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ISSN 8755-156X
Museum of Haiku Literature Award
$50 for best haiku appearing in the previous issue

i climb the mountain with my eyes
never ending snow

Pamela A. Babusci
In memory

of

Azhiac Maratos

January 19, 1913 - September 23, 1994

grey wind
nudges the weathervane
the sound
of rain comes from the forest

azhiac maratos

ERRATUM: The award-winning haiku by Pamela A. Babusci was printed in the last issue with a capitalization error. It is printed correctly on p. 1.
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Inside back cover
Greetings to you from your new Haiku Society of America President. As we move into the new season and the New Year and toward the turn of the century, I envision an increasing importance of the simple act of a haiku moment in the so-called postmodern world. I believe that haiku help us to maintain our humanity and poetic spirits. They also help us recover the precious small and large things in our world. As your HSA President, I plan to nourish and protect a place for such acts in North America and around the globe. I wish you all well with your haiku moments great and small.

abandoned house—
the lilacs just as bright
this spring

With best wishes,
Bruce Ross

This will be an experimental year for frogpond as a new editor seeks a style for, a Way to, and some Light on the process of producing a quarterly literary magazine devoted to haiku and its allied genres.

Please bear with me as I make mistakes, proceed clumsily, behave inconsistently. Please honor my failures as well as my successes as attempts to develop a frogpond that will remain fresh and interesting, recognizing the values of the traditional as well as the modern North American haiku forms. I should rather make mistakes than a dead frogpond.

Not that frogpond has been dead in recent years. When I joined the Society, Elizabeth Searle Lamb was the editor, a post that she held from 1984 through 1994, with a three-year sabbatical during which Sylvia Forges-Ryan took the helm. These editors produced issues of excellence which I shall have to struggle to maintain.

In this issue there is a focus on youth. Not only are the winning haiku in the Nicholas A. Virgilio Memorial Haiku Competition for High School Students printed herein, but there are also poems by 7th-grade students from a school in New Orleans. There are also some "new faces" in this issue: writers who, regardless of actual age, are young in the art of haiku.

This issue also bears the work of Robert T. Malinowski, who hopes to have an interpretation of each of the four seasons on the magazine’s covers through the year. Robert also provided the interpretation of Bashō’s "Desolate Fields" for the 1994 Members’ Anthology, dreams wander.

Thanks to all of you who have written with loving encouragement. I need all the good wishes I can get.

With gratitude,
Kenneth C. Leibman
the way
sunlight softens
pine boughs
in the spring

_Jeff Witkin_

steady spring rain . . .
a tree takes shape
at dawn

_Bruce Ross_

top of the spine
of a bareboned tree—
the nest

_L. A. Evans_

ancient cherry tree
its trunk in bloom
at every scar

_Doris Heitmeyer_

the tree's shadow
spread thin
over new grass

_Nistra Alma_

wild pea tendrils
entwining
last year's grass

_Cherie Hunter Day_

so long
I forgot their name:
April crocuses

_Bruce Ross_

the
hanging
fern
too
kindly
fed
fronds
reaching
the
floor

_Robert Spiess_
aged father's birthdate
his plum tree
plum its blossoms fallen
tree's just a tree
petals fluttering
down

Robert Spiess

wrens in the plum tree
spinning first light
into song

Diane Tomczak

almond blossoms
but the sparrows quarrel over
dryer lint

Ken Hurm

keeping bees
because of
tupelo honey

Robin White

morning shadows . . .
the fallen magnolia blossoms
already turned

Bruce Ross

one white camellia
how it softens
everything

Margaret Chula

my first pair of glasses:
the pines
have needles

Mauree Pendergrast
pulling out weeds i clear my mind of clutter

Pamela A. Babusci

too late . . .
as I stoop to weed
seeds fly

Leatrice Lifshitz

annointing the head
of the kneeling gardener
honeysuckle dew

Cecily Stanton

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

Ebba Story

pansy bed
a toddler bends down
to kiss their faces

Pamela A. Babusci

ikebana
arthritic fingers taper
the slender branches

Francine Porad

window blooms
turn their backs
on me

William M. Ramsey

Crying
I count
the onion’s rings.

Chris Linn

from the cypress
a mockingbird peeper
before its first song

Kay F. Anderson
from the treetop
meadowlark
calls the morning

J. Michael Koetzner

cascading
from telephone lines to grass
a fall of starlings

Marcyn Del Clements

its own raucous squawk
lifting the bluejay
to full height

Louise Somers Winder

ahead of the U-Haul
geese flying north

Nasira Alma

the bobwhite
I've been on the lookout for—
neighbor's car alarm

Yvonne Hardenbrook

drifting morning mist
the stillness
of the wild turkeys

Wally Swist

turkeys in cages
stacked on a passing truck
feathering the road

Kaye Bache-Snyder

only early risers
in the market parking lot—
two crows eat pizza

crane
on the horizon
holds a cloud

Tom Clausen
a deer springs
from the yellow sign—
the boundless plains

*Michael McNierney*

scattered skies—
five chamois cross
the moraine
(Switzerland)

*Darold D. Braida*

frosted pasture
the black stallion’s breath
smoking in the fog

*Wally Swist*

fish store window
the one remaining crab
with folded claws

*Doris Heitmeyer*

closing time
at the farmers’ market—
glazed eyes of salmon on ice

*Ce Rosenow*

sardine clouds—
the salty breath
of the fisherman

*Margaret Chula*

White sheets
billow in the wind
a fisherman’s wife

*Sam Savage*

black moon—
kerosene lamp luring
winged ants

*Federico C. Peralta*
construction site—
saying so long
to the daffodils

Wilma M. Erwin

uprooted cherry trees—
between the bulldozer tracks
wild mustard blooms

urban creek—
plum petals floating
on the oil slick

Donna Gallagher

Not one red berry
remains of the holly farm
under the car-park

D. W. Parry

mile-high view:
the city disappears
into sand dunes

Francine Porad

we've let you be,
spider, but now we're moving—
you, too

Zane Parks

A ladybug
flies out of my hand
April Fool's Day

Michael Fessler

butterfly holds tightly
to my finger
I take it to a rose

Brent Partridge

house on the hill
the door opens to let out
a butterfly

Yvonne Hardenbrook
suddenly
the silence between
each wave

_Leatrice Lifshitz_
spoondrift—
sandpipers scurry
ashore

_Robert Henry Poulin_

Almost spring:
a slow lantern walks
the low tide

_Mike Dillon_
they walk along
the water’s edge—the girl
and then the seagull

_Jackie Taylor_
receding water
in the tide pool
a quiet star

_Marian Olson_
sudden shower
darkening shadows on the beach,
then erasing them

_Dorothy McLaughlin_
stream full of melting snow
and a pair of mallards
floating backwards

_Rick Kuntz_
falling again
in spring rapids
—October’s leaf

_Nasira Alma_
Just enough wind
to twist a single
red maple leaf

_Penny Griffin_
pine pollen
drifts in yellow wave-forms
on the lake

*Ann Cooper*

clear sky—
the rower wrinkles
the mountains

*Darold D. Braida*

rainy woods
mushroom hunters sheltering
under their umbrellas

*Helen K. Davie*

spring—
fish kite
battling upwind

*Margaret Chula*

after the rainstorm
choosing dead limbs for kindling
by their fragrance

*a step on the stair
before the knock wind

*Jeff Witkin*

yesterday's wind
further away—
she weakens her tea

*Gary Hotham*

standing in the rain
waiting for your raincoat
to appear

*Pamela A. Babusci*

waiting for your return
tree shadows lengthen
brick by brick

*Helen K. Davie*
lonely tonight i drink all the moonbeams

Pamela A. Babusci

letters avoid words dreams dissolve

Linda D. Addison

blush of a rose
her “Dear John” letter stamped
Return to Sender

Carlos Colón

The start of spring—
telling her it’s too painful
to see her as a friend

Tom Tico

the thigh mole
near your hairline
only i see

William M. Ramsey

second marriage
she trains the gnarled wisteria
to a new fence

Yvonne Hardenbrook

first day of spring—
same as yesterday
his snoring

Leatrice Lifshitz

retirement—
at home all day
with a stranger

Addie Lacoe

love resurrected—
the flannel nightgown
put aside

Nasira Alma

jockeying wheelchairs
against each other—
the kiss hard-won

Zane Parks
Out of the school bus
dodging all the dry places

Rebecca M. Osborn

rising suddenly
the squeals of little ones
. . . the balloon bouquet

Elizabeth St Jacques

foster-care child
only a doll tells her
“I love you”

