

frogpond

**The Journal of the Haiku
Society of America**



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1. Submissions from both members and non-members of HSA are welcome
2. Submissions must be original, unpublished work that is not being considered elsewhere
3. Submission by e-mail is preferred
 - (a) in the body of the e-mail (no attachments)
 - (b) with subject line: Frogpond Submission
 - (c) with place of residence noted in the body of the e-mail
4. A submission by post will receive a reply only if included are either:
 - (a) a self-addressed stamped envelope (with a Canadian stamp)
 - (b) a self-addressed envelope with one International Reply Coupon (IRC) for up to 30 grams; two IRCs for over 30 grams and up to 50 grams,
5. Only one submission per issue will be considered

The Submission May Include Any or All of the Following

1. Up to ten (10) haiku
2. Up to three (3) haibun
3. Up to three (3) renga or other short sequences
4. One (1) renku or other long sequence
5. One (1) essay
6. One (1) book review

Submission Periods

1. February 15 to April 15 (Spring/Summer Issue)
2. June 01 to August 01 (Fall Issue)
3. September 15 to November 15 (Winter Issue)

Acceptances will be sent shortly after the end of each period.

Note to Publishers

Books for review may be sent at any time

Submission Addresses:

E-mail: gswede@ryerson.ca

Postal: George Swede

Box 279, Station P

Toronto, ON M5S 2S8

**Museum of Haiku
Literature Award
\$100**

For the best previously unpublished work appearing in the
last issue of *Frogpond* as selected by vote of the H.S.A.
Executive Committee.

From Issue 32:1

reddening apples—
my newborn tries to suckle
the orchard air

Dejah Leger, Washington



Haiku & Senryu

end of summer
the Great Blue Heron stretches
into its own shadow

Terry Ann Carter, Ontario

So hot
the pond
a lotus soup.

Alexis Rotella, Maryland

Crushed snow
the bite
into warm bread

Martina Heinisch, Germany

second thoughts
I bid
on dad's accordion

Marcus Larsson, Sweden

awakening
to winter gusts . . .
the rent due

Heidi George, Pennsylvania

spring woodnote—
the sunburned knuckles
on a birdwatcher

summer solstice
the chestnut stallion
out of his sheath

an'ya, Oregon

drawing the silence
around me—
long winter's night

lake ice
the color of sky
winter's end

Marjorie A. Buettner, Minnesota

hopscotch
the children
the robins

Lyle Rumpel, British Columbia

Going nowhere
a construction track
the length of someone's dream

Ken Jones, Wales

sunset
a crab hooks a claw
over the rim of the pot

Mark F. Harris, New Jersey

after
Chinese New Year
sections of the dragon
meandering
home

Judson Evans, Massachusetts

icicles—
the sun drips into
pools of light

Hortensia Anderson, New York

Doppler shift
from a top down mustang . . .
I finish the chorus

Tyrone McDonald, New York

dogwood set to bloom
the wind blows open
my blank journal

man in the moon
she floats nude on her back
in the lake

William Cullen Jr., New York

sticks in a puddle—
so very many ways
to get it wrong

John Edmond Carley, England

Texas sky
wind turbines
stir the heat

Tom Painting, New York

glacier's wind
the sour taste
of sorrel

Linda Pilarski, Alberta

jug wine
all the right notes
slightly out of tune

Lee Giesecke, Virginia

sundown after rain
one dragonfly
still shining

getting all
the attention
the twisted branch

David Gershator, U.S. Virgin Islands

pink clouds!
on a morning train
the circus arrives

a little motel
lousy with weirdness . . .
the humid night

Michael McClintock, California

space contracts
to a candle flame
long night moon

Ann K. Schwader, Colorado

dappled dawn twin fawns

Marsh Muirhead, Minnesota

In the rock womb
The poem-writing candle
Expires
(Iwabune Jinja, Osaka, 21.12.08)

Tito, Japan

sunrise . . .
the male pheasant
owns the road

Alice Frampton, Washington

just noticing
the countless scratches—
wedding band

Michael Blaine, Delaware

Moonflower tucked
under my chin. Wind buries
seeds slick with waiting.

Jessica Reidy, Ireland

transparent skyscraper
the elevator
to the moon

Dietmar Tauchner, Austria

silence
in the elevator
a whiff of durian

Bob Lucky, China

trade-in lot
her dream catcher left
on the rear view

Dan Schwerin, Wisconsin

winter trees
seeing the crow
the caw belongs to

Gregory Hopkins, Alabama

daffodils in bloom—
she skips to match
her sister's stride

Abigail Friedman, Virginia

Evening mass:
blood red daylight
drains from stained glass

Al Ortolani, Kansas

the memorial candle
lasting longer than a day
autumn clouds

Bruce Ross, Maine

winter gravestone
hyphen between dates
my father's life

James Martin, Oregon

a breathtaking view now a dot : : on the map

Kala Ramesh, India

I whisper—
fluent in
butterfly

yellow shirt—
his favorite
i become lace sun

Faith-Anne Bell, Maryland

caught in a rundown
between first and second
— a pickle —

John Bessler, Minnesota

an empty nest
on my father's tombstone
two blue egg shells

Robert Moyer, North Carolina

old canvas—
california poppies
flake from daffodils

Lorin Ford, Australia

slap and tug
of bedsheets on the line—
jury summons

Ruth Yarrow, Washington

one small child
wraps the roomful of adults
in laughter

a smiling dream
woke me this morning
where did it go?

Doris H. Thurston, Oregon

the density
of philosophy
cherry blossoms

Michael Fessler, Japan

canebreak—
hank of moss
trapping sunlight

Charles Bernard Rodning, Alabama

dry earth
the shriveled life line
of a worm

Nana Fredua-Agyeman, Ghana

past midnight . . .
the clock
and my heartbeat

Jo McInerney, Australia

cool morning
a spider threads sunlight
across barbed wire

Angelee Deodhar, India

solitary walk
the shape of an owl
cut from the moon

Melissa Spurr, California

she patiently
waits in line—
one finger nail at a time

Mike Montreuil, Ontario

lenten moon—
the bottomless cries
of hatchlings

morning star—
the newborn's fontanel
pulses softly

Nora Wood, Georgia

deep parts of the puddle left
— — —
our last day walking
near these mountains

Gary Hotham, Maryland

each set of eyes
watches the skirt
barber's mirror

Greg Piko, Australia

boiling maple syrup
wood smoke fading
into evening fog

Mark Alan Osterhaus, Wisconsin

lunch hour
lobsters duel
in the tank

Jeremy Pendrey, California

using his toothbrush
Oh dear God
in love again!

grey drone of the docent
yellow brilliance
of van Gogh's sunflowers

Audrey Olberg, Maryland

over Mt. Rainier
lenticular clouds,
I file a memory

William Scott Galasso, Washington

last night's dream—
cobwebs dangle in a
shaft of sun

Jack Barry, Massachusetts

morning chill—
crow's feet clatter
on the tin gutter

the baby's head
soft and warm
spring darkness

A.C. Missias, Pennsylvania

glorious eulogy
the birth of
a family myth

Muriel Ford, Ontario

recalling a childhood
of sexual abuse . . .
her voice grows younger

Tom Tico, California

the flood
a mail box
red flag up

Robert Mainone, Michigan

a torn leaf
blows in
with him

Susan Marie La Vallee, Hawaii

obituary
a face added
to his radio voice

the same Bach piece
the same feelings
I had back then

Anne LB Davidson, Maine

old garden blocks—
their grit softened
by green moss

Joan Murphy, New York

such a long winter
parsley shoots just visible
under snow crystals

Jean Jorgensen, Alberta

after the storm
caught in the fence
driftwood

Naomi Madelin, New Zealand

plane vapors
zig zag
without a message

Deborah Dunn, New Jersey

dim elevator
the song I never expected
to mean a thing

Cathy Drinkwater Better, Maryland

spring snow
gone as you
get dressed

John Martone, Illinois

first day of spring
early tulips hold
melting snow

Marilyn Murphy, Rhode Island

ten licks here
twelve there—
sun bathing cat

John Holt, Japan

shooting stars
the incoming tide
touches our feet

Lynne Steel, Florida

arrested by the evening air's magnolia scent my monkey mind

waking to
the shimmer of a wet
dream

Eve Luckring, California

today's plans—
a maple leaf drifts
in a new direction

Susan Constable, British Columbia

I read
my husband's mind—
the summer wind

year's end
the oven mitt
slightly charred

Peggy Willis Lyles, Georgia

in the pawnshop
we haggle over
someone else's childhood

Dan McCullough, Massachusetts

rain
the tumbleweed's
stillness

Margarita Engle, California

earth day—
the river gives up
another tire

John Soules, Ontario

winter night—
moving the bookmark
to another book

I sleep with her
or she sleeps with me
autumn equinox

John Stevenson, New York

no betrayal
just a bitter cold morning
in April

Bonnie Stepenoff, Missouri

spring crescent
the gnawing in the wall
grows louder

lace cap hydrangeas
a soft breeze ruffles
the dead chickadee's wing

Carolyn Hall, California

disappointment hits me like a father

R.P. Carter, Ontario

cherry buds
the neighborhood girl
i never noticed before

Stephen A. Peters, Washington

godwits return
to the beach—
bells peal

Lyall Clarke, New Zealand

after the tornado
my wind chimes ringing
from a neighbor's tree

John J. Dunphy, Illinois

duck
ducking
its ripples

Patrick M. Pilarski, Alberta

the great horned owl
stops hooting
a murder of crows

Raffael de Gruttola, Massachusetts

pigeons flock into the coop
a white feather
sailing elsewhere

Elizabeth Howard, Tennessee

flashing faces
the night train
I'm not on

Linda Jeanette Ward, North Carolina

rapeseed field the dress my mother never wore

Clare McCotter, Ireland

the encore—
jazz band riffs
with katydids

Carolyn Coit Dancy, New York

unexpected snow
the sound of water
about to boil

a falling leaf
rises on the wind . . .
again

Bill Kenney, New York

the pungent spray
of next door's ginger tom—
camellias opening

tight applause of secateurs weevil holocaust

John Sexton, Ireland

climbing the hill
a cicada shell
on every batten

Sandra Simpson, New Zealand

hangover . . .
out-of-date condiments
rattle in the fridge

Colin Jones, Scotland

forsythia—
vase of branches and buds
forcing spring

Eric Arthen, Massachusetts

that moment at night
when no dogs
are barking

Carlos Colón, Louisiana

bare maple
my daughter says
she'll come back

Yu Chang, New York

old growth daisies
loves me
not

Francine Banwarth, Iowa

stretched thin
in the yellowstone winter
a coyote's howl

Wanda D. Cook, Massachusetts

sidewalk crack—
forgiving
my mother

George G. Dorsty, Virginia

open casket:
the kiss
that used to wake you

Raquel D. Bailey, Florida

briefly the heron's catch shaping its gullet

Jeff Stillman, New York

after 40 years . . .
still the dreams of
being late

Diane Mayr, New Hampshire

bifocals i step into the gap

dinner party
candle light gleams
from knife blades

Karen Peterson Butterworth, New Zealand

the last rays
the steering wheel turns
with the red tail hawk

manhole steam
two men with briefcases
from the other world

Chuck Brickley, California

vapor rises from the fence i try to forget her

w.f. owen, California

leaves too small
to touch each other
spring chill

Burnell Lippy, New York

a spider on the other side
of the windowpane
lonely night

Collin Barber, Arkansas

On the pile
of ungraded papers
a fly cleaning its legs

David Elliot, Pennsylvania

between
the crow and the caw:
an arc of lightning

Michele Root-Bernstein, Michigan

dog days—
on the road mender's arm
a sweaty dragon

Rafal Zabratynski, Poland

mother's bone china
things we speak of
things we don't

nothing more to say—
what's left of the soup
thickens in the pot

Harriot West, Oregon

evening calm
a chink of moonlight
across my baby's cheek

cloudwatching . . .
my son's small hand
curled in mine

Vanessa Proctor, Australia

after jarring me awake,
the professor's voice
lulls me back to sleep.

