

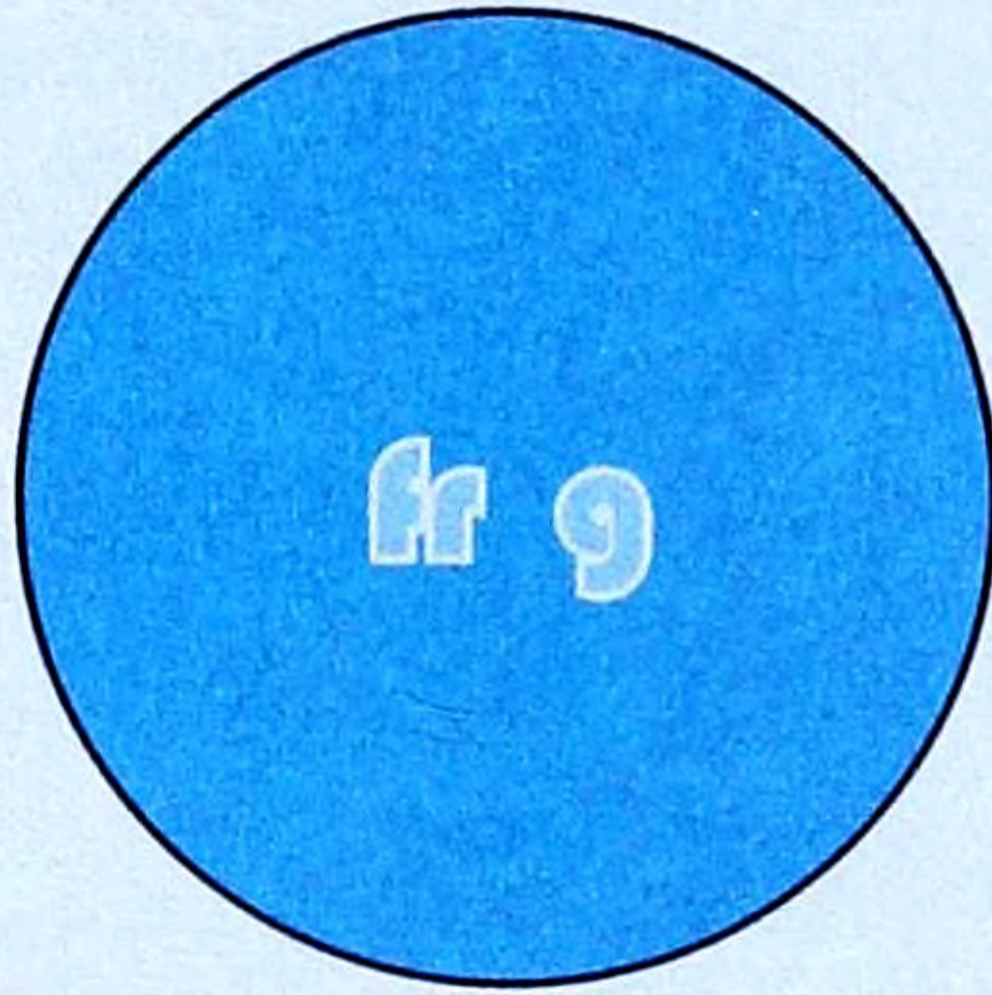
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Volume 32:1, 2009



frogpond

**The Journal of the Haiku
Society of America**



**Volume 32, Number 1
Winter, 2009**

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1. Submissions from both members and non-members of HSA are welcome
2. Submissions must be original, unpublished work that is not being considered elsewhere
3. Submission by e-mail is preferred
 - (a) in the body of the e-mail (no attachments)
 - (b) with subject line: Frogpond Submission
 - (c) with place of residence noted in the body of the e-mail
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 - (a) a self-addressed stamped envelope (with a Canadian stamp)
 - (b) a self-addressed envelope with one International Reply Coupon (IRC) for up to 30 grams; two IRCs for over 30 grams and up to 50 grams,
5. Only one submission per issue will be considered

The Submission May Include Any or All of the Following

1. Up to ten (10) haiku
2. Up to three (3) haibun
3. Up to three (3) rengay or other short sequences
4. One (1) renku or other long sequence
5. One (1) essay
6. One (1) book review

Submission Periods

1. February 15 to April 15 (Spring/Summer Issue)
 2. June 01 to August 01 (Fall Issue)
 3. September 15 to November 15 (Winter Issue)
- Acceptances will be sent shortly after the end of each period.

Note to Publishers

Books for review may be sent at any time

Submission Addresses:

E-mail: gswede@ryerson.ca

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Toronto, ON M5S 2S8

**This Issue Is Dedicated
To The Memory of
William J. Higginson
1938-2008**

A founding member of HSA, 1968

Winner of the first HSA Haiku Contest, 1968

President, HSA, 1976

Editor & publisher, *Haiku Magazine*, 1971-76

Founder of From Here Press, 1975

Winner, HSA Merit Book Award for Critical Writing,
1974: *Itadakimasu: Essays on Haiku and Senryu in
English*, J&C Transcripts, 1971

Winner, HSA Merit Book Award for Textbook/Scho-
larly Work (with **Penny Harter**), 1986: *The Haiku
Handbook: How to Write, Share, and Teach Haiku*,
McGraw-Hill, 1985

Inductee, New Jersey Literary Hall of Fame, 1989

Winner, HSA Merit Book Award for Translation
(with **Tadashi Kondo**), 1998: *Red Fuji: Selected
Haiku of Yatsuka Ishihara*, From Here Press, 1997

Recipient, the Sora Award for Service to the HSA,
2007

Well-Bucket Nightfall, or New Day?

by *William J. Higginson*

We don't always know about it while we're going through life's major switch points. For this brief essay, I want to use the Japanese season word "well-bucket nightfall" (*tsurubeotoshi*) as a sort of anti-theme. The theme is set in October, when dusk seems to swoop down suddenly on a world only a few minutes ago filled with the end of a busy day's activities. The image itself, now certainly metaphorical for most Japanese (and probably all haiku poets!), comes from agrarian village life, where a people drew water from their wells to prepare for evenings' activities. One moment, the bucket is there on top. The next, plunged into darkness.

While I do not have this same rural experience—my grandmother's well responded to a hand-pump in her kitchen—I love the remembered taste of that sweet well water from my early childhood, how great it tasted after the exertion of the pump. And later, the taste of a spring we found on a nearby hillside after the water in the well went bad. Well, a small flight from rural Japan to rural Connecticut, such as the mind of an old man might make.

Is this, then, to be the journal of my own well-bucket nightfall, when my own life will be snuffed out in a few weeks' time? Or the journal of a dark night to a bright new day? I have lived a long and productive life, to my own understanding, lived much of it on my own terms, much on the pure dumb luck of some accidental word or event no one could have predicted. Who could know that a single verse spoken in an endless year of USAF Japanese vocabulary drills relating to parts of weapons and flying airplanes would lead to a life-long interest in Japanese poetry that has sustained me through all the rest.

smell of bile . . .
I waken to October
afterglow

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October afterglow . . .
will my lucky star
shine tonight?

hospital window
in the clear dawn sky
one full moon

“Bill’s last personal writing, a haibun, written Friday, October 3rd, 2008, eight days before he died.” (Penny Harter, his wife, October 29, 2008)

* * * *

Three More Pieces by William J. Higginson

More intricate
than all winter’s designs,
this spring flake

(Winner of the first HSA haiku contest, 1968)

The clock
chimes, chimes and stops,
but the river . . .

(Winner of an HSA haiku contest, 1969)

Short Song

What can we do to appease it—
this desire to achieve the past?
Time through the ten thousand things
as wind through the leaves of trees.

(From his collection Surfing on Magma, From Here Press, 2006.)

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Death Illuminates Me

(for Bill)

by *Penny Harter*, New Jersey

Death illuminates me.
My skin is a trumpet.
Fire blows from my limbs
like a plague of locusts
buzzing in the dark.

Your death scalds me.
Its tears score my cheeks
as they run into the river
where you must be, freed
from the tether of the flesh.

And those ashes
in the box I've buried for now
in your empty closet
are cold, my love,
cold, though I do not
touch them—

I want to burn,
burn through the mourning
into light.

(Written October 29, 2008)



From Bill's Friends And Colleagues

nightfall . . .
the warbler's voice
stays in the rushes

Michael McClintock, California

late autumn
the empty cocoon
on the kitchen table

James Tipton, Mexico

I reread the blog
about your passing—
autumn rain

Lenard D. Moore, North Carolina

autumn rain
the lamp light falls
on his saijiki

Garry Gay, California

into the air and gone
my old neighbor's
wood smoke

Terry Ann Carter, Ontario

"The short answer?
Let me see." Folding one leg
over the other.

Dee Evetts, Virginia

Evening Star

An Ura Shiro renga to the memory of William J. Higginson composed online October 19 to November 2, 2008 (with hokku by William J. Higginson (WJH) from Cor van den Heuvel's Haiku Anthology, 1986).

Carole MacRury (CM), Washington; *John Carley* (JEC), United Kingdom; *Susan Shand* (SS), United Kingdom; *Gerald England* (GE), United Kingdom; *Hortensia Anderson* (HA), New York; *Norman Darlington* (ND), Ireland (*sabaki*); *John W. Sexton* (JWS), Ireland

evening star
almost within
the moon's half-curve WJH

the scythe's path
through dried grasses CM

father, mother
what became of
all the autumn colour? JEC

red faced dancers
crowd into the bar SS

thrice weekly
through the market hall
an odour of fish GE

the splash of a frog
on every stone HA

praying, not praying
for a gust to set the
blossom free ND

skyward our verse
inscribed on a balloon JWS

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Day Notes

(For Bill Higginson)

by *David Gershator*, U.S. Virgin Islands

six pointer
on the Richter scale
not a wrinkle on the sea

through island mists
a brief glimpse
of the invisible

your handbook
at hand
I reach for it again

the things I wanted
to talk about
will have to wait

slamming into the window
the dazed bird
crouches

nothing seemed to help
is this it
you asked

wife and daughter
sing you to eternal rest
Amazing Grace

some 1,400 miles away
I stare at the e-mail
stunned

(Written November 10, 2008)

**Museum of Haiku
Literature Award
\$100**

For the best previously unpublished work appearing in the last issue of *Frogpond* as selected by vote of the H.S.A. Executive Committee.

From Issue 31:3

autumn riff
aspen leaves a few notes higher
than the stream

Harriot West, Oregon

Haiku & Senryu

final day
film festival—
fade to sunlight

Deb Koen, New York

all day drizzle
her memorial bench
empty

Erik Linzbach, Arizona

the stone fence
unevenly put together
summer heat

Bruce Ross, Maine

one black butterfly
the afternoon stretches
all the way home

Bob Lucky, China

reaching in song
for the rhythm
her hips already found

Marlène Buitelaar, Belgium

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cataracts removed
now the wrinkles

Joan Gleichman, Oregon

I pause
the book on tape
mountain valley lake

Johnette Downing, Louisiana

first snow
and finally time to read . . .
ZZZZZZZZZZZZ

Kirsty Karkow, Maine

full moon night . . .
all that is
and isn't

Johan Bergstad, Sweden

autumn colours
we let mother lie
about our childhood

Marcus Larsson, Sweden

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Bathhouse . . .
Bare branches tapping
The glass

Mary Ellen Walsh, New Jersey

mist in the woods—
the bottle
under the grape leaves

PMF Johnson, Minnesota

widow
shelling beans
from another's garden

Merrill Ann Gonzales, Connecticut

quiet space
before the howl—
tea kettle

Patrick Pilarski, Alberta

one bead at a time
counting
on an afterlife

Susan Marie LaVallee, Hawaii

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morning fog—
from my window
nothingness

Joan Murphy, New York

rampaging thunderstorm
in my quiet life
a pleasure

Muriel Ford, Ontario

suicide point
the bridge's cables vanish
into mist

Allan Burns, Colorado

my child
colors the crows green—
power line shadows

Michael P. Spikes, Arkansas

power outage
my old house
is new again

Matthew Cariello, Ohio

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autumn rain
deeper and darker
the taste of tea

Mary Ahearn, Pennsylvania

old pond
another floater
in my right eye

Scott Mason, New York

September rain
hoping his nap
will last the chapter

Cathy Drinkwater Better, Maryland

spawn song
silvering
a dark salmon night

Clare McCotter, Ireland

favorite trout stream
she casts his ashes
to the evening rise

Jeff Stillman, New York

daddy-long-legs
from this cage of fingers
up into moonlight

John W. Sexton, Ireland

pond's edge
the silence of a frog's tongue
taking an insect

William Cullen Jr., New York

sharing me—
she
and the mosquito

Mykel Board, New York

windbells—
saving the last match
for the hurricane lamp

Ellen Compton, D.C.

withered roses
my weekend
for child custody

Stephen A. Peters, Washington

football weather
I consider a codicil
to my will

Billie Wilson, Alaska

November morning
Dogwood leaves that still cling
sculpted with hoarfrost

Jean Jorgensen, Alberta

too old for sex
on Sunday mornings
we share a newspaper

Gloria Jaguden, California

no wind at all
just a feeling
that something will happen

Bonnie Stepenoff, Missouri

dings and hisses
coming from the radiator . . .
a gray winter day

Tom Tico, California

blind date
oystercatcher on the roof
preens himself

Katrina Shepherd, Scotland

poetreason—
a hanging
of tense

Sari Grandstaff, New York

Chrome napkin holder—
girl wipes away
a smile

Patrick Pfister, Spain

another new year
the earring whose mate
still hasn't turned up

Dorothy McLaughlin, New Jersey

empty closet
a spider web
without a spider

Gregory Hopkins, Alabama

Nat's Christmas croon
the quiet steam
from my hot chocolate

Tyrone McDonald, New York

Olympic Games . . .
a record time
in my Lazyboy

Christopher Patchel, Illinois

kissing—
the seagull's wingtip
brushes the wavecrest

duckprints
stars shimmer
in them

Mike Andrelczyk, California

pauper's graveyard
only the long grasses
have names

Eileen Sheehan, Ireland

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reddening apples—
my newborn tries to suckle
the orchard air