John J. Dunphy

ghetto child’s crayon
all the gang colors
worn to stubs

Addie Lacoe

overhearing
that his life was
an accident

Anthony J. Pupello

cheek to pillow
a moonlit strand
of drool

Zane Parks

first day of spring
down by the mailbox
empty slippers

Nina A. Wicker

In the neighborhood
snowflakes and daffodils
this April Fools Day

Jane K. Lambert

road map
his hometown
on the margin

John Stevenson
light snow...
in my morning dream my son
waits for me to wake

Yasuko Yasui

an approaching shadow—
not knowing
it’s my mother’s

as if they belonged
to someone else
i put on my clothes

Yvonne Hardenbrook

savoring the book
how slowly he turns
the last few pages

as if to hear
his silent world
he cups his ear

Chris Gordon

clean biopsy
many promises now
to keep

Gloria H. Procsal

I wanted my spleen
that glistening purple
organ they cut out

Diane Tomczak

shattered,

Christina Sergeyevna

together with me, the glass
I threw at the mirror

William Woodruff

I wanted my spleen
that glistening purple
organ they cut out

Mauree Pendergrast

she lies in bed
both face and walls glow
nursing-home pink

Gretchen Graft Batz
May sunshine—
another name in the obits
rings a bell

H. F. Noyes

packing her dishes—
on the windowsill
paperwhites in full bloom

Ce Rosenow

filling the emptiness
where the widow's husband sat—
bands of sunlight

Wally Swist

warm breeze . . .
on the small forgotten grave
a clump of buttercups

Elizabeth St Jacques

laughing forever
on the white tombstone
the writer's image

Marian Olson

from the gravestone
to the blossoming tree—
a spider's thin strand

Helen K. Davie

a smooth stone—
the second wife buried
elsewhere

John Stevenson

family graveyard
uncle harry and aunt nell
still not speaking

Ken Hurm
the way her hand
lifts the ashes of her cat
scattering its stillness
(in memory of Calhoun)

Joyce Walker Currier

driving home from the vet
beside me on the seat
my old dog’s collar

John J. Dunphy

candlelight flickering . . .
together we cry
over our dead dog

Edward J. Rielly

alone in her nursing-home room
she baby talks
to her long-dead cats

William Woodruff

both Malamute and fire siren wailing away

Muriel Ford

twilight
sun
slipping
into
another
dark
world

Peter Duppenthaler

Winking
in the darkness of the street
a cyclist’s white shoes

Sam Savage

My phone
rings once
in the night.

Chris Linn

Marian Olson

house locked at last—
from somewhere
faint smell of smoke

Jeannette Stace
the ski lift
stopped and empty
one chair creaking

Kaye Bache-Snyder

Cold dark morning:
the commuter train’s
bright faceless windows

Mike Dillon

frigid morning . . .
on windshield ice
my shaking shadow

William M. Ramsey

driving away
that new car smell
my first dent

Carlos Colón

A car turning in . . .
headlights flicker on a tree
. . . then another . . .
(for John Wills)

Ross LaHaye

daydreaming . . .
the jet contrail softly
spreads

Tom Clausen

Department store
flies almost as many flags
as the U.N.

Kam Holifield

The smell of popcorn
rushes out of the lobby
ahead of the crowd.

Robert L. Brimm

he builds a house
with turquoise green carpets
matching her eyes

Flori Ignoffo
Pentecost morning—
a lighted candle falls
from the windowsill

Nina A. Wicker

famine relief—
side by side with the priest
the medicine man

Mark Arvid White
evening séance—
the medium's parlor
smells of cabbage

Patricia Neubauer

At the far end
of the church yard
a bronze Buddha

Dave Sutter

the act
of the statue
stillness

Paul O. Williams

holding my breath
Henry Moore's figures
in conversation

Ronan

Stone Mountain—
the granite faces of
defeated generals

Zane Parks

nude mannequin
the cigar store indian
staring

Ken Harm

caught inside
the rugged quartz
the sun

L. A. Evans
unable

unable to feed the birds i cannot lose weight

ill each tomato plant a stranger

finally tennecare approved but little mood for celebration

sunny morning negative feelings

before fall leaves fall my scattered mind

no money for the used book

right here on the calendar my days are numbered

another nice day still not over the weather

Marlene Mountain

Half Frozen

So alone
the snow I gather
with my hand

it drips
again rain
warm smooth

lower
an ice-flower opens five
half frozen petals.

Werner Reichhold
a starry night—
all of the sky
-going on

sunlit afternoon
only the wind
going on

insects and flowers
even here so much
going on

Paul O. Williams

Nicaraguan Mother

arch of rafters
sag of hammock—
her deep breath
dawn doorway:
glow of her candle
    nearer

stones
grinding corn—shreds
    of my dream
tortilla:
her fingerprints radiate
in all directions
curved hands:
the tortilla eases onto
scorching clay
sunspot
on the dirt floor:
the baby’s chortle
noon:
the huge white pig heaves
one grunt

Ruth Yarrow
Woodstock '94

Woodstock festival—
the crickets in the bushes
all night long

tossed frisbee—
the happily frolicking dog
misses every one

pulling a toy wagon
a middle aged woman with
a broken-heart tattoo

mud slide
at the bottom "dirt boy"
does a somersault

the young girl
expressively wiggles her hips
to "Chain of Fools"

Woodstock memorial:
POW sticker, flowers, poem
and a business card

Max Yazgur's farm—
a grasshopper leaps onto
a four-leaved clover

Bruce Ross
HAIKU IN THE SCHOOLS

WINNERS OF THE 1994 NICHOLAS A. VIRGILIO
HAIKU COMPETITION FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

More than a quarter of the 450 entries in this year’s contest were exceptionally good. It is interesting to note that, although this event is a haiku contest, a vast majority of the entries were pure senryu. Nature, other than human nature, was a mere footnote. Nevertheless, the sensitivity demonstrated by these young poets is astounding. We wish there were space to praise a good many more. Nearly all of the haiku submitted were not only written in the freeform style, but were of the minimalist school, many with a single word constituting a line.

In choosing the winners, we looked for originality, interpenetration, clarity and concreteness of images, focus on the present instant, and skill with words. Overall, we sought, especially, a sense of the deeper spirit of haiku.

The haiku teacher and the ninth-grade class at Wahlert High School in Dubuque, Iowa are sure to celebrate, having swept all honors in this year’s contest. Since there were only a few high schools whose students submitted work, we hope that more will be done in the future to promote haiku, and to encourage participation in the Nicholas Virgilio contest.

First Place
Lisa Tranel (9th grade) digging potatoes
Wahlert High School my dog barks at the shovel

The seasonal reference of this poem is clear; the time when potatoes are harvested. Other than potatoes, what treasure will the shovel unearth, maybe a coveted bone? At some level, does Lisa’s dog recognize its own nature in that of the shovel (much as haiku poets recognize themselves through heightened awareness of “external” phenomena)? The poet may well have been mulling over this very question. In doing what her dog does so well, dig, she finds significance in a common activity, significance that might otherwise have gone unnoticed: the unearthing of simple treasures, and a realization of a deeper connection to her dog, perhaps in the same way that her dog felt a connection to the shovel.
Second Place  
Adam Asbury (9th grade)  
Wahlert High School  

We feel the bitter cold of this poem, the coldness that was to end with the taking of life. The actual split-second of "freezing-up" is the point of focus. So sudden, the single explosion, a pheasant's wings... deafening, the silence where a gunshot could have been.

Third Place  
Brooke Althaus (9th grade)  
Walhert High School  

The poem is not "I see mountains along the horizon", or "mountains are the horizon", or any other re-write. It's not only that the single horizontal line suggests the horizon, although that is the case. As we live with this poem we find that it continually expands. "Mountains" is a rich word, associated with snow, rock, trees, stillness, storms, the purple shadows, and so forth. As we move through this cluster of meanings, we come to "the horizon" which always surrounds us. It is a difficult path ahead, to matter which way we go. It won't be a flat, easy walk.

Honorable Mentions are listed in alphabetical order; there is no order of preference.

