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Frogpond Listing and Copyright Information:

ISSN 8755-156X
Listed in the MLA International Bibliography, Humanities International Complete, Poets and Writers.

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Francine Banwarth, Editor Michele Root-Bernstein, Associate Editor

Cover Design and Photos: Christopher Patchel, Mettawa, IL.


Haiku Society of America
Submissions Policy
(Please follow the submission guidelines carefully.)

1. Submissions from both members and nonmembers of HSA are welcome.
2. All submissions must be original, unpublished work that is not being considered elsewhere and must not be on the Internet (except for Twitter and Facebook) prior to appearing in Frogpond.
3. Submission by e-mail is preferred
   (a) in the body of the e-mail (no attachments)
   (b) with subject line: Frogpond Submission + the kind of work sent
   (c) with place of residence noted in the body of the e-mail
4. A submission by post will receive a reply only if accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope with sufficient U.S. postage to reach your destination.
5. Only one submission per issue will be considered.

The Submission May Include Any or All of the Following:
1. Up to ten haiku
2. Up to three haibun
3. Up to three rengay or other short sequences
4. One renku or other long sequence
5. One essay
6. One book review

Submission Periods:
1. February 15 to April 15 (Spring/Summer Issue)
2. June 1 to August 1 (Autumn Issue)
3. September 15 to November 15 (Winter Issue)

Acceptances will be sent after the end of each period.

Note to Publishers:
Books for review may be sent at any time.

Submission Addresses:
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Website: http://www.hsa-haiku.org/frogpond/index.html
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for the best previously unpublished work appearing in the last issue of *Frogpond* as selected by vote of the HSA Executive Committee

From Issue 37:2

still watching me
with her knowing look—
my childhood doll

_Gwenn Gurnack_
Boston, MA
first frost—  
plants draped in tarp  
haunt the garden  

Patricia J. Machmiller, San Jose, CA

wind chimes  
how long not much  
goes on  

Ann K. Schwader, Westminster, CO

she comes to me  
attired only  
in a short night  

Ernest Wit, Warsaw, Poland

floating twigs—  
the ants choose  
their ways  

Pravat Kumar Padhy, Odisha, India
charcoal overcoats
all their lives worn down
to serious business

Nathan Renie, Chicago, IL

this life—
shaking dust off my shoes
at the front door

Edward J. Rielly, Westbrook, ME

stormy night—
when the lights go out
he teaches me to tango

Becky Reich, Hollandale, WI

morning alarm
I forget the girl
of my dreams

Troy P. Thompson, New York, NY

summer eve
the sound of moths
as I drive

Jeff Hoagland, Hopewell, NJ
the heat
church gargoyles
catching a breeze

Zinovy Vayman, Allston, MA

red tape—
feeding paper swans
to the shredder

Jim Warner, Springfield, IL

the story
in the embrace
of the story

Kim Peter Kovac, Alexandria, VA

tea leaves
foreseeing the future
in the compost heap

Autumn Noelle Hall, Green Mountain Falls, CO

early morning
weather report
soggy cat

Mark Levy, Oakland, CA
scrolls and tapestries
the only public hangings
I attend

Cynthia Gallagher, Chicago, IL

cool jazz
butterflies on a lilac
breeze

Joe McKeon, Strongsville, OH

returning geese—
the neighbor comes over
to kibbitz

Barry George, Philadelphia, PA

Mt. Olympus . . .
our 25th anniversary
relighting the torch

william scott galasso, Edmonds, WA

a single cloud—
she spends the evening
cutting quilt pieces

Elizabeth Howard, Crossville, TN
bean stalks—
height marks fade
in our childhood room

Arvinder Kaur, Chandigarh, India

new neighbours
the potluck dinner
spicier this year

Susan Constable, Nanoose Bay, BC

antiquarian book fair
a long line
of antiquarians

David Jacobs, London, England

evening shadows
the shabby chic
of an iris

Gregory Longenecker, Pasadena, CA

autumn afternoon
a chickadee watches me
raking in the wind

Sue Colpitts, Peterborough, ON
high tide
the lifeguard stands
in his tower

George Dorsty, Yorktown, VA

apple blossoms—
discovering grandmother
elope

J. Zimmerman, Santa Cruz, CA

dogwood tree
we cut lavender
in our church shoes

kate s. godsey, Pacifica, CA

dusk
getting deeper into red
wine

Ben Moeller-Gaa, St. Louis, MO

it paints a dark picture
of autumn
my umbrella

Tom Rault, Laxviken, Sweden
wind-tipped leaf
the year the day
half over

Munira Judith Avinger, Lac Brome, QC

warm southerlies
stirring the winter doldrums
skeins of geese

David J Kelly, Dublin, Ireland

no guarantee
you’ll like what you get
orange glads

Ignatius Fay, Sudbury, ON

the pink
of a junco’s beak
light snow falling

Brad Bennett, Arlington, MA

storm outside—
the flame within
doesn’t flicker

Kumarendra Mallick, Hyderabad, India
long winter—
cracking an egg to find
the color of life

Kristen Deming, Bethesda, MD

wilderness adventure
new pathways
through the neurons

John Watson, Columbia, CA

wild geese
where wild geese have gone
plenty of sky to go

Gary Hotham, Scaggsville, MD

black ice
I watch your heartbeat
stumble across the monitor

Patricia Pella, Woodland, CA

straight, no chaser
whiskey-colored
sunset

Johnny Baranski, Vancouver, WA
my father’s funeral—
I thought
it would be bigger

Ken Olson, Yakima, WA

windows smaller
the higher they go—
weeds in the schoolyard

P M F Johnson, Minneapolis, MN

calling hours
the first lady’s slipper
deep in the woods

Ann Magyar, Brighton, MA

summer storm . . .
I push the beetle
back on its feet

Nicholas Klaasanzky, Edmonds, WA

leaves catching rain
the dog’s eyes
watery with age

Paul Chambers, Newport, Wales
passing through
the amber of pregnant horses
a winter galaxy

for a fleeting moment
a crab becomes a god
hunting sideways

Scott Terrill, Melbourne, Australia

North Star
the first drop of morphine
on mom’s tongue

Joyce Clement, Bristol, CT

tea steam evaporating a dream of snow monkeys

Joyce Clement, Bristol, CT

hilltop cemetery
touching another world
with my tongue

Lee Gurga, Champaign, IL

I thought I knew you Queen Anne’s lace

Lee Gurga, Champaign, IL
aurora borealis—
the swan necks
her fingers make

aerating the wine . . .
notes from a distant
orange grove

Marie Louise Munro, Tarzana, CA

restless night
small feathers
fall from my chest

cricket half of a smaller infinity

David Boyer, Stamford, CN

step by step
my daughter and i climb
the mountain mist

alpine meadow swifts soaring in my knees

Bruce H. Feingold, Berkeley, CA
where the fish rest
as they drift
trusting again

paisley the windy sun of then all the dreams

Susan Diridoni, Kensington, CA

her hips
a pine the surf
made smooth

to
sound
to
touch
pitch

(her
ring)

Mark Harris, Princeton, NJ

overhanging ledge the loneliness of wind

Tim Gardiner, Essex, England
all I need
of forgiveness
snowdrops

breaking up a sentence fragment

Tom Painting, Atlanta, GA

season of loss
i adopt the color
my mother wore

sunshine state
my sister’s mania
in full bloom

Roberta Beary, Bethesda, MD

crows through rain an irrational number

Michelle Tennison, Blackwood, NJ

cattails gone to seed the hands I miss holding

Michael Blottenberger, Hanover, PA
her father’s footsteps
our shadow
splits in two

Carl Seguiban, Burnaby, BC

wherever I am with her Paris

Robert Epstein, El Cerrito, CA

sleepless night
the crescent moon
unhinged

Jennifer Thompson, Charles Town, WV

autumn wind—
a leaf curls around
its shadow

Rita Odeh, Nazareth, Israel

year’s end
one pants size
wiser

Michael Henry Lee, Saint Augustine, FL
dog tracks
the hole in the ice
my heart’s drain

Marsh Muirhead, Bemidji, MN

pregnant for sure some green on the hills

Jeff Stillman, Norwich, NY

late jacaranda
the bridesmaid dress
too small

Deborah P Kolodji, Temple City, CA

where we left
the moonlight last night
dandelion seeds

Jeanne Cook, South Bend, IN

adagio
she brushes back a wisp
of her daughter’s hair

Victor Ortiz, San Pedro, CA
blackberry brambles
her story
not mine to tell

growing used to growing older lilac dusk

Carolyn Hall, San Francisco, CA

antiques auction—
just beyond my price range
a tantalus

writing a check
for the lithograph
of Escher’s hands

Scott Mason, Chappaqua, NY

learning to write
an ancient language
spiderlings

D W Brydon
wild violets . . .
declaring myself
between the lines

rock paper scissors nightfall
Christopher Patchel, Mettawa, IL

an app for how to feel
waning gibbous
56% visible

afternoon rain
emptying a book
of its words
Peter Newton, Winchendon, MA

waning moon
space
a thief left

Elmedin Kadric, Helsingborg, Sweden
another game
of “Mother, May I?”
the questions still unasked

Angela Terry, Lake Forest Park, WA

a shared life
reduced to memories
empty cookie jar

Diane Wallihan, Port Townsend, WA

fog on the river
spring begins with another
one-night stand

Chris Galford, Walker, MI

perigee moon
a humpback whale
rolls on the shore

Ron C. Moss, Tasmania, Australia

cricket box
in an antique store
gathering quiet

Jeffrey McMullen, Cuba, NY
the fragrance
of night blooming cacti . . .
her buttons undone

Paresh Tiwari, Hyderabad, India

summer heat
swirls of robinia petals
lighten the wind

Roxane Taleb, Geneva, Switzerland

from a windowsill
a sax player riffing
with the thunderstorm

Frank Higgins, Kansas City, MO

Tax Day morning
the feeling of dampness
clings to my bones

Chen-ou Liu, Ajax, ON

snowbound
one cinnamon stick or two
mulling

Lysa Collins, White Rock, BC
word watcher
painting haiku
bird for bird

(for Tom Painting)

Charles Baker, Mineral Point, WI

putting off that call . . .
the last yellow leaf
clings to the tree

Anne LB Davidson, Saco, ME

The long afternoon
the flick of a horse’s tail
in the long ago

Stephen Gould, Denver, CO

cave dwellings . . .
I follow a lizard
up the trail

Aubrie Cox, Taylorville, IL

after all is said—
staring into the glow
of a dying fire

Devin Harrison, Vancouver Island, BC
lilac breeze . . .
the scaffold straightens
his back

Claire Everett, North Yorkshire, England

old lace
the scummed edge
of the sea

Mary Weiler, Baja California, Mexico

autumn wind—
the ice cream truck’s
swansong

Kevin Valentine, Mesquite, TX

eroded dunes
the crow’s call
unanswered

Lynne Steel, Hillsboro Beach, FL

the smell
of an unlit cigarette
Dad as a young man

Jim Laurila, Florence, MA
starry night
the drunk says he lives
inside a colander

John Quinnett, Bryson City, NC

slanted sunlight
everyone
a suspect

Yu Chang, Schenectady, NY

raindrop
on a bare twig
I’ve found myself

Mary Kipps, Sterling, VA

timed to the flight her life story

over rain-drenched meadows the peregrine-torn wind

John Barlow, Ormskirk, England
ocean of rain
my walk with
driftwood eyes

Kath Abela Wilson, Pasadena, CA

far Japan
now as close as
the tip of my brush

empty hourglass:
sunset ocean
full of gold

Lidia Rozmus, Vernon Hills, IL

on a bench
where no one is sitting
autumn begins

Jerry Gill, Hertford, NC

sleep’s episiotomy you slip out

up from the subway I raise blue skin to the rain

Peter Yovu, Middlesex, VT
the many-hearted paulownia leaves songs in minor chords

Beverly Acuff Momoi, Mountain View, CA

counting on her fingers
the syllables
of rain

sundial . .
all the time
spent looking for what’s lost

Bill Pauly, Asbury, IA

in the owl’s ululation a stirring of wings

Karen Cesar, Tucson, AZ

roller coaster romance
I raise my hands
on the first drop

the comfort of morning rain aching with experience

Robert Piotrowski, Mississauga, ON
sign language to the shifting tempo of timbales

Bill Cooper, Richmond, VA

afternoon hail
the texture of a napkin
from the dispenser

moonrise
just the xylophone
and drums

Lenard D. Moore, Raleigh, NC

boys splash naked in the river’s old age

Dan Liebert, Maplewood, MO

frozen sheets . . .
we unpin the shape
of winter

riding the sway-backed barn setting sun

Debbie Strange, Winnipeg, MB
frosted pumpkins
the crows peck
a grin toothless

Barbara Tate, Winchester, TN

flea market
the toy boat’s sail
half filled by a breeze

Christopher Suarez, Brooklyn, NY

fading lilac
the time
i’ll pass

Dietmar Tauchner, Puchberg, Austria

labyrinth
the question lost
at the turns

Gwen Stamm, Eastsound, WA

my doctor asks
if my tongue is sore
now it is

John J. Han, Manchester, MO
packing up to leave
everything we have
dead weight

Anna Maris, Tomelilla, Sweden

a new sound
from an old instrument
spring thaw

Cezar-Florin Ciobică, Botoșani, Romania

ice ferns
forming on the window
steeped tea

Deb Koen, Rochester, NY

a pale moon
in a pale blue sky
first warbler

Bruce Ross, Hampden, ME

July moon
crests the ridge
a lone coyote

John Soares, Ashland, OR
tending the campfire
remains of the harvest moon
my evening meal

Matthew Caretti, Mercersburg, PA

pouring off the bridge
into the darkness
winter rain

Peter Barnes, San Diego, CA

morning mist thickens
only third class mail now
in my mother’s box

Mike Dillon, Indianola, WA

new coolness
a sand message written
in eel grass

Alison Woolpert, Santa Cruz, CA

cave echoes
my mistakes
come rushing back

Adelaide B. Shaw, Millbrook, NY
stock market slide
the baby’s tightening grip
on my finger

Joan Prefontaine, Cottonwood, AZ

fisherman’s sky
a pelican bellies its way
to the shore

Greg Piko, Yass, Australia

red leaves in the wind—
a small girl twirls
until she falls

Jennine Scarboro, Oakland, CA

the old beliefs
lightning tangled
in the evening clouds

Duro Jaiye, Singapore

this long long day
children wait for
the ice cream seller

Angelee Deodhar, Chandigarh, India
the high-rise staircase lights
zipping a day
into a night

Natalia L. Rudychev, New York, NY

winging up from the south
a leaning flock
of Harley-Davidsons

Mark Dailey, Poultney, VT

spool of green thread
the dress Grandma made me
thirty years ago

Dorothy McLaughlin, Somerset, NJ

March funeral . . .
more colorful clothes
than flowers

Mohsen Farsani, Paris, France

father dips
his evil spirits
riverside chants

Ramesh Anand, Bangalore, India
walking apart
a little more of his mind
goes out with the tide

Dave Russo, Cary, NC

the crack
I stepped on in third grade . . .
Mom’s latest x-ray

Elinor Pihl Huggett, South Bend, IN

Balkan ranges
women bent over at dawn
picking blackberries

Doc Drumheller, Oxford, New Zealand

retracing my steps
the bread crumbs
of her parting words

Bob Lucky, Jubail, Saudi Arabia

fifty years together—
old pots and pans
at a tilt

Linda McCarthy Schick, Brooklyn, NY
bleating sheep
the wind whips the reservoir
into a frenzy

new moon
something in the lake keeps
tugging and tugging

James Chessing, San Ramon, CA

the blind guitarist
sings to an empty street . . .
end of autumn

Larry Gates, Portal, AZ

cups in their saucers
the coming of dusk
after all the talking

Michael Fessler, Kanagawa, Japan

waves recede
halved seashells
half buried

Weelee Hsieh, Concord, MA
before leaving,
I make an effort to get up
out of myself

after the diner
I look more carefully
at plain women

John Stevenson, Nassau, NY

deleting phrases
from an unsent love letter—
trees shed their red leaves

Austin Wallace, Covington, GA

reading Santōka
the sound of the breeze
in trees still green

Robert Forsythe, Annandale, VA

sipping cognac
with my dead friends—
winter solstice

Freddy Ben-Arroyo, Haifa, Israel
I tell him I hear
that voice, too,
spring breeze

ending a labyrinth back at the broken brick

Dan Schwerin, Greendale, WI

rows of poplar
I come from a long line
of hand shakers

mole hill
the little good
it does me

Glenn G. Coats, Prospect, VA

wrinkled hands knitting the future

Anupam Sharma, Khargone, India

around the corner my life takes a new turn of the screw

Marcus Liljedahl, Gothenburg, Sweden
the heart slowly
moving to the edge—
island rill

small rain on a big wind birthday

Jim Kacian, Winchester, VA

sitting all day
in front of a screen—
mouse potato

February—
the sun rises
shyly

Steve Addiss, Midlothian, VA

competing sirens grow fainter—dusk

Mike Taylor, San Francisco, CA

the leaf’s silhouette of my impatience

Scott Glander, Glenview, IL
poetry reading
a single slice of ham
waits to be eaten