Dejah Leger, Washington

first day of spring
pollen
footprints

Carlos Colón, Louisiana

winter—
the eye-popping orange
of a carrot

Alan Bridges, Maine

twinkling night stars . . . closer than us

job promotion—
one ant carries the largest
piece of leaf

Raquel D. Bailey, Florida

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sky darkens
the dog barks at what
we cannot hear

Elizabeth Bodien, Pennsylvania

turning back on a dead end street—
one odor changes
another

Gary Hotham, Maryland

out of season—
the haiku poet tells us
to ignore the frog

Stanford M. Forrester, Connecticut

Feria of Lent:
at the foot of the cross
winter berries

Stephen Gould, Colorado

meditation
the light
though my eyelids

Jeremy Pendrey, California

Frogpond 32:1

scent of stream
scent of sunlight
wild roses

Ann K. Schwader, Colorado

hot night
my book light
and a firefly

Deb Baker, New Hampshire

first frost
the heavy stillness
of green tomatoes

Jennifer Gomoll Popolis, Illinois

echinops ritro—
hadn't previously, ouch!
given it much thought

each 500 yen
the melon-grapefruit pastry
the book of haiku

Michael Fessler, Japan

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winter weather
the indoor language
of sighs

Margarita Engle, California

February snow . . .
choosing
the lilac-scented soap

Anne LB Davidson, Maine

the world
without you
full of you

losing my shadow in his

Natalia L. Rudychev, Illinois

heat lightning the crooked split in the watermelon

w.f. owen, California

revival
a deacon nudges
his sleeping wife

John J. Dunphy, Illinois

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wearing the new glasses
I don't seem to hear properly
Either

David Cobb, United Kingdom

full moon—
I finally share the secret
with my cat

Alice Frampton, Washington

the cry
of an unknown bird
false dawn

Jo McInerney, Australia

the scent of grilled onions—
all the fairs
I've been to

Sandra Mooney-Ellerbeck, Alberta

each note
each pause . . .
the heat

Angela Terry, Washington

rising from
the apple crate
autumn

Tom Drescher, British Columbia

spring snow
fever of the bloom
under the quilt

Richard Jodoin, Quebec

snowbound
getting out
that long book

Sharon Stoneburner, Virginia

frost on the roof
fog on the lake
the joy of spooning

William Scott Galasso, Washington

canopy gap—
the wood ants' flux
shapes their nest

Matthew Paul, United Kingdom

first killing frost
Canada geese and summer
leaving together

Amy Jo Schoonover, Ohio

second honeymoon
a flock of turnstones
skirt the shore

dry spell
a field sparrow flashes
burnt umber

Tom Painting, New York

scent of snow —
a freight train
grinds the night

Collin Barber, Arkansas

with droplets life giving first breast milk

Kala Ramesh, India

autumn deepens . . .
begging bowls
overflowing with leaves

laundry day
the scent of his
missing boxers

Pamela A. Babusci, New York

another quarrel—
his ramrod posture
casts a stark shadow

Emily Romano, New Jersey

family headstone—
I whisper the names
not carved

not a leaf moving—
the dog and i
stop for no reason

John Soules, Ontario

Frogpond 32:1

mental health day staring at the dreamcatcher

slatted light
rests on mother—
nursing home

R.P. Carter, Ontario

the barren windbreak sifting a rainy fog

fallen leaves
ornament
the small fir

Tom Clausen, New York

picking at the peeling birch—
recalling one regret
after another

dawning—
a herd of beeves
spreads the pasture

Mark Alan Osterhaus, Wisconsin

the nature trail
disappearing into
his loud complaints

from the house
where the old woman died
piano playing again

Robert Epstein, California

broken stratus clouds
over leafless trees
a wake of pink

Marshall Hryciuk, Ontario

winter night
the heat comes on
between us

a retinal sun
wanders through
the observation car

John Stevenson, New York

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your soft skin
the caress of moonlight
on a cloud

the shape
of a homeless sleeper
graveyard twilight

Terry O'Connor, Ireland

pas de deux
a breeze
catches the light

Diana Webb, United Kingdom

insects at dusk—
their monotone broken
by a dog's bark

Adelaide B. Shaw, New York

weekend walkabout
second guessing
a fork in the road

Curtis Dunlap, North Carolina

light snow:
white angle of ancient wind
in sandstone

in the huge gray sky
a focused instant:
hummingbird

Ruth Yarrow, Washington

fresh off the tree
half a fig
half an ant

Robert Moyer, North Carolina

the first chip
in our windshield
northern star

whistling wind
the noon train blows
an A-flat

Susan Constable, British Columbia

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losing track
counting rings on a stump
another birthday

resting our paddles
sunsets float past
on bubbles

Robert Seretny, Maine

clock sprung ahead
lunch tastes
the same

Mankh (Walter E. Harris III), New York

windowless classroom
we talk about thinking
outside the box

Appalachian spring
can I still learn
to play the violin

Yu Chang, New York

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lovers still
a falling petal
catches moonlight

fern fronds
tightly coiled—
the fetus kicks

Peggy Willis Lyles, Georgia

a rainy night
love
you can smell

Greg Piko, Australia

winter quarrel
a glove covers your beautiful hand

David Caruso, New Jersey

blackberry blossom
a honeybee steps lightly
on all five petals

John Thompson, California

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she would have
polished the silver
Mom's memorial

dogwood blossoms
Mom's ashes
lighter than expected

Carolyn Hall, California

netted butterflies—
a curl escapes
the Amish girl's cap

Linda Jeannette Ward, North Carolina

economy in a slump
the near empty ballpark
gets a home run

end of the day
pictures with smiles
in the obituaries

LeRoy Gorman, Ontario

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winter mist
four gravediggers watch
a fifth dig

whispers of wind a bittern clears the still-frosted reeds

John Barlow, United Kingdom

our long bathtub soak—
a ring around
the moon

David Giacalone, New York

sun splintered clouds
each leaf spills
molten gold

Angelee Deodhar, India

late August
eel grass
breaks the surface

Hilary Tann, New York

guitar-wood
thinness
late
at
night
when
you
play
the
blues
alone

Burnell Lippy, Vermont

water calls them
out of the sky
wing-worn geese

Francine Banwarth, Iowa

steady rain a line outside the aquarium

Greg Schwartz, Maryland

lemonade stand—
a pair of 6-year olds
discuss the downturn

Robert McNeill, Virginia

from the cemetery seventeen-year cicada cries

Robert Mainone, Michigan

Revelations: Unedited

by *paul m.*, Rhode Island

I was a bit apprehensive when asked to contribute to this column because I don't think there is a "secret" to writing haiku—at least not one that I know. Each poem is its own moment and is approached from a different angle and mindset, so any "secret" must take these mathematically large possibilities into mind. Flexibility any one "secret" would have difficulty achieving. That said I do have a couple things I try to keep in mind when I write.

The first is easily (and often) said but was perhaps the hardest to learn: *Try to approach poetry with openness to experience, leaving all preconceptions behind.* I believe strongly in experiential haiku and an insistence on letting things talk for themselves. In the past I have argued that from a reader's perspective wholly made up poems are indistinguishable from experiential ones, so there shouldn't be a stigma against desk-ku, in fact it shouldn't even be a topic of discussion; that perspective, however, is from the reader's point of view. As a writer, I want to expand my knowledge of the world and myself. A poem that is wholly made up, while possibly successful in a reader's eye, is only successful to my writer's ego. For me this was a hard lesson to learn because I was raised in a society in which we are taught that things mean other things. Stars and tea leaves tell our fortunes. A black cat can't cross my path without my recognizing it as a bad omen. This symbolism is equally true regarding literature. I was taught that Frost's "Stopping by Woods..." is not about stopping to watch the snow fall, but is about the meaning of land ownership. So I learned to approach poetry as if the poet was saying, "Let me tell you something through something else." Further, there is a whole network of journals and websites that want our poems, and that we want to be published in. Editors we want to impress. So our first instinct is to show off, to tell the editor something amazing. We think of the end result first. We think

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of meaning. “I’m going to write a poem about a cow chewing cud juxtaposed with a co-worker because I’m trying to show... etc...” But instead of leading with what I am trying to say, with what I want the objects to say, I should listen to the objects themselves.

What is remarkable about letting an object speak for itself is that it allows you to discover something new about it. You will never find anything new, much less report on anything new, if you approach your subjects with your mind already made up. Poetry should be about discovery and each true thing deserves more than my preconceptions. *Fay Aoyagi* said at a recent HPNC reading that she liked “the idea of everything—a tree, a flower, a lake, a stone and a house—having its own spirit.” I couldn’t agree more. It is our job as poets to find that spirit. Equally remarkable about letting an object speak for itself is that it allows you to potentially discover something new about yourself—to find your spirit. Years ago I wrote the poem,

daffodil shoots—
all these years
as an accountant

I had been walking up the front path of our house and noticed that the daffodil shoots had started to come up. This wasn’t surprising since I had planted the bulbs. But as someone who was raised on the beaches of Southern California I am fascinated with the emergence of spring in wintry New England. I found myself wondering about the internal clock of daffodils and was oddly surprised that some bulbs in exact situations were slightly different in their timing. I could have easily walked by the bulbs and thought in my accountant mindset that they were right on schedule. Instead, by taking the time to look at a few bulbs among the many, I discovered something new about bulbs, and also about myself. It was a lesson to be less that accountant.

Poetry is a balancing act. As writers we are all misunderstood. That is fortunately(!) the nature of the short poem. Words are abstractions, so the less words we use, the more abstract and general our poems become—and more open to reader interpretation. And haiku are the least wordy poems! It is important to

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remember that each poem is two poems: the writer's and the reader's. As a writer I want to express my discovery in just enough words to lead the reader to discover what I did, but I don't want to tell them too much or they lose their discovery. Follow this poem of mine through its specifics:

bird call	bird call	loon call
a boulder	a boulder supports	a boulder supports
stairs	stairs from the lake	stairs from the lake

I obviously didn't write the poem this way, but I think it is useful to illustrate how our perceptions change as the poem gets more specific? Perhaps you heard a crow or songbird in the first two versions? Or placed the poem in the desert. In a perfect world, my discovery would balance the reader's discovery. But that is often not true. But because that happens, it doesn't mean either side failed. Perhaps the reader's perception or history of "loon" is different than mine. Don't feel bad if a reader's reaction to your poem is different than you intended. It is important to understand that once a poem leaves the poet, it is open to other interpretations. As a writer it is our job to minimize that difference, but not at the expense of the reader's own discovery.

Haiku can have meaning. Some people insist that haiku don't mean anything. That they are just a direct observation of nature as it is. While I agree that a river is just a river and has no extraordinary significance in the objective universe, it can mean something further to me, personally, subjectively, at a certain point in time. Otherwise I am just writing pictures and a camera could do a much better job than I ever could. My first guideline mentioned the importance of letting things speak for themselves, and while this should always be true, it doesn't mean they will have the last word. It is important to be unafraid of where the poem's meaning leads you. As beginners we are inundated with rules. Yet a moment of perception has no rules! This past summer I wrote the poem,

mountain pass
my brothers stride
longer than mine.

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As I recited this poem to myself until I could pull pen and paper out of my pocket (much to the annoyance of my brother who rightly thinks such jottings are excuses to catch my breath) I played with the word order, and in one version used “his stride” in the second line. That reminded me of a letter from someone who thought I was a Christian writer and when I thought of the poem in that light it created a whole new poem with a very different meaning. Yet both poems do mean something to me. One is a commentary on how two people can confront the same thing differently; the other my confrontation with the nature of God. But both were discovered after the experience spoke for itself.

Nature as the subject of poetry. In 2004 *Dee Evetts* asked the question: why do so many poets who live in urban areas write poems primarily about Nature? A fair question considering the Western tradition’s focus on experiential moments. At the time I responded that nature had a natural cycle that urban life was missing. I’d add now that nature also has an immediacy missing in modern life. For example, I know I get paid twice a month, so I can call in sick once and a while, plus I get Saturday and Sunday off to hike, play some golf, etc. A hawk I see sweeping the field on my Sunday outing doesn’t have that luxury. If he doesn’t find food he starves. He doesn’t have time for hobbies. That immediacy is something both scary and yet vital. And perhaps missing from our lives. I think we write about nature to connect with that missing immediacy.

It’s an American (Canadian, British, Indian, etc.) poem. In talking to some haiku poets recently I was surprised to learn that they were not Modern Haiku subscribers—Modern Haiku, the grand dame of haiku journals! —or subscribers of Acorn, Mayfly, etc. Collections of Basho, Buson, et al are fine, but poetry journals and collections by our contemporaries are where we see what writers here and now are writing—people in the same environment with often the same concerns as ourselves. I am not trying to write an ancient Japanese poem, but a modern American one; and I suspect others are doing the same. Write about your discoveries.

