

# frogpond

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Art by Robert T. Malinowski

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# frogpond

carrying firewood  
to the house—  
winter in every breath

*Nasira Alma*

Vol. XX, No. 3      December 1997  
HAIKU SOCIETY OF AMERICA



## FROM THE EDITOR

What kind of people write the haiku and other features in *frogpond*? Well, many are schoolteachers, from preschool to university. Others are research scientists in chemistry, biochemistry, and other fields. We have diplomats, prisoners, translators, travel agents, graphic artists, playwrights, filmmakers, librarians, cabinetmakers, physicians, surgeons, dentists, military personnel, ministers, priests, nuns, publishers, beekeepers, booksellers, encyclopedists, students, anthropologists, sports pros, curators, filmmakers, gorillas . . .

GORILLAS??? Well, one. Donald McLeod, whose work appears in this and former issues, is a professional gorilla. You saw him in ads on television for several years trying to smash luggage. You saw him in such motion pictures as *Trading Places* and *Naked Gun 2½*. Now he's back on TV as Tarzan's main man—er, ape. *People Weekly* devoted a page to him a few months ago. What some gorillas won't do to support their haiku habits!

And now it's time to pass the reins over to a new editor. I have to apologize to you for the lateness of this and previous issues. Most of you have been remarkably forgiving. And I thank you for the outpouring of love that you have bestowed upon me during these three years. I have tried to follow your advice when possible, and you have in general been understanding when I couldn't. Many new haiku poets have appeared during this time, and you have made many of them feel quite comfortable. I have made so many new friends, some of whom I have met in person, others by correspondence; one of the things that I am looking forward to is engaging in much good correspondence with these new friends! And I am so looking forward to getting back to my own writing, as well as to the gardening, wine-making, and cooking that I have missed (June, who has proofread most of the pages of *frogpond* over the past three years, has also had to take over the kitchen completely).

Please show Jim Kacian the welcome that you gave to me. Please be patient, as you were with me, as he works his way into this demanding job. His address: P.O. Box 2461, Winchester, VA 22604.

With love and gratitude,  
*Kenneth*



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In memory of  
Nasira Alma  
(Nancy Henderson)

September 19, 1943 - November 16, 1997

the young peacock  
fighting his reflection  
in a hubcap

*Nancy Henderson*  
*frogpond XVI:1 (1993)*

the following haiku was  
submitted by Nasira Alma  
in June 1997:

pile of gold leaves—  
holding a match  
to last summer

Another of Nasira Alma's haiku appears as the theme haiku on the title page of this issue.

soft snowflakes  
lighting up this dark night  
her haiku and tanka

*Elizabeth St Jacques*

you tried this  
and that, Nasira,  
to help you stay longer,  
and still, still,  
you are with us

*Sanford Goldstein*

hearing of your death  
I am arranging flowers  
in a silver bowl—  
with each fragile blossom  
Nasira, I say your name

*Yvonne Hardenbrook*



In memory of

Virgil Hutton

May 11, 1931 - November 1, 1997

The approach of night;  
the hawk's graceful wobble  
into the wind

"The Hawk's Vision" (High/Coo Press, 1989)

Setting sun;  
in the harvested field  
pools of red water

*frogpond XIII:4 (1990)*

Autumn mist;  
drops fall to the leaves below  
from barren branches

*Modern Haiku XXII:3 (1991)*

Tears  
in the jogger's eyes;  
the autumn wind

(written a few days before his death)

*Virgil Hutton*

How quietly  
a good life ends  
and rain turns to snow

*H.F. Noyes*



grey mist rising  
over still river's water  
this autumn morning

*F. Matthew Blaine*

autumn morning  
in this thick fog  
a moon-white sun

*Tom Genovese*

We eat in silence . . .  
he leaves for work  
in the fog.

*Laurie A. Szpot*

Morning fog—  
always just  
over there.

*G.E. Baldwin*

Lingering  
only below treetops . . .  
morning fog

*Linda Jeannette Ward*

on a quiet street  
a woman walking through fog  
stops to touch a tree

*Jeffrey Rabkin*

sound of horns  
deep in the tidal wave  
of evening fog

*H.F. Noyes*

foghorn  
nudges through  
earplugs

*Alexandra Yurkovsky*



waking in darkness—  
neighborhood noises slowly  
absorb the freeway roar

*George Knox*

left over  
in the glow of dawn  
thin slice of moon

*H.F. Noyes*

dark sky—  
joining the falling rain  
dripping faucet

*Jeff Learned*

a crowded lunchroom—  
conversation louder  
for the rain

*Barry George*

rainswept lake—  
half a red bridge spans  
the October world

the river  
wider by one day—  
unbroken rain

*Ross Figgins*

stormy gust . . .  
it takes the moon a minute  
to come back

*Peggy Willis Lyles*

solitary  
tin-roof rain  
drifting off

*Robert Henry Poulin*

the rain  
impatiently  
fingers the roof

rain stops  
and waits  
in silence

*Josh Goldberg*



above the highway—  
upon a southeasterly wind  
the smell of the sea

*Stephen Page*

Morning beach stroll  
only gull tracks  
for company

*Bette R. Jones*

wave after wave  
each one lifting  
its own treasures

*Emily Romano*

footprints in the sand  
leading me . . .  
to a thorny end

*Edith Mize Lewis*

November's silence—  
freighters move down the earth's curve  
off Coney Island

Thanksgiving Day gale  
erasing all the footprints—  
Coney Island Beach

*Richard Rosenberg*

chilly sunset:  
in the clamshell's calm water  
the same ruddy sky

*Mike Dillon*

hunter moon  
through the window pane  
the deserted beach

*Karen Klein*

Hazy moon—  
how did we come  
to this place?

*Thomas Williams*



redwoods  
turning gray  
in the fog

*Kaye Laird*

birch trunks  
even whiter  
in the autumn

*Charles P. Trumbull*

autumn footpath;  
on the familiar elm  
new initials

*paul m*

so brilliant  
after miles of cedars  
the red maple

*Michael L. Evans*

again, the great maple  
turns Halloween orange  
again, this longing

*Larry Kimmel*

the only gold  
left on the pear tree  
the last burnished leaves

*Jeanette Stace*

apricot tree  
a single yellow leaf  
trembling

*Kevin Hull*

Late autumn arrives  
I think about the last leaves  
refusing to fall

*Joseph N. Schmidt, Jr.*



From a chimney  
black smoke  
chases the wind.

*Nikhil Nath*

autumn wind—  
through the bare branches  
dingy cotton

*Neca Stoller*

gentle breeze  
always the same small sound  
from the wind chime

windsong . . .  
the notes between  
the notes

*Jim Kacian*

empty shopping cart  
the wind  
taking a ride

*Idella Rowand*

staff meeting  
against the window  
last leaf of fall

*David C. Ward*

shuffling  
through autumn leaves—  
the rasp of a bamboo rake

*Evelyn H. Hermann*

once they've fallen  
how quickly they become  
winter leaves

moonlight on the curb . . .  
a pile of plastic bags  
stuffed full of autumn

*Robert Gilliland*

Moon night—  
branches detailed  
on a pale wall

*Richard Balus*



perched on the ledge of  
the windowsill, a cat sleeps

carious  
e l  
r y  
p

*Anita Wintz*

house cat  
and freshly folded laundry  
exchanging warmth

*Donald McLeod*

cold autumn morning  
glowing amber of cat eyes  
keeping the bed warm

*Celia Stuart-Powles*

before the fire  
cat stretched  
to twice its length

*Giselle Maya*

passing the cat  
en route to the bedroom . . .  
on the bed, the cat

*Mark Arvid White*

halloween cat . . . eyes full of moon

*Celia Stuart-Powles*

the flick of a paw  
sprinkles  
the moonlight

*Rubin Weinstein*

evening chill  
in with the dog  
. . . scent of burnt leaves

*Joann Klontz*

autumn night  
in the dog's snoring  
a kind of music

*John Sheirer*

three in a bed  
one being edged out  
by the dog

*Maureen Sanders*



in the fog  
its plaintive tone deepens  
mourning dove

*Naomi Y. Brown*

the  
tree  
branches  
bare  
except  
for  
the  
mourning  
dove

*Melissa Leaf Nelson*

through thinning mist  
of mid-October:  
flash of a goldfinch!

*Emily Romano*

the hunter  
describes for me the beauty  
of a pintail's landing

*Helen K. Davie*

calm pool  
geese flying south  
unevenly

*paul m*

the goose's brief honk  
the only sound on the lake  
. . . empty autumn sky

*Donnie Nichols*

home from a trip  
the dark sky's passage  
of trumpeting geese

*Lenard D. Moore*

in the mid of night  
wail of the loon  
and your breathing

*wanda d. cook*



Night ends  
with the cawing  
of a crow

*Tom Tico*

a silver dawn  
in the snow-covered forest  
the rancor of crows

*Elizabeth Howard*

crow squawking my woe

*Marie Louise Munro*

two crows perched  
among the bright empty branches  
. . . winter day moon

its eye  
as black as its feathers  
winter crow

*Bruce Ross*

from the top  
of a snow-covered pine  
a crow takes flight

*Edward J. Rielly*

swaying in the winter wind  
a bird feeder  
filled with chickadees

*joan iversen goswell*

Thanksgiving Day  
din of a hundred sparrows  
at one small feeder

*Carol Conti-Entin*

Into the pause  
after the *adagio*—  
winter sparrow's call

*D. Claire Gallagher*

dusk  
through the bare branches  
a red-tailed hawk

*Marshall Hryciuk*

the skunk's shadow  
waddles across  
moonlit snow

*Pamela Connor*



winter dawn—  
on the dogwood branch  
one gray feather

*Joann Klontz*

Sunday bells—  
snow geese rising  
from the lake

*Donald B. Hendrich*

distant church bells . . .  
a sparrow's breath  
lost in the holly berries

*Michael Dylan Welch*

in December fog  
sparrows' backsides  
almost furry

*Brent Partridge*

among glass canyons  
one dead sparrow and I  
visiting the city

*Elio Abbondanzieri*

winter loneliness . . .  
not even snow bunting tracks  
in my garden

*Pamela A. Babusci*

distracted by one  
red cardinal in the snow  
I prick my finger

*Anita Wintz*

covering the snow—  
a forest of blue shadows  
shaped like birches

*Jeffrey Rabkin*



so quiet  
opening the shutters  
to snow

*Peter Duppenthaler*

first snow  
swirling in the street  
young girl

*Fred Donovan*

First snow—  
in every shovelful  
the unraked leaves

*Richard Balus*

dusted with snow—  
piles of leaves  
and a broken bamboo rake

*Jon LaCure*

first snow,  
first snowman;  
blue eyes peeking  
through window breath . . .