Genevieve Bergeson, Chesterfield, MO

summer heat
new boards
pierced by nails

Dianne Koch, Dubuque, IA

fallow field—
the wild side
of old exotics

Charles Shiotani, Watsonville, CA

middle age
the leap
of a carousel horse

Els van Leeuwen, Sydney, Australia

in neutral
the drive
i once had

Haiku Elvis, Shreveport, LA
airport lounge—
the stuffed panda
never sleeps

Daniel John Pilkington, Melbourne, Australia

spring dusk
funny money
in the compost

Richard St. Clair, Cambridge, MA

Dad’s almanacs
keeping them
another year

Mary Frederick Ahearn, Pottstown, PA

moving out—
distracted
by our echoes

Mike Spikes, Jonesboro, AR

fresh grief
a pine adjusts
to the snow’s weight

Michele L. Harvey, Hamilton, NY
with her
no need for directions
the milky way

catching fireflies
the light
between my child and me

Stephen A. Peters, Bellingham, WA

glint of sunlight
on the Buddha’s lips
spring morning

Rob Dingman, Herkimer, NY

white breath
on the night window
a ghost of myself

thistledown children drifting away

Lorin Ford, Melbourne, Australia

(   )
my life
without her

Thomas Dougherty, Ambridge, PA
handwritten, a poem
sending me the pelicans
from her ocean

her hand on my heart
at midnight—
leaping deer

Michael McClintock, Clovis, CA

words fall just short
of just enough
mid-spring rain

James D. Fuson, New Haven, MI

failure to thrive . . .
the first snow falls
without sticking

from scratch sifting in the caws of crows

Jennifer Corpe, Spring Lake, MI

the fetor
of overripe figs
heavy rain

Lynn Edge, Tivoli, TX
just before
the casket closes
fixing mother’s hair

Jerome J. Cushman, Victor, NY

storm light—
the badger shakes earth
from her coat

in country darkness
the heart of the galaxy—
a barn owl’s long shriek

Allan Burns, Colorado Springs, CO

snow mounds deeper
on the slant, rented roof . . .
reading Satie’s letters

Brent Goodman, Rhinelander, WI

longest night
in the origami folds
a stillborn swan

Mark E. Brager, Columbia, MD
dry leaves fall in circles
heads down
we return from the grave

Robert Witmer, Tokyo, Japan

sunset lowers
the house into darkness
board by board

savannah trail
unable to find
the compass plant

Bob Moyer, Winston Salem, NC

news of her illness
sparrow flock
flushed from the hedges

Sharon Pretti, San Francisco, CA

late light of summer
a child lingering
after goodnight

Sandra Dugan, Albany, CA
his age
still counted in weeks
the time between cloudbursts

homeward bound
I fly into
yesterday

Annette Makino, Arcata, CA

storm warning
the porch screen bulges
in and out

my thread
keeps missing the eye
mother’s needles

Barbara Snow, Eugene, OR

at the window end of winter light

come summer speak cicada

Joseph Salvatore Aversano, Ankara, Turkey
Opening my palm
a firefly shines
on the lifeline

Procession of ants
each of them
has a shadow

Yasuhiko Shigemoto, Hiroshima, Japan

crematorium
just one anagram
for smoke

manicured lawn
the proud homeowner’s
nostril and ear hair

George Swede, Toronto, ON

hearslay

lunar eclipse . . .
pen and ink faces
to gauge pain

Roland Packer, Hamilton, ON
in this little part
of the solar system
dust motes

Tom Tico, San Francisco, CA

Cliffs, tinted clouds
the river reflects . . .
if I weren’t a self

One crow’s caw—
each cedar stands apart more
as the meadow fogs

Rebecca Lilly, Charlottesville, VA

mother’s rosary—
threads still hold
where links have broken

Lee Strong, Rochester, NY

Buddha’s garden
bare of all
but the winter buds

Ellen Compton, Washington, D.C.
tin roof rain  
I forget  
what I came for

Robyn Hood Black, Beaufort, SC

bad weather  
in an envelope  
I put a stamp on it

New York strip  
our wedding anniversary  
pink in the middle

Randy Brooks, Decatur, IL

early snow  
on the pasture slope  
unhappy moos

Neal Whitman, Pacific Grove, CA

stalking me  
on Facebook  
the sneakers I want

Susan Burch, Hagerstown, MD
shorter days—
a hand
full of splinters

crossing the neat lawn
with mother
in a shopping bag

Ruth Holzer, Herndon, VA

Grandpa’s smile
his wart disappears
into his cheek

drifting snowflakes . . .
the new leaves of the aspen
too small to hold them

Charles Trumbull, Santa Fe, NM

her last days . . .
in the kitchen
filling jars with jam

Charlotte Digregorio, Winnetka, IL
geranium patch
a warm spot
on the handrail

scrape of branches
against the window—
the dog’s small veins

paul m., Bristol, RI

his hand in mine
the smooth twist
of a driftwood knot

another whirl
on the Ferris wheel
the same me again

Michelle Schaefer, Bothe, WA

pressed
between pages
tipsy bride

Kevin Goldstein-Jackson, Poole, England
local bar
the child hopscotches
on the tile

heat lightning
fireflies
reply

Gayle Bull, Mineral Point, WI

jackdaw
the things he can’t say
to anyone

Stewart C. Baker, Dallas, OR

sinks the twenty
deeper into his pocket
gravedigger

dense fog
making not much
of everything

Alan S. Bridges, Littleton, MA
Sanjukta Asopa, Karnataka, India

purple crocus
the color of bruises
I no longer have

Sue Mackenzie, Victoria, BC

John McManus, Carlisle, England
locking my door
on the inside
a snail

wind sock in flight the trigeminal nerve kicks off

Helen Buckingham, Somerset, England

hazes of snow
rising from the skeleton cars
of a freight train

Marshall Hryciuk, Toronto, ON

haboob
we become
but a bit of it

on
nuclear winter

LeRoy Gorman, Napanee, ON

winter dusk morphing into a den of old songs

Kala Ramesh, Pune, India
Past international exchanges have included poets from Romania (Fp 36:2), Serbia (Fp 36:3), the United Kingdom and Germany (Fp 37:1), and Bulgaria (Fp 37:2). In this issue, we turn our attention for the first time to poets from a country in the Western Hemisphere, Colombia. While they don’t have a formal haiku society, these poets all know each other and publish in the journal Cantarrana, where, in friendly exchange, haiku written by HSA members will soon be published.

~David Lanoue, President, HSA

El ruiseñor pasa
con una lombriz en el pico.
Ahora comprendo su silencio.

The nightingale passes
with worm in beak.
Now I understand his silence.

Javier Tafur

De la neblina
llega con todo su color
la mariposa.

Out of mist he arrives
with all his color
butterfly.

Umberto Senegal

¿Leo las hojas del libro
o me detengo entre
las del guayacán?

Should I leaf through the book
or linger among leaves
of the guayacán?

Fernando López Rodríguez
La telaraña
el último recuerdo
para el grillo.

Spider web
the cricket’s last
memory.

Luis Alejandro Rojas Gómez

Hoy en el colegio
sólo nos visitaron
dos torcazas.

Today at school
only two doves
came visiting.

María Camila Rojas Gómez (Age 10)

Golpe de luz,
iris horizontal:
a lagartija.

Flash of light,
the horizontal iris:
a lizard.

Humberto Jarrín

La bordadora
se pinchó un dedo.
Rosas en la tela

The embroiderer pricked
her finger.
Roses in the fabric.

Álvaro Lopera Dagua

Llega la tarde,
todavía sigue tejiendo
la torcaza su nido.

Come evening
the dove still weaving
her nest.

Victoria Eugenia Gómez Mina

(Translations of poems from the original Spanish by David Lanoue)
Haiku Circle

Roberta Beary, Bethesda, MD
Ellen Compton, Washington, D.C.

woodsmoke haze
a hug from the hippie
with my accent

skittering clouds
the kettle begins to simmer

porch midges
beneath the fan’s swirl
workshop roll-call

into the trees . . .
whisper
of a one-breath poem

open mic—
the farm dog all ears

haiku circle
sunset deepens
the drum’s song
Striking Midnight
Ron C. Moss, Tasmania, Australia
Victor Ortiz, San Pedro, CA

fireworks reflect
on a mantel clock
striking midnight

the ticking tail
of a solar-powered dog

last call for drinks
the clink of beer glasses
as the darts go in

morning dew
twenty years a teacher
the same ringing bell

the windmill’s shadow
on the ancient sundial

on the anvil’s face
the rhythmic pounding
of the sword maker
Singing in the Rain
William Hart, Montrose, CA
Michael Dylan Welch, Sammamish, WA

rain in the wind
is spreading the news
autumn’s here

no business
like raking leaves

some enchanted evening
smoke
gets in your eyes

climbing
every mountain
aspen yellow

sunrise, sunset
closer each day

somewhere, lost in the leaf pile,
memories
of summer love
Deadheading Daisies
Michael Blottenberger, Hanover, PA
       Julie Warther, Dover, OH

muggy night
no freedom from
the sweat of my ancestors

free floating cottonwood seeds
these voices in my head

a sad song
in the silver scissors
deading daisies

tai chi
an orb weaver working
from the outside in

butterfly release
the flight of a fragile prayer

a hole in the cocoon
one branch of the hybrid
goes wild
Tasting a Cloud
Victor Ortiz, San Pedro, CA
William Hart, Montrose, CA

GARDEN
every letter
a different color

the green whispers
of fledgling leaves

record heat
shouting at us
the spring sun

rain and more rain
till mother nature
sings greensleeves

lenticular cloud the slight
taste of a buttermilk pancake

shadows grow
a mountain swallows the cold
of blue flowers
Waiting for No One
Terri L. French, Huntsville, AL

burial day
grackles lift
a winter sky

a baby hushed
by the mockingbird song

show-and-tell
the death rattle
in a chrysalis

spring baptism
white roses stitched
on the blessing gown

a belly-up toad
fished from the rain barrel

graping bubbles
the look of surprise
as she opens her hand
Parallel Universe
Scott Mason, Chappaqua, NY

Bright Angel Trail
so much depends
on a sure-footed mule

neither caw nor coo
I have been one acquainted
with the nightingale

the perfect host
I am large,
I contain microbes

Antarctica
the only emperor
is the emperor of ice caps

a praying mantis
stick-still on the stubble:
praise this
Birds of a Feather
Carolyn Hall, San Francisco, CA

morning star
peacock feathers splayed
against the Rajasthan sky

Taj Mahal
I snap another photo
of a parakeet

retracing
Gandhi’s last steps
a hooded crow

vultures roost
on the cenotaphs
Orchha moon

a sultry breeze
through teak leaves
the mynah’s many voices

what matters the name
of this Udaipur raptor
the twig in its beak

Kerala heat
the tail end
of the cormorant’s dive
Sikkim
Raamesh Gowri Raghavan, Maharashtra, India

bare juniper
my first view
of Kanchenjunga

slow morning
only the Teesta
rushing

chhang . . .
in a cupful
Shambhala

apple blossoms
by the silent gompa
birdsong

butter tea
the soft mooing
of a yak

snow doves
a white shroud
on the land

white water
the bridge coloured
with prayers

seven stones
a seventh of myself
left behind

five snow treasures
a last goodbye
to Kanchenjunga

Explanation of Sikkimese terms: Sikkim is a tiny state of India tucked in the Himalaya, with a dominant culture of Tibetan Buddhism. Chhang is an alcoholic beverage made of barley; Shambhala is the Buddhist equivalent of paradise. A gompa is a monastery of Tibetan lamas. Buddhist prayer flags often adorn bridges in Sikkim, many of which are rickety. The name Kanchenjunga (the third highest mountain in the world) translates from the Tibetan to “five snow treasures.” And lastly, the locals pile seven flat stones to build a temporary stupa, to make a wish to the Buddha.
Summer on the Plaza
Marian Olson, Santa Fe, NM

blocking off streets
huge clay pots
of geraniums

in store windows
kachina dolls
to lure tourists

ice cream cart
two foot police chatting
with a pretty girl

across the grass
dogs on leashes
pull along owners

country trio
couples two-step in front
of the bandstand

pueblo treasures
arranged on tables
Palace of the Governors*

dream catchers
an out-of-towner barters
for the big one

corner club jazz
Hatch chilies sizzle
on the curbside grill

another woman stops
to pet
the hunky man’s dog

*Built in 1610, the oldest government building in the U.S.
Passing Storm
Ferris Gilli, Marietta, GA
Ron C. Moss, Tasmania, Australia

sea and sky merged
the first large drops rattling
banana leaves

*kangaroo-paw flowers burst open in the heat*

Spanish moss
hangs lower in the oak . . .
passing storm

*crushed garlic still warm from the sun*

on my foot
a small coolness
the lizard’s stripe

*a silver gleam in the eye of the hurricane*

vacation’s end
a river otter
sneezes

*in the darkest patch of water a platypus rises*

littered beach
a makeshift fence
around the turtle nest

*fairy penguins crisscross moonlit sand*

goodbye letter
mockingbirds court
beneath the window
The Buson Variations
Cor van den Heuvel, New York, NY

Second Series — East Coast Modern

1. short night / the lighthouse beam / from a far island
2. the snail’s path / ends a long way from / the wave’s edge
3. Greenwich Village / for six floors a wisteria hangs / blossoms
4. the rain / moves south into Manhattan / the Yankees game resumes
5. record heat wave / not a leaf of grass stirs / in the deserted ballpark
6. heavy downpour / in the garden even stones / are afloat
7. spring ends / in the park, the robin’s song / still bright and spirited
8. spring night / the pretty co-ed in the college library / winks back
9. spring rain / the robin in her nest / keeps her belly dry
10. sudden rain / at the bus stop, a sports page / talks to the fashion news
11. summer stream / taking cold beer from / a small waterfall
12. struck by a car / the old poplar keeps on / waving its leaves
13. summer shower / ants no longer appear / at the ant hole
14. tale of a mockingbird / the sounds of basketball / in an outdoor court
15. the car alarm / a sparrow asleep on the hood / falls off
16. swimming hole / hanging in the winter drizzle / the rope for swinging
17. incense / the street vendor has lit / ten or twelve sticks
18. white clouds / slowly sail / above the autumn hills
19. the green of a lone pine / atop Jockey Cap Hill’s / fall patterns
20. early morning / thin ice on the sidewalk puddles / no one about
21. cool breeze / I sit in the backyard watching / gulls land in the marsh
22. low tide in the marsh / as the sun goes down / only shadows stir
23. after the spicy meal / the green of parsley / by the cash register
24. he shivers in July / his own name / on the gravestone
25. loneliness / someone’s wash left on the line / autumn rain
26. before the short night / can cover the sea / sunlight floods the beach
27. sounds from the bog / Emily and a nobody hear them / summer night
28. lilacs / like those behind the garage / of my childhood
29. spading the garden / missing my dog / who used to watch
30. barely audible / the Delius cd plays / in the shadow of the house
31. time to wind the clock / someone knocks on the door / quietly
32. summer clothes / getting out my John Wills T-shirts / one by one by one
33. tending the grave / he’s distracted by the activities / of the black ants

These haiku were inspired by the translations of Buson’s haiku by Makoto Ueda in The Path of Flowering Thorn: The Life and Poetry of Yosa Buson (Stanford University Press, 1998). To match the variations to their originals, look on page 213, the next to last page of the index for Buson’s haiku in English. The thirty-three haiku on that page correspond, in the same order, to the thirty-three haiku in the above series.
testing the flex
of the diving board
the cannonballer

*thunder*
*empties the pool*
Haibun

Cutting Board
Francis Masat, Key West, FL

Handed down through generations, it serves its purpose well, protecting our sharp edges. Stained by use and time, its grain scrubbed smooth, its middle nicked, it celebrates a thousand cuts, scars of knives untold. Flesh from pit, flesh from bone, the scene becomes the smell and sound of preparation, of piecemeal separation. And then it’s put aside until used again.

in-laws for dinner—
how the wasabi burns
behind my smile

On the Porch
Adelaide B. Shaw, Millbrook, NY

It’s the silence. The absence of 21st-century noises. No cars, no airplanes, no voices, no lawn mowers. It is not always like this, but today, a Saturday afternoon in late June, not even the birds are active. The only sounds are the ones I make: my cup on the wrought iron table, the click of my pen. There is a small breeze, but the pines have nothing to say. The lilac leaves sway silently, as do the hanging yellow petunias. The tall pink peonies nod briefly as if to greet each other. The day lilies hold their positions, facing the sun.

There are many chores I should be doing. But why?

warm air
stilling my thoughts
the pen rolls away
The Cubist Lunch
Joyce Futa, Altadena, CA

Soft pillow the sauce. Swallow. Words come out from inner. Sauce goes down, inner. Savor. Texting goes from air to air. It is outer. No, she said, texting. It can be inner, murmur, inner.

