

Section III: Appendices starts with a quote by James W. Hackett: "Haiku is ultimately more than a form or even a kind of poetry: it is a Way — one of living awareness." This is followed by a re-printing of a prose poem by Jim Kacian titled "Presence," which Doppler states, "was written in a style somewhat similar to [the] Dao De Jing...poetic and enigmatic." Jim Kacian's poem can be seen as a meditation on language and silence. The next two pages are suggestions for creating haiku in English by James W. Hackett. Following this, there is a discussion of martial arts, haiku, and *zoka* by Don Baird. This includes a re-printing of Don Baird's essay, "Zoka," which was originally published in *Simply Haiku* in 2012 and in *Under the Bashō* in 2013. One of the most powerful notions in Baird's essay is seeing the larger cosmos in microcosmic moments, and experiencing the beauty and mystery of the interconnectedness of life. This book closes with a short bio of Janice Doppler.

In summary, *One Thread: Zoka in Contemporary Haiku* provides several ways of deepening our haiku practice by acknowledging the wordless depths of life and the cosmos in each moment. Readers will be encouraged to study ancient texts after reading this book and will be inspired to find their voice in this web of meaning. Perhaps most importantly, readers will feel more connected with the Earth, the cosmos, and each other after reading this book, in this complex web of life. I recommend it. □■

REVIEWED BY SHELLEY BAKER-GARD

Unthrown Stones by Evan Coram, edited by Randy and Shirley Brooks (Brooks Books, Taylorville, IL: 2024). 4" x 5.75". 56 pages. ISBN: 978-1-929820-32-0. \$12.00 plus \$5.00 postage. Order from <https://www.brooksbookshaiku.com>

Evan Coram has a musical ear honed to a fine tune. His song writing skills facilitate the rhythm of his haiku and senryu in the chapbook *Unthrown Stones*. Sometimes they strike a staccato and at other times they drift one into a Clair De Lune dream of moments

in a life story that resonate with all life stories. This anthology, which is one of the winners of the 2024 High/Coo Chapbook Award, is mostly comprised of senryu swirling around the human themes of death, relationship challenges, and the joy and sorrow children bring to parents. Coram hints in his last senryu that they are not sequential as far as time. However, sometimes the senryu do occur in thematic groups to better tell a story. This is true for three sorrow-filled poems that are easily imagined to be about the loss of a newborn:

they say
 one day
 the weight
 lessens . . . unused

his bassinet

whispering your name
into wet, falling snow
deepening shadows

when the flower
doesn't flower
calling home

Interspersed amongst the poems are beautiful wind and moon haiku that exhibit the classical *wabi-sabi* sensibilities. In contrast, there are also a few satirical pun-filled senryu that may cause a smile of recognition. The following is an example:

away at college
my son's cat
kneads me

Haiku and senryu with clear images have the power to tap into the imaginations of the reader who will naturally develop their own meanings for the poems, whether or not they match the poet's thoughts. When Coram's entire chapbook is read in one sitting, a speculative biography emerges of a person who takes heed of the power of nature including human nature. He seeks cover when the wind storms, bears the angst and "unthrown stones" of marital conflict, and has the deeply felt love of children and the pain of their absence, whether they step on the school bus or leave us forever. These stories of life linger many days after reading them and will be appreciated by anyone who takes the time to ponder them. ◻■

REVIEWED BY BRAD BENNETT

Natural Consequences by John S. O'Connor (Brooks Books, Taylorville, IL: 2024). 59 pages, 4" x 5.75". ISBN: 9781929820337. \$15 from brooksbooks.com.

John O'Connor has been writing haiku for over twenty-five years. In an essay from Poetry Foundation's website called "A New View on Haiku," he credits Bob Speiss, editor of *Modern Haiku* from 1978-2002, as an early mentor. O'Connor has written two previous collections of haiku, *Room Full of Chairs* (2000) and *Things Being What They Are* (2011), both with Deep North Press. *Things Being What They Are* was awarded a Touchstone Honorable Mention by The Haiku Foundation. O'Connor has been an English teacher for thirty-seven years, teaching in multiple venues, from sixth grade through college. He's also written two books on the teaching of writing, *Wordplaygrounds* (2004) and *This Time It's Personal* (2011), both published by the National Council of Teachers of English. As a haiku poet and a teacher and student of writing, O'Connor seems to be on the lookout for everyday life lessons, those resonant teaching moments that emerge from haiku's close observation of daily existence.

Natural Consequences, a winner of a 2024 High/Coo Chapbook Award from Brooks Books, presents many valuable lessons learned. O'Connor reveals that the forty-nine haiku within