Renku

Cobalt Canyon: A 36-link Colorenga

by

Linda Papanicolaou (LMP), California; *Ellen Compton* (EC), D.C.; *Roberta Beary* (RB), D.C.; *Robert P. Moyer* (RPM), North Carolina; *Lenard D. Moore* (LDM), North Carolina; *Carlos Colón* (CC), Louisiana; *Lane Parker* (LP), California; *Dave Russo* (DWR), North Carolina; *Jim Swift* (JS), British Columbia

Jet Blue sparks from the landing gear	LMP
adding cornflowers to her wedding bouquet	EC
the molten sky about to burst	RB
clouds moving across the back yard pool	RPM
the bruise on her thigh pimples in the chill	LDM
denim jacket slumped on the folding chair	LP
azure as Delores Demure	CC
taking the sapphires out of the dinner ring	DWR
sunset in cobalt canyon—the sky turns green	JS
wine dark sea the oars of the trireme	LMP
he substitutes lime for the margarita	EC
split pea soup the third day in a row	RB
indigestion shows on her face	RPM
Pepto-Bismol printed on the chalkboard	LDM
ECNALUBMA the red light changes	CC

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the chameleon stares at the accident scene	DWR
desert camouflage another unit called up	LMP
a tie dyed shirt bleeds in the wash	RB
the new flag on the lesbian couple's porch	RPM
the sandpaper worn out	LDM
Dylan record at the bridge game one more cup of coffee	CC
swapping hunting stories slug of bourbon	DWR
banana split a scoop of peppermint	LMP
the stoplight stuck on yellow all night long	RB
in his eyes the jaundice	RPM
a wedge of lemon left on the saucer	LDM
renga writer lost in the corn maze	CC
month without rain the rose leaves wither and fall	DWR
sweet violets a faded potpourri	LMP
jeans missing check the daughter's rear end	RB
the singer howls his lover gone	RPM
through the window the lake swells	LDM
bottom of the toilet bowl turquoise necklace	CC
earthquake the Ming vase in shards	LMP
second marriage his eyes too the color of slate	RB
her indigo bra caps the bedpost at dusk	LDM

AN ANGULAR FIGURE: A SHISAN RENKU

by

Dick Pettit, Denmark

Francis Attard, Malta

An angular figure
walks up the stubble field
against the moon

*guides on stilts
at the autumn festival*

hard to dislodge
the puffed-up heads bobbing
on water stalks

*trendy Vogue hair
on a row of mannequins*

with shouts of glee—
the 'Vikings' plunge
into the winter sea

*a good beginning to New Year
the sight of piping plover*

* * * *

*most of her sweethearts gone
she thinks
of a spouse*

as they hear the rare cuckoo
he talks of his CDs

*a paper dragon!
the kite sweeps a path
down the glowing sky*

Frogpond 32:1

the wind dies, midges
dance above the water

*all this rank grass
scarlet pimpernel
barely made out*

go through the wood
and we'll see the lighthouse

Tan Renga

by

Jennie Townsend, Missouri

Ron Moss, Tasmania

hoarfrost—
packing away the window box
I breathe in thyme

bacon and eggs sizzle
as the children bicker



Rengay

NIGHT OF THE DANCE

by

Ron Moss, Tasmania
Allan Burns, Colorado

latest piercing
the neon flickers
across her smile

*he eyes the receiver
with sweaty palms*

night of the dance
everything from the rental
. . . too tight

*fresh dent
in the fender
a screech-owl's call*

between wild lovers
the safety of rubber

*after the betrayal
she stares a long while
into willows*

TRAFFIC STOPS

by

John Thompson, California
Renee Owen, California

the long dinner
punctuated by children
with raspberries

Frogpond 32:1

*his late night heartburn
coitus interruptus*

footsteps echo
down the dim-lit boardwalk
frogs pause

*the scent of perfume
from the breakfast room
nonstop sneezes*

writing her to-do list
she fills one line with hearts

*in a rush to get home—
traffic stops
for a field of lupine*

THE STONE BUDDHA'S SMILE

by

Carole MacRury, Washington
Hortensia Anderson, New York

late afternoon—
from deep in the lilac
a soft chattering

*a siamese cat steps gingerly
through the lady ferns*

distant voices
from beyond a fence
of green bamboo

*in the shallows
of the wading pond
a hundred frogs splash*

(Continued on next page)

Haiku Society of America

the stone Buddha's smile
behind the pink thistle

*just before dark
the moon and the sun
share the sky*

LETTING GO

by

Murasaki Sagano, Japan
Cathy Drinkwater Better, Maryland

napping mother
her face toward
tulips

*how soft the pillow
of fallen cherry petals*

freesia's scent
reaches to her bed
light breeze

*first rain drops
into the cup of a leaf
her unquenchable longing*

garden of anemones
inwrought with memories

*letting go
sakura blossoms
on the wind*

THE WAITRESS SINGS

by

Billie Dee, California

Deborah P. Kolodji, California

outside the café
winter jacarandas
winter sky

*the scarf Mother made me
last Christmas*

tattered cookbook
a buttered thumbprint
on the biscuit page

*autographs
old photographs framed
on the wall*

bacon pops
in the black iron skillet

*fresh crumbs
the waitress sings
as we drink coffee*

*

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Sequence

At the Orphanage

by *J. Frank Kenney*, Arkansas

that first night
tears wetting a nun's bodice
the smell of starch

a pile of old coats
we race to snatch
winter warmth

the coat I grab
no holes
no pockets either

thru the chain link
sis' tiny fingers
reach for mine

the smell of fries
nothing else reaches
the end of the table



Haibun

Teton Trail

by *Charles Hansmann*, New York

Gorp-fueled, high-altitude pokey, an eye out for big game and joking this could mean high-stakes poker at the switchback where we complete the Z from overlook to lake, in an acute corner of scratchy clearing, a bear grazes the sunny berries we look up from picking.

paw print filled with boot treads



Night Ferry

by *Bruce Ross*, Maine

I'm on the last ferry from Nantucket back to the mainland. My companion has fallen asleep and the small group of other passengers is subdued.

We are sitting on benches in the lobby. Outside the windows pure darkness. On each window the lobby's reflection. I become sleepy after the first hour and force myself to stay awake. In the stillness of the lobby and out of the surrounding darkness, ahead of us in the distance a string of light in a graded darkness. I consider that I am observing the birth of abstraction.

late night ferry
coming closer to port
moonlit waves

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Departing

by *Renee Owen*, California

Twilight walk through the sheep pasture, dry grass rustling in a hot wind. An ancient apple orchard beckons, twisted limbs curving towards me, inviting with their gnarled embrace. In the distance, above the ridge line, hint of an eerie glow.

one last wish—
to see again
this sickle moon

*

*

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Death Notices

by *Adelaide B. Shaw*, New York

I don't know them, the people listed in the death notices. Some have long obituaries. I check the ages—82, 91, 98, 106. Expected ages. It's the younger ones—24, 45, 53, 60—that cause me to suck in my breath.

One death in particular. A photo accompanies the obituary of a 53-year old woman. Attractive face, full of warmth and life. A BS in biology, a nutritionist, a teacher, a writer.

“Instead of flowers please send donations to The National Kidney Foundation or your local dialysis center”

heavy spring rain—
checking the young basil plants
for survivors

Fixture

by *Dru Philippou*, New Mexico

Mother handles the jacket in the Dutch Colonial armoire as if to deprive it of independence. In Father's hurry to leave for good one afternoon, he had forgotten his favorite jacket. It hung there for three years before she decided to do something about it. Each morning, Mother reduces the jacket's control over her by sliding it at will to a different part of the rail. She then slams the teakwood door only to open it a little as though to let the thing air:

deserted . . .
wool strands
frayed and tangled

Here and There

by *Janelle Barrera*, Florida

Today a light rain falls along the yellow clay banks of the Irrawaddy River. Our boat has dropped us off here that we may see historical ruins of prodigious proportions. Yet, I can see no farther than the hordes of small kids rushing toward our group of 8 American tourists. One tiny girl attaches herself to my arm telling me how beautiful I am and how fine I would look in her skinny little bracelet strung from wild flower seeds. She tells me and tells me as, together, we traverse the decaying landscape.

Her persistence, her patience, her passion! At what moment did she know for sure she would get the dollar she was aiming for? At what moment did I know that she knew? . . . these games we play from birth.

long river—
throughout the day
my thoughts return to you

Cathedral of Meaux

by *Margaret Chula*, Oregon

Flying buttresses with Archangel Gabriel blowing his horn, angels flying, the tall pipes of the organ empty of music. The cathedral is empty but for me and an old woman. She sits on a straight-backed chair and wraps her shawl tightly around her, tucking in her chin periodically when she feels a draught. I follow her gaze as she prays to the statue of the Virgin and Child in a small alcove altar. I too am transfixed by the purity of the Virgin's countenance, a face unlined by life's travails. I want to touch her cheeks, to run my hand along her face, to enfold her with my weary arms and absorb the quiet strength she offers. How has she managed to give tranquility to others for centuries without losing any herself? A vessel that remains full with giving. I want to wrap my Indonesian scarf round and round my torso till I am swathed like the Christ Child. To be held in her beneficence as he is, cradled in her elegant arms, tapered fingers radiant with a flesh-colored reality.

contained
in a vase like my mother's
cold white lilies

The Light at Savannah

by *Jeffrey Woodward*, Ontario

stretched out lazily
on stark white linen
the length of the day

by the oriel with a Royal Delft vase and one orchid with the lacy curtain and beveled glass beguilingly open

paging lightly through
a summer catalogue—
the mild airs of spring

outside the box
by *Roberta Beary*, D.C.

single, married, divorced, widowed. that's what the little boxes on government forms say. but some of us can't marry, at least not lawfully, because of where we call home. what box do we check?

photo magnet
the couple's face
just a blur



Platespotting
by *Carlos Colón*, Louisiana

License plates in Louisiana are now usually a combination of letters and numbers. A few years ago I started playing a game with license plates—trying to find the best cribbage hands (e.g., V664565). Except for personalized license plates, it is rare to find the letters spelling out words, and I remember reading that the state has taken precautions to avoid accidentally spelling anything that would be offensive; yet, you would be amazed at how many times you see a variation of KKX, which from a distance can be mistaken for KKK. There are even those rare times when the license plate is offensive to the driver, if no one else.

Platespotting
three OAFs
in one month

The Last of the Wydandots

by **Tish Davis**, Ohio

A local artist sketches him in full Indian headdress. At the entrance to the trail, two painters read the short biography about Bill Moose before setting up their easels along the north rim. A viewing platform overlooks the ravine where brown leaves ferment along the bank of a stream. Glacial erratics are scattered along the bottom—fallen warriors on flat limestone. Indian Run Falls, heard but not seen. Voices in the abandoned village.

I'm a few steps behind carrying my camera. The sunlight is filtered by Maple, Blue Ash, Shagbark Hickory. An occasional opening exposes roots, granules of dirt freshly creased. I slip off trail and follow the sounds to the secluded basin where Indian Bill washed. I remember the biography that I've read: "He slept outdoors every night during the summer and once a month in the winter with only a blanket for cover."

Moss covered formations cling to the ledges. Flowering rock cress juts out into space. The camera, now wrapped, hidden under a giant sycamore; the light in the spray against my skin.

leaves in a shallow pool
paragraphs of fine print
tacked under glass

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Camping

by *Alberto Ventura*, Arizona

We start a bonfire mindlessly, needlessly as the night is unexpectedly warm, the moonshine is intense and we are eating junk food right out of the bag. Our faces are glowing already, so the only labor of the flame is turning the trees all around into an even darker, quieter presence that has heard the same stories ten thousand times, a giant panther that won't lose sleep over our laughter.

moon at dawn
deep in the forest
lichen on a boulder

One Saturday Night, Just Thinking

by *John W. Sexton*, Ireland

I was out of the country, twenty-three years ago, when they took you from the wreckage. I was out of the country when they placed you in the coffin.

You were eighteen that last time I saw you, wearing that shirt you loved, the one you stole from Martin. It looked suddenly too big for you, and your face was cold and swollen and our kisses couldn't wake you.

I still have that photo ID of you that you had done when you were fifteen for the school holiday to Italy. Oh Gerard, my young brother, you look so handsome. I kiss that photo often. I kiss it now. But the kisses can never wake you.

How useless time is, when it's all spent.

on the table an hour
a central star widens
in the sliced lemon

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Strong As Ever

by *Natalia L. Rudychev*, Illinois

The horse from the drawing I did not buy because I could not come up with the sum needed fast enough still visits my dreams.

a stump in spring
the scent of cherry
strong as ever

* *

* *

* *

Hot Springs

(Landmannalaugar, Iceland)

by *Patrick Pilarski*, Alberta

We hold the sky on a string—huge and blue. It pulls on our palms, drags open the flat earth until it fits the horizon. Falls heavy on the glacier's tongue. Below it, fire—timeless and caustic; wisps that curl from the yellowed soil.

This place grows claws: coal-black fingers of lava, silt-water and steam. Picking our way along the lip of a ravine, small pieces of volcanic rock work like sandpaper inside our boots. Dig at our bones.

Hekla's shadow—
another foreigner
naked in the stream

Dusk

by *Angelee Deodhar*, India

Companion of a thousand walks, tens of thousands of fetching the ball, countless frolics, today she lies still with eyes closed with barely discernible breath, an occasional stirring of her legs as she vainly tries to rise against the weight of her fractured leg which hangs by her side like a broken wing. The other leg cannot support her anymore. I sit on the floor, let her head rest on my hand and talk to her as I stroke her. Once in a while she opens her eyes to look at me and I try to find the spark which kindled her spirit, the promise of that unconditional love with which she greeted us each time we walked in the door. This afternoon we have to bid farewell to all this and more, we have only a few hours before she is put to sleep. Our other dog, a golden cocker lies close to Liesl and she looks at me soulfully. The room feels oppressive, like *Bacovian Lead* and everything is black except the memories which glow like gold.

fading light
the silence shredded by
a lone cicada

Sea of Stars

by *Collin Barber*, Arkansas

As a father, it's in my nature to enjoy the idea that my toddler children think I have supreme knowledge of the secrets of the universe. Most of the time, I have no idea what the answers are to the questions they pose, but somehow I manage to tell them something that satisfies their curiosity. At the moment, my three year-old son has paralyzed me with his latest inquiry, "How do starfish poop?"

country night
clinging to a rock
in a sea of stars

Hide

by *Diana Webb*, United Kingdom

That longing to escape."It's for your own good we have to keep you here," they say. The constant tramping up and down the corridor. Within the dormitory, a bed enclosed by curtains draws her constantly to plumb the well of darkness, recollect . . .

far out
among waves of barley
one scarlet poppy

*

* * *

* *

Popcorn, or Notes for a Fairy Tale

by **Bob Lucky**, China

My wife, having had to fight the traffic, returns late from a conference in Shanghai and I make some popcorn. Our son crawls out of his lair to share in the feast while she tells us all about technology in the classroom. We get to the bottom of the bowl and consider the unpopped kernels. I decide to pop some more and our son tells us why he thought the school dance last week was a flop. We get to the bottom of the second bowl and I suggest a third. It's all about trebling, I explain, like in a fairy tale. But no one is interested in a third bowl and we all drift away to our private happily-ever-afters.

the patter of rain
rereading Goldilocks
in my own bed

Amos

by *Mark F. Harris*, New Jersey

The summer I worked with Amos at the vineyard on Orcutt Road I stayed at my aunt and uncle's house. Amos lived by the creek bed, in an old camper up on cinderblocks. "If the Border Patrol comes by, say, '*no comprendo*,'" my uncle told me; "you'll get a free ride to Tijuana." Amos thought that was funny; thinking about me leaving put him in a good mood. I remember him in his doorway at dawn, reaching down with sunburned arms to put a fried egg and Tabasco sauce on a step for the dog. Around back—a barrel full of crushed beer cans, and a dirt bathtub lined with plastic trash bags. Sometimes he dreamed about 'Nam, and woke up yelling. Afterward, he gave Ed the Indian a hard time, or got in fights in the valley bars.