*Michael L. Evans*

Shoveling snow:  
a pathway cleared  
as new flakes fall

*Joseph N. Schmidt, Jr.*

middle of winter—  
my own voice  
echoing across the snow

*Ryan G. Van Cleave*

after the snowstorm  
branches and my old bones  
creak in the silence

*wanda d. cook*

before tire tracks  
the new snow  
in moonlight

*Michelle V. Lohnes*



morning fog—  
lifting an earflap  
to judge the coyote howls

*Laura Young*

coyote's zigzag—  
desert path weaves  
in and out of sage

*Ulf Wiman*

alone on Christmas Day  
looking at snow  
in the manes of wild horses

*James Tipton*

The bird watcher  
faithfully places seed  
for squirrels

*Laurie A. Szpot*

in the barn's half-dark  
the sound of rats  
in the corn barrel

*eric l. houck jr.*

swirling wind rushes  
leaves through the open door  
also a field mouse

*Flori Ignoffo*

dusk  
cattle grazing  
on their shadows

*Donald McLeod*

passing train  
its sound expands  
the waterfall

*Helen J. Sherry*

first day of fall  
a train takes the hound's howl  
deeper into the night

*Nina A. Wicker*



traffic gridlock . . .  
out of the darkness  
the sound of a brook

*Sharon Lee Shafii*

in dawn's stillness  
the tree silhouettes  
networking

*Ronan*

A single leaf shines  
through black branches of the tree;  
snow clouds gathering

*R.S. Lewis*

Fallow field . . .  
covered with an early snow  
—Queen Anne's Lace

*George Skane*

this afternoon  
one more funeral to attend  
sasanqua in bloom

*Naomi Y. Brown*

dead tree  
one branch silhouetted  
against the setting sun

*Winona Baker*

chainsaw factory—  
and beyond, the winter sun  
flickers between trees

*Martin Lucas*

moving away  
giving the borrowed garden stones  
back to the river

*Blanche Nonnemann*

their dark forms  
resting in the last sunlight  
creek stones

*Bruce Ross*



In a slow curve  
of dark waters  
the mountains rest.

*Mikal Lofgren*

autumn wind  
combing the trees  
winter-ready

*Ronan*

The piece of paper  
I stoop to pick from the rug  
is a slit of sun

*Harriet L. Axelrad*

clouds moving  
a sliver of moon  
shining through

*Wendy Morris*

night at the red light—  
almost all alone,  
save for the moon

*Paul O. Williams*

winter mist—  
the mountain's slow  
unfolding

*Laurie W. Stoelting*

in the kitchen  
mini-blinds  
slice the sunlight

*Rebecca M. Osborn*

sunshine  
a last gash  
across the sky

*Patricia A. Laster*

Winter evening—  
haze on the moon  
from my breath.

*Katherine Wilwol*



first light—  
frost star  
in the birdbath

*susan delaney mech*

morning frost—  
the stillness within  
stillness

*Donald B. Hendrich*

the shady slope  
of each furrow  
rimed into place

*Makiko*

January thaw  
the narrow path  
fading away

*Mark Alan Osterhaus*

In the failing light  
sleet sizzles  
on the lake

*Ken Jones*

Sleet-glazed blacktop  
underfoot  
a lightning flash

*Debbie White-Bull Page*

Steady rhythmic drops  
quietly announcing  
chinook's arrival

*Sandra J. Barker*

wind, just wind  
with me tonight  
whistling

*Robert Henry Poulin*

winter wind . . .  
when did this mattress become  
so hard?

*Carol Conti-Entin*



this white sapphire  
in a certain light  
reveals its star

*L.A. Davidson*

Shortest day  
. . . the wineberry leaves  
curl into themselves

*Joyce Austin Gilbert*

Shifting patterns  
of grazing sheep  
trace out the winter's day

*Ken Jones*

winter wind  
getting enough junk mail  
for a small fire

*Robert Gibson*

firewood crackles . . .  
warmth from the tree I clung to  
through the earthquake

*Helen K. Davie*

the western horizon rises  
allowing the sun  
to slip away

*Monica Reller*

all day  
taking it slowly—  
so soon the evening star

*Susan Stanford*

Beneath a chestnut tree  
I gaze at branches  
full of stars.

*Predrag Pešić-Šera*



sudden return of winter  
snow slowly covers  
the dead snake

*D.L. Bachelor*

ancient rock wall  
under the layer of ice  
the snail's summer trace

*Elizabeth Howard*

alone . . .  
in a porcelain bowl  
winter spider

*Cherie Hunter Day*

Spider, forgive me.  
We both can't stay  
with the same woman.

*Carl Mayfield*

killing the spider  
on the mirror,  
I see a cold face

*Tom Williams*

aye, but laddie . . .  
bad loock fer yer hoose  
to kill a spoider innit!

*Kenneth C. Leibman*

spider's web  
old flies  
stored in the attic window

*eric l. houck jr.*

dancing on the moon—  
last fly  
by the windowpane

*Alexey Andreyev*



winter dawn under its cupola the railway clock

*Susan Stanford*

first light  
the window suddenly  
a mirror

*Jim Kacian*

Winter morning—  
the steamy mirror  
stifles a yawn.

*Robert L. Brimm*

behind the splotches  
as I wipe them off the mirror,  
me

*William Woodruff*

rubble  
the cornerstone yields  
half a name

*Peggy Willis Lyles*

noon—  
footprints in snow filling with  
shadows

*Donald B. Hendrich*

Suddenly I realize  
I've already crossed  
the scenic bridge

*D.W. Parry*

low sun through the trees  
flashing its strobe lights  
on the passing cars

*Jeanette Stace*

Her team far behind,  
the cheerleader jumps into  
the final buzzer

*Rich Krivcher*



red morning  
scarecrow casts  
a man's shadow

*Stephanie Curson*

late fall  
a scarecrow hunches over  
a schoolyard garden

*Anthony J. Pupello*

Autumn wind  
a button falls  
from the scarecrow's shirt.

*Chris Cook*

lugging the scarecrow  
rattling rattling  
over broken stalks

*William Dennis*

Wood carver's face:  
rough-cut, like his eagles  
and fish

*Dave Russo*

migrant workers  
picking apples . . .  
their leather faces

*Pamela A. Babusci*

unemployment office—  
a metal chair  
scrapes the linoleum

*Donald McLeod*

the rusty rake  
against the arbor  
winter vines

*paul m*

the red wheelbarrow  
upon which so much depends  
rusting, rots away

*Riki Kondo*



November morning—  
frozen at the bus stop  
by his smile

*Pamela Miller Ness*

Rushing through the rain with her  
as if that would give me a place to go

*Richard Rosenberg*

beneath the full moon  
holding hands for the first time  
the young blind lovers

*Sheila Hyland*

power outage . . .  
my little room larger  
by candlelight

*Tom Tico*

power outage over  
I keep writing the love letter  
by candlelight

*Mauree Pendergrast*

love note  
beside a bowl of tangerines . . .  
hunter's moon

*Peggy Willis Lyles*

Her chatter stops  
when she sees  
it.

*G.E. Baldwin*

sometimes  
after in the emptiness  
nirvana

*Robert Gibson*

tongue  
on  
tongue  
no  
place  
for  
words

*David Gershator*

In the cold night  
your fingers pulling your blanket  
over my shoulders.

*Dave Roberts*



between us  
armrest

*ai li*

dense fog—  
I write your name  
on the airport window

*Michael Dylan Welch*

in a kitchen  
bigger for her absence  
drinking tea

*Barry George*

lingering there still—  
long after we said goodbye,  
footprints in the snow

*Linda Porter*

Barren trees,  
quiet footsteps, falling snow  
missing you

*Sandra E. Novack*

only a nod  
from my neighbor today—  
late autumn light

*Alex Feldvebel*

your absence  
at dusk  
the banging door

*ai li*

still haunting me,  
our quarrel of the night before  
that car crash killed you

*William Woodruff*



Early morning bus—  
snowflakes swirl aboard,  
then the children.

*Robert L. Brimm*

afternoon tea party—  
a young girl pretends  
her dress is clean

*Dani DeCaro*

visiting infant grandson  
the joy  
of yucky kisses

Tanglewood concert  
operatic arias  
amid grandson's recitatives

*Charles J. Scanzello*

murder trial—  
the defendant's feet  
don't reach the floor

*Frank Higgins*

crossing the barren field  
the thinness  
of her shadow

*Ce Rosenow*

the coldest season  
and even my eyebrows  
are getting thinner

*Brent Partridge*

the evening before surgery  
sunlit clouds  
turn gray

*Kay F. Anderson*

leaving the dog out  
in the cold—  
my broken hymen

*Marie Louise Munro*



airport terminal—  
my elderly parents  
not saying “good-bye”

*D. Claire Gallagher*

my father  
losing his memory—asks me  
not to forget him

*Michael Ketchek*

Climbing cellar stairs,  
the cat and I together—  
moving slower now

*Don L. Holroyd*

a glint in her eyes—  
arthritic fingers lay down  
a gin hand

*Jeanne Emrich*

Ivory hairpin  
yellow  
without her brown

*Norman St. Francis*

old and alone  
she fills her days  
with doctor appointments

*Emily Romano*

dusk  
gathering  
at the corners of his eyes

*Carla Sari*

on her eightieth birthday  
the full moon the same  
as on her eighth

*William Woodruff*

tomorrow's my birthday—  
another leaf  
falls in the creek.

*Doni Scob*



saying  
something i don't understand  
my friend dies

*Robert Gibson*

on her death bed  
no one to say that her curls  
were golden

*Leatrice Lifshitz*

cumulus clouds  
on the day of her death  
the long walk home

*Cherie Hunter Day*

the gate lifts  
for the long black limo—  
autumn wind

*Michael Dylan Welch*

Procession of leaves  
hurriedly crossing  
the cemetery path

*Zoran Doderović*

November morning  
each granddaughter places  
a long-stemmed rose

*Joann Klontz*

december rain  
by the grave  
we warm each other

*Robert Gibson*

He died, that man we all loved  
and we laughed shiva  
in O'Reilly's Bar & Grill

*Michael McGrinder*



anniversary  
of my mother's death  
pecking of sleet

*Ken Hurm*

inhaling her scent—  
my dead mother's sweater  
pressed to my face.

