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HSA Logo (title page): Stephen Addiss
FROM THE EDITOR

This issue completes the thirtieth year of publication for the Haiku Society of America’s journal, *Frogpond*. When a human being reaches the age of thirty, there is often a degree of solemnity involved and perhaps a sense that one is now or soon should be embarked upon the mature course of one’s life. It may be, though, that this is not an apt comparison for a haiku journal since the life span of the average publication of this sort is probably less than ten years. Reckoning its age by this standard, *Frogpond* is very elderly, indeed. The good fortune of having the Haiku Society of America behind it, however, and the infusion, year after year, of new talent in the haiku community suggest that *Frogpond* has many good years ahead.

In this issue, we will be reprinting some poems from the third decade of publication. The editors during this period have been Jim Kacian (1998 - 2004) and John Stevenson (2005 - 2007). Jim has selected poems for reprinting from each of the seven years he served as editor, with the hope of featuring works “that in some way suggest the quality of the poems that were being published in *Frogpond* back then.” Here’s what to look for:

Frogpond - Third Decade

dim light
the night nurse
describes the rain

*Joann Klontz (USA)*

Volume XXVI:1 2003
Museum of Haiku Literature Award

$100 for the best unpublished work appearing in the previous issue of *Frogpond* as selected by vote of the H.S.A. Executive Committee
From XXX:2

year’s end—
what made me think I needed
a harmonica

Carolyn Hall
left over
in the glow of dawn
a slice of moon

H. F. Noyes

July sunlight
bends around her
and intensifies

Brent Partridge

heat wave . . .
from ginkgo to hydrant
rippling brick

Scott Mason

south of the equator halfmoon

Michele Harvey

June winter
a stray dog
in Santiago

Michele Harvey
Looking down
at ants
with a gigantic mood

_Yasuhiko Shigemoto_

tiny bird
it carries the world’s yellow
to the next curb

_Scott Metz_

hot roof
the cat crosses
at a smart pace

_Masako Yamada_

Nicaraguan night
I translate
the dog’s bark

_Johnette Downing_

summer’s end—
a firefly
in the lemonade

_S. B. Friedman_
breakfast alone
salt and pepper’s
dented tops

Robert Hecht

a moment
ago
a ripe banana

Ed Baker

smoke break
in his surgical scrubs
spring afternoon

Robbie Gamble

slouching over
in the outfield.
dandelions

Keith Jennings

picnic—
the bride’s contribution of
lopsided muffins

Emily Romano
home run drive—
my turn to crawl under
the barbed wire fence

Edward J. Rielly

ball field at dusk
a boy playing alone
pretends the crowd goes wild

Chad Lee Robinson

last game
of hide-and-seek,
fireflies

Keith Jennings

voices through the backs
of county fair tents
summer’s end

Burnell Lippy

a softball
as distant
as the sun disc

Jorma Loci
twentyfourseven
an empty laundromat
at dawn

Bill Kenney

summer solstice
the sprinkler completes
another arc

Mathew Spano

while I mow the lawn
wind blows the summer
over my skin

Zoran Mimica

freshly cut grass
clings to my socks . . .
first beer

Collin Barber

hay-hauling
the Farmall blows
blue smoke rings

Elizabeth Howard
turned earth
the splayed ribcage
of a March hare

*John Barlow*

tall spring grasses
a new path leads
to the old path

*Carolyn Hall*

foggy morning
an old woman talking to herself
in a firm voice

*Jack Watson*

rain clouds drift off with their promise

*Bett Angel-Stawarz*

returning the books
unread—
dog days

*Ruth Holzer*
moonlight
the shadow
between her shoulder blades

Gregory Hopkins

first snow . . .
how long before something new
becomes old

Alice Frampton

the waterfall frozen solid home for xmas

Jim Kacian

tinsel
and twirling
the holiday girl

Robert Epstein

winter morning
a dry section
in the grapefruit

Harold Bowes
AS A NON-NATURE PERSON, the flowers I can name are very few. Tulip is one of them. When I started elementary school (the Japanese school year begins in April), tulips dominated the garden. Every Japanese person is probably familiar with the song:\(^{1}\):

\[
\text{saita saita chûrippu no hana ga} \\
\text{naranda narannda} \\
\text{aka shiro kiiro} \\
\text{dono hana mitemo kireidan}
\]

(blooming, blooming, tulips are lining up, lining up in red, white, yellow looking at every flower how beautiful)

Recently I learned, from my saiijiki, the word “tulip” originated in Turkey. In Turkish, it means “turban.”

In my late teens, I liked to wrap my head with a colorful scarf. The more colorful the scarf, the more liberated I felt. I wanted to be a mosquito, which can fly, rather than a tulip passively enjoying the warm spring sunshine.

\[
fukuzatsu ni narunoga iyade chûrippu
\]

I do not want this to become complicated—tulips

Yoko Sugawa \(^{2}\)

In the foreword to the third edition of *The Haiku Anthology* \(^{3}\) Cor van den Heuvel wrote:
“Haiku is basically about living with intense awareness, about having an openness to the existence around us—a kind of openness that involves seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching.”

I will add a sixth sense to the above. Not only watching and observing the things around us, we also explore a flower with a close-up lens. We can inhale the air filled with songs by trees. The sky can be a mirror of our feelings. Church bells can sound differently when we are lonely. I certainly enjoy interweaving haiku with my inner life.

donosuna naran makigai ni sasayakuwa
which grain of sand
talks in a soft voice
to this spiral shell . . .

Sayumi Kamakura

Many of my business clients are located in Silicon Valley (30 miles south of San Francisco). I do not like driving. Highway 101 during the rush hour is killing. But on the way home when I see the water near Candlestick Point, I feel relieved. Especially after coming back from an out-of-town trip, the San Francisco Bay welcomes me home.

ukinedorikingin no hoshimachiteori
floating birds
in their sleep wait for
the golden stars, silver stars

Bansui Miyagawa

When I was living in Japan, I never lived outside Tokyo. I envied my friends and colleagues there who had other places they called “home” at that time. I never imagined I would be able to live a couple of thousand miles away from the place I grew up.
sennen no rusu ni bakufu o kakete oku

For my absence
for a thousand years I hang
a waterfall

Ban’ya Natsuishi (6)

As a waterfall never keeps one face, Tokyo, my birthplace, has changed from “a place I cannot leave” to “a place I visit.” Since I began studying haiku in Japanese I read more Japanese books and watch more Japanese videos than before. I do a blog in Japanese. Yet I feel I have lost something fundamental as a Japanese person. Do I become a perfect expatriate? Maybe. Subconsciously, I may need a thing to fill a hole in my soul. I think haiku is helping me to do this. I still want to be a creature with wings rather than a stationary plant. But I do not want to be a mosquito anymore. I would like to avoid being slapped and killed easily. It does not mean I am clinging to life. Because I am involved with haiku, my senses have sharpened. I hope I can sharpen them more by exploring life through haiku.

A roaring waterfall:
that eucalyptus tossing
the summer wind.

J. W. Hackett (7)

San Francisco has many eucalyptus trees. They are not native here, but they can have the the wind sing for them. Sometimes the wind becomes harsh. Other times, the sunshine is their best friend.

in the language
only the immigrants understand
cherry blossoms and I

Fay Aoyagi (8)

In my adopted land, I have been living happily as an immigrant and a naturalized citizen. I think I have been at the right
place at the right time. I am lucky living in California where fellow haiku poets live close-by. I can share the thoughts, doubts, and passion with those I trust. I believe I had already begun to see the world differently from when I was living in Japan as a non-haiku person.

hatsutabi no yama koete tsuku minato kana

first trip of the year
I arrive at the port
after crossing the mountain

Tsutae Hikara

This theme will be continued . . .

(1) Lyrics by Miyako Kondo

(2) Kadokawa Haiku Dai Saijiki (Kadokawa Comprehensive Saijiki), edited by Kadokawa Gakugei Shuppan. Kadokawa Gakugei Shuppan, Tokyo, 2006


(4) Haiku Shiki (Haiku Four Seasons), April 2007 Issue, edited by Seiji Hayashi, Tokyo Shiki Shuppan, Tokyo, 2007

(5) Gendai Saijiki (Modern Saijiki), edited by Tota Kaneko, Momoko Kuroda, Ban’ya Natsuishi, Seisei Shuppan, Tokyo, 1997


(8) Unpublished


All Japanese translation by Fay Aoyagi unless stated otherwise.
dog days—
the scrape of wrought iron
on concrete