He's gone now. My uncle said he went to Oklahoma to help out on his family's farm. Now that we're in another war, I think about Amos, the way he got quiet sometimes, his hands tending the plants but remembering other actions.

Tracking a hawk
into the sun—
flame in a tin lantern

* *

* *

* *

* *

Essays

To Contest or Not to Contest

by *Bob Lucky*, China

I'm feeling inadequate this morning, a little down. The birds are singing but no haiku springs to mind. I suppose I could write a tanka instead of this message to you, but it's too late. The pull of verbosity has won and I'm going with the flow, even if it's down the drain.

I've spent the last week reading all the haiku and tanka journals and publications that piled up over the summer in my absence, as well as online publications that I can't manage to get to when I'm traveling. I have to say, we short-form poets are an accomplished lot. If the brief bios are any indication, most of us have won more prizes and contests than Idi Amin had medals. Not all of us. I haven't.

Before you turn the page, let me assure you this is not a self-pity piece. I have no illusions as to my abilities as a poet. One reason I haven't won many prizes or contests is that most of what I write is merely okay. It shows an understanding of the craft but the need for practice. (And many of the pieces I send out thinking are near masterpieces look pretty meager in print surrounded by much better work.)

I also haven't won a lot of contests because I rarely participate. There are several reasons for this, a lack of contests not being one of them. First of all, there is the impracticality of the process for me. When I began seriously attempting to publish my short-form poetry a couple of years ago, I at last had a reason to love the internet. I was living abroad, in Bahrain, and going to the post office and dealing with IRCs and weighing this then that and licking envelope flaps and stamps and thinking of that scene in *Seinfeld* in which George's fiancée dies from sealing wedding invitations got to be too much. When I moved

to Thailand, I vowed only to submit to journals that accepted online submissions. I've been faithful to that vow, which is why, well, at least partially why, none of my work has appeared in a couple of reputable publications or crossed the desk of a contest judge in a postmarked envelope with the stamps peeling off at the corners.

Then there's the question of money. I don't begrudge anyone a reading fee, it's just that sending money, cash (stupid, I know) or check, from China, where I live now, is a bit like playing a slot machine. One is always warned that he sends cash at his own risk. In China, it is a guaranteed loss, or a donation to a needy postal worker if you try to look on the bright side. I can't find my checkbook most of the time, and 25% of the time the check I send never arrives. Most expatriate Brits and Aussies I know don't even have checkbooks, unless they are of a certain age. They've gone electronic, plastic. Which deepens the mystery of why Australian and British publications view PayPal with suspicion and fear. If I can use it, anyone can.

And another thing . . . What's with the 3x5 note cards? I haven't seen a note card since I went through my late grandmother's recipe collection. I exaggerate, but only slightly. Just because you have a horse doesn't mean you have to ride it to school.

Having said all that, I'll confess to having entered a few contests, all of which accepted online submissions and required no reading or entry fee. In one, my haiku was commended. Yes, it felt good, but then all those other contests beckoned, and the next thing I knew I wasn't writing poetry, I was manufacturing themed pieces about frogs or trees or erotic moments (or if I was really inspired I might capture that moment in nature when frogs get it on in the trees). The feeling I now have toward contests is similar to my love-hate relationship to taking photographs. If you give yourself over to finding that perfect shot, you miss all the wonderful imperfection around you.



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Unsung Heroes

And the Question of Zen in Haiku Poetry: Part Two

by *Mankh* (Walter E. Harris III), New York

Another unsung haiku hero is Zen Master *Soen Nakagawa* (1907-1984). He employed spontaneous and unorthodox teaching methods—for example, having a “tea ceremony” using styrofoam cups and instant coffee! (Are we not sometimes too attached to form and thus miss the spirit of the moment?!)

Discovering a Soen haiku on a Zen-quotes calendar led me to websearch, then to his marvelous book *Endless Vow: The Zen Path of Soen Nakagawa* (Shambala, 1996). Soen’s haiku have a depth and spiritual connection I often find missing in modern, even classical, haiku. While his poems may occasionally lack surprise and descriptiveness, they make up for it with simplicity and insight.

Young ox
plodding home
eternal spring

Then again, he can surprise, as Zen Masters are wont to do. One of Soen’s own favorites:

Aiming my penis
out over the steppes
awoken from a nap

To this he adds, “The word penis had never been used before in a haiku, and I was criticized for exposing such a thing! But a penis is just a penis. Nowadays there is confusion regarding sex. But in truth, sexual energy, like digestive energy, is God’s fine energy, Buddha’s energy, cosmic energy.” While I presume Soen’s statement is accurate, some have at least hinted. For example, in *The Classic Tradition of Classic Haiku*, *Faubion Bowers* footnotes a haiku by Nishiyama Sôin (1605-1682) stating: “*Tsuki idete* can also be interpreted as a pun for an erection.”

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From the Preface to *Endless Vow*: “Zen Master Soen Nakagawa was a key figure in the transmission of Zen Buddhism from Japan to the Western world. As abbot of the historic Ryutaku monastery, he trained monks and lay practitioners. Among them were Robert Aitken and Philip Kapleau Soen Roshi [Roshi is Japanese for Zen Master] had a major impact upon Paul Reps, Maurine Stuart, Peter Mathiesen, Louis Nordstrom, Charlotte Joko Beck . . .” and others.

Endless Vow is a combination haiku and haibun autobiography, plus biography (46-page introductory “A Portrait of Soen” by Eido Tai Shimano), and includes photos, plus Soen’s marvelous brush calligraphy with titles such as “Samadhi,” “Spiritual Interrelationship Mandala,” “True Man without Rank,” and “Let True Dharma Continue.” Each haiku has the Japanese, plus phonetic pronunciation in English. One of my favorites is:

Endless is my vow
under the azure sky
boundless autumn

Portraying detail is a specialty of haiku poets, yet how often can we condense the immeasurable in a graspable fashion?

After the Preface and Portrait, the Contents are, Part One: Ascetic Practice, 1931-1949; Part Two: Early Years as Abbot, 1951-1959; Part Three: Teaching in the West, 1959-1972; Part Four: Increasing Seclusion, 1973-1984; Postscript: “Where Is The Master?” by Roko Sherry Chayat; Chronology; and Glossary. Of Soen as a teacher and Zen Master, *Eido Tai Shimano* writes in the introductory Portrait—“he opened his students’ eyes to the astonishing power of each moment.” A very haiku-like approach, indeed.

In the new zendo
all-pervading
fragrant breeze

This reads like a mirror reflection of Bashō’s old frogpond and new splash.

If your interest in haiku and related arts also reaches out (or in) to Zen, Tao, and a more philosophical and spiritual approach, Soen's work and *Endless Vow* provide a wonderful opportunity to learn of how a spiritual path and artistic bent can intertwine.

In the Spring/Summer issue, 32:2, the last of this three-part series will examine the religious and spiritual practices of the classical haiku Masters.

* * *

**Aural Experience: Sound and Rhythm in the Haiku of
Nicholas A. Virgilio**
by *John W. Sexton*, Ireland

These days Nicholas Virgilio is celebrated for two haiku in particular, both of which, it is universally agreed, helped change the way in which haiku was practiced.

Lily:

out of the water . . .
out of itself

Bass

picking bugs
off the moon

These often-anthologized poems demonstrated how spare haiku could be, and the techniques were imitated and perfected by those many haiku poets who followed. In recent years, however, much else of Virgilio's work has been neglected, and the mass of it is never reprinted, with the regular exception perhaps of half a dozen pieces. The current, and apparently widespread view amongst many editors, is that the bulk of Virgilio's haiku lack subtlety to their message and are long and over-wordy in comparison to today's practice. On the surface it is hard to disagree with this view, and many admirers of Virgilio find his body of work sadly and largely disdained as some outdated fossil.

Although Virgilio is remembered for these two haiku, both being lean and direct in their execution, the larger corpus of

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his haiku is wordier, often demonstrative of both rhythm and rhyme, and other aural effects nowadays deemed self-consciously poetic. Within some schools of thought, obvious musicality in haiku is generally considered as inappropriate to contemporary practice.

The following brief examination of some of Virgilio's haiku is to demonstrate that many function, to this writer's mind at least, as capsule melodies, and to pose the question: is it really necessary to reject overt music in haiku in order to maintain its integrity and purity of form?

Virgilio's first appearance in *American Haiku*, 1963, was with a poem obvious in its rhythm and rhyme:

Spring wind frees
the full moon tangled
in leafless trees

But rhyme and rhythm were something he retained throughout his haiku career, deepening the sophistication of its practice as he progressed as a poet:

one wild apple
ripples the rain puddle:
evening sun

The combination of those fluid consonants (the conjoined *ps*, *ds* and *ls*) gives us a tonal rippling that's physically palpable. Although the word *ripple* is said only once, the reader experiences three rippings, in the words *apple*, *ripples*, *puddle*. Interesting, also, is how the poem begins and ends on the same resonantly hard consonant of the *en* sound; like something being struck, although in this case water. This effect is further added to by the placement of that same hard consonant towards the end of the middle line. The governance of speed is such that the spacing of all those intermediary open vowels allows a breathing between each rippling. Such balanced chiming as occurs in this haiku reveals beyond any doubt an ear sensitive to tonal effect.

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A similar effect of sound, but far more subtle, is achieved in

the knifegrinder's bell
fades in the afternoon heat:
cicada

The word *bell* is embedded, lost almost, between *knifegrinder* and *afternoon heat*. Tonal distance, the time it takes for the word *bell* to appear and then be left behind, adds to the effect of sound-loss described in the haiku. And that final word, *cicada*, with its soft echoic qualities, accentuates the idea of a fading bell. All this works side by side with the actual expressed meaning of the poem: a bell's sound fades in the afternoon heat, while the cicada resonates, becomes the new chiming.

always returning
to the turd on the tombstone:
cemetery flies

In this we observe not just the obvious alliteration of *turd* and *tombstone*, but also the wonderfully balanced ticking of those *t*-sounds in the first and final lines. Because of the preceding weak stresses the four initial *t*-sounds in *returning*, *turd*, *tombstone* and *cemetery* are equally placed, with *tombstone* containing that extra, riding *t*.

In many current haiku schools of thought such overt rhythmic and alliterative usage is largely frowned upon. This following haiku in particular would be very easy to dismiss by today's standards of composition, because it contains very obvious alliteration and rhyme:

her photograph fades:
the widower at the window
shadows the torn shade

A further negative would be that it's 5-7-5. (I'm making an educated guess here that Virgilio intended the pronunciation of *widower* to be elided, otherwise the haiku becomes hyper-

syllabic.) However, at what point can we safely discard poetic effect in any body of poetics?

Looking again at this haiku we cannot but fail to be aware of its atmospheric resonance. Because of the very language employed, the very obviously poetic devices, and the retarded speed in which it's delivered, the slow motion, the slurring caused by that alliteration, this haiku is haunted by its central image. And as we read it we are as haunted by that dead woman as the widower is.

Hauntings were something that Virgilio was quite good at, and they reappear throughout his work. Little wonder, really, for he was haunted himself:

my dead brother . . .
hearing his laugh
in my laughter

A perfect senryu, I would venture, managing to be both bitter and joyous in the one breath. This is a poem that wouldn't be remiss in any contemporary haiku journal, but let us not ignore the fact that it contains both rhyme and repetition, some of the things we've learnt in our apprenticeships to discard. The trick of the craft, however, is to know when it's right to retain something. In structure this particular senryu is syllabically symmetrical, being 4-4-4, and its stresses are fairly regular. And that symmetry, I would argue, helps to convey the shock that's experienced by the reader who starts with an encounter of death and ends with the sound of laughter. The effect is accentuated because the poem is confined in such a tight, enclosed box.

The death of Virgilio's younger brother in Viet Nam had a profound consequence on his work. His poetry became darker, nature appeared less innocent.

beneath the coffin
at the edge of the open grave:
the crushed young grass

Haiku Society of America

Metaphor is inescapable here, yet the metaphor is strengthened by the sounds running through the poem: *beneath the coffin is soft*, insidious; and that final line, *the crushed young grass* is sibilant, oozing betrayal.

Control of speed, a timed steering of his poetry, is evident in yet another of his elegies to his lost brother:

my dead brother . . .
wearing his gloves and boots
I step into deep snow

All poems end where they end, as do all sentences, all things. But this haiku doesn't merely end. It is end-stopped. And it stops us up. The rhythm of the second line is such that it delivers itself quickly to the reader, yet with *step* and *deep* we are held up, until finally, with the word *snow*, the poem literally sinks. In reading the final line we take those steps, interpenetrate with Virgilio's stopping.

Language not only has meaning, not only rhythm, but its sounds often suggest movement, for many words mimic what they describe.

rising and falling . . .
a blanket of blackbirds feeds
on the snowy slope

Here the alliteration, Virgilio's favourite effect, as well as the rhythm, caused by the groupings of weak and strong stresses, suggests movement, covering, and finally (with *snowy slope*) soft, temporary ground. In this haiku everything is in motion, yet Virgilio manages to end on an image of stillness, without, it should be said, actually stating that anything has stopped.

Not all of his haiku were presented in three lines, but his usage of devices was, admittedly, much the same throughout most of his work:

her shadow shaving the hair from its legs: the heat

The most common criticism aimed at him, however, is that his devices can be obvious, and the haiku compromised as a result:

approaching autumn:
the warehouse watchdog's bark
weakens in the wind

If the above haiku were presented at a poetry workshop in these more sophisticated times, it would probably be edited mercilessly. The alliteration would more than likely be toned down, if not eradicated completely. That would be a pity, for we would be depriving ourselves of a small song. Virgilio's work is peppered with such songs, all following a tradition of haiku practice that in times gone by was considered quite normal. In the attempt to objectify the capturing of the haiku moment such approaches as Virgilio's were abandoned. In our age, it seems, we see no need to return to them.

