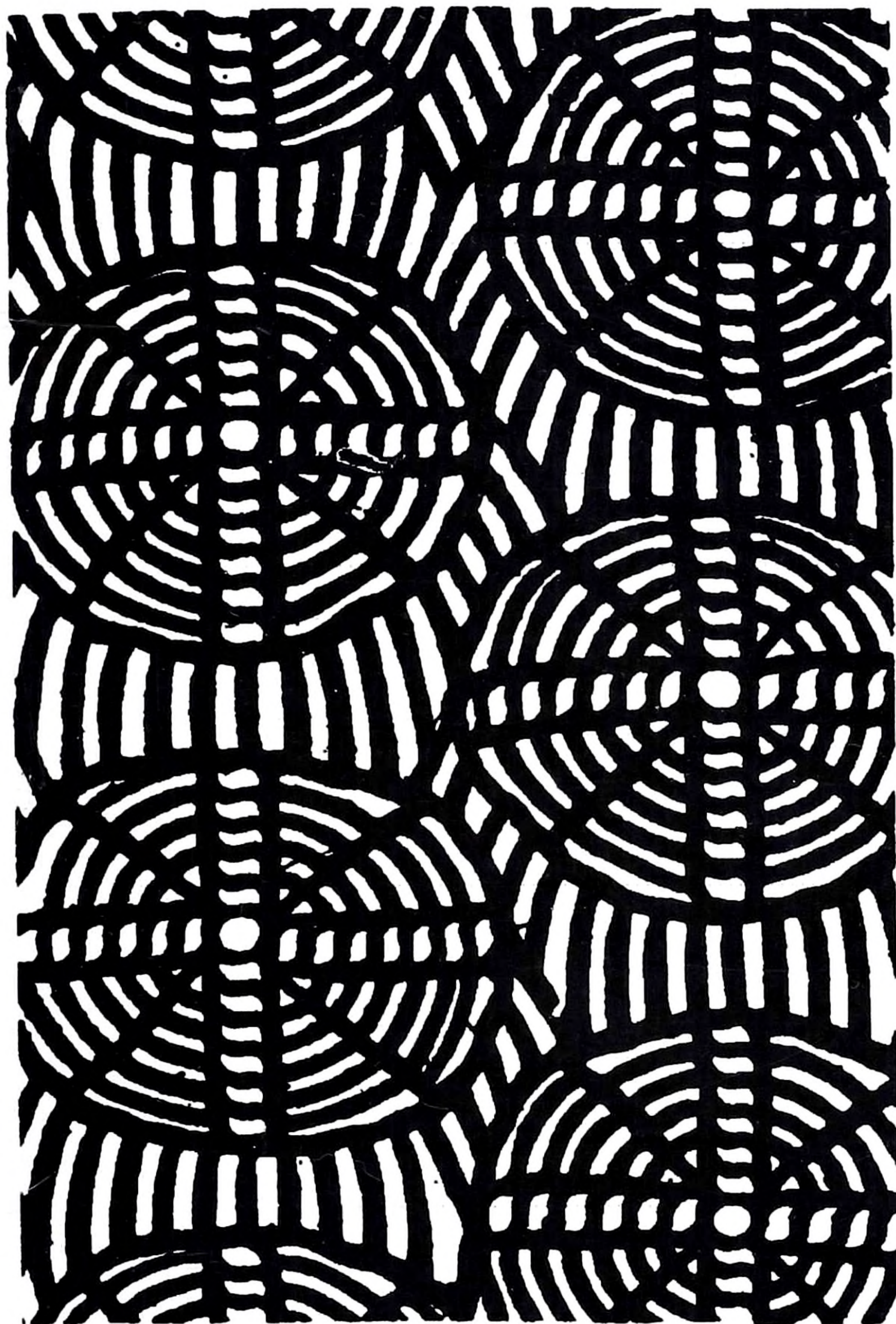


# frogpond



Volume V Number 3

Published by The Haiku Society of America



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# frogpond

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*Lee J. Richmond*

Selections from *Diary Of A Winter Fly*  
Copyright © 1982 by Lee J. Richmond

Again and again  
I cut myself at shaving  
life alone.

The loneliness  
frost growing to my nightshirt  
this morning also.

The rainy season  
bloating like tangled fish  
white roses.

Morning-glory  
one full day, before I spat blood  
it flowered red.

Sick-bed unsteady  
exceedingly shrill  
a cicada.