I wish i wish i wish. We wish we wish we wish. There is a fish swimming in the sea. A fish sliced in sauce, swimming.


In the middle of sauce we meet. Fingers fly to mouth: emulsion murmur.

“Oh that? he said. Then I said. Then he said loudly. Then I said carefully.” She tells us that carefully.

Bread is brush. Sauce is paint. Swirls inner. Turmeric.

I speak I cannot eat . . . he cannot speak he eats . . . she eats she speaks. We talk. We laugh.

   cleaned white plates:
   the light of the soul
   of this lunch

Venn Circles
George Swede, Toronto, ON

I’m bumping into things more even though I’m shrinking.

   cemetery
   he now in the shadow
   of her
**Tough Skin**
*Terri L. French, Huntsville, AL*

Most people, upon seeing my tattoo, ask if it hurt. I don’t know how to answer that question. Compared to what? Stubbing your toe, natural childbirth, the death of a loved one? I just smile and tell them I have a high pain tolerance.

red marks on white thighs  
he never once said  
it hurt him worse

**Industry**
*Cherie Hunter Day, Cupertino, CA*

At the sound of the bell best friends become twenty-minute adversaries on the playground. Who will lead the raid on Fort Cecelia with dirt clods? Who will play the spy? There’s a race to the door. Whoever makes it outside first gets the area nearest the chain-link fence. It has the most resources: thatched witchgrass, sticks and leftover gravel from the new school construction. Others make do with chunks of corrugated cardboard, Styrofoam insulation, and oversized bark mulch. Huts, roads, and barriers spring up immediately. A discarded juice box becomes a shield, or roof, or Trojan horse. The king is coming! Will he lead the charge of cavalry or a squadron of F-16 fighters? Tactics buzz within each group. Insults are carried on the wind. Destruction is assured. If not during second period, certainly by fourth period recess when the older boys come out to play. The bell rings again and everyone scrambles to get in line to enter the building. The scent of industry is sweat mixed with dust and ozone clinging to sun-kissed skin.

high noon  
the orb-weaver’s web  
in tatters
Walking on Water
Carol Pearce-Worthington, New York, NY

It’s a cold dawn in early March. A group of people has gathered at an overlook in Central Park. They move closer for a photo taken by someone in the party. Then a woman dressed completely in white emerges from those dressed darkly against the cold. She heads down a pathway that curves along the side of the hill. In twos and threes, the others follow, until they form a human thread among the winter naked trees. Their procession is neither slow nor hurried. There is no wind; sound does not seem to reach or touch them; they show no sign of hesitation or fatigue. They walk steadily from the highpoint of the overlook and continue to a place where the path winds around a glacial rock outcropping. The woman in white goes around the rock and vanishes behind it. Steadily, the others come until they reach that turn at the bottom of the hill and they continue walking one by one two by two until the last person disappears. The park is empty now. Dawn covers the sky. The lost are not lost. They are walking. They are led.

wailing wall
the rough edges
of an ancient photo

Visiting Georgia O’Keeffe Via the Internet
Lynn Edge, Tivoli, TX

How sparse the inside of her house. The whiteness of walls and floors is broken only by vigas. A piece of ply board serves as a table; her chairs, modern then, look retro now. Instead of choosing a headboard of carved Spanish design, she slept on a simple mattress covered by a white spread.

under desert stars
a bleached cow skull
fills my dream

Frogpond 37:3

73
Lament for the Lost Boy
Lew Watts, Santa Fe, NM

I was working overseas. This was the reason I gave myself—that it had to happen, that it was for the best. But in the Headmaster’s tea party for new boarders and their parents, doubts were creeping in with each bite of a bitter scone. We had been briefed on how to say goodbye, of course, but even then it was difficult to simply shake such a small hand before walking away without looking back.

So after all this time, this is why I hug you, why I wait those extra seconds before letting you go. It could be late at night, on a street corner in London, before I return to my hotel. Or like today, when it is you who are leaving to fly back to your home. Tonight, as you walk away through Security, I am on my toes, peering over heads for one last sight of you, waiting for the turn and raise of a hand, for some sign of forgiveness.

new tattoo— five blue quavers on a staff of scars

I Was Wondering
Bob Lucky, Jubail, Saudi Arabia

Could we hold another hand without thinking of each other’s hand, could we join bodies, share the friction of togetherness, without thinking of our own tongue-in-groove, could we possibly laugh at the same jokes without feeling queasy, could we sit there in the morning across the table and bear the silence of someone else, could we ever love another the way we once loved each other, could we ever love each other the way we once did?

late winter a deal on mail order tulip bulbs
I read Ma’s diaries again then drop them with mine in the recycling bin. When I used to play chess, I was happiest after I’d moved out of the argumentative opening and finished the arduous clamber through long complexities of setting up alignments, controlling the center, and feinting with deceptions. What I loved best was to settle at last into the clean swift millrace that would bring the game home. A bird sings in the weeping willow, something to smile at and then like everything else let go.

early spring sleet
driving through Switzerland
to where I might die

She’s been seeing him for three months. They are not kids, both approaching forty. Neither is naive and each has issues. And he is a bit of an actor, so he’s always “on.” He likes to push her buttons. Used to being dominant, he is unprepared for her confidence and the strength of her opinions. And she doesn’t back down.

The refreshing thing is that, for the first time, she’s met a man who can take it when she reciprocates. She gives him back some of his own. His ego is not so fragile as to prevent him from seeing her point, when she has one, and trying to alter his behavior accordingly. Potential recognized!

the snap
and hiss of her
arc welder
This Is Not the Pointless Babble I Signed Up For
Peter Newton, Winchendon, MA

According to my Twitter stream, no one knows how long it will hold but apparently there’s another 4-hour humanitarian cease-fire while aid workers clear body parts from a school, stepping over the carcasses of a cow and is that a horse? who also came seeking refuge from the deafening firestorm, the barrage of missiles that clickable sources say as many as 4 in 10 miss their mark completely falling short of what was expected of them.

@Iron Umbrella,
what color is the puddle
you’re standing in?

Ripples
Bruce Ross, Hampden, ME

I am snorkeling in the pristine preserve area of the second-largest barrier reef in the world. The silence is punctuated by incredibly neon-bright basslets, blue tangs and parrotfish and mature and young sea turtles feeding on the sea grass. The clarity of the sea is overwhelming, producing a slow motion kaleidoscope of color and form to float through. I finally exhaust myself in the cavernous corral canyons and lie absolutely still mesmerized by a flickering far below on the sandy bottom of the sea as if the pattern were in my own psyche.

Hol Chan
sunlit ripples again and again
on the sleeping stingray
**Groucho**
Jim Kacian, Winchester, VA

“I wouldn’t want to belong to any club that would have me as a member.”

Every one of us wants to be accepted by everyone else, and at the same time appreciated for our uniqueness. We want to be inside and outside at the same time, part of the herd and above it all. The great sociologist Groucho Marx, born a middle son of European Jewish émigrés, saw the walls more clearly than others, probably because there was more wall for him to see. At least he could laugh about it.

from the penthouse
gestures of the humans below
unintelligible

**Listening to Jupiter**
*for Clara*
Matthew Caretti, Mercersburg, PA

She has a theory for nearly everything. The conception of God. Even happiness, though she lays no claim to understanding life itself.

A silence falls between us as we drive on. Toward the horizon. The light ever receding.

messages
in the static
desert night
Neverland
Roberta Beary, Bethesda, MD

My water breaks. It’s all systems go.

obstetrics—
second star
to the right

No one looks at me. A wheelchair rolls to exam rm. 1.

metal stirrups . . .
sinking deeper
into neverland

My blood work contaminated. We do a redo as veins collapse.

hazmat bin—
nurse smee’s
this won’t hurt

All hands on deck. A white coat pops in.

amniotic rain
epidural
c/o capt. hook

My belly sliced open. A necklace of loops color code blue.

morphine . . .
the weight
of fairy dust

Neonate needs help to breathe. Needs must.

bed rest
straight on
’til morning
The Blue Egg
Margaret Chula, Portland, OR

Clots of purple scilla border the pathway that leads to the hay barn, bereft of horses and the sound of restless hooves at midnight. Above, the crisscross of bare limbs begins its mating dance. Spring buds nudge each other, tentative and shy.

How many years since I went barefoot into the uncut grass? Down the lanes of childhood without fear of bee sting or snake slither? How certain I was, placing the tiny blue egg back into the robin’s nest with my sure fingers—the smell of early daffodils making me hunger for swings and bird song and more nests to fill with my small omnipotence.

coloring Easter eggs
my name etched in wax
invisible

Almost Autumn
Kanchan Chatterjee, Jharkhand, India

He was in Copenhagen he said. I could hear the waves and the wind. He wasn’t happy. We talked a while. I told him about the waterlogged streets here and flies, mosquitoes and garbage. Still he missed home, he said.

sundown—
a grasshopper clinging
to the blade
Footnote
Tom Painting, Atlanta, GA

I sit at the kitchen counter with the Rand McNally before me, enamored by the blue-dotted highways. I plan road trips on no more information than that provided by mapmakers who designate certain out-of-the-way places as having particular scenic appeal. Story of my life: a little look before I leap.

humid night
the buzz of neon
from the small-town motel

Brainwashed
Jerome J. Cushman, Victor, NY

My sister was born just after Pearl Harbor. My older brother and I were taken to the birthing house to visit my mom and new sister. When my brother saw the baby his eyes widened. Later he told me he was sure the baby was a Jap spy. But, because everything was rationed, we’d all probably starve anyhow.

Fifty-four years later I visit my sister for the last time in her hospice bed.

radiation burns
on her scalp—
Hiroshima
Summer Wages
Glenn G. Coats, Prospect, VA

July. I hammer stakes and pull string across pastures. There are few clouds. The sun beats down and burns the top of my head and shoulders. I measure fifty feet along the line and dig a hole thirty inches deep, drop in a line post, fill in some dirt, tamp it down with a shovel handle, more dirt, tamp, check level, measure fifty feet and repeat the procedure. I am numb from the heat, the smell of earth, the taste of sweat.

Ruth is good with the horses, feeds and waters them, mucks out the stalls, rubs them down when they come back from a ride. When she is not in the barn, Ruth is out in the rows of vegetables, kneeling down, pulling weeds, lifting sweet potato vines to keep them from taking root, tying up tomatoes and beans. The sun bakes her neck and back; she darkens through the summer like a penny.

I try to think of things to say to Ruth, reasons to stop on my way back to the barn for field wire or staples. Nothing comes out right. I stutter and I never did that before.

August. I ask Ruth out to dinner and to my surprise the answer is yes. When I pick her up, she answers the door and invites me in to meet her family. Ruth looks beautiful in a yellow dress. I open the car door for her and drive over to the restaurant by the river.

As soon as we enter, a waitress rushes over and stares at Ruth. “Oh no honey,” she says, “we can’t serve you here.”

I take Ruth to the movies instead. On the way home, I apologize again for the incident. “Don’t worry about it,” Ruth says. “That is about the best thing that has happened to me—all year.”

sunlit hills
a rustle of darkness
in the trees
Yosa Buson (1716–1783) twice began the daily practice of writing ten haiku for a hundred days. He started one series on Buddha’s birthday in 1777 and another in his final year.\(^1,2\)

Intrigued by Buson’s intention, J. (Joan) Zimmerman started her first Buson One Hundred writing practice on America’s birthday, July 4th, 2013. Finding this practice to be of benefit, Joan presented it to the Yuki Teikei Haiku Society (YTHS) at their annual retreat in November 2013. That led to Gregory (Greg) Longenecker beginning a similar practice, quickly joined by three other haiku poets: Eleanor Carolan, Patricia J. Machmiller, and Phillip Kennedy. The five poets were all experienced in writing haiku. They represented a cross-section from less-known, less-published poets up to well-known and widely published poets. Haiku written by each poet in this practice have been published or accepted for publication.

This article summarizes the benefits and obstacles to the haiku poet of completing a Buson One Hundred. We invite readers to try the practice themselves.

**When and Where to Write**

The strength of the Buson One Hundred writing practice turned out to lie in its simplicity: write ten haiku a day. Keep doing it till a hundred days have passed.
When Joan shared her experiences initially, she gave no other requirements. Therefore the results came from the poets themselves. Each individual had to sort out how, when, and where they would write ten haiku a day, interpreting what Joan told them in their own way and following their own path of self-discovery in writing haiku. By doing this, they found and developed the exercises that allowed them to best complete their daily goal.

Writing ten haiku took less and less time as the days passed. On the initial day it varied from about 40 minutes to about 5 hours for the five poets. Towards the end it usually took closer to 20 to 30 minutes. Each poet missed one or more days, catching up by writing more than ten haiku on subsequent days.

Time and again, the poets expressed the need for dedication:

The important part is showing up each morning at my front window, as the sun rises, and writing. (Eleanor)

The writing could of course be done any time of day. It did not have to be completed in a single session, although that was usually the intent. Some preferred to write first thing in the morning, pondering the previous day’s material in conjunction with the opening day. Some used the body of the day. And some preferred to write in the evening. Most of us varied our initial plan for writing:

In the beginning I started out writing just before going to bed[,] in my easy chair in the family room. But I soon realized that I was going to have some very long nights. Sometimes I was so tired I just had to go to bed with the task unfinished. In that case if I had written only five haiku, say, I promised myself that I would write fifteen haiku the next day making the next day’s task even harder. . . . I needed a new strategy. (Patricia)

Increasingly we each thought about the Buson One Hundred all through the day, often making notes for later completion as poems. One poet found her cell phone to be a great alternative to a traditional notebook:
I really hit my stride when I started carrying my cell phone with me on my daily walk. I used the notepad app on the cell phone to record whatever struck me as being interesting. Sometimes it was a kigo—camellia, iris, fallen leaves, sometimes not. Sometimes I’d only capture a word or two, sometimes a line, sometimes two lines. Once in a while I’d get a whole poem. The important thing was that I regarded this time as my material-gathering phase. And the evening hour before bed became the forming-the-poem phase. (Patricia)

The regular push to get out the first few haiku each day was key to success in the Buson One Hundred. Often there was an intensity and sense of closure on completing a day’s set.

**Inspiration and the Making of Sense**

in spite of the cold  
I walk barefoot into the  
moonlit garden  

Eleanor Carolan

The real world offered the primary sources of inspiration to help us write haiku:

The daily practice of writing ten haiku enriches my experience of the rhythms of nature in my garden and neighborhood. . . . All my senses are expanded and honed. (Eleanor)

New areas of emphasis were found by writing in different places: cafés, restaurants, the beach, the mountains, a doctor’s waiting room, concert halls, and so on:

evening concert drawing the drapery to hold the light inside  

J. Zimmerman

All of us referred to saijiki and other seasonal reference works for inspiration. Writing ten haiku a day provided opportunities to study kigo (season words) in depth:

I’m finding that this process is really good for kigo practice. Some days . . . I pick a kigo and write ten verses with that word. (Phillip)
I use the YTHS Kigo List, years of saved GEPPOs, and on-line essential seasonal words. (Eleanor)\textsuperscript{11}

This has . . . taught me a lot about how season words affect the tone of a haiku. (Phillip)\textsuperscript{12}

The go-to strategy for Greg when he couldn’t write was to put down one image: a leaf, a snail, a bird. Then he would consider what it reminded him of: perhaps a broken relationship, his children, or his wife. Then he would juxtapose the two images. Sometimes gibberish was good if it kept him moving forward in writing.

Some of us resorted to a “keep the pen moving” approach:

I began to experiment with something rather like automatic writing (especially if I had to catch up). . . . I would set a time (anything from half an hour to ten minutes), sit down, and try to write however many haiku I needed to write for that day without thinking much about what I produced. (Phillip)\textsuperscript{13}

However, on the whole we were concerned to write meaningful poems, and not descend into gibberish because of haste or exhaustion. Joan was willing to allow such poems to be candidate gendai haiku, although most were not:

This was a real challenge and I’m not sure I can say that I completely avoided the gibberish part. For me trying to fit the writing in here or there just did not work. I definitely needed a block of time to form the poems and to make that block of time the most efficient, I needed to be gathering material throughout the day. (Patricia)\textsuperscript{14}

Reviewing past work often revealed ideas that had yet to be developed in a haiku. The haiku of other poets also inspired new haiku. We tried but could not always succeed in keeping the work fresh:

I decided it was more important to keep going and so I know I sometimes sacrificed freshness. I did find that my best and freshest poems came out of material gathered on my walk each day. Everything else seemed flat or artificial. (Patricia)\textsuperscript{15}
Squelching the Inner Critic

inchworm
his careful explanation
of why I am wrong

J. Zimmerman

One of the biggest obstacles was the inner critic. Most of us had long and strong discussions with this would-be saboteur. Sometimes the critic even found its way into a poem like that above. Self-criticism included:

I found it dispiriting to put words on paper that seem dull and flat and have no umpph. After a number of consecutive days with similar results, I was ready to quit... at one point I felt I was in a dark valley and nothing I wrote had any hint of promise. (Patricia)

Often a poet actively blocked the critic while writing a first draft, postponing it to surface later during revision:

To make it work I have to take my own advice and squelch the critic and accept some pretty awful writing. I’m trying to withhold judgment until it’s all over. (Patricia)

A poet’s commitment to writing a large number of haiku could be a big help, keeping the poet busy:

I have to trust the process, and put pen to paper, whether I feel like it or not. (Eleanor)

To lower the barrier to writing, Joan wrote with slashes instead of linebreaks in order to make the poems look less “poetic” and more ordinary, such as:

inchworm / his careful explanation / of why I am wrong

which was later submitted and published with line breaks as above.