*Janet Hobbs*

estate sale  
in a box marked 'discard'  
three scrapbooks

*John J. Dunphy*

winter Sunday  
I open the window wide  
for the bells

*Yvonne Hardenbrook*

church bells—  
too late for mass  
I contemplate a cloud

*R.A. Stefanac*

Walnut-hull brown  
my stained hands reach out  
taking Communion

*Debbie White-Bull Page*

Monks chanting  
at Vespers—  
birdsong in the rest notes

*Donatella Cardillo-Young*

sidewalk vent  
a homeless man hidden  
by the steam

*Christopher Suarez*



Through a center hole  
drilled in a sacred stone  
the universe

*Debbie White-Bull Page*

southbound . . .  
smaller and smaller piles  
of dirty snow

*Louise Somers Winder*

lost but still roaming  
the purple-dusk streets  
of Santa Fe

*Gloria H. Procsal*

yellow bird  
on a broomstick  
the dust can wait

*David Gershator*

while the moon waxes  
drunk on Chinese poetry  
we land in Peking

*Kris Kondo*

standing in a row  
on ancient tile roof corners  
the gods peek thru snow  
(Toksugung, Korea)

*Judith Gorgone*

Ryōanji—  
contemplating the koan  
of the rocks  
(Kyōto)

*Kenneth C. Leibman*

passing villages  
under the moon . . .  
the night train

overhead,  
grey kites—  
the slums of Bombay

*Kim Dorman*



Halloween moon  
hungry night creature  
in a pink tutu

*Jeff Logan*

October night  
blowing shadows  
all over my room

*Jeanne Harrington*

grimly carved pumpkins  
their lighted eyes gazing out  
at their faceless peers

*Donnie Nichols*

the pumpkin—  
still smiling  
as it deteriorates

*Tom Tico*

highrise  
a single balcony  
filled with Christmas

*Marc Thompson*

dusk . . .  
through the dark little woods  
someone's Christmas lights

*Bruce Ross*

unwrapping  
her Christmas gift she smiles  
only with her mouth

*D. Claire Gallagher*

New Year's Eve alone  
one by one I think of them  
the faces of friends

*Christopher Herold*



endless field—  
without paper or pen i  
compose & forget.

*steve dalachinsky*

The poet receives  
long awaited response . . .  
another rejection.

*Christine McGuigan*

open door—  
a glimpse of the empty stage  
the empty chairs

*Helen K. Davie*

grocery line—  
the dancer's feet  
in first position

*Charles P. Trumbull*

interior decorating—  
designer spots  
on her pot plants

*Ernest J. Berry*

science museum—  
men's room towel dispenser  
jammed

*Paul Watsky*

slushy late morning  
leaving the funeral home  
with their new calendar

*Zinovy Vayman*

flu season  
the hypochondriac  
feeling better

*Carlos Colón*



from sidewalk to lane  
and one fence to the other  
ownership of weeds

*Edwin N. Turner*

new employee  
everyone smiling  
once

*David C. Ward*

Fortune cookie said:  
"Big surprise ahead;"  
waiter spills tea on me.

*Edith Mize Lewis*

thrift store countertop  
several engagement rings  
only slightly used

lingering for a kiss . . .  
the train leaves  
right on time

*Paul David Mena*

**Museum of Haiku Literature Awards**

\$50 each for best haiku appearing in the previous issue

Father's funeral  
Mother  
suddenly small

*Celia Stuart-Powles*

porch swing  
now and then a breeze  
from the river

*Robert Gibson*



the gift of a book  
inside the jacket cover  
his winter haiku

sharing lunch  
we speak of the stages  
of his cancer

restaurant window  
table now empty  
where we sat

seeking my old friend  
between the lines  
of his haibun

*Joyce Walker Currier*

### Seven: Soul Food

journalwayselective

excerpt  
—carried daylong  
in my thoughts

a new insight  
with each reading . . .  
autumn leaves drift

dogeared page—  
crumbs  
in the inseam

autumn wind  
riffles through pages . . .  
starlight on prose

closing the book—  
ahead, on the moonbright path,  
a rabbit plays statue

book overdue—  
rereading a favorite entry  
one more time

*Emily Romano*

first chemo—  
the waiting-room eyes  
size us up

bright winter morning—  
the blind at her window  
drawn

how to lie  
in this bed of ours . . .  
alone

*Cyril Childs*



## One Summer Night

such coolness . . .  
sailboat leaves the dock  
at twilight

the boardwalk—  
neon lights hide  
the setting sun

summer night . . .  
behind the dunes  
soft laughter

low tide—  
young man skipping shells  
over the moon

moonlit,  
two swimmers embrace  
in the dark sea

old man  
fishes from the pier  
beyond the lights

driftwood fire  
dies on the empty beach—  
summer dawn

*Jim Mullins*

(This sequence was inadvertently omitted from the Summer issue)



**singles bar**

after 20 minutes of talk  
the ice finally melting  
in her glass  
  
across the room  
his ex-wife  
  
the man hitting on her  
grows more attractive  
as the candle dims  
  
at a table  
'Nam vet sits alone  
in his wheelchair  
  
the empty table's ashtray . . .  
two cigarette butts  
still smoldering  
  
phone number  
on a crumpled napkin  
floating in the mud puddle

*John J. Dunphy*

**Motel**

behind the door  
a disclaimer list  
covers everything  
  
old tv  
only snow  
outside too  
  
all alone  
i dial a prayer  
. . . no reply  
  
bedside cabinet:  
the choice of god  
or hefner  
  
check-out time  
at last i find  
the light switch

*Ernest J. Berry*

**The Education of Billy**

Billy is in English Class:

new girl in class  
it's love at first sight!  
Billy frogs her arm

Billy gets sent to the office for that:

waiting for mr. white  
in the antechamber—  
sweating it out

And punished:

i won't act macho  
fifty times he asks his mother  
what that means



## The American Dream

cardboard houses disassembling december wind  
vietnam vet hugging newspaper closer dusk  
woman sleeping beside blue dumpster  
red ferrari  
shopkeeper sweeping man from storefront shadow

*Marie Louise Munro*

## moon viewing

koto strings  
beneath night clouds  
we toast the moon  
rising:  
the cadence of a poem sung  
the hidden moon  
moon-shaped lanterns—  
drifting into darkness  
poet voices . . .  
rift in the clouds—  
at the end of the moon viewing  
seeing the moon

*Ellen Compton*

## flowerbed

daffodils  
crushed by snow  
. . . waiting for him to call  
first kiss  
on the answering machine  
his wife's voice  
snowmelt  
the daffodils  
reappear  
the dog  
joins us in bed  
soft falling rain  
monday morning  
in grandmother's vase  
wilted daffodils

*Roberta Beary*



## Travels in Ireland

lost in mist  
both banks of the river  
. . . slow moving ferry

summer traffic jam—  
farmer herds his cattle down  
the middle of the road

village cemetery:  
even my ancestors' names  
rubbed out by time

at the edge of a cliff,  
lashed by wind and rain,  
watching the ocean

ancient cathedral:  
on the high "monks' walk"  
darkness and silence

cathedral ruins:  
a cow grazes  
in the nave

small stone oratory—  
through the monks' lone window  
face of a tourist

*Edward J. Rielly*



## Uneven Odds

Rengay by D. Claire Gallagher and Ebba Story

harbor picnic—  
the one-legged blackbird swipes  
a heel of bread *dcg*

smoothing extra frosting  
on the lopsided cake *es*

frond of leather fern—  
the Ikebana teacher  
snips out symmetry *dcg*

the long detour—  
a moonlit oxbow scars  
the river plain *es*

the syncopated clanging  
against the sailboat mast *dcg*

summer hail—  
the smell of asphalt  
in the steamy air *es*



## Doing the Tango

Rendango between Alexis K. Rotella and Carlos Colón

Doing the tango  
I lose  
my wig. *a*

The flush of my cheek  
against yours. *c*

The seams  
in my stockings  
absolutely straight. *a*

Your legs  
making mine  
wobbly. *c*

What color is vertigo  
the toddler asks. *a*

Black and white  
your emerald eyes  
on my patent-leather shoes. *c*

Buried with his jazz bow  
the sax player. *a*

A rendango is a linked poem of seven links in the form 3-2-3, 3-2-3, 2 lines. The first link mentions a dance and the writers might want to keep in mind the senses that dancing accentuate. The rendango, like any dance, can be done solo or with a partner. It was invented by Alexis K. Rotella in February 1997.



## Window Frost

Renga by

Ann Cooper, Hazel Lee, Claudia Logerquist, and Antonia Green

first fragile ice  
sealing the circle  
of the dog's bowl

*ac*

train whistle cuts  
night's frigid silence

*hl*

on the dark porch  
tree shape of colored lights  
pinpoints spark

*ac*

woolly mitten studded  
with caked-on snow

*hl*

boots by the stove  
snow puddling, settling  
into winter

*cl*

coffee steaming  
window frost

*ag*

a scrawled heart  
over fern leaf pattern  
slowly thaws

*ac*

water along the sill  
slow drops on the floor

*cl*

skinny icicles  
under eaves  
cold pond misting

*ag*

headlights trace black ice—  
trees part silent darkness

*hl*

wheels crunch  
to a halt—rushed footsteps  
warm door

*cl*

light spills out  
welcoming

*ag*



## HAIBUN

### October Moon

October moon creeps through the night sky. Sharp wind gusts carry smells of cedar and pine, and fresh wood smoke from the neighbor's chimney. Temperature drops slowly, one, two, three degrees in sync with the rising moon. There's a penetrating chill inside my coat.

autumn;  
looking up, I marvel  
at the cold, cold moon

*Carolyn Thomas*

---

### Roslyn: October

The colors he had seen below over New England were now above him all around. One crow, disturbed and wanting him to know it, circled him counterclockwise, more a black shape really, jumping from tree to tree.

He found the plot, finally, and stopped. He knelt. The crow became silent, forgotten. Fresh rectangular blocks of coffee-colored earth filled the grave, but loosely. The sun peeked out from an indigo wash. He hadn't come back for the funeral . . .

Half-buried where the dirt met the grass remained an old flower in a little plastic holder. He peeled off the brown outer layers of petals. Inside lay a small red rose, as moist and sanguine as a new-born heart . . .

another Fall . . .  
the clouds move swiftly  
west to east

*Bob Gray*



## The Ties That Bind

The paths through Greenwood Cemetery have grown dim as dusk deepens into darkness. I need very little light to see by, since I know these paths well. The cemetery stones are all quite familiar . . . the small stone lamb marking a child's resting place . . . the tall stone angel on a slight elevation.

from the feet up  
darkness embraces  
the stone angel

I'm almost there . . . the massive tree trunk that rises near grandfather's grave is faintly visible. I shiver as an owl queries "Who?" It is only I, grandfather, coming yet again to visit your grave. It is sixty-two years since you were brought here, but the small granddaughter has not forgotten you.

beneath my feet,  
the soft crunch of leaves;  
beneath my palm,  
the roughness of stone . . .

*Emily Romano*

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## For Heinz Specht

Usually, when I drive home from work, I drive directly west into a brilliant sunset. For a week, it had been overcast with drizzling rain, unusual for this tropical climate. During this week, I had received news of my father's failing health.

This brought to mind my last visit, in the health-care facility, where I saw that his Parkinson's disease had progressed to the point where he had real difficulty feeding himself. The continuous spontaneous and witty conversations on every imaginable topic were a thing of the past, as it was almost impossible to understand anything that he was trying to say.

under slate-gray clouds  
a visit to my father—  
the unseen sunset



A week later I received the news that he had died quietly in his sleep, with my mother, his wife for 62 years, at his bedside.

home-made cherry jam—  
last night I heard that  
the tree had fallen

*Philip C. Specht*

---

### Strange Music

We spotted the submarine from the beach. With the grandchildren we ran to the jetty, up the sandy steps, and across the rocks. The fishermen's pier is across the jetty overlooking the entrance to the harbor.