*D. Claire Gallagher*

whisper-soft rain
hollow whistle
of a train

*Emily Romano*

autumn fog
the squeaking brakes
of a school bus

*Lenard D. Moore*

autumn woods
Dad speaks of a dog
he once had

*Marcus Larsson*

late November—
black and blue clouds
pound the daylight

*Joan Morse Vistain*
remaining snow
a carton of yearbooks
at the curb

D. Claire Gallagher

cedar pollen
my spring comes
on the wind

Toyoko Ueda

spring gale
barely blows
the blues away

Yuko Hirota

twirling
a white parasol
she climbs up the steep steps

Yuko Hirota

detour . . .
the sun
on my back

Jörgen Johansson
garden buddha
the weight of snow
on his shoulders

*Deb Koen*

the ides of March
a tethered kite
spins furious circles

*C. Avery*

Carolina wrens
turning my wood worn porch
into a nursery

*Merrill Ann Gonzales*

ringed moon—
I think of the wedding
my daughter would have had

*Lenard D. Moore*

summer camp
in cupped hands
water and moon

*Edith Bartholomeusz*
thawed garden
Buddha and Francis
lean on each other

Mathew Spano

bright stars
all that has melted
has turned to ice

Michael Ketchek

moss blossoms
we rise from our knees
in unison

Kirsty Karkow

dandelion puff the wind makes my wish

S. B. Friedman

the frayed end
of a tethered rope
. . . winter moon

Karen Cesar
bare branches
the light inside
on a clear day

Peggy Willis Lyles

first snow
the warmth
of the camera charger

Rob Scott

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

Burnell Lippy

crocuses in the park
a school girl asks
are you a photographer

Yu Chang

spring cleaning—
what does and doesn’t
wash off

Christopher Patchel
the pond ice
holding its own
midwinter rain

*Tom Painting*

a wooden bench
the shadow of leaves
swaying on my book

*Yoko Aisaka*

drought
the river bed
runs through my fingers

*Bob Lucky*

sprinkler turned on
the sparrows start
to sing again

*Kristen Deming*

lunar eclipse
a moth taps circles
on the ceiling

*Lorin Ford*
cold morning
his words still shaping
the steam on the mirror

_Helen Buckingham_

tender green
naming his friends
my child includes me

_Marcus Larsson_

the birds
know it first
spring dawn

_Ann K. Schwader_

my answer
with a shrug—
more rain

_Philip Miller_

wind in the palms
her head rises
from a nap

_Victor Ortiz_
sun on ice—
dark roar of a hidden stream
in my inner ear

*Ruth Yarrow*

foggy moon
the sound of breakers
on the inlet rocks

*William Cullen Jr.*

field of clover
a horse moves
through honey bees

*Polly W. Swafford*

signing the papers
to sell my parents' house
a soundless rain

*Elizabeth Nordeen*

lightning
rows of dark lanterns
begin to sway

*William Cullen Jr.*
clear winter sky—
a crow rattles a stop sign
as it flies off

Andrew Bleeden

lime-green moss
blowing from the pine
on the logging truck

Michael Dylan Welch

warm day
tractor mud dries
on the country road

Hilary Tann

summer drizzle
the last chicken on the spit
goes round and round

Bob Lucky

late autumn
the elm
casts a gold shadow

Jo McInerney
last day of summer
the bathing suits still damp
from last night’s swim
  
  Vanessa Proctor

smokehouse embers . . .
the sweetness
of new potatoes
  
  Irene Golas

grilled mushrooms—
fog rolls their scent
into my sweater
  
  Linda Jeanette Ward

anniversary
the coolness of sand
under our umbrella
  
  Tom Painting

toddler clothes
soaking in the tub
evening stillness
  
  Vanessa Proctor
weighing
freedom and loneliness
in separate rooms

Teruko Omoto

a still life
and, just outside the frame,
an old guard

Johan Bergstad

science project . . .
Jupiter
on the floor

Mark Wilson

big cleanup
on the radio
a tragic opera

Tom Clausen

local library
taking in the scent
of unread books

Wanda D. Cook
the cart hauling hay
for the horse
hauling the cart

*James Tipton*

business lunch
I’ll have
what the boss is having

*Amitava Dasgupta*

after calling in sick
I suddenly feel
so much better

*Marianna Monaco*

cross-examination all morning a slanting rain

*Jeffrey Stillman*

lighthouse stairway
someone ascends before me
always out of sight

*Patricia Neubauer*
old friends we compare toes and toenails

Marlene Mountain

coffee break—
a blank sheet in the pile
of copies

Gary Hotham

Christmas nesting dolls
what's inside
what's inside

Alice Frampton

her father's visit . . .
the fruit basket
full again

K. Ramesh

it's spring
all the seats on the subway
taken by young people

Michael Fessler
empty baseball field—
standing on first base
he gives me a kiss

_Hortensia Anderson_

in love again
a lot to be said
for chocolates

_Marianna Monaco_

rusty blades—
she skates backwards
so we can chat

_David Giacalone_

his hand on her thigh
one cloud slips
into another

_Francine Banwarth_

art deco knob
it was here
i was made

_Jörgen Johansson_
art reception—
people coming to see
and be seen

Merrill Ann Gonzales

from a certain angle
my shadow casts
a full head of hair

Robert Epstein

sunset viewing
I become an overweight man
wearing horizontal stripes

LeRoy Gorman

blackboard wiped clean
in an old photograph
the solemn young faces

Jo McInerney

lifting my suitcase
as mother opens the door
the weight of my smile

Eve Luckring
richest woman in town
watering her garden
in the rain

Bonnie Stepenoff

driven mad field guides to nature this and nature that

Marlene Mountain

ceaseless rain
the children pretend
to be Cybermen

Matthew Paul

the frayed edges of her picture—
I grasp what my fingers remember

Peter Joseph Gloviczki

cloudless day
more walls
going up

Scott Metz
Alzheimer's ward
the faded blue numbers
on a resident's arm

Pamela Miller Ness

after all these years
just the blip
of his heart monitor

Michael Dylan Welch

the punch at the wake
room temperature

C. Avery

here the stream
runs underground
I miss my father

Neil Muscott

Memorial Day—
smoke from far-off fires
makes it hurt to breathe

Peggy Willis Lyles
back from Iraq
my former student remembers
freshman year

*John S. O'Connor*

looking for animals
in the clouds
above the refinery

*Chris Glutz*

moving day
a box
of naked barbies

*Michael Morical*

pruning deadwood
from the rose bushes
Valentine’s Day

*Eve Luckring*

Roller skates,
an old bicycle—
this was home

*Jane Stuart*
jailhouse interview
the orange jumpsuit
two sizes too big

*Cathy Drinkwater* Better

the palm reader’s wrinkled brow

*R. P. Carter*

screeching to a halt
in time
the cow moves

*Susan Marie La Vallee*

married—
so many loops
to this new signature

*Joyce Clement*

her boyfriend’s
clothes in the closet—
sparrows nesting in the eaves

*Bonnie Stepenoff*
arriving passenger
his eyes circle and land
on mine

*Ruth Yarrow*

the doctor’s waiting room—
my queasiness sitting in
someone else’s warmth

*Peter Yovu*

at the cast party
capulets
and montagues

*Stephen Peters*

a sky full of stars
how improbable
my parents would meet

*Robert Mainone*

after the divorce
sunshine where his shadow
used to jostle mine

*Dorothy McLaughlin*
I think I hear him
grumble good morning
and grumble good morning back

*Barry George*

Christmas card
so typical of her
the offset stamp

*Michael Magliari*

lunar eclipse—
sipping moonshine
from a sake cup

*Curtis Dunlap*

blue sky
my tee shot finds
the only divot

*Scott Mason*

Beads from New Orleans
shimmer on the shelf . . .
We’ll manage.

*Paul Pfleuger, Jr.*
Tan Renga
Page 41

Haibun
Pages 42 - 46, 48 - 50

Haiku Sequence
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Rengay
Page 51
the lightness
of a butterfly
last day of school

*the arc of the trout*
*shaking loose my hook*

Yvonne Cabalona
*Leslie Rose*

Father’s Day
wearing his tie
again I don’t measure up—

*pacing off the distance*
*between home and first base*

w. f. owen
*Leslie Rose*
IN THE RURAL LAND OF my childhood was a long rolling stretch of red clay packed hard by mules and trucks and slick as a soaped pig when it rained. My grandmother named it after a popular book, but most of the people who took to calling it “Tobacco Road” had never heard of Erskine Caldwell. Fresh as morning in my memory, Tobacco Road curves and lifts and falls through pine-covered hills, past plowed fields and barns and sharecroppers’ shanties leaning this way and that, sun glinting between rusty patches on leaky tin roofs.

scattering small rocks
the splintery gate scrapes open . . .
magnolias

Travelers on this course pass yards as likely guarded by chickens and hogs as by dogs, where half-naked babies play on grassless earth around hand pumps and crumbling brick wells, where pink, blue, and sea-green hydrangeas prop up sides of shacks, and morning glory vines are sturdier than the fence rails.

cloudless sky
smoldering ashes settle
under an iron pot

thyme full of bees
she scrubs brown lye soap
into a wet rag

_Ferris Gilli_
DON'T

SHE SITS ON THE STOOP of a wooden shack, paint flaking off the walls, her hand on a rusty shopping cart stacked high with possessions. “Don't you take my picture!”

“I won’t,” I say, feeling guilty because she caught me with my camera pointed in her direction. “Why don’t you want your picture taken?”

“I know what you people do with them.”

“You have a beautiful face. That’s why I wanted to.” It’s like porcelain with fine lines etched around eyes and mouth.

She adjusts her floppy hat and smiles. “I used to be a singer. I still know a lot of songs.” She begins to hum.

crumpled paper bag
she offers
a ginger snap

Ray Rasmussen

PENETRATING THE PRIMEVAL

ONLY THE CHANCE DISCOVERY of a child’s spade unearths the dwelling places of baby beetles and nests of pill bugs juxtaposed in various shapes and sizes.

cotton fields—
sprouting globes
of moonlight

Karina Klesko
twenty-second floor
office windows fogged in—
a desk in the clouds.

