

Book Reviews

Reviewed by Daniel Shank Cruz

downhill home by Chuck Brickley (Snapshot Press, 2025). 114 pages, 5" x 7.75". Perfect softbound. ISBN 978-1-903543-61-0. \$20.00 from snapshotpress.co.uk.

Chuck Brickley's first collection, *earthshine* (2017), enjoyed its fifth printing in 2024, an indication of its monumental status within English-language haiku (ELH). His second collection, *downhill home*, includes 111 poems published between 2017-2025. It is another excellent book. It includes numerous examples of Brickley's skill for describing nature in revealing ways:

creek bed crack
out one leg at a time
tarantula

downhill home likewise shows that Brickley is just as adept at evoking city scenes:

stifling heat
the stillness of sneakers
flung on a wire

The collection describes life in our terrifying times with direct, graceful accuracy:

New Year's morning
not one child
has shot another

and

left one sprinkler on one Earth left

Like *earthshine, downhill home* is a must-read because it shows the breadth of what ELH can be.

Reviewed by Joshua Gage

Applause for a Cloud by Sayumi Kamakura, trans. James Shea (Black Ocean, 2025). 304 pages, 5.5" x 7.4". Perfect softbound. ISBN 978-1-939568-99-1. \$25.00 from blackocean.org and other booksellers.

Sayumi Kamakura is the author of numerous poetry collections, including *Moisture*, *Cross in the Water*, *From the Skylight*, *La La La Goes the Sea*, and *The Collected Haiku of Sayumi Kamakura*. Her work has appeared in dozens of anthologies in Japan and overseas, and she is the only haiku poet featured in *Japanese Women Poets: An Anthology* edited by Hiroaki Sato. She is the recipient of the Oki Sango Prize, Modern Haiku Association Prize, and the Azsacra International Poetry Award.

With the help of James Shea, Sayumi Kamakura has released a collection of her haiku translated into English, her first in almost twenty years. This is a remarkable, dual language collection, presenting the haiku in both Japanese and English. As Kamakura is such a vital but under-translated voice to contemporary Japanese haiku this collection reads as both a collection of her work but also an introduction to most English-language haiku readers.

The depth and breadth of this collection is impressive, and Kamakura and Shea have carefully curated some excellent selections showcasing her modern style and surreal imagery: