass of milk over the pan and he stirs some more *A
little more milk there* and he stirs some more then he says *Now
drop those little pieces of chipped beef in there* and he spoons
chipped beef gravy onto squares of toast *The white sauce has to
be not too thick, but not too thin. It's the glue that binds.*

winter morning
sun glints off his plate
and mine

Jennifer Hambrick

Ornitheology

Think of it as a Sunday gathering—you might not recognize the old frat house for a church. On this hot summer morning, no air conditioning, all the doors and windows are thrown wide.

call to worship
a chickadee sings
of sky

You might not recognize the lay service either, though how fitting that what revelation there is should come from the children's garden, just outside.

lesson on busyness
a visiting rooster's
cock-a-doodle-do

After the candles of joy and sorrow, a hymn or two, and a moment of meditation, the rest of what you get is what you see in it.

flutter of sparrows
we clasp hands
for the closing affirmation

Michele Root-Bernstein

Controlled Burn

I grew up believing I was a consequence rather than a wished-for result of love.

wildflowers no excuses

Tom Painting

Consultation

It turns out you can have a hot flash without really knowing it's a hot flash. I mean, everyone gets hot sometimes. Okay, so not usually all of a sudden, while you're sitting quietly at your desk, in the middle of winter. Not so hot that you have to desperately rip off your sweater and throw it halfway across the room because you can't stand the thought of having it near you.

But still. It's not like "hot" is an unfamiliar sensation. Frankly, hardly any sensation is unfamiliar by the time you're this age. It could be anything, right?

"Of course it was a hot flash," my mother says on the phone. She was a nurse before she retired and everything makes much more sense to her than to me.

In fact, I'm the only thing she doesn't really understand. How I got to be this way, so smart and so dumb. So oblivious to reality. So incomprehensibly unable to believe any of the things that normal people believe or do any of the things that normal people do. And now: middle-aged, so what chance is there that I'll ever change?

She sighs. "Don't worry, honey, I only ever had two or three of them."

Then she adds hopefully, "I'm sure you'll take after me."

fall equinox
I pretend I can't read
tea leaves

Melissa Allen

Crush

He looks like Jimmy Clanton in baby blue trousers and polo shirt. He follows me home one afternoon. I hear him tell his buddy he likes my legs. Then Friday night when I'm at the carnival I see him walking towards me, like it's a dream. He knows my name, puts his arm around my waist and walks me into the funhouse where he asks for a kiss but doesn't mention the tongue.

Orange Crush
we drink from
the same bottle

Alexis Rotella

Postmortem

i.

I have to go to court this afternoon about the divorce. My lawyer says it's no big deal, just a routine status update, whatever that is; I won't even have to talk. But I've never been in a courtroom before. I can't help feeling like I've done something wrong.

crushed ant
I ask everyone else's
forgiveness

ii.

My lawyer lied—I had to talk. It was hard because they make you sit about forty feet away from the judge, with no one and nothing in between. It's like you're on opposite banks of a river, yelling across.

Beforehand I met my soon-to-be-ex in the hall and he told me his father's surgery that morning went well. I hadn't even known his father was having surgery. We also commented on the view from the county courthouse, which was spectacular, and discussed the arrangements for our son's wisdom tooth removal on Friday. I tried to think of something else to say but I couldn't think of anything, even something mean.

Then we went, not exactly together, into the courtroom, and the judge, who was very just and terrifying, investigated all our excuses for not being divorced yet and found them wanting. He told us we had ninety days to work out our settlement and we would be getting divorced on August 22. They're good at getting things over with in this county.

icemelt
stones piled up
for the skipping contest

Melissa Allen

Commute

Three horses graze in a weed-strewn pasture along Carmel Valley Road. A peeling picket fence encloses them by suggestion more than force. I have gusted past this scene before, blurry in the hour between waking and working, but today the dingy white horse lifts her black eyes as I pass. For a mirrored moment, my legs are planted in clover. I see the wind rush by, while the grass in my mouth tastes of dew and sunlight.

shadows of wings
on the chaparral hills
elevation change

Deanna Ross

Roman Holiday

Arab junkyard—
stray dogs and baboons comb
moonlit rubbish

Today, such unlikely relationships mystify scientists. But 2,000 years before Copernicus the question was, Vaticanus? And, What veracity in blue Venus veiled in haze?

In ancient Rome, Republicans pondered how a virgin might best devote herself to Vesta. Drinking molten metal became the penalty for breaking a solemn vow. Augustine condemned such political religion as opium.

The Golden Ass teamed with magic—the evil eye, numina in menstrual blood and iron, magic circles, odd numbers, lunar powers, protective spitting, and sex changes. Republicans donned their magical amulets to ward off disease and chanted, Be gone vile demon hydrophobia!

Near the Villa of Mysteries, initiation, flagellation, mystical phallus and the promise of eternal bliss.

Anna Cates

Another Row

A recent theory of the brain/thought connection suggests that the two are both structured and creative.

a child's joyful cry
another sand pail castle
begins the next row

Bruce Ross

Symphony Minus Waves

When we arrive at the arctic village of Kivalina, Alaska, the villagers boast about it. But it is August, months before we can hear it for ourselves. Finally, in mid-February, while teaching the fourth graders homophones, harsh sounds from outside make everyone jump. Leaping from their seats, the Inupiat children hurry to the windows. “Teacher, teacher, the sea ice. Hear it sing.”

jingle of bells
huskies carve black lines
through the snow

But singing does not describe this noise. The sawing, grinding, rasping of the ice sounds as if a giant creature beneath it is gathering all his energy and will to burst through to freedom.

We throw on parkas and race outside. As we stand in the forty below zero air, the whining of the ice changes to John Cage-like music: high-pitched, eerie, way off-key. I expect the frozen water of the Chukchi to break into floes, but it remains snugly attached to shore. Whole.

From nearby houses, several village men join us and begin drumming. The fourth-grade girls sashay, swaying their arms in time to the music, giving emphasis to each discordant grumble from the ice-bound sea.

fading afternoon sunset
a single raven
pulls down night

Doris Lynch

John Q. Public

Half-blind but loyal, the last surviving member of my cult is a broken-down stray I rescued from certain death. She rides shotgun in the old Ford like she owns this town. “Not much sense left in the world,” I tell her. The planet’s careening on the edge of a canyon and the driver thinks he’s playing in a sandbox. It’s enough to drive the average Joe over the edge himself. “Just give us this day,” I say, repeating a half-remembered prayer. In fact, saying it again I make it my one demand of the angels. “Give us this day.” Though I have no leverage in this negotiation. No bargaining chips left. I am a hostage in my own country waving at strangers.

silk flowers in her window box nobody’s fool

Peter Newton

By moonlight I write into the darkness

I remember that her face took on a softness in the glow of the moonlight through our bedroom window. From the bedside table, she picked up a pen and a Post-It note, and wrote down her last one-liner:

midnight moon shedding light on the scars of our past

This one was stuck in a rainbow totem of Post-it notes above our bed, and, like its creator, never failed to surprise me. Of her one-liners, the most memorable was written on a “real dark night of the soul, three o’clock in the morning,” as F. Scott Fitzgerald emphasized in *The Crack-Up*.

a mass of piled-up shadows not knowing the sound of snow

The incident took place about three years ago. After a week of mental fencing with me, she slammed the door as she rushed out into the falling snow. She wandered through that night like a stray cat for several hours before she returned by the back door. Looking out the window into the barren landscape of our daily lives, she wrote down her “not knowing” monostich on the kitchen table.

Today marks the second year of her absence. Winter moonlight slips in through the bedroom window, reaching the empty side of the bed. I touch it and feel a chill. I sit up in bed and turn my head to the wall, looking at her Post-it notes.

Tower of Babel where the lines end her absence becomes

Chen-ou Liu

Climb

At my age I probably shouldn't be taking psychedelics while traveling alone in a foreign country. Seeking the source of the Bagmati River, I clamber up the northern rim of the Kathmandu Valley. Not far from the highest elevation, I pass through a forest of old-growth rhododendron in full bloom, their sunlit blossoms bright white.

if not for shadows
forgetting the flowers
in my hair

Mark Dailey

Florida

All afternoon, the palmetto bugs make their bodies the thickness of paper. So the cereal stays in the oven. Bread, too, double-bagged in plastic.

Half of Ontario's here again this year. Have they learned this trick, this secret of survival? Was their bread gnawed that first year?

winter fingers
hard to fathom
eating an orange

Peter Jastermsky

Halcyon Days

I won't have that it's as dull as dishwater. The more acerbic of my friends attribute it to 'beer goggles.' The traditionalists blame rose-tinted glasses. The physicist among them rambles on about the Tyndall effect, structural colouration and the scattering of light. Something to do with wavelengths and nanometers.

I catch the tail-end: "... it's the same with blue skies," he says.

But now all I hear is the song by Irving Berlin. That's how it is when your head's in the clouds and you're walking on air.

Then I focus again, respond. "Real, or not real—whatever that means—what you see is what you get, in a manner of speaking. It's all about faith ..."

He's still umming and ahing over that.

Because the way I see it... that's right: *the way I see it*... whether it lasts a week, a month, a year, or a lifetime, love, too, is in the eye of the beholder.

ice-glimmer
the come and gone
of a kingfisher

Claire Everett

Brooklyn Botanic Garden

I'm admiring the lake on one of the twenty days that cherries bloom when a Japanese tourist appears out of nowhere and announces, "It's one hundred percent." With this ringing endorsement he walks off towards the pines, having personally vouched for the culture of Nippon in Brooklyn.

garden for the blind
excited children yell
look look

David Gershator

Case of the Missing Mannequin

The culprit may be using a disguise & hiding in plain sight. Police are asking citizens to report anything suspicious. They have yet to offer a reward.

overnight an ice storm
robes Venus
in the neighbor's garden

LeRoy Gorman

Winter Solace

We walk the ragged shoreline, wind in our faces, the sand hard packed and mixed with snow. We first came here young and in love when nothing else mattered. Now more than half a lifetime later, we meet to make up for missing years. You remind me of the time waves froze into chunky, yellow mountains and that I scaled one. Such an act was foolish, but not so much as an old man in love when so much else matters.

losing my mind in a cloud of starlings

Tom Painting

Prison of Self

I have often said that the sole cause of man's unhappiness is that he does not know how to stay quietly in his room. –Blaise Pascal

drenched by a shower
drying out
in a basement barroom

Reading Jaccottet's *Seedtime* again late at night, a "seminal" work. The pine pollen is starting to fall. Doors must remain shut, or our rooms will be coated with yellow dust. I forget how long pollen falls, a week or two? Longer? If it were to go on from spring through summer, we'd have to walk through pollen drifts in September, and the governor would need to call out the National Guard to clear the roadways. But it will last just a little while, long enough so that growth is guaranteed despite how we choose otherwise to live. Nevertheless, as in all of Nature, there's an excess to its falling, a waste.

emptying trees
against a harvest moon
vacancy

The authors he quotes from: Hölderin, Leopardi, Baudelaire, Musil, Char, Novalis . . . these in just his first 14 pages. And what authors did they read and quote from in their notebooks? A cacophony of influences, a library of dead voices, whose books have been harvested, each volume's pages scattered on marble floors of memory like so many autumn leaves or so much pollen. And we lone patrons walk about the debris and join page to page in order to reassemble old books and create fragmented new ones instead, becoming authors ourselves. We, who merely visited the library to satisfy private urges, to relieve solitudes, to escape four walls.

windless morning
from room to room
a fly buzzes

Richard Straw

One can estimate

the age of a tree by counting the rings contained in its trunk. A good way to estimate the age of a utility pole is to count the number of nails and staples embedded in it.

Dad's unsold golf trophy
now propping up
a broken bookshelf

John J. Dunphy

Living in the Past

The Hill House, an historic home, a retirement project. Tools, some new and others family hand-me-downs, share a workbench during the Victorian's restoration. Two by two, aging parents move in. The fathers remember the heft of a hammer, the fit of the plane in the palm, and they reminisce about the carpentry skills of their fathers. In the makeshift kitchen, a crock on the counter holds wooden spoons, whisks and whatnots—a collection that covers many generations.

the way it was remembered imagined

Diane Wallihan

The Waterhen Watchers

Height gives the illusion of ownership. I'm surveying the pools, where the moorhens, their world circumscribed by reeds, water and grass, ripple the surface with their movements. They slip between the vegetation, their white tails flicking. It's the end of winter and soon there will be a new generation.

Also under observation below me, the shadow of myself, a blind watcher, a phantom whose fate is disappearance.

hilltop
the bench
with its dedication plaque

Robert Smith

The Neon Buddha Attends His First Haikucon

At the sprawling registration table, the neon buddha knew he was in trouble—he wasn't dressed as his favourite haiku poet. No notebook in his hand like William Higginson, no cap with his name on it like Haiku Guy, no cape like Captain Haiku. But he gave his name to the beaming registrar, and she looked him up on the long list of attendees. He had won his free haiku conference registration by writing a cheesy limerick about haiku, and couldn't pass up anything free, so here he was.

"Here's your badge, sweetie—it gets you into all events except the Bashō Bash costume banquet."

"It doesn't?"

"No, when you registered, the banquet was optional. If you'd still like to attend, I can sign you up. There's a discount if you're in the latest Universal Haiku Groupies anthology—are you?"

"Ummm, no."

"Ah, well, please fill out this form, including a sample poem. Do not use 5-7-5, but be sure to use a kigo."

"A what?"

"A kigo. You do know what a kigo is, don't you?" Wisps of blond hair slipped down over her left eye.

"Oh, you mean a cutting word?"

"No, that's kireji, which cuts the poem into two parts. I mean a season word. It's a word that names or suggests the season when the poem occurs."

"You mean like a blizzard for winter?"

"Yes, exactly. Or frog for spring, like in *furuike ya*."

"Fooroowhat?"

"Bashō's poem, the one about the old pond."

"Oh, yeah, I know that. I don't know the Chinese, though."

"Japanese."

He knew that—oops. The neon buddha's face flushed as he filled out the form and wrote down one of his haiku, hoping he wasn't embarrassing himself with it. Around him were several clumps of costumed attendees, each with a name badge, their

arms animated in eager discussion. There were too many conversations for him to make out what any of them were talking about.

“Okay, here you go, your banquet ticket—and it also gets you into the dance afterwards, the Shiki Shuffle. Have fun!”

The neon buddha took the ticket but stood still. He felt like he was standing at the top of a cliff, and was about to be pushed off.

“Is there anything else, dear?”

“Um, yes. I don’t . . . I, um . . . Where should I start?”

“Ah, good question. I recommend the exhibits floor. Lots of publishers with their latest haiku books. But if you’re looking for a place to meet people, check out the renku rooms—there are different rooms for different skill levels. Or try out the rengay room. You’ll meet new writing partners and hopefully finish a rengay or part of a renku pretty quickly. There’s a tan-renga room, too, if you’re really pressed for time.”

“Rengay? Tan-renga? What are . . .”

“You really should go and check them out. Go to the first-timer corners, dear.”

She waved him away with his registration form, then turned her attention to the person behind him, someone wearing a giant spider costume with gargantuan pendulous eyes. A small tag identified him as “Issa’s Ghost.”

Down the hall, the neon buddha saw the room for rengay. He figured you had to be gay to participate, so he went next door to tan-renga, even though he didn’t have a tan. Inside, a sign for first-timers pointed to one corner so he ambled in that direction, where a voice called out.

A tall guy with a ready grin bounded up to him. “Newbie, are ya? I can tell by the look of abject fear on your face. Just kidding. Welcome! We’re a friendly bunch here—mostly. Please have a seat. My name’s Kelly—Kigo Kelly, they call me. I’m a killer for kigo, but don’t let that worry you. Just pull out your haiku notebook and we can get started.”

The neon buddha put his hand on his pocket but knew he didn’t have a notebook.

“What’s your name, by the way?”

The neon buddha realized his name tag had flipped over,

turned it around, and stammered something about not having a haiku notebook. Kelly's eyes widened. "Wow, you really are a newbie. But don't worry, we have some notebooks here, if you don't mind it having a sponsor logo from Japan Airlines. Here."

The neon buddha took the notebook and admired the cherry blossom images at the corner of each page. He noticed definitions at the back for haiku, and something called senryu.

"So lemme tell you about tan-renga. Obviously, you know how to write haiku, right?"

The neon buddha nodded, his face flushing again.

"Excellent. Well, one of us starts with a haiku, and then the other person responds with a two-liner. It's that simple, and it stops after just the second verse. The same link-and-shift rules used in renga also apply."

"Lincoln Shift? Who's that?"

"No, link . . . and shift. The second verse has to link to the first one, but also shift away, to take us somewhere unexpected. It should connect yet also disconnect at the same time."

"Why's that?"

It was Kigo Kelly's turn to look puzzled. He'd never been asked that before and had to think quickly.

"Well, that's just the way it's done. Japanese poetry is often a social activity, so that's why there are two people involved. Let's sit down here, shall we? In renku, or renga, as the old-timers used to call it, the verses were meant to taste all of life, so they say—to wander among as many topics as possible—and tan-renga does the same."

"But why?" The neon buddha tightened his eyes while he pulled out his chair. He wasn't sure why he needed to know, but most likely his insistence was a subconscious way of putting off actually trying to write one.

"I don't really know, to be honest," Kelly said. "That's a good question. It's just the way it's done."

The neon buddha drew a big breath and resigned himself to giving it a try. "So, do I write the first verse, or do you?"

"Why don't we both try writing a verse and then see which one we like best—or get inspired by?"

For the next few minutes, they each tried to write a starting verse. By turns they looked up at the ceiling vent, or at the doorway leading to the hall, where the neon buddha could swear he just saw Haiku Elvis. Other conference attendees streamed by, wearing Bashō or Santōka costumes, or whatever their get-ups were—the neon buddha wasn't really sure. Nothing was coming, but at least he wasn't alone in staring off into space. He looked across to a window at the end of the room. It had a view to another city building next door, a wall of shiny glass.

On his brand-new Japan Airlines spiral-bound notebook, using his brand-new Japan Airlines ballpoint pen, the neon buddha wrote down “city highrise.” Then he looked at the ceiling vent again.

He wondered if this conference center was one of those buildings with that sick-building syndrome he'd once read about. He crossed out “city highrise” and wrote down “sick-building syndrome.” Usually he worked out a haiku in his head before he wrote it down, but he felt pressured to produce something faster this time. In a few more moments he finished his poem, drew in a deep breath, and held out his notebook to Killer Kigo Kelly.

ceiling vent—
sick-building syndrome
starts with me

The neon buddha had actually finished before Kigo Kelly, so he felt a small triumph. But it didn't last long.

“Which of these do you like best?” Kelly asked, sliding a piece of scrap paper across the table between them. He had written five poems, each one radically different from the other. The neon buddha pointed at the first one.

“Okay, then write a response verse. Just two lines. Remember to link to it in some way, yet also shift away. Don't create a narrative development, and don't link to it in too close a way.”

Too many rules, the neon buddha was thinking.

“Just give it a try, and we can take a look when you're done. I'll try to write a two-liner in response to your verse, too, and you can tell me what you think.”

Thank goodness for the ceiling vent. The neon buddha examined it again, wondering where to go with Kigo Kelly's verse about a tax refund. He figured that must be the poem's kigo, that season-word thing. Tax forms, could he write about that? Or was that too close? Paperwork in general? Or maybe tulips, since that was a spring season word too? He still needed to pay his taxes.

tax refund—
 this month's mortgage
 paid on time

tulips in bloom
 in front of the town dump

"Hey, not bad!" Kigo Kelly grinned. "I like the surprise of the last line, and your first line links in to the tax refund season word. Way to go!"

The neon buddha felt relieved. His verse wasn't a total failure. He had been nervous about his verses, yet also curious and a little excited to see what Kigo Kelly would write in response to his own starting verse.

"How about this?" Kelly said. The neon buddha looked down at Kelly's notebook, a beautiful blank book he recognized from the haiku museum gift shop.

ceiling vent—
 sick-building syndrome
 starts with me

at the haiku conference
 I bow instead of shaking hands

"Works for me," the neon buddha said. "But I don't really know how to judge them. I mean, are these tan-renga worth anything? Like, would anyone publish them?"

"Oh, don't worry about that. They're a way to get to know your writing partner a little bit, and maybe learn his or her haiku

aesthetics. My verse isn't stellar, but I'm not worried. We're just having fun."