David Rosenthal, California

asking answering
goldfinches move deeper
into the trees

heat lightning
the lost lyric
to a long ago song

Joyce Clement, Connecticut

anniversary breakfast
blooming morning glories
hug their trellis

Erik Linzbach, Arizona

wild strawberries
the kiss
that never happened

Tanya McDonald, Washington

plucking a white hair
from my eyebrow
crescent moon

Eileen Sheehan, Ireland

my skipping stone its moment in the sun

sudden cloudburst—
Mona Lisa in chalk
turns expressionist

Scott Mason, New York

at the end of the rainbowat

meeting the in-laws
rain & snow
together for a day

LeRoy Gorman, Ontario

o
wisteria pods p p spring sun

Renée Owen, California

making sheep jump sleepless synapses

Christopher White, England

carrying the oystercatchers carrying their cries the autumn wind

redwings on the fringes of the henge midwinter wind

John Barlow, England

Leaving the Cro-Magnon grin on the river I pack my camp

Paul Pfeuger Jr., Taiwan

crypt inscriptions half-lit yawn misty

Francis Attard, Malta

your arms around me
white butterflies
dance together

mountain glen
a clear burn burbles
through birdsong

Katrina Shepherd, Scotland

skinny dipping
her perfect swan dive
caught in headlights

Karen Reynolds, Massachusetts

goldrush site
buttercups
in the long grass

Nola Borrell, New Zealand

carnival midway—
above the ring toss
the full moon

Adelaide B. Shaw, New York

turning the idea
over and over
smooth river stone

Stacey Poston, North Carolina

buds opening
we don't know how
to pronounce Paris

Scott Metz, Oregon

late autumn . . .
a lone hoot
through the hollow

what doesn't kill you Chicago in winter

Christopher Patchel, Illinois

garden whispers . . .
the air heavy
with magnolia

Deborah P. Kolodji, California

My slow dying
across a lifetime
halts, at baby's cry

His empty shoes
side by side
neatly alone

Alice Mae Ward, Massachusetts

riverbank mud—
so still, the water
in my footprints

Mark Arvid White, Alaska

spring cleaning—
your head mark on the wall
small comfort now

the boats sail out—
this emptiness
left behind

H.F. Noyes, Greece

Revelations: Unedited

Poets and Editors: Some Thoughts about Both

by *Marian Olson*, New Mexico

"It takes two to speak the truth—one to speak, and another to hear"

—*Thoreau*

Early on when I first began submitting work to editors, I considered them formidable and alien. They either honored my work with acceptances or they dishonored it with rejections. Poems I thought were good, they rejected. Poems I wasn't sure of, they took. Their responses were unpredictable. I received their opinions personally and sometimes with puzzlement, but always with the idea that they were the unassailable arbiters of good, great, and bad poetry. My poetry failed or passed according to some mysterious absolute that they were privy to, and I wasn't.

Time and experience changed my perspective. For a while I co-edited *The Writer's Block*, the poetry journal of Antelope Valley College. I learned on the job about the work involved, as well as the arbitrary and subjective choices an editor makes. It was not an easy task to wade through piles of poems and choose which ones would make the cut for the upcoming issue and which ones wouldn't. It wasn't easy to assuage damaged egos or temper the occasional self-importance of some whose poems were accepted. Working with poets and their poems was only a part of our responsibilities. We also had the task of layout and design while we labored to meet deadlines—all this in addition to our professional and personal lives.

Thus, I learned that the job of editor has the heart of a tyrant, ignoring personal needs for relaxation—space to play, ruminate, or write. It has no tolerance for sloth or error, demanding accuracy with detail. It offers no monetary reward for all the time and effort involved. Its motto would seem to be serve me, slave.

Why, then, would anyone choose to become an editor?

Some editors are invited into the position and accept the role because they feel a responsibility to continue the legacy of a respected editor. Some step into the role because for one reason or another, it becomes available, and someone must fill the position. Some simply want to create a new journal with a new voice, offering a different view among the many. Some take on the role because they seek control, power, or influence. Whatever the motivation, most are discriminate and able to say no to a poem even when it comes from someone well known, culling submissions until they have a good selection of poetry to present in their respective journals. No matter the reason for the decision to assume the editorship of a poetry journal, all of these editors have a passion for poetry.

Every poet who has published—even those who haven't published yet—has had a variety of experiences with editors. I have worked with some of the best and some of the worst, real nightmare editors, editors who are rude and egotistical; editors who are sloppy with the submitted material, losing submissions and making unbelievable excuses; disorganized editors who are unable to locate a submission when asked; editors who take an inordinate amount of response time, thereby denying the poet a chance to seek another outlet for the work; editors who have a compulsion to rework the poet's poem (one who did that to me failed to notify me of the changes before publishing "his poem"); and editors who feel compelled to make stabbing remarks when nothing more than a canned rejection slip would have been necessary.

On the other hand, I have known editors that seem to have dropped out of editor heaven, men and women who selflessly work to create the best journal of poetry available. I can think of at least five in my lifetime of publishing. Of those, one was a vigilant protector of his stable of poets, a conscientious and fierce watchdog of his poetic turf. Once, he sent back a batch of poems with a short and humorous comment that he felt he

had to protect my reputation, and thus regretfully had to reject the submission. I loved the comment, which made me laugh and mentally thank him, even though I didn't agree with his assessment (later, some of those very poems were picked up by two different editors, something poets discouraged by rejections may like to remember). Another editor actually writes kind notes in response to the accepted and rejected poems. This is far and above what any poet expects, especially considering the massive work each editor deals with, but this poet became a loyal contributor to his journal as a result of the practice.

I know another editor who carefully hones his journal until each issue is a polished gem. How does he get such quality material from journal to journal? He is efficient and organized, a person with a sensitive nature and keen intelligence who has carefully pulled together a likeminded team. He takes time to know his poets, and he is respectful. Another of these five outstanding editors is a fine poet himself—actually, all of them I've mentioned write venerable poetry. Working to make his journal the best, he seeks feedback; then incorporates workable suggestions. This is the kind of editor that poets want to support with their best work. Out of all the editors I have worked with, one became a mentor, a role neither of us would have imagined in the beginning of our relationship, nor a role either of us consciously sought

Elizabeth Searle Lamb, later dropping her middle name and referring to herself as *Elizabeth Lamb*, was *Frogpond* editor from 1984 to 1991, and then once again for one year in 1994. Before taking on that mantle, she was one of the original small band of haiku pioneers in the United States who helped shape the haiku movement in the West. Although an outstanding poet, she was a natural editor, cut out to do the exacting work demanded by the job. She didn't know the meaning of rude or arrogant because she was by nature self-effacing and polite. Nevertheless, she had a perceptive editorial eye, passing over any poem that didn't meet her standard of excellence. She took time to correspond with poets who submitted to the journal and sought her comments. A rejection slip from her

became a teaching tool. She wrote short notes and sometimes longer ones that revealed who she was and what she expected, so that little by little poets came to trust her and appreciate that she had their interest at heart. More than one of us have known the power and warmth of her pen, and remember with a smile her concluding words “In Haiku joy” before she sealed an envelope or added a stamp to a post card and slipped it into the mailbox at the end of her drive.

The day we finally met face to face, we sat under the green shade of a gnarled apricot tree in her comfortable adobe patio. She served ginger cookies and tea that hour, the first of many we would share through the years to come. We talked about haiku, New Mexico, ourselves. She was a good listener, a sounding board for all the questions and ideas I had never shared with the other editors. I talked so much I embarrassed myself and told her so. With a wave of her hand she dismissed my comment, saying, “No, no, no. You make me feel good.” She made me feel good too. It was on that visit that I told her about my passion for chickens and roosters. “That’s a book, Marian,” she said, “You must write it.” I returned to California and wrote *Songs of the Chicken Yard*, a poetry book that has achieved some acclaim. I wrote two haiku books and one haiku manuscript with her encouragement.

Several years later after moving to Santa Fe, New Mexico, I visited Elizabeth whenever I could. She lived in the historic area of the small capitol city, down a twisty road shaded with giant elms and cottonwoods, a road cut by early trail horses and wagons. It was a short walk to her blue front gate, softened with whorls of blue morning glories in summer and snow in winter. Her blue door would swing open any time of the year, and her large blue eyes shine with welcome. (I was one of many haiku poets who made a pilgrimage to her unpretentious adobe home to meet her and visit.) She prepared Earl Gray tea then and served it with a small plate of cookies before settling down to visit in her small living room with its oversized low teak chest topped with books and magazines and writing pads.

We studied the latest haiku journals, discussing the essays and poems. We wrote some renga together. We shared poems of others we loved, and sometimes offered a draft of a haiku we were pulling together to get a candid response. She sent me home with rare poetic treasures to study, classic out-of-print books and volumes of the first haiku journals. Little by little she was shaping me without intention or goal. I learned to trust my muse because of her.

She had become a mentor. To think of herself as a mentor would have amazed her. Free-spirited, intuitive, and generous, she shared her genius with me, as well as with hundreds of other poets in her long and productive life. Elizabeth Lamb was unique, and remains to this day, my idea of the quintessential editor.



Rengay

At The Seaside

by

Rafal Zabratynski, Poland

Collin Barber, Arkansas

gentle waves
a stick rocks
up and down

*cigarette butts
amidst the shells*

stroll for two
the evening breeze
pilfers her scent

*shoreline calming—
a puddle of sunlight
on the jellyfish*

an empty beach
if not for me?

*lull of tides—
I stare at the sun
with my eyes closed*



lost kaleidoscope

by

John Thomspn, California

Chuck Brickley, California

shards of colored glass
battered smooth by the waves
a change of heart

*pacific sunset
if only I could see you again*

half-closed poppies
over inlet and bluff
salt mists drift

*to forgive
the unforgiving
a yellow iceplant bloom*

purple starfish and teens
splashed by moonlit waves

*dawn gleams
amongst the piled driftwood
broken bottles*



Trillium Lights The Forest Floor

by
Carolyn Hall, California
Billie Wilson, Alaska

daybreak
trillium lights
the forest floor

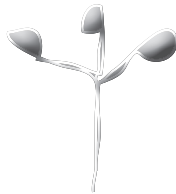
*beached kayaks
a shimmer of willows*

sunglint from the creek
the alder leaves
greener

*afternoon shadows
all through the orchard
ripening apples*

in the midst of the sunset
the basho

*owlsong
mountain pines glisten
under the moon*



Tan Renga

by

Linda Jeanette Ward, North Carolina

Eva Taylor, Maryland

bare black branches
balance a heavy moon
in the predawn sky

*the face of a prostitute
through barred windows*

by

John Edmond Carley, England

Hortensia Anderson, New York

falling softly
through this emptiness
the thought of snow

t

*the shape of our words
fixed in frosted breath*

by

Christopher Herold, Washington

Ron Moss, Australia

tractor idling
the last bright star
fades into dawn

*mother's best corn cakes
warming with her song*

Sequences

Bushfire 2009

by
Quendryth Young, Australia

roar of the wind
flaming leaves fly
tree to tree

helicopter—
a water bomb startles
the possum

smoke-raw throats
call out to neighbours—
cat in a basket

breathless air . . .
a small child clutches
her doll

refuge—
the hug of a stranger
unleashes the tears

endless hills
of blackened trunks—
body bags

the gleam
of a mangled trinket—
household rubble

ashes to ashes . . .
through the hush
a bird calls

Yoga At Pura Vida: Costa Rica

by
Margaret Chula, Oregon

morning breeze
pulse of water
 smell of cow manure

holding the pose longer
 hummingbird
at the hibiscus

how flexible
the Brahmin bulls
nuzzling their own backs

the different colors
of water over rocks
russet-backed squirrel

solo yoga
giving myself permission
to bend my knees

after the poses
and the AUMs savasana
in the hammock



Haibun

Christmas 1996

by *Marjorie A. Buettner*, Minnesota

Christmas eve, a full moon casts a shadow as deep and as blue as an ocean at night, a foreign blue from out of a dream landscape which I cannot identify but which looks so familiar. Not another like it on Christmas eve, says my husband, until 2104. We hang tenuously over the edge of the bed like sailors over the railing—straining to glimpse a future that is not ours to see, while a ground breaking cold and a strange blue light from a distant moon change everything.