Drafting in other forms or layouts also seemed helpful, in part because these formats were not as familiar and did not elicit...
harshness from the inner critic. Another method of camouflaging a haiku from the critic was to write it in the simple and direct language of diary or journal entries.

For Greg some days of greatest difficulty took two or three hard-fought battles to get his poetic self in gear. Then suddenly, a stream of haiku would flow. It could be a struggle to get past the inner critic that wanted to judge and comment on each haiku, but once he passed that stage he was free to write.

Sometimes the inner critic was excessively insistent, yet eventually overcome:

As the process went on, I felt I hit a dry spell so that writing ten haiku in a day became a burdensome task. . . . And I found myself being critical which was even more discouraging. But I kept hearing what I tell everyone else: no matter what your critic says, write it down! And now that I’ve worked through that period, I’m glad I did. The material I find is something I can work with and that is very confirming. (Patricia)²⁰

**Experimentation**

knocking
on my own door
Hogmanay

Phillip Kennedy²¹

Most poets experimented with different forms and techniques. As noted earlier and in the haiku above, Phillip thrived by exploring timed or automatic writing.

Many explored the single-line haiku and the way it can lend itself to multiple readings. For Joan that was especially fruitful as it led to twenty-eight of her single-line haiku appearing at *DailyHaiku*, including:

mouth organ lamentations drifting down the coast road fog²²

Paul Miller’s article “Haiku Toolbox: Synesthesia”²³ inspired Greg to mix senses and explore synesthesia:
morning
the slow silence
of a snail

Greg in particular was motivated to explore concrete haiku with varieties of layout, as with this poem appearing here for the first time:

our
patchwork death
his
after conversation

Greg’s format and subject leave the reader with several possible readings of this haiku. They include: our patchwork death / after his conversation; our patchwork / after his death / conversation; his patchwork death / after our conversation; and, after his death / our patchwork conversation.

The mundane was not just allowed to creep in but welcomed, as in this example also by Greg:

Swiss cheese
the way she knows me
inside and out

Other sources of inspiration included supplementing the real with the not-quite-understood, exploring various poetic styles such as mixing metaphors, and delving relentlessly deeper into a single topic, be it music or darker materials.

Revision

fumigating
the memory palace
winter solstice

Phillip Kennedy

We tended not to look back at poems or attempt revision for many weeks after writing them. When reviewing, we typically considered less than a quarter worth possible revision.
Eventually only five-to-ten percent of the total were given significant further work and considered for submission:

The later editing and refining may find only one daily poem worth keeping. Still, I love every word and every attempt, all the crossed out ones, as well as the perfect match. (Eleanor)²⁸

**Conclusion**

almost dawn
the last pillow talk
of towhees

Gregory Longenecker²⁹

We have no information on why Yosa Buson decided to write ten haiku a day, only that he started twice. Even though he did not complete either of his hundred-day plans (the second one being interrupted by his death), his intention was enough to inspire Joan and then four others to try writing ten haiku a day for a hundred days. The results from this disarmingly simple challenge were significant and manifold.

These writers were all skilled in writing haiku at the outset. They each had the freedom to experiment with how, where, and when they would devote themselves to the work. Additionally, they had to find sources of inspiration to help them achieve their daily goal. The challenge of writing so much material forced them to face and sidestep their own inner critics, becoming liberated to explore new ways for them to write haiku.

This experience can be compared to attending a writing course where the teacher assigns a series of exercises in order to help the attendees become better writers. The difference in the Buson One Hundred was that the participants were given only one assignment, to write ten haiku a day, and through this task they achieved something comparable to a writing course. The achievements made were based on each individual’s orientation as to how they would face the challenge. They determined what the syllabus would be and which exercises would
lead to success. In other words, through their personal journeys of self-discovery they shared in the experience Buson began over two centuries ago.

To join us in this practice, you might begin by writing ten haiku one day and ten the next. Continue this for a week. Then decide whether to continue for a hundred days. We invite you.

Acknowledgements

blue sky
the cookie’s
advice

J. Zimmerman

The authors are immensely grateful to our fellow poets Eleanor Carolan, Patricia J. Machmiller, and Phillip Kennedy for joining us in the Buson One Hundred and for allowing us to quote their poetry and prose. We offer a deep bow to Yosa Buson for suggesting this practice. We thank Beverly Acuff Momoi and Patricia J. Machmiller for editorial advice.

Notes

3. Patricia J. Machmiller, The Heron’s Nest, 16:2 (June 2014).
5. Patricia J. Machmiller, “After Buson: One Thousand Poems in One Hundred Days,” forthcoming in GEPPo, date to be determined.
6. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
17. Machmiller, “After Buson: One Thousand Poems in One Hundred Days.”
20. Patricia J. Machmiller, personal communication (February 24, 2014).
25. Gregory Longenecker, first publication here.
27. Phillip Kennedy, first publication here.
30. J. Zimmerman, Modern Haiku 45.2 (summer 2014).

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J. Zimmerman writes widely published haiku, tanka, and haibun. In summer 2014 she was the Poet in Residence at the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music. She was a 2013 New Resonance poet. Recently her haiku were featured at Daily Haiku. She writes articles on the Japanese forms and teaches workshops on tanka. Her poems have been translated into Japanese, Chinese, and German.

Gregory Longenecker is currently editor of the Southern California Haiku Study Group’s annual anthology and has published in Acorn, Atlas Poetica, Bones, bottle rockets, Frogpond, Mariposa, Notes from the Gean, Prune Juice, and tinywords. He has been a prizewinner in the 2013 Haiku Poets of Northern California Haiku Contest, 2012 Tokutomi Haiku Contest, and in the online Shiki Monthly Kukai.
Robert Spiess’s Haiku: Reading and Translating for Better Understanding
John Zheng, Itta Bena, MS

Translation challenges a translator to gain a better understanding of a poem so that he can convey the meaning accurately and poetically in the target language. It also gives him a chance to re-create the poem, though this re-creation should remain faithful to the original. During this re-creative process he has to pay attention to the subject matter as well as the effective function of diction, tone, rhyme, structure, and imagery. A method I have been using in reading haiku for accurate meaning is to translate it into the target language and/or back translate it into the source language so that I will be able to notice the gain and loss. This essay shares some ideas about how reading and translating increase poetic appreciation, for instance, of Robert Spiess’s haiku.

About fourteen years ago I received a greeting card from the poet. The cover was John R. Reynolds’s illustration of a mallard hen and three ducklings cresting the waves and inside was Spiess’s handwritten, ekphrastic haiku that perfectly matches the art:

the pines on shore sway—
a mallard hen and ducklings
crest another wave

This haiku presents a sense of playfulness and light humor, and creates a lucid sound effect of assonance through the use of vowels a and e and the end rhyme in lines 1 and 3. The musicality brings to the fore the kinetic, visual images of swaying pines, surfing ducks, and waves. While innovative haiku minimalists today use truncated phrases or new shapes such as compressed patterns, concrete or vertical forms, and one-liners to offer readers a kaleidoscope of contemporary haiku, Spiess used the traditional pattern of seventeen syllables to create a playful scene that is easily accessible and strong in liquidity, visuality, and musicality. I translate this haiku into Chinese as...
and provide the Chinese phonetic syllables for comparison of variations and subtleties in musicality and diction:

song shu an shang yao
mu ye ya ya bao bao
you shang yi lang jian

In translating this haiku, I try to keep its musicality through the vowel sounds of *ang, u, a,* and *ao* for the effect of assonance and the repetition of *s* and *y* for alliteration. I maintain the end rhyme (lines 1 and 2) and use seventeen Chinese characters to match the traditional, syllabic pattern of Spiess’s haiku.

Here’s a closer look at my process. Instead of choosing 貝 (pronounced as “fu”), a less common name for mallard in Chinese, I use 野鴨 (“ye ya” which means “wild duck”) for assonance. The word “shang” (上), which is used twice, has different parts of speech. In line 1, “shang” is a preposition which means “on,” but in line 3, it is a verb which means “reach” or “to be on top of.” The phrase “bao bao” (寶寶), which means “baby,” is chosen for the sake of the end rhyme, though “ducklings” can also be translated into 小鴨子 (xiao ya zi), which means little ducks. I believe that Spiess’s haiku sounds more like a lovely one written for children, making the use of this phrase appropriate. When used together with “ya” (鴨/duck), the three-word phrase (“ya bao bao”) means ducklings. “You” (又) in line 3 is an adverb, meaning “again”; “yi” (一) is an article for “a” or “one”; and “lang jian” (浪尖) means “crest of the wave.”

For an English speaker to see the variations or subtleties of word choices and to share in the better understanding of the translation, I present a back-translated version: “pine trees on shore sway—/ wild mother duck and ducklings / again reach a crest.”

Interestingly enough, a goose haiku by Spiess is as lovely as his duck one:
patches of snow
mirrored in the flowing stream;
long wedge of geese

Technically speaking, this haiku uses juxtaposition to bring up a perfect symmetrical comparison of the two images, patches of snow and geese. The first two lines parallel the third, but the images, separated by the use of the semicolon, become two independent parts, each existing in its own right. These two parts do not form a simile or metaphor, although we can use the comparative words—“are” or “are like”—to connect them for easy understanding: “patches of snow mirrored in the flowing stream are / are like a long wedge of geese.”

Through the awareness of juxtaposition, a reader may be delightfully surprised to discover an interaction between the two parts and, in turn, increase poetic appreciation: there are patches of snow which are mirrored in the flowing stream and look like geese, or there is a long wedge of geese which looks like patches of snow in the stream. In #790 of his “Speculations,” Spiess asserts that “[t]he juxtaposed, reverberating perceptions of a haiku are far greater than their small verbal frame, and intimate the larger universe of which they are ‘representatives’.” The greater perceptions he talks about include the significance or insight achieved by a haiku poet through the integration of things in nature. Integrating snow, stream, and geese, the perceiver nurtures an aesthetic response to nature.

Whatever lovely picture of integration a reader may have, the visual effect produced by juxtaposition depends on an internal comparison, another haiku technique that suggests, rather than states, the similar and dissimilar characteristics of two different images. As early as 1958, Harold G. Henderson explained that the internal comparison means that “the two parts that make up the whole are compared to each other, not in simile or metaphor, but as two phenomena, each of which exists in its own right. This may be called ‘the principle of internal comparison’ in which the differences are just as important as the likenesses.”

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The images are visual ones in ‘patches of snow,’” but the snow in line 1 is an image in stillness while the stream and the geese in lines 2 and 3 are in motion. However, in context with the flowing stream, the snow in stillness becomes an image in motion, too, and creates, in turn, an associative train of thought in the observer’s mind. The internal comparison provides a moment for imagining the likeness between snow and geese (I feel that geese in this haiku may mean snow geese).

In one respect, Spiess’s goose haiku can be translated into Chinese rather easily because of the similar word order. A word worth a brief discussion is “wedge” in line 3. This word suggests that a long formation of geese in flight is a V shape. To translate it into Chinese, I choose 人 (pronounced as “ren” which means “person”). I choose 人 because the form of the Chinese character looks like an upside-down V shape. Another reason to choose 人 for “wedge” is that, in Chinese culture, the word is often used to describe the wedge shape of the geese in flight. However, an alternative might be to translate “wedge” into 楔形, according to its lexical meaning in Chinese, though this choice of the word would be against the established common use of 人 to describe the formation of geese in flight. A second alternative might be to use the alphabet V for “wedge.” Another word that deserves mentioning is “patch.” I choose 堆 (“dui”) for “patch” though a different word 片 (“pian”) can be a choice. The repetition of the word 堆 conveys the plural meaning of “patches.” Below for examination is my translation accompanied by the phonetic syllables:

堆堆雪
dui dui xue
倒映在流溪中;
dao ying zai liu xi zhong
人形雁陣長
ren xing yan zhen chang

A word-for-word back translation could be “patch and patch of snow / mirrored in the flowing stream / a long V-shape of geese.” However, to simply rewrite the haiku in Chinese, I omit 在 (“zai” which means “in”), the third word in line 2, and this omission is permitted in Chinese usage. Also, the first two words 人形 (“V-shaped”) in line 3 can be omitted so that the
revised translation will consist of only eleven words and maintain the terseness of haiku:

堆堆雪
倒映流溪中:
雁陣長

patch and patch of snow
mirrored in the flowing stream
a long formation of geese

I choose to keep the translation in eleven words for two reasons: First, to make the haiku denser. Second, when kanji (Chinese characters) are used in classical Japanese haiku, a haiku may consist of eleven words, but it may have seventeen onji because some kanji are polysyllabic in Japanese even though kanji are monosyllabic in Chinese. For instance, Bashō’s famous frog haiku has only eleven words (古池や蛙飛び込む水の音), but it has seventeen onji (furu ike ya / kawazu tobi-komu / mizu no oto). Spiess’s haiku consists of only fifteen syllables, and its terse characteristic can be preserved with fewer Chinese characters. Comparing the two versions of Spiess’s goose haiku in Chinese, one notices the gain and loss in translation. To keep or not to keep the same number of syllables depends on how to best present the haiku in translation, and also how to consider issues in tone, diction, image, poetic expression, and readability of the translated poem. In this case, sacrificing the literal sense of V-shape seems to me a fair exchange for fewer syllables.

Another haiku by Spiess also uses an internal comparison, which associates the dusk with the caught fish on the stringer:

Becoming dusk,—
the catfish on the stringer
swims up and down

This haiku is a good example of a haiku moment. The perceiver, who notices the transitoriness of dusk and the strung catfish unable to escape, catches a moment of empathy and of awareness to connect the two images. In his Speculation #773, which was prompted in part by a passage by Chang Chung-yuan, late professor of philosophy and scholar in Daoism at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, Spiess writes, “In a true now-moment of awareness (which can result in a haiku moment and subsequent
haiku) the poet is simultaneously free of his/her subjectivity as perceiver and the objectivity of entities—the ‘subjectivity’ of the poet and the ‘objectivity’ of entities are united.” Here Spiess seems to draw on the notion of kibutsu chinshi, “a poetic technique that can be traced to the Man’yoshu and to Chinese poetry, [in which] the poet expresses his or her thoughts metaphorically, through ‘external things,’ especially natural images.”

In Spiess’s example, “dusk” does not mean an abstract idea of a particular moment; rather, it functions together with the catfish on the stringer as an immediate scene that suggests the perceiver’s underlying feeling, intensified by the inescapable up and down swimming of the catfish. And this catfish image is absorbed not only through the perceiver’s naked eye, but also through his intuitive apprehension of the essence of the natural objects as the projection of his state of mind. This mental process reflects an aesthetic attitude, which Kenneth Yasuda calls “a haiku attitude.”

In translating this haiku, I choose the word 近 (jin), which means “close to” or “nearing” for “becoming.” In a sense, 近 means “becoming” because of its usage in the language. With this word, the haiku sounds more like a poem written in Chinese rather than a translation. Also, because of an easy word order, my translation is almost an exact rendering of the original:

近 黃昏——  jin huang hun
串在繩上的鲶魚  chuan zai sheng shang de nian yu
上下遊動  shang xia you dong

A word-for-word back translation into English (“nearing dusk—/ the catfish on the stringer / up and down swims”) shows only a minor variation in word order in line 3.

The following haiku by Spiess presents the bird voice that seems to function as a call to raise human awareness of nature:

The chain saw stops;
   deeper in the winter woods
     a chickadee calls

     .................................................................
Frogpond 37:3  97
One of our contemporary tragedies is the human destruction of nature and the plundering of natural resources. This haiku is a mini eco-poem that expresses ecological concerns. Ecopoetry is not quite nature poetry in the sense of pastoral or Romantic writing. Having evolved in the late 20th century as a subgenre of poetry with a strong emphasis on human responses to ecological changes and on human awareness of environmental disasters, ecopoetry has been a type of creative expression with a strong tone of human responsibility. In this vein, Spiess challenges the reader to examine environmental disaster through the image of the chainsaw and to ponder the impact of human actions on nature. If human beings stop destroying nature, nature in return will offer its beauty through a chickadee’s call, even in bleak winter, which is nature’s meaningful response to human nature.