Honorable Mention  
Nate Jenkins (9th grade)  
Wahlert High School  

A simple act, a natural act, perhaps an unconscious one. Adaptability is a strong human characteristic. Here are two possible scenarios, each powerful in its own way: 1) A teenager leaves home for school, baseball cap worn in the more conventional manner, as his parents insist upon seeing it. But, when he turns the corner he assumes his image of choice, turning the cap backwards as is the custom of his friends. The rebellion of youth is universal; it has always been. 2) A teenager leaves home, baseball cap worn in the conventional way, and reaches the corner. It is a brisk day and there is a stiff breeze... rounding the corner, he turns his cap so that it will not be taken by the wind. He is in tune with his environment and takes charge of his life. Adaptability—whether to social environment or to the weather.
Honorable Mention  Eucharist
Jessi Kurt (9th grade)  white
Wahlert High School  on my dirty palm

Even those who may not be familiar with this rite are likely to understand this poem. The image is stark and clear; the poet’s recognition of the need to be unburdened of sin, of guilt, is expressed more by the dirty palm than by the Eucharist itself. It is the contrast that underlines this need and deepens the impression.

Honorable Mention  rain...
Amanda Wetjen (9th grade)  he holds out
Wahlert High School  his hands

The ellipsis holds us for a moment in the first awareness of rain. It is possible that the rain is so light that hands are held out to be sure. This is a common reaction, often an involuntary one. Alternatively, the person holding out his hands may know that it has started to rain and welcome it, palms up, a willing participation—a celebration.

Honorable Mention  grandmother’s smile
Lisa White (9th grade)  spreads
Wahlert High School  into a yawn

As we grow older those things that once fascinated or gave pleasure tend to exert less of a hold on us. Exuberance gives way to calmness, laughter to a smile (sometimes merely a polite smile). Often we grow weary, even in the company of friends and relatives, and it becomes less and less important to conceal our true feelings. This poem acknowledges and accepts the universal seasons of life.

Presented with joy, encouragement, and gratitude,
The Judges:
Christopher Herold
June Hymas

NOTE: The rules for the 1995 Nicholas A. Virgilio Haiku Competition for High School Students appear in the Announcements section at the back of this issue of frogpond.
The haiku and sequences on this and the following page were submitted by students in Mr. Arlie Parker’s 7th-grade English class in the Isidore Newman School, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Night in the city
the far-off sound
of a lone train

Leslie White

While I fall asleep
I see the day in a quick
five-second recap

Vasu Tummala

Sweet smell of old times
... recollecting
how he hurt me

Rachel E. Landis

The tall wood houses
rise from St. Charles Avenue
as the sun comes out.

Matthew L. Mann

The yellow fuzz
on this leaf
got up and walked away.

Dorothy Ball

babies bawl, hungry
kids cry, hungry
adults beg, hungry

Brett Bissinger
Cold winter moon
an old man sits by himself
looks out the window.

City summer day
the boy with a cold watches
the party below.

Kyle Jones

You reach out for me, not realizing you're late

It was lonely,
that scary moment
when you said I didn't matter.

No one expected
for you to say
that I still matter.

As I see you dance with her
I too have my doubts
that I am important.

The moment was hard
no words to show you cared
for me or anyone else.

Things are hectic
Because you are here;
don't worry, it's okay.

You are together,
happy as always;
you are safe.

Victoria Barreto
Each year in Japan the Haiku Poets Association (Haijin Kyōkai) and the Museum of Haiku Literature (Haiku Bungaku Kan) publish their Haiku Karenda, with haiku by the members. The cover and each month's page include reproductions of from one to three long, narrow poem strips (tanzaku) or square poem cards (shikishi) in the authors' calligraphy, plus—on the monthly pages—thirty or so additional haiku in type. The following poems are translated from the tanzaku and shikishi; I am grateful for the help of Tadashi Kondo and Kayoko Hashimoto. (Authors' names in Western order.)

Front cover:

senmen ni  scattering
uta o chirashite a poem on the fan paper—
fude hajime first calligraphy

Shunsō Machi

January:
momenjima the simplicity
kitaru tanjun of wearing striped cotton
hatsuhi uku I accept the first sun

Ayako Hosomi

taiji wa umi kara an embryo from the sea
fubo to nigatsu no with father and mother the color
iwa no iro of February boulders

Hekiteikan Isogai

me ni kiyuru coming so close
made chikazukite it fades in the eye
ume no hana plum blossom

Utsuwa Kamikura

tada ima tada just now just
nuke ha nimai ya two fallen feathers . . .
tori-awase the cock fight

Tōge Morita
kuwa no ne o                    mulberry roots
 taki kebura suru               kindle and smoulder . . .
 higandera                     the temple at Higan

*Bansui Minagawa*

*Higan*, sometimes given in English as "equinoctial week" but literally a translation of "Paramita" (Sanskrit for "fixed goal" or enlightenment), is a week-long Buddhist observance every spring and autumn, and includes visits to temples and graves with prayers for the spirits of the dead. (to be continued)

**Sierra Fly Fishing**

Last night I saw Mars—magnetic orange in a dark sky of white stars. Mountains, half crusted in snow, on both sides of our valley as we rise at dawn—the sun an orange ball that is soon shadowed by ominous clouds. It could rain on us yet. I'm reluctant to leave my cocoon in the tent, but coffee's on. Activity of breaking camp after breakfast warms me up. Now I am flexing my new graphite rod over the swollen waters. It's impossible to keep a fly in the eddies—current so strong.

tROUT RISING
    big browns and rainbows
    my line falls short

Fish not interested in my dry fly anyway; they are rising to tiny black midges. There's more than fish interested in these bugs; a flycatcher is picking them off our dusty car. He also has a territory problem:

    black phoebe perches
    on the car's sideview mirrors
    attacking the foe

Cows—red and white or black with white faces—bawl in the stubbled field. Winter range here, along the river. But there is nothing for them to eat. A tan pickup truck pulls in, empties a sack of grain in a long line and drives away. Now the river flows through stillness.

cattle queuing
    licking a line of grain
    a sudden wren sings

Marcyn Del Clements
I remember
the blue of fringed phacelia
but not the passing year
only my lover’s stride
beside me on the moist path

I will not falter
under your steady gaze
the flame you desire
swells and flickers
at another’s hearth

Sandra L. Martin

Home alone and
I read your old love letters
this full moon night . . .
the smell of lilacs
comes and goes

these nylon stockings
moon-white on the bedpost
faint warmth
yet sniffing the powder
between your full breasts

Lenard D. Moore

Kissing you good-night
even the scent of your toothpaste
excites me.
Forty years ago I feared
we might run out of love.

My love . . .
must you really go back to
buying and selling?
The roses are in bloom, and
your piano gathers dust.

The finches sing
freely ’til I appear, then
a silence falls.
Mother’s whistling always stopped
when I approached her other world.

Having washed your face,
hands, arms, stayed near
while you slept,
you turn from dying to ask:
You’re my mother, aren’t you?

Somewhere in her heart
in her memory perhaps,
she will find it still
the laughter, closeness we had.
Granddaughters often do.

Kay F. Anderson

The poinsettia
tiers in the wisteria;
the wisteria
hangs in the poinsettia—
ardent-pale, so much like love

songs in the field
from the sowing of seed
to bird voices
the turn of the earth
a wind-up toy

Fileman Waitts

Jane Reichhold
after the thunder

a Kasen Renga

by

Joanne Morcom

Nika

Sister Mary Jane

silence
after the thunder . . .
then crickets

in the prairie grass
the fawn's warmth lingers

under the noonday sun
a naked child sits
and smiles

Halloween night—
small shrill voices

a bright moon—
in and out of shadows
slips the owl

the bonfire flares . . .
twilight trembles anew
is it there
in the dying embers?
face of a friend  Joanne

from the withered branch
the last apple . . .  Nika

winter wind:
dry leaves swirl
between the tombstones  Mary Jane

final parting
his bittersweet kiss  Joanne

spring dreams—
added to her shopping list
harlequin romance  Nika

drifting into deep sleep
i trust in resurrection  Mary Jane

entwined
in the robin's nest
bright blue string  Joanne

at rest within . . .
the crescent moon  Nika

over the hill
distant fields glisten—
september dew  Mary Jane

morning stillness
the deer hunter follows tracks  Joanne

a scarecrow
staring blankly at the stars
orion beams back  Nika

to the creche
a toddler carries a crumpled rose  Mary Jane
faintly
from the thicket
newborn’s cry

beneath the bed
kittens nursing

green shoots push up
through dead matted weeds
fresh beginnings

in her white hair
a pink and purple bow

widow . . . wrapped
in a room with a view
careses memories

wild geese far above
flee the sea storm

cold autumn rain
drums steadily down
on a shed roof

again the salmon gather
at the mouth of the river

sirens pierce
the stained glass window
nuns kneeling

slow dance . . .
heartbeats race

lovers taste
each other’s sweetness
harvest moon

rust colored foliage
a fox appears  disappears
pensioner shares her thanksgiving meal with a stray cat  
Joanne

war vets drink to the “good ol’ days”  
Nika

snowflakes falling falling falling . . . snow  
Mary Jane

april afternoon . . . clouds come and go  
Joanne

befuddled bee reluctantly emerges from the thistle  
Nika

Handel’s hallelujah chorus sounds my drooping spirit soars  
Mary Jane

The practice of composing kales renku (the style of haikai no renga written in 36 stanzas and taught by Matsuo Bashō in the 17th century) has made wonderful progress in North America. In the twenty-odd years since it was introduced to the community of haiku aficionados, renku and its unique style of linking different verses on different themes by several different poets has become a much written and discussed genre, thanks of the efforts of scholars and poets such as William Higginson, Donald Keene, Tadashi Kondo, Earl Miner, Hiroaki Sato, and Makoto Ueda.