As if made for them  
the fence  
morning-glories.

Only the scarecrow's face  
over there  
heavy fall of snow.

The old calendar  
numbers like bright barbed hooks  
hanging there still.

Moving pots out-of-doors  
one is bound  
to die.

The razor-grinder  
gazing at leftover moon  
autumn evening.

On the clothesline  
a butterfly  
black as spring.

All night long  
flowers in the wallpaper  
are all withered away.

Plum flowers fall  
insomniac counting  
and counting again.

The pampas grass  
six feet  
laying out winter clothes.

The snowball  
no strength to throw it,  
falls.

My nerves are worse,  
that tear in the wallpaper  
tonight.

Autumn has begun:  
tongue of the old housefly  
stronger now.



*Geraldine C. Little*

fiddlehead fern  
bearing the whole world  
of spiderweb

the bright silence of sun in a clay pot

on the beach just listening to driftwood

once again the lake takes in my summer face

*Barbara Ungar*

rain  
the creek has swallowed  
the stepping stones

someone's campfire  
smoke turning  
blue in the sun

dangling my feet  
the moon trembling  
breaks

the fire  
catches—the stars  
recede

The above haiku first appeared in *Haiku in English* by Barbara Ungar, Stanford Honors Essay in Humanities, no. 21, Stanford, CA 1978.

*Tao-Li*

after  
the  
funeral

carrying  
out

the  
potted  
palms

*Evelyn Tooley Hunt*

graveside service. . .  
the drone of that cicada  
suddenly stops

hello jo  
all day the mynah bird  
in his cage

checking my trap line. . .  
the buzzard's silent shadow  
growing larger

*LeRoy Gorman*

highdive  
birdsong  
bubbles

rain ends skY

e<sup>a</sup>r<sup>t</sup>h<sup>w</sup>o<sup>r</sup>m<sup>i</sup>n<sup>g</sup>d<sup>e</sup>w

locked in the sc rat ch

*Nick Virgilio*

autumn twilight:  
a distant train whistle lengthens  
the long country road

In the village square,  
honoring the war hero:  
the chill morning air

circuit preacher  
reaching the meeting house:  
evening sun

crossing the street,  
leading her retarded son by the hand:  
the heat

*Sandra Fubringer*

Misty rain—  
streetlights on  
at noon

Watching  
for lightning  
and waiting. . .

Starry night—  
walking home  
the long way

Spring thunder—  
wet snow  
slides off the roof

*Paul O. Williams*

a long blast  
from the boat horn—  
no grass blade moves

the old garden fence  
now keeps the goldenrod  
from the goldenrod \*

fireflies at dusk  
flashing on the rise—  
rising, rising

the flick of high beams—  
out of the dark roadside ditch  
leaps a tall grass clump

\*Awarded the Museum of Haiku Literature Award of \$25 for the best previously unpublished haiku in *Frogpond* Vol. 5, No. 3.

*R. Boldman*

In a freezing wind  
daisies beating their heads  
against the window.

A run in the hose—  
the shadows of winter  
everywhere.

the chirping  
of sparrows  
in the death notices

my autumn shadow  
crosses the threshold of the church  
i wait outside



*Frederick Gasser*

last light  
a hawk veers shadowless  
across the bay

drowsy—  
feeling my book slip away  
with the dream

beneath  
squacking blackbirds  
Buddha's silence

after the blimp passes  
nose prints look out  
the school window

*Stephen Gould*

Walking in a darkened house  
answering myself:  
the sickle moon

Shadows flowing together  
the neighbor's clock  
strikes chords

The vacancy sign lighted  
the office dark  
I knock

Waves of snow  
the building  
steps back

The cyclist neither  
approaches nor recedes:  
twilight cold

Sky of stars  
on the radio  
white noise

High wind    bulblight steadies the patterned wallpaper

Scott L. Montgomery

*selections from "Out of the Mine"*

explosion deep in the mine  
veins of  
    new darkness

coal miners  
at lunch  
whites of their eyes

from the mine  
faces darker  
    than their shadows

digging his nails  
into white soap  
    young unmarried miner

creak in the timbers  
headlamps go still—  
dust falling. . .

winter morning—  
wiring dynamite  
into cold rock



Zolo

it must be  
the peony's soul. .  
white butterfly!