Christmas day—
the gift I would have given
if you were still here

Family Portrait

by *Lynn Edge*, Texas

The flat-bottomed boat nudges the shore. My grandson stands on the roof deck with my daughter and her husband. When the tour guide announces we are near the Lopstick family of Whooping Cranes, I leave the glassed interior and walk to the bow.

The male is twenty-nine years old; the female twenty-eight, both near the end of their natural life. They are called the Lopsticks after their nesting area in Canada. With them are two juveniles. Only one in ten Whoppers raise both chicks and I am looking at the Lobstick twins. My daughter and her family still stand on the top deck and I hesitate to climb the ladder.

pressing together
for the camera—
my fake smile

Backyard Pond, Brocaded Carp

by *Lisa Cihlar*, Wisconsin

My daily yard and garden tour. I carry fish pellets to the pond. My largest gold and black koi has died. The local raccoon got others by feeling behind rocks and in crevasses with paws that look like tiny desiccated human hands. He didn't get this one. I know because there are no half-eaten fish parts scattered in the grass. This fish just died, old age, some fish disease that I can't fathom.

It floats on the surface now, half-sheltered by a water-lily leaf, almost mistaken for a flower-bud. I scoop the body up in my hand, feel the roll of maggots under scales. I recoil, send it back into the water and the dozen living carp of many colors come to feast on the larvae, a free-floating meteor shower.

Grant Park Jazz Gala
dragonflies swirl up, over
improvisation



God jul et godt nytt år

by *Bob Lucky*, China

In the margins of your Bible you penciled in comments in Norwegian. The writing is strong—the lines flow like the engravings on old Viking swords. You only taught me how to say “Merry Christmas and Happy New Year” in your mother tongue, so your annotations are meaningless to me, as is the Bible. I comfort myself by believing that when we die we go wherever we think we're going. I'll be staying here.

prairie sky
a passing cloud turns
the color of lefse

Genome

by *Michael Kiella*, Michigan

Today I walked shin-deep into wild grasses at the old farmstead: past the crumbling brick foundations and down the path to where the barns once stood. These many years later, I can still find the turn where, through grass and bramble, the old orchard still blooms. Coming upon it, I see the damage that fodder-hungry rabbits did to sweet-bark this past winter. I imagine a different time, a different spring. I imagine those whom I've never met that, by mortgage or deed once owned this orchard; the peach, pear, and apple trees.

bees fly in circles
choosing at the speed of flight
on which bloom to land

Today, as it happens, my walking is one step real, the other imaginary. I consider different days . . . the faces and lives of those now gone, either by death or circumstance, who pruned and cared for this orchard, who picked its sweet harvest. The truth of it now: the few remaining trees still blossom in pink and white. I imagine children taking make-believe picnics between their father's orchard rows. My thoughts are of secret lovers blanketed in tall summer grass between those rows of trees. I think of soft sweet bellies: naked, pink and white. I think of the ovaries inside . . . and of peach blossoms. I consider the longevity of genome and the brevity of blossom.

peach blossom
all orchards to come
peach's past



memento mori

by *Roberta Beary*, District of Columbia

each of us owns something that carries with it the weight of nostalgia. the coffee cup that says *made in occupied japan* on its base. the sepia photo of sturdy ancestors that sits off center on the mantel. the tattered book with its flyleaf inscription that reads *to joe for excellence in effort signed sister aloysius, june 1907*. often the weight of these inherited family relics drags us down. yet still we wonder who will remember us after we are gone as we sign our name in another book and date it with a flourish.

bonedry
mother's hand
in mine

Blue in the Distance

by *Barbara Strang*, New Zealand

It's just a short stroll from my sister's flat in Wellington to the top of Mt. Albert. Since I started the course this is my first sight of the South Island. I am struck by these two large mountains, blue in the distance, which I recognise as Tapuaenuku of the Inland Kaikouras, and to the left, Mt. Fyffe of the Seaward Kaikouras.

It hits me—they can also be seen from my home in the South Island. From the beach the faraway Kaikouras pierce the northern horizon. At this very moment you could be walking the dog, you could be looking at the other side of the mountain, and thinking of me.

Tapuaenuku
the glacier
streams down

Author's Note: Tapuaenuku—strictly Tapu-o-Uenuku, in one interpretation, footsteps of the rainbow (Maori).

In High Country

by *Carol Pearce-Worthington*, New York

I am not too proud to ask for a tame horse. A quiet horse. A gentle, very small, obedient, and polite horse. Lightning is white; her eyes rimmed with pink. Ten of us ride single file up steep mountain paths, our horses picking their way like models on a runway: one foot precisely in front of the other; a slow, painstakingly stomach lurching, don't look down, will it ever end climb. From some plateau, we can see for miles: Yellowstone's whipped cream peaks across the vastness. Lightning pretends to be asleep, but as I remount, she strolls away, leaving my foot in mid arabesque over the saddle. At last toward dusk, a meadow appears, the wranglers locate a spring, they raise our tents. For a toilet, they dig a hole beneath a pine. The horses are set free to roam. I don't care if I ever see Lightning again. My straw cowboy hat resembles a soggy English muffin, sitting is out of the question, and my legs feel permanently bowed. Around the campfire we sing "I'm an Arizona cowboy." The sky holds so many stars.

high country —
the horses steam
in summer snow

Longing

by *Harriot West*, Oregon

It wasn't your normal now-the-guests-are-leaving goodbye hug—two bodies leaning in at oblique angles, patting each other awkwardly on the shoulder. No, this was a grab-you-hard-and-pull-you-close embrace, the kind that leaves you thinking, long after the party, about a man you barely knew with a rasp in his voice and Titian-colored hair.

deep winter
I hold a pomegranate seed
to the light

the last pair of socks

by *w.f. owen*, California

dad left me threadbare at the heels warm comfortable holding
tight around my calves so i'm not always pulling them up and
darned if they don't fit even though he stood more than half a
foot taller a fact made clear that day i helped with his coffin
everyone around the house says throw them away it's been
years but i don't wear them out only to sleep in and they fit

a raindrop falls through a hole in the leaf



Balmoral Beach

by *Vanessa Proctor*, Australia

I sit down on a bench looking out across the harbour to the
Heads. It's a beautiful winter's day with blue skies and a hint
of a breeze. My baby is asleep in her pram beside me. Finally
I can write. There's a simple joy in sitting and observing the
world: the clang of scaffolding going up behind me, two trades-
men catnapping on the sand, the rustle of paper sandwich bags,
a pair of plovers striding along the water's edge, a swimmer in
the shallows, the sun warming my skin. Some of these obser-
vations will evolve into poems, some won't.

a free afternoon
the way wind moves
over water

The Family Tree

by *Karen Peterson Butterworth*, New Zealand

There's a sharp autumn chill in the air when our party sets out for the family tree. Tui pushes my wheelchair to the end of the wide track, then I walk using my elbow crutch. Whenever my legs and shoulder grow sore, I find a wet, moss-covered stump and sit down, and the others lean against trees around me.

forest floor fragrance
the fluting song
of a bellbird

We reach the mark that tells us where to leave the path. It's a rusting preserving jar lid Dad nailed up 50 years ago when he chose the tree he wanted to nourish after his death. Our family tree is approximately 200 years old, with a straight grey trunk and dark green needles that hang in the rimu's characteristic weeping form. Situated deep in the bush reserve Dad helped protect, it will live for hundreds more years. We stand in silence while Mirren re-carves the initials on its trunk. GMP 1970, EAL 1973, JRP 1977, PEM, FEMP, and KSP a year before Beth. Now the new initials: FBM. Everyone except Mum and Dad younger than I am now.

my sister's ashes
drop into faint grey—
last trace of our brother

We toast Beth's life with rum and port wine—her favourite re-viver when she went tramping. We feel her presence among us, with all the others whose minerals rise in the sap of our family tree. On the way back Tui's partner piggybacks me along the final stretch to my wheelchair.

old woman
bounces along a bush track
on young legs

Netley Marsh Poems

by *Patrick M. Pilarski*, Alberta

Pelicans

Our boat cuts through brown water, leaving a slow groove to tickle the marsh grass. The reeds map a warren of hidden channels—shallow tracts of mud. Around every corner is a pelican. As we approach, they turn, one by one, beat soft thunder on the water. Rise on world-heavy wings to join the motion of the sky.

broken clouds—
a carp slides
between the weeds

Hérons

From the waterline, the marsh goes on forever, grey sky traced by the sharp tips of cattails and migrant bamboo. Our channel narrows into the shade of trees—a small ridge perched above the water line, a tight serpentine between the snags. Then, in an instant, the rain comes. Drops hammer the water. I see a heron break free from the bank, fold into itself, become the whisper of wings.

a bowl of sky thunderheads crossing the marsh

Carp

Blackbirds and kingbirds line the branches of dead trees. Sagging with each other's weight, dragonflies mate only inches above lead-smacked waves. The boat engine slows and we coast to a dead end. Pale bellies boil in brown water. The surface parts, ripples replaced with the hungry, anxious, mouths of carp.

between trees
the sagging arc
of a pelican's glide

Day Out

by *Diana Webb*, England

“He always carried a pencil in his hand while travelling.”

Sketches by Turner are on display with watercolours, some not “finished.” Many delineate buildings. One is mere brushstroke of some chance trick of air. All natural light from the bright winter’s day blocked out from the room to prevent more loss of his precious hues, some newly discovered as pigments in his lifetime. Prussian and Cobalt blue. Viridian. Surfaces scratched with his right thumbnail to let spots of light shine through.

Two small boys with their teacher are having a go at copying his work, as he was once prompted to copy the work of others.

“Which one shall I draw?”

“You’ve got just five more minutes. Then we’ll need to leave.”

Downstairs, in the gift shop, more schoolkids are gathering souvenirs before the coach arrives. They count out spending money, pick up postcards, swarm in a disordered queue around the harrassed merchandise attendant.

“Do you have any more pencils like this one please?”

bare willows
spider
the fading sky



Parallel Lines

by *Angelee Deodhar*, India

In eight decades only one Indian film has captured the world's imagination, a glitzy portrayal of poverty within which lies the poignant side of this country's dilemma, the unwanted, unwashed, unfed children foraging with vermin for the dregs of a meal. For this the film won eight Oscars.

At the same ceremony, a documentary about an Indian girl-with a congenital deformity also won acclaim when a team of dedicated philanthropists restored her smile. The confused but happy parents are shown cuddling a shy little girl who clings to her mother's sari, wondering why so many cameras are pointed at her. There was a time no one would play with her in her village . . . today she has new clothes, new friends. The air is thick with the shouts of the paparazzi.