The neon buddha nodded pensively.

"We can enter these in the tan-renga contest if you like. This room isn't as popular as the renku and renga rooms, so our odds of winning a prize are higher here."

"Sure, why not? Do you really think they're worth it? Do they need any more polish? Or a title?"

"No titles. Maybe in a month we might think of a way to improve them," Kelly suggested. "But let's just go with spontaneity for now, shall we, and see what happens?"

Just then a buzzer sounded. The neon buddha knew it was time for the conference's first scheduled sessions. And now he had a big choice. "Choosing Your First Electronic Saijiki" or "The History and Tradition of Urdu One-Liners." He really couldn't decide. Or maybe "Developing That Next Killer Haiku App." But no. He didn't even have a smartphone. He didn't know what a saijiki was, so he figured he could check that out. After all, he was here to learn. The neon buddha said thank you to Killer Kigo Kelly, stood up, and strode towards the doorway, wondering which hallway led to the Matsuyama Room.

Michael Dylan Welch

contests

2017 MILDRED KANTERMAN MERIT BOOK AWARDS

FOR BOOKS PUBLISHED IN 2016

Judged by Terri L. French and LeRoy Gorman

This year's selection of 48 single-author titles and 7 anthologies was wide-ranging in form and content. Consideration was given to dividing titles into distinct categories such as: haiku only works, haiku with tanka, haiku with essays, haiku with non-haiku related poetry, and a variety of other combinations. In the end, it was decided to go with two divisions: single author works and anthologies. In each entry, the judges looked for originality of individual poems and prose selections, clearness of voice, thematic unity, and physical presentation.

F I R S T P L A C E

Helices

by George Swede

Red Moon Press, Winchester VA

118 pages, 4¼×6½", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-70-6

\$15 from redmoonpress.com

Right from first reading this title jumped out. Clear editing and presentation pace the reader through four balanced sections (or *helices*) combining haiku, tanka, and haibun. Swede's craft is exemplary. The writing pleases at every turn. There are introspective pieces, ones of social concern and more—all sparkling. *Helices* is a title to read and admire over and over.

S E C O N D P L A C E*(Tie)***Undercurrents***by Amanda Bell**Alba Publishing, Uxbridge, UK**72 pages, 5¾×8¼", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-910185-35-3**\$14 from albapublishing.com*

For a first collection, this book is remarkable. Bell presents haiku and haibun that mix her personal history with the collective history of the rivers of Ireland. Her emotional connection to place immediately draws the reader in to traverse the waterways along with her. Like the rivers themselves flowing to and becoming ocean, Bell's work carries the reader to a much larger place of both understanding and satisfaction.

Prayer for the Dead:**Collected Haibun & Tanka Prose***by Margaret Lane Dornaus**Singing Moon Press, Ozark AR**107 pages, 6×9", perfectbound. ISBN 978-0-9982112-0-6**\$15 from lulu.com*

A travelogue through memory, this work invites the reader to enter the author's journey to discover her place in the context of relationships with family, ancestral heritage, friends and strangers encountered on travels. Love, loss, death, and hope—all the big themes are here. The prose is polished and engaging; the haiku and tanka are moving and integrated with precision.

T H I R D P L A C E

(Tie)

Winnows

by Maxiianne Berger

Nietzsche's Brolly, Toronto, ON

60 pages, 5¼×8½", perfectbound. ISBN 978-0-920489-48-2

22 CAD from Imago Press at imagorediron@gmail.com

Entirely a collection of found haiku, or as the poet terms it "plundered," from Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, this title never ceases to awe. Berger consistently arrives at seemingly effortless, intuitive haiku from what appears to be a seemingly constrictive and painstaking method of creation. The results are impressive.

Imago

by Peter Yovu

Ornithopter Press, Princeton NJ

32 pages, 4⅝×7⅛", block printed cover wrappings, saddle stitched.

ISBN 978-1-942723-02-8

\$11 from ornithopterpress.com

This limited-edition chapbook showcases a highly original and assured voice. Presented in brief suites, the haiku are striking. Yovu often uses irregular lineage and spacing to exceptional effect.

H O N O R A B L E M E N T I O N S

(Unranked)

Invisible Tea

by Kyle D. Craig

Red Moon Press, Winchester VA

72 pages, 6×9", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-71-3

\$15 from redmoonpress.com

A keen eye is at work here presenting life moments often with surprising connections. The writing is often witty and always engaging—a pleasure to read.

At the Water's Edge

by Carol Judkins

Wildflower Poetry Press, San Bernardino CA

40 pages, 8½×8½", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-535538-59-6

\$15.30 from www.amazon.com

Haiku, tanka, haibun, and tanka prose are pleasingly presented along with stunning shoreline photographs by David Foster. The writing is crisp and the content appealing.

Highway of Sleeping Towns

by Deborah P Kolodji

Shabda Press, Pasadena CA

108 pages, 6×9", perfectbound. ISBN 978-0-9915772-3-1

\$16 from shabdapress.com

Substantial in scope, the number and variety of haiku is significant. Kolodji's referencing of science and science fiction themes, in particular, gives the work a distinctive freshness.

Cicada Chant*by Giselle Maya**Red Moon Press, Winchester VA**78 pages, 5×7½", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-60-7**\$17 from redmoonpress.com*

With a series of vignettes, Maya takes the reader through the seasons of her idyllic paradise in Provence. The passages are rich in detail and enchanting.

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

This is an innovative mix of haiku and tanka with other poems. Notably, Rowland pushes haiku boundaries and does it with a pleasing panache.

B E S T A N T H O L O G Y*(Tie)***Naad Anunaad:****An Anthology of Contemporary World Haiku***ed. by Kala Ramesh, Sanjukta Asopa, and Shloka Shankar**Vishwakarma Publications, Pune, India**234 pages, 5½×8", perfectbound. ISBN 978-93-85665-33-2**\$8 from amazon.com*

Isn't it great when dreams come true? This anthology of 746 haiku from 26 countries is the dream child of writer, editor, and educator, Kala Ramesh. From the beautifully designed cover to the well-chosen title, thoughtfully written foreword and diverse selection of poems, the editors have managed to put out a collection not only haiku poets in India can be proud of, but all haiku poets around the world. The book intersperses three-line haiku, one-liners, vertical haiku, traditional and more gendai-ish haiku and senryu without what can sometimes be distracting divisions. It is particularly refreshing that the haiku of students are included. The poems produced by their young, creative minds certainly give hope for the livelihood of the genre. A must-have anthology for any haiku poet's bookshelf.

**Galaxy of Dust: The Red Moon Anthology
of English-Language Haiku 2015**

edited by Jim Kacian et al.

Red Moon Press, Winchester VA

184 pages, 5½×8¼", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-55-3

\$17 from redmoonpress.com

We come to expect good things from Red Moon Press and *Galaxy of Dust* is no exception. Containing 147 poems (haiku and senryu), 16 linked forms, and 4 critical essays, it's a compilation of the finest from the finest. The poems are far-reaching in their style and subject matter—from the thumbprint of a fetus to a galaxy of lost mermaids. The linked verses, too, explore a broad range of topics and emotions from somber to whimsical. The in-depth, scholarly, yet easily readable, essays bring this anthology to another level. Another admirable collection from Red Moon Press.

H O N O R A B L E M E N T I O N

Scent of the Past... Imperfect*edited by Renée Owen*

Two Autumns Press, Santa Clara CA
32 pages, 5½×8½", perfectbound. ISBN none
\$8 from reneeowen@sbcglobal.net

Though a mere thirty-one pages, and containing the work of only four poets, this collection by the Haiku Poets of Northern California in conjunction with the twenty-seventh reading in the *Two Autumn* series, contains so many evocative and sensuous poems. The introduction is a little redundant and a bit of a spoiler. Work this good needs no introduction. A lovely read.

2017 LIONEL EINBOND RENKU COMPETITION*Judged by Ron Moss and Ferris Gilli*

We are pleased to award Grand Prize in the 2017 competition to *Glacial Boulder*, a summer kasen renku. During our many readings of the entries, this poem drew us back more than any other. The opening hokku is steeped in traditional imagery and is a fine start for this winning entry. Several other desirable qualities should be noted: the variety and unexpectedness of the stanzas; the clarity of language; the overall freshness; and the satisfaction in discovering the links between stanzas. Some links are more subtle than others, and studying and solving their small mysteries was fun (and educational). Moving from *candied apples / as party favors* (the sixth stanza in the *jo*) into the *ha* presents an easily realized, delightful link and shift.

The variety in the types of linking is a major asset. There's always a place for humour and the amusing linking between

class clown / the butt of a joke (stanza 20) and *her stage fright / she takes it all off / for a steamy scene* is a treat. Also notable is powerful imagery between *the stubble field / stretching the long / rays of sunlight* and *town park cannon / quiet for generations* at the beginning of the *kyu*. The lively verse, *brindled colts / canter into the meadow*, brings the renku to a satisfying close.

From the Vine, a summer nijūin renku, held our attention for Honorable Mention. Again, we enjoyed the types of linking. One of the most interesting links was found between *the dentist suggests / a surgical extraction / of wisdom teeth* to *new tamping machines / for the cemetery*—the mind boggles. There is a wonderful flow of diverse imagery in the opening section that moves from warm tomatoes under a cloudless sky to a well-worn hammock and on to grips on a guitar, to finish with a ticket stub as a book marker. We appreciated the intriguing shifts, the inclusion of current events, and the interesting transition from the end of the middle section to the fast close of the last four stanzas.