The criteria for this contest included adherence to the jo-ha-kyu form (introduction, body, fast close); correct use of season; diversity of topic and tone; and quality of linking. Although all of these qualities are important, the judges feel that perhaps the one most essential to a good sequence is the latter, as a good renku may be conceivable without the others, but not without imaginative and subtle connection between verses. Among the entries received, we felt that “after the thunder” showed the best understanding and execution of linking technique, if not in other, more technical aspects of renku. We congratulate its authors, and applaud the high level of skill they displayed in crafting poetry in this demanding genre.

The hokku places us in autumn (season word: crickets), and the tone is that of hushed awe—even the crickets are quiet for a while. This is developed in an appropriately close verse which further defines the setting—we are on the prairie, and the thunder which silenced the crickets has perhaps startled a tawn. The matted-down grass from which it has risen is still warm, and the
themes of gentleness and repercussion are extended. As appropriate to the
daisan, the theme has shifted, and we find ourselves in the company of a young
child rather than a fawn, and in the sunshine, rather than under threatening
clouds. The connection is obvious: youth and warmth, showing a link by quality
(perhaps Bashō would have deemed this to be utsuri, reflection) rather than
by place. Antithesis is another way of linking, and in the following verse, the
naked child basking in the sun is replaced by a garishly costumed pack of kids
moving through the darkness of Halloween night.

Perhaps the most successful sequence of stanzas occurs in verses 10-16. We
begin with a love verse, as is appropriate on the second page of a kasen and,
also appropriately, it is followed by a second love verse; both reflect the proper
tone of longing, rather than fulfillment. The parting couple in verse 10
becomes a pair of figures on the cover of a harlequin romance novel in a
supermarket, which a lonely matron has added to her purchases. Her reveries
about romantic dalliance become more literal in the next verse—perhaps she
is only dreaming of dreaming of love. As the figure slips into unconsciousness,
the erotic impulse is transformed into a simple hope for survival, and
surrender to love is transmuted to surrender to infinity. At this point, the
sequence is in danger of becoming too close to being a narrative, and so the
next verse moves away from the depiction of a lonely woman to the springtime
scene of a robin's nest. The themes of springtime, potentiality, and resurrection
are wonderfully combined in this verse; the round nest suggesting cyclic
eternity in terms of its shape, its function, and its contents. The blue color
shared by the thread in the nest and the egg reinforce this, and the thread
itself serves as a visual pun signifying connection. In the next verse, the round
nest becomes the partial ring of the crescent moon, another symbol of cyclical
change. This, the 14th verse, is appropriately the moon verse, and we are thus
moved into autumn. The shift from the dreamy potentiality of spring to the
dwindling energies of autumn are apparent in the crescent, most likely waning
moon. The colors become muted—instead of the blue of the eggs and thread,
and the red of the robin's chest, we have merely the black and white of the
moon and nighttime sky; the stillness of the egg, in which a new life is actively
forming, becomes that of negative space. The following link reverses this
meditation on potentiality by depicting fruition. Together the maeku and
tsukeku create a lovely sequence in which an early morning landscape is
displayed. It is September, and the fields are ready to be harvested. In the faint
light the bluish-white glow of dew can be seen on the crops—we have come
full circle from the springtime robin's nest. This is a moment of stillness, yet
in the next verse, the stillness is broken by the approach of a hunter, who
follows the trace of a deer in the autumn landscape. It is, perhaps, a poor
choice of quarry in terms of the entire sequence, inasmuch as a fawn has
already appeared in the wakiku. Despite this, this run of verses shows the skill
and imagination of the participants in this renku in terms of theme, variation
of linking technique, and quality of individual verses.

John Ziemba

35
and the winter road thin curved calligraphy on snow
leaves on a high branch cast shadows
in the square this early morning light pale as pears
azaleas that bloomed in a poem withering now
a sadness between the lines . . . these letters from provence
dark clouds drift apart new stars
still warm a small blue egg a small blue song
pennies give birth to wishes pregnant koi
eenee meenee minee moe . . . licorice or lemon drops
spinst er woman plants forget-me-nots
old mountain climber she lives on a hilltop
the postman complains again
night alone moon lingers at the window
seven times now my dream
the bridge all lit up while the city sleeps
remembering that kiss in a taxi
haunted by regret . . . so silent in her presence
to find another river and another
only the fog discovering these empty streets
footsteps swish in yellow leaves
she disappears into the crowd the rainbow’s end
scent of sandalwood lingering
in the open field a battleground of felled trees
sudden applause at the shooting gallery
rifting on an evening air the sadsweet carousel
from flower to flower gardener & butterfly
pleated fans folded now in the house of autumn
buzzsaw interrupting bird song sudden chill
north by northwest this november wind changing my mind
a distant mountain lost in the haze of sky
small fingers crossed wishing on that winter star
behind the stripper's art . . . something
days of solitaire red kings upping black queens
the sword is mightier than the pen
first to fall bright rows of fife and drum
. . . all music spent

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A READING

Raggedy Ann cut open
for her candy heart
that says 'I love you'

Robert Spiess

This haiku—a mere tale of greed and naughtiness in the nursery? Perhaps it seems so at first reading. Perhaps it may even have seemed so to the poet when he jotted down his first notes for as much happens in the poet's mind between the moment of perception and the finished haiku as in the reader's between the first and subsequent readings.

The haiku describes a child cutting open a rag doll to get at its candy heart. In imagination, one can almost hear the cloth tear, almost feel the heart-shaped candy in one's hand, and one's experience of the "moment" would end at this point were it not for the third line. The juxtaposition of 'I love you' and the act of destruction opens the door to a long, dark corridor that echoes and re-echoes with Tom Jones' "Delilah" and Wilde's "The Ballad of Reading Gaol," with Don Jose's remorsetful "C'est moi qui l'ai tuée—ah Carmen, ma Carmen adoré . . .," Othello's softly uttered words "Put out the light, and then put out the light" and Medea's frenzied cries of anguish and revenge. Different readers will have different associations, but all will relate in some way to the theme of passionate love transformed into possessiveness just as the child, ripping open the doll, is determined to possess the candy heart for herself alone.

Without this juxtaposition, the haiku would lack resonance. Haiku poetry never describes that which it discovers. This is why, I think, many speak of haiku as a double art, meaning both the writing and the reading. The poet creates the haiku; the reader completes it.

Patricia Neubauer

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1From The Shape of Water, ©1982, Robert Spiess. By permission of the author.
The Garden

a woman
weeding her garden
crying, smiling
face smudged where hands have brushed
open furrows
shadow
in each one
what she's turned up dries out
red hands
opening
tulips
the earth darkens further down
blackbirds overhead
singing
of worms
dark hair wriggles with the wind
quiet spaces
unseen in the sky
swallows loop together
the same cloud all morning
a glint of sun
at each stroke
of the hoe
puffs of earth—the wind carries them off

Jim Kacian
One of the more puzzling notions brought into the American understanding of Japanese haiku is onji. According to its greatest proponent, William J. Higginson, “Japanese poets do not count 'syllables' at all. Rather, they count onji. The Japanese word onji does not mean 'syllable', it means 'sound symbol'” (The Haiku Handbook, McGraw-Hill, 1985, p. 100). Higginson made this assertion even though Tadashi Kondo had given a more or less correct (albeit confusing) account of the term onji as early as 1976 (A Haiku Path, Haiku Society of America, 1994, p. 85).