How will one slum dog help the hungry children eking out an existence besides the railway lines?

hawk's shadow

the songbird's trill

suddenly shortened



new blood of autumn

B. Ellis Williams, Oregon

twilight in the cemetery. a storm is brewing on the northern horizon—lightning strikes, but the sky is silent. wind stirs gently in the oak trees high above.

i remember a cold autumn night in this cemetery, coming to meet her in secret, after not having seen her for months. i recall the short walk, which seemed to last forever, from the house on b st. in the pitch-black darkness; the feeling of the coming rain. and i remember the knot inside my stomach, seeing her silhouette, poised among the headstones in the distance like some strange, lost character in a shadow theatre. and slowly, as a cold autumn wind blew in against us: taking her delicate body in my arms . . .

the fall is coming now. phantoms rise, electrified, and filled with restive sorrow. will the dust of this life ever settle?

from behind the storm clouds:
evening sunlight—
a single drop of rain

Widow Maker

by *Renée Owen*, California

A demon wind howls across the front porch, rattling the glass doors and windows of the old cabin. Another storm blowing in off the Pacific. Waves churn to froth in the deep, dark night. Light from a single lamp pools on the pages of a book I no longer see. My mind curls inward, plays tricks. A vision of myself slowly drifting down the years on the tide, cold and alone.

far from home
missing him
before he's gone

Jardins Du Luxembourg

by **Aurora Antonovic**, Ontario and **Yu Chang**, New York

As we walk around the gardens, tears stream down her face as she retells the horrors she endured at her ex-husband's hands. Again, I place both arms around her and repeat what I hope will be comforting words, to no avail.

mid-park
where the old oak
used to be

As we walk around the gardens, tears stream down his face as he retells the horrors he had to endure at home. Again, I place both arms around him and repeat what I hope will be comforting words, to no avail.

*old scar
how carefully
his touches my hand*

The Hunt

by **Shelly Chang**, California

A chunk of ice thuds against the plate glass window. The hole in my stocking escapes to a run. I am stuck in my seat. The interviewer goes over company rules: six day workweek, no Internet access, no fooling around. From the gray cubicles, a steady patter of keystrokes sounds. The next job-seeker adjusts her sober-colored suit. Did I dream those better days in tie-dyes and aprons, when the kitchen filled with laughter, and bread dough got twisted into turtles? Skyscraper security checks my photo; I look to see if I have kept my soul.

wild winds
every wing beat counts
to keep the bird in place

The Virgin River Gorge

by *Deborah P. Kolodji*, California

Twists, turns, and more twists. Sheer cliffs tilted sideways, with crooked striations of bedrock. I-15 takes a convoluted turn on the way to St. George, Utah from Las Vegas. A detour through Arizona.

hair pin curves
gray cliffs festooned
with rock ribbons

Carved out by a tributary of the Colorado River, the gorge slices through mountains. Impossible steep walls are laced with exposed bedrock. Rock layers fall at odd angles. Subtle pinks and yellows layered with gray hint of the rock rainbows of Utah on the road ahead.

static
on the radio . . .
guitar riffs

Growing Up

by *Adelaide B. Shaw*, New York

The teenage girl sits on the café stool and orders a latté and a muffin. A pretty face, smooth and rosy, long light brown hair silky like a cocker spaniel's. Her short tee-shirt rides up higher as she moves her arms. Her tight jeans slip lower, lower, revealing inches of flesh and a peek at where the flesh divides.

She chats on her cell phone. No pausing to swallow her muffin. Bite, talk, swallow, talk, drink . . . So much to say. So much to hear. All the news. Hurray. Pass it on.

a gull in flight
the speed of its dive
to snare a fish

Essays

Renhai, a New Verse Form by *Vaughn Seward*, Alberta

Renhai is a new short verse form that consists of three themed haiku verses typically written by two writers. The final result is similar to the first three verses of a rengay with each of the three verses having one or more common themes. Renku-like links exist between each verse, including between the first and the last.

When *Garry Gay* conceived of the idea of rengay in 1992, he wanted a simpler, shorter form of renku. Six verses seemed long enough to be interesting, but not so long that readers would grow tired of reading them. He also wanted simpler rules that provided the writers with a little more freedom [see **Gay, G. & Thompson, J.** *The Unlocked Gate in Frogpond*, 31:3, pp. 85-86]. To this end, rengay was very successful and continues to be a popular verse form. By the end of August, 2007, I had been involved in a number of renku and rengay projects. One day I got wondering if it was possible to write a linked verse poem that was in length somewhere between the rengay and the tan renga. One verse is a haiku, two verses is a tan renga or tanka. What about three verses? This idea nicely corresponded with the three lines of a modern formatted haiku. Could it be possible to write such a short rengay-like verse form? Could two writers successfully write such a poem?

Later that year, *Zhanna P. Rader* and I experimented with these ideas and eventually found a way. The final approach intrigued us in that the middle verse was truly collaborative and that the entire poem was relatively short and yet was themed and fully linked. We also found that these poems could be written quickly.

This is how we composed the first renhai ever written. Summer was chosen as the season and each line of the middle verse

was written by each writer in turn. Zhanna first wrote “blanket of velvet-gray fog” and I completed the verse with “a crow pierces the silence”.

At this point we decided to go with the theme of “permeating”. The middle verse references this theme in that the fog spreads out in every direction. I then wrote the following verse:

Still autumn night—
each patch of the forest,
full of darkness.

This links to the middle verse with the sense of stillness or silence. The theme is referenced through the feeling of darkness permeating the forest. For balance and symmetry this verse was placed first. However, the first and third verses can be switched around according to the tastes of the writers.

Zhanna then wrote the third verse to the “permeating” theme with coffee filling the air:

Coffee aroma
permeates the morning air—
sudden rain . . .

This verse links to the second one with the concept of interruption and to the first verse with reference to the beginning and end of the day (morning/night).

A renhai is, therefore, written in this inside-out manner. You can think of it as being organically derived. The middle verse is like a seed that germinates and sprouts a root (3rd verse), and a stem (1st verse).

We chose “renhai” as the name for this new poetic form as it incorporates its two main elements. “ren” is from the linking aspect of RENga, RENku, RENgay. And the “hai” is from HAIku in that its form resembles the three lines of haiku as

well as its short length. Here is the first renhai in full:

A Night Out

Still autumn night—
each patch of the forest,
full of darkness. / *vs*

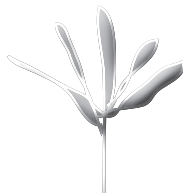
Blanket of velvet-gray fog— / *zh.r*
a crow pierces the silence. / *vs*

Coffee aroma
permeates the morning air—
sudden rain . . . / *zh.r*

In December, 2007 the Renhai Studio Yahoo group was set up for the purpose of incubating ideas about Renhai and for conducting experiments and sharing results:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/renhai/>

Since then, over 120 Renhai have been written by 20 different writers. A number of variations have been explored including three- and four-person collaboration, multiple renhai with a common middle verse, solo, reversed order, and renhai written for young readers.



Haikuholics Anonymous
by *Michael Dylan Welch*, Washington

*May the Infinite Now grant me the serenity to accept the haiku
I cannot change, courage to change the haiku I can,
and wisdom to know the difference.*

In a recent double-blind clinical study published by the *Psychoanalytic Poetry Journal*, researchers found haiku poetry to be the most addictive of all English-language writing pursuits.¹ Of the 328 subjects tested over the course of the twelve-month study, a full 87 percent exhibited addictive haiku-writing behavior, as quantified by the Carani-Lucchetta Writing Addiction Scale.² This widespread haiku-writing addiction manifested itself in many forms. Anecdotal reports included the obsessive seeking of “haiku moments,” fixated discussions on obscure Oriental terminology such as “wabi,” “sabi,” “yugen,” and “karumi,” manic arguments as to the correct “form” for haiku poetry (whether traditional or free-form), the regressive counting of syllables, a puerile tendency toward circular debates regarding the virtue of “senryu” versus “haiku,” and the excessive use of a further range of subgroup rhetoric and marginalized code words such as “ginko,” “kigo,” “renku,” and “hototogisu.”³ In a similar study, many subjects also reported: a) being unable to part themselves from pocket-sized notebooks and pencils, b) the compulsive purchase of haiku chapbooks and quarterlies, c) prolonged spousal ignorance, d) abnormal amounts of personal correspondence, e) frequent and unexplained stamp-licking, and f) unrelenting attendance at numerous haiku meetings, retreats, conferences,

¹Arthur N. Samuels and Jocelyn Farquharson-Dalrymple. “Addictive Traits Among Medium- to Well-Established Haiku Poets: A Double-Blind Study of Image-Reflex Observation.” *Psychoanalytic Poetry Journal* XXV:11, 218–32, 1994.

²Caroline Carani and Bertrand Lucchetta. “Towards a Quantitative Assessment of Writing-Addiction Behaviour: The Carani-Lucchetta Writing Addiction Scale.” *Poetry Therapy Weekly* LV:42, 72–98, 1972.

³Samuels and Farquharson-Dalrymple, *op cit*.

and haiku writing seminars.⁴ These subjects also exhibited other persistent behavior bordering on the odd and psychotic. This cumulative behavior, when manifested in adequate quantities, has been identified as Basic Anal-retentive Senryu/Haiku Obsession, also known as BASHO Syndrome, and has been shown to be present in an alarming number of practicing haiku poets.⁵

In many cases, haiku-writing addiction reaches the point of religious fervor. While the prevalence of BASHO Syndrome should come as no surprise to seasoned amateur and professional haiku poets in English-speaking countries, it does suggest a growing need for treatment methodologies when the addiction syndrome reaches an intolerance threshold. To meet this necessity, this paper proposes a twelve-step haiku recovery program, and also calls for the establishment of a much-needed haiku-obsession recovery and support group. This organization will be called Haikuholics Anonymous, also known as “HA.”

We may continue this discussion of haiku-writing obsession by presenting the aforementioned twelve steps of recovery for those persons exhibiting haikuholic tendencies:

The Twelve Steps of Haikuholics Anonymous

1. We have admitted we are powerless over haiku—that our writing has become unmanageable.
2. We have come to believe that a Power greater than haiku can restore us to good haiku-free writing.
3. We have made a decision to turn our will and our poetry

⁴ Millicent Q. Laplander. “Cultic Tendencies and Poetic Neuroses Among Prize-Winning Haiku Poets of Late Twentieth-Century North America.” *Neuroses Daily* III:4, 13–58, 1992.

⁵ Johnson Kidder Templeton. “Basic Anal-retentive Senryu/Haiku Obsession Syndrome: A Progressive Longitudinal Study of 100 Severely Under-published Haiku Poets.” *Wooden Oats Haiku Weekly*, XXX:13, 102–115, 1989.

over to the care of the Infinite Now *as we understand It*.

4. We have made a searching and fearless moral inventory of our poetic ability.
5. We have admitted to the Infinite Now, to ourselves, and to another haiku poet the exact nature of our haiku-writing obsession.
6. We are entirely ready to have the Infinite Now remove all these defects of our writing.
7. We have humbly asked the Infinite Now to remove our haiku shortcomings.
8. We have made a list of all haiku poets we have harmed by excessively borrowing phrases or images, and have become willing to make amends to them all.
9. We have made direct amends to such haiku poets wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them, their haiku, or their publishing or contest-winning endeavors.
10. We have continued to take inventory of our poetic ability, and when we have written bad haiku promptly admitted it.
11. We have sought through nature walks and meditation to improve our conscious contact with the Infinite Now *as we understand It*, praying for poetic knowledge of Its will for our writing and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we have tried to carry this message to haikuholics, and to practice these principles in our writing.

Obsessive haiku writers reading these twelve steps should not despair at the extent of this list, nor be discouraged by the heavy demands it may suggest. Haikuholics should not attempt to become perfect poets, but rather, seek to make progress toward that perfection, which, of course, eschews all haiku.

With these steps in mind, and with a significant body of like-minded haiku-obsessors in central geographic regions, it is possible to develop the fellowship necessary to form haiku recovery and support groups. While compulsive haiku writing is not widespread in such places as North Dakota, Idaho, Prince

Edward Island, Manitoba, or the Yukon Territory, BASHO Syndrome and related haiku ailments have reached epidemic proportions in such population centers as Boston, New York, Portland, Seattle, San Francisco, Ottawa, and Toronto.⁶ These regions should immediately form a HA chapter to meet the present and anticipated needs of the obsessed haiku poets in their local areas, and should also provide long-distance telephone support for haikuholics in outlying areas through the 1-800-NO-HAIKU support system (formed in 1994 by refugees from the Universal Haiku Association based in Reykjavík, Iceland).