G R A N D P R I Z E

Glacial Boulder

jo

a glacial boulder
and an ancient pine—
deepening shade

Paul MacNeil

fireflies
back and forth

John Stevenson

she selects
an embroidered bureau scarf
from the bargain bin

Hilary Tann

the new hire snags a twelfth floor office	<i>Yu Chang</i>
college observatory open to the public for moon viewing	<i>Tom Clausen</i>
candied apples as party favors	<i>js</i>
<i>ha</i>	
much puzzlement in the voting booths this year	<i>pm</i>
I retrace my steps to take the path not chosen	<i>ht</i>
a war hero finds his sweetheart in Japan	<i>yc</i>
the flight of time embracing her	<i>tc</i>
what can only be said to the memory of you	<i>js</i>
a web search for "runes"	<i>pm</i>
silhouette of a moonlit fox in the daguerrotype	<i>ht</i>
the snowmobile speeds into a hairpin	<i>pm</i>

Zika finishes first at the Rio Olympics	<i>yc</i>
bagging the summit with bated breath	<i>tc</i>
tight buds about to burst into peonies	<i>js</i>
the miser relishes his tax refund	<i>ht</i>
frog chorus drowned out by children's laughter	<i>yc</i>
class clown the butt of a joke	<i>js</i>
her stage fright as she takes it all off for a steamy scene	<i>tc</i>
falls in love with his cooking	<i>ht</i>
to the bedroom while the sourdough rises?	<i>pm</i>
a murmuration swirls and swerves	<i>tc</i>
increased police presence during the fireworks	<i>ht</i>

bathers and paddlers at the seashore	<i>yc</i>
he's the kind of guy who dabbles in black magic	<i>js</i>
no exit from the theatre of the absurd	<i>tc</i>
the waning moon is still enough for me	<i>pm</i>
a few yellow leaves dancing in the wind	<i>yc</i>
<i>kyu</i>	
the stubble field stretching the long rays of late sunlight	<i>js</i>
town park cannon quiet for generations	<i>tc</i>
the carillon slowly plays the Westminster chimes	<i>pm</i>
once more turning the soil in the raised beds	<i>ht</i>
just beneath the cherry blossoms all my little hopes	<i>yc</i>
brindled colts canter into the meadow	<i>js</i>

*H O N O R A B L E M E N T I O N***From the Vine**

cloudless sky
the warmth of tomatoes
straight from the vine

stretching the batik pattern
of a well-worn hammock

my cousin
shows me a few grips
on his guitar

the ticket stub serves
as a book marker

silhouettes
of totem poles
against the rising moon

lonely for you on longer nights
of this Northern Hemisphere

regretting her marriage
whenever she hears
the wild geese call

who knows what "Brexit"
will really mean in ten years?

the dentist suggests
a surgical extraction
of wisdom teeth

new tamping machines
for the cemetery

a sprinkle
of brown sugar melting
over oatmeal

the moon reveals
a pack of hunting wolves

still paranoid
even though the weed
is now legal

an incomplete entry
in Captain Nemo's log

young lovers
unable to keep their hands
to themselves

I'll never dance again
to our song!

hard rains
reviving
a mountain stream

a train accelerates
through greening fields

cherry petals
on the soles
of a row of shoes

the laughter of children
popping soap bubbles

Polona Oblak
John Stevenson

2017 NICHOLAS VIRGILIO HAIKU COMPETITION

Judged by Linda Papanicolaou and Brad Bennett

This year almost 6,000 poems were entered in the Nicholas A. Virgilio Memorial Haiku and Senryu Competition. It is impressive and very heartening that so many students entered their poems. We were especially struck by the range of emotions embedded in the poems, from hope and glee all the way to pain and loneliness. We hope that poetry, and haiku in particular, continues to provide an outlet for these young writers to express these feelings through concrete imagery.

What did we look for in these haiku and senryu? We looked for a fresh and successful rendering of a moment observed, a deft portrayal of concrete sensory experiences, an allusion to emotions rather than personal revelation, simple language, and a strong voice, all of which are necessary when writing excellent haiku and senryu. We were also looking for a distinctive young person's voice in each of the winning poems.

We felt honored to be asked to judge this contest. We very much enjoyed the whole process, from reading the poems, to rereading the poems, to rereading the poems again, to discussing the poems we most appreciated, to whittling all the wonderful poems down to a mere six winners. There were many more that deserved praise. But the final six resonated for us. Their writers showed creativity, voice, and knowledge of the craft of writing a successful haiku. Congratulations to the winners!

In the summer heat
endless jump shots
on a broken hoop

Stephanie Okeke, grade 12

This haiku very effectively accentuates how oppressive a heat wave can be. The word “endless” is the first indication that this heat has gone on long enough. Not only that, all the basketball player has to shoot at is one “broken” hoop. That’s disheartening! The writer, by carefully selecting these words, has masterfully

alluded to feelings of loneliness and boredom, perhaps as oppressive as the heat. But we can also appreciate the writer's dedication to practice. Well executed!

tea leaves
she stirs them
for something better

Olivia Shannon, grade 7

One of the common themes of the human condition is to want to change our lives for the better, especially if we're struggling with something. We often go to great lengths to shake things up, but sometimes we do little things to make a difference. Like stirring some tea leaves. So this poem connects with a universal desire. In addition, the unknown subject "she" brings some wonderful mystery to this poem. Is the writer speaking autobiographically? Is it about someone important in the writer's life... a friend, a mother, a sister? The meaning changes depending on this choice, and that ambiguity gives this senryu added intrigue and resonance.

Amber alert
one desk
empty

Campbell Serrano, grade 7

A common misperception about a senryu is that it's a humorous poem that focuses on human foibles. Not so—as this poem shows, it can also be about deadly serious matters, and emotion. The effectiveness of this poem lies in its minimalism and its shape, an inverted triangle that narrows to one stark word, "empty," on the third line. Rather than telling—or even showing—the emotional responses of the other students, the emptiness of that desk places us in the classroom, feeling directly the unspeakable fear of a child's kidnapping.

our parrot shrieks
my father's name
in my mother's voice

Cole Mitchell, grade 12

This is a classic, wonderfully funny senryu. Since parrots learn what they hear often, it speaks volumes about the dynamics of a household in which the mother's and the family parrot's voices mirror each other. The choice of a single word can make or break a poem. In this case it's the "our," which sets the poem within the child's point of view and frames the joke with a knowing humor.

father's silhouette
 cut from the photo
 his hand still on her shoulder *Cole Mitchell, grade 12*

This is a powerful senryu. The author uses a concrete image, an altered photograph, to allude to some very strong feelings. Why is the father cut out? Is this a "broken" family? Is the father no longer living? Is the girl mad at the father? And even though an attempt has been made to cut this man out, his emotional impact lingers on. In addition, the last line is longer than the first two, and that adds to the lingering effect of the hand, and the pain.

millions of stars
 my father
 points out a planet *Daisy Solomon, grade 8*

The emotional strength of this haiku is its nostalgic evocation of childhood memories of stargazing on clear summer nights. How many of us have been taught by our fathers to pick out the constellations and planets? In its simplicity of words, this haiku is well crafted, with both cut and *kigo* ("a million stars" would be a late summer/early autumn reference), and the choice of imagery draws a wonderful contrast between the immensity of the night sky and the intimacy of a father teaching his child that some worlds are not quite as far away as the stars.

**MUSEUM OF HAIKU LITERATURE AWARDS:
A RETROSPECTIVE SELECTION**

Michael Dylan Welch

The Haiku Society of America is rich with traditions. One of these traditions, worth celebrating with *Frogpond's* fortieth anniversary in 2017, is the Museum of Haiku Literature Award, which has sought to recognize the best contribution to each issue of *Frogpond*, as selected by the HSA executive committee. The award began in 1981 by honoring the following poem by Tadashi Kondō from *Frogpond* 4:1:

hoping the shape
of the navel will be good
father cuts the cord

Since then, selections have included mostly individual haiku, but also tanka, haiku sequences, and renku or other linked verse. Each award has included a cash prize of \$100. Total prize money has now exceeded \$12,000, with funding provided by the Museum of Haiku Literature in Tokyo — a place well worth a visit if you ever have the chance. The Haiku Society of America and its members are grateful for this ongoing support.

Some Museum of Haiku Literature Award selections have remained memorable, others less so. Either way, they reflect the changing tastes and perspectives of HSA leadership, and may serve, as the following selections indicate, as a microcosm of English-language haiku development over the last several decades. The award continues to encourage the submission of each person's best poems for publication in *Frogpond*. Long may this tradition continue.

1981

hot rock by the stream
each of the baby's toeprints
evaporating *Ruth Yarrow*

This poem is 5-7-5, though completely natural. *Frogpond* had by this time largely moved on from the predominance of 5-7-5 syllables found in early English-language haiku journals (the first such journal was *American Haiku*, which started in 1963, and *Frogpond* started in 1978).

1982

the old garden fence
now keeps the goldenrod
from the goldenrod *Paul O. Williams*

1983

Against his coat
I brush my lips—
the silence of snowflakes *Alexis Kaye Rotella*

1984

The sound of scissors
through quilt stuffing:
chill autumn moon *David LeCount*

1985

The family gathered—
a tear of embalming fluid runs
from my brother's eye *George Swede*

1986

a steady rain
the dentist's drill
turning to snow

Jane Reichhold

1987

still in the taste
of afternoon tea,
my grandmother's brogue

Jerry Kilbride

1988

snow geese
Sarah discovers
the letter V

James Minor

The year 1988 saw the first selection of sequences for the Museum of Haiku Literature Award. In fact, each issue that year honored a sequence *and* an individual haiku, a practice that was continued through 1992, for a total of five years.

1989

gone from the woods
the bird I knew
by song alone

Paul O. Williams

This selection is one of the classics of English-language haiku. It was written as a memorial poem for Nicholas Virgilio, who had died in January of 1989. Paul had never met Nick, but knew him only by the “song” of his poems in haiku journals.

1990

Into old pots and pans
 thrown out in the backyard—
 the musical rain *Tom Tico*

In 1990 a sequence of tanka was selected, as was a renku, both for the first time. Back then there were no separate journals for tanka, and thus tanka were welcomed in *Frogpond*. But later, with the emergence of various tanka journals, starting with *Five Lines Down* in 1994, and my founding of the Tanka Society of America in 2000, tanka came to be excluded from *Frogpond*.

1991

in a backyard
 two women folding sunlight
 into sheets *Sandra Fuhringer*

One highlight from 1991 was the selection of a hundred-verse renku—something that has rarely been attempted in English. This renku was “Green-a-Glitter,” led by Hiroaki Sato, with twelve other writers.

1992

falling leaves
 day by day
 the house grows brighter *Peter Duppenthaler*

The year 1992 also saw the selection of “Windswept Walk,” a kasen renku by thirty-six different participants, which I started. My calculation, in those days before everyone emailed, was that this renku traveled at least 32,000 miles before it was completed, even though it stayed entirely within North America.