The children climbed a wooden plank fence to see.

Red and white tugs, one of either side, gently maneuvered the black whale-like ship into the channel.

Over the ocean breakers, and the sounds of the fishermen and the gulls, we heard a music unlike any that we hear on the radio.

The children watched without speaking.

The sub drew closer until we could see at the rear the musician standing alone with his instrument. On the deck near the tower the crew dressed in kilts stood in a line.

Bagpipe music  
submarine's crew at attention . . .  
onlookers too

*Bette R. Jones*

---

### after the rain

the tracks of a small animal cake the car hood, slope downward & slip into smudged streaks along the fender. afternoon shadows smother the old tree's bark.

chopping wood  
i begin to realize  
my age

as evening approaches i can't stop wondering about those tracks.

*steve dalachinsky*



## A Wilsonian Tale

Biophilia, if it exists, and I believe it exists, is the innately emotional affiliation of human beings to other living organisms.

Edward O. Wilson

My grandparents place: a refuge for a city-raised child, filled with woods, hidden ponds and creeks with a gravel road meandering through 300 acres. My days there were filled with leisurely walks, my grandmother often accompanying me to point out black-dotted frog eggs in puddles or deer feeding on fallen persimmons in a hidden, neglected grove . . . but I was allowed to roam free too, all by myself I explored, one day encountering a pair of turkey vultures so immersed in a bloody carcass they paused only to offer a passing glance at my approach . . . they seemed huge from my ten-year-old perspective, like menacing black monsters with wrinkled necks and scrawny heads the color of the blood they fed on. Standing frozen with fright, then with fascination, I watched . . .

ebony wings spread high  
delicately  
they encircle their victim

Reminiscing now, I wonder if this chance meeting sealed my bond with the avian world, a bioaffiliation that I follow yet into old age.

soaring into sunlight  
rippling currents  
through glossy feathers so fine

*Linda Jeannette Ward*

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## A Can of Rotten Worms

Part of the fun in fishing with my friend, Kermit, is that we have to travel to our favorite spot and back in his big old green station wagon—a wagon we initially stuff with a thermos of coffee, Kerm's limburg cheese sandwich, a ton of fishing gear, a container of live bait, and a small johnboat equipped with a silent electric motor . . .

his car exudes  
a scent more fishy  
than our meager catch

*Liz fenn*



## Indian Summer Marauders

Toughened soles of bare feet press down on satiny grasses. There is almost no illumination from a moon shrouded in clouds. Suddenly the marauders are everywhere! Superb flying machines, sonar-equipped, maneuver past me at high speed. I can't actually see them, but I know they're there. I can hear them, and more than once I feel a slight brush as a velvety being eludes my tense form. Afraid to remain here, so vulnerable in the darkness, yet afraid, too, to move, I hold my breath for long moments. The marauders continue their impossible flight patterns, weaving, diving, and all the while emitting high, thin sounds.

unpredictable moon—  
against the increasing light,  
silhouettes of bats

*Emily Romano*

---

## Woodcarvings

A black man was beaten and sodomized in the bathroom of a police station. On page three of the morning newspaper, his wife's face is frozen in mid-cry; anguish and outrage echo from a silent mouth.

At the botanic garden, a woodcarver has set up a folding table beside the lily ponds. The table holds his creations: African kings, tribesmen bearing spears and shields, turbaned women carrying baskets of fruit. He picks up a small figurine and shows it to some white customers—a man in a business suit, a woman with a baby carriage. The wooden statues watch the strolling people. The carved eyes are those of warriors before battle, observing the enemy, determining strategy, waiting for the right moment to attack.

after the riot  
warrior eyes  
in the woodcarver's statues

*Gregory Suarez*



## homeless shelter

My wife, our daughter, and this poet have agreed to work as volunteers at a local homeless shelter on the fourth Friday of each month from October to April. We actually asked for the 2-to-5 am shift because we were told that it was virtually impossible to fill.

arrival at the shelter  
each of us holding  
a giant carry-out coffee

While the shift is grueling—it is either too late or too early, depending on one's perspective—this interval at the shelter is perhaps also the least demanding. The guests are sleeping soundly, and our duties basically consist of just holding down the fort.

4:34 am  
hurrying to finish the book  
before our shift ends

The shelter is so quiet during our shift that the occasional noise always seems amplified a thousand times over.

from the darkness  
of the sleeping quarters  
a child's whimper

This shelter is rather unusual in that it does not accept single people. Our nightly guests are limited to parents with children.

sleeping five-year-old  
clutches a teddy bear  
loaned by the shelter

As we walk to the parking lot, our exhaustion is somewhat abated by the sheer briskness of the early morning air. We are always joltingly reminded that it would not have been a good night to spend on the street.

eight blocks from the shelter  
woman wrapped in a blanket  
sits on the curb

*John J. Dunphy*



## Subway Haibun

*Wednesday, 11/20/96, 0835 AM*

Green ink today & a chance to smudge it all up. Sinister's curse. Smudge of a day, too, but at least I'm behind a few solid hours' sleep. First week of the term, excitement of new classes, odd counter-academic rhythm of the labor union school's calendar. Have to travel to Local 1199 twice: AM for class, PM for testing session in Penthouse. Only 8 students out of 24 showed up for the AM class yesterday, so I got their writing samples & let them off till next week, today will meet a wholly different, perhaps even larger crowd. Testing sessions offer spectacular views. Out the windows from the 35th floor is one thing, but last time after I got all the tests running I crept up flights of iron & concrete stairwell, got to the actual roof, a narrow, low-parapeted catwalk around mansion-sized elevator machinery & heating/cooling core, all 400 feet off the ground, spectacular windy view, only a few spires in the middle distance high as I was: Empire State, Chrysler, Chembank & all the Jersey & Long Island light-carpet clear out to a miracle semicircle of horizon, the planetary curve. My first thought was what a good place to smoke a joint if I still smoked & had bad company to do it with. Eleven years since I last didn't exhale & the setting's so perfect it recapitulates the whole set. My second impulse was to walk all the way around. Then the steam or maybe demons came up inside some pipes bigger than me, sounding enough like a dinosaur stampede that I bolted back down the stairs to where the wild world is safely zooed behind glass, like history in the first stanza of that Ishmael Read poem "Dualism . . ."

yellow light slants through  
Manhattan Bridge. Woman's blue  
eyeshadow goes green

A regular haibun today (thanks to green ink?)

cold subway morning:  
I feel for warm spots hands leave  
on aluminum grab-poles

I could actually figure this out maybe in the next three lifetimes. Query: how much of a fool did I have to be in, say, 1753 to be only at this point by now? This assumes there *were* past lives and I'm not some new model recently added to the mix. How about that deteriorated schizophrenic in the chronic facility in Jersey I recalled being



when I did that regression with J? Guess everybody wasn't a princess or prophet. & that's not the half of regression I do around her to this day. Even my prose rhymes, & that ain't Hay. Wasn't he Lincoln's Secretary of the Army? The one who said Grant's a drunk & Lincoln said send my other generals a case of whatever he's drinking? I used to imagine my department Chair said that to people who told her I was a pothead: send those lame-o's an ounce of whatever he's smoking.

Got a seat at DeKalb Avenue, last stop in the boro, knew I would, can always pick a commuter who's not leaving Brooklyn to stand over, 1¼ seats actually, next to a guy who takes up 1¾, & perfect, too: left end of a 3-bench where I can loop my elbow around the pole & write.

It's like I was saving this new page for something special. What? Two so far. Holy trinity before Washington Square? Nope, here it is. Save one for the transfer.

empty A train waits  
patiently for us to leave  
clogged escalator

Personification! No tropes! & that should do it. Or is there one, yet one? I think it's exceptionally but four to crow & younger in the intervening texts but if I don't seriously toward the luck of it . . .

one-half-poet scrawls  
unkempt senryu aboard deep  
steel noise: vacation!

*Steve Fried*

---

### **Eight Hours**

At medical school, they never taught us how to break bad news. Comfort the patient, stay calm, do not fear, pain is only in the mind, or in that phantom limb. You're better says the physician, and with a dracula smile orders more tests—blood samples, x-rays, echoes, referrals—if better why all these investigations. You tire easily so you must take more oxygen, at least eight hours a day. Tied to the oxygen cylinder, an umbilical cord to survival dream of snow in the mountains and the ski slopes where we christied. Snowbound inside the white expanse of quilt, my knees tenting it into mountains over which only my fingers climb, play chess against myself remembering Edmund Hillary's quote:



Those Himalayas of the mind are not so easily possessed.  
There's many a precipice and storm between you and your Everest.

Even the cicadas are silent, the hiss of the oxygen, the ticking clock, his gentle snore, the cocker whimpering in her dreams—moonglow intrudes. Earlier in the evening we'd watched a comet. With its flamboyant tail it whisks across the sky leaving other stars staring. In my mask, I am that comet, that space traveller racing past galaxies to keep a tryst with eternity.

needing more oxygen  
I break the bad news  
to myself

breathing easier  
those eight hours  
unconquered Himalayas

*Angelee Deodhar*

---

### Opus Dei

. . . but it is here and now, in the immediate, the dull, the ordinary situation of everyday life, that we must seek God and that He will find us.

Esther de Waal, "Seeking God—The Way of St. Benedict." The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, MI (1984)

Now in winter—at the beginning of day—I can see the sun rise through the eastern woods. But today the redpink sky tells of a gathering storm, and at the birdfeeder the bluejays and chickadees and nuthatches chatter in excited anticipation of sunflower seeds. Setting a bowl of breaddough in a warm corner near the woodstove to rise, I bundle into jacket/boots/hat/gloves and head outside for morning chores. The long, slow work of winter has begun . . .

calm before the storm—  
only the clunk of firewood  
being thrown into the cellar

*Evelyn Lang*



## TANBUN\*

Larry Kimmel

### Outside a Woodland Cottage in Winter

Unworldly wind and dark the midnight forest. So cold the branches click like antlers. Beyond that, not much to know.

*In the black of nothing—  
phantom bucks  
battle*

### October Morning

High and motionless, the hot-air balloon seems painted on the October sky. Its flame, the distant roar of a Chinese dragon.

so vivid—  
her fresh  
tattoo

### Beyond Reason

On this one way street, where two slatterns grapple over what? the evening traffic circumvents, discreetly.

a flash of thigh  
taunts  
beyond reason

### Strange Harvest (from a local legend)

His first day home on the farm, unscathed by combat, he loses an arm to the combine harvester.

last night  
a sister's auburn hair  
this morning white

\*In this short haibun form of the author's devising, the prose text consists of 31 syllables or less, followed by a haiku of 17 syllables or less. In some cases a haiku may also precede the prose text.



I'm up anyway  
this dawn and should write a poem,  
but instead, I lie  
abed warming cold edges  
on soft flannel sheets and you.