a butterfly  
flutters in  
among the scholars

cows  
true  
giver

dawn. .  
the river  
stirs  
my blood

swan. .  
the lotus centered  
valentine

moonlight:  
another little frog's worth  
splashes the sky

kiddie-land,  
the llama's eye  
reflects the chaos

mirror to mirror the wind

air!  
the dragonfly  
floats on rain

sunspan. .  
the depth  
of lily

*Season*

gazing at the moon  
it gazes back—tea leaves  
settle in my cup

morning stillness;  
a faint moon hangs  
in the window

ting-ting:  
emptying  
the rice bowl

noon sun: my face in the bottom of the water bucket



*Andre Dubaime*

*with English versions by Dorothy Howard*

dehors  
la pluie ne semble tomber  
que devant les phares

outside  
the rain falls  
only in front of headlights

brouillard  
que le temps de suivre  
la ligne jaune du chemin

fog on the highway  
only time enough to follow  
the yellow line

deneigeant  
son manteau mi-enlevé  
un mamelon durci

as she shakes the snow  
from her unbuttoned coat  
a nipple

la chaleur  
d'une visiteuse  
sur le siege du bol de toilette

the warmth  
of a guest  
on the toilet bowl seat

le soleil  
à travers ses fleurs de verre  
l'antiquaire somnole

sun  
in the antique glass flowers  
the dealer snoozes

les enfant  
entrent et sorent  
sans cesse

kids  
in and out  
forever

le nez  
collé à la fenetre  
l'air inégal des narines

my nose  
stuck to the window  
uneven nostril air

sous la pluie  
une femme mentruée nous conduit  
à la mer

in the rain  
a menstruating woman drives us  
to the sea

le bruit des vagues  
pourtant sous les pins  
chantent les cigales

the noise of waves  
and yet under the pines  
the song of the cicada

les plantes vertes  
mortes de soif  
j'étais a la mer

green plants  
browned with thirst  
i've been to the ocean

deux coquillages  
où déposer mes cendres  
mes sous

two seashells  
for my ashes  
my coins

un moineau se pose  
quelques feuilles mortes  
s'envoient

a sparrow lands  
a few dead leaves  
fly

1982  
SEVENTH ANNUAL HENDERSON CONTEST  
Sponsored by The Haiku Society of America

*Winning Haiku*

First Prize: \$100.00

horizon  
wild swan drifting through  
the woman's body

*Raymond Roseliep*

Second Prize: \$50.00

deserted wharf  
the mime bows  
to the moon

*C'buck Brickley*

Third Prize: \$25.00

a spider's web  
across the windharp  
the silence

*Elizabeth Searle Lamb*

This year's judge was Bill Pauly. His commentary on the award-winning haiku follows:

### First Prize ("horizon"):

This stunning prize winner enchanted my heart and eye and imagination from beginning to end. I find it clearly the best of all submissions. There is a dramatic serenity in the intersection of human life and the natural world here. The image itself is magnificent, reminding me of a freeze frame from a Bergman film like *Cries and Whispers*. Beyond that, though, it has depth and suggestion—what I like to call resonance—that brings me back to it again and again. Without ever mentioning a reflection, the poem makes it clearly visible; I cannot help thinking of Leda and the swan legend when I read it. The topography here also reinforces the beautiful image—above, we have the horizon; then, the long second line literally pictures the swan drifting through, joining the horizon with the woman's body. Sound values add another dimension. The echoes of "n", "w", "s", and "r", and the long and short "i" help unite the sound and sense of this superb haiku, in which no word is wasted.

### Second Prize ("deserted wharf"):

I remember smiling when I first read this haiku, for it, too, touched me deeply. The writer's economical word use helps me visualize the scene: the mime, perhaps just finishing a performance, bowing to a captive audience of one. The implied reflection of mime and moon on the calm water adds depth here. This simple, effective image really works for me and on me, suggesting melancholy or *sabi*, and calling forth overtones of the mysterious man in the moon. I think those acquainted with the moon can easily put themselves in the place of the mime, which is part of how I define a good haiku.

### Third Prize ("spider's web"):

I find this still-life study in comparison and contrast tremendously appealing. Here is a stillness visually defined: no music on the wind-harp, no movement of the spider's web, another kind of windharp or windcatcher. This interplay of human and natural worlds creates a serene atmosphere, especially the numerous "s" sounds, almost belie the silence suggested movingly with words.