It is hard to imagine why Higginson decided to muddy the picture. In the first place, as the English poet James Kirkup, who alternates his residence in Japan, Andorra, and England, says in Formulas for Chaos (Hub Editions, 1994), “few [Japanese] have ever heard” the word onji. Indeed, check the definitions or descriptions of the terms tanka, renga, and hokku (haiku) in Japanese dictionaries and books on these verse forms, and you will find that the word used for counting the sound units is on, ji, or moji. More important, Higginson did not really try to determine what onji actually was. Just look at its definition in, say, Daijirin: “A moji (character) that expresses a certain sound on its own. There are onsetsu moji (syllabic, syllable) and onso moji (phone, phoneme). Also called hyō' on moji and onhyō moji. See iji (ideograph).” (In this translation, parenthesized words and phrases are my additions. On account of the way words are often formed with Chinese ideograms in Japanese, hyō' on and onhyō are completely interchangeable, both meaning “phonetic.”)

Now, no Japanese moji or ji represents a phone or phoneme that is a complete consonant—except perhaps the one for n, which in the Japanese scheme of things is regarded as a “half-vowel.” Accordingly and therefore, as far as the Japanese language and its writing system are concerned, an onji can only be a syllable. As Kirkup goes on to note, “A syllable is a syllable, in whatever language it is written or spoken.” His conclusion on this much ado about nothing: “Theorising about onji seems a very pedantic way of using a sledgehammer to crack a hazelnut.”
For sweeping aside this non-issue in its Prologue alone, *Formulas for Chaos* is worth having. For Kirkup fans, the book’s worth doubles because he says this will be his last collection of haiku. Kirkup (b. 1923), whose first book of poems, *A Correct Compassion*, appeared in 1952 (the title poem describes a mitral stenosis valvulotomy), is a philosopher-poet. The opening piece reads:

Haiku should be just
small stones dropping down a well—
with a remote splash

And the Epilogue:

A barge moving through
thick morning mist blows its horn
after vanishing

As these pieces show, his “preference” here is for the 5-7-5-syllable, 3-line form. He quotes Auden as saying to him: “What’s the use of having rules if you don’t observe them? You lose the whole fun of the thing.”

Between the opening haiku and the Epilogue, Kirkup throws in his translations of Louis Calaferte (1928-1994, French. “Vertical / dazzle of / full summer”—from a sequence in which Calaferte has “deliberately not employed the traditional form of the Haïkai, respecting only its substance”), tanka, translations of the dancer Takehara Han (b. 1903. “Working on dance steps, / my kimono becomes so / laden with my sweat”), of Takahashi Mutsuo (b. 1937. “The enormous kite / did not find its real soul / until the string snapped”) and Yannis Ritsos (Greek. “Shadows of seagulls / patterning the damp sand / patterning our flesh...”), and of a selection of 14 tanka from the *Hyakunin Isshu* (One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets). *Formulas for Chaos* also has a sequence called “Snowviewing” spread on two pages, “intended to be read diagonally” across them.

The philosopher-poet Kirkup does not impose a narrow range of topics to be dealt with in haiku—as may be discerned from three randomly selected pieces from a sequence called “Gaia”:

With the death of Man
the earth will recover health—
its lost butterflies
In the village pond
fading stars are shaken by
a first falling leaf
By the window fall
the autumn leaves and the rain's
tears for Yves Montand

Of course, to speak of the imposition of a narrow range of topics in haiku can mislead. After all, haikai started out by rebelling against tradition and its dictates. Still, compared with the notion of *kachō-fūgetsu* (flower-bird-wind-moon) that the haiku "dictator" Takahama Kyoshi (1874-1959) advocated as the only appropriate subject matter for this literary genre, any attempt to go beyond it has a broadening effect.

Among the modern Japanese haiku writers who made that attempt before the war, Saitō Sanki (1900-1962) is prominent. In the touchy atmosphere created by the ascendance of ultranationalists, Sanki was arrested and jailed as a Communist suspect for the kind of haiku he wrote. To wit: Migi no me ni taiga hidari no me ni kihei, "In the right eye a huge river, in the left eye a cavalryman"; Harupo Marukusu kami no kuso yori umaretari, "Harpo Marx must have been born of the shit of God"; Dōkeshi ya ō ni warau uma yori ochi, "A clown laughs and laughs, fallen off a horse"; Kinsen no ippen to rafu korogareru, "One fragment of money and a nude woman lie about"; and so on.

Saitō Masaya (no relation of the poet) has translated about 400 of Sanki's haiku in *The Kobe Hotel: Saito Sanki* (Weatherhill, 1993). The title of the book derives, however, from a series of prose sketches Sanki wrote about his experiences in the port city—the one devastated by an earthquake earlier this year—which takes up three quarters of the volume. A man who spent the second half of his twenties in Singapore teaching dancing (rather than practicing dentistry as he was supposed to), Sanki lived in a rundown hotel in Kobe in the midst of the war, from 1942 to 1943 and, before the city was razed by air raids, managed to move to a Western-style mansion, which was away from the hub of the city but was equally rundown. For about two years following Japan's surrender, he associated with American soldiers and did business with the Occupation forces, once as a plumbing contractor for the whorehouse set up for the U.S. military.

These prose pieces are fascinating. Most readers are likely to be surprised—as I certainly was—to learn that quite a few foreigners lived in wartime Japan. Among the long-term residents of the hotel were an Egyptian named Maged Elba, a White Russian woman, and a Turkish-Tartar couple (there was also a young Taiwanese named Keelung and a Korean woman). In a different, not quite rundown
hotel of the city were officers and sailors of a German cruiser and submarine who were stranded after making a port call because by then the waters around Japan were patrolled by U.S. submarines. Other unexpected characters put in their appearance—a Japanese, for instance, who had become a pilot in France and for a while served the French military as an officer. Sanki describes these people with a debonair, cosmopolitan restraint and amusement associated with the 1920s and 1930s.

The sketches include some that explain the circumstances of the composition of certain haiku. One of them reminds us—if that is needed at this late date—how difficult it is to pack meanings into a single haiku and make that piece understandable on its own. It has to do with *Hiroshima ya tamago kū toki kuchi hiraku,* “Hiroshima: when I eat an egg my mouth opens.” A year after the atomic bombing, Sanki happens to find himself in the city on a “pitch-black” night. Saitō Masaya translates:

Sitting on a stone by the side of the road, I took out a boiled egg and slowly peeled the shell, unexpectedly shocked by the smooth surface of the egg. With a flash of searing incandescence, the skins of human beings had as easily slipped off all over this city. To eat a boiled egg in the wind of that black night, I was forced to open my mouth. In that moment, this haiku came to me:

Hiroshima—
to eat a boiled egg,
the mouth opens.

By reading this haiku by itself, how many readers can guess the ghastly chill that the poet might have tried to have it convey?

The addition of haiku to the “Essential Poets” series by The Ecco Press, in 1994, is an intriguing event. On the one hand, *The Essential Haiku*—the twentieth in the series—is the first selection given over to non-English-writing poets, so that now the usual triumvirate of Bashō, Buson, and Issa stand shoulder to shoulder with the likes of Shakespeare, Whitman, Browning, and Poe—a distinct honor if you are pro-haiku.

On the other hand, Robert Haas, the editor and “verse translator” of this volume, is a professor of English whose knowledge of Japanese literature essentially comes through second-hand sources. “Over
twenty years ago,” says Haas, “reading R. H. Blyth, I began to make
my own versions of his translations, from an impulse to simplify or
clarify them” (p. 309)—a process which, by his own admission, has
changed little. I’m amused to imagine how his eyebrows might react
if a Japanese with a minimum understanding of English told him of
a plan to make his own version of an existing Japanese translation of,
say, Ashbery, from an impulse to “simplify or clarify” the poet. Such
an attempt, he would agree, does have some pitfalls.

Let us leave aside some of the more obvious misstatements with
which he sprinkles his commentaries so we may look at the question
of “simplicity.” In the Introduction he says, “The spirit of haiku
required that the language be kept plain. ‘The function of haikai,’
Bashō once said, ‘is to rectify common speech.’” The first sentence has
nothing to do with the second.