*Samantha Dunaway*

a droning bee  
in the thistles  
your sharp words  
so softly spoken  
so keenly felt

*D. Claire Gallagher*

you think it didn't matter  
what your decision was . . .  
everything has changed  
the new road leads to places  
none of us ever dreamed

*Ruth Holter*

cold cold cold  
the pattern called Orion  
hangs its points  
above the frozen ground  
and our divided hearts

*Gene Doty*

"Was that you?"  
the girl asks about my old picture.  
"You were pretty."  
From deep within me  
a mourning dove calling.

*Kay F. Anderson*

cars swish past  
my window after midnight  
wave upon wave  
the hum of my computer  
drowns their whispers

*Alexandra Yurkovsky*

the cafe  
divested of her presence  
the table has become wood again  
and my cup  
returned to glass

*Kenneth Tanemura*

she calls  
remember me?  
how could I  
forget those nights . . .  
or was it she

*Watha Lambert*

guests leave, at last,  
the remains of Christmas Eve—  
turkey scraps  
and fire inside  
to pick some bones with you

*Kaye Bache-Snyder*

At dawn I take  
a hibiscus chain  
to the temple  
at night I take  
a rose to a whore

*Nikhil Nath*



## Writing from the Monkey Face

Rich Krivcher

Year after year  
on the monkey's face  
a monkey face

*Bashō*

How can I paraphrase Bashō's penetrating obviousness? On first reading, when I came to the end of the second line, I expected that Bashō would then show me something incongruent "on the monkey's face;" but the incongruence was in the way I previously saw or imagined a monkey face—and everything else for that matter. On top of an 'original face' I had placed a coarse image, what I thought was a monkey face. I hadn't really seen.

Reading this poem led me to ponder the notion of mask. I thought of Greek drama: the comic mask of Thalia, the tragic mask of Melpomene. I thought about the severe expressions of the Japanese Noh masks and the wrathful masks of Tibetan Buddhist deities. I thought of Hwui Shan's account of men in a far distant land who had human bodies and animal faces.<sup>1</sup> I thought of the *masque*—the aristocratic revel of pantomime, dance, and song in Shakespeare's England.

I thought of Al Jolson singing in blackface; I thought of Eddie Murphy singing in whiteface.

I thought of Bette Davis in the movie *All About Eve*, in which she plays a famous stage actress, Margo Channing. At the beginning of the film, Margo is seen resting in the dressing room after a masterful performance, her face greased, denuded of cosmetics, as she leisurely smokes a cigarette and exchanges tart remarks with her entourage—but who else could it be but Bette Davis?

I thought about a friend, slightly older and deeply philosophical, whom I had not seen for five years. Within the last couple of years his ideal marriage had disintegrated into an agonizing divorce. When I saw him anew his face had aged more than those five years would have warranted. Aside from the greyer hair and the more deeply etched lines on his forehead, recessed black semicircles under his eyes seemed to expand the sockets into large dark teardrops. Within those teardrops his eyes showed the softness and vulnerability of one who has known a most bitter truth.



I thought of a girlfriend who routinely—and may I say, happily—fashioned a flawless, elaborate face every morning before going to work only to wipe it clean again every night before bed. I remember the cucumber freshness after the scrubbing.

I thought about my rolfing treatments and the particular session when the rolfer attempted to free the fascia, the connective tissue, that had bound itself to the muscles of my face. I recalled the localized pain along the underside of the cheekbones extending down to the hinges of the jaw; then the shudder at recognizing that the cheerful, smiling face with which I faced the world was nothing but a mask—glued and set.

That night after reading Bashō and allowing these sensations to drift in and out, as I lay in bed waiting for sleep, a string of words, a ready-made haiku, was forged in my mind. The words like a final punctuation seemed to complete my thoughts:

Night after night  
the mask removed  
reveals a mask

For a number of weeks this summary expression was self-satisfying. Eventually, though, I had to acknowledge that my poem is founded upon the hopelessness of ever discovering a true, uncompromised identity. In contrast, Bashō's poem is about the clarity of seeing and knowing, immediately, without question. What is there is there. The mask is removed, if indeed there ever was a mask, because preconception no longer clouds perception.

What is it, though, about Bashō's poem that works so well, that pins this reader right between the eyes? The subject, a monkey face, is both well known and distinctive; Bashō transposes the distinctive onto the well-known. If I could simply remain true to Bashō's formula, I reasoned, and insert a visual subject with similar qualities, then perhaps I could create a poem of similar effect. By attempting to reconstruct the artistic process, I further reasoned, I might garner a deeper appreciation of Bashō's art and learn to convey a truer vision. I thought long and hard, for the better part of a day, of a fitting image. At last, these lines emerged:

Scene after scene  
on Groucho's face  
a Groucho face



Admittedly, Bashō's monkey face is more naturally archetypal and the effect more penetrating, but for all these years haven't we taken for granted Groucho's face, a veritable symbol of comedy? Haven't we all donned those half-masks—the cheap plastic glasses with the hollow plastic nose, bushy eyebrows, and moustache—and pretended to be, by virtue of having his “face,” Groucho? Hasn't Groucho's face become for us a caricature of Groucho's face?

Despite this minor success at mimicking, or should I say *aping* Bashō's poem, I couldn't stop there. I wanted to expand the scope of Bashō's formula to other sense impressions and to return to a more serious vein. I reminisced on how as a young boy in Tennessee I often was overcome on summer nights by the cacophony of crickets and cicadas, and other unidentifiable buzzings, especially near my favorite lake. I used to walk there by myself, after supper, and just listen. If I listened long enough and intently enough my perceptions would sharpen and within the silence of all that unearthly chattering I would hear more than I ever could have imagined. Inspired by these ponderings, with this haiku I conclude, at least for now, this extemporaneous study of Bashō's “monkey poem”:

On this summer night  
in the cricket's call  
a cricket calls

---

<sup>1</sup>Hwui Shan was a Chinese Buddhist monk who reported to the Chinese court in the year 499 AD on his travels in Fusang, a country far to the east of China. In her book “Pale Ink” (Chicago: Swallow Press, 1972), Henriette Mertz presents a fascinating, though often fanciful, argument that Fusang was none other than the North American continent and that Hwui Shan, after arriving from China by boat, traveled throughout the southwestern United States and Mexico. Mertz postulates that Hwi Shan's description of men with animal heads refers to ritual costumes which native Americans wore to celebrate the totems of the tribe. Mertz also writes of an earlier exploration in North America by the Chinese in the twenty-third century BC. See also Charles Godfrey Leland, “Fusang, or The Discovery of America by Chinese Buddhist priests in the Fifth Century” (New York: J.W. Bouton, 1875).



# THE SAD, LONELY POETRY OF THE CITY

Readings by Tom Tico\*

1

Fifth Avenue  
white satin wedding dresses  
through a veil of snow

*Doris Heitmeyer*

Each one of the luxurious wedding gowns is like an ideal that promises matrimonial bliss. But the poet is not a starry-eyed girl with dreams of romantic love; she's an experienced woman who has gone through the crucible rather than the fantasy of married life. The final line—which so powerfully completes the poem—suggests separation, loneliness, and old age.

the remaining snow  
in isolated patches  
our separate lives

*Patricia Machmiller*

2

Along the waterfront  
women in windows  
stained by the sea

*Dave Sutter*

This is a classic picture of women who wait for their men to return from the sea. And while they wait they suffer want—want of material well-being, want of sexual satisfaction, and want of emotional fulfillment. How the women deal with these deficiencies shape and mark their characters. It is not just the windows that are stained by the sea.

moored to the pilings  
the rusting ferryboat  
rides the morning tide

*Leroy Kanterman*

---

\*Some of these readings portray circumstances of the poets' lives, but they are not meant to be regarded as actual facts; they are simply part of the imaginative flights that the poems engender in Tom Tico.



3

city night—  
in the rain-wet street  
a deeper darkness

*Lawrence Rungren*

The city as a dark and threatening backdrop for all kinds of maliciousness is the vision of *film noir*. And this poem seems to partake of that world. The deeper darkness that resides in the night and in the rain-wet street has a mysterious but malevolent allure. It's a vortex, and if you happen to be drawn into it, you are likely to be swallowed up.

under the manhole  
the night gives  
a gurgle

*Tom Clausen*

4

puddle of neon  
nyloned legs  
shadow by

*Jeffrey Winke*

The woman with the nyloned legs shadowing by beneath the neon lights might well be a streetwalker putting in a hard day's night. She walks on those "mean streets" that Raymond Chandler spoke of, but in a darker world than he had ever portrayed. And as bleak as her present situation is, her future looks even bleaker.

3:20 am  
the hooker stares  
down the empty street

*John O'Connor*

5

autumn rain and leaves . . .  
outside the bank  
a drunk panhandling

*M. Kettner*

With the rain and fallen leaves the poet conveys the mood of autumn which is sad, lonely, and decadent. In this emotional atmosphere the



drunk goes about his daily activity of trying to get enough money for his next drink. Unlike the people he panhandles from, he accumulates nothing and takes no thought for the morrow.

autumn rain—  
a dog looks up at each person  
passing on the street

*Chuck Brickley*

6

Snow falling  
on the empty parking-lot:  
Christmas Eve . . .

*Eric Amann*

Some people at Christmas time do indeed realize that *It's a Wonderful Life*; they get together with family and friends and experience all the conviviality that the season allows. But there are other people who find themselves alone, on the outside. Perhaps they are without family and have few close friends. For them, Christmas is a lonely and painful experience.

glimpsing Christmas  
through other people's windows  
the chill of rain . . .

*Ebba Story*

7

Memorial Park  
twilight enters  
the cannon's barrel

*Frederick Gasser*

The twilight that enters the cannon's barrel suggests the countless men who, from time immemorial, have been killed or maimed in battle. However, the poem also suggests that warfare has had its day and is no longer acceptable in the light of human evolution.

Tied  
to the veteran's crutch—  
a miniature flag

*Tom Tico*



8

Now a street person  
but still in combat fatigues—  
the Vietnam vet

*Tom Tico*

For many who fought in that war the negative effects are still being experienced. Post-traumatic stress syndrome is a nightmare that doesn't end. And so many Vietnam veterans are either in prison or homeless. The street person who is still in combat fatigues is a walking poem indicating that for him and for many like him the war is still going on.