“The chain saw stops” has a 4–7–5 syllabic pattern. In my first translation, I try to keep the same number of syllables:

连锁停了；
冬天林子更深處
一隻山雀鳴

lián jù tíng le
dòng tiān lín zǐ gèng shēn chū
yī zhī shān quē míng

but a second look at the translation prompts me to think that it can be condensed into a 3–5–3 syllabic pattern without losing the meaning of the original. For instance, though “dong” (冬) can be used together with “tian” (天) in line 2 to form a compound word to mean “winter,” “dong” itself means “winter” too; therefore, “tian” can be abandoned. Another compound word is “lin zǐ” (林子 woods). Without “zǐ” (子), “lin” (林) still means “woods,” so “winter woods” can be condensed into “dong lín” (冬林) rather than “dong tiān lín zǐ” (冬天林子), which seems wordy in translation and awkward in poetic expression. Another word that can be dropped is “le” (了) in line 1, an unstressed auxiliary word which performs the grammatical function of tense to mean the completion of an action or serves as a kireji. The deletion of “le” (了) does not affect the meaning. In line 3, the article “yī” (一 / a) and the measure word “zhi” (隻) can also be dropped because they seem not distinctive in the Chinese version. Maynard Mack mentions in “A Note on Translation” that “since Chinese... lacks distinctions of
gender, of singular and plural, of a and the... also of tenses, the pressure of the English translator to rearrange, straighten out, and fill in to ‘make sense’ for his or her reader remains strong.”

Mack’s discussion is provocative with regard to two points: (1) the use of a and the is not distinctive in Chinese; and (2) since translation of Chinese poetry into English may require a translator to “rearrange, straighten out, and fill in to ‘make sense’ for his or her reader” by adding, for instance, a and the, we can also rearrange to make sense by deleting a and the measure word in translation. The revised version thus reads:

鏈鋸停；
冬林更深處
山雀鳴
lian ju ting
dong lin geng shen chu
shan que ming

I render the haiku back into English with the omission of words mentioned above, but not, I think, of meaning as

chain saw stops;
der deeper in winter woods
chickadee’s call

Let’s read another bird haiku by Spiess:

Winter wind—
bit by bit the swallow’s nest
crumbles in the barn

Different from the “chain saw” haiku, this one examines the relationship between the natural power of wind and the gradual destruction of the swallow’s nest. The poet renews human awareness of the nonhuman world and its interrelatedness through his observation of the nest’s bit-by-bit crumbling in the winter wind. This haiku puts into practice what Spiess states in #768 of his “Speculations”: “Haiku surprise us with new approaches to perception—not by exotic or esoteric phenomena but by the factual occurrences in our day to day lives.”

“Winter wind” also expresses a bit of sadness on the poet’s part, for his inability to rescue the nest from nature’s cycle of life and death.
I first try a translation with an exact word order to match the original version:

冬風——
一點一點地燕巢
碎在穀倉
dong feng
yi dian yi dian de yan chao
sui zai gu cang

but when I read my translation orally, I realize that “winter wind” sounds the same as “eastern wind” (東風). They both have the same phonetic syllables: “dong feng.” To help a reader easily understand “dong feng” as the “winter wind” in the haiku, I insert “ji” (season) between the two words. Also, “bit by bit” is an adverbial phrase modifying the verb “crumbles” and its position before the noun does not cause trouble in English. But, if a word-for-word order is kept and “yi dian yi dian de” (一點一點地 / bit by bit) is placed before “yan chao” (燕巢 / swallow’s nest), the line seems awkward in Chinese, for the adverbial phrase may sound like an adjectival phrase modifying the nest if the line is read without a pause between the two parts of speech. With these concerns in mind, I rearrange the word order of the second and the third lines to make the translation sound more like a colloquial Chinese expression:

冬季風——
穀倉裡的燕巢
一點點碎了
dong ji feng
gu cang li de yan chao
yi dian dian sui le

which reads in English as “winter wind— / the swallow’s nest in the barn / bit by bit crumbles.” Then, to make it sound less colloquial and more poetic, I use the 3–5–3 syllabic pattern to get the third version:

冬季風——
燕巢一點點
碎穀倉
dong ji feng
yan chao yi dian dian
sui gu cang

The back-translation reads as “winter wind— / the swallow’s nest bit by bit / crumbles in the barn.” This version is similar to the original except that “bit by bit” is placed after the noun; however, the preposition in line 3 has been dropped. The word-for-word translation would be “crumbles barn,” which may
sound ridiculous in English, but the Chinese reader, without the help of a preposition, knows definitely that the original means “crumbles in the barn.” Even though these few words are omitted and the word order is altered in line 2, the message in the original haiku is faithfully maintained in translation.

Cor van den Heuvel says in The Haiku Anthology: “Haiku is basically about living with intense awareness, about having an openness to the existence around us—a kind of openness that involves seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching.”12 Spiess, a fine haiku practitioner, lived accordingly. Conscious of nature and of human nature, he used senses and images to raise in readers an awareness of their co-dependent existence. As stated in his Speculation #785, he framed this awareness as “the aesthetic, senseful, psychological, existential moment of the ‘now’ wherein the infinite past and infinite future are included and transcended.”13 The now-ness of Spiess’s haiku and his aesthetic attitude draw me to the challenge of translating his poetry. I believe that translation is a re-creation of the original, and that this re-creation leads to better understanding and appreciation. Even though something in the original may be lost in translation, an excellent haiku can remain much the same in the target language. Also, back translation can be a useful tool, for it provides extra checks to ensure quality, accuracy, and poetic expression for better reading and understanding.

Notes


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*John Zheng edits* Journal of Ethnic American Literature. *He is a recipient of the 2014 literary arts fellowship from Mississippi Arts Commission.*

by Charlotte Digregorio, Winnetka, IL

Haiku Elvis epitomizes senryu. Since the time we were young, we all dreamed of achieving fame and recognition, if only for a few minutes, when watching someone famous. Carlos Colón, a longtime haiku and senryu poet, lets us dream about fame through his persona of Elvis, often making us laugh at ourselves and our illusions. He compiled his book largely as a clever channeling of poems from Elvis:

hoping I can
fit back through it
kitchen door

screaming fan—
in her hand
a clump of my hair

The book is divided into parts, among them: “Birth of a Rock Star,” “Matinee Idol,” “Family Man,” and “On the Road.” It is filled with light-hearted humor and wordplay, illustrating the celebrity performer’s life:

not myself tonight
my belt missing
a rhinestone

late for the sky
another
curtain call

lost luggage
I ask for the bag
with the blue suede shoes
Paris—
in my mouth
a foreign tongue

Some of the poems in this collection were written prior to Colón’s “Haiku Elvis” days, although he deftly weaves them into the life of Elvis:

family time
a conversation
between bathrooms

Ever the senryu poet, he includes poems that won awards in significant competitions:

in the middle
of making love
counting syllables

Though *Haiku Elvis* contains mostly senryu, there are also haiku of a serious tone. Colón is a spiritual person, and often his poems include Christian symbols. One of my favorite haiku in the book takes off on Elvis’s famous song, “Blue Christmas”:

a little more
periwinkle this year
my Blue Christmas

In the poem above, periwinkle is a symbol of eternity, a reminder of the departed that we were close to.

Another haiku that embodies spiritual sensibilities is:

pointing
my way home
the starfish

The starfish symbolizes the Virgin Mary. She promises safe travel over troubled waters, and is an emblem of salvation during trying times.
Further, consider this lovely haiku:

summer’s end
the trace of your shadow
through my sunglasses

In reading this book throughout, we have the idea that the often laconic Elvis Presley might have relished haiku for its brevity, had he known about it, and found in it a subtle vehicle for his innermost feelings. Reportedly, Elvis often experienced painfully lonely thoughts. It has been widely publicized that he was an introspective man who pondered his existence and read books on religion and mysticism.

Could Elvis ever come back as a haiku poet? One thing is for sure: if Elvis did come back, he would find Colón’s haiku thoughtful and delightful, capturing his sensibilities.

The book’s attractive front and back covers, featuring Colón dressed in a white jumpsuit as The King, invite even non-poets to discover haiku. The book undoubtedly will work to bring haiku into the mainstream.

At the end of the book, Jim Kacian, haiku poet and founder of The Haiku Foundation, interviews both “Haiku Elvis” and Colón. The author discusses the free form of haiku that he practices, educating those who grew up thinking they must write in the 5–7–5 syllable format. He makes such points as the need to cut back on our use of adjectives and adverbs when writing haiku. This interview is a great introduction for those who read the book not knowing about haiku and its modern form.

*Haiku Elvis* is a worthy, intuitive book, and it is an excellent addition to our haiku and senryu collections.

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*Charlotte Digregorio is the author of the new book, Haiku and Senryu: A Simple Guide for All. She is HSA’s Midwest regional coordinator.*
Aubrie Cox. Yay Words! @http://yaywords.wordpress.com/: A Blog Review.

by Jessica Tremblay, Burnaby, BC

During the month of June 2014, I really enjoyed reading the tiny haibun (or “tibun”) that Aubrie Cox published on her blog Yay Words!

Aubrie describes her blog as “[a] celebration of language and the written word (with a little art on the side).” Some poets might know Aubrie from the Doodleku she led on her blog for many months: she would post a drawing and ask poets to write an accompanying poem in the comments. But in June, there was a sudden shift in her blog postings as she started writing very short prose followed by a haiku.

Living Things

I’ve yet to visit since you moved into the mausoleum. Every poem could be my last.

Guess I’ve social anxiety even among the dead.

Sunday in the park
butterfly shadow
between the bells

Her haibun reminded me of tanbun, a genre invented by Larry Kimmel, which is a combination of a short prose of 31 or less syllables followed by haiku or tanka. Aubrie replied to my comment on her blog by saying: “A little over a year ago I discovered hint fiction, which is fiction in 25 words or less. After experimenting, I started doing these haibun with prose within those confines.”

Whether her haibun are facts or fiction, they are highly effective in emotionally engaging the reader.
White Balance

You arrive at the Star of Hope Mausoleum, only to find it locked in the minutes you sat in the car working up your nerve.

sun showers
she brings hot tea
without asking²

Aubrie occasionally adds link within the prose or haiku, adding an element of interactivity to the poem.

Signs of Life

Tufts of fox fur litter the end of the drive. You look everywhere for blood before it rains.

green tomatoes
*evolution*
of the human face³

In this poem, the link takes you to an article explaining how the human face evolved as a result of physical violence: the tiny bones becoming more robust as a means of protection against small impacts such as that of a human fist.

The titles of Aubrie’s haibun also caught my attention: they are beautiful and poetic and they can stand by themselves, almost like short poems: “Sporadic Flu Activity” (June 25), “81% of the Moon is Illuminated” (June 16), “Meteorological Summer” (June 2).

Beyond the Limit of Astronomical Twilight

I convince myself fireflies are varying shades of yellow and green like vaseline glass.

That my hips don’t hurt when I run.

That we’re talking.

cilantro seeds—
all my favorite
B-side songs⁴
Sometimes there is some kind of association between the title and the haibun, but oftentimes there doesn’t seem to be any link between the title and the piece, which adds a touch of surrealism to the haibun. When I asked her where her title ideas came from, Aubrie wrote: “One good place for titles and/or inspiration is Wunderground.com’s charts and stats for your area.” When I looked on the website (which is a local weather app), I did see “Sporadic Flu Activity” as one of the headlines for my area. Great title for a haibun! What a clever appropriation of weather terms for poetic purposes!

Today is Forecast to Be Nearly the Same Temperature
As Yesterday

You rarely write about sound. You explain there are two types of pain. You wonder if there are any other stories left in you.

   cool after the rain . . .
   mosquito larvae twist
   in on themselves

Here, the image of “mosquito larvae twisting in on themselves” is surprising. We often read the same image, over and over, in haiku. It is nice to read something new and original in a poem. I said as much in a comment on her blog, and Aubrie replied: “I’ve been trying hard to find something new and fresh, though I’ve definitely caught myself sliding into some old habits here and there.”

Aubrie serves as the haiga editor for the online haikai journal *A Hundred Gourds*. After graduating from Millikin University with a B.A. in English literature and writing, she completed her M.A. in English creative writing at Ball State University in 2013.

According to the About me section on her website, “Aubrie Cox went to university to write a novel; she came out writing haiku. It’s worked out pretty well so far.”

Considering the tibun on *Yay Words!* I’d say things have worked out well, too.
Notes

6. www.aubriecox.com/about/

Jessica Tremblay is the author of “Old Pond Comics” published in Frogpond and at www.oldpondcomics.com. In 2013 she was the official cartoonist-in-residence at Haiku North America, Seabeck Haiku Getaway, and Haiku Hot Springs. In 2014 she received a Canada Council for the Arts Grant for Professional Writers to continue exploring the new genre of “haiku-comics.”

by Kath Abela Wilson, Pasadena, CA

Children
From Fukushima
Dash into a white surf

Many of us think of “our” Fukushima, for good reason. Fukushima, March 11, 2011. There is a small leap of the heart common to all of us. This was the day of nuclear disaster, the meltdown at the nuclear power plant in Fukushima that was hit by a tsunami caused by the 9.0 magnitude earthquake. Three hundred thousand people were evacuated from this area, and the work of recovery will continue for decades.

For Taro Aizu (Aizu is his pen name, he was born in Aizu-Misato, Fukushima Prefecture) this is no small leap of the heart. It goes very personally and deeply to his roots. It is his Fukushima, his childhood, his cherished hometown.

Born in Fukushima, he lived there for 18 years until entering college in Tokyo. After graduation with a degree in French literature he moved to Kanagawa Prefecture, where he has lived for 37 years. Once a year, since then, he has visited his hometown for Obon, which honors the spirits of ancestors. “When I visited Fukushima in August 2011,” he told me, “I saw my nephews hanging dosimeters around their necks. The scene gave a great shock and it inspired me to write ‘My hometown, Fukushima’ in 2012. At last, I could publish it in May, 2014.”

I had read *My Fukushima* in the Kindle edition twice when I so fortunately traveled to Kanagawa, and was able to meet Taro there in June 2014. With gentle generosity he gave me the gift of his beautiful hardcover in French, Japanese, and English.
I have always loved the individual haiku of Taro for their crystal clear moments expressed with such heart, delicacy, and powerful description. But when I read *My Fukushima* I was surprised and further moved by the strength of his feeling and expression. His book draws me back, over and over.

Nothing can equal a book on a commonly felt theme that emerges from strong, immediate personal experience. Taro’s haiku, tanka prose, and haibun recall with intensity his childhood home. He speaks with intimate detail of its innocence and the sudden change to a difficult, threatening existence. The progression gathers strength as we experience all this very emotionally and feel the seeds of the unseen and unknown—before and after the disaster. We are drawn to his side to view the scene. We read:

At last I visited Miharu to see the Takizakura I April 2012. It was as beautiful as always. I stayed looking up at it for two hours.

Takizakura is the beautiful cherry tree seen in Fukushima.

One thousand years
Flow through the blossoms—
Takizakura

Taro observes the scene in Fukushima . . .

One by one
One by one
Cherry blossoms

Then he views the familiar, now deserted, beaches near the nuclear plant.

As if the tsunami
Had been a fabrication
A calm sea in spring
As we progress with him through the seasons, we see what he sees and remembers, we notice with him endurance and fragility.

Summer grass  
Only house foundations  
Remain in silence

Groundwater  
Climbs into the dead trunk  
The silence in winter

The falling snow  
Black cows wandering  
Near the plant

Japanese daffodils  
Bloom in midwinter  
Quiet energy

The exquisitely written haibun set the scene with such specifics that we feel present in real time, in the hometown of our hearts in innocence, danger, and hope. The book ends with a litany of specific wishes for his hometown, in haiku form. *My Fukushima* speaks tenderly for all of us of the beauty and fragility of life itself.

◊◊◊

*Kath Abela Wilson, secretary of the Tanka Society of America, an active member of the Southern CA Haiku Study Group, creator and leader of the Pasadena-based international group Poets on Site, gives live performances and publishes her haiku and tanka widely in journals and anthologies. She travels the world with her mathematician husband who accompanies her on flutes of all countries.*
The cover illustration of *Symbiotic Poetry* by artist and writer Werner Reichhold features a collage of words, drawings, and photographs that hints at the scope of this latest volume produced with his wife, Jane. Containing a body of work that includes prose and short plays penned by the Reichholds over several decades, this book is much more than a poetry collection.

In the three-page introduction, “Coming to Terms,” the authors address the familiar problem of how to define English-language poetry inspired by a whole range of traditional Japanese forms such as haiku, tanka, and renga. Issues including differences in sound between the English and Japanese languages; the fact that today’s poetry is informed by experiences far removed from the simple, rural life of the early haijin; and the use of experimental poetic techniques suggest that it was inevitable that such Western poetry would evolve into something very different from its traditional Eastern counterpart.

Bearing this in mind, the Reichholds present the case for adopting the term “symbiotic poetry” to categorize this type of work which has been inspired by different cultures and poetry forms—in other words, of mixed literary parentage. Both writers have sifted through their creative output of “borrowed genres” (to use Jane’s own words) to find examples of such work. This rich and unusual collection is the result.