Though haikai in essence meant the use of daily language (as
opposed to the highly regulated poetic diction of the court which was
employed in tanka and orthodox renga), it did not necessarily mean
plain language. Then, the observation attributed to Bashō—different
versions of which appear in Nijūgo-ka-jō (Twenty-five Articles) and in
San-zōshi (Three Booklets)—is paradoxical. As a haikai master, Bashō
was supposed to tend to the use of zokugo (daily language) but as
years went by his preference for gago (poetic diction) became stronger. This is why he followed this observation, in Nijūgo-ka-jō,
with an explanation: haikai no sugata wa, uta renga no tsugi ni tachite,
kokoro wa kōjō no ichiro ni asobubeshi, which may be paraphrased:
“As a verse form, haikai stands behind tanka and renga, but in spirit
you must continuously improve yourself through it to reach the levels
achievable in those two genres.” The matter has little to do with the
plainness or simplicity of the language.

Hiroaki Sato

Note: This reviewer’s previous Current Crop group reviews appeared in frogpond vol.15, no. 2, p. 75 (1992) and vol. 16, no. 2, p. 55 (1993).


Ion Codrescu (editor of Romania’s haiku publication Albatross and
founder of the Constanţa International Haiku Festival) solicited work
from haiku enthusiasts around the world for this anthology. Told the collection would commemorate the tercentenary of Bashō’s death, poets were invited to submit articles, letters, haibun, renga, etc. of their choosing, along with their own haiku.

As a result, the work of 49 poets from 16 countries appear here and range from a few lean paragraphs to several pages, while topics concern how one became acquainted with haiku through to studies of the form. As all material appears in English and Romanian (the first half of the book is in Romanian), Round the Pond is surely the first Western haiku anthology of its kind.

Here, you will find the work of William J. Higginson, Jane and Werner Reichhold, Francine Porad, Robert Spiess, Rod Wilmot, Anne McKay, Dorothy Howard, Janice M. Bostok, Ion Codrescu, and other well-known haikuists.

To whet your appetite, consider the following: Kōko Katō (Japan) tells us that “October is known in haiku parlance as 'wintry drizzle' month; thus (Bashō's) death date is known as 'the wintry drizzle memorial day'”, and the author goes on to present three of the Master's haiku with her interpretations. Alain Kervern (France) reminds us that Bashō believed the artist's spirit “follows nature and befriends the four seasons. Everything he sees becomes a flower, and everything he imagines turns into a moon.”

Elizabeth S. Lamb (USA) recalls her fascinating haiku journey of 31 years that has accumulated “more than a thousand” books for her personal library, and André Duhaime (Canada) tells how his haiku interests led to a love for the rengū form.

Taking a look at haiku translations and commentaries, James Kirkup (Britain) provides valuable insight on the reasons behind use and placement of certain words, punctuation, etc. in eight of the Bashō translations, while H.F. Noyes (Greece) exemplifies Bashō’s conviction “that the poet's character and purity alone (can) produce good haiku.” James W. Hackett believes “The aesthetic anarchy of modern haiku has even resulted in writers who are trying to divorce haiku poetry from nature. Today, 'haiku' is written about everything from elevators to computers. A dire fate for such a rare poetry.” Undoubtedly, certain ideas here will spark debate with particular quotes repeated long into the future.

Work by less familiar poets can make for pleasing discoveries. For instance, Sean Dunne, an author and journalist from Ireland, takes us on an enchanting journey that visits “old Irish monks,” their abodes and haiku-like poetry, all of which remind the author of Bashō. Less
successful are articles that ramble on or contain questionable state-ments (i.e., haiku are “object[s] of silence”). In one case, “haikus” and “rengas” are used rather than the correct plurals, “haiku” and “renga.”

However, acknowledging the difficulties in translating prose and poetry into other languages, errors (including typos) are easily forgiven. Besides, there is far more in this collection to be applauded. A special treat is that most authors end their contributions with two or three of their own haiku that sometimes reflect their unique environment and different haiku styles. A few 3-line favorites:

at dusk
watching the space
where the train went
Brian Tasker, Great Britain

late summer moon—
the cricket remains silent
in the glass jar
Garry Gay, USA

silently
the maple lets go a leaf
of moonlight
Ruby Spriggs, Canada

Oh, the harvest moon—
On the drops of dew,
On the pond.
Fuitsu Hazumi, Japan

temple bell—
inside, a fly
buzzing
Penny Harter, USA

alone into white
endlessness, a cyclist
riding to nowhere
Catherine Mair, New Zealand

icy evening:
in the firewood basket
a guest snake sleeping
Deon Kesting, South Africa

The Codrescu’s are to be congratulated for gifting us with a valuable international haiku anthology. Surely, Bashō is pleased.

Reviewed by Elizabeth St. Jacques


This beautifully produced collection of 115 tanka is a feast to the eye with soft black title and list of contributing poets on the deep gray cover, and two to four neatly spaced, crisply printed poems appearing
on light gray linen-like pages inside. Appearing here is the work of Christopher Herold, David Rice, Pat Shelley, Dave Sutter, Kenneth Tanemura, Michael Dylan Welch, and Paul O. Williams—all from the San Francisco area. An impressive roster to be sure, but why predominantly male? Considering the number of female tanka poets from this area of California, it is disappointing that Pat Shelley (whose tanka are excellent) is the only representative of her gender.

That aside, it is exciting to see how well western poets are embracing the ancient tanka form, especially since it is relatively new in the English-speaking/writing world and a firm set of rules have yet to be established. Apart from the basics that tell us that the poem is written in no more than 31 syllables and contains a shift in direction somewhere along the way, poets are pretty much on their own.

Editor Michael Dylan Welch sees tanka as “a lyrical five-line poem often expressing deep emotions through the use of natural symbolism. Without a natural representation of internal emotions, the poem can become detached, an unengaging intellectualization, or simply a pretty description of nature.” This is in line with the views of other well-known North American tanka poets.

For example, Sanford Goldstein, after judging entries for the 1990 Mirrors International Tanka Awards, stated that to write good tanka, “each poet has to confront his/her basic self, his/her limited self. In many of the (entries), the thirty-one syllables did not let me feel that individual quality.” Jane Reichhold of AHA Books says that poems were chosen for its 1994 tanka anthology Wind Five Folded by fulfilling certain expectations, which included: “Are feeling, diction and form unified? Does the poem touch one’s heart?”

Keeping all of the above in mind, then, poems in Footsteps in the Fog are very satisfying; clear images and convincing emotions blend smoothly while voices are colorful and distinct. Two examples:

what’s left of the moon and wild white roses wilting in the gazebo you drift from my arms and I see you for the first time, again I would like to return to the mountain meadow where together we picked wildflowers but how would I find my way without you?

Christopher Herold

Pat Shelley

An assortment of tanka styles are found in this collection, the majority consisting of fewer than 31 syllables, and even fewer in the 5-7-5-7-7 style. While Welch’s preference leans toward not-too-short tanka, a few briefer poems are also included, some of which read more like 5-46
line haiku. It will be interesting to see how well poets accept the briefer style. An example of each:

the budding morning incense—
touches even the contrails the last strand
with slight, salmon fire— of her hair
would I were so touched today as it leaves
driving through fatigue to work my fingers

*Paul O. Williams*  

It is unfortunate that there isn’t more humor in this collection, for a respite from more serious subjects. (Is there some unwritten rule that tanka should avoid addressing humor?) I particularly enjoyed the following for their two-sided readings—gentle humor/solemnity:

all afternoon The butterfly
from the ancient sycamore flew in circles
wren song around the rose
when I called to tell you then settled on
the machine answered the sharpest thorn

*David Rice*  

A variety of subjects fill these fog-filled places of lost love, sorrow, joy, and beauty, most of which entice you to linger a little longer, to savor the images, to become one with the poet’s world and emotions. While not every poem resounds clearly, a great many do. Don’t be surprised if the echo of some footsteps here leave you wishing they were your own.

at last we depart
after lingering
in embrace—
the echo of your footsteps
in the fog

*Michael Dylan Welch*

Reviewed by Elizabeth St. Jacques


This lovely little (3¾ x 5½-inch) book, gold feathers on its cover and dustjacket, does not contain haiku but rather a collection of aphorisms, “seeds of contemplation,” printed one to a page on an
elemental paper made from unrefined pulp. The title derives from Vincent Tripi's conviction that all of us who write haiku are indeed members of a tribe. The findings recorded here may roughly be divided into spiritual and poetic, although one gathers that for Tripi there is not much distance between these states.

From the first type:

The sound of listening is always the same.