In addition, Mr. Pauly has singled out the following haiku for Honorable Mention, in no particular order:

under the back steps  
catfish still flop in the pail—  
the long August night

*Rita Mazur*

horns fold  
at my shadow's touch;  
brown slug

*Darold D. Braida*

early April rain  
the woman fills every jar,  
seals them forever

*Sister Mary Thomas Eulberg*

dead mynah bird. . .  
with each passing car  
its wing flaps

*Darold D. Braida*

Picking cotton—  
the memory  
of birdtracks in the snow

*Edward P. Willey*

Old tea bag;  
tints the moon  
slightly.

*Gary Gay*

blackened walnut  
left unopened—  
winter solstice

*David E. Evans*

Distant woodchopper  
inside the cabin  
axbite echoes

*Thelma Murphy*

The grey cranes—  
bending in a line along  
the crooked fenceposts

*R.M. Bodner*

checking for water  
the woman finds a full moon  
trapped in the cistern

*L.A. Davidson*

**PILGRIMAGE: A Commemorative Celebration  
of Masaoka Shiki**

by Michael Dudley

1982 marks the eightieth anniversary of the death of Masaoka Shiki (1867-1902). From the original Japanese I have translated five favorite Shiki haiku that I feel effectively illustrate the poet's keenness of perception and scope of sensitivity. The following translations are to serve not only to commemorate the occasion of Shiki's death, but to celebrate the grand body of Shiki's work—which reads as an evocative pilgrimage by the human spirit.

*Fuyu-gawa ni sutetaru inu-no kabane kana*

abandoned  
on the river ice:  
a dog's carcass

*Kaeri-mireba yuki-aisbi hito kasumi-keri*

a backward glance:  
the person I bumped into  
turned into fog

*Kimi matsu yo mata kogarashi no ame ni naru*

night while I wait for you again the cold wind becomes rain

*Daibutsu no majiroki mo senu arare kana*

hailstorm—  
Great Buddha  
doesn't blink



*Yoru tsuki ni mazui fue fuku tonari kana*

tonight it's for the moon  
my neighbor plays his flute  
quite poorly

\* \* \* \* \*

*Robert Kramer*

### Time and Tide

The moment has arrived. . .  
The knife of daylight  
Prys open the oyster.

The undulating dolphin  
Comes up for breath. . .  
And to return a smile.

High tide is leaving. . . .  
Left on the beach,  
A bracelet of assorted charms.

Along the beach  
Open palms up, empty shells  
Have nothing to hide.

Picking up a seashell,  
Small fingertips feel the prints  
Of growth lines.

Fist over little fist. . .  
The sand is trickling  
In hourglass fashion.

Sand slowly fills the ears of the shells. . .  
The sound of the sea  
Grows muffled.

Inside the open locket  
Sand and seaweed  
Replace a memory.

*Elizabeth Searle Lamb*

The Floating Market of Iquitos, Peru

fetid smells  
of decaying fruit, hot  
in the slanted sun

for sale  
a rhinoceros beetle tethered  
on a pink string

an old woman  
lades some kind of soup  
into a carved gourd

moving from boat to boat  
as they swing in the current,  
hunting the freshest mangos

the dried piranha—  
half its razor-sharp teeth  
are missing

after midnight  
only the rats, foraging  
under this full moon

## HSA Sampler

*an on-going selection of work being done by members of the Haiku Society of America.*

Drawing an old doorway;  
a solitary fly  
persists.

*Colm O'Connor*

The rose  
you left  
still unfolds

*Janet Pehr*

The purple center  
of the althea grows darker—  
humid evening

*Barbara McCoy*

To swim to rest on a lily pad

*Marion J. Richardson*

leaning into shore  
a distant sail  
sundown

*Gene Williamson*

Blue shell emerging  
the startled robin blinks  
at a greater sky

*Roger F. Sorrentino*

an old photograph  
turned at the edges  
this autumn day

*Robert J. Fiorellino*

Afternoon break:  
two shop girls comb their long hair  
out of the spring rain

*Rosamond Haas*

lost cloud  
shadow straying  
over the mojave desert

*Kay M. Avila*

Milkweed pods burst  
with seed puffs arrayed in light;  
we wait for wind.

*Wayne Hoffman-Ogier*

Winter chill:  
polar bears along the shore  
eating scattered fish

White clouds—  
golden wheat swaying  
in an open field

*Lenard D. Moore*

winter moon—  
a headless snowman  
guards a battered fort

*Ross Figgins*

Picked clean of apples  
the backyard tree cradles  
the setting sun

*George Swede*

First sun in days;  
strutting across the lawn  
a lone peacock!