1993

the petals scatter
over graves swept
and unswept

Kohjin Sakamoto

1994

bird shadow
from tree shadow
to fence shadow

Christopher Herold

1995

leaving the park —
glimpses of cherry petals
on the soles of shoes

Ebba Story

1996

spring planting
her refusal
to compromise

Anthony J. Pupello

In 1996, *Frogpond* switched from four issues a year to three, making it a little harder to be honored, not just because there was one less award each year, but because the number of poems in each issue also increased. Indeed, *Frogpond* has grown in size, making the Museum of Haiku Literature Award a rarer and greater honor as the years go by.

1997

undefended:
in the cold rain
their snow fort

Tom Clausen

faint city stars...
 the moth's copper dust
 in my palm *Ebba Story*

Father's funeral
 Mother
 suddenly small *Celia Stuart-Powles*

porch swing
 now and then a breeze
 from the river *Robert Gibson*

January thaw
 the narrow path
 fading away *Mark Alan Osterhaus*

Of all the years that the Museum of Haiku Literature Award has been given, 1997 has been my favourite, thus I present all five selections (two each were selected for the first and second issues of the year).

1998

starry night—
 biting into a melon
 full of seeds *Yu Chang*

1999

garden work—
 talking to each other
 back to back *Dimitar Anakiev*

2000

snake hunting the boy sheds his shirt

Makiko

whistling

he

hangs

the

birdhouse

he

built

Carolyn Thomas

These two poems show variety—horizontal and vertical. A one-liner was first selected in 1981. Other one-liners have been chosen since this first year, mostly in the last decade, but only about five percent of all individual award selections have been one-liners.

2001

Independence Day—

I let him touch

a little bit of me

Fay Aoyagi

2002

spring plowing

a flock of blackbirds

turns inside out

Tom Painting

2003

dim light

the night nurse

describes the rain

Joann Klontz

2004

jackknifed rig
the trooper waves us
into wildflowers

Robert Gilliland

2005

spring evening
the children's promise
not to get cold

Marcus Larsson

2006

circle of pines
God absent
from the wedding vows

Carolyn Hall

open scissors beside a vase of water

Eve Luckring

2007

distant singing—
the winter stars
almost touch

Ian Daw

2008

the glare off snow
has the run of the house
February's extra day

Burnell Lippy

2009

bare maple
my daughter says
she'll come back

Yu Chang

2010

woodsmoke ...
the guilt of living
on

Roland Packer

2011

whale songs ...
when did we stop
talking

Bud Cole

2012

summer heat
the strands of hair not captured
by her braid

Michael Ketchek

2013

silence of snow
we listen to the house
grow smaller

John Parsons

2014

her letter ...
I'd forgotten
paper can cut

Tom Tico

2015

afternoon rain
emptying a book
of its words

Peter Newton

2016

third deployment
the unfinished dollhouse
beneath a sheet

Steve Hodge

What might we learn from the preceding poems, and from selections not represented here? We might expect to see a progression toward shorter poems, or perhaps toward more variation and experimentation, but I don't think this occurs, at least not strongly. The sweep of this award may raise more questions than answers. The technique of juxtaposition seems to have been used steadily, but have seasonal references been changing? How are genders and nationalities represented? Should the award limit itself to individual haiku, or should sequences or linked verse again be recognized? And what about haibun and haiga? And are some of these poems possibly senryu rather than haiku? Perhaps a more psychological vein has emerged at times, but overall the selections seem steady and reliable in quality, even while the nature of committee selection may have overlooked possibly stronger poems in some issues. Ultimately, it is a pleasure to read and reread these poems, and that's really what haiku—and the Museum of Haiku Literature Award—is all about.



essays

FOXFIRE: THINGS THAT GLOW IN THE NIGHT

(FROM *A FIELD GUIDE TO NORTH AMERICAN HAIKU*)

Charles Trumbull

Mysterious, magical, and terrifying things happen in the woods at night. Toadstools spring up, unfamiliar hoots and rustles issue from nocturnal creatures; fairies are abroad. Here and there, things are unaccountably glowing . . .

crescent moon —
foxfire glows in the hollow
of a decaying stump

Evelyn Lang, Woodnotes 13, 1992

“Foxfire” is the popular word used to describe several phenomena of things that glow eerily in the night. Properly “foxfire,” according to *Encyclopædia Britannica*, is a kind of bioluminescence shown by certain fungi that live on decaying wood — particularly, in the United States, the jack-o’-lantern (*Clitocybe illudens*) and the honey mushroom (genus *Armillaria*). Reportedly, the bluish or greenish glow of the healthy growing mushroom can be bright enough to read by. The bioluminescence is durable, too; the effect remains for hours or even days after picking. Sometimes the fungi have been used to mark paths through the forest or attached to people’s clothing to identify them in a dark forest. With no apparent relationship between glowing mushrooms and foxes, some specialists believe that the origin of the word may be the French *faux feu*, “false fire.” Foxfire is also sometimes called “fairy fire.”

Here are examples of how some top English-language haiku poets are using “foxfire”:

warm tints of fall—
 foxfire flecks of the withered copse
 in the dying light

H.F. Noyes, Modern Haiku 26:3, 1995

foxfires show along
 an old mountain road
 only revealed by them

Brent Partridge, Frogpond 21:3, 1998

lanternless walk
 through dark winter night
 foxfire glows

L. Teresa Church, Simply Haiku 6:4, 2008

Some poets relate the glow of foxfire to other nocturnal sources of light:

Summer midnight:
 the glow of fox fire
 ... the full moon.

Evelyn Tooley Hunt, Modern Haiku 3:2, 1972

heat lightning
 through low clouds
 foxfire night

Jim Kacian, Hummingbird 6:3, March 1996

slowly taken
 into the light
 foxfire

Mark E. Brager, 2012 HaikuNow! Contest (Commended)

Are the haiku above by Hunt, Kacian, and Brager actually about true foxfire? I think they are, but, confusingly, the term “foxfire” is also sometimes used in English to describe a pale bluish glow that seems to hover over bogs and marshes. This phenomenon,

unrelated to true foxfire, is thought to be a result of the spontaneous ignition of methane gas from rotting wood. Its proper name is *ignis fatuus* (“foolish fire”), or popularly “will-o’-the-wisp,” “friar’s lantern,” or “jack-o’-lantern.” Numerous other local names can be found in English and Irish folklore. Almost always these are attributed to some eerily glowing creature or apparition that lures unwary night travelers deeper and deeper into the marsh... until it is too late!

Here is how three classic American haikuists have experienced will-o’-the-wisp by whatever name:

wait, will-o’-the-wisp
 in the marshes, till I come
 with my walking stick

Raymond Roseliep, Flute Over Walden, 1976

moonless midnight
 foxfire
 on the mountain bog

Charles Dickson, A Moon in Each Eye, 1993

moonless night
 has darkened the marsh
 occultly
 will-of-the-wisp
 bluely burns

Robert Spiess, Noddy, 1997

It is in this meaning—“will-o’-the-wisp”—that the word 狐火 *kitsunebi* is used in Japanese haiku. Curiously, *kitsunebi* means literally “fox-fire.” According to Hiromi Inoue’s *kiyose* (season-word list; no longer available online) and Gabi Greve’s *World Kigo Database*, it is an all-winter *kigo*. *Kitsunebi* is not one of “The Five Hundred Essential Japanese Season Words” compiled by Kenkichi Yamamoto and translated by Kris Young Kondo and William J. Higginson (2hweb.net/haikai/renku/500ESWd) and Higginson does not mention the topic in *Haiku World* except to say that “fox” is a winter season word.

The popular conflation of “foxfire” and “will-o’-the-wisp” has resulted in some insecurity of translation from Japanese. The second installment of Leon Zolbrod’s book-length article, “Reluctant Genius: The Life and Work of Buson, a Japanese Master of Haiku and Painting” (*Modern Haiku* 23:3 [fall 1992]) presents four haiku that use *kitsunebi*, all written in 1774:

狐火やいづこ河内の麥畠
kitsunebi ya izuko Kawachi no mugibatake

The fox fires —
 Where have they gone in Kawachi
 Among the fields of wheat?

狐火や五助畠の麦の雨
kitsunebi ya Gosuke nii ta to mugi no ame

Look! Fox fires!
 In Gosuke’s new rice field,
 Right there, in the rain.

狐火の燃へつくばかり枯尾花
kitsunebi no moe tsuku bakari kare obana

Mysterious lights —
 They look as if they’re glowing
 In the tall dry grass.

狐火や髑髏に雨のたまる夜に
kitsunebi ya dokuro ni ame no tamaru yo ni

Mysterious light —
 From a skull where rain water
 has gathered at night.

Zolbrod uses “fox fires” for *kitsunebi* in two translations, but “mysterious light(s)” in the other two. Other specialists have translated these same Buson haiku. For *kitsunebi*, “foxfire” is the choice of Takafumi Saito and William R. Nelson in *1020 Haiku in Translation: The Heart of Basho, Buson and Issa* (2006), Allan Persinger in *Foxfire: the Selected Poems of Yosa Buson* (dissertation, 2013), and W.S. Merwin and Takako Lento, *Collected Haiku of Yosa Buson*; while “fox-fire” is the spelling used by Yūki Sawa and Edith Marcombe Shiffert in *Haiku Master Buson* (1992 and 2007).

Only Shoji Kumano (“Winter,” *Living in the World of Buson* website [hokuoto77.com/frame2-buson]) translates *kitsunebi* as “will-o’-the-wisp.” Here is his version of the third of the Buson haiku above:

From will-o’-the-wisp
 As if to catch fire;
 Ears of dried pampas grass! *trans. Shoji Kumano*

Kitsunebi, as we said, is a winter *kigo*. In the four Buson examples, *kitsunebi* cannot be the principal *kigo*, since “new rice fields,” “wheat fields,” and “dry grass” suggest haiku of summer, spring, and winter, respectively. From Kumano’s page of interpretation and commentary we learn that the *kigo* of this particular haiku is rather 枯尾花 *kare obana*, “dried pampas grass.” He explains that *kitsunebi* is derived from a popular belief that a fox breathes a fire from his mouth and defines it as “a mysterious light, seen in fields or mountains on a moonless night.” He says that Buson wrote about this haiku in a letter to his disciple Tairo: “The Haiku reads like an old artistic style but I must use the style. I beg you to read it with as much attention as possible.”