IN THOSE DAYS BEFORE CUBICLES, all the secretaries worked in one big open space. Privacy was unheard of. The glass-enclosed office of the Company’s President was located where he could survey the entire floor and make sure everybody was busy. “Look busy” was a byword among us.

The secretary who started it all—Roberta, a hard-bitten veteran office worker who bounced from job to job—resented being forbidden to use the red-carpeted front entrance. It was for clients only. Employees had to use the back door.

“They don’t want us to set foot on their damned red carpet,” she said. “We might get it dirty.” That red carpet became a symbol of all we disliked about the Company. Roberta contacted an organizer at the Union office, a blonde lady who smoked a silver pipe. A few of us met with her and began cautiously recruiting others. You had to be careful. There were some we couldn’t approach for fear of being ratted out.

Late one afternoon a clueless young typist breezed into the Ladies’ Room and blurted out, “Sorry I can’t come to the Union meeting tonight I’ve got a date.” A couple of girls abruptly departed. I was still applying lipstick when our Office Manager, the old battleaxe, emerged from the end stall, where she had been sitting all this time. Her eyes were smoldering as she marched toward the President’s office, trailing toilet paper from her heel.

My then best friend Wanda was called in and interrogated. I don’t know why she was chosen. Afterward she bragged, “He asked me how many we had. I told him more than 70%.” We numbered only six or seven. It was then I realized that Wanda was a real loose cannon. “Do you know what you’ve done?” I asked. “They’ll fire everybody. People who never even heard
of the Union."

"What if he expected me to name names?" she said. No matter. Soon we'd all be down at the Unemployment Office, and you can bet without a reference from the Company.

quitting time
dark streets and a sharp wind
around every corner.

Doris Heitmeyer

THE SOLOIST

MOST NIGHTS ON TOUR she mixes a packet of soup with hot water from the tap but today she considers the smoked oysters, careful to choose a tin she can open easily. On her way through the deli, she picks up a napkin and plastic fork.

vivace
her thighs grip
the cello

Harriot West

close lightning
the metallic taste
in my mouth

Charles Easter (USA)
ABSTRACTIONS

WITH THE DETERMINATION of the young, he ploughs his fingers through the dirt and dune grasses. Nothing. Any small token would excite, breathe life into my tales about his grandfather and great-grandfather alike. For a six-year-old, I guess, abstractions are oblique, just like the letters I read him from his uncle in Afghanistan. He is not willing just to believe.

Normandy beach
half-buried under sand
a broken shell

Jamie Edgecombe

LIVE BURIAL

WHEN I WAS VERY YOUNG I buried a toad. I don't know why I buried that toad.

I was in the park, playing in the grass. He came along and hopped around me. I played with him and then put him in a hole.

I went home and worried a lot; did he crawl out into the park? Did he crawl out and find his friends?

I hope you did, oh Mr. Toad, and that you grew up to be very old.

summer time
little sisters
in blue dresses

Betty Kaplan
CHILDHOOD HOME

childhood home
no longer mine, and yet
grandmother’s lilacs

somewhere in this dirt
the imprints of
my mother’s knees

freshly turned earth—
at the garden’s edge
a frayed pillow

a bed of pansies—
just for a moment
mother’s hands again

where has it gone
the sturdy oak that flew
my childhood swing?

my lost skate key—
might it still be there
in this tall grass?

I drive away
from my old house—
the rear-view mirror

Penny Harter
THERAPY

THROUGH CORRIDORS SMELLING OF URINE and disinfectant, I escort a group of tranquilized male inmates from their locked wards to the Occupational Therapy building. Today’s therapeutic activity is to sand layers of paint from beaten-up tables and chairs. One patient systematically sands through a chair rung, then moves on to the next. Wood dust fills the air.

reverberations
a steel door slamming
in a stairwell

Robert Hecht

FAST TRAIN

WHEN THE 17.22 HEADS OUT of Victoria and begins to pick up speed I start thinking about seat belts, or the absence of seat belts, and how in an emergency I might be thrown onto the woman opposite, cracking my head against hers, or puncturing my face on a corner of her open hardback book. But then I notice her breasts which are packed beneath a bib of pink frills, her tiered paisley skirt rumpling in waves over plump knees, her curly hair the colour of hazelnuts, her milky skin, which takes me back to her breasts which are pendulous, generous. And I’ve forgotten about seat belts, as I shift my knees to one side to get a view of her feet, the shoes she’s wearing which I know will make all the difference to whether she’ll scream and push me away as I fall, or cradle my face away from her book, those wonderful breasts receiving me like a tumbled duvet.

not knowing
how to hold her
my mother at eighty

Lynne Rees
DRIVEWAYS

DAVID, MY SON, THIRTY-SIX AND SINGLE, has moved from an apartment into his own home. I drive over for the day. We eat at the Satellite Cafe, and I order broiled trout in crab sauce because he recommends it. The sauce tastes strong, but I don’t complain. After lunch we stroll through Lack’s Furniture looking at sofas.

My mother died two years ago at age ninety. After every visit she walked outside with me and even on cold, windy days she waited, arms crossed, in her drive while I drove away. Now, David stands in his drive, hands in pockets, and watches me leave.

summer’s end
the honeysuckle swells
beyond the boundary

Lynn Edge

ON THE MOUNT PLEASANT BUS

YOU HAVE SEEN THIS VIEW many times before, but this evening it catches you. As you come over the top it is sunset; you see the South Island as a shadowy mass bounded by sharp edged Alps. On the other side the Pacific Ocean is a container of light. The sky is huge.

There are two other passengers in the bus, a couple close together on the front seat. As the driver steers down the steep slope we are silent. The sunset plays over us; the details of our lives fall away. Aiming for home, I am being taken on a longer journey.

darkened house—
roses above the fence
retain light

Barbara Strang
STAYING FOR REFRESHMENTS

THE LECTURE OVER. I decided to remain a bit longer and mingle with the crowd. No one seemed to be discussing the content of the speech, but were instead making small talk, or gossiping about this or that.

As I moved along the line at the refreshment table, I overheard a woman talking about haiku. She was bragging about having just had a haiku accepted by a leading haiku magazine. I found myself wondering which one.

Her friend asked her to recite the haiku. “Oh, I couldn’t do that,” she replied. “It wouldn’t be ethical.”

Losing interest at this point, I moved past them and heard: “If you subscribe to the magazine, you’ll have a copy of my work to keep forever.”

mystery haiku—
somewhere a page
is ruffled by wind

Emily Romano

Frogpond - Third Decade

moonlight
river divides the forest
into two nights

Nikola Nilic (Croatia)

Volume XXI.2 1998
DYING SPARK

Rich Krivcher, John Thompson, and Michael Dylan Welch

lightning flash—
a bug streak glows
on the windshield

in the night heron’s beak
a wriggling glint of silver

Roman ruin:
the candle sputtering
deep in the tunnel

ten-wheeler hauling sheep
a spark from the mudflaps

graveyard shift—
lighting one cigarette
with another

photographing Hiroshima
the sudden flash
Essays

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THE HONKADORI

Doreen King

THE HONKADORI REFERS TO the borrowing of words and phrases from earlier poems. Haiku writers frequently use beloved phrases from older poems and Haruo Shirane describes how the honkadori is applied:

Significantly, one of the most fundamental techniques of Japanese poetry (if not of all Japanese literature) is the honkadori, or allusive variation, in which the poet takes a part of an earlier, well-known poem and incorporates it into his or her own poem. Here the poet becomes a “reader” of an earlier poem, which is metonymically evoked. The honkadori, like the seasonal word or seasonal topic, ties the poem into the poetic tradition as a whole, into the Great Seasonal Anthology.¹

The honkadori might be direct or indirect. A phrase might be “borrowed” from a well-known poem and altered a little, or an idea taken and expressed in different words. The haiku is so short that when the honkadori is used, a third or half the haiku may be copied. With such a condensed poetry form, just one or two words can give an entirely new dimension, and repetition, via the honkadori preserves historical aspects and traditional continuity within the poetry form.

As an example, I give below Basho’s “summer grasses” haiku:

natsugusa ya / tsuwamono domoga / yume no at²

The three English-language interpretations below focus on loss:

summer grasses
all that remains of the dreams
of ancient warriors³

Summer grasses
all that remains of great soldiers’ imperial dreams⁴
Basho travelled to Takadote where Yoshitsume and his last followers were killed. From here, he could see the plain of Hiraizumi where the Fujiwara clan had once lived. Basho also studied the poet Saigyo. Following the death of Fujiwara Sanekata, Saigyo wrote: *He left us nothing / but his own eternal name— / just that final stroke. / On his poor grave on the moor, / one sees only pampas grass.* The closeness in sentiment to the Basho haiku is very apparent. TuFu also wrote in similar vein: *The whole country devastated only / mountains and rivers remain. In / springtime, at the ruined castle, the / grass is always green.* These two sentences seem disjointed at first, leaving the reader to sort out the puzzle they present. Such use of the oxymoron and the hyperbole are common in haiku.

In Basho's haiku, the season is "summer," but the subject—death—implies winter and herein is the paradox. Even the word "grasses" alludes to the enforced falling back to the common end—all those blades (of grass). The implication in the Basho haiku is that war is futile. (The word "grasses" is common in Noh drama.) Such lines evoke a sense of destruction and elimination—of returning to roots—the sadness yet reassurance in the face of devastation that life will continue. Grasses die and resurface. The grasses are all that remains, yet it is summer, and summer has come through the centuries. The grasses are still there although the ancient warriors are long gone: and the former poems are still there, resurfacing.