Silence too is wild.

and, in the form of the line from Euripides via Longfellow:

Whom nature would enlighten she first makes wild.

Illustrating Tripi's equating of spirituality and poetry:

Here in the woods I learned how to write when I finally had learned to pray.

I write in a moment of being given to and giving.

And some observations on the art and craft of haiku:

The haiku poet hears the tree in the sound of an acorn.

It is the task of the poet to uncover the covered bridge.

A statement on the place of the reader in the haiku process:

The words of the haiku invent a new silence.

And a realistic statement, a parody on the title of a famous comic short story, showing the need for discernment in the haikuist:

Sometimes frogs is frogs & haiku is haiku.

Reviewed by Kenneth C. Leibman

BOOKS RECEIVED

Listing of new books is for information only and does not imply endorsement by frogpond or the Haiku Society of America. Reviews of some of these titles may appear in later issues of frogpond.

a dandelion’s flight: haiku and sumi-e. Lidia Rozmus, 1994. Portfolio, 8¾ x 9¼ in., containing 10 sumi-e on heavy paper with 10 haiku on translucent overlays. n.p.g.; enquire of author at 1 Echo Court, #11, Vernon Hills, IL 60061.


a hummingbird’s dance. Ok-koo Kang Grosjean. Parallax Press, P.O. Box 7355, Berkeley, CA 94707, $10.00. 60 + x pp. 8 x 5¼ in., paper, perfectbound. $10.00. Poetry, some with haiku- or tanka-like stanzas.
On arriving at the Zendo, which was once Harriet Beecher Stowe's lakeside house, we were shown to our rooms by a barefoot novice monk. The formal opening of the retreat by Bruce Ross, then Vice-President of HSA, was followed by a simple meal of noodles and salad, during which Seigan (the word means "vow"), the head of the Zendo, spoke of the paradox of Zen, using the lake as an example: while the surface changes constantly in relation to the weather, the deepest parts remain unmoved and still. Within each of us, he said, is this same surface and depth, and the fusion of the two is the essence of both Zen and haiku. The best haiku, Seigan feels, allow the reader not just to feel or think something but to momentarily become the experience. After dinner, Seigan gave a presentation on meditation, with an introduction to the various postures, and encouraged us to attend Zendo meditation and chanting sessions and to maintain a quietude consistent with the meditational mind.

The evening talk was by Ruth Yarrow, a naturalist who had recently returned from a year in the mountains of Costa Rica. She discussed the problems of trying to write haiku in a mostly manmade environment, with an idealized and romanticized vision of what nature is, as if it had definite boundaries and did not include human realms. She feels that haiku have the power to confront our environmental troubles and are perhaps the ideal voice for poets to give nature a voice and to express simply and sensitively that people are part of nature. She concluded her talk with a showing of slides that she made in Costa Rica, interspersed with some of her haiku written there, such as:

- hillside vine swing—
- the child's feet skim
- the far mountains

- rain forest edge:
- an enormous leaf spills
- moonlight

Ruth then asked participants to describe how they had initially become engaged in haiku. Dee Evetts told how 25 years ago he read a poem by Issa and marked how refreshing a poem could be that in so few words could express something so unlikely as dirty bathwater; this and reading Alan Watts' *The Way of Zen* were his starting point. John Ziemba was first excited by the possibility of saving so much with so few words, attributing his initial interest to readings of Blyth's translations. David Bloch had been introduced to haiku via the Peter Pauper Press series. Jeff Witkin was touched first by Cor van den Heuvel's *The Haiku Anthology* after Alexis Rotella recommended it to him. Karen Sohne was attracted to haiku from a belief that life is too rushed and that haiku is a way of taking the time to savor what is fleeting. Jim Kacian recalled reading Jack Kerouac's *Dharma Bums*, and was inspired to write his own haiku, beginning with a vow to write 1000 poems before he would try to get published. Bruce Ross described his academic work on Zen Buddhism and teaching in China as two sources of interest, with the essential connection between the self and the moment as a bridge needing to be identified. Nancy Kline told how she used to have her children attempt to create haiku on long car trips to maintain order and inspire observation. The evening ended with an open haiku reading.

The next morning, Bruce Ross spoke about his premise for his anthology, *Haiku Moment*, identifying three important characteristics of haiku: 1) simplicity, 2) timelessness, and 3) silence. Other significant aspects of haiku to him are their
seasonal references, their universal insight into the meaning of reality, and the detachment in a cosmic sense which resides in all things. Haiku, he said, are meant to convey the immediate in the infinite; what is happening in this place at this time.

Peter Meister then read his translations of haiku by the German poet Gunther Klinge. Two personal favorites:

In the summer sky
childrens' balloons growing tiny,
and then twilight.

The open door—
already past midnight. Snow
soundlessly falling.

There was a ginko walk before lunch. The afternoon program began with a series of readings by Tom Clausen, after which Bruce Ross showed a video made of the John Wills memorial gathering in Tennessee in June 1994, and then led a workshop (see the report in the January 1995 HSA Newsletter). After dinner, David and Julie Bloch gave a recital of their songs, after which Marshall Hryciuck read a variety of his poems.

gnarled cherry trees through the screen, through the rain
a crow on the bridge an island
doesn't budge in mist

After snacking on apple cakes, a gift of Seigan and the Zendo cook, the remainder of the evening was given over to a renga party, which continued well past midnight (described in the January HSA Newsletter).

On Sunday morning, Julie Bloch led a rubberstamp-making workshop, after which the renga composed the previous evening were read aloud, and then Karen Sohne read her autumn poems, including

following me before entering the cathedral
down the subway steps I eat the apple
a dry leaf to the core

Bruce Ross then led a second workshop, and after a final reading, those still present had lunch, the first meal shared with the Zendo residents, during which one of the Zendo staff remarked that we should hear some poetry. After introductions all around, Bruce Ross answered the staff member: “You want to hear some poetry. Here is a haiku.” He then recited a haiku he had composed the day before during the ginko walk:

ancient stone . . .
the sound of autumn leaves
on autumn leaves

A stone marker at the entrance to the Zendo features one of Bashō’s autumn haiku:

along this way
goes no one
this autumn evening

We all left by the same dirt road we came on, passing this poem, and it served to accent the sense of passage in which each participated in this weekend retreat.

Tom Clausen
HAIKU SOCIETY OF AMERICA AWARDS AND CONTESTS, 1995

HAROLD G. HENDERSON AWARDS
FOR BEST UNPUBLISHED HAiku

These awards are made possible by Mrs. Harold G. Henderson in memory of Harold G. Henderson, who helped found the Haiku Society. $100 toward these awards is donated annually by Mrs. Henderson.

2. Entry fee $1.00 per haiku; checks/money orders to Haiku Society of America.
3. Limit: Ten unpublished haiku, not submitted for publication or to any other contest.
4. Submit each haiku on three separate 3 x 5 in. cards, two with the haiku only (for anonymous judging), the 3rd with the haiku and the author's name and address in the upper left-hand corner. Please designate as haiku.
5. Contest is open to the public.
6. Submit entries to Barbara Ressler, HSA Contests, 1717 Kane St., Apt. 27, Dubuque, IA 52001.
7. First prize, $200; second prize, $125; third prize, $75.
8. Winning haiku will be published in frogpond. All rights revert to authors on publication. Please send SASE if you would like a list of the winning entries.
9. The name(s) of the judge(s) will be announced after the contest.
10. Sorry—entries cannot be returned.
11. 1995 HSA OFFICERS who are members of the Executive Committee will not be eligible to enter the Henderson or Brady Contests. However, REGIONAL COORDINATORS may enter.

GERALD BRADY MEMORIAL AWARDS
FOR BEST UNPUBLISHED SENRYU

The Gerald Brady Memorial Awards are made possible by a starter fund of $25 donated by Virginia Brady Young in memory of her brother Gerald Brady.

Rules 1-6 and 8-11 are identical to those for the Harold G. Henderson Contest, except that for “haiku” read “senryu” throughout. On 3 x 5 cards, please designate as senryu. First prize, $150; second prize, $100. Third prize, $50.