Over the park dwellers,  
flying from a shopping cart—  
the stars and stripes

*Tom Tico*

9

winter rushhour  
the sunset home  
ahead of me

*LeRoy Gorman*

As the poet drives home, as he drives into the sunset, he thinks of a further destination towards which he is rushing. Lately, in his mid-seventies, he's felt more aches and pains and a diminishing store of energy. He's not afraid of death but abhors the thought of infirmity and dependence on others. Furthermore, he certainly hopes to spend his remaining days in the privacy of his own home.

snowman  
on the front lawn  
of the retirement home

*Penny Harter*

10

last light:  
my old neighborhood  
weighted with leaves

*Dwight Spann-Wilson*



It's deep autumn as the poet returns to the old neighborhood for the first time in many years. He thinks of his boyhood friends and the girls he had crushes on and he wonders what has become of them. Many have probably died and those that haven't have grown old just as he has. As he gazes at the fallen leaves drifting beneath the last light of evening, he realizes it's no time at all before he and all that remains of his generation are likewise swept away.

leaves blown  
their shadows  
with them

*George Ralph*

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1. Fifth Avenue *frogpond* vol. XIV, no. 1, 1991.  
the remaining snow "The San Francisco Haiku Anthology," Smythe-Waithe Press, 1992.
2. Along the waterfront *frogpond* vol. XV, no. 1, 1992.  
moored to the pilings "When Butterflies Come" (Members' Anthology), Haiku Society of America, 1993.
3. city night *frogpond* vol. XV, no. 2, 1992.  
under the manhole *Modern Haiku* vol. XXII, no. 2, 1991.
4. puddle of neon *frogpond* vol. X, no. 4, 1987.  
3:20 am *frogpond* vol. XVII, no. 1, 1994.
5. autumn rain and leaves *frogpond* vol. IX, no. 4, 1986.  
autumn rain *Modern Haiku* vol. X, no. 1, 1979.
6. Snow falling "Cicada Voices: Selected Haiku of Eric Amann 1966-1979," High/Coo Press, 1983.  
glimpsing Christmas *Modern Haiku* vol. XXIV, no. 2, 1993.
7. Memorial Park *Modern Haiku* vol. XV, no. 2, 1984.  
Tied *Modern Haiku* vol. XX, no. 2, 1989.
8. Now a street person *Modern Haiku* vol. XXV, no. 3, 1994.  
Over the park dwellers *Modern Haiku* vol. XXV, no. 3, 1994.
9. winter rushhour *Modern Haiku* vol. XXVI, no. 1, 1995.  
snowman *frogpond* vol. XIII, no. 1, 1990.
10. last light *Modern Haiku* vol. XXIV, no. 3, 1993.  
leaves blown *frogpond* vol. XII, no. 2, 1989.



## *Wabi* Suchness in Haiku

H.F. Noyes

*Wabi* refers generally to the sort of poverty or simplicity of living where there is, through acceptance, a kind of contentment. "Suchness" refers to the seemingly ordinary that surprises and rewards us when we discover it as a welcome part of everyday life. "Nature is wont to hide itself," said Heraclitus in the fifth century BC. Two hiding places are brought to light in these haiku of James W. Hackett:<sup>1,2</sup>

The nameless flower climbing this trail with me is a yellow you can taste!	Buildings hide the sky and pavement the earth, yet this weed grew to seed.
--	--

There may be an aspect of redeeming humor along with the prosaic plainness of *wabi*:<sup>3</sup>

Sometimes the oddest thing,  
like this orange pip,  
begs not to be thrown away.

Humble—even desolate—circumstances can be relieved by a sense of beauty:<sup>4</sup>

Red clouds glowing  
at sunrise—reflected  
in the pigsty mud

*Bruce Leming, original and trans.*

This haiku in its original, tremendously alive Scots tongue is:

Reid cluds lemin  
at keek-o-day—refleckit  
in the cray glaur

Though *wabi* is most often an *unexpected* recognition of the faithful suchness of things and the beauty of the ordinary, here one feels no surprise on the part of a poet rooted to earth and at home beneath the heavens. I find the *wabi* element delightful in these two other farm and garden haiku: <sup>5,6</sup>



Summer dusk  
—puddles  
where the melons were

*Matthew Louvière*

Envelope of seeds:  
A flower like the picture  
Will bloom, I hope so.

*Sakuzo Takada*

Louvière is content to see things just as they are, to see “nothing that is not there and the nothing that is.”<sup>7</sup> In Takada’s haiku I cherish the gentle humor and the charm and naïveté of the vernacular, in which the Japanese excel.

There is *wabi* in the simplest pursuits of our daily life, such as the bread delivery or a saucepan’s transfer in winter. How far the mundane ordinary is transcended in the following:<sup>8,9</sup>

daybreak—  
from the bread truck’s roof  
frost swirls

*Tom Clausen*

Carrying a saucepan  
Over a little bridge in Yodo  
Someone in the snow.

*Buson*

The first has a powerful aura of *wu-shih*—“nothing special.” In the background, do I hear, “Give us this day our daily bread”? Buson’s haiku offers a charming picture of life at its sweetest—“near the bone,” as Thoreau put it. It depicts no one of note carrying nothing of any account nowhere that matters, and is redolent of the truest *wabi*. Robert Spiess, throughout his “noddy,” maintains a quality of humbleness that reveals the essential truth of things just as they are. In *Progress*, his very language expresses *wabi*: “tumblebug/tumbling a dungball past/tumbly digs.”<sup>10</sup> A kind word or a comfortable bench can bring moments of contentment even in a miserable life:<sup>11,12</sup>

rushing out  
with more garbage!  
genuine,  
the collector’s  
‘thank you, sir’

*Robert Spiess*

Small-town park:  
he adjusts his spine  
to the slatted bench.

*Dee Evetts*

Issa is a poet often grounded in the earthiness of *wabi*. The following reflects his loyalty to the aesthetic philosophy of *wu shih*:<sup>13</sup>

The man pulling radishes  
pointed the way  
with a radish.



Examples of *wabi* can be beautiful, too; but the kind of beauty to be preferred is that formulated by Clement Hoyt as “an easy austerity.”<sup>14</sup> This is well illustrated by a haiku by Brett Peruzzi:<sup>15</sup>

First frost—  
the icy beauty  
of a flower’s last day

In one memorial issue for Raymond Roseliep we have a classic haiku of *wabi*—rare among so-called death poems. It takes us deeply into that silence and calmness that ensue when through the perspective of a nature of detachment, a life is touched by grace:<sup>16</sup>

wishing I were  
a dandelion  
I become one

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<sup>14</sup>“The Zen Haiku and other Zen Poems of J.W. Hackett.” Japan Publications, Tokyo (1983). p. 192.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid.*, p. 86.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>4</sup>“Scots Haiku.” Hub Editions, 1995.

<sup>5</sup>*Woodnotes* no. 17 (1933), p. 11.

<sup>6</sup>*Wind Chimes* no. 25 (undated), p. 4.

<sup>7</sup>Wallace Stevens, “The Snow Man.”

<sup>8</sup>“Unraked Leaves.” Benson Smyth Publishing, Wellsville, NY (1995), p. 1.

<sup>9</sup>trans. Edith Shiffert and Yuki Sawa.

<sup>10</sup>“noddy.” Modern Haiku Press, Madison, WI (1997), p. 35.

<sup>11</sup>*ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>12</sup>*Wind Chimes* no. 27 (1989), p. 6 (in renga, “Four-for-a-dollar Goldfish”).

<sup>13</sup>trans. Robert Hass. in “The Enlightened Heart.” Stephen Mitchell, ed. Harper & Row, New York (1989), p. 99.

<sup>14</sup>“Storm of Stars, The Collected Poems and Essays of Clement Hoyt.” The Green World, Baton Rouge, LA (1976); cited by Tom Clausen, *South by Southeast* 4:3 (1997), p. 22.

<sup>15</sup>Source uncertain at presstime.

<sup>16</sup>*Wind Chimes* no. 11 (1984), p. 12.



## Traditional and Modern Haiku: A Vibrant Dichotomy

Michael Dylan Welch

In the great sweep of haiku tradition, the vast bulk of that tradition is, of course, Japanese. When American haiku writers band together to discuss tradition, they are obviously limited by what they know. Basically, we don't know what we don't know. So we always have something to learn, or perhaps we should always feel humility as trustees of a borrowed poetry. But some of us don't care, feeling that haiku is now fully Americanized, and can—and should—find its own path. No extreme seems ultimately helpful, however.

Harold G. Henderson is often quoted as saying that “haiku in English will become what the poets make it,” and there is a certain wisdom in that empowerment. Yet perhaps, in our enthusiasm, we risk running too far off course, making our “haiku” into something that really isn't haiku.

This need for freedom and self-expression, however, is often balanced by at least *some* sense of tradition. We receive this tradition in the form of translations of Japanese haiku, which are published regularly in books and magazines, and in global interaction and criticism, whether by letter, email, magazine articles, or international travel. Yet we also develop our own traditions, not blindly, but responsibly, as we seek our own authentic voices, our national voice. Thus North American haiku operates in a dichotomy: some poets are drawn by Japanese tradition, sometimes traveling a well-worn path (at its worst, merely imitative), and some poets are enlivened by striking off into new territory (at its worst, no longer haiku).

Certainly the languages differ, making some things possible in Japanese that are not possible in English—but also vice versa. Yet underneath the differences of syntax and grammar and the fundamental notion of syllables in each language, there lies, I think, a universal haiku essence, often called the “haiku spirit.” Perhaps this is the sense of keen seeing, of deep feeling, and of recording moments of heightened awareness in our brief poems. In haiku of all languages of all times, intuitive insight into nature and human nature seems to be the most important common poetic denominator—along with brevity. Details of form and season word, though still important, strike me as less important. Thus it seems that divergences in form and some content (formal patterns, season word usage, and so on) more frequently



reflect differences in language and culture (a *necessary* reflection) than any sort of rejection—as some might believe—of tradition.

In 1993, at the second Haiku North America conference, held in California, a panel of poets engaged in a discussion of “what is essential to haiku.” The topic generated lively debate. I think that the notion of haiku’s “essential” will probably always be a matter of contention, perhaps with the arguments more often reflecting personal bias than the essentials of haiku. I would suggest that English-language haiku will always exist in this dichotomy—the traditional/conservative and modern/liberal—and that the dichotomy is probably the very thing that keeps haiku alive and vibrant. We are each drawn to what we love. We each touch a different part of the elephant. Haiku, thank goodness, is a large elephant.

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### ERRATA

● An error in the Brady Award announcement in the wording of one of the prize senryu made its way into the last issue (XX:2). The correct poem should be:

carrying their canes  
two old women lean  
on each other

*Paul Watsky*

● Although a poem by *John Martone* appeared in the last issue (XX:2), the author’s name did not appear in the Author Index. The editor apologizes for this omission.



## BOOK REVIEWS

### “The Trees Have Awoken and the Birds Have Spoken”

#### An Experiential Review

*rectangle of light*. Marje A. Dyck. Illus. James Dyke, proof press, 87 rue Court, Aylmer, QC J9H 4M1, Canada, 1996. 44 pp, 6¾×4¼ in, paper, saddle-stapled. \$4.00 \$1.00 per order s&h.

When I presented “rectangle of light” as a possibility for an illustrative session for the Grade 4 Art classes in my school, I anticipated a polite response, perhaps some pleasant sketches, before continuing on with our lessons in perspective drawings.

We knew that our perspectives needed focal points. We had invented fantasy scenes where aliens zoomed to faraway galaxies. Returning to earth, however, on this particular day, we heard how a poet from the prairies regarded magical moments on this planet.