*Peggy Heinrich*

twenty miles offshore  
the white butterfly

*Hal Roth*

all over Mexico  
*La Virgen de Guadalupe:*  
scent of her December roses

*Elizabeth Searle Lamb*

Still trying to catch  
the prayer plants going to sleep. . .  
Autumn evening

*Sydell Rosenberg*

splitting the wood  
yellow leaves fall all around

*William Higginson*

far side of the gorge  
children climb a rainbow  
not knowing

*Ruth Yarrow*

warbling cool  
as spring water.  
jenny wren's back

sun  
runs down her pigtail,  
drips off

*Randy Brooks*

## JOHN WILLS AND ONE-LINE HAIKU

### III: Three in One or One in Three

by Cor van den Heuvel

*(In part II of this series (in Vol. V, No. 1), there were several errors. Most of these resulted only in awkward syntax, through which I think the reader could, with a little effort, discern the intended meaning. However, there were two factual errors that should be corrected. The publication date of Marlene Wills' the old tin roof was in early 1976, not in 1974. So the period when "there was little or no exploration of the [one-line] form's possibilities, at least in print," was from 1971 to 1976. The other was a reference to Michael McClintock's "free haiku": his own term was "liberated haiku.")*

A good stimulus for writing in a certain form is the appearance of fine work in that form. Besides the influences discussed earlier—Marlene Wills, Matsuo-Allard, Hiroaki Sato, and the general trend to shorter and shorter three-liners—the publication of fine haiku printed in one line by George Swede, Virginia Brady Young, Bob Boldman, Elizabeth Lamb, and others has encouraged more and more writers to try their hand in the one-line form. Even a renga of one-liners has been written: "Old Woman's Banjo" by Marlene Wills, Elizabeth Lamb, and Bill Pauly (*Cicada* 3/2, 1979).

Elizabeth Lamb won the H.S.A. Harold G. Henderson Memorial Award in 1978 with a one-liner:

leaving    all the morning glories    closed

That she chose to break it into three parts by putting in two spaces is indicative of the hesitancy with which many of us approach the one-liner. Putting such spaces may have been—and for some writers may still be—a transition device, as one moves from one form to the other. The "Croaks" section in the early issue of *Frogpond* probably served this function for many of us. For lack of space, the editor, Lily Tanzer, printed everyone's three-liners in one line with slashes indicating the original line breaks. It helped one to see the possibilities of the one



the form. It's one step from slashes to spaces, and then to closing up the spaces—as Marlene Wills often does, even when the reader has to mentally recreate spaces to get the grammatical sense of the haiku. Interesting questions arise: Is a one-liner in three parts still a three-line haiku? Can some haiku be printed both ways effectively? Will they be equally effective?

George Swede has printed quite a number of one-liners with one space, or pause, in them. Some critics might claim he has simply placed two-liners on one line:

One by one to the floor    all of her shadows

(from *All of Her Shadows*, High/Coo  
Mini-Chapbook No. 15, 1982)

Others he does print as two-liners. It seems to be almost, if not wholly, an arbitrary choice. And I'm afraid this is the case with many, if not most, one-liners. Many of them could just as well be printed in two or, more often, three lines.

Printed haiku in two lines has not caught on. Bob Boldman, Swede, and a few others have tried them. I think, though, that for haiku, two lines are esthetically, simply as a form on the page, unpleasing. In English, they remind one of aphorisms or epigrams, which have often appeared in couplets. There is something too balanced and rational about them—they do not have the unfinished suggestibility in one line, but the unfinished aspect is not so easy. One line has the advantage of unity, or oneness, but it may tend to look like a complete, closed sentence. On the other hand it may seem like a one-line excerpt from a longer work—but this is not the kind of “unfinished” we want. We want the openness of the haiku, but we want it to also seem like a complete poem. In any case, three lines combine these paradoxical elements while two lines do not—considered solely as *form*, of course.

However, if a haiku naturally falls into two parts—which most of them do—it may still be printed in one or three lines. In the one line you can have a space between the two parts (as Swede does). In the three lines there will be a pause at the end of one line-break and a “run-in” at the end of the other.

Some critics claim all true haiku naturally break into two parts. These are usually not equal parts; in Japanese the 5-7-5 *onji* are said to usually “break” into 12-5 or 5-12. For example, Basho's “*furu ike ya*” has the “old pond” in the first 5 *onji* and “frog-jump-in-the-water-sound” in the last 12. Within this two-part haiku there is still the three-part *onji* pattern, which reflects the three most basic parts: pond, frog, and sound.

We, of course, have taken hold of the three-part pattern and not concerned ourselves much with this two-part aspect of the haiku—though if we took the time to look, we might find it present in most of our haiku anyway. In fact the Elizabeth Lamb haiku quoted above really needs only the first space or pause, because grammatically it breaks into two parts—though there is a certain extra sense of sadness in contemplating the word “closed” by itself also. But, as I implied before, this is actually a three-line haiku printed in one line. Printed in three lines, it would give the reader the option of running-on or pausing—twice—which increases the possibilities of ambiguity, or suggestion, for both “leaving” and “closed.”

It wasn't until I read John Wills' *up a distant ridge*, shortly before beginning this series of articles, that I began to think of the one-line haiku as more than an occasional exception. Seeing so many outstanding haiku all at once, all printed in one-line form, made me an enthusiast for one-liners. I began to think that the one-liner might become almost as important as the three.

In the process of doing these articles I've had a lot of time to think and re-think this problem, and my initial enthusiasm has considerably cooled. Not that I'm convinced that we should all go back to writing only three-liners, but I do think we will have to do a lot more critical searching for the answer to the question: what is form in haiku?

My enthusiasm for *ridge* has not cooled; I'm as certain as ever that this is a great collection—I've only come to the conclusion that most of the haiku in it are basically three-liners. I knew, when I first read it, that some of the haiku in the book had originally been in three lines—I'd seen some of them in manuscript, and at least one of them had been published in three lines:

a mourning cloak  
comes sailing down  
the deer path

(*Haiku Society Minutes*, June 4, 1973)

The one-line version in *ridge* lacks the word “comes.” Wills told me recently that the word should be in the haiku whether it's printed as one line or three. One reason is that without it the iambic rhythm is broken. Ultimately, the right words in the right order take precedence over considerations of line arrangements—though it might be argued that part of “right order” involves, in a way, such considerations.

John Wills has concerned himself with such considerations for a

ing time. In *Seer Ox* No. 3, 1975, he had the following:

### A SPRING TOO MANY

“Keep out” sign, but the violets keep on going.  
The weeds I cut beside the shed in blossom.  
About the den of the copperhead hepatica.  
On this glad morning only I am old.

Is this intended as a four-line poem or as four one-liners? I wonder if Wills himself was sure. He published two more titled, four-line “sets” like this in the following issue. From the above, he got this for *ridge*:

rocky den of the copperhead    hepatica

I’ve seen still another, later, version in manuscript which is in three lines.

Wills was certainly influenced on this subject to some extent during the mid-seventies by his wife, Marlene. In fact, she wrote to Matsuo Allard in the fall of 1977—when Allard was in the midst of getting together that luminous second issue of *Uguisu*: “I have told John recently that I thought many of his haiku might look good as one-liners.” A few weeks later John Wills sent Allard the complete manuscript of *up a distant ridge* in the exact form in which it was finally published in 1980.

Wills has always written very simply and concisely—and the shorter the poem, the more likely it’s going to *look good* as a one-liner. But “looking” good is one thing—having the most effective form may be something else.

I recently received a long book manuscript from John Wills that he is preparing for publication. It contains about 250 haiku—all in three lines, including the haiku from *ridge*. Most of the latter were, he says, originally written in three lines. Yet he is still considering the possibility of reprinting some of them in one line.

He wrote to me after the first part of this series appeared, “I suppose many of my haiku were conceived as one-liners. At least I conceived them in one breath. I work musically as well as pictorially and rarely worry much about the number of lines or syllables.” Obviously he is oversimplifying the creative process here, or he could not have produced such a large body of work in three-line form. But almost all of his haiku have a basic iambic meter combined with a concise simplicity of language which gives them a one-line-like unity. It is this flow within a short space that makes many of his haiku appear to ad-

vantage when printed in one line.

If we took the three-liners of Mabelsson Norway, who writes always in 5-7-5 syllables, and tried to print them as one-liners, we would find they are just physically too unwieldy for the page. They are so long they would look awkward strung across the page and tend to break themselves into more lines by their very weight:

The old rooster crows . . . Out of the mist come the rocks and  
the twisted pine

To go to the other extreme—Marlene Wills' one-liner:

pig and i spring rain

would in three lines lose much of its comic humor which depends on seeing all three elements close together—so close that one almost sees the poet rolling in the mud with the pig, she is so pleased with the promise the spring rain brings.

Shortness alone, however, does not make a one-liner. Take Larry Wiggin's,

crickets . . .  
then  
thunder

where each word gets the time and silence it needs by having a line to itself.

A good combination for one-liners might be shortness and a syntax that does not call for any noticeable pause or break—and where nothing would be gained in suggestibility or enriching ambiguity by deliberately breaking the line. For example, Virginia Brady Young's,

The silence  
in moonlight  
of stones

Gustave Keyser, writing about one-liners back in 1971 (*Haiku Magazine* 5/3), suggested a number of three-line haiku might work better in one line, including the one just quoted. Virginia has told me she agrees.

More than 10 years later, after some experience with one-liners, perhaps there are more readers who can appreciate the simplicity of

is haiku in the one-line form:

the silence in moonlight of stones

But when we come to a haiku like John Wills',

dusk    from rock to rock a waterthrush

becomes more difficult to decide which is the best form, for it seems equally effective as

dusk  
from rock to rock  
a waterthrush

Three lines has a "tradition" in English language haiku, even if it hasn't been around a long time. It's how the genre started in English. On that basis alone, it seems more like a haiku, a complete poem, and one is, perhaps, more mentally and emotionally prepared—consciously and subconsciously—to give it the kind of attention it needs to work as a poem. A reader is also apt to read it more closely and slowly in three lines. In addition, everything I said in praise of this haiku in the first part of this series of articles applies to the three-line version as well as the one.

On the other hand, there is a purity, a feeling of unity, oneness, that is pleasing and enriching, in seeing it printed in one line. Haiku should be simple. Isn't one simpler than three?

Even from the standpoint of form contributing to the sense, or meaning, of the haiku, arguments can be advanced in favor of both forms. In the one-line version, having the "waterthrush" so close to "from rock to rock" increases the sense of *quick*, mysterious movement, the flash of the bird going from here to there. From the three-liner, one could say that the mind runs the second and third lines together to get this effect anyway, yet can also feel the unique qualities of "rock" and "waterthrush" by having them on separate lines. One can even run-on the first and second lines to get a sense of the "dusk" also moving "from rock to rock," which further enriches the experience and adds to the unity. The space in the one-liner after "dusk" might be thought to inhibit such an effect. Yet if you dropped the space, something else would be lost. In the three-liner you can have the space or not, by either pausing at the line-break or running-on.

This is where I think we come to a point where the three-liner clearly takes the lead. It is possible that a reader can, if sensitive, see the poem both ways in his mind whether it is printed in one *or* three lines. But it is easier to see the one in the printed three lines than it is to always see the three in the printed one line—because in the one line, the reader may make the breaks differently than the writer intends, or make no breaks at all. If there is no place for breaks, perhaps it's a real one-liner.

This reminds me of the controversy in the Christian Church between the Unitarians and Trinitarians. One way has three in one, the other one in three.

The mind can do many things with a haiku—but the poet must decide which form will be best to convey his intention to the reader. As a reader and critic, I think the “waterthrush” haiku comes closest to perfection in the three-line form—perfection in form being that form which best conveys the richest, deepest experience.

I've come to the same conclusion about most of the other haiku in *ridge* as well. Some may work equally well either way—or so close it's hard to tell the difference—but only very few of them are clearly better as one line. The most important of these is the title poem:

the sun lights up a distant ridge    another

the word “another” would be considerably weakened at the bottom of three lines:

the sun lights up  
a distant ridge  
another

The haiku gains immeasurably by having the sunlight, and the reader's mind, sweeping horizontally across the page, across the landscape—leaping the space between the words, between the ridges—to light up one ridge after another, all rising up out of a simple abstract word that has been transformed into an actual presence by that wonder of language: poetry.

My experience with this book leaves me still intrigued by the possibilities of the one-liner, but also feeling a new respect and appreciation of the three-line form. Perhaps it may be good to get a new perspective on any haiku by seeing it both ways. The Japanese usually print, or write, their haiku in one vertical line, or column, but sometimes on

pecial cards for presentation as gifts they may write them out in more than one vertical line. If they should break it into three vertical lines they do not, I understand, usually follow the 5-7-5, but let the calligraphic design dictate the breaks. However the haiku is written or printed, the Japanese reader can always pick out the three-part form made by the 5-7-5 *onji* pattern (except where, as in some modern Japanese "free haiku," it does not exist). The 5-7-5 is a formal reflection, I think, of an even deeper threefold aspect of the haiku, which is perhaps somehow basic to the mystery of the haiku spirit. I recently met a young Japanese visitor to this country at a party in New York. When I brought up the subject of haiku, he said he knew very little about it as he was a painter—but, he said, even in his ignorance he knew that the 5-7-5 was very important in haiku, because it requires or assists the reader, or poem, to go up to the summit and back down again—leaving a beginning, a view, and a conclusion. That it creates a natural regularity going around from 5 to 7 and back to 5 again, which gives the haiku unity.