So that the reader can distinguish between each of their contributions, Jane’s work is typeset in Book Antigua and Werner’s in Arial on the pages of the text. However, their individual styles are so distinct that they are easily recognisable.
For instance, if the following two tanka in Jane’s series “A Thank You” from *In the Presence* are compared with Werner’s untitled poem from *Bridge of Voices*, the difference in style is immediately evident.

waiting on you
in a vase of admiration
the rhododendron
its perfection stops just short
of breaking into song

and

alone and cloaked
a walk in the woods
I am recognized
trees wave leafy boughs
flowers nod and wave

linking 
man on the moon 
two stars
snail of an ear 
the spoken word 
winding
all holes linked 
Swiss cheese
smoke of a joint 
the leaves of no virgin 
circling
a letter unfolding 
two roses
silver arrow 
the cry of geese
whenever we meet 
the tide is changing 
color

The first two poems, which are quite traditional, very visual, and suggest a certain oneness with nature, reveal the poet’s sentiments quite clearly. The third is like a spell or chant and begins almost as a list poem detailing a dream. Even when the author comments in the last line, we are not totally sure exactly what is being described, so the reader must work in order to arrive at a conclusion.

Many of the themes that run through the book are traditional: nature, love and relationships, birth and death, loneliness and growing old. There are some really beautiful poems, in particular, the “Water-Renga” from *Narrow Road to Renga* written by both Jane and Werner. This sequence features mermaids,
sea fog, and tide pools. Again their individual contributions reflect their different poetic styles and it is interesting to observe how they combine—“symbiotically”—to create something new and surprising:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{darting into spindrift} \\
&\text{silver between his talons} \\
&\text{(Jane)}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{gold medal winner} \\
&\text{dives into advertising} \\
&\text{sun oil} \\
&\text{(Werner)}
\end{align*}
\]

And a touching tanka from *Bowls I Buy* describes Jane as sculptress not only of her clay creations, but also of the child she carries:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{hands folded} \\
&\text{she models for the artist} \\
&\text{in clay} \\
&\text{her smile shapes within} \\
&\text{a son who looks like him}
\end{align*}
\]

In the following haiku from *Ten Years Haikujane*, several of the senses come into play in just seven words to create an extremely visual and auditory haiku:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{wild lilac} \\
&\text{a bush speaks} \\
&\text{with bees}
\end{align*}
\]

and from the same collection of Jane’s, the cyclical nature of life is highlighted in this haiku with the images of birth and death in the first two lines. In line three, “nest-shaped” suggests the season of spring, and therefore birth . . . and so life continues:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{eggshell} \\
&\text{a bird’s skull} \\
&\text{nest-shaped}
\end{align*}
\]
This love haiku by Werner from *Layers of Content* effectively employs a shift of focus from the close-up, tiny speck of light in a lover’s eyes to the faraway mass of stars in the universe. I found it to be a beautiful poem:

on a voyage  
the light in your eyes  
star to star

The use of the collective noun “herd” for snowflakes is also striking in Werner’s lines from “Into My Heart,” a collaborative poem taken from the collection *Film of Words*:

turning loose  
a herd of snowflakes  
the lover’s lips unseen

However, these form just a small part of “Into My Heart,” demonstrating how its individual components can be enjoyed as well-constructed, stand-alone poems as well as integral parts of the complete piece. When read as a whole, it moves along at a rapid pace and feels very spontaneous.

It is perhaps the spontaneity employed in parts of the collection that sometimes results in a slightly disjointed effect. This technique combined with the occasional lack of logical (or perhaps traditional) construction brought to mind some of the work of the Absurdist playwrights and New Wave film makers in Europe when reflecting the absurd nature of the human condition—the conflict between our constant search to find meaning in life and our inability to do so. They also favoured the technique of self-reference which appears in Werner’s short play, *Alfredo and Traviata*, at the beginning of *Symbiotic Poetry*. Here, there is reference to the craft of writing when Alfredo reports that “the guys mentioned earlier (Freud, Foucault, and Derrida) stated, ‘A special kind of madness is one of the conditions, requirements, qualifications in finding a concept for writing poetry.’” Indeed, the characters’ sometimes
meandering conversations reminded me a little of the work of the Irish writer, Samuel Beckett.

The book ends with a journal entry from *Invitation* entitled “Wednesday January 14, 1998.” The detailed preparations depicted for what was obviously a very important event led me to believe that Jane was describing her wedding day. It is, in fact, a meticulous account of their participation in the New Year’s Poetry Reading at the Imperial Court of Japan. The Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko had invited the Reichholds to that year’s prestigious event, Utakai Hajimi, and I really enjoyed reading this firsthand report of the occasion. This in turn allowed me to reread Werner’s piece, “Entering the Poetry” with a much better understanding. Here is an extract:

Poems leave their notation
in the singers’ mouth, in the direction toward their Majesties
and back from wooden walls, the acoustic is timing its echoes.
Voices go for a swim in space,

and a tanka from Jane’s account:

feeling the poetry
deepening in the voices
men chanting
The Pine Tree Room reaches out
to the god in every one

Jane and Werner Reichhold’s distinctive styles and their influence on each other when working collaboratively could be considered an excellent example of symbiosis at work. No doubt they absorb some of each other’s poetic rhythm; in fact, the following haiku is typeset in Arial, therefore it must be Werner’s—but it also sounds a lot like Jane’s!

from a bay
escorting salt
the spin of birds
In any case, it left me slightly breathless with a hint of sea spray or spindrift in the air. I have no doubt that *Symbiotic Poetry* is one of those books that I shall be dipping into again and again.

ETHER

Marion Clarke is a creative writer, visual artist, and poetry facilitator from the east coast of Northern Ireland. A graduate of the University of Ulster and post graduate of the University of the West of England, she began her writing career producing technical articles for the UK trade press. Then she discovered haiku.

As the title of T.A. Carter’s new chapbook indicates, here is a haiku how-to—a modest, yet handy one, at that. Twenty poems each illustrate a particular haiku technique or principle, very briefly explained on the facing page. Also included are suggested readings for further study especially focused on the work of Carter’s fellow Canadian poets. Although pitched to beginners, the primer can serve as a technical to-do list for more seasoned haiku poets as well. This writer has spent more than one delightful afternoon exploring the same experience expected depths in the moment. *Silence / of old growth cedars—/tourist’s small talk [contrast]; under the blue sky / hydrangea petals / in the stone bird bath [shasei]; ocean view / through the hole in the hedge / missing cherry blossoms [sabi]. ~MRB*


In this chapbook, Robert Epstein composes his paean to the whimsy, wonder, and disarming naïveté of the under-10 set. Rather than recall his own childhood, he revels in the insights wrung from the charming *bons mots* of an ebullient, highly
imaginative niece. Though some of the 50 haiku and senryu he presents verge on familial anecdote, with little space for expansion of meaning, the sympathetic reader (one who recognizes him or herself in the besotted adult) will find ample room for reflection in many other poems. A light tone and a deft use of italics has the effect of making the child’s voice—and the poet’s delight—come alive. my niece’s birthday / she wants to sleep tonight / in a flower bed; out of the blue / my niece names the colors / wonder comes in; my niece / folds the sky in half / to save it. ~MRB


In this little book Miriam Sagan, friend of Elizabeth Searle Lamb and editor of her collected work (Across the Wind-harp), offers up a “posthumous dialogue” with the poet she calls her teacher. With a few exceptions, the poems by Lamb presented here were unpublished and uncollected at her death. The risk in such an enterprise is to include the improvised sketch never meant for public view along with finished work. A number of Lamb’s poems (there are 36) may be unfinished nuggets of poetic thought, yet many are polished gems. Beneath each of Lamb’s poems, Sagan has placed one of her own, written in “an attempt to enter into the mind of Elizabeth Searle Lamb’s haiku.” Many of these responses restate the same material, too close in subject matter to expand the poetics of the original. Those that work well link much more indirectly, in the manner of a freewheeling exchange of ideas. Still, there is much to treasure in this “conversation.” In one of her haiku, Lamb asks whether she will be able to write her death poem when the time comes. Readers may find that some presented here beautifully fit the bill. the night sky / curls around itself / slow moving stars [ESL] slow stars / above my house / year after year [MS]; before I make / the important phone call / fresh lipstick [ESL] a thank you note / for a thank you note— / Shinto gate postcard
[MS]; the sharp ping / of a breaking harp string / the empty room [ESL] at the funeral / the harp suddenly / plays “Carmen” [MS]. ~MRB


In this second collection, Francis Attard presents an anthology of 350 or more poems (some previously published), along with commentary on haiku and senryu and a dash of experimental verve. Working in English as a second language, he offers up solid haiku of haunting musicality and wry wisdom, unfortunately awash, for this reader at least, in a small sea of less-well-crafted poems. Particularly remarkable for its one-line ku, this is a collection in need of pruning from a poet well worth the watching. dislikes purple of the moonflower Sunday date; year’s end in a second-hand bookshop one I autographed; wake to the plaintive cry of the piping plover winter. ~MRB


In this collection of bare bones haiku, George Swede arranges 101 poems by date of composition over thirty-six years. Characterized by technical excellence and poetic acumen, every one of his micro haiku packs a punch and demonstrates—in his publisher’s words—“how the world’s shortest poetic form can be even shorter and still create resonance.” With remarkably little repetition of ideas or images, Swede hones his ku to the sharp edge of comparison, contrast, irony, personification, allusion, linguistic misdirection, paradox, and more. One truly gets the sense that, in whatever way language opens up disjunctive space, Swede has been there, done that and masterfully so. as i enter moonlight fills her room; snowflakes bricks; brook / sunlight / Bach. ~MRB

Three years ago Lee Gurga and Scott Metz coedited Haiku 21: An Anthology of Contemporary English-Language Haiku (see review in Frogpond 35:2). For this first (hopefully annual) supplement, the editors screened over 10,000 haiku published in 2013 and feature “100 notable ku” by 100 authors. As in the first publication, this edition questions “What can haiku be?” and sets out to explore the possibilities. Many of the poems are innovative and experimental, not in a random fashion but, as the editors explain, in a way that each might engage the reader in “cognitive effect rather than in relation to typography or layout.” Included also are haiku that follow the more traditional approach, but with unique and fresh perspective and appeal. As readers, editors, and publishers we should seek out haiku of excellence in the full range of traditional and modern practice, haiku that speak to us on more than one level, that inspire and challenge us. At times we may feel uncomfortable with the result; we may ask, “Is this a haiku?” But if the poem clings to the conscious and/or subconscious mind and reaches us on a variety of levels, including emotional, intellectual, imaginative, and intuitive, we will find ourselves engaged even if we can’t explain the exact meaning or intent of the lines. A few of the many excellent haiku in this collection that speak to me: another bird dream probing the tenderness under a wing (Melissa Allen); in his buttonhole our forgotten war (Fay Aoyagi); Parable; / too heavy / for insect wings (Joe Polsky); a blue coffin / one nail escapes / the solar system (Peter Yovu). ~FB


A tight little collection of 45 haiku that offer sometimes expected and often surprising juxtapositions. We find encounters human and nature based that pay attention especially to
movement and sound, yet are interlaced with moments of quiet and solitude. This careful balance, coupled with Cooper’s eye for detail and keen articulation, adds a quality of “overtone” to many of his poems. Overtones can be heard in harmonic and disharmonic musical compositions. They can be seen in the color of reflected light. They can also suggest secondary meaning and connotation in the spoken and written word. The reader will find all of these elements in this satisfying and engaging collection, which is divided into three sections: “the many paths,” “flowing into watercolor,” and “softening taps.” One poem from each section: the haiku / of a humpback whale / one breath; feast over / a second round / of soft tuba notes; onshore breeze / the fiddler crab stretching / a smaller claw. ~FB


In both English and Swedish this compact collection of 40 haiku and senryu offers a mix that ranges from the uncanny to the melancholic. One gets a sense that Johansson is confident inside his writing skin, that he sees life and relationships as they are and doesn’t hesitate to say so. Contrary to what the title poem suggests—the firefly’s signature / on the night sky / unreadable—all of these poems are accessible and many suggest something deeper than what first meets the eye. The chapbook is divided into three sections, “their first quarrel,” “the wrong window,” and “the druid arrives,” which set the tone for a good measure of tension, but we also find resolution in many of the poems. Others allow the author’s unique sense of play to shine through. Some of my favorites capitalize on Johansson’s skill with word choice and diction, for trimming the lines to just what is needed to grab and hold the reader’s attention with a range of poems from 6 to 17 syllables. A memorable collection. a ladybird / b5 to c4; june bride / the church filled / with second thoughts; art deco knob / it was here / i was made; rainy july / bite marks / on the table tennis racket. ~FB

When the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami struck the Pacific coast of Japan, Madoka Mayuzumi was in Paris serving as Japan’s cultural ambassador to Europe. On her return to Japan she visited the stricken areas and held writing sessions with hopes that haiku would help the survivors regain purpose and strength in the aftermath of the disaster. *So Happy to See Cherry Blossoms* features her selection of 126 haiku written by survivors aged 8–91, with an account of the moment that inspired each haiku. The editor includes notes on the *kigo* used and additional translators’ notes are provided. Divided by season into four sections, the collection recounts loss and survival through the eyes, hearts, and pens of those who found comfort in cherry blossoms about to bloom, a dandelion in the grass, a lone pine tree, a grandchild singing, wildflowers, fireflies, a pot of roses, moon and candle light, sweet sake, and more. *Within me aftershocks have come to inhabit spring deep* (Saitō Kazuko); *Some large radishes put up to dry in a make-shift row* (Kikuta Tōshun). ~FB


A small but eye-appealing collection of 32 haiku and senryu by 16 members marking the 20th anniversary of the towpath haiku society. A bright array of voices from the Washington, D.C. area, with an interesting variety of themes and well-crafted poems. *wood chisel / releasing the curve of a wing* (Patricia A. Rogers); *after Mardi Gras / the mockingbird’s nest / glittering* (Kathleen O’Toole); *waiting room / how this blood test / is a poem* (Jimmy Aaron/Peach). ~FB

Those who have had the opportunity to hear Marjorie Buettner read her haibun recognize not only her skill but also her passion for the form, which she expresses beautifully through a heart that has traveled the corridors of wisdom. In this first collection she takes the reader from season to season, and at the end, briefly into a world where dreams fuel the exquisite prose and capping haiku. (Six of the 51 haibun are capped with tanka.) In the words of Marian Olson, these are haibun “composed by a writer who cares about language that draws the reader into her sensual and sensuous musings.” Each one draws us, as the title suggests, into a measure of her existence. This is a collection that will warm your bones through the coming months of winter. ~FB


Sixty-three haibun comprise the author’s second collection, which he introduces with this haiku: *summer dusk—/tucked between pages/the pieces of a life.* These are stories wonderfully told from memory and notes Coats has taken through the years about folks from all walks of life, “but with a particular focus on the impoverished, the illiterate, the physically or psychologically wounded, the immigrant.” The capping haiku are as good as the prose and I found myself stopping often to let the language work its magic. Four sections—“Mercy,” “Crossing the Border,” “Side Roads,” and “Trace of a River”—place us in the presence of the author’s humanity. ~FB

**Publication Update: James Fuson. 20 Years: Reflections of an Empty Sky** (briefly reviewed in *Frogpond* 37:2) is available at www.softsculpture.org.
Neal Whitman, Pacific Grove, CA, on Sheila Sondik’s haiku:

Poetry is about life and death and everything in between. This is true of all forms of poetry, yes? This has been even more true for me since I became a hospice bereavement volunteer. Today my copy of *Frogpond* arrives as I am heading out of the house to meet a woman in pain dealing with the loss of her husband. Per usual, I show up early at our local coffee shop so that I can read poetry ahead of our session. This helps ground me for whatever unfolds. I peruse *Frogpond* and see two haiku with the word “hospice,” plus several haiku dealing with loss and grief. When I come to Sheila Sondik’s haiku

```
hospice visit  
his favorite topic still  
buying and selling
```

I feel a stab of recognition. No two people experience the same grief and no two people grieve the same way. But, as a hospice volunteer, I hear variations on the theme of negotiation. In some instances, the person in bereavement tells me that his or her loved one had tried to bargain with God, with the universe, with death (folks hold many beliefs). Or the person in front of me reports that, *seeing his or her loved one nearing the end of life, tried to strike a bargain.* As I read this haiku, it brings light to a dark subject . . . even a smile. Not a wide one. But the corners of my lips curve up. We all think or hope we can talk our way out of a tough situation, don’t we? My parents thought I would become a lawyer when I explained my C in third grade conduct: “Yes, but it’s the best of the bad grades.” As I listen to my hospice client today, I hear how she had tried to talk her way out of a bad deal. This haiku helped ready me to listen.
Bonnie Stepenoff, Cape Girardeau, MO, on Anne LB Davidson’s haiku:

The great blue heron is a tough old waterbird, not too particular about its surroundings. I have seen them in the wetlands of Louisiana and at the edge of a lake in the Ozarks. All they need is a body of water with fish in it. Even the Missouri winter does not seem to faze them. Since I live near the bottoms of the Mississippi River, I sometimes see them in the fields along the narrow road to my subdivision. One day not too long ago, at the end of a rainy afternoon, I looked down into the ditch beside the road and saw one lifting its long leg carefully from a muddy pool. Part of me thought, there is majesty here, even in this lowly place, and part of me wondered about the habitat of this beautiful bird. Will our earth provide a home for it forever? That is why I was so taken with Anne LB Davidson’s haiku

into the future
the great blue heron’s
widespread wings

Brent Partridge, Orinda, CA, on five haiku:

A number of the haiku in issue 37:2 have a quality of reaching or stretching out. They have a surface simplicity, then open. Here are some examples.