In his introduction to Virgilio's *Selected Haiku* (1988), **Rod Willmot** picks out the above haiku to point up how the alliterative *w* suggests the *woof* of the barking dog, but also (Willmot falling prone to alliteration himself) how it further suggests "something weak and whining" about the creature in question. None of this can be denied, and there is an innocent and indulgent pleasure in enjoying the effects of sound in this wonderful little poem. The same pleasure we find in most popular song and verse. Which brings us to another of Virgilio's perceived sins: his facility of craft, his ease of accessibility to a general readership.

Rod Willmot quotes a later, and much sharper haiku that uses similar effect:

barking its breath
into the rat-hole:
bitter cold

Haiku Society of America

As Willmot, and not fancifully I think, points out, the repeated alliterative *b* here also denotes a snapping bark. Here we have a haiku that wouldn't be out of place in a modern journal, but one that still utilizes the poetic effect and devices of sound.

Of course, one must not forget that Virgilio also experimented with minimalism, which he could employ quite effectively for political satire:

spentagon
pentagony
repentagon

or as an expression of transformation, as in:

Hiroshimagined

And even in minimalism he did not abandon the roots of haiku as nature poem:

nowl

However, it is neither in such minimalism, nor in the tight constructions of the anthology favourites, that Virgilio's work typically resides, but in the small songs, the one-verse alliterative hymns to nature and to experience, his tiny sculptures of sound and atmosphere. It is in these that we find his true legacy.

the first snowfall:
down the cellar staircase
my father calls



So:ba: Part Two

by *Jim Kacian*, Virginia

Editor's Note: Part One ends with the question, "But if it's so good, why did it disappear? ("It" refers to poetic conceits such as the one found in a haiku by *Teishitsu* (1609-1673): coolness / condensing in the air— / the midnight moon.)

The truth is, it hasn't—there are thousands of poems written like this every year, and some of them find their way into print:

The mystery is:
here is the fork in the road,
but which way is up?

William Warriner, Corporate Haiku

You may *prefer* one or another of these, but the impulse, and the level of accomplishment, is about the same. It's apparent both poets can count, both are capable of creating a bit of suspense, both reach a level of achievement. And certainly both are better than what we usually get from absolute beginners:

When dawn is breaking
rustic leaves gusting in the wind
the pumpkin shivers.

Ron Dawson, A Cache of Haiku

This is not meant to be an indictment of Ron Dawson or his poetry: we all start somewhere. However, Mr. Dawson has had the bad advice or judgment to put a sizeable portion of his early work in print, and so has needlessly exposed himself to a certain amount of criticism. That's what happens when we send our children out into the cold, unfeeling world. But if he wants to, if he reads and studies and practices, Mr. Dawson will get better. And how will he get better? He will acquire *ba*. I could be wrong, but my assumption is that neither Ms.

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Coates nor Mr. Warriner has any interest in getting any better. As we all know, improvement is not an instantaneous process, nor is it automatic, no matter how much we desire it. Consider this one:

ara nani tomo na ya kinô wa sugite fukutojiru

well, nothing's happened
and yesterday has come and gone—
fugu soup

For those of you who don't know, fugu, what we call blowfish, is a Japanese delicacy which, if not properly prepared, can paralyze and kill the eater. Isn't the playfulness of this poem very like that of Teishitsu and Warriner? We can easily imagine the poet, probably a young man, eating fugu on a dare, and now, safely on the other side of yesterday, watch him crow a bit—see, I did it. But bravado aside, nothing about the poem invites deeper reflection: it's just a joke. And who is the author of this poem?

Yes, it's *Bashô*, but before he became Bashô This poem originates from around 1678, when he was 34, so the poet was no newbie at this point: he had been studying for seven years with his master Soîn in Edo, was considered by this point a rising star of the Danrin school, and had even taken on Sampû and Kikaku as students. Yet it's easy to identify this as a relatively immature effort. Compare it with this:

kareeda ni karasu no tomarikeri aki no kure

on a withered branch
a crow has settled—
autumn evening

It's not just the somberness of the content that has changed here—everything's different, not least the poet himself. This poem, written in 1680, only two years later, suggests what a great distance Bashô has come.

This movement from amusement to literature is the reason why we're here today. If haiku had remained the jokey plaything it was prior to Bashō, then it would have had its fifteen minutes and disappeared, just as the purveyors of contemporary trash haiku will have their populist fling and then we will hear no more of them. This seems fitting: very little has actually been accomplished in these poems, and in fact, if any of us turned our minds to it, I'm sure we would have no difficulty writing, in the space of an hour or two, quite a good-sized book of trash haiku on virtually any subject we might think of. And perhaps we ought—perhaps we should have a workshop on Commercial Haiku, brainstorm a topic, and let fly. It might even be fun. But even if we did that, it wouldn't compel us to change our routines, endure the hardships of travel, perhaps take a day off from work without pay, to gather and discuss them. Why bother?

Yet here we are, and it's Bashō's fault, Bashō and his followers and their followers and the translators and the critics and theorists and the early practitioners and our fellow poets—it's all our own fault. Since we recognized the power of *ba* and featured it in our poems, we have made something significant of it, something more than a nonce poetry. It may not make us rich or famous, but it has something that keeps calling to us, and we answer.

Since *ba* has had such a powerful effect on our lives, it's worth having a look at how it has come to us here in the west. It's one thing for Bashō to adapt a local custom, but quite another for a completely different culture to identify and adopt such a foreign concept.

Japan was a closed culture for a very long time, so we in the West knew nothing of haiku (or its predecessors) for its first several centuries. Only after the so-called "opening" of the islands by Commodore Perry in 1853 did we catch a glimmer of what kinds of things were happening there, and even then there were few non-Japanese who could speak the language and had the wherewithal to interpret what they

were witnessing. And it was these very few people, largely a group of artists and intellectuals from Boston, who were responsible for creating the cult of Japonisme that emerged. These people—Ernest Fenelosa, Edward S. Morse, Stuart Bigelow and others—were the interpreters of the East for the first fifty years of our contact with it, and we came to view it largely through their eyes. As you might imagine, simply cataloging the range of activities and norms of another culture would be a staggering achievement—opining on their value is something else again.

Haiku was an art wholly endemic to Japan, which made its interpretation all the more difficult. Nevertheless, as early as 1869, or a mere 16 years after Commodore Perry's invasion, the first non-Japanese book of haiku appeared—in Bulgarian! It was, of course, a book of translations of original Japanese poems. But consider the challenge—even if you get the words right, what do they mean together? And even if we catch the literal and idiomatic meaning, how do we discover the poetic sense?

Isn't this just like our own first encounters with haiku? But with this important difference—when we encounter something unknown to us, we have the resources to learn more. The earliest writers and translators, on the other hand, had either to ask the Japanese, or make the best guesses of which they were capable, given their own understandings and backgrounds—that is, given their own *ba*. This accounts for the interesting if wrong-headed assumptions and dictums we find from this period, such as *Basil Hall Chamberlain's* referring to haiku as a “poetical epigram”. But for the first time non-Japanese could begin to fathom what haiku poets had been working at for those many centuries. Not until Lafcadio Hearn took up residence in Japan in the 1890s was thoughtful and balanced consideration given to what had been attempted, and even then Hearn was no specialist (his interest was primarily folk song). It was another decade before other scholars, Japanese and outsiders, began publishing their considerations of what haiku were.

Simultaneously while exporting of their own culture, the Japanese were also importing Western culture at a great rate. In fact, there was real concern in the 1920s that the Japanese might jettison their entire way of life for a Western mode of being, and it was due at least in part to those Boston intellectuals that some of the old ways were maintained and revalued in Japan. Amongst the ideas that gained a foothold in Japanese culture at this time were a new foundation for commerce, a familiarity with Western philosophical dualism, and an acceptance of Western-style arts, especially painting and literature. Some of the modes of the day imported wholesale into Japanese discourse included naturalism, surrealism and dada.

This free-market cultural exchange has had an enormous impact on, among many other things, the history of haiku in the west. I don't mean simply that haiku was coaxed out of its indigenous home to be interpreted by Lafcadio Hearn, revisioned by Ezra Pound and contextualized by R. H. Blyth, though these things are extremely important. Even beyond that, something was going on in haiku in Japan that was unprecedented and which has never been repeated, at precisely the moment we began taking it on board here.

As we recollect, Bashō elevated haiku in the seventeenth century to a literary art. It remained in good health for a time, as his disciples kept the practice alive and taught others well. But after a time, and inevitably, haiku declined, returning again to wordplay and slickness of treatment as opposed to the depths of emotion and allusion it had come to feature at its zenith. There were two revivals of haiku as high art, each centering on the work and personality of a particular master of the art, first Buson (flourished 1760) and then Issa (flourished 1810), but neither created the widespread systematic schooling that Bashō had managed, and so haiku again and quickly slipped into a retrograde condition. It was in this state when Perry sailed into Tokyo harbor.

But through an unbelievable piece of bad luck, all this happened at exactly the time that Japanese haiku was going through

a remarkable reevaluation, led by a young ambitious poet: Masaoka Shiki. Shiki was very interested in the cross-cultural exchange that had come to Japan. His first love was that ancient and honorable Japanese sport—baseball. He was studying the English language as early as high school. And he had a taste for Western art, particularly representational painting, which was to have a marked effect on his own opinions of what constituted good art. And, of course, he was deadly serious about haiku.

And we know the result: Shiki retooled the moribund haiku into an objectivist art, replete with a model of composition (*shasei*), and a reevaluation of the pantheon (Buson became his exemplar, replacing the subjective and heterodox Bashō). Or, to put it in the terms of this conference: he jettisoned the ethos of 400 years of haiku for something like the philosophy of the Hudson River School. Shiki changed the foundation of haiku by changing its *ba*.

Readers will discover the consequences in the Spring/Summer issue, 32:2, which will feature part three of this series of four.



Reviewed

Barlow, J. & Paul, M. *Wing Beats: British Birds in Haiku.* Foreword by S. Moss; illustrated by S. Gray. Liverpool: Snapshot Press, 2008, 320 pp., perfect hardbound. ISBN 978-1-903543-24-5, 40 USD postpaid. <www.wingbeats.co.uk>

by *Carole MacRury*, Washington

Based on my deep respect for the editorial taste consistently demonstrated by Snapshot Press editor, John Barlow, and because of the skill and verbal dexterity of his own poetry and that of the poets he publishes, I wasted no time in ordering my copy of *Wing Beats* as soon as it was announced. I will admit to having the tiniest of misgivings as to whether a book devoted entirely to bird haiku could maintain my interest. It was a needless worry.

At the least, these poems offer an intimate look at the particular behaviors and traits of birds in their natural environment and, at the most, they soar beyond the bird into the ethereal; that indefinable moment in haiku when the essence of something deeper, something shared, is felt.

More than half of the 323 haiku are written by the editors, but the book also includes the works of 34 other poets culled from over 3000 submissions. The skills of these poets more than meet the high standards of the editors. For example, the following two haiku, through aural and visual suggestion bring us the wing beats of two swans and the listening found in the silence between man and bird.

summer clouds—
two swans passing
beat for beat

John Crook

keeping silence
each tilt
of the sparrow's head

Keith J. Coleman

Haiku Society of America

All of the haiku are based on actual experience to ensure an authentic record of wild bird activities. However, many of the poems move beyond simple bird behavior into human nature as well. I particularly enjoyed the euphony of these two poems through their effective use of alliteration and onomatopoeia.

pipit song . . .
the cyclist's
creak of breaks

Keith J. Coleman

sick in the dark—
a twitter from inside
the martin's nest

David Cobb

Occasionally I came across words that may be more familiar to British readers, but this fact rarely interfered with my reading of the poem. And in fact, a quick glance at a dictionary informed me that the breakwater that plunges into the ocean outside my window is properly called a "groyne." And a "mere" (small lake or pond) is not too difficult to deduce within the context of the poem—especially to those who are familiar with *Tennyson's* line, "sometimes on lonely mountain-meres / I find a magic bark." I believe most writers appreciate discovering new words.

groyne's end:
a pair of cormorants
hang out their wings

Matthew Paul

darkening mere—
a heron coils its neck
the last half inch

David Cobb

Here are two wonderful exceptions to the standard three line haiku:

down
the
leafless
beech
the
voice
of
a
nuthatch

teals whistle over the seawall long black freighters

Matthew Paul

Poets new to haiku are often told that haiku uses ordinary language. But, the poetry in *Wing Beats* reminds us that it's not ordinary language but the best language that is required to transcend the ordinary into the extraordinary. Here are a few personal favorites that do just that.

through the curls
of a crow's feet . . .
deepening twilight

daylight fading. . .
a curlew's cry
lengthens the hill

John Barlow

stalking. . .
bubbles gather
around a heron's shin

Caroline Gourlay

starlings
twist through starlings . . .
distant rain

Keith J. Coleman

John Barlow

Not to be rushed is the foreword by Stephen Moss and the introduction by John Barlow and Matthew Paul. Both will appeal to poets and non-poets as well as bird-watchers worldwide. The foreword offers insights into our love of birds through the history of British verse and the introduction shows the essential qualities that comprise the best of Western haiku while keeping to the spirit of its Japanese origin. The appendices found at the back of the book offer a wealth of detail for those wishing to learn more about haiku and/or birds through scientific names, and/or the seasonal aspect of haiku both in Britain and Japan.

Snapshot Press has once again lived up to its reputation of bringing to the market books not only tasteful in design but with contents that rise to the level of excellence found in all Snapshot Press publications. This book would make a unique and special gift to all who appreciate the joy of discovery and shared experience with the natural world.