While many haiku poets suffer from the insidious and debilitating yet sometimes subtle effects of haikuholism, all is not bleak. In a pilot program, the Haikuholics Anonymous concept was tested in an inner-city haiku ghetto (where the craving for nature walks known as “ginkos” fevered uncontrollably). In this placebo-controlled study, researchers reported a small but significantly positive modification of obsessive haiku-writing behavior by administering a new awareness-inhibiting drug marketed as Kigozac.⁷ With more research, further positive results are expected with the use of personal priority shifting, botanical medicine regimens, and self-help recovery programs such as Haikuholics Anonymous.

Conclusion

The goal of Haikuholics Anonymous is complete withdrawal from the writing of haiku in order to counteract the uncontrollable obsession indicated by BASHO Syndrome. While

⁶Archibald Hatcherdon, Elaine Dunhampton, and Billy Smith. “Carpal-Tunnel Vision Among Aspiring Haiku Poets: A Report of Regional Correlation.” *Psychotic Neuralgia Studies* CX:1, 38–44, 1995.

⁷Andrew Addlepate and Richard Paul Stone. “Poetry-Writing Behaviour Modification Amongst Nature-Deprived Inner-City Haiku Poets: The Positive Effects of Placebo-Controlled Kigozac Administration.” *Medical Poetry Journal* IV:3, 1192–1234, 1991.

Haikuholics Anonymous is an effective means to this end, it is proposed that numerous approaches to dealing with compulsive and obsessive haiku-writing behavior can work in harmony with HA to improve personal and domestic tranquillity among today's thriving poets. The complete absence of haiku-writing behavior may be too much to hope for among some delusionary subjects. Nevertheless, significant cessation rates are certainly possible with the appropriate formation of Haikuholics Anonymous support groups in select North American cities. All haiku writers who have suffered the afflictions of haiku obsession are hereby challenged to seek sanity in their lives by immediately forming a local chapter of Haikuholics Anonymous.

***Author's Note:** This paper is intended for humorous purposes, and in no way means to denigrate the valuable work of Alcoholics Anonymous and other vital recovery and support programs.*



***Editors' Note:** Part 3 of "Unsung Heroes" by Mankh was unavailable at the time this issue went to press.*

So:ba: Part Three
by *Jim Kacian*, Virginia

Editors' Note: Part Two ends with the statement, "Shiki changed the foundation of haiku by changing its *ba*."

The consequences, of course, have been profound. The west came to haiku at the only time in its long and estimable history when it had adopted an objectivist orientation. Never mind that objectivism is philosophically untenable, that there is no way to prove through language the existence of any sort of reality "out there." Even more implausibly, the whole grounding of the traditional art of haiku, according to *Shiki*, was now to be based on an imported western construct. And haiku has suffered for it ever since.

This is not to say there is no value in Shiki's approach, but in seeking to revive it, he felt it necessary to throw out the very underpinnings of the art, the stuff out of which Bashō had made it an art form in the first place. And to argue his case, he reinterpreted the history of haiku in Japan in a way that the poets themselves would have rejected. *Buson* was no objectivist—his model, in fact, was the subjective Bashō, and he employed *ba* as the core of his best work in the same fashion. Consider this famous poem:

tsurigane ni tomari te nemuru kochō kana

resting upon
the temple bell—
sleeping butterfly

Shiki singles this out as exemplary of what haiku ought to be—image-based, pictorial, and immediate—a "sketch from nature," perfect *shasei*. In fact, Shiki considers this poem to exemplify what he terms "positive beauty"—a western attribute, as he saw it, and as opposed to the traditional "negative beauty"

which marked “Oriental” art. The translators and interpreters who followed concurred: *Miyamori* calls it an “artless little verse” and “a mere simple objective description.” *Blyth* follows with “There is nothing symbolized,” and continues “however objective it may be, we feel the intensity and absorption of the poet and butterfly as one thing.”

Really? Is that what Buson had in mind, or are Shiki and Miyamori and Blyth simply arguing for their interpretations?

In fact, Buson’s poem is a web of allusions, not least to the famous dream of *Chuang Tze* (in Japanese, *Sōshi*), who could not say if he was a man dreaming of being a butterfly, or a butterfly dreaming he was a man. I doubt any literate Japanese could read this poem without being reminded of this incident, much less a poet, and especially a poet of Buson’s caliber. Beyond this, there is an allusion to a Noh play by *Zeami* entitled *Takasago*, and an episode in the *Genji Monogatari*; though both of these are based on this same classical original. And of course it plays ironically with *Moritake*’s famous falling leaf/rising butterfly poem. But most of all, it alludes directly to *Bashō*’s

kimi ya chō ware ya sōshi ga yume gokoro

you’re the butterfly
and I’m Chuang Tze’s
dreaming heart

To deny the possibility of allusion and symbolism to Buson’s poem is like saying that *Moby Dick* must be read as a straightforward account of a fishing expedition: it’s possible to do so, but why would you want to? This doesn’t mean that Buson never saw a butterfly on a temple bell—we don’t know if he did, and it doesn’t matter. What we do know is that wherever he got his material, he knew how to turn it into poetry. To denude such haiku of its allusion is to strip it of its fetch, and to reduce it to little more than a journal entry.

And of course this is not the only such example—the entire corpus of Buson’s work contains this same sort of allusive material. Simultaneously we can go through Shiki’s readings of Buson’s poems and find this same reductionism at work. This is too bad for Buson, but what of it? Why should this matter to us, two centuries later?

It matters because of the manner in which it has affected the very way in which you and I and all westerners have come to view haiku, narrowly limiting what haiku have traditionally been by making the least out of that which makes haiku so distinctive: its *ba*. In order to demonstrate this let’s consider the arc of the Haiku Society of America’s definition of haiku from the time of its inception in the early 1970s to the present time. The need for definitions is apparent—how else to tell the uninitiated (that is, most new members) what we are about? But definitions are famously retrograde and proscriptive. Interestingly, however, the HSA’s earliest attempts at definition were broader, and grew gradually narrower. The first version, as suggested by Professor **Harold G. Henderson**: “A short Japanese poem recording a moment of emotion in some way connected with nature.” (I will omit discussions of format and English cognate at this point for brevity’s sake.) Notice that even at the outset mention is made of nature. There is the mention of “moment” here as well, which is equally loaded, but that’s a discussion for another time.

A month later this became: “A Japanese poem, a record of a moment of emotion, in some way linking Nature with human nature.” The “moment” is retained, nature has become Nature and human nature has been removed from this Nature by being posited against it, as though it were something else. In other words, there is something out there called Nature, and we humans do not partake of it. And the clear limning of this Nature as it relates to us is the business of haiku. This is a clearly objectivist position, following Shiki.

Half a year later this has morphed into this: “A Japanese poem, a record of a moment keenly perceived which in some

way links Nature with human nature.” This is much the same as the previous except for the addition of the phrase “keenly perceived,” which, as one of its outcomes, suggests that “the record“ of any moment “keenly perceived” is a haiku. *Marlene Mountain’s* parody definition of this was that a haiku was “a dull moment keenly perceived,” and of course she makes a point: none of this is about art so much as about optical acuity.

At this point it’s worth considering how Japanese dictionaries define haiku—from the *Jikai*, edited by *Kindaichi Kyosuke* and considered the equivalent of *Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*: “1. abbreviation for “stanza of a haikai” etc., and 2. particularly, a name for “hokku”; a word used and popularized by Masaoka Shiki circa the 23rd year of Meiji (1890). Five-seven-five, three-line, seventeen-sound short poem.” Interesting, isn’t it? No mention of nature, or Nature. No “moment”. No “keen perception”. Haiku in Japan is defined primarily as a poem, and all that that implies. But what we had imported was something quite different: in brief, we had taken on Shiki’s program as though it were the whole of haiku, when in fact it was an extremely minor, doctrinaire, one-time aberration in the lengthy history of haiku as an art.

This series will conclude in the Fall issue, 32:3, with Part Four and a bibliography.

Editors’ Note: *On our trip across the South Seas in January 2009, we discovered that ba is not only a state of mind, but also an actual place. Ba is a province in northwest Viti Levu, Fiji’s largest island.*



Reviewed

Kacian, J. *long after Raccolta di haiku*. Rosignano marittimo: Albalibri editore, 2008, 177 pages, perfect softbound, 7.5 x 4. ISBN 978-888-961-8585, 17 USD <www.redmoon-press.com>

by *E.D. Blodgett*, Alberta

The true pleasures of reading haiku only appear to reveal themselves suddenly. Rather they come as unexpected afterthoughts, sometimes leaving one uncertain where they came from. Their effect is like those of harmonic partials, accompaniments that cannot be readily located, but always in the air. So it is with the new collection of Jim Kacian, a sequence whose title *long after* evokes resonance immediately, while suggesting unexpected returns whose promptings seem to come from nowhere.

In his Author's Note, Kacian aims for immediacy, announcing in his first sentence, "Remembering is a kind of pornography." Leaving the reader to ponder the sense of such an assertion, he then remarks, "Forgetting is a kind of return to innocence." The relation between the two, we are then told, is made by grief, which provides the form of the book, a kind of record of grief that moves between the alliterated framing sections called "Ago" and "Again," suggesting a process of rebirth. The book, then, has a kind of narrative structure whose effect is to play contrapuntally upon the impact of the individual poems. For if haiku is designed as a moment of insight and reverberation, how is that moment to be construed in the larger unfolding of the process of grief? It is to be construed, I would suggest, within the dimension of unexpected afterthoughts which belong to both haiku as a momentary experience and grief as an experience of longer duration. Because the rapport is reciprocal, grief is lightened (it brings rebirth about), and the poetry is given more layered depths (it is where the rebirth occurs).

In *Richard Gilbert*'s deeply sensitive and intelligent Introduction, the poetics of haiku is neatly conjoined to the process of grief. He reminds us that the mark of haiku, "its unique poetic quality" (p. 11), is *kire* (Japanese for "cutting"), that sudden gesture, almost captured in the word "cleaving," that at once separates and configures in an unexpected way, prompting the leap from one dimension of experience to another, from the human to the natural world, from time to non-time, from past to future. As Gilbert concludes, "In such conjunction there is also metamorphosis" (p. 13), which he aligns with the process of grieving.

What adds to the power derived from the interaction of haiku and the cycle of grief are the further dimensions provided by the translations of the poems. Each poem is directly followed by translations into Italian and German. The effect carries all the surprises and delights one might expect because of the linguistic differences that appear. One reads: "the day now burnt out fireflies" (p. 91), and one is quick to wonder where the *kire* falls in the poem. Is it after "day," "now," or "burnt out?" All, of course, are possible, and each suggests a different emphasis and modified reading. Somehow it is difficult to pause in the Italian: "*il giorno adesso si è spento lucciole,*" and perhaps only before "*lucciole.*" Perhaps this is because the translator read "burnt" as a finite verb, rather than just a past participle, making everything before the last word to be a single preparation. The German follows more easily the halting, self-discovering quality of the English: "*Der Tag jetzt ausgebrannt Leuchtkäfer.*" All the beauty of the poem resides in its compounded uncertainties, which both the Italian and German help the reader to see more clearly by both diminishing and enhancing it.

Some poems—some would say all—defy translation. The poem "clouds seen/ through clouds/ seen through" (p. 103) is such a poem. The enjambement between the first and second lines takes the expression "seen through" and proposes its possible meanings, only to suggest at the end that something

seen through is shown to be exposed, its true meanings manifest. The abruptness of the ending suggests also that perhaps the viewer has seen through either to nothing or to what cannot be named. The poem is placed in a cycle called “bargaining” whose poems all suggest a kind of movement going nowhere. The perfect dissyllabic form of each line reinforces such a see-saw movement. The Italian version is literal and clear, rendering “seen through” as “*viste attraverso*,” which signals the action of seeing through without hinting at a notion of understanding that one might have been taken in, which would have been suggested by “*non ingannare*.” The German uses “*erblickt*” (catch a glimpse of), which as a single word in line three is sudden, urging to read that all one sees through clouds are more clouds, that is, the continuous lack of clarity in the bargaining of grief. It misses, however, the sense of seeing through, especially something as a ruse, which would be better rendered by *durchschauen*.