This paper is based on a talk presented to The English Department, The Royal Holloway, University of London, 2005.

2. Based on Kokkha Taikan editions.
3. Doreen King, version based on western empathetic considerations.
HAIKU AND CINEMATIC TECHNIQUE

Allan Burns

THE VOCABULARY OF CINEMATIC TECHNIQUE can be used productively to analyze expressive effects in haiku. Both haiku and cinema are essentially imagistic, presenting images “objectively” without attempting to explain or interpret them. Because of this similarity, one can readily find in haiku fairly precise analogs for a number of cinematic techniques. Even though many haiku effects have been around much longer than cinema has, the language of cinema gives us a fresh and revealing way to talk about what happens in a haiku.\(^1\)

The two most fundamental cinematic techniques are *mise-en-scène* (“placing-in-the-scene”) and *montage*. The former signifies the composition of a single shot, including the arrangement of objects and camera movements. Montage is the opposite and complementary technique of cutting from one shot to the next.

Through its history, American haiku has tended to move from a style based on *mise-en-scène* to one based on *montage*. In the early years of the haiku movement, many poets, including such pioneers as Clement Hoyt, J. W. Hackett, and O. Mabson Southard, typically wrote “through-phrased” haiku fashioned as complete sentences that explore the details and implications of a single scene or “shot.”

Half of the minnows
within this sunlit shallow
are not really there.

(*J. W. Hackett, Haiku Poetry: Volume One, 1968*)

Splinters of moonlight
glint on the broken windshield
of the junkyard car

(*Eric Amann, Cicada Voices, 1983*)
This technique can achieve remarkable effects, as the implied camera eye reveals more details of a scene (moonlight...broken windshield...junkyard) or that a first impression is illusory (half of the “minnows” are actually shadows of minnows). Today, however, this technique is largely out of favor; instead, the overwhelming majority of contemporary haiku employ the montage technique of cutting from one image to another. Robert Spiess was perhaps among the first American haiku poets to utilize this technique—derived, of course, from Japanese haiku masters—consistently. In his classic collection *The Turtle’s Ears* (1971), based on canoeing adventures in the Midwest, Spiess typically juxtaposes an image on shore with one on the water, often binding them together with complex sound patterns:

Lean-to of tin:  
a pintail on the river  
in the pelting rain

Because of the brevity of haiku, they can usually only manage a single *cut* and therefore cannot reproduce the effects of a cinematic montage sequence, involving many rapid cuts. It would take a more extended genre such as renku to approximate such effects. Haiku can, however, reproduce the effects of a variety of different types of expressive cinematic shots and cuts.

The *establishing shot*, for instance, is a device used to set the scene, in terms of location, time, and mood. In film, a famous landmark is sometimes used synecdochically to convey the necessary information about location succinctly: François Truffaut’s *The 400 Blows* (1959) opens with a shot of the Eiffel Tower, and Judy Irving’s *The Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill* (2003) immediately presents the Golden Gate Bridge. Typically, such images appear in an *extreme long shot*, after which the camera can begin honing in on details, using a *medium shot* or a *close-up*. Haiku can function similarly, moving from an extreme long shot that situates the poem in spacetime to an extreme close-up that records a telling detail:
Sierra sunrise . . .  
pine needles sinking deeper  
in a patch of snow

(Christopher Herold, Woodnotes: 12, 1992)

Often, because of the traditional importance of the kigo, haiku tend to emphasize a temporal setting without specifying a precise geographical location (a less important consideration in haiku than in film):

autumn twilight:  
the wreath on the door  
lifts in the wind

(Nick Virgilio, Selected Haiku, 1988)

solstice dawn  
a flotilla of sea ducks  
turns eastward

(Kirsty Karkow, water poems, 2005)

Another and rarer variant, creating a different sort of effect, is to cut from a specific detail to the establishing shot:

boulders  
just beneath the boat  
it’s dawn

(John Wills, Reed Shadows, 1987)

A match cut juxtaposes two images that share some striking similarity. David Lean’s Lawrence of Arabia (1962) cuts from a lighted match being blown out to a desert sunrise, and Stanley Kubrick’s 2001: A Space Odyssey (1968) cuts from a bone tossed into the air to a space station—encompassing in two images the entire history of human technology. Match cuts are
common in haiku, although unlike in the film examples above haiku images will typically be understood to be visible from a single vantage point in spacetime:

pink sunset
through each flamingo’s stance
another flamingo

(an’ya, haiku for a moonless night, 2003)

summer stars
the trumpet glinting
from its case

(Lenard D. Moore, The Heron’s Nest 5.1, 2003)

steeping tea . . .
I count the bags
of raked leaves

(Kirsty Karkow, Modern Haiku 36.3, 2005)

Note how sometimes, as in the first example above, the first member of the matched pair also functions as an establishing shot.

Alfred Hitchcock introduced the aural match cut in his thriller The Thirty-Nine Steps (1935) by cutting from a woman’s scream to a train whistle. This technique has been widely imitated by subsequent filmmakers and can also be used as the basis for a haiku:

glissandos
rippling from the strings
wind from the sea

(Elizabeth Searle Lamb, Across the Windharp, 2000)

A point of view shot or a subjective shot occurs when the
camera reveals the perspective of a specific individual, involving the viewer in that individual’s perceptions and frame of mind. Haiku can use the same technique to express emotions ranging from anxiety:

exploring the cave . . .
my son’s flashlight beam
disappears ahead

*(Lee Gurga, Fresh Scent, 1998)*

to wonder:

camping alone one star then many

*(Jim Kacian, Frogpond 29.2, 2006)*

A more radical form of a subjective shot is a **flashback**, used extensively in films such as Sidney Lumet’s *The Pawnbroker* (1964). Flashbacks are rare in haiku, but they can be used to convey a Proustian connection between an image and lost time:

cold moon—
a moment of hesitation
years ago

*(John Stevenson, The Heron’s Nest, 8.4, 2006)*

A cut similar to a subjective shot that proceeds from an individual directly to what the individual sees is known as **eyeline matching**:

I lay down
all the heavy packages—
autumn moon

*(Patricia Donegan, Without Warning, 1990)*
Haiku frequently juxtapose images and sounds, mirroring cinematic counterpoint between image and *soundtrack*; but because of the linear nature of writing, the effect still comes across like a cut rather than a simultaneous cinematic presentation of image and sound:

- heat lightning
- the screams
- of mating raccoons


- faint stars…
- the cabby speaks
- of home

* (Timothy Hawkes, *The Heron’s Nest* 5.12, 2003) 

Haiku can also combine an image and commentary, creating an effect analogous to *voiceover narration* in cinema:

- snowy night
- sometimes you can’t be
- quiet enough

* (John Stevenson, *quiet enough*, 2004) 

In the right hands, the counterpoint between image and state-
ment can avoid redundancy and be used artfully, as in Terence Malick’s film *Days of Heaven* (1978) or in Stevenson’s haiku. Some haiku create effects that can perhaps best be conceptualized not as cuts but as approximations of camera movements. A tilt occurs when the camera eye pivots on a vertical plane, moving either up:

rows of corn
stretch to the horizon...
sun on the thunderhead

*(Lee Gurga, *Fresh Scent*, 1998)*

or down:

weathered bridge
everything but the moon
drifting downstream

*(Rick Tarquinio, *The Heron’s Nest* 6.8., 2004)*

The complementary motion of moving the camera along the horizontal plane is known as a pan. Its expressive uses range from showing something occurring next to something else:

flag-covered coffin:
the shadow of the bugler
slips into the grave

*(Nick Virgilio, *Selected Haiku*, 1988)*

to revealing the full extent or trajectory of an object:

the broken harp string
curving
into sunlight

*(Elizabeth Searle Lamb, *Across the Windharp*, 2000)*
A **tracking shot** occurs when the camera is moved forward, backward, or sideways. Nick Avis approximates such an effect in a single-line haiku that seems to move forward through a barren forest, coming to rest on a colorful contrasting image:

deep inside the faded wood a scarlet maple

*(bending with the wind, 1993)*

In a **zoom**, an object is brought closer to view to reveal telling details:

the goose droppings
spattered on spring grass
full of spring grass

*(D. Claire Gallagher, Modern Haiku, 33.2, 2002)*

It is also possible to zoom out from something, moving from a detail to a broader, more revealing perspective:

The white of her neck
as she lifts her hair for me
to undo her dress

*(Bernard Lionel Einbond, Haiku Magazine 2.3, 1968)*

A related technique is a **rack focus**, in which the focus shifts within a single stationary shot from one object to another, often redirecting a viewer’s attention from something in the foreground to something in the background. John Wills approximates this effect in the following haiku:

keep out sign
but the violets keep on going

*(Reed Shadows, 1987)*
A long take occurs when the point of view simply lingers on an image and records a slowly unfolding event in a single shot:

A wisp of spring cloud
drifting apart from the rest…
slowly evaporates

*(Tom Tico, Spring Morning Sun, 1998)*

the mirror fogs,
a name written long ago
faintly reappears

*(Rod Willmot, Sayings for the Invisible, 1988)*

Haiku sometimes imitate even more complex cinematic effects, such as time-lapse photography, in which events recorded over a long period of time are compressed, making processes such as the blooming of a flower into rapid, dramatic events:

lily:
out of the water . . .
out of itself

*(Nick Virgilio, Selected Haiku, 1988)*

winter moon
taking all night to cross
so small a pond

*(Ken Hurm, Frogpond 12.1, 1989)*

Tracking shots, zooms, rack focus, long takes, and time-lapse effects bring us out of montage back to the realm of mise-en-scène, demonstrating the many possibilities inherent in this latter technique. Haiku conceptualized as utilizing tilts or pans would also belong in this category.

Some film directors are associated principally with montage...
(Sergei Eisenstein, Alain Resnais) and others with mise-en-scène (Max Ophüls, Kenji Mizoguchi); the truth, however, is that all cinema employs both techniques. Likewise, both occur in classic Japanese haiku. Consider, for instance, these mise-en-scène haiku by Buson (translated by Takafumi Saito and William R. Nelson, *1,020 Haiku in Translation*, 2006)\(^2\):

> Against the sunset
> Swallows
> Returning home.

> Chisels of a stone mason
> Cooled
> In the clear spring water.

Although haiku and film are very different arts in many obvious and essential respects, the correspondence between certain cinematic and haiku techniques is striking.\(^3\) I can't pretend to have exhausted all the possible parallels. My main point has been simply to demonstrate how the technical vocabulary of cinema can be used to analyze haiku effects with a fair degree of precision, allowing writers and readers to be even more acutely conscious of the manifold possibilities of haiku expression.

Notes:

(1) The subject of haiku’s influence on film is significant but beyond the scope of this article. The celebrated Soviet filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein (1898–1948), for instance, spoke Japanese and used haiku as a model for his theories of montage.

(2) Although these haiku do not have internal cuts, both end with the kireji (or cutting word) “kana,” which according to William J. Higginson “indicates an author’s wonder at the object, scene, or event” (The Haiku Handbook, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1985, p. 291).

(3) Haiku is obviously more “democratic” than cinema, in that it requires only pen(cil) and paper, not expensive (and unwieldy) film equipment.
COBWEB: Single-Words Shisan

February 5-16, 2007

H. Gene Murtha
Paul MacNeil
William J. Higginson
(With an homage hokku by Cor van den Heuvel)

tundra          cvdh

hgm

cobweb          hgm

valance         pm

ion             wjh

moon            wjh

hayride         pm

woodpecker      hgm

Viagra®         wjh

Venusians       pm

divorce         hgm

quince          hgm

pollen          pm

Notes on Composition and the Verses:

Notes begin with season (if any), topic(s), type (person-place), linking method. A comment follows. (Comments not otherwise attributed are Bill’s.)
tundra
Summer, landscape, place. Cor van den Heuvel’s famous one-line haiku is suggested as our hokku by Paul MacNeil, in response to Gene Murtha’s offering of the next verse as a single-word poem; Paul says “‘tundra’ seems logically to be a summer kigo,” and we accept it as such. (Note: Cor has said privately that he considers this a spring verse.)

cobweb
Summer, arachnid, place; things (locus, visual chord). Gene originally offers this as a one-word poem on the Haiku Talk 2 e-list. Paul responds that this strikes him as a summer wakiku, set in the same time and place as—he proposes it as a sequel to—Cor’s verse, taken as an homage hokku, and then Paul suggests continuing a renku with single-word stanzas. While working on the piece, we continue to call the whole poem “cobweb” in honor of Gene’s initial verse. While the title of a renku normally derives from the first stanza, we also don’t want to seem too high-handed in borrowing Cor’s famous piece to begin the renku.

valance
No season, furnishings, place; things (locus). This is Paul’s offering, which he styles as “daisan, no season, shifted indoors.” He invites others to join in, pointing out that the moon should be in verse #5 (assuming a normal kasen-like progression).

ion
No season, chemistry, place (self implied); words (pun). This is my response, which I style as “no season, set-up” for the following verse. Note the deliberate pun on the homonym “valence” for the previous verse.

moon
Autumn, celestial body, place; words (pun). I provide the “moon” as per Paul’s instructions, saying “sorry, couldn’t resist punning in both directions” (i.e., reading “ion” as “eye on” and thus making the two verses taken together a translation of the Japanese term tsukimi, “moon viewing”). Paul responds “Oooh, Bill. 3 to 4 a homophonnic link! Neat, and Io is a moon all by itself . . . ha!”
hayride

Autumn, social event, public; things (action in setting). This is Paul’s neat solution to the apparent lack of people thus far and the constraints of single-word stanzas involving season words, as he says, “autumn (people implied).”

woodpecker

Winter, bird, place; things. Gene returns to the poem with a more direct animal reference, this time to a bird normally signifying autumn in haikai — read on. At this point, forward motion lags for several rounds on the list, so I look over what we have so far and suggest the option of completing a traditional shisan in single-word-stanza style, offering the following stanza. Were we going for a kazen, three autumn stanzas here would be appropriate. But, adjusting to the shisan format, we accept “woodpecker” as a winter kigo in order to not lose the delight of it, and to meet the requirements of the shisan form. (See the note on shisan at the end.)

Viagra®

No season, love, medicine, proper noun, corporate greed (implied), self and other (implied); words (pun). This one is a nod to the American haiku poet Arlene Teck, whose business is inventing names for new products. She invented the name “Viagra.” I ask my fellow poets if this seems like a possible throw-back, with a reference to medicine after the earlier reference to chemistry. Or, perhaps, it too obviously continues a narrative started with the moon / hayride stanzas.

Venusians

No season, love, sci fi, proper noun, other; scent (fantasy). Paul offers this with the following comments: “On one level this is a fantasy topic, beings from mythology — Venus the planet being no-season and associated as the embodiment of ‘love’ . . . I also note that since we have moon, this is a second heavenly body but only by implication.” and “Hey, if the moon precludes this, or the letter V, I'll start again.” We like the verse, and accept it as being about “people,” not the planet. In larger renku formats, I have not paid much attention to the initial letters of stanzas, but perhaps in single-words renku we should. In any case, “Venusians” is in, as we don’t want to lose forward motion and the special juice that comes with light, quick improvisation.
divorce

No season, love, disaster, self; scent (alienation). Gene, when asked for the next two single-words verses, at first offers for this position the name of a sport which we have to reject on the grounds of its season, and then replaces it with this. A sharp break with the fantasy world of love and mythology, space aliens, and the like, “divorce” comes as a surprise, and is his response to the suggestion that a disaster of some sort must appear before a renku is complete. As a love topic, “divorce” continues the theme of love overlong, for a renku of this short length (see Paul’s comment on the next stanza), but also goes so far in the other direction, we really like the way it shifts and shakes things up at this point. In a normal shisan renku, I’d also be a bit uncomfortable with such violence and negativity leaking into the last three stanzas, but, from another perspective, divorce itself can be a blessing, a release from intolerable circumstance, and the beginning of the next phase of one’s life. As William Carlos Williams said, “Divorce is a sign of knowledge in our times”—or something like that.

quince

Spring (blossom), place; scent (unexpected). This seems a marvelous spring blossom verse; the blossoms of the quince are not as showy as those of some other fruit trees, though quite attractive. While it worked well enough with the sport Gene offered initially, it works extremely well when linked with “divorce”. Some quince trees produce sharp spines, making this verse well accord with the tone of “divorce”. (The single name of a fruit tree, in English, usually refers to the autumnal fruit. But here, with the constraints that single-words composition imposes, I think we can take it in the Japanese fashion, wherein the name of a flowering tree, the single word by itself, usually refers to the blossoms. That, coupled with the normal penultimate position of the blossom verse, should make the reference to blossoms rather than fruit evident to those familiar with renku. Others, perhaps, will understand it when they see it together with the final, spring verse.) The horticulturalists among us may recall the quince’s connection to the Middle East (originated in northern Iran, according to one of my guides to flora), which provides an implied link from personal disaster to current events on the world scale. Paul indicates some of the difficulties encountered in this two-
verse sequence: “In a kasen (36) or other longish form, I’d love mention of “divorce” as either a third love stanza or at the least a ‘following love’ verse. In a shisan (12) it does seem another love in the sequence. . . . I’m happy enough with it (divorce) if you are, and, certainly, quince—the tartness—is a link to divorce. I’m not sure the world-event association you find will be available to most folks—but? Not an important consideration, as another path is available.” All in all, this is probably the most complex and provocative link (from “divorce” to “quince”) in the renku.

pollen

Spring, plants, place; things. Offering this, Paul says, “I hope it is uplifting. Feels it to me, pregnant with hope and the spark of new life. The U.Virginia saijiki (Spring) shows this as hanabokori or literally and very charmingly ‘blossom dust,’ ‘pollen.’ Bees are implied (all spring) I guess, yet the pollen can be wind-borne too—all leading to new life. The link is quite close—but, yea verily, this kind of renku doth pinch, methinks.”

Well, here ends our brief experiment. We offer this not as a great work of renku art, but as a provocation. Hopefully, it takes us a little deeper into thinking about links between stanzas, and about the range of denotations and connotations of the words we use in renku. And, if anyone wants to take up the challenge, well, enjoy single-words renku!

Note on the Shisan:

This 12-verse renku format involves four “pages” of three stanzas each, with each page having one or two verses devoted to a particular season, the seasons proceeding in their natural order from the hokku. The Japanese poet Kaoru Kubota invented the format in the 1970s, as an accommodation to the needs of foreign poets just getting into linked poetry, Japanese-style. The single-words adaptation was invented by Paul MacNeil, H. Gene Murtha, and William J. Higginson, with this poem.

“Tundra” copyright © 1963 Cor van den Heuvel, by the author’s permission.
Re:Readings

Jim Kacian on Michael Ketchek ("sitting on the porch / blowing smoke / into rain") "The poet at home, deftly self-deprecating (merely 'blowing smoke')—no clash of the titans here, just a mutual regard, and the quiet pleasure of one force of nature acknowledging another. He does, and writes, as we all wish we could more often—just being, on the porch, admiring the rain, knowing what we're doing is no big deal, and the biggest deal possible."

Jim Kacian on Michael McClintock ("the full moon: / I love a night / that simple")

"Michael McClintock:
I love a poet
that simple"

Scott Metz on Tyler Pruett ("powder blue song of a robin . . .") "I've come to this poem in two different ways and take great pleasure in thinking about it in those ways at different times. The first is that the song is happening in the here and now, the wonderful use of ellipses allowing the song to continue, the day to continue, the season to move forward. The other is that the song is over (albeit only temporarily) and the poet is reflecting upon it and its powdery nature, the ellipses, again wonderful, this time conveying the poet's mind and thoughts, the 'blue' in this case possibly even evoking a kind of sadness. This haiku moves me in the ways that it touches my ears (song), fingertips and mind/heart/soul (powder) and eyes (blue). The blue takes me to the clear skies of spring as well as the shape and size of the robin's egg. There is also such a sense of time and time passing/fleeting in the poem. The poem begins with 'powder,' eliciting such power for what follows. 'powder' not only sets the stage for the song itself but for the entire poem, the entire world, even all of the life within that world. To have written 'soft blue' would have been fine but 'powder blue' elevates this haiku into something even more meaningful and imaginative. It makes the robin's voice and everything about it
more physical—all of which I want to touch and know and contemplate more intimately. This is one of the very best haiku I feel I’ve read of late and hope to read more like it more often. I don’t feel I have to read this poem anymore though. It’s a part of me now."

H. F. Noyes on Tami Fraser (“snowing / all the way / to the ground”) and Ruth Yarrow (“rounded boulders / the mountain torrent / around them”) “I like and respect Tami Fraser’s [poem]. Nature often surprises us in its most simple forms. In our complex world, simplicity is so easily overlooked. Lao-tsu, father of Taoism, urged us to embrace simplicity. And I feel so strongly Ruth Yarrow’s inward embrace in her [poem].”

Robert Epstein on Patrick Sweeney (“sea salt / my mother’s / freckled arm”) “This haiku immediately washed up to the shore of consciousness a memory of being at Rockaway Beach in NY when I was five or six. I loved going to the ocean during the summer, where my mother’s mother and her surviving siblings vacationed. Although my grandmother was bitter and depressed (I later learned) because her mother and eight beloved siblings perished in the Holocaust, she seemed to genuinely enjoy herself, however briefly, at the beach. In my mind’s eye, I see her wet, tanned arms splashing water at me and smiling gleefully. It was my grandmother who taught me to love."

Robert Epstein on Rebecca Lilly (“Years we were away—/ through driftwood / the water’s clarity”) “Our family moved away from my childhood home when I was thirteen because my father got a job in another state and the commute was too long. My world was shattered and it took some thirty years to recover from the devastating loss. I have still not reclaimed the sense of home; I long for the clarity of feeling at home again. A poignant poem that encapsulates for me a lifetime of pain. I cannot even imagine what it would be like to return to my childhood home for a day’s visit, let alone to live."

Robert Epstein on Andrea Grillo (“church graveyard / the thin brown stones / hunch forward”) “We console ourselves that those who have passed on are resting in peace. This poem presents a disturbing vision of frail souls hunched forward in fear or distress or straining to whisper something to passersby.
When my father died five years ago, my mother told me what her grandmother had said to her some seventy years prior: 'You mustn’t cry when a loved one dies, or your tears will fill their coffin.' My mother was determined not to shed any tears, at least not any that we would see. What happens to our souls after death? I will live with the unknown, yet the thin brown stones have my deepest sympathy.”

Dan Schwerin on Ruth Yarrow (“rounded boulders / the mountain torrent / around them”) “It seems like a scene we have walked past before but this rendering suggests the abundance of nature, the refreshing cool of summer, pouring out. I appreciate the natural images. I too easily gather in what the human is doing in the scene. Haiku like this offer something of the natural abundance, comfort, and the effortlessly timeless in the space of a breath. It’s the reason one goes to the mountain. What epic says more?”

Curtis Dunlap on Richard Straw (“Drowning”) “What a poignant piece Richard has written in his haibun entitled ‘Drowning.’ There is much to be considered here. Though very sick, the father’s ‘be good’ shows that he is still the caring, nurturing parent. There is also the terrible irony in the haiku and the prose; how easily the father held ‘his son above the waves’ while the son, now grown, is unable to keep his father from drowning. Indeed, the son now holds the arms that once held him so that the nurse can suction fluid from his father’s throat. And yet, there appears to be a bond that will not be broken; the father is unresponsive, but leans toward his son when the latter lovingly swabs his forehead with a damp washcloth. Masterfully written, this is one of the most moving haibun I’ve ever read.”

Emily Romano on Robert Gaurnier (“chin stubble—/ a sleeper / among rose bushes”) “Such prickliness in this haiku . . . chin stubble and rose thorns! Yet at the heart of it, a sleeper dreams (or not) as if on a downy cloud. All around us are prickly situations, yet in a moment of meditation, or sleep, we may find peace.”

Emily Romano on Harriot West (“falling snow / the hen’s warmth / in the egg”) “Anyone who has lifted an egg from be-
neath the warm body of a hen can identify with this haiku moment. To set this moment in the cold of winter is a stroke of genius. It is one thing to feel the warmth of the egg on a temperate day, but to feel such warmth on a cold day as the poet walks from the chicken coop to the house, enjoying the comfort of the warm egg in her cold hand makes the moment unforgettable.”

Dee Evetts on Darold D. Braida (“from Denmark / the gulls follow the ferry / back to Sweden”) “These days there is a bridge connecting Denmark and Sweden, and this has resulted in the demise of the Copenhagen-Malmo ferry service. But further north on the sound a boat still plies between Helsingor and Helsingborg, and the gulls go back and forth behind it, just as they do between Dover and Calais, Vancouver and Victoria, Kowloon and Hong Kong. The poet observes this with the plainest of statements, and yet evokes both the excitement and the ordinariness of crossing the water. The perennial movement of humans and birds, the symbiosis of species, the cycles that underpin our quotidian life, as well as the oddness of nationality— these are the larger themes just below the surface of Braida’s simple-sounding poem.”
Matsuo Basho’s Poetic Spaces: Exploring Haikai Intersections
Kerkham, Elenna, Ed.

Border Lands
Kacian, Jim

The Parsley Bed: Haiku Stories
Jones, Ken

D’un ciel à l’aure / From one sky to another
Chipot, Dominique
(Director of Publication)
Matsuo Basho’s Poetic Spaces: Exploring Haikai Intersections, edited by Elenna Kerkham (Palgrave MacMillan, 2006) is a scholarly anthology covering all aspects of Basho’s oeuvre from haiku and haibun to haiku-no-renga and haiga. While this specialist text may not be available in smaller libraries, it is worth seeking out because it offers provocative perspectives on broad issues of interpretation as well as specific close readings of interpretative cruxes in well known Basho texts. Essays that offer broad-ranging perspectives include Kerkham’s own contribution, an essay on novelist Maori Atsushi’s theory that Oko no Hosomichi is structured analogously to the Chinese four line verse the jue-ju. This piece offers an interesting pedagogical tool for teachers of Basho’s text: while Leopold Hanami’s piece, Loosening the Links, which defends a broader continuity of meaning within renku beyond adjoining verses, is instructive for English language writers of renku. Essays offering more specific, detailed treatment of interpretative cruxes include David Landis Barnhill’s close reading of Basho’s famous injunction from Knapsack Notebook “follow Nature, return to nature.” Overall, the essays repay both the writer of English language haiku and related forms and those who study and teach Japanese literature.

For English language practitioners of haiku and haiku related forms, this anthology helps supplement the rich and far-reaching work of Professor Haruo Shirane (Traces of Dreams, 1998) in elucidating the cultural contexts of the haikai spirit. In particular, several authors explore the influence of Chinese philosophical and literary traditions on Basho’s work, an area much less well-known to non-specialists than the influence of Buddhist tradition.

In “The Creative in Basho’s View of Nature and Art,” David Landis Barnhill investigates the Chinese concept of Zaohua (translated into Japanese as Zoka) that underlies language in Basho often ambiguously and misleadingly translated into English as either “Nature” (suggesting merely an arrangement of natural objects) or, at the opposite extreme, as a transcendental “God”. Barnhill helps us find a more open-ended, dynamic creative force at play in these passages, a sense of trans-
formation that is immanent within the creation. This leads to a re-reading and re-interpretation of some well-known passages in Basho, such as the haibun on Matsushima in Oko-no-Hosomichi, and several of Basho’s comments on the role of the poet, such as that from the Knapsack Notebook quoted above. Barnhill claims that Basho sees the poet as one who “reinact[s] the animate totality of nature... [and expresses] the power to ‘be’ Nature, not to make that ‘second nature,’ whose identity comes from its distinction from first nature.”

