

Sometimes, though, the poems veer into the didactic:

siesta —  
when all else fails  
be sure to take one

Or, the haiku seem to be leaning towards a motivational message:

homage to Monet —  
I won't let my inner landscape  
crust over

And, on occasion, the poems center on themes that could be characterized as generic:

desert rose —  
sometimes beauty is right  
underfoot

Overall, *Memo to Warhol: A Collaboration of Art & Haiku in Color* is an entertaining and intriguing homage to a legendary artist. In my opinion, there are a few moments where the poems could be more subtle or nuanced, and the art could perhaps be better displayed. Still, if you are a fan of Warhol and Robert Epstein's haiku, you will find food for thought while also exploring a range of emotions and sentiments. ■

#### REVIEWED BY DANIEL SHANK CRUZ

*Two Seasons in Israel: A Selection of Peace and War Haiku* by Rick Black (Turtle Light Press, Arlington, VA: 2024). 139 pages, softcover. ISBN: . 978-0-9748147-7-3. \$16.95 from [turtlelightpress.com](http://turtlelightpress.com).

*Two Seasons in Israel* is an expanded version of Black's 2007 chapbook, *Peace and War: A Collection of Haiku from Israel*. Black,

who lived in Israel for six years working as a journalist, decided the expansion was necessary as a response to the events of October 7, 2023, and their aftermath. Black writes that when putting together the collection “I realized that the poems were divided between two seasons: peace and war” (ix), hence the book’s title. The collection contains around 200 haiku/senryu, with seventeen black-and-white photographs interspersed throughout. It also includes a glossary of terms from the poems that is a helpful accessibility tool, showing that Black is genuine in his wish that the book will help readers learn about the conflict.

*Two Seasons* does not shy away from portraying the ravages of violence:

one-legged vet  
the ricochet of dice  
by his espresso

just buried soldier—  
too soon for his mother  
to notice the crocus

Throughout the collection, there is a sense of weariness about how long the violence has lasted alongside a sense of hope that peace will prevail and the strife will become only a memory:

highway's edge  
old armored vehicles rust  
beneath cypress trees

an armored tank  
completely surrounded  
queen anne's lace

The collection frequently uses children as a symbol of this hope and resilience:

Muslim Quarter:  
boys keep playing soccer

despite the gunshots

Hasidic boys  
slide down the bomb shelter—  
its slippery roof

In one poem that sounds like something Bashō might have written on his wanderings, we are reminded that peace is something achieved not just between humans, but also between humans and the environment:

sign posted  
at the Latrun monastery:  
“Don’t hurt the flowers!”

These last five poems epitomize one half of the collection’s thought-provoking subtitle. I know what a “war haiku” is, but “peace haiku” is an under-utilized genre that deserves more practitioners. Black successfully writes about such a divisive conflict because he rejects the binary of Israeli/Palestinian to focus instead on that between war and peace, making it clear that the haiku way is on the side of peace. The book declares this without being preachy. I hope that more haijin begin using “peace haiku” as a form for their work. As good as Two Seasons’ poems are, this concept may be its most important contribution to English-language haiku.

A few poems are too direct to work as haiku or senryu. Here are two examples that also show Black’s tendency to overuse dashes as kireji:

luggage repair—  
if only our broken hearts  
could be mended

plowshares, indeed

will we ever stop  
waging war?

However, overall *Two Seasons in Israel* is well worth reading. It does an excellent job examining its specific subject matter while also offering a powerful general example of how to successfully write politically-inspired haiku. □■

### BRIEFLY REVIEWED BY JOSHUA GAGE

*magnolia diary* by paul m. (Modern Haiku Press, Champaign, IL, USA: 2024). 90 pages, perfect softbound. ISBN: 978-0-9600855-8-3. \$12 +S&H directly from the publisher at <https://www.modernhaiku.org/mhbooks/Miller-MagnoliaDiary.html>.

*magnolia diary* contains over one hundred haiku and senryu focusing on themes of aging, memory, and loneliness. paul m is an accomplished haiku poet, and these haiku resonate with each other to create a beautiful chorus of poetry. Sample poems: young fiddleheads--/unpacking lunchtime's/NSAID; dining alone/the water glass/arrives with lipstick. This book is strongly recommended to and belongs on the shelf of any reader interested in contemporary English Language Haiku and poetry. □■

*How Do You Haiku? A step-by-step guide with templates* by Danna Smith (Plumbago Press, Woodbridge, CA, USA: 2023). 106 pages, perfect softbound (additional formats available). ISBN: 978-8-9887378-1-0. \$19 from Amazon.com

*How Do You Haiku?* by Danna Smith is guide to haiku and related forms for tweens. This book aims to teach tweens the basics of haiku history and writing, seeking a balance between playfully encouraging and educational. Older grade school and younger tweens are the clear target audience, from the use of simplistic fonts as well as comic graphics. The book is directed towards them,