

HSA 2010 First Quarterly Meeting
Pasadena, California, February 19–21, 2010

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The first 2010 quarterly meeting of the Haiku Society of America was hosted by the Southern California Haiku Study Group in Pasadena, California during the weekend of February 19–21. Naia and Deborah P. Kolodji planned and organized a full weekend of events, beginning Friday evening with a no-host dinner at “Burger Continental,” an eclectic Middle Eastern restaurant in the Lake Avenue shopping area. This was followed by a reception and an Urban Haiku Reading, a multi-media event, at Ten Thousand Villages, a fair trade retailer also on Lake Avenue.

Michael Dylan Welch, Naia, Victor Ortiz, and Deborah P. Kolodji were the four readers for the Urban Haiku Reading & Multimedia Event. Urban-themed haiku from each of the four poets were woven into a script, divided into seven loosely defined sections. Guitarist Chris Wesley created a musical mood for each section of haiku and played interludes between sections as well as accompanying all of the haiku in the program. Kathabela Wilson joined him on various percussion instruments. The reading was set to a slideshow backdrop that Naia created using images by Michael Dylan Welch, Deborah P. Kolodji, Naia, and Rebecca Lowry. Lowry is an artist who provided us with photos of her West Hollywood street sign haiku art installation, and also attended the performance. After the show, there was a haiku “open mic.”

Saturday events were primarily held at the Pacific Asia Museum, where the Southern California Haiku Study Group conducts its monthly workshops. HSA executives gathered in the Blue Room for an early 9:00 a.m. conference-call meeting. Three HSA officers were present: President Ce Rosenow, Vice President Michael Dylan Welch, and Newsletter Editor Susan Antolin.

Public events started at 11:00 a.m., with a performance of haiku and haibun inspired by the art of Hyunsook Cho, organized by Naia and Kathabela Wilson. Cho's “Sketches of China” was part of a special exhibit in the auditorium foyer. Rick Wilson accompanied the poets on flute. Poems were collated with photos of the art in a gift booklet for meeting attendees.

Afterwards, everyone walked down Colorado Boulevard to Sitar Restaurant for a champagne buffet.

The afternoon program included time to browse and purchase haiku books. Rebecca Lowry had a display and maps of her haiku art installation in West Hollywood. After a haiku read-around from all present, Ce Rosenow reported on the state of the HSA.

Next, Dr. Thomas Rimer presented “Round Holes and Square Pegs: Translating Classical Japanese Haiku into English.” His presentation was very interesting, followed by general discussion. Dr. Rimer was interested in hearing from contemporary English language poets, and he’d come to the right place. He had as many questions for us as we did for him. After a short break, performance artist Genie Nakano translated classical Japanese haiku into movement with “Moving to Haiku.” Naia read each haiku selection followed by Genie’s interpretive movement. Genie also led attendees in a relaxation exercise and then delighted the audience with a spontaneous belly dance.

Susan Antolin read from her new book of haiku, *Artichoke Season*. Her haiku were moving and often centered around life with her husband and children with insightful and touching imagery.

Michael Dylan Welch finished up the afternoon with a presentation on “Editing Haiku” that included some very useful tips on exploring ways to think about the writing and revision process. Welch advised that at some point it helps to shift one’s focus from process to product. This creates an objective distance that allows the poet to divest personal interest enough to explore whether or not a particular poem “hits the mark.” After Welch’s presentation, we all walked across the street to McCormick and Schmick’s for dinner. That evening we gathered at the home of Rick and Kathabela Wilson for drinks, dessert, and a poetry salon. Ce Rosenow read from her book *Pacific*, Rick played from his extensive collection of antique and ethnic flutes accompanied by Kathabela on percussion, and Michael Dylan Welch led us in an anonymous haiku workshop that lasted into the wee hours of the morning.

On Sunday morning, an intrepid group (Ash Baldon, Billie Dee, Oleg Kagan, Deborah P. Kolodji, Naia, Linda Papanicolaou, Kathabela Wilson, and Rick Wilson), met at the Del Mar Station in Pasadena to board the Gold Line for a journey of haiku inspiration. Meanwhile in Long Beach, another group of poets boarded the Blue Line bound for Union Station. Michael Angerman and D’Ellen met the Gold Line at the Union Station platform and the expanded group enjoyed art deco architecture and haiku writing time as they waited for the Blue Line poets: Christine Moore, G. Murray Thomas, and Wendy Wright. Exiting Union Station, the group walked to historic Olvera Street for an hour of exploration and haiku writing, inspired by Aztec dancers, brightly colored booths, authentic costumes, and historic landmarks. We then walked over the 101 freeway, passed City Hall and reached Little Tokyo in time for lunch at Chin-Ma-Ya of Tokyo. The balcony outside the restaurant was the perfect place to share urban-inspired haiku. This concluded the official portion of the ginko, but more than half of the people stayed to spend the rest of the afternoon exploring Little Tokyo and writing about it. Ending the day, Billie Dee, Naia, Michael Dylan Welch, Oleg Kagan, Ash Baldon, and Deborah P. Kolodji stopped at the Del Mar Station for dinner and rengay composition at La Grande Orange.

—Deborah P. Kolodji and Naia