Fabre, G. *Because of a Seagull*. Dublin: The Fishing Cat Press, 2005, 70 pp., perfect softbound. ISBN 0-9551071-0-5. 15.00 USD postpaid <www.haikuspirit.org>

**In Issa's and Santoka's Footsteps:
Gilles Fabre's Way of Haiku**

By *Bruce Ross*, Maine

I recently met Gilles Fabre in Dublin where in a few hours after landing I was to do a reading before the haiku community and answer their questions. That I had opened a sports wound just before takeoff in the US and was jet-lagged, hungry, taped up, and on crutches in Dublin made no difference. Gilles secured a wheelchair and made the event painless for me. I could see how, in a broader (compassionate) sense, he was attracted to Issa.

In correspondence he noted he discovered haiku from a French anthology and picked out Issa for his "lightness and simplicity." Gilles, in the introduction to this volume, accordingly calls haiku a "shortcut to the heart of Nature and our everyday life." For him the "Way of Haiku is a way of life" in which "every living being that may cross our path is important and worthy of our compassionate care and humble empathy." Yet, there is humor in it too!

Look, cat—
your new neighbors:
they have a dog!

Let me pick you off
the middle of the road
wandering snail

Take care, fat fly,
this reading room
has carnivorous plants

This heartfelt tenderness and homage to Issa extends to our everyday lives where "every moment and experience we go through in our life is meaningful." He also noted in corres-

Frogpond 32:1

pondence that Santoka is his second most favored haiku poet because he “. . . can extract and single out any small act/action in daily life and show the poetical side of any banal thing we may do in a day” Santoka’s existential starkness as responded to by Gilles in his poetic diary of life is, however, softened by compassion and humor.

After mass
the priest kneels again
to lock the church door

Laughing with my mother—
I hold the hands
of her terminally ill body

In this world
where people kill people
for the first time I kiss my son

Yet, beyond these poetic insights into life, there is a sensibility that is able to be surprised by a cosmic synchronicity that is almost magical, sometimes in a senryu-like ordinariness, sometimes in a delicate opening of awareness of the less-than-ordinary, *wabi* taken to another mode of feeling.

Evening shower—
in the pub,
I find an umbrella

These books
I read years ago:
they’re bending the shelves

In the old iron pot
morning tea
reheated by midday sun

Because of a Seagull is a collection of open-hearted, insightful sensibility and one hopes to share more of Gilles’ “sketching of a special moment” gleaned from his all but effortless Way of Haiku.

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Briefly Reviewed

by *George Swede* (Ontario)

Brooks, R., Evans, E., Bearce, R., & McLay, M. (eds.). *Millikin University Haiku Anthology*. Decatur, IL: Bronze Man Books, 2008, 192 pp., perfect softbound, 5.5 x 8.5. ISBN 978-0-9787441-6-8, 27.50 USD postpaid <www.bronzemanbooks.com>. This student anthology is the best I've ever read and testimony to the program of haiku studies that Randy Brooks has run at Millikin University in Illinois since 1999. It also shows his egalitarian outlook insofar as the co-editors are his former students: Emily Evans and Rick Bearce graduated in 2005 and 2008 and Melanie McLay plans to graduate this spring. The selection process was rigorous with the editors reading all the haiku ever written by Millikin students and nominating 1,800 for possible inclusion. Then these haiku were rendered anonymous and the editors gave themselves one year to reach unanimous agreement about each of the included 260 or so haiku, including three by Brooks. Here are examples from the three student editors: *pulling stamens / off the Easter lilies / we don't talk anymore* (**Evans**); *sunlit windowsill / light spreading / through the bottles* (**Bearce**); *peeking through / tiny holes — / first confession* (**McLay**). This anthology should be in the library of every university creative writing program.

Donegan, P. (ed.). *Haiku Mind: 108 Poems to Cultivate Awareness & Open Your Heart*. Boston: Shambhala, 2008, 231 pp., perfect hardbound, 5 x 8. ISBN 978-1-59030-579-9, 18 USD <www.shambhala.com>. For decades, senior meditation teacher, writer and editor Patricia Donegan has combined a search for enlightenment with the practice of writing haiku. Her ultimate goal is to see the everyday world with a "haiku mind," that is, "to live with more clarity, compassion and peace." This motivation has resulted in a number of books, including this one. The number in the title is part of Buddhist thought which states that "there are 108 difficulties to overcome in order to become awakened." As the basis for reflec-

ion about each difficulty, Donegan has chosen a haiku from 108 North American and Japanese poets. Thus, the book is part haiku anthology and part prose contemplation. To illustrate, one of the difficulties is “vulnerability” and Donegan uses this haiku by *Hisajo Sugita* as a springboard for a brief, but compelling meditation on the topic: *moonlight— / through thin clothes / to naked skin*. Another difficulty is “perspective” and she uses this haiku by *William J. Higginson* to launch her thoughts on how we can see things in multiple ways: *holding the water, / held by it— / the dark mud*. Donegan’s meditations not only make the tenets of Buddhism interesting reading, but also give valuable insights into each of the 108 haiku.

Dale, M. & Moldovan, V. *Fragrance of Lime: Renga Poems*. Bucharest: Editura Făt-Frumos, 2008, 104 pp. , perfect softbound, 5.5 x 8. ISBN 973-552-85, No price. Contact Magdalena Dale <dale_magda@yahoo.com>. For collaborative writing devotees with an interest in linguistics, this is an interesting title featuring a variety of renga styles in both Romanian, the native language of the two poets, and English: one in 24 stanzas; four in 36 stanzas (*kasen*); one in 12 stanzas (*junicho*); three rengay; and six tan renga. Also included is one haiku sequence (eight stanzas) by Moldovan and a seven stanza *gunsaku* by Dale. The two poets, however, should have asked for a fluent English speaker to help them with their translations. Errors such as these abound: *Light day like / at the birds canteen / winter moon (Dale)*; and *The first snowfall: / a deep silence / get down of sky (Moldovan)*. Yet such errors are sometimes compensated for by arresting lines in perfect English: *On the old bench / two lovers lit by / lime blossoms (Dale)*; *A lime leaf / instead of a bookmark . . . / the old love story (Moldovan)*.

Dale, M., Ruse, A., & Văceanu, L. (eds.). *Shades in Light: Haibun Anthology*. Constanta, Romania: Editura Boldaș 2008, 96 pp., perfect softbound, 6 x 8. ISBN 978-973-88626-4-7, No price. Contact M. Dale <dale_magda@yahoo.com>. In his introduction, *Vasile Moldovan* states that Romanian interest in the haibun surfaced in 1991 as a result of translations

of Bashō's travel journals, first by Florin Vasiliu and later by Aurel Rău. The best 27 haibun written since that time are collected in this anthology, both in the original Romanian and in English translation. Also included are five others in original English with Romanian translations: two from the U.S., two from India and one from Australia. Of the 32 haibun, 27 fit on one page or less and the remaining five range from two to three pages. The number of haiku range from one to three. While a welcome addition to the growing body of haibun literature, most of the English versions of the Romanian haibun have to be read beyond the awkward English translations to see that they are good, if not excellent.

Findlay, M. *Empty Boathouse*. (Photos by the author; book design by S. K. Hamilton). Portsmouth, NH: Single Island Press, 2008, unpag., perfect hardbound, 7 x 7. ISBN 0-9740895-3-2, 43 USD postpaid <haikumuse.com>. The eye-fetching front cover photo of an empty boathouse is only the start of a pleasurable experience turning the inside pages with their 15 photos (plus two more on the back cover and flap), almost all of which were taken from the author's family albums. The 32 haiku (counting one on the back cover flap) complement the photos perfectly: *in the dappled shade / the man and rake are one — / basket of old leaves // filaments of light / through weathered slats / empty boathouse*. Overall, a wonderful evocation of a family's long-ago summer retreat.

Grayson, D. (ed.). *Moonlight Changing Direction*. Oakland, CA: Two Autumns Press, 2008, 32 pp., saddlestapled, 5.5 x 8.5. No ISBN, No price. Contact Fay Aoyagi <faycom@earthlink.net>. Four well-known poets are the contributors to this brief anthology produced by the Haiku Poets of Northern California: Fay Aoyagi, Christopher Herold, John Stevenson and Billie Wilson. As expected, the 12 haiku representing each are of high quality: *cauliflower — / another day without / an adventure (Aoyagi)*; *end of a journey / back onto the road the mud / we scraped from our soles (Herold)*; *autumn wind / the leaves are going / where I'm going (Stevenson)*; *choosing a melon — / a song so old / I forget why I cry (Wilson)*.

Hall, C. *In and Out of Shadow*. Lufkin, TX: True Vine Press, 2008, 12 pp. saddlestapled, 4 x 6. No ISBN. 5 USD <truevinepress@gmail.com> or <truevinepress.blogspot.com>. This small collection won an autumn-themed mini-chapbook competition with 57 entries. The 12 pieces are what we have come to expect from one of today's premier haiku poets: *dark comes early now— / we speak of the children / we didn't have*.

Mankh. (ed.). *2009 Haiku and Brush Calligraphy Calendar*. New York: Allbook Books, 2008, 26 pp. saddlestapled, 8.5 x 11. No ISBN, No price <mankh@allbooks-books.com>. It is a fun calendar for haiku aficionados as well as for those with an interest in visual art. Each month has a different calligraphic design, often with explanations for the various symbols involved, as well as from five to seven relevant haiku (plus five more on the back cover)—from a total of 34 contributors. To illustrate, March has calligraphy for spring and haiku such as these: *spring wind / teaching a child / to whistle (Bill Kenney)*; *early spring— / when the rain stops / I close the door (Lane Parker)*.

Morical, M. *Sharing Solitaire: Haiku and Related Poems*. Georgetown, KY: Finishing Line Press, 2008, 27 pp., saddlestapled, 5.5 x 8.5. ISBN 978-1-59924-326-9, 14 USD <www.finishinglinepress.com>. The “and Related Poems” in the title comes from the author's narrow view of haiku as bereft of metaphor, puns and irony. In fact all of the poems are haiku (and senryu, if we want to be picky). The 76 poems are arranged in four sections: Chishang, Taiwan, Manhattan, Wandering Home and Brooklyn. All contain work that suggest an emerging talent with a voice already distinct: *Morning melts / the snow on bare trees. / Your face is showing. // A brook feeds the stream. / One reflection trickles / into another*. Meriting comment is the layout—three poems at the top half of each page. This grouping suggests two things: that the three poems have something in common and that the white space at the bottom half is for the reader to reflect on what this might be. It works.

Rotella, A. *Looking for a Prince*. Baltimore: Modern English Tanka Press, 2008, 119 pp., perfect softbound, 6 x 9. ISBN: 978-0-9817-6915-8, 11.95 USD <www.modernenglishtanka-press.com>. One of the greats of English-language haiku poetry, Alexis Rotella is on a publishing binge after years of quiescence. This is her fifth collection in two years, although this title needs a qualifier—a shorter version with the same title was published in 1991. Picked at random, here are five vintage Rotellas: *Cow running to the slaughter house. // After confession / skipping home. // Keeping our distance, / both of us / pet the dog. // As the defendant / tells his side, / the witnesses tilt / to the right. // Pulling in / the moonlight / then spilling it out / again . . . / trombone man.* Apart from their resonance, these examples illustrate how Rotella varies the number of lines from one to five to generate maximum effect.

Savina, Z. *The House: Haiku*. (Translation by A. Petroy & M. Spetsioti; Drawings by Alexandros). Athens: 5+6 Editions, 2008, 163 pp., perfect softbound, 6 x 6. ISBN: None. No price listed. Contact the author <zoesavina@yahoo.com>. Known for being the editor of the ambitious international anthology *the leaves are back on the tree*, Zoe Savina has published a collection of her own haiku, both in the original Greek and in English translation. Some of the over 200 pieces in English work well: *icy cold night / our warm breaths / echo in its ears // that is how he died, / the way you violently / cut a poppy.* Most however, are marred: *Children and dogs / play in the park / . . . grass in a panic // empty port / and not one boat / —fish on guard.* Whether such work is due to poor translation or reflects the originals is hard to say. As for the book's design and layout, they are first rate.

Stone, A. *Cherry Blossom Suite: American Haiku*. Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2008, 103 pp., perfect softbound, 6 x 9, ISBN: 978-1-4343-8400-3. 14.99 USD <www.authorhouse.com>. Arlene Stone wrote the over 200 haiku, many of them in short sequences, during a trip to Japan and Korea in the spring of 2007. Most of the haiku lean toward the prosaic rather than the poetic—like observations needing to be trans-

Frogpond 32:1

formed later into more substantial prose or poetry: *At last the sky is blue / sun in dreary Seoul / my batteries renewed // swimming pool empty / karaoke bar silent / high season long past.* Only a few, like this one, reveal a true haiku moment: *Synthetic blossoms / suspend from light standards / in gray Kanazawa.*

Thériault, D. *The Postman's Round: A Novel.* (Translation by L. Hawke). Toronto: The Dundurn Group, 2008, 124 pp., perfect softbound, 5.5 x 8.5. ISBN 978-1-55002-785-3, 19.99 USD <www.dundurn.com>. In 2006, well-known French-Canadian writer Denis Thériault won the Japan-Canada Literary Award for the original French-language version of this novel. It deserves similar recognition for the superb English version by its award winning translator, not only for the riveting prose, but also for the over 70 haiku and over 20 tanka. While few of the poems would be accepted on their own for publication in *Frogpond*, taken together in the context of the story, they are superbly effective. Very briefly stated the tale involves an exchange of love haiku and tanka between a postman in Montreal and a woman in Guadeloupe who have never met. Here is a taste of their exchange: *Flower of your flesh / Within its tender petals / lies a hidden pearl // Venture into the / warmest part of me / Lash your body onto mine.*

Thomas, C. *notes from a poet's journal: haiku and tanka.* Self-Published, 2008, 142 pp., stringbound, 8.5 x 11. ISBN 0-9724396-1-7. 25 USD. Contact the author, 7866 Hogan Circle, Hemet, CA 92545. A substantial collection—the first two-thirds of the collection contains about 360 haiku and the last third 80 or so tanka. The haiku are divided into the four seasons and each contains gems such as these: *spring moon / the expectant mother / shifts her weight // cooling breeze / a poem comes out / from that hidden place // November afternoon; / kicking through the leaf pile / raking it up again // its slow walk / up the windowpane / a winter fly.*

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**Re:Readings of Issue 31:3
(& 31:2)**

Peter Yovu, Vermont, on a haiku by *Peggy Willis Lyles*, Georgia, that first appeared in 31:2 and again in 31:3 as winner of the Museum of Haiku Literature Award for the best haiku in 31:2.: *rain settles / some of the pollen / some of the plans*. (Yovu's comments were accidentally left out of the Re:Readings for 31:3. Since they were written before it was known that Lyles won the Award, Yovu shows himself to be prescient.)