In 12 words or less, we discovered that a poet could focus on a sound or movement, spying on a spider, a loon, or a dragonfly. Yet like our pictures of the universe, the poet would be surrounded by the world. We read the 3-line poems, some students imagining what kind of scenery surrounded Marje as she focused on float planes, chicken coops, and the '59 Pontiac. The children imagined

How the spider  
runs over the sand  
as if on air

seeing a legless oval skimming over a beach, moving desperately, escaping from a source of danger. Their childhoods spent splashing in the Similkameen River, they knew how

A school of minnows  
changes direction  
under my shadow

because minnows were so hard to catch. Those students living on ranches looked forward to the birth of calves and lambs.

Young calf cavorts  
spring  
in its heels



was a new way of thinking. In

Fur and bones  
beneath the pine  
rain misting down

they guessed that an animal had died too soon and that no one cared about it.

From "The City" section they were intrigued by the janitor vacuuming at night in the rectangle of light. Some thought the poet was spying on the janitor from inside the building. Others thought she was looking down from a higher building across the street. Perspectives again.

The Cawston School grade fours that week drew many pictures based on their reactions to Marje Dyck's capsules of thought. Because Dore Lake and prairie scenes were unfamiliar to them, some of the artists drew the insects, birds, and animals amongst cherry trees in their British Columbia mountain region.

Some students responded to the challenge of "12 words or less". Combining rhyme with her own creative tense, Preet drew a sunrise and wrote, "The trees have awoken and the birds have spoken." Eli, who likes hiking near the ruins of a gold mine, wrote, "The snow drifts quietly upon the wondering trees." Sunny, who had visited his relatives in India, wrote, "Guards on stone horses Indian people pray in the temple."

We compiled our drawings and poetry into a rectangular, yellow binder and sent it off to the poet from Saskatoon who had inspired us to see the world in a different light.

*Lois R. Dyck*

**Editor's Note:** We have been given to understand that the reviewer Lois R. Dyck bears no relationship, by blood or marriage, to the author Marje A. Dyck.



*The Light Comes Slowly*. Edith Shiffert. Illust. Kohka Saito. Katsura Press, POB 275, Lake Oswego, OR 97034; 1997. 113 unnumb. pp, 5¼×8½ in. paper, perfectbound. \$14.95.

In what has been announced as her final book, Edith Shiffert, a 35-year resident of Kyōto, includes a great number of different types of haiku and haiku-like poems. All are in the 5/7/5-English syllable form, and it is remarkable that there are no signs of padding and none of unnatural wording to make the poems fit the form. It is to be supposed that one completely familiar with the Japanese language and with reading poems in 17 *onji* would easily work with 17 English syllables. Unlike many American writers of 17-syllable poems, Shiffert tends to use short, simple syllables, and fewer of the dreadfully long, multiconsonantal English syllables (though it is next to impossible to avoid the latter: compare the first and second lines of the following):

Oh those clouds, those clouds,  
are they a sea or a sky?  
Colors change to night.

Some of my favorite haiku and senryu in this book:

In these ditches too  
fallen petals of cherries,  
the outcastes' district.

With the autumn leaves  
a butterfly too is blown  
across our pathway.

Because I cannot  
use stepping stones or bridge,  
I take the long path.

Beside a park pond  
a bar hostess and her friend  
drink morning saké.

Unfortunately, many of the poems finish with explanatory or commentative phrases, spoiling them in terms of the North American haiku. Another large fraction of the poems are what I have previously<sup>1</sup> referred to as 'message haiku,' exemplified by poems of some Japanese poets, such as Shōhaku, "the many Buddhas/disappear and yet again/come into the world," and Santōka, "incessant/sound of water/Lord Buddha is here," as well as in the work of writers who normally wrote other material, such as Hammarskjöld and Tagore. Some of Shiffert's are simply delightful:

That Zen monk also  
nine months inside his mother.  
Salted plums with rice.

Wherever it is  
one can get there finally—  
the cats can go too.



But others are more prosaic statements of faith, or more obvious presentations of perceived truth. Finally, although Edith Shiffert is no George Burns, she obviously is having intimations of mortality, and there are a fair number of 'death poems' here:

Now as my life ends	just being joyful
to walk beneath these cherries	though alone in a stillness.
on and on and on!	This, eternity?

*Reviewed by Kenneth C. Leibman*

<sup>1</sup>*South by Southeast* vol. 1, no. 4, p. 6 (1994).

*endgrain: haiku & senryu 1988-1977*. Dee Evetts. Red Moon Press, POB 2461, Winchester, VA 22604; 1997. x + 51 pp, 5½×8½ in. paper, perfectbound. US\$10 + \$2/order p&h: checks payable to Red Moon Press; other currencies at US\$1 = £0.60 = Can\$1.35: checks payable to Dee Evetts.

In his foreword to this fine collection, Anthony J. Pupello refers to "the essence of haiku: the resonance of a moment experienced among the minutiae of everyday life." And in his own introduction, the author states that "if a poem gives off 'the stink of Zen', or the stink of anything else" (which he earlier refers to as 'the grittier-than-thou fallacy'), "then for me it has failed twice—as a poem and as an effective message." Evetts' haiku certainly do not emit any stink, yet they exemplify the importance, common to Zen and many other traditions, of being here now:

morning sneeze	morning moon
the guitar in the corner	a flock of pigeons turns
resonates	above the town

and are often effective social commentary:

overnight bus	how come
the young mother	whatshisname
sucks her thumb	never speaks to me

This book can also serve by example as a lesson in how to dispense with punctuation in haiku. With the exception of those necessary for quotations, compound words, possessives, and proper names, these haiku contain no punctuation. Yet careful wordcrafting has ensured



that there are no dangling participles or other awkward constructions brought about by lack of punctuation marks.

There are many seasons in these poems, and an appended sequence illustrates a period of drought that can be read like the rings of trees, as in the title poem:

endgrain  
of the staircase  
droughts and seasons

*Reviewed by Kenneth C. Leibman*

### **A Collation of Anthologies**

*In the Waterfall*. Spring Street Haiku Group, 1997. 27 unnumb. pp, 4× 5½ in. paper, saddle-stapled. \$3.00 ppd from Dee Evetts, 102 Forsyth St. #18, New York, NY 10002.

*Shades of Green* (1997 Haiku North America anthology). Michael Dylan Welch, ed. Press Here, Foster City, CA 94404; 1997. 24 pp, 5½×8½ in. paper, saddle-stapled. \$7 ppd (checks payable to Michael D. Welch).

*Flows Down the Mountain* (1997 Members' Anthology, Haiku Poets of Northern California). D. Claire Gallagher and Ebba Story, eds. Two Autumns Press, 478 Guerrero St., San Francisco, CA 94110; 1997. 24 pp, 8½×5¼ in. paper, top saddle-stapled. \$7.00 ppd.

*Sunlight Through Rain: A Northwest Haiku Year*. Robert Major & Francine Porad, eds. Vandina Press, 1996. 57 unnum. pp, 5×8½ in. paper, perfectbound. \$8 + #1.25 p&h; make check payable to and mail to F. Porad, 6944 SE 33rd, Mercer Island, WA 98040-3324.

*Cherry Blossom Rain* (Anthology IV, Northwest Region, Haiku Society of America, 1997). Mary Fran Meer, ed. 32 pp, 5¼×8½ in. paper, saddle-stapled. \$7.50 ppd from editor, 1128 - 108 Ave. SE, Bellevue WA 98004.

*Gathering Light: an international haiku anthology* (The Herb Barrett Award, 1996). LeRoy Gorman, ed. hamilton haiku press, 237 Prospect St. S, Hamilton, ON L8M 2Z6, Canada, 1997. iv + 27 pp, 5½×8½ in. paper, saddle-stapled. US\$6; Can\$6.

*A Solitary Leaf* (1996 Members Anthology, Haiku Society of America). Randy M. Brooks & Lee Gurga, eds. 40 pp, 5½×8½ in. paper, saddle-stapled. \$9 ppd from Brooks Books, 4634 Hale Dr., Decatur IL 62526.



*From a Kind Neighbor* (1997 Members' Anthology, Haiku Society of America). John Stevenson, ed. 86 pp, 5½×8½ in. paper, perfectbound. \$9 ppd US & Canada; \$10 elsewhere from (checks payable to) John Stevenson, POB 122, Nassau NY 12123.

A bumper year for anthologies; in most cases devoted to haiku from a regional group, one from attenders at a major haiku conference, one from winners of a major contest, and two from members of the Haiku Society of America.

The New York group gives us a collection of mostly urban haiku, including a day filled with sudden surprise glimpses:

morning's first rays  
on the last drops  
of vodka

*Mykel Board*

rush hour subway  
the live fish flops  
in her plastic shopping bag

*Karen Sohne*

from the train  
the ball half-way  
to the plate

*Cor van den Heuvel*

in the dark  
the outline of my wife  
stargazing

*John Hudak*

From the Haiku North America conference, poems from around the continent arranged as usual for this series in alphabetical order by first name, claimed to be the Japanese tradition (yes, Mike, but their first names are last names). Four samples illustrating the evanescence of the moment, often dimly sensed:

window frost  
our names drip  
from my finger

*Christopher Herold*

in the dark . . .  
we drive past a meadow  
of new-mown hay

*Jean Jorgensen*

reflected  
in a beggar's cup  
tropical sun

*Fay Aoyagi*

bay in fog  
the sailboat at anchor  
comes and goes

*Yvonne Hardenbrook*

The Northern California group is international in membership. Again a quartet of sudden change, sudden discovery, sometimes sudden *yūgen*:



morning sunshine  
overflows  
a field of tulips

*Naomi Y. Brown*

stairway  
descending into  
her perfume

*John Stevenson*

windswept mesa  
the Navajo ghost hogan crossed  
by ravenshadow

*Elizabeth Searle Lamb*

dusk—  
suddenly hearing  
the river

*David Rice*

The Northwest anthologies are both divided seasonally. A haiku from each season from each book, again moments of discovery:

“Sunlight Through Rain”

train yard  
beside the iron rail  
new blade of wheat

*Dean Summers*

afternoon warmth  
in and out of the stone lantern  
sparrows fly

*Brad Wolthers*

milkweed stalks  
their pods empty  
under a new moon

*Nasira Alma*

february storm  
four small lights moving  
at sea

*Robert Gibson*

“Cherry Blossom Rain”

carried downstream  
with the river’s song  
morning sunlight

*William Scott Galasso*

heat lightning  
the glow  
of a distant town

*Robert Jenkins*

mist rises—  
on the rowboat’s bow: heron  
motionless

*Connie Hutchison*

Since we are fallen,  
let us wave our arms, become . . .  
angels in the snow

*Robert Major*

Robert Major’s haiku a reminiscence of Bashō with a touch of Milton?