Bruce Ross’s

Walden Pond
from a tree to my hand
autumn leaf

has a reaching out from almost two hundred years ago—and a reaching backward. Often, of course, autumn leaves are somewhat hand shaped, and remind us that we too will be gone. In this case, the interconnected quality reaches

..........................................................
from Thoreau through the tree to Bruce—and through him to us.

In Ken Olson’s

a tea kettle sings
through the open window
sparrows on cue

we hear the sparrows singing along in the same way that birds often tend to flock with other types of birds. With some of us, reference to a tea kettle resonates with Hakuin-zenji’s work.

Bruce H. Feingold’s

retirement
a flash of sanderlings turns
toward the sea

shows with the unique word use of “flash” that turning may be more than advancement. It also shows the liberation of microcosms.

Roman Lyakhovetsky’s

sleepwalking
i bump into the last
line of the poem

takes us beyond sleeping and waking.

Joseph Salvatore Aversano’s

autumn duck call hinges in the wind

opens in a number of ways: the shape of the sound as it spreads out on the wind; an echo of the sound of a hinge in a hunter’s duck call imitation. Both the wedge of a duck flock in flight and the hinge-like wing motion are evoked—unfolding.
Call for Designs

Help stock this pond with frogs! We welcome frog designs in black and white for inclusion in the pages of this journal. We hope to choose a different frog design for each issue, so please e-mail your submission of high-quality .jpeg or .tiff files to the editors of Frogpond at frogsforthepond@gmail.com.

The Haiku Society of America Annual Contests

Thank you to the judges and contest coordinator, Sari Grandstaff, and congratulations to the winners of the 2014 HSA Haibun, Henderson, Brady, and Einbond contests.

The deadlines for HSA-sponsored contests are:

- Bernard Lionel Einbond Renku Contest: February 28, 2015
- Nicholas Virgilio Haiku Contest: March 25, 2015
- Mildred Kanterman Merit Book Awards: March 31, 2015
- HSA Haibun Contest: July 31, 2015
- Harold G. Henderson Haiku Contest: July 31, 2015
- Gerald Brady Senryu Contest: July 31, 2015
Judge

Ferris Gilli, Marietta, GA

When considering the merits of a haibun, I keep several central elements in mind. Interesting, evocative prose, and verse that complements the prose are paramount. Whether the poem has an obvious relation with the prose or an indirect one, it should contribute to the essence of the author’s experience. Length of paragraph(s) and length of haibun are not particularly important to me. Well-balanced, resonant content overall is key. While the writer may take a philosophical, even humorous approach, I hope to discover why the author’s experience compelled him or her to write about it. I prefer verse that makes good sense in or out of the haibun context; but of greater importance, I expect to get more from the juxtaposition of the prose and verse than I might from either one without the other. There are certain caveats that I believe are crucial when writing a haibun. The prose should not explain the haiku, nor should the haiku explain the prose. With few exceptions, the writer should repeat as little as possible, especially avoiding repetition of main verbs, nouns, adjectives, and adverbs. Just as the prose should not be repeated in the verse, the verse should not be repeated in the prose. Judging duties aside, I enjoyed every entry. Having gained something unique from each, I’m grateful to have had this opportunity.

Ferris Gilli
Crouched under the dying plum tree, hacking out root growth, it hits again. Fourth time in 2 weeks. I am paralyzed by pain, can’t get up, can’t open my leg. The doctor thinks, strained tendon. The PT thinks it might be arthritis holding up a ligament that crosses the knee, then lets it snap back in place. Sit, try to relax. Putting aside the pruners, I crawl into the shade of the apricot tree, wait.

a brown wood beetle
       crosses a patch of sun
       my watch ticking

I lick a small cut on my hand, from pruning asparagus fern. Nasty stuff. My husband hates it. A drop of sweat rolls off my head, down past my ear, drops to my sun-browned arm. Black & red ants fuss over the apricots I left around the trunk for them, and for the blue-throated fence lizard who lives in the geranium duff. A towhee, sensing the garden is quiet now, flits out of the hibiscus and down on the walk. Chucks his long tail above his flashy crissom, struts into shade of the pine where we have hung the seed feeders.

I try to gauge the passage of time, silently berate myself for not checking my watch when it hit. Seems like it takes longer each time. What are you going to do if this happens while climbing Kilimanjaro? my husband wants to know.

the tree leaves tremble
       my neighbor’s playing
       rap again
When it eases, I’m fine, I heft the bucket of cuttings to my hips and schlep it to the wheelie bins. I’ve started therapy, exercises to strengthen my quads. Are you getting the message, asks my therapist, that you shouldn’t squat anymore? She told me I could keep riding my bike. Just stay on it, she said (referring to why I’m in this mess, by falling off.) And I can continue cardio training, my stiff hikes.

But when I’m climbing on Kilimanjaro, what will I do when I have to pee? Get a funnel? I wonder how that would work? Could I direct the stream like the guys? Write my name on the rocks? Adding nitrogen that lichens would be attracted to. Then as weary climbers ascend the mountain, age after age, there is my name, in orange and yellow lichen, indelibly graffitied for all time.

under the staghorn
the lily planted last year
blooms Easter white

Like most good narratives, “Trick Knee” contains tension, highly descriptive imagery, and a dose of humor. The variations of sentence length and occasionally abbreviated syntax contribute to brevity and compression. Subjects and even verbs are sometimes omitted, but without obscuring meaning or creating distractions. I am already intrigued by the first two sentences when the next words, “I am paralyzed by pain,” grip me and keep me reading through the last vivid haiku. In the shade of an apricot tree, I wait with the writer for her release from intense discomfort. The writer’s detailed attention to small creatures in the garden engages me; her informal, somewhat intimate style of writing nearly convinces me that we are actually together in deep conversation, she relating the experience, and I listening and nodding: “I lick a small cut on my hand, . . .” Oh, yes, I’ve often done that myself.

Her husband raises the question of what she will do if the arthritis strikes while she’s climbing a mountain. From the garden, communing with birds and ants and a lizard, suddenly to
the heights of Kilimanjaro! But the flare-up in her knee passes, and it’s back to yard work for the writer. In the last paragraph, however, she considers how she could perform bodily functions on the side of a mountain if unable to squat. The way she pokes fun at herself raises my eyebrows as I chuckle and try to imagine myself in the same situation. Still, the writer’s physical pain is very real, and I suspect she’s quite seriously concerned with how she would handle such mundane yet problematic needs. The three pleasingly placed haiku seem perfect companions for the prose. Though each poem could be published on its own in a respected haiku journal, verse and prose work together here to create a strong, memorable haibun.

~ Second Place ~

A House of One’s Own
Deb Koen, Rochester, NY

The buds are popping, as we hop off the school bus. Timmy takes my hand and leads me to his hideaway tucked into the largest oak on the hillside. This secret perch is the most thrilling discovery yet of my twelve years.

Over summer, I transform the three-plank platform into a full-fledged tree house. Hauling up boards with a pulley and banging in nails, I decorate with a Beatles poster, a flowery swag, and a wind chime. Each day from morning until my mother’s dinner call echoes down the valley, I claim my new home away from home.

By the time the leaves turn, Timmy’s interest has dimmed and my passion intensified. Should he return to reclaim his space, I don’t know to what extent I’ll go to stand my ground, but I’m quite certain I will never surrender.

time of war
the peace symbol
all the rage
Beginning with the first sentence, the writer vividly and skillfully carries readers through three seasons. It becomes clear that this brief haibun centers on a tree house belonging to one child (Timmy) but eventually claimed by another. The author’s increasingly possessive love for the construction drives the story, which is shown through detailed description of the long hours spent there and the decorative additions to the three-plank platform. With growing interest, I observe the writer’s actions that reveal emotional attachment to the property and a resolve not to surrender it to its original owner. With only the mention of war and a single icon, the haiku reflects the mood of the prose, and beyond that, the era in which the writer’s experience occurred. Verse and prose satisfyingly combine to depict a significant period in the writer’s childhood. After many readings, I have come to consider “A House of One’s Own” as a compact, open-ended, coming-of-age story. If Timmy returns to claim the tree house, will the author surrender it? How will the decision affect the children’s friendship? I believe the author is wise to leave readers with a few unanswered questions, allowing us to consider how we would have reacted in similar circumstances, or how our own children might behave.

~ Third Place ~

Thirteen
Phyllis Lee, Sebring, OH

It was Awards Assembly, the day before eighth grade graduation. I was the only one to win a scholarship for free lessons at Chicago’s Art Institute. How would I get there? Mama didn’t drive and Pa worked Saturdays delivering ice. I was thirteen and would have to take the streetcar from our neighborhood in Brighton Park, miles and miles, to downtown Chicago.

Pa said no. Mama wiped a tear from her eye. I couldn’t go.

road’s edge
a child chalks her name
before the rain
Simply and concisely written, “Thirteen” depicts a universally recognized dilemma. The author moves quickly from the prize to the conflict, which the key question poses: “How would I get there?” A thirteen-year-old is dealt heavy disappointment when denied free art lessons at Chicago’s Art Institute in downtown Chicago. Although the writer doesn’t actually say so, it seems to me that the child understands and accepts the father’s decision without bitterness—a decision clearly made in the interest of the teenager’s safety. Yet the depth of the disappointment comes through, and I empathize strongly not only with the child but also with the parents. The single haiku, while lovely and touching on its own, borrows poignancy from the prose and lends it to the story as well, so that verse and prose are more meaningful together than either would be alone.

~ First Honorable Mention ~

Her Royal Self
Neal Whitman, Pacific Grove, CA

We sit in the doctor’s office. He faces on the other side of a large desk. He wastes no time. “I have bad news.” I hear the words, “breast cancer,” but he must be talking to someone else in the room. This could not be her chart he is holding.

on his office wall
photographs of Mt. Fuji
shortness of breath

In 5 days I drive my wife to the hospital for surgery. One month later she will begin chemotherapy. There is a long list of side effects. She tells me she is not afraid of losing her hair, but of losing her dignity. She marches into her hair salon. “Matt, give me a buzz cut.” “Really?” he asks. She tells Matt what’s up. In no time, he is sweeping her hair off the floor into a dustpan and into the trashcan. She asks, “How much?” “Are you kidding, my dear? This one’s on the house. Come back in 6 months and let’s give you a new hairstyle.”
dawn
out of muck and mud
a lotus flower

I come home from work, walk into our living room, and see a princess sitting in my wife’s rattan peacock chair. She now goes to the infusion room in the hospital every two weeks for two months. Each visit is a long afternoon. She takes control of the word: she will not use the shorthand word, chemo. She calls it chemotherapy with the emphasis that it is therapy: “It is medicine. It is going to save my life.” And, it did.

her own Narrow Road
to the Interior
one page at a time

~ Second Honorable Mention ~

March
Lynn McLure, Burnsville, NC

Twenty degrees when I start down to the barn with a north wind blowing at forty to fifty. I push through it, gulping and coughing. Sheep snouts poke through the fence. They start up a noisy pleading when they spot me. Forgot my cell phone and imagine my children are somewhere scolding me. Urgently I pack hay into the feeder as though somehow I can move fast enough to avoid a heart attack until I have my phone again. I am winter weary of long johns and boots and this going up and down on icy gravel. Besides, I’ve already planted peas. Climbing back uphill I try to outrun the argument between “I love this mountain like a lover” and “I am too damn old to keep this up.”

bare trees
shadow dancing
across my bedspread
~ Third Honorable Mention ~

Devotions
Michele Root-Bernstein, East Lansing, MI

My eighty-eight-year-old mother-in-law is on the floor, pulling watercolor paintings I have never seen before from the bottom kitchen cupboard where she stores her artwork. Tomorrow she will have a backache, but for now all I discern is the palimpsest: thirty years ago my toddler son hunkered in moist garden dirt, holding in his outstretched palm a snail, forever crossing.

fiddlehead fern
how it is we rise
from the knees

As with the first three winners, it was difficult to choose only three haibun for honorable mention. There were simply too many that touched me on some level. One attempts to judge objectively, and this is fairly easy for me when it comes to passing over those works with glaring errors, distracting repetition, lack of clarity, and dull writing. But surely judging written works on the level of this year’s entries must at some point become subjective. When a stack of haibun satisfy technical requirements, those that also evoke emotion, entertain, and invite me to return again and again will naturally rise to the top. After many readings, I finally marked three that refused to relinquish their places. Each in its own way speaks to me.

◊◊◊

Ferris Gilli’s work in haiku and related genres has appeared regularly in eminent journals since 1996. Her work has earned awards in more than thirty haiku-related competitions. She frequently judges for prestigious competitions in haiku-related genres. She has been an associate editor of The Heron’s Nest since December 2000. Ferris conducted the on-line Hibiscus School of Western Traditional Haiku (sponsored by the World Haiku Club) from January 2001 to April 2002. Her haibun can be found in a variety of journals and anthologies.
Emily Dickinson once wrote that “The soul should always stand ajar, ready to welcome the ecstatic experience.” The poems we’ve selected from 739 entries for the Haiku Society of America’s 2014 Henderson Haiku Contest all speak to some degree of ecstatic experiences found in life’s everyday mysteries. These experiences have reached their authors—and us in turn as readers—because each poet stood ajar, their doors open to what life had to tell them. We hope you enjoy the ecstasies in these winning haiku.

*Tanya McDonald & Michael Dylan Welch*

~ First Place ($150) ~

county fair
second place ribbon
in an empty stall

Joe McKeon, Strongsville, OH

This haiku not only captures a moment, but piques the reader’s curiosity with unanswered questions. What happened to the occupant of the stall after the judging was finished? Was it taken home? Auctioned off? What kind of animal was it? Why was the ribbon left behind? How did its owner feel with the second-place designation? Proud? Disappointed? There is a whole story in this poem, and it draws the reader in like good stories do. “County fair” serves as a summer *kigo*, and with
those two words, one can imagine the scent of the barn, the sounds of the other animals, perhaps the crunch of hay underfoot and the taste of dust. It’s a poem to linger in and let the imagination roam.

~Tanya

I’m sure there’s much amusement to be found in a second-place ribbon winning first place in this contest, but beyond that, the poem offers deeper resonances. I find myself immediately engaged by the question of why the stall is empty, and where the owner and animal are now. Was the second-place ribbon forgotten because the winner was too busy tending to the animal after the fair? Or was it forgotten because the animal’s owner was disappointed at not winning first place? We can also wonder what sort of animal it was—a horse or rabbit or chicken? County fairs are rich sources for haiku inspiration, and a distinctly American seasonal subject. This poem demonstrates that even second place can win first place after all.

~Michael

~ Second Place ($100) ~

junk car
the hum of bees
beneath the hood

John Stevenson, Nassau, NY

To everything there is a season. This old car has found new life as a home to bees. The hum of the motor is now replaced by the hum of bees. The rust of the car makes me think of autumn for this poem, but I also think of the heat of summer when the bees would be thriving the most. Wouldn’t it be interesting to know what had happened to every car you ever owned? And wouldn’t it be a pleasure to discover if one had found new life as a home for bees? A finely crafted poem that says just enough and not too much.

~Michael
This car isn’t likely to rumble down the highway again, isn’t likely to fulfill its purpose of transporting someone from one place to another. It has become stationary, a home for bees, and they bring a new life to it, buzzing where an engine once revved. It’s not being recycled, as would happen if it were turned into scrap metal, but reused by the bees, and it’s this reappropriation by nature of something man-made that hints at our complicated place in the universe.

~Tanya

~ Third Place ($50) ~

the Christmas
after we told them
artificial tree

Joe McKeon, Strongsville, OH

The mystery of this haiku is what grabbed my attention. It does not state what was told, nor to whom. It could be the truth about Santa Claus, or it could be something else. Whatever was revealed, the artificial tree suggests that there is no longer a need for pretense. Perhaps the news was not taken well, and Christmas no longer merits a real tree. It’s a poem that keeps me wondering, both wanting to know the rest of the story, and leaving me content to come to my own conclusions.

~Tanya

The mystery of this poem is the uncertainty of what was told to whom. That Santa wasn’t real? That mom and dad were getting a divorce? The possibilities are endless and far-ranging, and thus we may easily dwell in this poem to find possible answers. The Christmas season, for those who celebrate it, is rife with complex emotions, both happy and sad. This haiku bristles with tinges of sadness, and hints at the growth of children who have learned something new about life. In this way, like practically all haiku, this is a poem about change.