William R. La Fleur, in his essay Skeletons on the Path, does further work in excavating deep roots of Chinese Taoist influence in Basho’s poetry, specifically through the Zhuangzi. La Fleur brings his scholarship to bear on a passage in Basho’s Journey of Bleached Bones in a Field that might easily leave the modern reader somewhat puzzled and disturbed—a passage in which Basho discovers an abandoned child in his travels, and without making attempt to intervene, wanders on after making a pronouncement that the blame for the child’s dire situation rests neither with the child, himself, nor his mother or father, but rather with (in various translations) destiny or fate. La Fleur convincingly analyzes the Chinese Taoist concepts embedded in Basho’s vocabulary, and shows that when Basho calls for the child to “cry out...to Heaven,” he is drawing upon the political implications in the Chinese concept of Tianming, Heaven’s Mandate. Far from a mere fatalism or quietism, Le Fleur shows the underlying political critique built into Basho’s response, since “on the deepest level ideas of Heaven’s Mandate present us with a gap between the human order as it ought to be and as it actually is.”

Although there are multiple perspectives and insights within the essays here too numerous to summarize, I will conclude by mentioning Horikiri Monoru’s fascinating re-reading of several of Basho’s haiku that focus on subtle sounds on the border of inaudibility. Noting some rather odd and reactionary 19th century racial theories on the uniqueness of the structure of the Japanese brain and the way it processes sound, the author explores a distinction in Japanese poetic vocabulary between ordinary sound and the normally inaudible imaginary sounds of
small things: a lotus opening or a worm eating its way inside a chestnut. The essay suggests a niche for a phenomenologist like Gaston Bachelard to arise among Japanese scholars and devote a full study to the complex contexts of sound in Japanese culture.

Overall, this anthology offers scholarly insight into issues that have immediate bearing on the reading of Basho’s poetry and its value for our own practice as haiku poets.

Judson Evans


In his twelfth book *Border Lands*, Jim Kacian enters a dimension not many of us would feel we could face. However, traveling with him into the unknown we return the better for it.

hazy moon
the Muslim woman’s eyes
behind her veil

Through war zones, loneliness, and feelings of uselessness he remains steadfast to his promise of friendship. From the top of a mountain into the valley below he writes “little me.”

In the same style as *Six Directions*, Kacian uses haibun and haiku to take us with him on his journey. Sharing every page, we see, smell, touch, hear, and taste his fear, his elation, his likes, his dislikes, and his “old world” loyalty from his command of the English language and the haiku form. Passages like, “the gold of the vaults has been tarnished by centuries of burnt myrrh,” followed by:

a feeble light
the slow melting
of the eucharist
pull us in and take us there. Throughout, he uses interesting techniques to catch and guide the reader well into a myriad of human emotions. The title of each haibun is taken from the last two or three words of each piece, creating a circle, and each piece contains and is followed by poems such as:

departing bus—
a child I don't know
waves to me

If anything lacks it’s in his chapter entitled “and salt” where, for a moment, he slips into a telling mode: “The women serve the men. The men honor the women,” which is very uncharacteristic of this author. And later, one slightly contrived haiku:

after the wake
a shawl on the chair
unknits itself

though these small sidesteps are totally forgivable in such an otherwise fantastic experience

Alice Frampton

Jones, Ken The Parsley Bed: Haiku Stories Foreword by Caroline Gourlay (Pilgrim Press, Troedrhiwsebon, Cwmrheidol, Abersystwyth, SY23 3NB, Wales, 2006) ISBN: 0-9539901-4-1. 114 pp., 8 1/2" x 5 1/2" perfect softbound. $15 (dollar bills only, please) from the publisher, or order through www.gwales.com.

“His voice is the most striking thing about him,” says Ken Jones speaking of his alter-ego in “Such Stuff as Dreams are Made of,” one of the 34 haibun in this very engaging collection. He is right on the mark. Jones’ voice reverberates with gusto, delectable turns of phrase, and a Welsh sensibility that adds a dimension of the exotic to his prose (and necessitates
Welsh glossaries at the end of some of the pieces). In his introduction to the book, Jones describes his haibun as prose written the style of haiku, i.e., “a tiny coiled spring that can release subtle and fleeting insights into how life is, a heartfelt acceptance of the suchness of things, a whiff of existential liberation.” That liberation extends from truthful to “truthlike” (i.e., clearly fictional) haibun ultimately grounded, Jones says, in his own experience. In many of his haibun “reality” readily becomes reverie and myth. Things are never quite what they seem.” Like haiku, his haibun all take place in the present—even when the story being told takes place on a battlefield in the year 1401. Jones has a great appetite for history, and his quest for discovering the past on its own turf takes him, and us, on a journey to the commonwealth of fairies, an ancient nunnery, a Zen monastery (“sitting eight hours a day, locked in one kind of lotus or another”). Typical of his narrative style is this descriptive scene from “Rusty Iron”:

Finally I make it over into a closed-off upland. Just below is a long loch, an exclamation mark full stopped by a shining lochan at the far end. Late lunch on a buttock-shaped boulder.

Soda bread and honey
the mountain sits
apart, indifferent

Other mountains have wished me a happy birthday, but not this one, on my seventy-fifth. There is usually at least a marker stone placed on the occasional boulder; faint signs of a path along the ridge; a boot print here and there. But on this one, nothing. As if no one had ever been here before me.

And in "The Question":

Ty Malwoden - the Snail House. Out on the point I have raised a cairn. Its white quartz cap catches the first and the last sun of each day - however rarely offered. From
beneath an angler's umbrella I flick the question back
and forth across my mind, with never a bite. Deftly shied,
my slates skip and skim, but never reach the other shore.

It is that unquenched thirst for answers to life's perplexing
questions that seems to drive each one of these haibun. And it
is Jones' predilection for pushing a haibun-length story to its
limits which makes this book a fascinating read.

The book is divided into five segments: 1) Life & Times, 2) People & Places, 3) Grandeur, Folly & Fun, 4) Dreams, Memories & Imagery, and 5) The Grave & Constant, with a selection of a dozen or more related haiku separating one section from the next. The stand-alone haiku are often personal and amusing:

Married thirty years
and still can't slice a grapefruit
into equal halves

By the coffee and mints
we're down to moles
and their habits

Well-thumbed public map
"You are Here"
no longer there

But they are too often (at least for my taste) flat and unsurprising:

Ageing address book
the living squeezed
between the dead

In the old summer house
his brass compass
her straw hat
The haiku embedded in the haibun for the most part do the job they are intended to do, leading the reader deeper into the prose. Still it is the brilliant storytelling that makes this book memorable.

Jones is no novice. *The Parsley Bed* is his third published collection of haibun. He is co-editor of *Contemporary Haibun*, and in the quarterly online version, *Contemporary Haibun Online*, he has published a series of essays on how to craft fine haibun. His advice is sound—and he clearly knows how to take good advice, even when (or perhaps especially when) it is his own.

Jones says that the writing of haibun is, for him, an integral part of half a lifetime’s practice of Zen Buddhism. “He dares to reveal much of himself in his writing,” says Caroline Gourlay in her Foreword, “and thus elicits from the reader a similarly human response.”

Unless you’ve read one of Ken Jones’ earlier collections, I expect you’ve never read a book quite like this one. I recommend that you begin now.

*Carolyn Hall*

---

*a yellow leaf
touching the green ones
on its way down*

*K. Ramesh (India)*

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*Frogpond - Third Decade*

Volume XXV:2 2002
There is a bright expressionistic painting by Chagall, “Paris through the Window” (1913), of a window’s view of the Paris cityscape, including the Eiffel Tower. In a way the spirit of this monumental volume of European Union haiku follows the painting.

The French Haiku Association chose 221 haiku from 66 authors from 16 countries. There were 1,100 haiku submitted on a number of themes: the beginning of April, night, tree, the National Day, the open window. The anthology is preceded by three short introductions [by] Dominique Chipot, founder and president of the association, and concluded by information on the included haiku poets, the translators, the illustrator, and the association.

It is a handsome volume. A glossy cobalt blue cover with incandescent white stars trailing across the front and back covers. Fourteen engravings by Senadin Tursic are interspersed throughout the anthology. The impressive full page engravings are semi-abstract landscapes and waterscapes, some, like “Golden Waters” and “Every Evening,” based on traditional Japanese painting. Each haiku poet’s entry consists of the poet’s name and country of residence and his or her poems, one to a page, in their original language with an English (Daniel Py, Klaus-Dieter Wirth), French (André Duhaime, Daniel Py, Klaus-Dieter Wirth), and Japanese translation (members of the Meguro Haiku International Circle). These poets and translations take different directions in terms of phrasing, idiom, punctuation, and general structure.

The translations, to my limited observation, seem clear and poetic in their phrasing, on occasion taking different possible choices as in this by David Cobb (England) that included the word “poky” which could mean “shabby” or “cramped”:
Frogpond XXX:3

a poky hotel—
no space for my shadow
to stretch

The German goes for “schäbiges” (“shabby”), the French “exigu” (“small”), and the Japanese “mijikai” (“short”).