Emerson remarked that "every word was once a poem." Each of us, no doubt, has favorite words that somehow seem sufficient unto themselves and satisfying as poetry. *Plum* comes to mind, as it comes to mouth, a ripeness needing no verb, no adjectival boost to make its flavor burst upon me. But in a media-saturated age, an age of speedy information and scant understanding, such an experience is rare, unless we are willing to pause, to stand under a tree, a word, or a idea until understanding overcomes us and we are able to grasp the roots of a thing by way of its branches. Of course haiku require such patience and willingness to linger, a truth I remember (as my senses come back to me) and am re-minded of (my thoughts refreshed) by Peggy Willis Lyles' poem. My mouth loves to say this poem as much as my mind loves to ponder it, and vice versa. I sense the *plan* in pollen, and the wayward, outward, forward nature of *pollen* in plan. Rain is a solvent. To be settled, to understand something, is to give up wishing it would go away and come again some other day. The truth, like it or not, is forever coming down.

One could say that the three nouns in this poem rejoice in each other's company — they stand alone, and by doing so give each other life. I cannot help but add, speaking of sound, that the word *rain*, to my inner ear, gives the impression of the *totality* of a rainfall, one thing composed of many; the stillness of motion. The French word *pluie*, as it happens, has more the

sound and feeling of individual drops, as they land. Lyles gets both the totality and the particular in her poem.

Joan Vistain, Illinois on a linked poem by *Michael Dylan Welch*, Washington: When I first saw "TEXT-KU" I thought, oh no, please ... not *Frogpond*! Then I saw the glossary and immediately identified with the line beneath it. I read Michael Dylan Welch's rendition with delight. How clever and entertaining. Just what we need in these TT (tumultuous times).

Roberta Beary, D.C., to the Editors of *Frogpond*: In issue 31:3 of frogpond, my haiku

rambling phonecall
i count the drinks
in her voice

is published as:

rambling phone call
I count the drinks
in her voice

You may be aware of a recent review of *The Unworn Necklace* which appeared in both *Modern Haiku* and the *Harvard Book Review* terming my use of the lowercase "i" an affectation. In the spirit of haiku's understatement and restraint, I have made a conscious choice to use only lowercase in my haiku. Your use of capitalization not only contradicts this long-held personal decision but also may give credence to the misplaced critique.

On the second point, I chose to write "phonecall" as one word to show the effect of the drinks.

Please republish my submission as originally written. Thank you.

Editors' Note: Oops! The changes were not intentional.

Doris Heitmeyer, New York, responds to comments by *Janelle Barrera*, Florida, on the article by *Bruce England*, California in 31:2: that proposed an alternative membership anthology.

Mr. England was not kidding! He was earnest about creating an HSA Member's Anthology as an artistically unified literary form rather than a catchall.

What he didn't know (not being a member at the time) was that our first three anthologies were skillfully sequenced by their Editors following the principles used by Japanese anthologists, particularly Bashō in *Sarumino (The Monkey's Raincoat)*. Methods of linking, similar to those used in *renku*, were employed to set one haiku off against another, masters and beginners alike, to create a finished work greater than the sum of its parts—an artistic whole.

Why did we change our approach to presentation of the poets in strict alphabetical order? Was it to avoid any hint of partiality in the placement or order of the haiku? Should we re-think this? It's an open question.

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Corrections to Issue 31:3

p. 20: For the first haiku by *Roberta Beary*, D.C., see her comments in *Re:Readings*, p. 91

p. 27: In the haiku by *Tom Painting*, New York, the bracket and slash should not be there.

The Mildred Kanterman Memorial Book Awards for 2008

Judged by

George G. Dorsty, Virginia & *Marie Summers*, Missouri

First Place: *Desert Hours* by **Marian Olson**; Art by Karen Fitzsimmons: Lily Pool Press, Northfield, MA, 2007, 109 pp. ISBN 978-0-934714-35-8, 22 USD postpaid from the author, 2400 Botolph Road, Santa Fe, NM 87505-5754.

Second Place: *The Whole Body Singing* by **Quendryth Young**: Self-published, 5 Cedar Court, Alstonville, NSW 2477, Australia, 2007, 90 pp., ISBN 978-09803396-6-6, 25 USD.

Third Place: *The Unworn Necklace* by **Roberta Beary**: Snapshot Press, PO Box 132, Waterloo, Liverpool, U.K., L22 8WZ, 2007, 80 pp., ISBN 978-1-903543-22-1, 14.USD.

Honorable Mention (tie): *Stumbles in Clover* by **Matt Morden**: Snapshot Press, PO Box 132, Waterloo, Liverpool, U.K., L22 8WZ, 2007, 80 pp., ISBN 978-1-903543-23-8, 14 USD. *Missed Appointment* by **Gary Hotham**: Lilliput Review, 282 Main St., Pittsburgh, PA , 15201, 2007, 22 pp., No ISBN, 3 USD.

Best Translation: *The Rabbit In The Moon* by **Kayoko Hashimoto**: Kadokawashoten, 2-13-3 Fujjimi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-8087, Japan, 2007, 258 pp. ISBN 978-4-04-621519-2, 2667 yen plus 5% tax.

Best Anthology: *Big Sky – The Red Moon Anthology of English-Language Haiku 2006* edited by **Jim Kacian** & The Red Moon Editorial Staff: Red Moon Press, P.O. Box 2461, Winchester VA 22604-1661, 2007, 192 pp. ISBN 1-893959-60-0, 16.95 USD.

Best Haibun: *small events* by **w. f. owen**: Red Moon Press, P.O. Box 2461, Winchester, VA 22604-1661, 2007, 64 pp. ISBN 978-1-893959-62-0, 12 USD.

Haiku Society of America

When the 38 entered books for the 2008 Mildred Kanterman Memorial Book Awards were delivered, it was like peering into a heavy bag of freshly collected Halloween candy. Our eyes widened with anticipation to experience them all, to gaze upon their unique, individual wrappers, and devour every page of creativity. It is usually the chocolate bars that are immediately put into the “favorite” pile to be eaten first; therefore, we chose our favorite ten publications based upon appearances. Our lists were strikingly similar, and predictions for possible winners were then quickly made. It was then time to get to know all of these treats by their ingredients, not just by their colorful shells.

We lived with these books for weeks, getting to know each one intimately. The judging process become increasingly difficult, and the discussions about each morsel more in depth—an intense sugar rush! In the end, it was the journeys the authors took us on, dazzling scenes of nature exposed, originality of subject matter, consistency, ease and order of content, and a general reflection of material being published worldwide within the community journals that left the sweetest tastes in our mouths. Our early predictions may not have been dead on, but that goes to show you that you can’t always judge a book by its cover!

DESERT HOURS is a collection of personal and natural experiences by *Marian Olson* gained from daily life living in Santa Fe, New Mexico which is full of Native American and Hispanic cultural influences. Karen Fitzsimmon’s landscape piece sets the stage for the reader’s journey into this unique collection of haiku. Upon opening the book, Olson chose a quote from Santoka Taneda, “Settle in this world. There are hidden treasures in the present moment.” Olson does just that, sweeps you away and shows you the beauty of her home through her eyes:

at my touch
the tortoise withdraws
to a secret place

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Olson brings you in closer, her experiences become your own:

wren's song
so different now
without you

August moon
the cricket throb
in me too

The landscape has a way of opening up its breathtaking beauty to those who are willing to wait and observe:

whole as the snakeskin surrender

birds shift
in the moody sky
one body, one mind

a day circling
the one tree he knows
fledgling

And just when it seems this rugged hideaway could not reveal anything more, night settles in and displays an entirely new vision to behold.

final light
and no clouds left
to hold it

All in all, this was a satisfyingly themed collection geared toward the emotional aspects of living in a region of timeless beauty, surprise and wonder while using simple language to fully envelop the senses to experience of striking yet delicate images and culture of New Mexico.

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THE WHOLE BODY SINGING by *Quendryth Young* is a powerful collection from beginning to end as she shares the natural experiences from her homeland of Australia. Young named the book from her introduction haiku:

grey butcher bird
the whole body
singing

. . . which allows her readers to experience the gravity of her writing from the very start. And no matter the page, Young has an ease at sharing the ordinary and making it extraordinary!

high tide
beach and sea exchange
driftwood

dawn surf . . .
a swimmer's arm
crosses the horizon

silky oak
a gust releases
last night's shower

She even adds in a bit of humor:

town cemetery
a peppercorn shades
old enemies

uphill . . .
an old man carrying
his dachshund

But no matter the haiku experience, Young writes each with what seems like such ease, and presents them with such simplicity as in:

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tranquil lake
a duck sends ripples
to my feet

water's edge
the ocean overflows
his bucket

As *John Bird* states in the foreword, Young is “a disciplined wordsmith with an impressive armoury of poetic skills.” *The Whole Body Singing* will have you coming back again and again as Young hints to within her collection:

dragonfly
again and again
to this rock

THE UNWORN NECKLACE by *Roberta Beary* is a completely different collection than most have or will experience. Beary takes us on a journey of emotions through the close relationships with family members in her life, childrearing, marriage, divorce, illness and more. It is certainly a book that will have you reading from cover to cover and reflecting upon the heavy nature of the haiku.

Two very poignant haiku in from the beginning of the collection alert the reader to a deeply-felt sadness in Beary's life:

the empty place
inside me
. . . wild lupine

on my finger
the firefly puts out
its light

. . . and then are granted permission to advance to the frontlines of a brewing divorce, a flurry of angry feelings:

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hating him
between bites
of unripe plums

But as time goes on, Beary comes to terms with events, even finds humor in her ex's new wife, and explores dating again as indicated here:

first date—
the little pile
of anchovies

third date—
the slow drift of the rowboat
in deep water

Other trials come her way, but by the end of the collection, Beary notes there is a glimmer of hope that life will have many grand moments just waiting for her as time passes on:

empty room
a teacup holds
the light

The eye-catching title of *Max Morden's* collection, *STUMBLES IN CLOVER*, causes the reader to stumble for a moment, too, before rushing headlong into his haiku like a bumblebee into ripe clover; however, the cover art plainly boasts to the beholder that Morden is a lover of nature, and has a keen eye for noticing details. A few pages into the book, we read the stunning piece behind the title:

mid-argument
a bumblebee
stumbles in clover

. . . and even more gripping is this haiku on death. In a few powerful lines, the reader's breath is taken away, a heavy

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sadness descends upon the heart, and a pause for reflection is certainly required.

mountain wind
the stillness of a lamb
gathering crows

A bright, vivid image of beauty lightens the spirit with this haiku:

caught in
the red kite's tail
day's end

Deviating from the seriousness of death, a call for renewal is in the air with these cheerful three-liners:

winter solstice
the flock of starlings
takes a new shape

new year's day
bleaching work shirts
back to white

Morden shares moments in a such a way to make the ordinary, extraordinary as in the piece below. No matter the page, the images brought forth from each poem is a delight! Readers will be eagerly awaiting the next collection.

winter moon
a pregnant Friesian
paces the byre

MISSED APPOINTMENT by *Gary Hotham* is a quaint collection of only fifteen haiku, but readers should not be deceived by the small size of this mini-chapbook. Each haiku tucked within its pages is striking and poignant.

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farewell party—
the sweetness of the cake
hard to swallow

Another farewell haiku is presented later in the book, as if Hotham is exiting a once beloved time in his life, or someone he loves dearly is departing:

farewell dinner—
more hot coffee poured
into what's left

. . . and an even more defining moment:

Dad's funeral—
the same knot
in my tie

The ability to be selective with the haiku presented is what made this collection so grand. Readers will enjoy revisiting the haiku and re-examining the experiences behind these exquisite haiku moments.

THE RABBIT IN THE MOON is a collection of haiku written between 1987 and the summer of 2005 by Japanese haikai, *Kayoko Hashimoto*. In the tradition of Shiki, the “sketch of life” poems in this beautiful book reflect Ms. Kayoko’s haiku exchanges with poets from Japan, Germany, Italy, the British Isles, Australia, and America. Of particular interest to HSA members might be her poems written while in Washington, D.C. as the guest of poet Kristen Deming and her father, who is the former Ambassador to Japan.

At Deming’s Residence

In the spring sunbeams
in a living room . . . the reflection
of the pond sways

Frogpond 32:1

Tulips
the residence of the chargé
up on the hill

written with *Kristen Deming* and
Francine Porad, a past president of HSA

The title, *The Rabbit In The Moon*, recalls Raymond Roseliep's collection of the same name and, like the poems in his collection, Ms. Kayoko's poems abound in compassion and goodwill. The image is one which Hashimoto explains "comes from a picture of a rabbit pounding rice in the moon", which is on a "Kyoto Minoya lacquer incense container" designed by her grandfather as a New Year's gift for the Year of the Rabbit in 1915. She inherited this container from her mother and carries it with her on all her journeys. The image of a rabbit in the moon comes from one of the Jataka tales in which Buddha rewards the rabbit for his extreme act of charity toward another by drawing a rabbit on the moon that will be visible to all. Is *The Rabbit In The Moon* then a symbol of Hashimoto's own charitable mission as haiku emissary?

Even to Rome
I bring along the rabbit
in the moon

English woods—
is that Peter Rabbit
running?

