

almost Christmas
I count the leafless trees

no matter the lash
I'll return my arms—
one final goodbye

To further ground these poems in reality, Smith pairs every sequence with an actual fugitive advertisement from the Freedom on the Move database. These records of history, of which there are thousands, provide the perspectives of slave-owners as a vile, dehumanizing contrast to the voices Smith summons in her poems.

Runagate is a complex literary masterwork. As a document of research, it provides a very human voice to an easily abstracted or theorized shame of United States history. As literature, it is unfortunately necessary. Smith celebrates forgotten heroes, some who may have no story or voice left beyond those that she created. Still, there is an authenticity that permeates this collection, an anthologized choir of unique voices with a common history and experience, all singing a hymn to freedom. To ground this book in the contemporary, Smith bookends her collection with two haibun, both of which are achingly personal yet defiantly resolute, illuminating parallels between the weight of history and the current socio-political climate. This book is all but required reading for anyone interested in contemporary English language haiku and tanka. Beyond that, anyone interested in history and the ongoing fight for freedom, equality, and social justice in society will benefit from reading this collection. □■

REVIEWED BY ALLYSON WHIPPLE

The San Francisco Haiku Anthology: Volume 2 edited by Susan Antolin, Garry Gay, and Carolyn Hall. (Spare Poems Press: 2024). 251 pages, softcover (ebook version also available). ISBN: 979-8-

218-51228-6. \$39.95 from www.sparepoemspress.com

The San Francisco Haiku Anthology: Volume 2 is an anthology that builds on its 1992 predecessor, with the goal of showcasing the ongoing developments of Bay Area haiku over the last 32 years. Starting in 2022, the editors spent two years building this anthology, nearly doubling the number of included poets. While not all of the original 57 poets make a repeat appearance, the 94 that make up this new edition showcases a wide range of the haiku being produced in San Francisco, bringing forth newer poets while honoring more established voices. At 250 pages, this is a substantial anthology, with every poem contributing to the whole. If you flipped through my copy, you'd be hard-pressed to find a page in which I did not leave a heart next to a poem that moved me.

the empty honey bear
still stands on his head—
autumn equinox
Roger Abe

the dogs
shake it loose
summer sea
Alison Woolpert

quarantine—
the sound of a rose petal
dropping to the table
d.f. tweney

piano bar
the tip glass full
of morning light
Jeremy Pendrey

The San Francisco Haiku Anthology: Volume 2 is certainly a must for fans of the original 1992 work, as well as anyone invested in studying and collecting the work of a particular region. If you're planning to attend the 2025 Haiku North America Conference in San Francisco this year and you're newer to haiku, this anthology is an excellent way to familiarize yourself with some of the poets you will likely meet. (I plan to bring my copy with me for the poets to sign.) But even if you are not focused on the Bay Area as a source of interest, or preparing for HNA, the poems in this anthology are of such high quality that I would recommend it to anyone. This is not a novelty gift book; the city of San Francisco is more of an implicit presence than an explicit one. You can enjoy and learn from these haiku no matter where you live. □■

REVIEWED BY NICHOLAS KLACZANSKY

Memo to Warhol: A Collaboration of Art & Haiku in Color by Robert Epstein (haiku) and Ed Markowski (art). (Self-published: 2023). 135 pages, softcover. ISBN: 979-8862017885. \$18 from Amazon.com.

As a fan of Warhol's, my interest in this collection was immediately captured. I see the comparison between the art of Markowski and Warhol: both are bright and colorful, but Markowski leans more toward the abstract. The links between the art and poems are clear yet subtle. I was disappointed, though, that some of the images of the art in the book are pixelated and not sharp. Perhaps this was the intention of the artist as an aesthetic, but I am not sure.

I found many of the haiku personable, witty, and inventive. An illustration of a haiku that encompasses these three qualities is this one:

bronc buster —
sliding off the storyline
I wake up