Despite the occasional sense that the translations might be too literal, the reader is compensated by both the different movements that Italian and German provide in their distinct music, but also the unexpected gifts they can bring. When Kacian writes “green woods” (p. 48), his Italian translator answers “*boschi Verdi*,” an operatic note that could not be more dramatically opposed to the delicacy of the imagery of the poem, thus uniquely underlining it. Sometimes all three languages cooperate with great fluency: “the river/ the river makes/ of the moon,” *il fiume/ il fiume interpreta/la luna*, and “*Der Fluss/ was der Fluss/ aus dem Mond macht*.” So we read in Italian: the river/ the river/ interprets (or enacts as in a play), the moon. The German varies the sense: the river/ what the river/ forms of the moon. In the latter, with the addition of *was* (what), it’s another river that comes into sight (*ausmachen*).

The translations, which a reader might take in the usual pedestrian way, as an addition to the book, are in fact integral. They belong to the harmonic partials of the whole chord. But because of their presence, they change the character of the

English. It becomes a version too, a version of the whole experience which the three versions of the poem, each with their distinctive *kire* moments, co-create. Thus the author of the English haiku is both problematised and subsumed into some larger dimension, the larger haiku that echoes over the whole experience. If there is any flaw, it is typographical. For some reason the German was neglected. “*Geistes*” should have been added at the end of the haiku on page 103, something like *heiss* should complete the poem on page 61, on page 89 “*nichs*” should be *nichts*, and *bedürfni* should end in ‘s.’ Despite such flaws, the book constitutes a superb addition to any library of haiku.

Editors’ Note: *E.D. Blodgett is Professor Emeritus of the University of Alberta at Edmonton. Dr. Blodgett is the author of seventeen books of poetry among which Apostrophe won the Canadian Governor General’s Award for Poetry in 1996.*



Abe, K., Ichino, K., Itō, T., et al. (eds.). *The Haiku Universe for the 21st Century: Japanese/English JAPANESE HAIKU 2008*. Tokyo: Modern Haiku Association, 2008, 216 pp., perfect softbound, 5 1/2" x 8 1/2". ISBN 978-4-8161-0712-2, 25 USD (no checks) <6-5-4 Kairaku Building, Soto kanda Chi-yoda-ku, Tokyo, Japan 101-0021>.

By **Brent Partridge**, California

More than just a bilingual anthology, this book also includes "A Brief History of Modern Haiku." The anthology is the work of more than 245 modern and contemporary (born since 1945) poets. It's arranged historically and divided into sections titled "Pioneers," "Promoters," "Challengers," and "Kaleidoscope." Though this volume has a number of tiny mistakes in its English translation, none of them disturb the enjoyment of the truly great haiku. A wide and egalitarian overview of the field is provided, pointing the way to possible further translation of the works of these writers. The success achieved by so many to expand haiku in unique ways— is striking. The principle of juxtaposition alone is explored in most transformative ways. The writers' thrusts of innovative style are closely revealed.

Here are two examples from each of the four sections . . .

Pioneers

Poling along
right in the middle
of the moon

Seisensui Ogiwara (1884-1976)

In my usual clothes
and my usual state of mind—
peach blossoms

Ayako Hosomi (1909-1981)

Promoters

Fluffy snowflakes—
quietly the hours
begin to dance

Sumio Mori (1919-)

Placing the new year
on a set of scales—
they stay quite still

Michi Shibuya (1926-)



Challengers

Yourself and me:
everything has been frozen
to a rosy hue

Ryū Yotsuya (1958-)

In the evening sky
for cats in love
a castle tower

Reona Takayama (1968-)

Kaleidoscope

Every so often
it mutters an archaic word:
the toad

Shijūkara Iwashita (1913-2006)

On a pilgrimage to space
force all the stars
to pray

Hitoshi Hashiguchi (1956-)

Both the poems in the historical section and those in the anthology offer valuable inspiration to haiku writers in our increasingly competitive creative lives.

Briefly Reviewed

by *George Swede*, Ontario

Buettner, M. *Seeing It Now: Haiku & Tanka* (Intro. by H.F. Noyes). Red Wing, MN: Red Dragonfly Press, 2008, 47 pp., perfect softbound, 5 x 8. ISBN 978-1-890193-85-0, 15 USD <www.reddragonflypress.org>. Of Marjorie Buettner's 72 included poems, 43 are haiku. Most of the latter will resonate for the reader: *this spring night . . . / suddenly my desires / are very simple* and *unraveling back / to the lost stitch / autumn loneliness*.

de Gruttola, R., Evans, J., & Klein, K. (eds.). *wind flow*. Boston: Aether Press, 2008, 66 pp., perfect softbound, 5.5 x 8.5. No ISBN, 13 USD postpaid <Rafael de Gruttola, 4 Marshall Rd., Natick, MA 01760>. Well-produced, this anthology showcases the work of members of the Boston Haiku

Society. As well as haiku, it includes tanka, renku, haiga and haibun. Those new to Japanese poetics will find this book particularly useful.

Faiers, C. *Zen River: Poems & Haibun*. Brighton, ON: Hidden Brook Press, 2008, 58 pp., perfect softbound, 5 x 8. ISBN 978-1-897475-25-6, 15.95 CAD <www.HiddenBrookPress.com>. Zen-influenced Chris Faiers' seventeenth book offers a mixed bag of work: twelve haibun arranged according to seasons, three early haibun written in 1969, a haiku sequence on spring, a long poem and five pages (including a back cover poem) of writing by four other Canadian poets. After initial confusion, readers will come away with an appreciation of the poetic life halfway between Toronto and Ottawa.

Forrester, S.M. *the toddler's chant: selected poems, 1998-2008* (Fwd. by M. Fessler). Windsor, CT: bottle rockets press, 2009, 111 pp., perfect softbound, 5.5 x 8. ISBN 978-0-9792257-3-4, 14 USD <www.bottlerocketspress.com>. This book gives readers a good look at ten years of writing by a leading haiku poet and editor. Many of the poems involve Zen practice and some deal with visits to Greece and India. Although strongly influenced by Zen, Stanford Forrester's haiku do not bludgeon the reader with a message. Usually, they are, first and foremost, poems, often playful, sometimes serious: *old jazz record / a scratch / improvises and meditation hall . . . / an ant carries away / my concentration and burning an old love letter . . . / a moth / circles my way*.

Jones, K. *Stone Leeks: More Haiku Stories* (Fwd. by J. Kacian). Troedrhisebon, Cwmrheidol, Aberystwyth, SY23 3NB, Wales: Pilgrim Press, 2009, 96 pp., perfect softbound 6 x 8.5, ISBN 978-0-9539901-6-0, 6.50 pounds/15 USD <www.gwales.com>. Ken Jones is the editor of *Contemporary Haibun* (hard copy and online) and author of four prior collections of haibun. The 28 haibun in his new title are arranged into five themes with each section followed by several pages of free-standing haiku. The haibun are two to three pages long and

feature one to eight haiku. Readers will come away with strong impressions of Welsh character and how it feels to live in Wales under varying circumstances. Of course, everything is nuanced by the fact that Jones is a practitioner and teacher of Zen.

Kennedy, S. & Guenther, D. (eds.). *The Fish Jumps Out Of The Moon: Haiku of Charles F. Kennedy*. Internet: Xlibris, 2009, 62 pp., hardbound or perfect softbound, 8.5 x 8.5. ISBN (hb) 978-1-4363-9633-2/ ISBN (psb) 978-1-4363-9632-5, 31.99 (hb)/ 24.99 (psb) <www.Xlibris.com>. **Charles Kennedy** (1959- 2004) was the leader of a group of amateur naturalists who explored New York City's Central Park at night, and in this role achieved celebrity status by being a chief character in a book about these activities as well in a documentary aired on PBS. He left behind a large number of photos, essays and haiku involving these nighttime forays. His nephew, Steve Kennedy, with the help of friend Dan Guenther, decided to publish the best of Charles' work in this well-designed, glossy-paged volume: *bagpipes / cicadas are / bagpipes* and *this evening / the brook finally learned / my reflection*.

MacRury, C. *In the Company of Crows: Haiku and Tanka Between the Tides* (Sumi-e by I. Codescu; Intro by B. George). Eldersburg, MD: Black Cat Press, 2008, 139 pp., perfect softbound, 5.5 x 8.5. ISBN 0-9766407-7-5, 18 USD <blackcat_press@yahoo.com>. Readers will find Carole MacRury's first collection of over 200 individual haiku and tanka a welcome addition to the growing bibliography of Japanese short-form poetry titles. Cathy Drinkwater Better, co-owner of Black Cat, and an accomplished poet in her own right, has selected and ordered the poems in a manner sure to rivet the reader. The book itself is handsome and the drawings by Codescu tasteful and relevant. Here is a brief sampling of the haiku: *afternoon heat— / even the cut tulips / have flung open wide* and *election results— / low-tide clams / spit seawater* and *twilight . . . / an acorn falls / into our silence*.

Marra, M.F. *Seasons and Landscapes in Japanese Poetry: An Introduction to Haiku and Waka* (Foreward by J.T. Rimer). Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2009, 296 pp., hardbound, 6 x 9. ISBN 978-0-7734-4907-7, USD 119.95 USD <www.mellenpress.com>. In this book, Michael Marra, a Professor of Japanese Literature at UCLA, introduces the major poets of every period, from the early Man'yōshū to the last poet of the Meiji period, Masoaki Shiki. Instead of a chronological timeline, he organizes their poems according to the seasons. Thus, readers will find something about or by Shiki in each of four sections. The translations are fresh and are accompanied by commentaries that reveal levels of meaning often not apparent, even to seasoned readers. This is a fine work of scholarship that will be appreciated by readers who seek to be informed about the history of the haiku and waka.

Marshall, I. *Walden By Haiku*. Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 2009, 239 pp., hardbound, 5.5 x 9. ISBN 978-0-8203-3288-8, 28.95 USD <www.ugapress.org>. A Professor of English and Environmental Studies at Penn State Altoona, Ian Marshall has written a truly innovative, two-part book bristling with ideas on the relationship between haiku and prose nature writing. In part one, he presents 293 haiku extracted, chapter by chapter, from *Henry David Thoreau's Walden*. In part two, he presents the source for each haiku in the original prose passage and suggests that together they may be read as haibun. What led him to conduct this literary experiment?—to confirm his belief that outstanding prose nature writing has, at its core, haiku-like elements. He chose *Walden* because it is at the pinnacle of American nature writing. Here are three of his found haiku picked at random: *the stillness of the air / the smoothness of the water / the loon's long howl* and *hen-hawks circling / approaching, leaving / my thoughts* and *drinking deeper from the stream / fish in the sky / bottom pebbly with stars*. As Marshall searched for haiku in Thoreau's prose, he had to confront the central assumptions we, in the west, have about the aesthetics of the form. Some of his conclusions are provocative and central to the haiku's current evolution. For instance, he states, "Precision of image,

it seems, is prized at the expense of sound, verbal play, or resonance” (p. xxi). The volume is certain to become a prized reference for different interest groups: Thoreau scholars, nature writers, haiku theorists and haiku poets wanting to hone their skills

Metz, S. *A Sealed Jar Of Mustard Seeds*. *ant ant ant ant ant* number nine, winter 2009, unpaginated, stapled, 5.5 x 8.5. No ISBN, 76 cents USD <mrcr3w@yahoo.com>. This chapbook is a special edition of a journal that explores the haiku form. Scott Metz is the editor of *Roadrunner*, an online periodical with similar goals, and his one-liners give readers the surprises they expect: *walrus with its mouth wide open war statistics* and *entering through the back door eaters of light*. Readers will come away hoping for a more substantial collection in the near future from a member of the new wave.