Many of the poems are reminiscent of poems by classic haiku poets such as Bashō, Issa, Buson, and Shiki. Here are a few examples of the poet's English translations of her Japanese language haiku:

Bird Influenza

Heaps of chickens
going on the road to hell
spring mist

(Continued on next page)

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On friendly terms
with mosquitoes . . . living alone
I rub India ink

With a white wake
the boat goes toward
a hazy island

Straws in glasses
facing this way and that
summer has come

A silver knife
long fingers peel
the foreign pear

In the postscript to this lovely book (which opens from right to left in the Japanese manner) Ms. Kayoko writes, “Nowadays, haiku has spread across the world. Haiku reflects the shine and tone of life in the universe. Confronted with the beauty of a mountain, river, trees or plants, and recording it with ultimate brevity: that is haiku. Haiku goes straight to the heart.” This is especially true of the haiku in her own collection, *The Rabbit In The Moon*.

It is always a pleasure to jump right into one of *Jim Kacian's* Red Moon Anthologies. Each selected work is nominated and then voted upon to grace the pages of these yearly collections by a select editorial staff. Due to the growing number of first-class haiku journals and competitions available to the community, the final word on placing only those ‘best of the best’ haiku, senryu, haibun, and essays is a difficult yet rewarding annual task.

BIG SKY is exceptionally pleasing due to the superb content and layout of the book itself. It features over 150 of the best haiku published today! Kacian's editorial juices were certainly flowing when it came to formatting this lovely anthology, and his time and attention to detail paid off! Choosing a few select pieces from *Big Sky* to feature is almost impossible, and that is

why the 2006 volume is such a treasure.

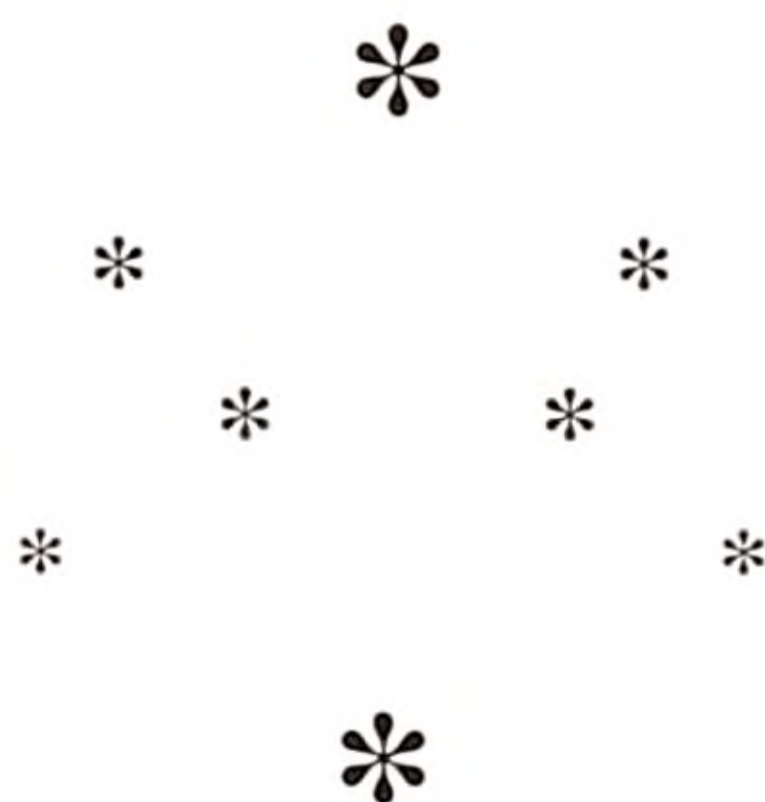
big sky
the uncertain legs
of the foal

This year's anthology was titled after *Tom Painting's* powerful contribution. Just from the first line, Painting reminds his readers of how large and overwhelming the world can be especially for the younger and more fragile generation.

Annie Bachini's haiku reflects the gravity of this big sky collection as a whole as the essence of all the chosen pieces fill the reader's thoughts with so many unique experiences. Everyone has felt the pull of inertia upon their bodies, and this collection will certainly pull you in and devouring every word!

lurching to a halt—
the weight of the bus
inside my body

SMALL EVENTS by *w. f. owen* is just that, a collection of short haibun capturing times in his life like cherished photographs, and placed carefully into an album. This collection of haibun is in chronological order from boyhood to adulthood, commemorating all of the little twists and turns the journey of life takes you on. owen's book is carefully constructed, cleanly formatted, pleasing to the eye, and the accompanying haiku fit perfectly with each shared memory.



Harold G. Henderson
Haiku Contest for 2008

Judged by
Jennie Townsend (JT), Missouri
Christopher Patchel (CP), Illinois

(The judges are identified by their initials at the end of each commentary.)

1st Place (\$150), *John Stevenson*, New York

Thanksgiving—
fifteen minutes
of mince pie

Haiku tends to be unassuming and understated. Using simple language to show rather than tell, suggest rather than state, it often reveals its layers of meaning only by degrees. This year's Henderson Award winner is an excellent case in point. Though it did not make either of our initial shortlists, something about it kept drawing me back, and over the weeks it opened up in stages like a time-release capsule.

The poem gives us concrete, associative images but leaves the setting to our imagination. It could be the highlight of a Thanksgiving dinner with extended family, or conversely, the entirety of a solitary celebration apart from family, one small way of connecting with the spirit of the holiday. But might the poem be intimating more?

Thanksgiving Day is set aside for thankful reflection on our blessings. It originated as a harvest festival much like those of many cultures around the world and throughout history. Like all enduring traditions, it connects us to each other and to the generations before and after us. We share in, and contribute to, the cultural heritage handed down to us and pass it along. On this continuum, the span of our life is akin to

fifteen minutes, a small window of participation. (The words minute and mince are even related to the word *minute*, meaning very small.)

Mince pie, like Thanksgiving, is part of a long tradition. Also known as mincemeat pie, it is commonly meatless now, both in Britain and here in the States. I was curious to try it and, since it's only available during the holidays, resorted to baking a pie. I found it delicious. The variety of fruits and other ingredients suggested harvest and bounty. I even enjoyed the bitter tang of the orange rinds.

Though brief in the larger scheme of things, it's obvious this partaking of mince pie is deliberately unhurried for its fullest appreciation, each rich mouthful chewed thoroughly to taste every flavor (the word mince suggesting this as well). This is an extended moment of savoring, and thanksgiving.

Haiku, also, is about engaging in moments, be it through our own words or those of meaningful poems like this. —*CP*

For me, this haiku took on the tone of “the working man” eating in a lunchroom or, if traveling, perhaps catching a bite at a diner. His or her entire Thanksgiving by necessity is reduced to fifteen minutes and a slice of mince pie, the savoring of which triggers memories of where they once were, where they aren't now — that large family gathering where Uncle Joe had everyone laughing until they cried. A person can be thankful for a lot in the short time between the first bite and the last crumb. This is the poem to show us that. —*JT*

2nd Place (\$100), *Kristen Deming*, Maryland

blossoms . . .
the baby's bare feet
pedal the air

Everything about this poem says spring: The lighthearted tone, the blossoms, the baby, the softness, the fragrance, the

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bare feet, the pedaling (an apt description). Not to mention the implicit joy of it all. —*CP*

“blossoms . . .” The author’s use of an ellipsis is a signal to engage the senses, to bring up a scent, the feel of the wind, or hear someone’s voice and at the end of the ellipsis, the following two lines catapult us into the baby’s first play and pleasure of a spring morning. The reader is a witness to a baby with the whole world at its feet: the soft blossoms, soft breeze, soft caresses and the joy on the baby’s face mirrors in ours, an experience wholly shared in a small, elegant moment. —*JT*

3rd Place (\$50) *John Stevenson*, New York

butterfly
my attention
attention span

Given haiku’s economy of form, word repetition is usually something to be avoided. Yet here it’s utilized to inspired advantage. Simply repeating the word “attention,” serves to convey, without having to describe, the thoughts of the poet, and the flutter of a butterfly, here, there and anywhere. A rendering like this feels satisfyingly inevitable, to the point where changing anything would seem inconceivable. —*CP*

It is easy to picture ourselves in this moment, enjoy a laugh at our expense, perhaps experience a twinge of worry that we brush off. Is the moment about aging or distractibility? The poet makes a gift of a human foible engagingly captured and presents it just this side of clever keeping it that way. —*JT*

Honorable Mentions (unranked)

one moth
a thousand candles
light the darkness

***Garry Gay*, California**

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All of the images here—one, moth, thousand, candles, light, darkness—are strong and clear, as are the relationships of each to the others. But where are we? I picture it as a memorial vigil. —*CP*

It takes something powerfully meaningful to draw a thousand people to one purpose, be it an expression of grief, solidarity, or celebration, to honor a life or event that caused a change and created the need. The poet isn't telling us what happened or to whom, but through these words we participate and meet the need of our own experience. —*JT*

trail's end—
my pebble
settles the cairn

Linda Jeannette Ward, North Carolina

This could be read as a death poem since it takes on the meaning of a completed life's journey. I read the word "settles" as "puts at peace," and picture this landmark providing a homecoming welcome for another trekker, or as a grave marker on which visitors place small stones as tokens of respect. However understood, this symbolic joining of pebble and cairn feels primal. —*CP*

There are cairns in many parts of the world but the urge that creates them may be older than any culture, a vestige of our earliest human memories where reaching a destination meant survival, and marking the passage was as important to their story as the finish. This haiku may be a poet's homage to having made the trip. With the act of adding a pebble, the poet connects to a long line of others who accomplished what they set out to do, leaving behind a marker for those who follow. —*JT*

Closing Remarks:

The turnout was on the low side compared to recent years with 125 writers submitting 672 poems. A deep thanks to everyone who submitted work, with apologies for any worthy poems

we perhaps weren't able to connect with strongly enough to select. Thanks also to the HSA board for entrusting us with the judging. Our heartiest congratulations to the winners.

Gerald Brady Memorial Contest for 2008

Judged by
Alexis Rotella, Maryland
Scott Mason, New York

An effective senryu is like a magical hand mirror: viewed just so, it yields a partial yet telling reflection of our basic human nature. Some reflections, of course, are more telling than others. We have chosen seven that spoke to us through humor, irony or poignancy with a level of observation and perceptiveness far beyond their few words. More than reflections alone, these brief poems offer glints of genuine insight into the tragic, prosaic and comic pageant of our everyday lives.

1st Place (\$100) *David P. Grayson*, California

street corner memorial—
my four-year-old
asks for the balloon

A parent (we imagine a mother) and her young child happen upon a makeshift memorial on the corner sidewalk of a city or suburban intersection. This was likely the place of some recent tragedy—such scenes are all too familiar to those of us living in populated areas. Perhaps a vehicle struck a pedestrian in this intersection. The impromptu memorial might include handwritten notes, candles or flowers, plus a balloon, left by surviving loved ones. The four-year-old innocently asks his or her mother for the unattended balloon. The mother now faces a quandary: how can she explain to her young child that the balloon “belongs” to someone else—quite possibly another child—who is no longer here to enjoy it?

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In just eleven words we experience a moment both authentic and deeply poignant. How well it depicts the “collision” of childhood innocence with the occasional harshness of real life; and how effectively it places us in the shoes of the parent who must mediate between the two. A masterpiece of mixed emotions.

2nd Place (\$75) *Michael Dylan Welch*, Washington

busy Italian restaurant—
happy birthday
sung to the wrong table

Here, by contrast, is a moment of pure hilarity. Waiters and waitresses hastily converge to belt out that old standby; and just as quickly they disperse, leaving utter bewilderment in their wake. In this parody of “personal” service, they might just as well have sung to. . . the table!

3rd Place (\$50) *Margaret Chula*, Oregon

Tokyo vending machine
the long line
behind the foreigner

The Japanese have a word—*gaman*—for “enduring the seemingly unbearable with patience and dignity.” Here a foreigner (we imagine a Westerner) fumbles with instructions, money or the buttons at a vending machine. He or she may be oblivious to all those who are waiting. Their implied silence makes this cross-cultural “encounter” pitch perfect.

Honorable Mentions (unranked)

old palm reader . . .
my life line
her longest yet

Kenneth Elba Carrier, Massachusetts

Comment: Who’s kidding who? . . . A poetic sleight of hand.

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engagement ring
he decides
it looks real enough

Marian Olson, New Mexico

Comment: Priceless!

parade march--
the old vet with canes
refuses to ride

Catherine J.S. Lee, Maine

Comment: . . . or fade away. What made *The Greatest Generation* great!

first day of school
her brother's backpack
with legs

Robert Mainone, Michigan

Comment: Worn with pride or resentment? Either way, an amusing and lasting image . . .

This year's contest received 470 senryu from 93 writers. Congratulations to the winners!

Editors' Note

Readers can view all the winning entries across the years on the Haiku Society of America site:

For the **Harold G. Henderson Haiku Contest**, go to <<http://www.hsa-haiku.org/hendersonawards/henderson.htm>>

For the **Gerald Brady Memorial Contest**, go to <<http://www.hsa-haiku.org/bradyawards/brady.htm>>

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From the Editors

The first section of this issue is dedicated to William J. Higginson, one of the pioneers of English-language haiku, who died October 11, 2008. The centerpiece is Bill's last piece of writing, a haibun, which was given to us by his wife, Penny Harter. It movingly demonstrates all that for which Bill is noted: scholarship, poetic talent, humbleness and courage.

Many readers have given us positive feedback about the Fall issue, both for the content as well as for the design. In terms of the latter, the bright colors of the cover and the title page drew special attention. Thus, some are bound to be disappointed by the cover of this issue, for it is in three shades of one color, as was the Spring issue.

It seem appropriate, then, to explain our color choices for the three different covers we have had to date. For the Spring/Summer issue, we chose green as the best representative of the two seasons (frog leaps up). For the one in Fall, we chose several different colors to reflect autumn's palette (frog jumps down); while for this issue, we selected blue—as in ice-blue—to reflect the experience of readers who live in areas frequented by freezing temperatures (frog hibernates).

But such criteria are not the only ones involved, for a constant constraint on our decision-making is the cost of printing—one color being cheaper than two, and so on. We figured the HSA budget for *Frogpond* could tolerate a splurge of color for one issue, but not for more.

Also, readers will note that this issue has more pages than any previous *Frogpond*. Two reasons account for this: the memorial for Bill and the informative, but lengthy, judges' comments for the Kanterman Book Awards.

As always, we welcome your comments.

George Swede, Editor

Anita Krumins, Assistant Editor



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