HSA RENKU COMPETITION

2. Contest is open to the public. Entries must be in English.
3. Entry fee: US$15 per renku; checks/money orders to Haiku Society of America.
4. Length, authorship, limit of entries: A renku must consist of 36 stanzas written by two or more persons, each of whom contributes a substantial number of individually authored stanzas. Any particular author may appear in no more than three different renku entered. No entries will be accepted that include work by any of the judges. Entries must not have been previously published, nor contain any stanzas previously published or submitted for publication or for any other contest.
5. One copy, will full authorship information stanza by stanza, must give the full name and address of all authors and indicate which is the coordinator (to whom any correspondence will be addressed). This copy must be signed by all authors to
avoid entry without the knowledge of one of the authors. Three additional copies, without authors' names but marked with numbers or letters to show the sequence of authorship, must accompany the identified manuscript. Failure to follow this format will make it impossible to judge an entry.

6. Submit entries to Barbara Ressler, USA Contests, 1717 Kane St., Apt. 27, Dubuque, IA 52001.

7. Grand Prize: up to $150 and publication in frogpond. All rights revert to authors on publication. Amount of Grand Prize and additional prizes may vary, depending on the quality and number of entries. If no renku is deemed by the judges to merit the award of Grand Prize, renku awarded lesser prizes may or may not be published in frogpond.

8. Please send SASE for list of winning entries.

9. The name(s) of the judge(s) will be announced with the winners.

10. Sorry—entries cannot be returned.

11. All 1995 HSA OFFICERS, including members of the Executive Committee, may participate in renku submitted in this competition.

NOTE: Prospective contestants may wish to review the "Report of the Renku Contest Committee" published in frogpond vol. XIII, no. 2 (May, 1990) for background on the contest and renku in general.

HSA MERIT BOOK AWARDS
for excellence in published haiku, translations, and criticism

2. Entry fee: none.
3. Eligibility: Book(s) must have been published in 1994. An author may submit more than one book.
4. Submit one copy of each book, noting it to be a Merit Award entry. Judges may consider books that have not been entered. Authors are urged to enter their books in order to be sure that they are considered. In order that no book of merit be overlooked, members should contact the President some time before the deadline about such books to ascertain whether they have been received.
5. Awards are open to the public.
6. Submit book(s) to Bruce Ross, President, Haiku Society of America, 222 Culver Rd., Rochester, NY 14607.
7. Substantial cash awards will be announced later.
8. The list of awards will be announced in frogpond.
9. Books will remain the property of HSA and will be added to the permanent HSA Library Collection.
10. The name(s) of the judge(s) will be announced after the awards are decided.
11. Books published by 1994 and 1995 HSA OFFICERS will be among those considered for this award.

THE NICHOLAS A. VIRGILIO MEMORIAL HAIKU COMPETITION
FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
(There is no entry fee for this competition)

Founded by the Sacred Heart Church in Camden, New Jersey, and sponsored by the Nick Virgilio Haiku Association in memory of Nicholas A. Virgilio, a charter member of the Haiku Society who died on January 3, 1989.
WHO? Any student between the ages of 13 and 19 enrolled in high school (grades 9-12) as of September 1995.

WHAT? A maximum of 3 haiku per student. Each haiku must be typed in triplicate on 3 x 5 in. index cards. The haiku must appear on the front of each card; the name, address, age, grade level, and school must appear on the back of each card. Please also give the address of your school. All haiku entered must be previously unpublished, ORIGINAL work, and not entered in any other contest. Please keep a copy of your haiku; entries cannot be returned. Please do not send SASE’s.

WHEN? The deadline for submissions is November 30, 1995. Entries postmarked later will not be considered.

WHERE? Submit entries to Tony Virgilio, Nick Virgilio Haiku Association, 1092 Niagara Rd., Camden, NJ 08104.

WHY? Generous cash prizes; amounts to be announced. The list of winners and winning haiku will be published in *frogpond* in 1996. The high school of each winner will receive a one-year subscription to *frogpond*. All rights will remain with authors except that the winning haiku will be published in *frogpond*.

OTHER CONTESTS

*Canadian Writer's Journal 1995 Poetry Competition*

In-hand deadline: June 30, 1995. Open to all, unlimited entries. Four categories: haiku/senryu; sijo; free verse; traditional poetry. Entries must be typed, original, unpublished, and not under consideration elsewhere until winners are announced. Two copies of each poem: one with no identification, other with name and address in upper left corner. Indicate category in upper right corner of both copies. Haiku/senryu on 3 x 5 index cards only. Enclose SASE (Canadian postage or IRC) for list of winners. Winning poems published in Fall 1995 *Canadian Writer's Journal*. Entry fee: $1 per haiku/senryu or sijo; $5 per longer poem (25 lines or less). Checks payable to Canadian Writer's Journal (US checks admissible). Prizes: 40%/25%/15% of total fees received. Send entries to CWJ 1995 Poetry Competition, Box 6618, Depot 1, Victoria, BC, Canada V8P 5N7.

*Florida State Poets Association Contest, Haiku Category*

Deadline: Postmarked by August 31, 1995. Open to all. No limits. Must be original, unpublished, not currently entered in any other contest or for publication, and must not have won more than $10 in any contest. Type single-spaced, in English, on one side of 8½ x 11 in. paper (no onion skin). Submit 2 copies with category name (Berniece McConahay Memorial Award) at upper left of both, and name and address at upper right of only one copy. Entry fee: $1 per haiku; check or money order payable to F.S.P.A., Inc. Send entries to Donna Dickey Guyer, 1508 22nd Ave. SW, Boynton Beach, FL 33426, with SASE for winner’s list. Information on other categories from same address with SASE.

MEETINGS

*Haiku North America 1995*

Haiku North America III will be held July 13-16 at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute in downtown Toronto. Three days of presentations, lectures, readings, and workshops; art
show; book fair. Student residence rooms can be reserved for the entire conference for Canadian $117.60 or $39.20 per night. Food services are available in the student cafeteria (about $25/day). Alternative hotels and restaurants within walking distance. Travel arrangements: Goliger’s Travel, 1-800-268-7442. For details, contact organizers at Haiku North America 1995, P.O. Box 75009, Hudson Bay Ctr., 20 Bloor St. E., Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4W 3T3. Those who register by May 31, 1995 are guaranteed one haiku in a special anthology and one free copy.

PUBLICATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Third Annual Haiku Society of America Members’ Anthology

Deadline for receipt of haiku, July 1, 1995.

Only paid-up HSA members for 1995 may be included in the Anthology. Send a page in duplicate containing 5 haiku or senryu, and your name and address. Poems may be either unpublished or previously published (in the latter case, give name and year of publication). However, do not send work that is currently or going to be entered in a contest of which the winners have not yet been announced (such as the 1995 Henderson or Brady). Do not send more than 5 poems, but do send 5 to give the committee enough choices. Also enclose your check for $6.50 (entry fee/prepublication price) made payable to Jean Dubois. In addition, enclose SASE to learn which poem will be used.

Mail to Jean Dubois, P.O. Box 1430, Golden, CO 80402.

One of your haiku/senryu will be published in the Anthology, and you will receive a copy of the book. Distribution is planned for early October, 1995.

Selection committee: Managing Editor, Michael McNierny; Co-Editor, Jean Dubois; a second Co-Editor will be appointed.

Note: If you use a pen name or other name, please also give your name as it appears in the HSA address list.

Availability of Second HSA Members’ Anthology, 1994

Copies of the Second Anthology, dreams wander, published on the 300th anniversary of the day of Basho’s death, are available from Kenneth C. Leibman, P.O.Box 767, Archer, FL 32618-0767 for US$7.00 ppd in US or Canada (US$9 overseas). Write checks or money orders in US funds payable to Kenneth C. Leibman.

Availability of 20th Anniversary Book

A Haiku Path is available to HSA members for US$21.95 per copy ppd in US (+ $2 to Canada and overseas); nonmembers’ price is $29.95 (foreign postage as above). Make checks and money orders (US funds) payable to Haiku Society of America; send to Doris Heitmeyer, Secretary, 315 E. 88th St., Apt. 1F, New York, NY 10128-4917.

New Address for Northwest Literary Forum. The address for Northwest Literary Forum, which publishes haiku, tanka, other poetry, and short fiction, is now 3439 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland, OR 97232.

North Carolina Haiku Society. At a meeting at Bolin-brook Farm near Chapel Hill, NC in January 1995, the North Carolina Haiku Society, which had been inactive for over a year, was reorganized with Lenard D. Moore as Chairman and Contest Manager. Dues are $6 by check payable to North Carolina Haiku Society and sent to Lenard D. Moore, 5625 Continental Way, Raleigh, NC 27610.
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### HAIKU SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC.

#### ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT (January - December 1994)

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*Submitted by Raffael de Gruttola, Treasurer*