Missias, A.C. (ed.). *A Loose Thread: Selected poems from 10 years of Acorn, with commentary*. Philadelphia: redfox press, 2008, unpaginated, stapled, 4.5 x 7. ISSN 1521-138X, 6 USD <P.O. Box 186, Philadelphia, PA 19105>. The founding and former editor of *Acorn*, Andrea Missias, has selected 59 haiku proportionately from the first 20 issues of this tiny, but respected periodical and provides sensitive commentary on each. This anthology is worth reading for understanding the way an editorial mind works.

Pilarski, P.M. & Pakan, N. (eds.). *Daily Haiku II: A Daily Shot of Zen*. Edmonton: Daily Haiku, 2008, 72 pp., perfect softbound, 6 x 9. ISSN 1913-3928, 10 CAD <www.dailyhaiku.org>. This anthology is part of a growing trend—a year-end hard copy edition of an online periodical The new online twist developed by Pilarski and Pakan is to feature one haiku and related features each day. After 365 days, all special features and published haiku are collected into an annual print volume. The format is actually more complicated than indicated here, but readers who pursue further details will be rewarded.

Rosenow, C. & Arnold, B. (eds.). *The Next One Thousand Years, The Selected Poems Of Cid Corman*. Guiford, VT: Longhouse, 2008, 206 pp., perfect softbound, 5.5 x 8.5. ISBN 978-1-929048-08-3, 16.95 USD <www.LonghousePoetry.com>. Scholar, translator, poetry broadcaster, mentor and, above all, prolific poet, Cid Corman (1924-2004) is served well by Ce Rosenow and Bob Arnold. Their goal was to create a new selected edition of Corman's poetry because most of his titles are out of print. The result is a volume encompassing the breadth and depth of Corman's style—long free verse and formally structured poems to shorter poems often akin to haiku. Because of the editors' desire to provide something new for faithful Corman admirers, they found poems from rare privately circulated editions and three unpublished manuscripts. The result?—Corman's work will attract many new fans. Here is a taste of his haiku: *You are / the rock / shadow* and *From the hills a breeze / reaching a windbell thinking / of wanting to live*.

Ross, B. *endless small waves: haibun*. London, ON: HMS Press, 2008, 102 pp., perfect softbound, 7 x 8. ISBN 978-1-55253-070-2, 15USD <P.O. Box 340, Station B, London, ON N6A 4W1>. The design for this book is basic, with neither foreward, nor index, nor illustrations, nor section breaks, nor cover description of contents, thus forcing the reader to go directly to the contents, which, in this case, is not a bad thing. Nearly all of the almost 70 haibun involve travel by Bruce Ross, mainly in Canada and Mexico. Some are brief—less than half a page and include one haiku; others are long—up to five pages with 15 haiku. Many of the haiku are integral to the prose and do not stand well on their own, although others do: *desert rain / by the roadside cross / fresh flowers* and *early spring / rust down the side / of a gravestone*.

Russell, H. *Distant Sounds*. Issaquah, WA: Privately Printed, 2008, unpaginated, thread bound, 4.5 x 5.5. No ISBN, 10 USD postpaid <3710 Providence Point Dr. SE, #320, Issaquah, WA 98029>. This chapbook was put together by Connie Hutchinson, Ann Spiers and Ruth Yarrow to honor Helen Russell on

her 99th birthday (22 Nov 08). A Washington state resident, she began writing haiku in 1996 and her first collection shows a grasp of the form: *high tide in the slough / two little boys pole / into a foreign land* and *a cloud across the sun / and suddenly / I am old*.

Theodoru, Ș. G. *One More Step*. Bucharest: Amurg Sentimental, 2008, 159 pp., perfect softbound, 5 x 8. ISBN 978-973-678-246-6, No Price <Fax 021.687.68.85>. The pitfalls of translation are once again in evidence with this collection by Ștefan Theodoru, a widely-published Romanian poet. Most of his translations into English do not emerge as well-crafted haiku, hampered as they often are by awkward syntax and occasional misspelling. Yet they also suggest that a better poem is likely to be found in the Romanian version on the same page. Patient readers will, however, find a few haiku free such encumbrances: *In from bitter cold— / tea with rum for some / rum with tea for others* and *Carried by the wind / among the autumn leaves / a letter*.

Tipton, J. *Proposing to the Woman in the Rear View Mirror: Haiku and Senryu*. Baltimore: Modern English Tanka Press, 2008, 46 pp., perfect softbound, 4 x 6.5. ISBN 978-098176917-2, 9.95 USD <www.modernenglishtankapress.com>. Originally a Colorado writer and poet, Tipton moved to the Lake Chapala area in Mexico a number of years ago. The better haiku in the collection speak with worldly-wise machismo: *a new blue shirt / leaves this solitary house/ to go wife hunting* and *in her proud voice / you can hear / her breasts*.

Tipton, J. *Washing Dishes in the Ancient Village: Short Poems about Mexico and Latin America*. Chapala, Jalisco, Mexico: Ediciones del Lago, 2009, 103 pp., perfect softbound, 5 x 7. ISBN 0-912549-21-1, 10.95 USD <Bread & Butter Press, 1150 S. Glencoe, Denver, CO 80246>. All the haiku in this collection are in both English and Spanish. Sometimes they sing: *Full moon . . . / two straws / in the coconut*. But, too often, they merely speak: *Rolex watches. / “For you amigo, / only ten dollars.”* and *Careful! / Just ahead / a ten-cross curve*.

Verbeke, G. *Hermit: Reflections about haiku, a tribute to master Bashō*. Flanders, Belgium: Privately Published, 2008, 86 pp., perfect softbound, 5.5 x 8. No ISBN, No Price <www.haikugeert.net>. As the back cover blurb states, the Belgian Geert Verbeke is, “a poet, writer, haikuist, traveler, musician, painter, exponent of singing bowls, free thinker and eternal student.” This book has all of those elements in Verbeke’s haiku and commentary on the form (the latter taking up most of the pages) as well as in the many quotes and haiku from other writers, both ancient and modern, eastern and western. Despite being named in the title, Bashō plays a peripheral role. A few readers will find that this book contains an overwhelming, but sometimes compelling, mish-mash of information; others will be stimulated into rethinking cherished ideas; most will have a combination of both experiences. Despite English not being his first language, Verbeke manages to write clearly most of the time. Since the bulk of his poems in this title are senryu, here are a couple: *haiku meeting / counting on their fingers / again and again* and *on her night table / a brass buddha / and her false teeth . . .*

Verink, E. A. *Pump Jack Poems* (photos by G Kalisek). Point Venture, TX: Privately Published, 2008, unpaginated, perfect softbound, 5.5 x 8.5. No ISBN, 12 USD <E.A. Wells, 200 Golfview Circle, Point Venture, TX 78645>. While seemingly meant for adults, Texan Elizabeth Verink’s book seems more suitable for children. Each haiku is accompanied by a full-page color photograph and most of the latter are of Disney-like cutouts attached to oil pumping units (nicknamed pump jacks) to make them look less bleak or menacing. Verink’s haiku rarely go beyond a simple description of each photo. For instance, one photo shows a pump jack adorned with a cow jumping over the moon and the accompanying haiku reads *old man moon / greets the bounding bovine / aloft*. None of Verink’s haiku appear to have been published previously (no acknowledgments are listed) and this might explain their prosaic nature—the author has received no constructive feedback from someone more knowledgeable about haiku.

Re:Readings of Issues 31:3 & 32:1

Issue 31:3

Lee Giesecke, Virginia, on *Cor van den Heuvel*, New York: I thought Cor van den Heuvel's *alone / on top of the ferris wheel / the moon* [p. 24] was the best in *Frogpond* issue 31:3. It works, in part, because it plays with our expectations. We suspect a human presence on top of the Ferris wheel—whether the observer or the observed—and are surprised to find that it is the moon. The unusual form also helps. The first and third lines are short. Each is an iamb with a nasal sound in the second syllable. The short lengths and the parallel elements emphasize the feeling of aloneness. The middle line, by contrast, is long. It could have been shortened by using “atop” instead of “on top of.” However, “on top of” is less trivial and seems to give a greater feeling of height and separation. For whatever reason, the poem works.

H.F. Noyes, Greece, on *Patrick M. Pilarski*, Alberta: This poet from Alberta has perfectly expressed his haiku: *under the dock/ waves count/ the weathered pilings* [p.9]. Not one word comes between us and the “counting.” And the term “weathered” allows us to clearly visualize the happening as well. Once the reader hears one breaking wave, the waves are endless, the haiku unlimited, the “one breath” becoming an eternity of moments.

Issue 32:1

Brent Partridge, California, on “Cobalt Canyon: A 36-Link Colorenga” by nine contributors (pp. 42-43): The renga “Cobalt Canyon” demonstrates working together very well. It has a true visionary quality and reminds me of a great man, who said more than forty years ago, “I have a dream.” And more—the reverberations include joy and humor: I laughed aloud at

Carlos' [Colón] “corn maze” [p.43]. The overall effect is triumphantly beautiful.

Linda Jeanette Ward, North Carolina, on the article “To Contest or Not To Contest” [pp. 62-63] by *Bob Lucky*, China: I’d like to address two of Bob’s concerns. One, the question of money. It’s been my impression over the last decade or so that most contest entry fees in the haiku and tanka world are primarily used to cover the costs involved in the contest, not to pay a “reader.” These costs include the prize money, printing of brochures and postage. If the contest is for a collection of poems, the entrants often receive a copy of the winning entry.

Secondly, those very important 3x5 cards. Yes, they’re still available (at least in the USA). I find them in any place that stocks school and office supplies. Why use these cards? First, and most importantly, they help to keep the judging unbiased and fair. By printing or typing each poem separately on a card the judges are helped to avoid what psychologists call the “halo effect.” In a contest where the entrants are asked to print all entries on a single sheet of paper, the influence of one poem that impresses a judge casts a “halo” or favorable view on the others on the same page. I’d call the opposite a “shadow” effect. Thus, the 3x5 cards help to ensure that each individual poem is judged on its own merit. You can see the difference in results, i.e., when entrants are asked to list entries on a single sheet, you’re more likely to find several winning poems by the same poet.

A second reason for the 3x5 cards is convenience for the contest coordinator and judges. The cards can be code numbered and easily divided and referenced later.



Corrections to 31:3 and 32:1

31:3

p. 94: *Tom Painting*, New York, wrote: “While working with some students on Virgilio [Haiku Contest] entries I discovered an error as to the author of one of the 2008 winners that was eventually . . . published in *Frogpond*, 31:3. The haiku:

light footsteps
across the snow
his alcohol breath

was attributed to Desire Collier, when in fact *Desire Giddens*, New York, wrote the poem.”

32:1

p. 22: The haiku by *Jeremy Pendrey*, California, should read:

meditation
the light
through my eyelids

p. 100: *Kristen Deming*, Maryland, wrote that in the description of *The Rabbit In The Moon* as the winner of The Mildred Kanterman Memorial Book Award for Best Translation, 2008, it was stated that her father was ambassador to Japan. In fact, he was not. However, her father-in-law, Olcott Hawthorne Deming, did serve as Consul General in Okinawa after the war.

The Bernard Lionel Einbond Renku Competition 2008

Editors' Note: In order to make the judges' commentary more easy to follow, the stanzas have been numbered.