The Herb Barrett Award, named for the late Canadian poet/editor, is an annual international haiku contest. Four moments of discovery:



gathering light ✓  
one swell of the sea  
becomes another  
(first prize)

*Jeffrey Witkin*

winter solstice  
the waterfall frozen  
in mid-air

*Sandra Fuhringer*

low tide  
the driftwood  
rests

*Giovanni Malito*

into his fur  
the old cat smooths  
winter sun

*Jeff Seffinga*

Two anthologies of haiku by members of the Haiku Society of America were published this year. From the volume for 1996, these visions:

at one  
with its imperfect shadow  
rusty chain

*ai li*

open prairie—  
a small trail follows me  
through wild grasses

*Marianna Monaco*

garden pond—  
a goldfish swims  
through my reflection

*Barbara Ressler*

black plums . . .  
the color  
of her skin

*Rita Z. Mazur*

And from the 1997 anthology, four moments of wonder:

fireflies floating  
with the stars  
on the pond

*Hayat Abuza*

raindrops  
releasing summer  
from a sidewalk

*Robert Gilliland*

killdeer overhead  
into the dusk  
its name

*ken hurm*

Not yet dusk  
for each blade of grass  
a shadow

*D.R. Spurgeon*

*Group minireviews by Kenneth C. Leibman*



**Tiny Poems Press 1997 Chapbook Winners**

*The Farmer Tends his Land.* Janice Bostok.

*A Work of Love.* Tom Clausen.

*Ripples Spreading Out.* Elizabeth Searle Lamb.

*Beyond Where the Snow Falls.* Jeff Witkin.

Tiny Poems Press, 1997. 20-24 pp, 5½×4¼ or 4¼×5½ in. paper, saddle-stapled. \$3 ppd. each or \$10 for set of 4, from John Sheirer (to whom checks & MO's should be drawn), Asnuntuck Community-Technical College, 170 Elm St., Enfield, CT 06082.

In a *kasen solorenga* Janice Bostok traces the course of a farmwoman's life, through a stillbirth, a retarded child, divorces and remarriages, husband's injuries, slipping often into allegories of ducks and drakes.

meeting on the path  
the duck stretches its neck  
in greeting the drake

after mating drake drops  
sideways off the duck's back

Clausen presents a group of *tanka*:

between chores  
I study my hands  
as if they might hold  
something  
I should know

returning home  
the hospital smell transfers  
from his body to mine

careful in bed—  
careful even holding hands

as if one  
were not enough  
I daydream pleasantly  
of several women  
I know

Elizabeth Searle Lamb's chapbook is subtitled, "Poems for Bruce and Others." Bruce, of course, is her late husband, and the rest are haikuists and artists.

*for F. Bruce Lamb:*  
it's still there  
echo of flute notes tangled  
in apricot blossoms

*for Raymond Roseliep:*  
on New Year's Eve  
streak of a shooting star—  
Sobi-Shi . . . that you?

*for Pablo Picasso:*  
the first spring rain  
the "Bust of Sylvette"  
streaked with it

*for Geraldine C. Little:*  
still so clear  
echo of the word  
and of the song



Jeff Witkin traces a season from harvest moon to magnolia blossoms, during which a major change in his life occurred:

perennials  
for my wife of thirty years  
. . . not knowing it's over

moving day  
the framed ketoobah\*  
in an empty room

\*a jewish marriage contract

autumn chill—  
without its hanging plant  
the chain clinks

snowmelt  
a space opens  
around the rock

*Reviewed by Kenneth C. Leibman*

### BOOKS RECEIVED

Listing of new books is for information only and does not imply endorsement by frogpond or the Haiku Society of America. Reviews of some of these titles may appear in later issues of frogpond. Prices are US currency except where noted.

*a haiku alphabet in celebration of winter*. LeRoy Gorman. proof press, 67 Court, Aylmer, QC J9H 4M1, Canada, 1997. 36 unnumb. pp, 4¼ × 5½ in, paper, saddle-stapled. \$5 ppd. Set of 4 seasons, 1994-7, in easy-bind cover, \$15 ppd.

*All the Games: Haiku, Tanka, Art*. Francine Porad. Vandina Press, 6944 SE 33rd, Mercer Island, WA 98040; 1997. 33 double-folded pp, 5½ × 8¼ in, paper, perfectbound. \$8.00 + \$1.25 p&h; checks payable to Francine Porad.

*Centum*. Ștefan G. Theodoru. In Romanian, French, and English. Editura "Vasile Cârlova", Bucharest, 1997. 146 pp, 3¾ × 5 in, paper, perfectbound. \$5.00 ppd US, \$5.50 Canada & Mexico; \$7.00 elsewhere, from author, 28-18 29th St., Long Island City, NY 11102.

*The Way of the Hawk*. Doris Heitmeyer. Published by the author, 315 E. 88 St. Apt. 1F, New York, NY 10128. Haibun. iv + 24 pp, 5½ × 8½ in, paper, saddle-stapled. \$5.

*Traces of Dreams: Landscape, Cultural Memory, and the Poetry of Bashō*. Haruo Shirane. Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA 94305-2235, 1998. xvi + 382 pp, 5¾ in, paper, perfectbound, \$19.95; cloth, \$55.00.

*Traista cu stele/Le sac à étoiles/The Bag of Stars*. Ștefan Theodoru; French tran. Constantin Frosin; English tran. Virginia Cucu. Editura Haiku, Bucharest, 1995. 206 pp, 3¾ × 5½ in, paper, perfectbound. \$6.00 ppd USA; \$6.50 Canada & Mexico; \$8.00 elsewhere, from author (see *Centum*).



## THE MERIT BOOK AWARDS 1997

Haiku Society of America  
(for books published in 1996)

Hayat Abuza and Charles Trumbull, judges

A haiku book is more than a handful of verses. Editing, illustration, design and layout, and production values as well as the quality of individual poems and the sensibility of the selection are all factors that contribute to the success of the finished book. In evaluating the 24 entries in the 1997 HSA Merit Book Award competition we sought balance and harmony among these several criteria. Finally, we asked ourselves: which of these books make genuine contributions to the haiku literature? which are good values? which would we like to own?

We took seriously the HSA Guidelines for entries in the contests, especially the defining passage, "outstanding collection of original haiku in English published in the previous year." This phrase, we felt, excluded some entries from consideration for the main awards (collections of poems that were chiefly or completely not haiku, anthologies, translations, essays, and so forth).

Finally, we thank the HSA for the opportunity to be involved in this fascinating and important work!

**First Place:** . . . *the path of the bird* by vincent tripi. Ill. David Kopitzke. Selected & arranged by Phyllis Walsh. Hummingbird Press, POB 96, Richland Center, WI 53581. \$10 ppd.

. . . *the path of the bird* is an affectionate collection of haiku celebrating birds and the ways we encounter them. In an exquisitely produced and numbered edition, the poems move easily from ocean to arroyo to mountain with great delicacy and beauty. The clarity of each haiku moment and the harmony of the design and presentation bring this book top honors.

**Second Place:** *Jumping from Kiyomizu: a Haiku Sequence* by David Cobb. Ill. Charlotte Smith. IRON Press, 5 Marden Terr., Cullercoats, North Shields, Northumberland NE30 4PD, UK. £4.99.

*Jumping from Kiyomizu* comprises a long sequence of poems arranged in the stages of the life cycle from birth to death. These haiku succeed in conveying large themes through small,



vividly crafted impressions—humorous, touching, and surprising. They are impressive in their variety of subjects and in the way they resonate ever more deeply on each reading.

**Third Place:** *Paris* by William Hart. Ill. Jayasri Majumdar. Timberline Press, 6281 Red Bud, Fulton, MO 65251. \$9 ppd.

Handset and classically presented, *Paris* evokes a city, its people and its moods. The author wanders smoothly from street corner to museum to Métro, displaying a wry and seasoned perspective. Like a traveler's sketchbook, this collection brings home favorite images to savor later.

**Honorable Mention:** *Presents of Mind* by Jim Kacian. Katsura Press, Lake Oswego, OR 97034. \$14.95 from author, POB 2461, Winchester, VA 22604.

### Special Merit Book Awards

*Students Breathing* by John Sheirer. Elbow Editions, Elbow Lake, MN. \$5 ppd. from author at Asnuntuck Community Technical College, 170 Elm St., Enfield, CT 06082.

John Sheirer's chapbook-length haibun is exceptional and deserving of special mention. The topic—a teacher's work year—is inspired, and the author handles the subject matter with inventiveness and wit. The content as well as the simple design make for an endearing book that readers will want to share with their teacher friends—while still keeping a copy for themselves!

*Between Two Waves/Între două valuri* by H.F. Noyes.

*Surâsul călugărului/The Monk's Smile* by Vasile Spinei.

Both from Editura Leda, c/o Ion Codrescu, Str. Soveja nr. 25, Bl. V2, sc. B, apt. 31, 8700 Constanța, Romania (numbers 1 and 4, respectively, in the Haiku Collection series).

The judges wish to recognize the efforts of Ion Codrescu of Constanța, Romania—publisher, poet, sumi-e artist, and tireless “haiku ambassador.” Two excellent books from his publishing house were entered in the competition, both deserving of special attention. *Between Two Waves* is a rich collection of haiku on the theme of water by the contemporary master



H.F. Noyes, in the English original and Romanian translation.  
What a prize this book must be for Romanian haikuists!

The second title represents what certainly must be the first haiku book to bring the poems of a poet from the Republic of Moldova into English: *The Monk's Smile* demonstrates a very high level of haiku and is all in all a very winning collection. Ion Codrescu illustrated both books and, with his wife Mihaela, provided translations.

*Hayat Abuza & Charles Trumbull*

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### CONTESTS AND AWARDS

#### **Tallahassee Writers' Association 1998 Penumbra Poetry Competition, Haiku Category**

Postmark deadline June 30, 1998. Type haiku (unpublished, not under consideration elsewhere) on duplicate 3×5" cards; one with haiku only, one with author's name, full address, telephone number, and source of contest information on the *back* of the card. Send also one paragraph of good biographical data, including publications. Prizes: \$50/20/10. Winners & HM's will appear in and receive a copy of chapbook "Penumbra 1998" Mail with entry fee of \$3 per haiku (check/MO payable to "T.W.A. Penumbra") and SASE for winners' list to Penumbra Poetry Contest, POB 15995, Tallahassee FL 32317-5995.

#### **Still Haiku Award, 2nd 1998 Competition**

In-hand deadline August 15, 1998. £500 prizes over the year. Entry fee £2 per haiku or £10 per 6 haiku. For Entry Form, send SAE + 2 IRC's to Still, 49 Englands Lane, London NW3 4YD, England.

#### **Florida State Poets Association 1998 Contest, Haiku Category**

Postmark deadline August 15, 1998. Prizes \$25/15/10 + 3 HM. Send unpublished 3-line haiku, not under consideration elsewhere, which have not won more than \$10 in any previous contest, typed single-spaced on duplicate 8½×11" sheets. In UL corner of both, type "Category 8, Berniece McConahay Mem. Award"; in UR corner of only one, type your name & address. Send with entry fee of \$1 per haiku (checks/MO's payable to F.S.P.A. Inc) and SASE for winner's list to Karin Lindgren, 124 Lakeview Ave., Lantana, FL 33462. For brochure describing 23 other categories, including sijo, concrete, etc., send SASE to same address.



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