Kumano’s reading is quite different from Zolbrod’s. He writes, “The Poet is so affected by the weird breath of air dried pampas grass gives out which he sees in the growing dusk, that he imagines the ears of the grass lure a will-o’-the-wisp, as if to catch fire from it.”

More recently, I received this translation of a haiku by

Kobayashi Kōji, a living Japanese poet, in which foxfire seems to be used in a metaphoric sense:

bungaku ni kuruhishi tsukihi kitsunebi kiyu

those crazy days
in literature—
foxfire dying out

Sugimoto Kazuko, another contemporary poet, links “foxfire” and the Inari fox-god statues that guard Shintō shrines, in this case most likely Fushimi-Inari Taisha outside Kyoto. She also plays on the growing light of foxfire and the diminishing light of a summer dusk:

狐火か稲荷に灰と夏灯
kitsunebi ka Inari ni honori to natsu tomoshi

Is this is a foxfire?
In the shrine of Inari
Summer light is faint.

Sugimoto Kazuko, HI Haiku International 40, 2000

And here is an interesting recent haiku in which *kitsunebi* is translated as “will-o’-the-wisp”:

復員後狐火一つ見たるのみ
fukuin go kitsunebi hitotsu mitaru nomi

Since demobilization
I’ve seen only one
will-o’-the-wisp

Tamura Chisei, in Modern Haiku Association, Japanese Haiku 2001

Just when we think we have a handle on foxfire, Gabi Greve in *World Kigo Database* informs us that in addition to *kitsunebi* (also sometimes called 鬼火 *onibi*, “devil’s fire”) other similar

phenomena occur in Japanese folklore, including *hitodama* (literally “human ball” as in a ball of energy), *hi no tama* (“ball of flame” or “fireball”), *aburagae*, *koemonbi*, *ushionibi*, and others. “All these phenomena are described as balls of flame or light, at times associated with graveyards, but occurring across Japan as a whole in a wide variety of situations and locations.” So in Japan *kitsunebi* is used for a range of natural phenomena of which “will-o’-the-wisp” is only one.

“St. Elmo’s fire” is yet another completely different sort of otherworldly glow. It is an atmospheric electrical phenomenon that causes church steeples, towers, and ship masts to glow in a storm. You may remember vivid appearances of St. Elmo’s fire in Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* or Melville’s *Moby Dick*. I have found no Japanese haiku about St. Elmo’s fire, and only one in English, and that one seems to confuse St. Elmo’s fire with will-o’-the-wisp:

A glow in the swamp.
St. Elmo’s fire? or
Spirits?

Geoffrey Wilson, Terebess Asia Online, n.d.

Foxfire, of whichever kind, is a wonderful haiku image and could certainly be more widely explored as a topic in English-language haiku.

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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 “Landscape: foxfire.” 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 under 360,000 haiku. I sometimes indicate the count of haiku in the Database on the given topic in this form: N=150; J=90, meaning in this case there are 150 “foxfire” haiku in the Database, of which 90 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.

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

reviewed

Issa and Being Human by David G. Lanoue (2017, *Haiku-Guy.com*). 228 pages, 5½×8", perfectbound. ISBN 0991284054. \$9.99 from *amazon.com*

Reviewed by Joshua Gage

David G. Lanoue—poet, translator, scholar, former HSA president—is probably most known in the haiku community for his monumental Issa translation project. He has translated over 10,000 haiku from haiku master Kobayashi Issa (1763–1828), which are available on his website, *haikuguy.com*. Lanoue’s newest book, *Issa and Being Human*, focuses on Issa’s haiku portraits of his contemporaries in an attempt to understand the poet’s views of humanity.

Lanoue starts with two different translations of the same poem by Issa:

naka-naka ni hito to umarete aki no kure

quite remarkable
being born human ...
autumn dusk

just so-so
being born human ...
autumn dusk

Lanoue’s thesis is that the ambiguity of the phrase *naka-naka ni*, meaning both “remarkable” or “just so-so,” captures Issa’s views of humanity. Issa saw people as remarkable, deserving of praise or pity, as well as just “so-so,” worthy of satire and occasionally

scorn. Lanoue builds on this idea to explore what Issa thought about the concept of “being born human” using Issa’s haiku as the starting point for an analysis of the poet’s worldview and philosophy.

The book is organized into chapters that focus on social classes or castes of people in Issa’s world: children, farmers, priests, samurai, artisans and merchants, entertainers, prostitutes, beggars and outcasts, the old. In each chapter, Lanoue provides his translation of an Issa haiku, as well as an analysis of the poem and an explanation of how it reveals Issa’s views on humanity. As the author explores Issa’s worldview, he also delivers a fairly intimate portrait of Issa himself, with all his strengths and flaws. This allows the reader to better understand and empathize with the poet, even through hundreds of years of historical and cultural distance.

To aid the reader, Lanoue provides background information on Issa’s society and culture. This is a fairly academic text, with many notes and resources included. However, Lanoue makes it extremely accessible for the average reader to understand and digest. Whether he is describing the various levels of legal and illegal prostitution at the time, or 18th-century Japanese currency, or the psychological concept of a “default mode network” in children’s minds, Lanoue is able to fully explain the concept to the reader.

Issa and Being Human is a historically rich exploration of Issa, his poetry, and his world. The book offers a great collection of translated haiku, and Lanoue’s scholarship, helping the reader to understand Issa more fully, is invaluable. Anyone interested in haiku or haiku history should read this book.

Bushfire Moon by Ron C. Moss (2017, Walleah Press, Tasmania, Australia). 45 pages, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1877010767. \$14.50 from [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

Reviewed by Robert Epstein

Ron C. Moss's latest book of poetry and prose begins with his inimitable cover, depicting a blackened house in flames as a partially obscured moon overlooks the grim scene. With deep red overtones, *Bushfire Moon's* cover art is beautiful, but it is a terrible beauty, which only a firefighter/artist could so vividly portray.

For all our civility and modern advancements, uncontrolled fire has lost none of its ferocity since Neanderthal times. Most of us, if we are fortunate, live comfortably removed from the devastation that uncontained fire can wreak. The opening haiku is deceptively domestic, only hinting at, or foretelling, the danger that lurks closer than we think:

fire duty
the newly ironed shirt
still warm

Turning the page, readers follow the Sandfly Brigade volunteer firefighter into the intense heat, grime, and smoke of a fast-moving fire. Tasmanian poet Moss has brought us with him into the stark, frightening scene where he finds himself isolated from his crew member. What could be more unnerving, even for a seasoned volunteer officer? The harrowing haibun concludes with the following haiku, giving rise to far more than a sigh of relief:

between heaven and hell
the touch of a friend's hand
on my shoulder

Firefighting isn't fundamentally about ego-driven acts of courage or heroism. It is about endurance and friendship, deep caring,

and holiness (the kind one spontaneously encounters out-of-doors, unaccompanied by liturgy or scripture).

summer wildfire
a burning scarecrow
on the cross

Could anyone mistake the airborne rescue team alluded to in the haiku below punctuating another frightening haibun?

smoke and ash
flying tin angels
work the skyfall

In so many places around the globe there is drought. Fires thrive in such conditions. It is no wonder that rain appears again and again in these pages. Is the rain due to a fetish for repetition or editorial neglect? I think neither. The recurrence of rain, like the recurrence of the moon, is no accident in this carefully crafted work of art.

passing car
a tiny hand opens
to the rain

Rain is life. Children know it innocently, firefighters respond to it instinctually, Mother Earth receives it naturally.

On the recurring presence of the moon: In traditional Japanese poetry, the white circle in the sky often symbolizes spiritual enlightenment or self-realization. It can also represent immortality, and much more.

Though a dedicated volunteer firefighter for more than twenty years, Moss has the emotional integrity to acknowledge that the work, when seen through the eyes of *small mind* (a Zen term), can be exhausting. Such burnout or compassion fatigue could prompt a weary volunteer to contemplate retirement or totter on despair. Not so for Moss, who taps into *big*

mind (another Zen term), drawing renewed strength from...
you guessed it:

tired of this world
suddenly moonlight
through the window

Curiously enough, Moss does not include a famous poem by the 18th-century Japanese poet, Mizuta Masahide, but it readily comes to mind:

barn's burnt down
now I can see
the moon

Moss is a poetic descendent of Masahide with one qualification: The author of *Bushfire Moon* deeply appreciates the full catastrophe that is this life of fire-and-moonlight. He knows only too well that wildfires cause incalculable devastation and loss yet, even so, humanity finds renewal like redwood seeds that germinate in soil warmed by a windswept blaze. By the light of the moon, we behold this regeneration and rebirth and celebrate the resilience of the Earth and our species.

A longtime Zen student, Moss has wisely chosen the path of the real, rather than the surreal, and we are richly rewarded. Like the Buddha, who described himself as “awake,” Moss has awakened to the beautiful, the poignant, and catastrophic. Commemorating the 50th anniversary of the terrible Black Tuesday fires in Tasmania, *Bushfire Moon*, like *The Bone Carver* before it, is more than a wildfire chronicle from the front lines. It is a book of great sensitivity and inspiration from a firefighter, poet, and artist who implores us to see beyond tragedy to that which is sacred.

East-West Literary Imagination: Cultural Exchanges from Yeats to Morrison by Yoshinobu Hakutani (2017, University of Missouri Press, Columbia MO) 293 pages, 6×9", cloth bound. ISBN 978-0-8262-2080-6. \$80 from press.umsystem.edu

Reviewed by Randy Brooks

Yoshinobu Hakutani is Professor of English at Kent State University, known for his scholarship on African American writers and American haiku. He is the author of *Richard Wright and Haiku* (University of Missouri Press), *Haiku and Modernist Poetics*, and *Cross-Cultural Visions in African American Modernism* (Ohio State University Press). This new study explores the cultural exchanges between the East and West that began in the nineteenth century with American transcendentalists and continued with modernists such as Noguchi, Yeats, Pound, Camus, and Kerouac. In the third section, Hakutani makes the case that African American writers including Richard Wright, Ralph Ellison, Alice Walker, Toni Morrison, and James Emanuel are postmodernists. Hakutani argues that these writers' literary work is better understood not as national literature, but as literature informed by cultural exchanges with the East.