Grand Prize

Peggy Willis Lyles & Ferris Gilli, Georgia

Paul W. MacNeil, Florida

The Smell of Earth a spring kasen renku

1. wide-brimmed hats
a trowel loosening
the smell of earth *Peggy*
2. on the run
he unreels the box kite *Ferris*
3. Federal Express
knocks at my door
and a butterfly enters *Paul*
4. the textbook open
to Common Sense *Peggy*
5. only the full moon
helped her study
for mid-terms *Ferris*
6. I step carefully
to avoid the mushrooms *Paul*
7. chandelier swinging
as our loud boogie woogie
rattles the crystal *Ferris*

8. courtesans wave
from the gondola *Peggy*
9. bright petals
down the wedding chapel's
center aisle *Paul*
10. could I conceive
in the eye of the storm? *Ferris*
11. let's imagine
this magnetic tape
is your DNA *Peggy*
12. illegal immigrants
caught with forged papers *Paul*
13. the snow leopard
leaps higher
winter moon *Peggy*
14. leafless shadows
mark the oak grove *Paul*
15. a big green X
in place of his hair
then the chains *Ferris*
16. for the birthday girl
old jade restrung *Peggy*
17. surrendering myself
to lily of the valley's
timeless appeal *Paul*
18. those tadpoles with legs
look so curious *Ferris*

19. two by two
the Merry Men
greet the Queen of May *Peggy*
20. her television stolen
while she dreams *Ferris*
21. so few good points
that my matchmaker shrieks
“Impossible!” *Paul*
22. bananas flambé
kindle our mood *Peggy*
23. giant boulders screening
his slow ramble to
the erogenous zone *Ferris*
24. undertow at this beach
in Zanzibar *Paul*
25. another sell-off
sweeps away
my market gains *Peggy*
26. every toilet flushed
with the janitor’s bleach *Ferris*
27. I promise Mother
the little alligator
will be no trouble *Paul*
28. “See ya’ later,
conjure man.” *Peggy*
29. chicken blood drips
into the circle
pale moonlight *Ferris*

30. the harvester follows
a row to the horizon *Paul*
31. in this place
they bale marijuana
along with the hay *Ferris*
32. we've found the needle
that threads itself *Peggy*
33. indubitably
Sherlock shows me
the crucial clue *Paul*
34. at last I know a way
out of the twisty maze *Ferris*
35. blossoms blown
from six directions
toward the obelisk *Peggy*
36. finding its new level
so many brook sounds *Paul*



First Honorable Mention

John Stevenson (js), *Yu Chang (yc)*, New York

Paul W. MacNeil (pwm), Florida

Hilary Tann (ht), New York

“a glass of red” a summer nijuin renku

1. balancing
on the floating dock
a glass of red *js*

2. loon calls
echo our laughter *yc*

3. please hold
for the next available
representative *pwm*

4. she attends the birth
of her grandchild *ht*

5. the moon revealed
what else
was there . . . *yc*

6. it'll be tricks
if we're out of treats *js*

7. their heirloom bed
seems oversized
these chilly nights *ht*

8. new lingerie
however briefly *pwm*

9. a complete landscape
in a few deft
strokes *js*

10. Climb aboard
the Great Western locomotive! *ht*
11. two scorpions
already occupy
my motel room *yc*
12. snowflakes
fall in moonlight *js*
13. prayers for peace
after a homily
on Bethlehem *pwm*
14. the dream catcher
takes another twig *yc*
15. he schedules an appointment
with his massage-therapist
wife *ht*
16. appraising her curves
and hollows *pwm*
17. small town stories
often have a touch
of irony *js*
18. Dorothy returns
to Kansas *yc*
19. even early blossoms
fill the esplanade
with picnic baskets *pwm*
20. a windrow of
cottonwood fluff *ht*

Second Honorable Mention

John Stevenson (J) & Michele Harvey (M), New York

The Hour a winter nijuin renku

1. the hour between
children and parents waking
presents under the tree *J*
2. a ball of wool socks
in the calico's clutches *M*
3. I promised myself
I would learn
to play guitar *J*
4. echo of a train whistle
rides the cusp of dawn *M*
5. the moon
seems permeated
with a smokey scent *J*
6. without you
the leaves have less color *M*
7. we turn to each other
for the warmth we need
as autumn deepens *J*
8. today's mail
sent to the recycle bin *M*
9. battle sites
named one way by the Yankees
and another by the Rebs *J*

10. nobody needs a tattoo
the body itself is art *M*
11. thumping
a series of melons
to check their ripeness *M*
12. moths prefer the porch light
to the moon *J*
13. the Braille book
of blonde jokes
raises some funny questions *M*
14. she signals her readiness
with a slight pause *J*
15. they bond
because it's understood
they are not bound *M*
16. "on my honor,
I will do my best . . . " *J*
17. Murphy's law
can be overcome
by improved design *M*
18. a second pair of legs
for the tadpole *J*
19. the neighbor's fence
has vanished
in the bougainvillea *M*
20. bursting bubbles
as we blow more *J*

Judges' Comments

Renku is a form that thrives on variety and imagination. As a long poem it benefits from changes of pace and tone: surges of liveliness are interspersed with moments of quiet, tenderness follows rough-spokenness, playfulness gives way to more somber thoughts—these are ingredients of a masterful renku. All three of the renku we chose, *The Smell of Earth* (Grand Prize), “*a glass of red*” (First Honorable Mention), and *The Hour* (Second Honorable Mention), had these qualities; each takes the reader on an extended and enjoyable journey through an imagined and imaginative landscape that, for the most part, sustained its energy.

Counterbalancing the importance of variety is connection—linking—brief synapses of communication that bridge the span between adjacent stanzas, and only adjacent stanzas. A good link offers evidence that one poet has understood the essence of the preceding poet’s stanza. Furthermore, reading ought to flow swiftly through areas in which connections are meant to be close (prologue, love sequences, conclusion) and in areas where shifting is emphasized (the rest of the renku), connections ought to be subtle, thereby slowing the flow and demanding a more sustained attention from readers. In these respects, much of the linking in the three renku we chose was very good.

These aspects—variety, linking, imagination, change of pace, and change of tone—made all three of these renku contenders for the Grand Prize. The following discussion of the details of the poems and how they conformed to, or worked against, the renku “rules” is meant to reveal our thought processes, but we do not want it to detract from the overall success and the enjoyment we felt in reading and studying these final three poems.

There were some weaknesses in the renku we received, in-

cluding the three we chose for awards. Since writing renku is by no means easy and perfection in the craft is, as far as we know, unheard of, we were willing to forgive some aberrations. Also, it is much easier to accept flaws, even critical flaws, with the understanding that, as important as the rules and guidelines are, it is equally important that we have fun with renku and support one another's efforts to create these unique word-sculptures. When there is obvious enjoyment by the writers, of the process and of each other, it shows in the liveliness and verve of the resulting poem. In this spirit, we offer the following praise and criticism.

We would like to commend both linking and shifting in all of the renku we received. Each has sequences, some quite long, that are delightful in the ways they connect and separate from one stanza to the next. Take for example verses 9 -12 in *The Smell of Earth*. Verses 9 and 10 give us the image of a bride walking down the aisle as a storm approaches, wondering to herself whether she will be able to conceive in the eye of it. When verse 9 falls away and verse 10 is read with verse 11, the woman, instead of thinking to herself, seems to be sharing her concern with her lover, whose reply takes on a slightly professorial tone, "let's imagine / this magnetic tape / is your DNA." As we move on to consider verse 11 with verse 12, the speaker of "let's imagine..." becomes, perhaps, a border patrolman, and the whole tone of the paired verses takes on a hard, sarcastic edge. This is superb connecting. Another sequence in this poem worth studying is 15-20. It was this kind of variety and imagination, as well as deft linking and shifting that earned *The Smell of Earth* the Grand Prize.

Look at the passage of verses 7 through 10 in "*a glass of red*," a nijuin renku and our choice for First Honorable Mention. In verses 7 and 8 we see a couple standing together before their heirloom bed (7), one clad scantily in lingerie (8). When verse 7 fades into the background and verse 8 is read with verse 9, the scene shifts to an art studio and the implication made is that the subjects formerly seen as lovers are now an artist and a model. Continuing, when verses 9 and 10 are read

together, the scene shifts outdoors to where a *plein-air* painter is capturing a locomotive on canvas!

We found another example of good link-and-shift technique in *The Hour*, also a *nijūin renku* and our second choice for an Honorable Mention. Consider verses 8-11. Reading 8 and 9 together, we can imagine someone on the computer reading e-mail and checking out a site on the Internet with a map of the battles of the Civil War. Verse 10 moves that map from the Internet to a human body, where it is seen in the form of a tattoo. The person who was a rather neutral observer in verse 9 now offers a point of view. Read with verse 10, verse 11 changes the scene to a supermarket and the person with a tattoo is suddenly thumping melons while grocery shopping. The linkage could be interpreted in more than one way: that there is an “art” to selecting a melon (by thumping its “body”) or that the melon itself is nature’s “art.”

The good writing in *The Smell of Earth* fell off toward the end. Starting with verse 30, the connections are a bit too obvious (harvester — bale/hay — needle — clue — maze). Four of the last seven stanzas have to do with finding things (the needle, a clue, a way out of the maze, and a new level); two, 34 and 36 (the *ageku* itself), link penultimately to stanzas 32 and 34 respectively. The delight we felt throughout the rest of the *renku* was thereby diminished. In addition to these difficulties the *ageku* itself, required to express a spring theme, features no such *kigo*. We understand that it is hard to sustain energy to the end of a thirty-six stanza poem. If this *renku* was written at a single sitting then the writers did very well up to verse 30 and are to be commended for consistently high quality writing up to that point. A good variety of topics was covered with few instances of repetition. Two were notable, however, occupations (stanzas 8, 21, and 26), and tools (stanzas 1, 32). Generally, a minimal repetition of subject-matter (in this case tools) is not a problem if there’s sufficient space between the references, but since the first mention of a tool comes in the *hokku*, the mention of another, anywhere in the *renku*, is a serious oversight.

The poems chosen for Honorable Mentions also ran into difficulties toward their conclusions. In “*a glass of red*” verses 17 and 18 seem too close (small town / Dorothy / Kansas). More problematic, its lovely closing verses use summer kigo (picnic baskets and cottonwood fluff) rather than the spring kigo required. There is also an imbalance between natural scenes and stanzas featuring human topics, the latter accounting for about 3/4 of this renku’s subject matter.

The Hour also weakened toward the end. After verses 15-17 linked “bond” and “bound” to a quote about duty, the dictum of Murphy’s law continues the theme. In addition to this, the blossom verse presents a summer flower before the final spring verse.

We are happy to note that, of the three renku we chose to honor, two were written by more than two poets. Our feeling is that renku’s greatest wealth lies in the variety of voices involved—the more the merrier. It’s what makes renku-writing so amazing.

We enjoyed reading all the poems submitted to this year’s contest. Our critique is offered with the best of intentions and we hope that our thought processes will prove useful to those who wish to refine their renku-writing skills.

Christopher Herold, Washington
Patricia Machmiller, California



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Frogpond Editor: George Swede, gswede@ryerson.ca

Frogpond Assistant Editor: Anita Krumins, akrumins@ryerson.ca

Frogpond Postal Address: Box 279, Station P, Toronto, ON M5S 2S8

Regional Coordinators:

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From The Editors

On April 27, 2009, David Wright, the Editor, Directory of Periodicals for the Modern Language Association, approved our application to have *Frogpond* listed in the prestigious *MLA International Bibliography*. This means that students and scholars around the world who want to learn about the haiku and its related forms in English will now be able to find the Haiku Society of America's official journal in the company of other outstanding literary periodicals.

The implications of this cannot be overstated—MLA's recognition of *Frogpond* means that haiku, senryu, renku, renga, tan renga and haibun, in all their variations, as well as commentary and criticism involving these forms, have been officially recognized by the literary establishment as worthy of study by the hundreds of thousands of persons who consult the *MLA International Bibliography* each year.

As a consequence, those who submit essays and reviews to *Frogpond* will have to reference even more carefully any data, ideas or quotes not originating with them.

We want to thank Ce Rosenow at the University of Oregon for suggesting that we send an application to the MLA.

As always, we look forward to your feedback.

George Swede, Editor
Anita Krumins, Assistant Editor