~Michael
Honorable Mentions
(Unranked)

a bit of rust
on the Chevy’s fender
harvest moon

Terri L. French, Huntsville, AL

a lightning strike gives up a flower

Rob Dingman, Herkimer, NY

forest clearing
a scapula
left for the moon

Scott Mason, Chappaqua, NY

that time of year
moonlight fills
his empty chair

Phyllis Lee, Sebring, OH

birding . . .
the unfamiliar path
home

Julie Warther, Dover, OH
winter solstice
the tilt
of her hospital bed

Carolyn Hall, San Francisco, CA

first morning
firecracker papers
wander the streets

Joseph Robello, Novato, CA

I recently came across a quotation from Albert Einstein that struck me as applying to haiku. He said that “The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science. He to whom the emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand wrapped in awe, is as good as dead—his eyes are closed.” The honorable mentions we’ve selected offer a cornucopia of experience, and the emotion that goes with each experience—each poem from a poet whose eyes are open in wonder and awe. That’s what haiku is all about. The mysteries of life don’t have to be opaque, but if something is just beyond our understanding, it can engage our curiosity. In these haiku, we may wonder when an animal died, leaving its bones to the moonlight, or ponder what had caused the departure of a beloved family member or friend who leaves behind an empty chair. We may find amusement in our passion for activities such as birding that take us so far from our regular paths that we have to find a new way home. We may wonder, too, at the winter solstice, when the earth is tilted away from the sun, why a hospital bed—perhaps empty after death or recovery—is also at such a tilt. What do these images and experiences mean? We are engaged in this mystery, and celebrate the wonder of life through haiku poems that catch and release this mystery. We may find resolution in accepting the unfolding of time revealed in the growth of rust.
on a car’s fender when the harvest moon has rolled around again, or in the delight of seeing a flower—freshly and surprisingly—at the moment of a lightning strike. Or we may find ourselves feeling like those firecracker papers that blow in the streets on that first morning of the new year, spent but celebratory, anticipating what is to come in the year ahead. Thank you to each of these poets for taking a moment to pause and to wonder, and to notice the mysteries of life.

~Michael

Of the first honorable mention, one can picture the rust-colored moon, hanging in the autumn sky. It also suggests that if the Chevy is acquiring rust, it may be facing the autumn of its life. The second haiku is intriguing for the way the flower is revealed. The lightning doesn’t just brighten the flower enough for it to be seen, it “gives up” what it is illuminating. Another way of reading it could be that the lightning strike itself sets something on fire, and that sudden flame looks like a flower. The third haiku seems straightforward enough on the surface—a bone left in the moonlight—but the poet has noticed that it’s a particular kind of bone, a scapula, laid bare by time and teeth until it matches the moon for paleness. The fourth poem suggests a sadness or melancholy. The time of year is not stated, so we are left to guess if it’s the same time of year when the chair’s former occupant departed, or simply the time of year when the moon shines at an angle that will illuminate the chair. Whatever the case, the emotion is beautifully depicted, giving us time to reflect upon the absences in our own lives, and what fills the places they have left. The fifth poem is more personal to me. As a birder, I’ve experienced the way one gets wrapped up in looking for birds. A little bird disappears into the forest, and you follow by sight or by sound, keen to discover what it is. By the time you turn back, you might be a little misplaced. The thrill of birding, of discovery, is juxtaposed with the different route one must take back to familiar territory. But much like an unfamiliar bird, the unfamiliar path can be a delight unto itself, and this haiku leaves room for both interpretations. There’s a sense of transition in the sixth haiku. In the Northern Hemisphere, the winter
solstice marks the shortest day and the longest night, as well as the end of autumn and the onset of winter. But after this, the hours of daylight begin to increase, even as temperatures often get colder. The angle of the hospital bed suggests this transition period, too. Is the bed occupied, or empty? Is it the start of a recovery, or the end of an illness, or somewhere in the middle? The sparseness of the language invites us in, lets us make our own judgments about the situation, and this haiku is stronger for it. And in the seventh haiku, I appreciate that the poem does not focus on the fireworks exploding the night before, but rather on the quiet aftermath the following morning. Chances are, most revelers are still asleep, leaving the leftovers of their celebrations to “wander the streets” as they might well have wandered them the night before. Congratulations to each poet whose poem we’ve selected here.

~Tanya

Tanya McDonald has been actively writing haiku since 2007. She served as the regional coordinator for the Washington State Region of the HSA for three years, and has been published in various haiku journals. She also coedited the Haiku Northwest 25th anniversary anthology, No Longer Strangers. In September 2014, she was one of four featured readers at the 25th annual Two Autumns haiku reading in San Francisco. Currently, she is revising her young adult novel and working on the sequel.

Michael Dylan Welch is founder of National Haiku Writing Month (www.nahaiwrimo.com), and cofounder of the American Haiku Archives and the Haiku North America conference. He has also been an HSA officer for many years, and founded the Tanka Society of America in 2000, serving as its president for five years. His poems, essays, and reviews have appeared in hundreds of journals and anthologies, and he has won first prize in the Henderson, Brady, Drevniok, and Tokutomi contests, among others. His personal website is www.graceguts.com.
A good senryu captures a moment revealing human nature with lightness, humor, irony, or satire. It never comes across as a silly joke, or as being in poor taste, insulting, or offensive. We focused on finding poems that illustrated poets’ skills of observation, perceptiveness, and insight into daily life and the human condition. We also focused on finding layers of meaning in each poem.

Charlotte Digregorio & John J. Dunphy

~ First Place ($100) ~

night crossing
Tijuana border guard
in sunglasses

Neal Whitman, Pacific Grove, CA

This senryu sets the scene in an evocative way. We consider the word “sunglasses” to be the keystone without which there would be no poem. We can take this senryu on different levels.

The poem speaks to us because it indicates the deliberate “blindness” of the border guard towards the illegals crossing the border. When we think of the border guard wearing sunglasses at night, this can also evoke the image of a “shady” person—pun intended. Is he/she a criminal? Or, if the person wears shades, but isn’t “shady,” perhaps he is trying to pass himself off to others as the epitome of cool or toughness as an enforcer.
~ Second Place ($75) ~

small town
the same dream
as last night

John Stevenson, Nassau, NY

This senryu conveys the sense of sameness, but perhaps not a sense of resignation or even hopelessness that some small town residents may feel. We have no way of knowing the age of this small-town dreamer. Perhaps this person is in his/her 20s, someone who is having a midlife crisis, or one who is even getting on in years. Still, the dreams are limited to this person based on the locale. The person’s dreams are no closer to fulfillment than they were yesterday, last year, or a decade ago. But this resident has at least kept his hopes alive. He hasn’t thrown in the towel, and for that we can admire the person’s spirit. Is he a man who seeks a better job somewhere else or a woman bored in her marriage? Sometimes, when we think of a small town, the adage “small town, small minds” comes to us about the often-perceived provincial nature of small towners. This stereotype does not at all fit the dreamer. We visualize this dreamer as not being permanently locked into his ho-hum existence, but we feel he will eventually find a way “out of Dodge.”

~ Third Place ($50) ~

half-empty cup
I decide I’ve had enough
of you

Susan Burch, Hagerstown, MD

We like the no-nonsense, straightforward tone of this senryu. We visualize a woman who is fed up with her significant other. She has either met him for coffee or perhaps she is sitting
at home with him. After taking a few gulps, she tells him she is dumping him. The break after the second line prepares us for a surprise ending. What has she had enough of? After we read the ending, we imagine she’s had enough of his antics. The half-empty cup then makes sense to us. The cup is also half full, on the optimistic end, because she is ridding herself of him.

Charlotte Digregorio is the author of the new book, Haiku and Senryu: A Simple Guide for All. She is HSA’s Midwest regional coordinator.

John J. Dunphy has been published in haiku journals since the 1980s. His chapbooks include: Old Soldiers Fading Away (Pudding House, 2006); Stellar Possibilities (Sam’s Dot, 2006); Zen Koan-head (Second Reading Publications, 2008); Dark Nebulae (Sam’s Dot, 2009); and Touching Each Tree (Free Food Press, 2014). He owns The Second Reading Book Shop in Alton, Illinois.
Judge
Shokan Tadashi Kondo, Tokyo, Japan

~ Grand Prize ($150) ~

Warmth of the Rail
(A Summer Kasen)

Tom Clausen, Ithaca, NY
Hilary Tann, Schuylerville, NY
John Stevenson, Nassau, NY
Paul MacNeil, Onawa, ME
Yu Chang, Schenectady, NY

Jo
damselfly—
the coziness sampled
from each chair

a turn of the lock
at the boathouse

spotless crystal
and polished silver
on display

the movie billboard’s
ten-gallon hat

Tom
Hilary
John
Paul
moon-viewing
through the arms
of a Joshua tree

our state fair organist
chooses his stops

Ha

a ballet
of departing swallows
in the wind

the Queen Mary offers
a “paranormal tour”

is undying affection
enough to court
my sweetie?

sent to the bedroom
to revise a love poem

their urge
to touch the screen
as they Skype

after the train has passed
the warmth of the rail

a plume of smoke
that appears to be the moon’s
visible breath

local news
touts a whiteout

panic buying
based upon rumors
of kielbasa shortages

..........................................................
a gecko disappears
down the rabbit hole

Yu

reflections
of cherry blossoms
at the Vietnam Memorial

Hilary

putting off spring cleaning
permanently

John

morning mist
so slow to pull away
from mountains

Paul

It’s a bird!
It’s a plane!

Hilary

an airman
comes out of
the closet

John

she dresses
to kill

Yu

they start in bed
only to fall
to the floor

Tom

ensō
in the sandbox

Yu

circumnavigating
through the longest day
of your bi-polar moods

John

I cope with the heat
while collecting swizzle sticks

Paul
an E.T. fossil
from the Antarctic
core sample
Hilary

islands of plastic
bobbing offshore
Yu

hotel room photo
of the moonrise
between the twin towers
Tom

the giant harvester
fills truck after truck
Paul

*Kyu*

her daughter-in-law
makes the phyllo dough
for mushroom strudel
Hilary

scent of pine
through the open door
Yu

blinking lights
for both intersections
in the old mill town
Tom

hopes arising from
the vernal equinox
John

the last petals
around miniature apples
drop away
Paul

a rainbow kite
received as a gift
Hilary
~ Second Place ~

Straw Hair
(An Autumn Kasen)

Ron C. Moss, Tasmania, Australia
John Stevenson, Nassau, NY

twilight glow
a scarecrow’s straw hair
lifts in the breeze    Ron

the moon is gentle
on the ladies          John

crickets pinned
in the Victorian display case
by royal command    Ron

luxury in detail
aboard the Cunard liner  John

dominoes lean
in a cigar smoke haze
towards port  Ron

snowfall deepens
in the mirror       John

***

under the pillow
the tooth fairy
is short of change  Ron

gas masks issued
to dough-boys over there  John
our first
hot buttered kiss
as the movie starts  Ron

she gives me credit
for pursuing her  John

a tourist
plays the blues harp
down under  Ron

taking shelter
from the hailstones  John

we dare each other
to go skinny dipping
in the moonlit lake  Ron

a rare computer user
who knows how to make one  John

the watchmaker
has more time now
for Facebook  Ron

it will be all Easter
this weekend  John

apple blossoms
on the oil skin coat
of the drover  Ron

the whole family
smelt fishing in the creek  John

***

how one thing
leads to another
in a local bar  John
more protein powder
to get that pump

the Hudson
widening on its way
to New York

it takes a year to save
for your diamond ring

finishing
each other’s sentences
with exclamation marks

the heat of sunburn
as we say goodnight

soaking in
a rare shower
during fire season

the speaker stands tall
at the protest rally

who was it
who was supposed to
inherit the earth?

the rolling thunder
all the way to the moon

what the squirrels know
is where the acorns
are buried

golden leaves fall
on the miner’s grave

***
a crayon map  
showing the way from here  
to here again  

John  

the joy to be lost  
without a GPS  

Ron  

in lucid dreams  
I realize this is  
my imagination  

John  

the frog that awoke  
as a prince among men  

Ron  

castle folly  
in the company  
of blooming cherries  

John  

through haze I see her  
both happy and free  

Ron  

~ Third Place ~  

Yellowing Willow  

Claire Chatelet, London, England  
Eiko Yachimoto, Yokosuka City, Japan  
Chris Drake, Hatoyama-cho, Japan (sabaki)  

yellowing willow  
along the canal towpath  
a smattering of rosehips  

Claire  

a moonbeam woven shadow  
stops, searches for a key  

Eiko  

.................................................................  
Frogpond 37:3  155
the time a deer cried  
and I went right in  
without knocking  

Chris

a volute of steam rises  
from a chipped teapot  

Claire

slice a daikon radish  
into rings one inch thick  
and boil till tender  

Eiko

in cold wind they hold hands,  
surround the nuclear plant  

Chris

***

a street artist  
draws a portrait of Einstein  
with colored chalk  

Claire

the age of innocence  
buried for good  

Eiko

seeing the man  
on a high wire sway  
suddenly they kiss  

Chris

the cooing of turtle doves  
somewhere in the pines  

Claire

with a feather pen  
on fine washi I scribble  
letters of your name  

Eiko

seven ghost sightings  
on the same block tonight  

Chris

cool us, moon!  
in this heat even anthills  
turn into mirages  

Claire
dividing the tall grass
a rope like snake

the distinction
between war and peace
a convenient fiction

mourning Mandela
my rainbow child and I

the patter of rain
lets up: open now
and fly, my blossoms!

chunks of ice from upstream
flash between green reeds

***

white clouds race
across the muddied lake
as swans build their nest

seized by sad news, I see
the past coming alive

for John Carley
the new was a patina
obsuring the newer

sincerity comes first
wabi, sabi someday

between well and hearth
how many times must the clay pot
cross the threshold?

poppies bloom in the remains
of an ancient stone circle
in the green storm
briefly leaving the trees
a summer butterfly

love makes you see
signs everywhere

her portrait
has his left eye
clearly larger

ignoring border walls
wedding bells ring out

for one night
the moon flawless between
waxing and waning

the debt collector finds
red leaves in the envelope

***

dripping dew
a bicycle heads up
a mountain road

engraved on a cattle trough
the year 1888

a union organizer
came to this village
and found friends

when making tofu
every detail is crucial
what stirring
deeper than the deepest roots
for all blossoms

Claire

a spring wind brings
the sound of distant waves

Chris

General Comments

These three kasen are very close to each other. “Warmth of the Rail” has more interesting and deeper love poems. I enjoyed all of the kasen, and I was impressed by their effort to master the kasen form. I used the judging method innovated by Professor Meiga Higashi, which looks at four levels of the renku structure.

1. quality of one verse
2. quality of linking
3. quality of shifting in the third verse
4. variety of topics in the mandala-like world

In addition to this, I think it is important to have among participants a well-balanced sharing of long/short verses and moon/blossom verses. The linking order might need a little more study. One of the most important principles in renku is to avoid the regression, both short distance and long distance, so I think a deeper understanding of objects and events in the world will improve the quality of renku. Thank you for sharing the renku with me. A happy future for American renku, and I look forward to seeing more of them.

With best wishes,
Shokan Tadashi Kondo

Tadashi Kondo, founder of Renku United Nations, is Professor Emeritus of Seikei University, Tokyo, and director of the renku societies of Japan and Kyoto. He has studied haiku and renku since 1968 and has published widely in these areas.
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*************************************************

Ten tips for frogs who want to inspire haiku poets, by Kaeru the frog

1. sing  
2. swim  
3. blink  
4. stare  
5. gaze at mountains  
6. stop in the middle of a bridge  
7. stand at their doorstep  
8. get covered in petals  
9. stay still  
10. jump in the water!

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From the Editors

For me a part of the genius of haiku lies in variations on a common theme, just as each of our faces is unmistakably different even though we share the same features in more or less the same position.

~Paul O. Williams

With Chris Patchel’s exquisite “potpourri” cover of twenty-two different kinds of flowers, herbs, and spices (including one he still can’t name) we think of all the sights, textures, smells, tastes, and sounds that make up our experience of here and now. As poets, we have all these sensations and perceptions to draw upon, in endless combination, to express ourselves and bring our voices alive. And it may well be that what we contribute to the poetic conversation of our times has less to do with originality as novelty than it does with originality as variation on those images and themes that speak most deeply to us all. As Paul O. Williams observes, it is not just a haiku “face” (disjunction, brevity, “the thing in itself”) that defines what we fashion, but certain thematic content, certain approaches to the poetic transcription of the world. With this in mind, we celebrate the 766 haiku and senryu, 40 linked forms, 70 haibun, 10 essays, and 41 long and brief book reviews that it has been our pleasure to publish in 2014—each an indispensable piece of the potpourri of haiku arts right here, right now.

In this autumn issue we are also very pleased to feature the new HSA logo (designed by our own Chris Patchel) on the spine and title page. We thank Ignatius Fay, who reminds us to hold steady through the end of the year with his captivating frog art, “Cling-on.” And as always we are grateful to the HSA for their support; to all who send their work for our consideration; to Charlie Trumbull and Bill Pauly, who catch our errors; and to Noah Banwarth for technical assistance. As we close the pages on this issue, we look forward to the next.

Francine Banwarth, Editor
Michele Root-Bernstein, Associate Editor

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