For scholars interested in the history of English-language haiku, this collection of essays provides three significant contributions. First, Hakutani provides evidence that Yone Noguchi was a primary source for modernist conceptions of haiku and Japanese literature. This includes Noguchi's own collection of haiku in English, lectures and essays on Japanese haiku, and several books on Japanese literature.

Second, Hakutani examines early American haiku writers from the 1950s and 1960s in his chapters on "Richard Wright's Haiku and Modernist Poetics" and "Jack Kerouac's Haiku, Beat Poetics, and *On the Road*." While noting that R.H. Blyth's translations were significant to all of these haiku poets, he argues that Wright follows a modernist approach from Shiki "that haiku should be a depiction not only of nature but also of humanity, and that humanity should be represented by the author of

a haiku himself or herself.” Based on Shiki’s essay, “Criticism of Basho,” he views Richard Wright’s haiku as following Shiki’s “opposition to the classic tradition of suppressing subjectivity.” Hakutani writes:

Many of Wright’s haiku reflect the features of modernist haiku, such as the expression of subjectivity and the interaction of humanity and nature. Although Wright emulated classic haiku, he consciously or unconsciously departed in many of his compositions from the classic poetics in which the poet effaces human subjectivity. (139)

Hakutani compares Wright to Basho:

A thin waterfall
Dribbles the whole autumn night,—
How lonely it is

A crow
Perched on a withered tree
In the autumn evening.

He notes that:

Basho focuses on a single crow perching on a branch of an old tree, as does Wright on a thin waterfall. Both haiku create the kind of beauty associated with the aesthetic sensibility of *sabi* that suggests loneliness and quietude, the salient characteristics of nature, as opposed to overexcitement and loudness, those of society. As Basho expresses *sabi* with the image of autumn evening, so does Wright with the line “How lonely it is.” Subjectivity, however, is absent in Basho’s haiku while it is directly expressed by Wright’s third line, “How lonely it is.” (139)

In his chapter on Kerouac’s haiku, Hakutani notes that while Gary Snyder was interested in Zen Buddhism, “Kerouac was

impressed with Mahayana Buddhism, for one's goal of life is to achieve Buddhahood, a celestial state of enlightenment and acceptance of all forms of life" (155). In another passage, he writes about Kerouac:

For him, Buddhism taught one to transcend the origin of suffering and death: desire and ignorance. Most impressively, Buddhism taught Kerouac that the phenomenal world was like a dream and an illusion and that happiness consisted in achieving that strange vision in the mind—enlightenment. (138)

Hakutani makes a convincing argument that Kerouac's writing and haiku responded to:

the Zen principle to establish authority in one's spontaneous and intuitive insights and actions. Kerouac took pains to see things as they existed, without commentary, interpretation, and judgment. (155)

He also notes several Confucian principles that are evident: "Several of Kerouac's haiku reflect a Confucian perspective that all things in the universe are related and united:

The tree looks
like a dog
Barking at Heaven.

The last section of this book examines Eastern connections evident in other African American authors including Richard Wright, Sonia Sanchez, and James Emanuel. After reviewing the reception of Richard Wright's collection *Haiku: This Other World*, Hakutani examines the haiku of Sonia Sanchez as an example of a postmodern approach:

Although most of the short poems collected in *Like the Singing Coming Off the Drums* are stylistically influenced by the

poetics of haiku as well as by the aesthetics of modernist poetry, much of Sanchez's ideological concern is postmodern, postcolonial, and African American. Many of her poems aim at teaching African Americans to achieve individualism and value their heritage. Even such haiku as *mixed with day and sun / i crouched in the earth carry / you like a dark river* succinctly expresses what Langston Hughes does in "The Negro Speaks of Rivers." (257)

This book ends with a study of haiku by James Emanuel who "found a strong affinity between haiku and jazz" as evident in his collection, *Jazz from the Haiku King* published in 1999.

BRIEFLY REVIEWED

Reviewed by Randy Brooks

Blowing Up Balloons: Baby Poems for Parents by Vanessa Proctor and Gregory Piko (2017, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA) 120 pages, 4¾×7", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-78-2. \$15 from redmoonpress.com

Blowing Up Balloons: Baby Poems for Parents is a collection of parenting haiku by Australian haiku writers Vanessa Proctor and Gregory Piko. The haiku are presented one per page, without designation of author, so the reader has plenty of room to enter into the imaginary space and let each expand in his or her own mind. I enjoyed the playful haiku, *breakfast / throwing up / baby names*, which is both about morning sickness and the fun of rejecting possible names for the coming baby. Some of the haiku are straightforward observations with commentary: *stretch marks — / proof that you / have changed me*. However, all seem genuine to the parenting experience: *sleepless night / we pack the hospital bag / again*. My favorite was *patchwork quilt / the women discuss / stitches* which is, of course, about stitches beyond the quilt.

Cherry Blossom Light: Yuki Teikei Haiku Society Members Anthology ed. by Mimi Ahern (2016, Yuki Teikei Haiku Society, Santa Clara CA) 80 pages, 6×9", perfectbound. ISBN 978-0-9975614-1-8. \$12 from youngleaves.org

Cherry Blossom Light was published by the Yuki Teikei Haiku Society (YTHS) as an educational resource for new members and others interested in learning more about the YTHS approach. In addition to two haiku from each current member, the anthology includes a compilation of *kigo* (season words), the 2015 Kiyoshi and Kiyoko Tokutomi Memorial Haiku Contest award winning haiku, and an essay by Michael Dylan Welch on how Shunryu Suzuki's book, *Beginner's Mind*, can help haiku poets consider Zen principles in writing haiku. In the "Dojin's Corner," three of the recent leaders answer questions, such as how they select haiku for commentary in the society's newsletter, *Geppo*. Two sample haiku are: *orchard at dusk / she inspects the branches / for baby bumps* by Marilyn Ashbaugh, and Priscilla Lignori's *along the river / students set up their easels / the scent of wild grape*, which won 2nd place in the 2015 Tokutomi Haiku Contest.

Cricket Song: Haiku and Short Poems from a Mother's Heart by Jessica Malone Latham (2017, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA) 70 pages, 4¼×6½", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-83-6. \$15 from redmoonpress.com

In this collection, blogger and poet Jessica Malone Latham collects haiku, tanka, and senryu about the joys and challenges of motherhood. In the introduction she states that becoming a mother "was the greatest transition I have experienced—one from womanhood to motherhood, from independence to selflessness." The book begins with a birthing haiku: *spring evening / I hum him / into this world* soon followed by haiku about becoming a mother: *hummingbird shadow / in the midst of motherhood / I forget myself*. I enjoyed this collection very much and passed it on to my daughter who recently become a mother herself. She appreciated the complex mix of emotions evident in *heavy scent /*

of lavender and rose / postpartum as well as the simple everyday realities such as *laundry day / his clothes too small / to fold*. I especially liked the quiet, slightly restless moment conveyed in this haiku: *loneliness / I bump into the wind chime / on purpose*. The motherhood haiku in this collection are honest and real.

Dust Devils: The Red Moon Anthology of English-Language Haiku 2016 ed. by Jim Kacian and the editorial board (2017, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA) 182 pages, 5½×8¼", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-80-5. \$15 from redmoonpress.com

Dust Devils is the 21st annual anthology in the Red Moon Anthology series. This collection includes 173 haiku & senryu, 8 linked forms (haibun, renku, sequences), and 5 essays. It is intended to be a "reader's digest" of selected examples of the best English haiku-related work published in 2016. Ten editorial board members nominate works that are reviewed and selected for the anthology. Three of the essays were originally presented at Haiku North America 2015 including Susan Antolin's "Haiku Aesthetics: A Look at Understatement" and "Teaching Haiku in American Higher Education" by Randy Brooks. Jim Kacian's essay "Realism is Dead (and Always Was)" is followed by David Landis Barnhill's "A Reply to Jim Kacian's 'Realism is Dead (and Always Was)'" One of my favorite haibun published this year is "We Regret to Inform You" by Kyle D. Craig, which features a litany of things gone wrong, followed by the haiku *snow storm / grocery store shelves / out of milk*. This anthology also includes vincent tripi's haiku *never / just one wildflower / meditation spot* and Debbie Strange's *lilac buds / no one notices / the bruises*. Also especially appropriate in a year of political debate regarding immigration is Rita Odeh's outstanding haiku *some seeds / in his pockets... / the refugee*.

Journeys 2017: An Anthology of International Haibun ed. by Angelee Deodhar (2017, Chandigarh, India) 390 pages, 6×9", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-5413-8703-4. \$25 from amazon.com

Journeys 2017 is the third anthology of haibun collected by Angelee Deodhar. This is the largest edition, including 133 haibun by 22 contemporary haibun writers and 6 early “adaptors” of haibun in English including works by John Ashbury, Jerry Kilbride, Kenneth C. Leibman, Paul F. Schmidt, Edith Shiffert, and Rod Willmot. *Journeys 2017* also includes prose excerpts and haibun from Japanese authors Saigyō, Sōchō, Bashō, Issa, Chodō, and Shiki. The collection concludes with a translation of “Slokan Diary” written by a Japanese woman in a Canadian internment camp during World War II. Aspiring haibun writers will find Jeffrey Woodward’s brief essay, “Form in Haibun: An Outline” very helpful. In the introduction, Rich Youmans writes: “the true genius of this series” is “to present the genre in all its chaotic volatility and inchoate promise, so that we can come to a better understanding of not just where the haibun is, but where it can go.” Available for only \$25, *Journeys 2017* is an outstanding collection of English-language resources on haibun, including an extensive collection of high-quality English haibun.

Knots of Sand / Cylymau Tywod by John Rowlands (2017, Alba Publishing, Uxbridge, UK) 118 pages, 5¾×8¼”, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-910185-59-9. \$15 from AlbaPublishing.com

Knots of Sand is John Rowlands’ third collection of haiku. As a poet and painter Rowlands has an excellent eye for the found art of nature, as evidenced by the intriguing black and white photographs interspersed throughout the collection. His haiku also portray an intuition of discovery—observing something ordinary that leads to noticing something beyond the immediate perception, as in: *spring / the insistence / of a wren*. Many of the haiku are in both Welsh and English. His haiku usually establish a clear scene, then invite the reader to seek or discover the hidden connections. For example in *promenade / the flap of flags / and flip flops*, the haiku starts with sounds but expands into the stiff breeze coming off the ocean. I’ll close with a favorite haiku: *calm sea / we slip into / our liquid selves*.

Old Pond: The Art of Haiku ed. by Clysta Seney (2016, Yuki Teikei Haiku Society, Santa Clara CA) 80 pages, 6×9", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-36522235-1. \$10 from lulu.com

Old Pond: The Art of Haiku is a collection of 17 craft discussions on haiku collected from the archives of the Yuki Teikei Haiku Society (YTHS). These short discussions were originally published from 1995 to 1998 in *Geppo*, the society's newsletter. These reprints provide a glimpse of YTHS poetics from the 1990's on topics including traditional haiku, form, place, line, word order, image, *kigo*, and observation. Featured authors include key leaders of YTHS: Patricia J. Machmiller, Jerry Ball, Alex and Alice Benedict, D. Claire Gallagher, and Jane Reichhold. Other well-known contributors include Paul O. Williams, Margaret Chula, Francine Porad, Christopher Herold, H.F. Noyes, Jim Kacian, Ebba Story, Carol Conti-Entin, and Michael Dylan Welch. One of the most interesting discussions is Margaret Chula's suggestions on effective line breaks in English-language haiku.

Of This World: 48 Haibun by Stella Pierides (2017, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA) 122 pages, 6×9", perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-80-5. \$15 from redmoonpress.com

Stella Pierides is an accomplished fiction writer as well as poet, which is evident from the careful crafting of narrators' voices throughout *Of This World: 48 Haibun*. Some haibun writers load their prose with dense imagery such that it resembles a prose poem, followed by a prosaic haiku. However, in Pierides' haibun, each haiku extends, not merely repeats, what has already been expressed in the prose. I also like the layout of this collection, with all haibun presented on the recto pages, and the verso pages blank. This layout gives the reader space and time to settle in with one haibun at a time. With a variety of approaches and topics, it is clear that *Of This World* is not a collection of haibun "about me" but rather a collection that asks us to consider, ponder, reflect, and see things in a new light. It is a collection of narrator voices, positioning us to see the

human condition, and allowing us to enter into each perspective. Her various narrators let us establish a relationship with each unique voice, and depending on the voice and topic, this allows us to construct our own imaginary closeness or distance. One of my favorite haibun is “Replacement Child,” which starts with the refrain, “If you are a replacement child, you are born to parents hoping to heal the loss of a child who died earlier” and ends with the haiku *old photos / the dust never / settles*. This is an outstanding collection of haibun worthy of study and imitation by those seeking to better understand this literary art.

Outside the Garden by Mike Dillon (2017, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA) 58 pages, 6×9”, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-81-2. \$15 from redmoonpress.com

According to the short biography in *Outside the Garden*, Mike Dillon grew up on Bainbridge Island and has lived for more than three decades in Indianola, a small town on the Puget Sound northwest of Seattle. This third collection of his haiku is organized to follow the Pacific Northwest seasons. He states that “If not all are strictly ‘nature’ haiku, they aim in that direction: to check the human ego at the door.” While his haiku are not “all about me,” they certainly embrace the human experience on the edges of civilized nature, outside the garden. Following are sample haiku from each season. Summer: *their faces / around the last bonfire / Milky Way*; Autumn: *the last light goes out / in the old library / wind-polished stars*; Winter: *beaver lodge / of sticks and stones / it begins to snow*; Spring: *graveyard bench / worn smooth / the dogwood in bloom*.

Small Clouds: In Memory of Jane Reichhold 1937–2016 by Iza Boa Nyx (2016, Castle Valley UT) 60 pages, 5½×8½”, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1540568397. \$10 from amazon.com

Jane Reichhold was a significant contributor to the haiku and tanka community for over thirty years as a writer, teacher, publisher, and mentor. She and her husband, Werner, promoted the

development of all linked forms of writing through the journal *Lynx*. Iza Boa Nyx wrote *Small Clouds* as a haiku diary—creating a touching tribute to her mother, Jane Reichhold, who died July 28, 2016. This book is an intimate memoir of personal reflections and a form of self-therapy as the author seeks both to deal with the loss while celebrating her mother’s life and accomplishments as a poet. As a personal chronicle, the goal is not to collect only her best haiku and tanka, but rather to share her creative journey in seeking some resolution and understanding. In this collection, it is evident that Iza Nyx clearly learned from her mother’s example to share her inner voice with us. Some of the haiku are matter-of-fact: *old sea / a poet jumps into / silence*, which describes Jane’s death. Others, such as *mountains / keeping the recluse / company*, show a deeper understanding of the power of haiku to connect the inner and outer selves. Nyx concludes with a better understanding of her mother’s work as a literary artist and her place in the broader haiku community. She writes, “Looking through her website only begins to hint at the rich dialogue, interactions, and friendships that she fostered with poets and open hearts all over the world. And all along I thought that she had lived a very reclusive life! It leaves me with a deep sense of awe and love for a woman that I always wanted to know better. . . . It is rare that a mother has touched the lives of so many people, who hold her in deep affection. I consider all of these people my extended family. More than you can ever know, it is you who are holding her memory alive and carrying on her vision”. *Small Clouds* is a wonderful memorial.

Waking and Dream by Glenn G. Coats (2017, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA) 128 pages, 6×9”, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-82-9. \$15 from redmoonpress.com

Waking and Dream is Glenn G. Coats’ third collection of haibun. Although not a chronological narrative, the haibun have an authenticity that comes from writing about his life and region. The haibun are organized into six sections: By the Banks of Saint Johns, A Rustle of Leaves, Milagros, Impulse or Desire, Absent

Geese, and Increments. The first four sections are written with a nostalgic narrator, recalling memories from boyhood, teenage days, first dates, and romance. I read these as autobiographical vignettes. For example, in “Stone Fruit” Coats writes about a cashier: “I work with her at the Food Lion. The girl is pale as a ghost. Tells me she is allergic to anything that swims.” The haibun ends with this haiku: *moonlit lawn / she blows a moth / from her arm*. The section titled Absent Geese consists of haibun written as free-verse poems ending with a haiku. Overall, I read these well-crafted haibun as thoughtful, creative nonfiction with a closely linked haiku, written in the same atmosphere and tone as the prose.

The Windbreak Pine: New and Uncollected Haiku 1985–2015 by Wally Swist (2016, Snapshot Press, Ormskirk, UK) 96 pages, 5×7¾”, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-903543-42-9. \$25 from snapshotpress.co.uk

The Windbreak Pine: New and Uncollected Haiku 1985–2015 is Wally Swist’s second major collection of haiku from over 30 years of writing. Swist’s haiku are pure images of perception, but they are not “objective haiku” written merely to describe dead things and scenic places. His poems celebrate a vibrant, ephemeral livingness worthy of being expressed as a haiku. Although Swist has explored minimalist and one-line haiku in the past, this collection presents what I would call “full bodied” haiku that allow for full expression. Note the long phrases in this excellent haiku: *morning mist rises from the mountain / new leaves of birch trees / shaping the wind*. Throughout the collection, Swist gives us haiku without commentary or emotional outburst or poetic embellishment. The haiku are not ego-centric. They are nature haiku with just a hint of human presence: *roar of the falls... / the plunge pool’s ripples / vibrating with light*. Swist excels at haiku in this tradition of the implied universal human perceiver. This is a collection of well-polished haiku, carefully crafted with exact detail, precisely chosen words, and steadfast focus on whatever

catches our attention: *the cold night long— / from the barn's rafters / a squeaking of bats*. Having praised Swist for staying out of his haiku, I must admit that a personal favorite from the collection is one in which Wally makes an unusual cameo appearance: *horse tracks up the mountain— / following with / my crooked walking stick*.

ERRATA

In *Frogpond* 40:1, on page 66, these credits should have read:

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



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Middlesex VT



HSA OFFICERS

President, Fay Aoyagi: *fay.hsa.president@gmail.com*
930 Pine Street #105, San Francisco CA 94108

1st Vice President, Mike Montreuil: *mikemontreuil@sympatico.ca*
1409 Bortolotti Crescent, Ottawa ON K1B 5C1, Canada

2nd Vice President, Beverly Acuff Momoi: *bamomoi@gmail.com*
530 Showers Drive, Ste 7, PMB 290, Mountain View CA 94040

Secretary, Dianne Garcia: *garciadianne@hotmail.com*
3213 W. Wheeler #4, Seattle WA 98199

Treasurer, Bill Deegan: *hsa.treasurer@yahoo.com*

Frogpond Editor, Christopher Patchel: *frogpondhsa@gmail.com*
1036 Guerin Road, Libertyville IL 60048

HSA Newsletter Editor, Ignatius Fay: *hsabulletin@gmail.com*
600 William Avenue, Unit 33, Sudbury ON P3A 5M9

Electronic Media Officer, Randy Brooks: *brooksbooks@gmail.com*
6 Madera Court, Taylorville IL 62568

REGIONAL COORDINATORS

California, Deborah P Kolodji: *dkolodji@aol.com*
10529 Olive Street, Temple City CA 91780

Hawaii/Pacific, Brett Brady: *brettbrady@gmail.com*
13-3632 Nohea, Pahoa HI 96778

Mid-Atlantic, Robert Ertman: *robertertman@msn.com*
213 Glen Avenue, Annapolis MD 21401

Midwest, Julie Warther: *wartherjulie@gmail.com*
1028 Winkler Drive, Dover OH 44622

Northeast/New England, Wanda Cook: *willowbranch32@yahoo.com*
PO Box 314, Hadley MA 01035

Northeast Metro, Rita Gray: *ritagray58@gmail.com*
785 West End Avenue #12C, New York NY 10025-5454

Northwest, Angela Terry: *amterry9@comcast.net*
18036 49th Place NE, Lake Forest Park WA 98155

Oregon, Shelley Baker-Gard: *sbakergrd@msn.com*
1647 SE Sherrett Street, Portland OR 97202

Mountains, Steve Tabb: *satabb@hotmail.com*
Boise ID 83703

South, Margaret Dornaus: *singingmoonpoetry@gmail.com*
1729 Cripple Branch Lane, Ozark AR 72949

Southeast, Robyn Hood Black: *robyn@robynhoodblack.com*
Beaufort SC 29902

Southwest, James M. Applegate: *japple@dfn.com*
601 Fulkerson Drive, Roswell NM 88203