In a haiku by Daniel Dölschner (Germany) the German repeating of “unter” (“under”) possibly adds a note of awe and musicality in a pattern of “n” and “t” sounds in addition to the possible humorous delight of the French and English translations:

Sommernacht. Nuit d'été. Summer night
Wir liegen unter Sternen Sous les étoiles Under the stars
sie unter mir sur elle on top of her

In a wonderful haiku by Daniel Py (France) the musical pattern of “l’s” in this two-liner becomes equally melodious in the pattern of “f’s” in the English translation:

lendemain de feux d’artifice day after the fireworks
les éclairs de l’orage the flashes from the storm

By far most of the anthology haiku take up the window theme. Three of them begin with an open window: the simple hominess of a neighbor’s cooking by Edin Sarajevic (Slovenia), the extraordinary image of a cloud through a torn curtain by Aksinia Mikhailova (Bulgaria), and the sound of cicadas near a school by Djurdja Vukelic-Rozic (Croatia):

open window— the open window
buckwheat mash on the stove the old curtain
in a neighbor’s house mended with a grey cloud

the open windows
on the school building

-83-
The eye is the window to the soul and the window is a metaphor for the entrance of the mind, spirit, feeling, or imagination into the world of experience or transport, as in these haiku and Chagall’s painting.

The theme of Independence Day issues of national feeling and memory become universal through the form of haiku. Notice the human synchronicity in Alenka Zorman (Slovenia), an important national event in modern history in Daniel Dölschner (Germany), and the pathos of war in Francis Attard (Malta):

Independence Day.
In the warm wind my scarf touches a stranger.

Touching the Wall
being touched by the Wall—
Reunification Day

The National Day
a cool breeze sweeps leaves off—
the hero’s epitaph

This anthology is filled with wonderful seasonal haiku on harvest time by Geert Verbeke (Belgium) and Ion Codrescu (Romania), spring by Serge Tomé (Belgium), and autumn by Vasile Moldovan (Romania) (155, 44, 250, 266). The familiar resonance of silence appears in aesthetically transparent and imaginative haiku by Dominique Chipot (France), Horst Ludwig (Germany), Isabel Asunsolo (Spain), and Kai Falkman (Sweden) (90, 137, 152, 185). Unique and sensitive haiku on the persistence of nature in modern human spaces and the need for a connection with forebears are presented in haiku by Krzysztof Karwowski (Poland) and Roberta Beary (Ireland) (188, 245).

Some of the haiku are exquisitely crafted to offer an almost seamless evocation of feeling, as in a mystical metaphor in Alenka Zorman (Slovenia), an expression of simple joy in Damien Gabriels (France), and in a moment of transpersonal insight in David Cobb (England):
Roof by roof.
Each smoke reaches
its white cloud.
Coming home from work—
I count on my way
forsythias in blossoms
in the dark garden
a distant lightning flash—
the track of a snail

We are in the third century of Japanese artistic influence and the transformation of that influence on and by Europe. One thinks of the French Impressionists and Van Gogh in painting and early translations of tanka and later haiku in France and Romania. Now we have a full blooming gathering of where such influence and transformation has arrived in European haiku through this European Union anthology.

Overall "From one sky to another" offers many rewards and is highly recommended and, moreover, a high water mark for international haiku.

Bruce Ross

BOOKS RECEIVED:


Jenkins, Nigel O for a gun (Planet Books, PO Box 44, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY 23 3ZZ, Cymru/Wales, UK, 2007) ISBN 978-09540881-7-0. 136 pp., 5.75"x 8.25" perfect softbound. £7.50 from the publisher.

Galloway, Linda (Ed.) Rattle of Bamboo: A Haiku Collection (The Southern California Haiku Study Group, 2007) No ISBN. 44 pp., 5.5" x 8.25" saddlestapled softbound. No price. Inquire at <dbyrd37@yahoo.com>.


King, Doreen *rose stems* (Tribe Press, Greenfield MA 2007) No ISBN. 24 pp., 4" x 3" saddlestitched softbound with wrapper. No price. Enquire with the publisher.

Wyatt, Bill *Samadhi Haiku Dust* (Self-published, available from Maitreya Buddhist Centre, 13 Sea Road, Bexhill on Sea, East Sussex TN40 1EE, UK, 2007) No ISBN. 56 pp., 5.75" x 8.25" perfect softbound. $10US ppd.

Fraticelli, Marco *watching the butterfly* (King's Road Press, 148 King's Road, Pointe Claire, Quebec, H9R 4H4 Canada, 2007) No ISBN. 20 pp., 5.5" x 8.25" saddlestapled softbound. No price. Enquire with the publisher.

Fraticelli, Marco and Philomene Kocher *The Second Time* (King's Road Press, 148 King's Road, Pointe Claire, Quebec, H9R 4H4 Canada, 2007) No ISBN. 16 pp., 5.5" x 8.25" saddlestapled softbound. No price. Enquire with the publisher.

Fraticelli, Marco and Carolyne Rohrig *Chalk Drawings* (King's Road Press, 148 King's Road, Pointe Claire, Quebec, H9R 4H4 Canada, 2007) No ISBN. 20 pp., 5.5" x 8.25" saddlestapled softbound. No price. Enquire with the publisher.


Terebess, Gábor *Haiku in the luggage* (artORIENT Press, Budapest, 2006) ISBN 963-9147-68-0. Translated from the Hungarian by Jon Tarnoc. 208 pp., 4.75" x 6.75" hardbound. No price. Enquire with the publisher at terebess@terebess.hu.

Haiku and senryu in their brevity are an art to master. Most of the entries to the Nick Virgilio Haiku Contest this year were senryu. Some missed the form of haiku or senryu altogether. Still in the entries we found again and again powerful images that showed thought and vulnerability. Should the author re-write with some further instruction there is potential for poignant haiku. All the submissions gave us a delightful and interesting look into the young author’s world. The scope of the content ranging from the mundane to the highly unusual thus showed an attempt by the authors to look at their world fresh with eyes open, senses at alert.

early spring  
the willowy girl  
runs around the track  
Sara Dill, 13, Grade 8  
School of the Arts  
Rochester, NY

You can feel the cold crisp air and the sense of determination in each step. A young girl with her life ahead of her like the new spring day is full of promise. The comparison to a willow speaks of fluidity of movement and grace; a profound evocative image of “youth.” The rhythm of her step around a circular path is repeated in the mention of the season with its own circular rhythm.

spring morning  
her jelly shoes dry  
on the back porch  
Zoe Christopher, 14, Grade 9  
School of the Arts  
Rochester, NY

Jelly shoes stand out as a delightfully unusual but recognizable image. It evokes an array of colors although in this haiku the color is unnamed. The smooth texture of the shoe and the
suggestion of wetness or even a puddle by the use of the word dry repeats the smooth surface and shape of the shoes. They are empty on the porch, but someone has worn them. They suggest a story, but it is left unsaid. So much is unsaid in this timeless glimpse of the mundane invaded by the colorful shoe that it makes a very interesting senryu to ponder.

the wind                Jordan Krueger, 17, Grade 12
taking                 Wahlert High School
her secret             Dubuque, IA

The wind brings mystery into this simple senryu of two young girls sharing a secret. The very economical use of words suggests briefness. The secret is shared, the words spoken and are gone as quickly and silently and mysteriously as the wind. A secret shared is not to be repeated thus exists, but does not exist except between those who share it. An excellent expression in nature of the relationship is implied in this work. The word taking suggests something stolen or forbidden to share.

This senryu could also be read as someone with no one to share a secret. They speak instead into the wind creating a profound sense of aloneness and alienation by one who holds a secret no human ear can hear.

beep of the monitor          Nicole Grogan, 18, Grade 12
reminding me . . .          Wahlert High School
to hope                   Dubuque, IA

There is a heart wrenching story behind this senryu. Life so precariously hanging in the balance that the author falters between despair and hope. With each heart beat life continues. As long as there is a heart beat there is hope. There is sense of waiting beside a bedside held captive by the monitor, distanced by technology but informed by it also. It is a surreal moment that anyone who has sat in that chair can slip into in a heart beat upon reading the senryu.
empty house

echoes of laughter
in the rotting wood

Emily Onyan, 13, Grade 8
School of the Arts
Rochester, NY

A mood is created in this senryu with many echoes or layers. There is the sight of the empty house, the mood that emptiness creates. The smell of the rotting wood is another layer that tells us the house is old and abandoned for years. The echoes of laughter are in the present and past connecting the unauthorized visitors that explore the empty rooms with the strangers who lived there at one time. Why do we love to explore abandoned places?

Valentine’s Day
the stop light stays red
too long

Pendle Marshall-Hallmark, 14
School of the Arts, Grade 9
Rochester, NY

Expectation good or bad, anticipation of an encounter or the dread of a long lonely day is the stuff that Valentine’s Day is made of. The color red like a stop light can’t be ignored. Even if you want the day to end or want it to last forever the feeling of stress can’t be ignored. It is the annoyance of a long red light when you are waiting for something more in life to happen but instead you are sitting in your car at a red light waiting.

fireflies—
remembering things
I’ve only imagined

Kenneth Payne (USA)
Haiku Society of America

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Frogpond - Third Decade

the quiet graveyard
a warm breeze & an end
to alphabetic order

LeRoy Gorman (Canada)

Volume XXIV:1 2001
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