Haiku may be about a single moment, but in light of the above, I wonder if it isn't also like a journey (such as Basho's travels) in microcosm. There is the setting out, the experience on the road, and the return. Basho's disciple Hattori Toho wrote, "hokku is the attitude of mind that goes and then returns." (See "Parameters of Linked Poetry" by Esperanza Ramirez-Christensen, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 44, 1981, p. 581.) Considering the three parts of a haiku, this may mean that we go from the first element to the second and that the third brings us back to the first. The "third" may be the result of the juxtaposition of the first with the second giving us a new awareness of the first, thus "returning" us to it.

To take the "*furu ike ya*" again, as a very simple example: you start out with the "old pond" (eternity), you go to the "frog jumping" (life), and then you return to the "old pond" with the "water sound," which is the moment of meeting, or juxtaposition, of the first two (life and the eternal, or the infinite). Two things are "juxtaposed" and meet in a third, resulting in a new awareness bringing us back to the first.

We have no 5-7-5 rhythm inherent in our language to reflect this threefold characteristic of haiku. Our only form "frame" for it is the three-line form. I don't have space to explore the question of the proportionate lengths for the three lines, but most critics say it should be short-long-short in sound duration to match the 5-7-5 of the Japanese, with a total of about 10 to 14 syllables, which approximates the duration of 17 *onji*. In cases where a "formal" break is not wanted, we can sometimes create the "threefold" in *one* line by our use of language.

For example, in some of the one-line haiku discussed in this article,

two things are brought together in a third to return the reader to the first thing with a new awareness: the pig and i are brought together in the spring rain; we go from the silence to the moonlight and these are brought together in the stones, or we might say we return to the silence as the moonlight meets the stones, or even that we go from the silence to the moon (light) and return to the earth (stones, silence), etc.; we go from the sunlight to the ridge to "another," which by becoming another ridge, and another, and another, takes us back to the sunlight and a new awareness of the infinite *it* reflects.

It would seem, from the views explained here, that a haiku should have three elements in one moment—usually with a two-part division superimposed on the three. Whether we write it in three lines, or one, should depend on which works best with the words to reveal the haiku spirit.

## HAIKU NEWS

### PUBLISHING NOTICES

- Lewis Sanders announces he is editing a haiku column for PARNASSUS magazine. He will not use experimental or avant garde haiku, rather he will be leaning towards traditional haiku, though not necessarily 5-7-5. For further information, or submissions, write: Lewis Sanders, 125 Taylor St., Jackson, TN 38301.
- Sabine Sommerkamp has set up and is editing a haiku section ("Haiku Ecke") in *apropos* magazine, a magazine for art, literature and criticism. It is the first regularly appearing forum for German language haiku, and submissions, if linked to German haiku, will be included. For more information, or submissions, write: Sabine Sommerkamp, Wullenbushkoppel 9, 2000 Hamburg 65, West Germany.

### CORRECTION

Footnote number 8 to William Higginson's article "Afro-American Haiku" should have read, in its entirety:

<sup>8</sup>(Detroit: Broadside Press, 1968), pp. 18-19; however, I am quoting all of his haiku from *Born of a Woman: New and Selected*



*Poems* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1980), pp. 13-14, 42, which has corrected versions of the earlier poems. Other haiku by Knight, not reprinted in *Born of a Woman*, appear in his *Belly Song and Other Poems* (Detroit: Broadside Press, 1973).

### HSA Membership Update

#### *Renewals:*

Bob Boldman, L.F. Gronich (1983), Mrs. H.G. Henderson (H, D), Brita Kerner, Fr. Neal Henry Lawrence, OSB (1983), Frances Levenson (1983 & D), George Moseley, Alexis K. Rotella, Zolo.

#### *Address Correction:*

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NOTICE

— Please remember to include an SASE when writing to *any* HSA officer. The cost to the society in replacing stamps and envelopes has been adding up.

